

The Inferno Guided Reading Questions**Canto 1 Questions**

1. What was Virgil's occupation? When and where did he live?
2. Where did Virgil tell Dante that joy and its beginning could be found?
3. Name the creatures that Dante finds in the woods.
4. Which creature was the most horrible and why?
5. Dante felt fear for many reasons. What were some of these reasons?
6. Why did Dante not know how he got into the woods?
7. What helped Dante to feel hope?
8. What did Virgil say they would see and hear on the journey?
9. Why did Virgil explain that some sufferers were happy in their pain?
10. Virgil said he would guide Dante on a journey but Virgil would have to turn back at one point. Where would Virgil stop with Dante?

Canto 2 Questions

1. With which two other travelers does Dante compare himself unfavorably?
2. Who opposes cruelty?
3. What is Virgil's impression of Dante's courage?
4. What happens to Dante's courage after Virgil talks to him?
5. Who was the heavenly woman who was concerned about Dante?
6. Who was the New Testament Saint who recorded his images of Hell?
7. Who created the character of Aeneas?
8. Who guarded the gates of Heaven?
9. How does Virgil's courage compare to Dante's?
10. Why did Virgil decide to try to rescue Dante from his wanderings?

Canto 3 Questions

1. What was Dante's first reaction to the wailing?
2. To what does Dante compare the worry that the uncommitted might be missing something?
3. What is the name of the river which circles the rim of Hell?
4. What was the name of the ferryman?
5. Who were the cowards in Canto III?
6. The river's name is translated as "joyous." Why is this a good name for the river?
7. The uncommitted had saved their blood all their lives. What was the ultimate result of this act?
8. What is Dante's initial reaction to the many souls he sees in the Vestibule of Hell?
9. Who are the cowards whom Dante describes?
10. What is Dante's reaction to the sights and sounds of Hell at the end of Canto III?

Canto 4 Questions

1. Where is Dante when he awakes from his swoon?
2. What causes Dante to wake from his swoon?
3. What causes the thunder Dante heard?
4. What is the sound of the first circumference?
5. Who is in the First Circle?
6. Who are the four mighty shades?
7. Dante says that the group of six dwindles to two. What does he mean?
8. What is the occupation of the "men that know"?
9. Why is the first circle called "Limbo"?
10. Who is the first father that the one with crowns took from the First Circle?

Canto 5 Questions

1. Why does Francesca's heart still hurt and ache?
2. How does Dante react to Francesca's tale?
3. What does Francesca say is the greatest sadness in this place?
4. What is the punishment in this Second Circle?
5. What caused Francesca to commit the sin of lust with Paolo?
6. How did Francesca die?
7. Why does Dante not tell the reader of the trip from Circle One to Circle Two and from Circle Two to Circle Three?
8. What does Minos do?
9. In Canto III and in Canto V Dante refers to will and power being one. Where is this place where will and power are one?
10. What does it mean when Dante says that he is grieved by the way in which the murder of Francesca and Paolo came about?

Canto 6 Questions

1. What is the atmosphere like in Circle Three?
2. Of what crimes were the souls in Circle Three guilty?
3. From where did the gluttonous soul who talks to Dante and Virgil in Circle Three come?
4. From what city did Dante come?
5. What are the three sparks from Hell sowed in every person's breast?
6. Who is the great enemy that Dante and Virgil will find at the next descent?
7. What does the word Ciacco mean?
8. Who is the guardian of Circle Three?
9. What were the gluttons eating in Hell?
10. What is the "Enemy Power?"

Canto 7 Questions

1. Who guards the Fourth Circle?
2. What sins have been committed by those in the Fourth Circle?
3. Describe how the squanderers and the hoarders are punished.
4. What is the name of the marsh in the Fourth Circle?
5. Where are the passively wrathful in the Fourth Circle?
6. How does Dante travel within the Fourth Circle?
7. The Fourth Circle is the last of the circles of Incontinence. What is "incontinence"?
8. What did Virgil and Dante find at the foot of the path and stairs?
9. To whom do nations owe the credit for the amassing great wealth or the blame for not amassing this wealth?
10. Why did Virgil encourage Dante to move more rapidly?

Canto 8 Questions

1. Who rows the boat for Dante and Virgil?
2. What is the signal used to send for the oarsman?
3. What does the soul in the mud mean when he asks who is here before his time?
4. Why is the oarsman angry when he sees who has come for a ride?
5. What is the name of the soul in the mud who causes Dante to show anger?
6. What is Dante's reaction to the pulling and hauling that Filippo Argenti receives?
7. Dante says at one point that his gentle father has left him. To whom is he referring?
8. What is the name of the city at which they arrive?
9. How is Virgil received at the gates of the City of Dis?
10. What does Virgil have to do to gain admittance?

