

“The Flowers”

A short story by Alice Walker

Choose EIGHT of the following questions to answer ON YOUR OWN PAPER or in a Google Doc you share BEFORE class this Friday. Remember to include any C&C (collaborators & consultants/consulted resources) information at the end of your work.

1. What is the meaning behind the main character’s name? How might the name reveal something about the personality of the character?
2. Approximately, how old is she? Why does Ms. Walker tell the reader that “nothing existed for her but her song”? (What is the imagery of the word “song”?)
3. Why might Myop strike out “at random at chickens she liked”?
4. What time of day does she begin her adventure? How is this significant?
5. What does Myop turn her back on? What does this reveal about the time in which the story takes place? What do you know about the history of that time?
6. What is significant about the fact that “today she made her own path”?
7. For what was she “vaguely keeping an eye out”? Why is this significant?
8. As she picked flowers, what are we told about the types that she picks? What is the reader told about the “blue flowers”? What is important about the suds bush?
9. Why does Ms. Walker tell the reader that Myop’s arms were “laden with flowers”?
10. How is the place Myop finds herself at noon different from “her usual haunts”? How does Ms. Walker describe the setting now?
11. When Myop begins to “circle back to the house,” what is she figuratively trying to go back to? What time of day is it then?
12. How does Myop gaze “around the spot”? What catches her attention first? Then what does she notice?
13. What do we now know about the “tall man”? List the concrete details Ms. Walker uses to give the reader that information.
14. When “Myop laid down her flowers” she was letting go of something else, figuratively. What do you think she had lost? Why do you think so? Give concrete details to support and explain your opinion.
15. What does Mr. Walker actually mean by the last line of the story, “And the summer was over.” What is the symbolic meaning of the word “summer”?
16. Why did she call her short story “The Flowers”?