

Sample Grade 10 Unit Plan: *The Scarlet Letter*

Fiction

Mentor Text/Class Novel: *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne (Penguin Books, 2003)

Standards Addressed: RL.9–10.1, RL.9–10.2, RL.9–10.3, RL.9–10.4, RL.9–10.5, RI.9–10.9

	Teaching Point	Possible Text Excerpts	What Students Will Try
1	<p>Readers take careful note of all the important information conveyed in the beginning of a book; knowing the way the author structures the beginning is important.</p>	<p>pp. 7–8 The introduction’s first two pages</p> <p>p. 28 “But the past was not dead . . .”</p> <p>p. 29 “But one idle and rainy day . . .”</p> <p>p. 31 “The object that most drew my attention . . .”</p> <p>p. 36 “. . . he need never try to write romances.”</p> <p>The teacher thinks aloud about what he or she notices while reading the introduction, rereading key parts such as those noted above. Think-aloud topics might include how the intro frames the narrative, the narrator and his role in retelling a story, and the category of “romance” of the narrator’s fictional account of the history of the scarlet A. The teacher can also think aloud about the structure of this long essay and how it sets the atmosphere, provides essential information, establishes the conflict, provides the basis for the story, and defines the work’s genre (romance). Presented here, too, is an opportunity to acknowledge what many students consider confusing—Old English—and how the teacher, as a strong reader, makes sense of it.</p>	<p>Students take a few minutes to read or reread the beginning of their book, jot down what they notice, then share with a partner about what they notice about how the book begins and how that information is conveyed. They all work to answer: what purpose does the structure of the beginning serve?</p>

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<p>2</p> <p><i>Readers analyze the author's choice of narrator, considering the purpose and impact of that perspective.</i></p>	<p>p. 13 "Doubtless . . ."</p> <p>p. 18 "It would be sad injustice . . ."</p> <p>p. 32 "In the absorbing contemplation . . ."</p> <p>p. 40 "In short, unpleasant as was my predicament . . ."</p> <p>Students read in pairs, or with the teacher, and briefly consider implications of the surveyor's perspective. For instance, what is the impact of Hawthorne telling the story twice removed through Jonathan Pue, what are the similarities to Hawthorne's views, are such parallels relevant, and how is the narrator's perspective as an outsider similar to Hester Prynne's?</p>	<p>Readers consider the implications of the narrator's perspective in their books. They consider and take note of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What role does the narrator serve, other than simply conveying the events? • What information is the narrator privy to, and what is he or she unaware of? <p>Students should write about a half page about why their author may have chosen that narrator, and how that perspective is relevant.</p>
<p>3</p> <p><i>Readers can do additional "sleuthing" to understand the cultural context in which a text was written, and thereby have a</i></p>	<p>The teacher jots down questions generated from the reading so far, such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was life like in these colonies? • What was the relationship between law and religion? • What is a custom house? • Why is the condemnation of Hester so public? 	<p>Students write down questions from their reading so far. Then, they go about getting answers to those questions online and chart how that information affects their understanding of the text.</p>

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Teaching Point

more nuanced understanding of the book.

Possible Text Excerpts

- Why is there this obsession over sin?
- What was the Puritans' notion of what was sinful?

Then, the teacher shares researched information that answers those questions. Research includes the main tenets of Puritanism and its views on sin. Modeled notes will also include what that information does for students' understanding of key scenes so far, such as Hester's public condemnation and why she was punished for adultery in such a way.

Questions	Information	New Understandings

What Students Will Try

Questions	Information	New Understandings

4

Readers pay attention to significant and repeated images and consider what those images might symbolize in the larger context of the novel.

p. 45 Descriptions of the prison door, such as "heavily timbered with oak, and studded with iron spikes," "marked with weather-stains and other indications of age," and "beetle-browed and gloomy front." Descriptions of the rosebush with "delicate gems," and a "fragile beauty."

Students briefly consider in pairs the possible significance of these images, and the teacher may add on his or her thinking as well—for instance, how the unrelenting, imposing, dark door versus

Students take notes as they read, considering the following questions:

- What images, objects, colors, and settings are described in detail; seem to come up again and again; or simply seem potentially relevant and put there for a reason by the author?