Canto 9 Questions

1. From where did Virgil hope to get help?
2. Who is Erichtho?
3. Why had Virgil been in Hell before?
4. Who are the Furies?
5. Who was the queen whom the three goddesses served?
6. Describe Medusa.
7. What are the tombs like near the City of Dis?
8. How does the heavenly messenger open the gate?
9. Why do you think the heavenly messenger spent so little time with Dante and Virgil?
10. Who are the heretics?

Canto 10 Questions

1. Dante addresses the power that "wheels" him. To whom is he referring?
2. What is an Epicurean?
3. Who is the family enemy that Dante encounters in the graveyard?
4. One of the shades inquires of a family member to Dante. About whom does he ask?
5. What does he find out about this family member?
6. With whom does the shade say he is lying in that graveyard?
7. Name the term used to refer to Christ in Canto X?
8. About what do Dante and Farinata argue in Canto X?
9. What is the reference to Beatrice in Canto X?
10. Who is the queen who reigns below?

Canto 11 Questions

1. What sin does Virgil say that people—but not animals—are subject to commit and that God hates worst?
2. In which ring would one find murderers, people who are violent with their hands, and robbers?
3. In which ring would one find those who gamble, waste their money, and rob themselves of goods?
4. What is the sin of Sodom?
5. What is the sin of Cahors?
6. Where would one find flatterers, sorcerers, hypocrites, and cheats?

7. Which is least blameworthy: incontinence, vice, or brute bestiality?
8. What does Dante say will heal all light which was dim?
9. Contempt of art and contempt of Nature are the same, according to Dante, in that they express contempt of whom?
10. What does Dante define as a breach of trust against the confiding?

Canto 12 Questions

1. Canto XII begins with a reference to a "Thing." What is this thing? Describe it.
2. What natural disaster or occurrence has happened since Virgil's trip to that area?
3. Who is the great Prince referred to in the Canto?
4. Who is the prey mentioned in Canto XII?
5. What is a centaur? Who is the leader or chief of the centaurs?
6. What is the task of the centaurs?
7. When they are walking together, Chiron reveals that he is aware of the fact that Dante is still alive. How does he know this?
8. When Chiron asks why Dante is there, how does Virgil respond to him?
9. Who are Nessus and Deianira?
10. At one point Virgil speaks of a woman who told him to bring Dante to Hell. Who is this woman?

Canto 13 Questions

1. In line 94 a reference is made to Minos. Who is Minos?
2. In line 64 a reference is made to a harlot. Who is this harlot?
3. Why is Dante reluctant to speak to the trees?
4. A reference is made in line 8 to a place between Corveto and Cecina. What does this mean?
5. Canto XIII concludes with a reference to the fact that the shade made a scaffold of his roof-tree. What does this mean?
6. Why does Virgil ask Dante to pluck a small branch or twig from a tree?
7. Describe in detail the Harpies mentioned in Canto XIII.
8. In Canto XIII what comes forth from a tree in the woods if a branch is plucked?
9. What is meant by the phrase that suggests Florence changed her patron for the Baptist?
10. What do the Harpies eat?

Canto 14 Questions

1. Why does Dante gather the leaves from the ground and place them back near the tree?
2. What is the symbolism of the rain of fire?
3. Who is Capaneus?
4. Who is Cato?
5. What is the name of the mountain?
6. What is the man made from?
7. Which river is able to put out the flames on either side?
8. What is one of the greatest marvels that Virgil tells Dante he will see?
9. Where does Rhea reside?
10. How does Virgil feel about the many questions Dante asked?

Canto 15 Questions

1. With what does Dante compare the banks of the river as they continue their journey?
2. How long have Dante and Virgil been traveling?
3. Who is Brunetto?
4. How does Brunetto say that Dante can win?
5. What does Dante say that he will do with the words that Brunetto gives him?
6. Who is the wise lady that Dante mentions in the passage?
7. What is the meaning of the words "Well-heeded is well-heard"?
8. Why does the adviser not tell Dante who is in Circle VII?
9. Who is the "Servant of servants"?
10. How does Dante say that he feels about the future?

Canto 16 Questions

1. What does Dante mean when he says that he has to fall to the center?
2. What do the three shades mean when they say that Guillim Borsier has "but late enrolled"?
3. How does Dante feel about the three shades and their punishment in Hell?
4. What is the political affiliation of the three shades?
5. How does Virgil say that Dante is to treat the three shades?
6. What are the Acquacheta and the Forli?
7. What does Virgil throw into the water?
8. What are the Apennines?
9. Whom does Jacopo blame for his vice?
10. What is the Comedy that Dante refers to in Canto XVI?

Canto 17 Questions

1. Why does Virgil tell Dante to talk with those in the Circles of Fraud?
2. Describe the sounds that Dante hears while riding the creature from the depths.
3. What part of the Geryon does Dante consider dangerous?

4. To what animal does Dante compare the Usurers?
5. What do the Usurers wear about their throats?
6. What is on the purses of the Usurers?
7. What are the faces of the Usurers like? Why are they like that?
8. How do Dante and Virgil get to the next circle?
9. How does Dante feel on the trip to the next circle?
10. Who was Icarus? How does Dante's fear compare with Icarus's fear?

Canto 18 Questions

1. What is Malbowges? Of what is Malbowges made? What is in the middle of Malbowges?
2. Compare and contrast seducers and panders.
3. Why is Alessio Interminei in this place?
4. How many parts are in Malbowges?
5. What is a bowge?
6. Of what sins are those in the first and second parts of Malbowges guilty?
7. How are these seducers being punished?
8. On which side of the road do the sinners walk?
9. How are the flatterers punished?
10. For what sin is the harlot being punished?

Canto 19 Questions

1. How does Dante know that Virgil approves of what he says?
2. Who is Simon Magus?
3. Why does Dante break up an area made for the priests to stand in to perform baptisms?
4. What is the punishment of the Simoniacs?
5. What is the punishment of the priests?
6. Who is the priest with whom Dante speaks?
7. For whom does Nicholas III mistake Dante?
8. Who is the "Fairest among Women" that the priests had used poorly?
9. Why does Nicholas III not realize that Dante is not Pope Boniface VIII?
10. Who is the disciple who replaces Judas?

Canto 21 Questions

1. Why does Virgil pull Dante to one side and cry out?
2. What is a barrator?
3. Why do the barrators remain in the boiling pitch?
4. How does Virgil manage to get by and to help Dante get by the demons?
5. What is the name of the main demon?
6. Describe the appearance of the demons.
7. What caused the earthquake that destroyed the bridge?
8. On what day of the week does the encounter with Belzecue occur?
9. What year did the earthquake occur?
10. What time of day is it as the demons talk with Dante and Virgil?

Canto 22 Questions

1. What is the legend of the dolphins mentioned in Canto XXII?
2. What is the reaction of the shades to Barbiger?
3. What is the name of the shade who does not submerge himself?
4. How do Dante and Virgil manage to get rid of their escort?
5. How do the demons punish Gian Polo when they find him out of the pitch?
6. What does Gian Polo promise to bring back from the pit?
7. Gian Polo is from which kingdom?
8. To which animals does Dante compare those in the pitch?
9. From which country does Gian Polo come?
10. What signal do the shades use to tell the others that the coast is clear?

Canto 23 Questions

1. Why does Dante say that he is particularly frightened of the demons?
2. Is Dante alone in his fear?
3. What is Virgil's reaction when he sees the demons?
4. Who are the sinners in Circle VIII, Bowge VI?
5. How are they attired?
6. Who is the shade Dante sees crucified?
7. What is the formation that Virgil and Dante take when they resume travel?
8. Who are Catalano and Loderingo?
9. How are the demons able to overtake the two travelers if the travelers have a head start?
10. How long are the hypocrites to wear the cloaks?

Canto 24 Questions

1. What is a hind?
2. Describe the relationship between Dante and Virgil.
3. Virgil warns Dante several times to make sure that the rocks he steps on will bear his weight. Dante is not worried about this. Why?
4. What is Virgil's reaction to Dante's stopping for breath?
5. What does Dante see in Bowge VII with the sinners?
6. How are the sinners in Bowge VII tied?
7. What is Vanni Fucci's disposition?
8. Vanni Fucci refers to Mars. Who is Mars?
9. Fucci predicts the defeat of a faction? Which faction is this?
10. Why does Fucci share this prediction with Dante?

Canto 25 Questions

1. Fucci makes a sign at the beginning of the canto. What kind of sign is this?
2. At whom does Fucci make the gesture?
3. How does Dante feel about Fucci after observing his actions?
4. What does Dante believe is unique about Fucci?
5. What is Maremma?
6. Do you think that Fucci feels remorse for the sins he committed in life?
7. What is Cacus?
8. Where does Cacus live?
9. What does the term metamorphosis mean?
10. How does Dante recognize Puccio?

Canto 26 Questions

1. Dante begins Canto XXVI with irony. Describe this irony.
2. How are the Counselors of Fraud punished?
3. What does Virgil think of Dante's desire to speak to the flame?
4. Does Dante get to ask his questions?
5. Who is the flame who tells them of his travels?
6. What was the Palladium?
7. How was Eteocles killed?
8. What was unusual about the funeral pyre of Eteocles and his brother?
9. How was Ulysses killed?
10. What is the name of Deidamia's son?

Canto 27 Questions

1. For what does the tall flame have to wait before it can pass on to another place?
2. What was the purpose of the Sicilian bull?
3. What is meant by the statement that uncontrite is unabsolved?
4. What is the occupation of the shade before he became a friar?
5. Who is the shade who asks of conditions on earth in this canto?
6. Why does the shade reveal his identity to Dante?
7. What does Dante tell him of the condition of Romagna?
8. Why is the shade present in Bowge VIII?
9. The shade says it was brought to Minos. Who is Minos?
10. Why had Constantine sought Silvester, according to the shade?

Canto 28 Questions

1. What is the punishment of the Sowers of Discord?
2. Who is Absalom?
3. Who is Bertrand de Born?
4. Why does Virgil say that Dante is in Hell?
5. What advice does the outcast give to Caesar?
6. What is the outcast's punishment for giving ill advice to Caesar and for creating discord?
7. How is the outcast able to speak?
8. Which type of discord does Bertrand represent?
9. Which type of discord does Mahomet represent?
10. Which type of discord does Curio represent?

Canto 29 Questions

1. Why does Dante spend time observing the people in the Ninth Trench?
2. What does Virgil say that his business is in Hell?
3. Why is Aretine being punished in Hell?
4. What is the punishment for falsifying?
5. How large is the fosse, according to Canto XXIX?
6. According to the myth, how did Jupiter repopulate the island of Aegina?
7. According to the myth, why did Jupiter have to repopulate the island of Aegina?

8. What was the "joke" that Aretine had told Albergo of Siena?
9. How did Albergo punish Aretine?
10. What are some examples of falsifying?

Canto 30 Questions

1. What is Dante doing when Virgil reprimands him?
2. What is Dante's reaction to Virgil's reprimand?
3. What images of falsifiers are found in Bowge X?
4. In Canto XXX about what does the Greek lie?
5. Whose image is on the counterfeit coins in Canto XXX?
6. How did Hecuba kill herself?
7. What is the sin of Myrrha?
8. What is the sin of Gianni Schicchi?
9. Who is Capocchio?
10. What did Juno send to Athamas for revenge?

Canto 31 Questions

1. What does Virgil say causes Dante not to see well?
2. What are the towers that Dante thinks he sees?
3. What does Dante think about nature's decision to discontinue the giants?
4. How large (using the measurement of hands) is the giant from the place where the mantle is buckled to the ground?
5. Who is Ephialtes?
6. What is the punishment of Ephialtes?
7. Who is Nimrod?
8. What is the duty of Antaeus?
9. Who is the military leader that Scipio causes to retreat?
10. What is Carisenda?

Canto 32 Questions

1. What is the temperature like in Region ii?
2. What does Dante find in the lake beneath him?
3. What is Region ii called?
4. In Canto XXXII what is one of the shades eating that causes Dante horror?
5. One of the shades would not tell his name. How is Dante able to learn his name?
6. What is unusual about the tears of the shades in Region i?
7. Whose sin is more severe: traitors to country or traitors to kin?
8. What about the location of that sin in Hell enables one to know the answer to question 7?
9. Where does the land of Caina get its name?
10. Bocca tells Dante the names of others in the region. What does this tell you about Bocca's repentance?

Canto 33 Questions

1. Why does the sinner speak to explain his ugly feast?
2. Which of the shades is Count Ugolino?
3. What is the occupation of the shade who is being eaten?
4. How had Count Ugolino died?
5. What relation to Count Ugolino were the four who died, according to the canto?
6. What is the day when Dante visits the lowest area of Hell?
7. What promise does Dante fail to keep?
8. What was the dreadful den in which Ugolino died?
9. What is the name given the dreadful den after Ugolino was found?
10. Who was Anselm?

Canto 34 Questions

1. Why does Dante not describe all the sights he sees in Canto XXXIV?
2. What name does Dante give Satan in Canto XXXIV?
3. How does Satan's size compare with that of the giants?
4. How are Dante and Virgil able to climb out of the pit?
5. What is the sin of Iscariot?
6. What is Satan doing to the sinners in Region iv?
7. What is the name of Region iv?
8. Name one of the shades that Satan is devouring.
9. Dante says that he grasps the hair of the Worm. To what is he referring?
10. Dante refers to Lucifer in Canto XXXIV. Who is Lucifer?