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	<p>the beauty of the rosebush shows the contradiction between the harshness of the Puritan society and blossom” or how the rose (romance) is trying to survive among the gloomy surroundings.</p> <p>Another image to explore:</p> <p>p. 50 Descriptions of the scarlet letter, such as “On the breast of her gown, in fine red cloth surrounded with an elaborate embroidery and fantastic flourishes of gold thread, appeared the letter ‘A.’ It was so artistically done, and with so much fertility and gorgeous luxuriance of fancy . . .”</p> <p>The students can briefly jot down the possible significance of this image and whether it has positive or negative connotations. In this case, it is rather positive. It showcases Hester’s talent instead of something sinful.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is their significance, based on how they are described? • What ideas do they reinforce in your book? • How do they deepen or change your understanding of the big ideas in your book?
5	<p><i>Readers consider complex characters and how they advance the plot or develop the theme of a novel.</i></p> <p>pp. 53–54 “Had there been a Papist . . . Be that as it might . . .”</p> <p>The teacher thinks aloud about the theme of sin in the Puritan society where all are born sinners, and how Hester is immediately scapegoated to reinforce the townspeople’s higher moral ground. But Hester also holds her head high, is noted for.</p>	<p>Students take notes on how main characters are described, and then use one of the sentence frames to consider how that character contributes to one of the big ideas in the novel:</p>

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	<p>her beauty, and is literally and figuratively apart from the judgmental men and women of the town rosebush and Hester and Pearl's survival and isolation among their surroundings.</p> <p>Through the descriptions of Hester Prynne, we see that Hawthorne's take on the idea of sin is very different from the Puritan doctrine, and that perhaps her acceptance of the judgment, her isolation from the others, and her comparison to fine and beautiful things might add to that.</p> <p>The teacher might use a sentence frame such as "The descriptions of [a character] provide insight into the author's take on [a big idea] in that . . ." or "One of the themes in [the book] is . . . , and [the character] furthers our understanding of that theme by . . ."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The descriptions of [a character] such as . . . provide insight into the author's take on [a big idea] in that . . .• One of the themes in [the book] is . . . , and [the character] furthers our understanding of that theme by . . .
6	<p><i>Readers continue to consider complex main characters, what they represent in cultural beliefs of a specific time and place, and how the characters contribute to the theme.</i></p>	<p>p. 48 "‘Goodwives,’ said a hard-featured dame of fifty . . ."</p> <p>p. 50 "She was ladylike, too . . ."</p> <p>The teacher can provide some background information on Puritanism, original sin, and women in the colonies before asking students to look at these excerpts and consider what they know about the cultural expectations of the time. Then, students can finish the following and share out: "This dialogue around [the character] seems to show . . ." "[The character] seems to support the theme of [sin results in suffering] by . . ."</p> <p>After sharing out, students use similar sentence starters to consider character and theme in their novels.</p>

Teaching Point	Possible Text Excerpts	What Students Will Try
<p>7</p> <p><i>Readers continue to consider complex main characters and their interactions. They look at how dialogue, actions, and reactions can shed light on the theme of a novel.</i></p>	<p>Chapter 3, pp. 62–63 Interactions between Hester and Dimmesdale</p> <p>Chapter 4, pp. 66–69 Interactions between Hester and Chillingworth</p> <p>The teacher thinks aloud for the Chapter 3 excerpts in which Dimmesdale admits Hester is braver than he, and Hester refuses to admit Dimmesdale is the father. These interactions seem to further the theme that sin has more to do with secrecy and hypocrisy than adultery.</p> <p>Then, the teacher could ask students to consider Dimmesdale and Hester’s dialogue, actions, and reactions in Chapter 4, perhaps using the sentence starter, “This [interaction/dialogue/action/reaction], in which . . . , shows us something about these characters such as . . .” or “This character development also furthers the theme of [knowledge without compassion leads to evil] by showing . . .”</p> <p>For example: “The interactions between Dimmesdale and Hester, in which Dimmesdale is more agonized than Hester, show us Hester’s less troubled soul and Dimmesdale’s increasing torment. This character development furthers the theme that sin is determined by a person’s conscience, making Puritans less powerful than they would like to believe.”</p>	<p>Readers go on to examine dialogue, actions, and reactions and how they establish or further themes in their novels, using the same sentence starters as templates if they choose.</p>

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Teaching Point	Possible Text Excerpts	What Students Will Try
8 <i>The contradictions within characters are important to pay attention to, as they may highlight significant ideas and themes in novels.</i>	<p>p. 71 “Then, she was supported by an unnatural tension of the nerves, and by all the combative energy of her character, which enabled her to convert the scene into a kind of lurid triumph.”</p> <p>p. 76 “In all her intercourse with society, however, there was nothing that made her feel as if she belonged to it.”</p> <p>Hester is shamed and isolated, but also a bit triumphant and resilient. These examples show deep shame, but also glimmers of a feisty spirit. Then, Hester dresses Pearl in finery and does not flee the community completely, although she also expresses guilt for her sins. These examples further the big idea that Hester’s public sin has not completely tainted her private heroic qualities.</p> <p>Chapter 6, p. 80 “She knew that her deed had been evil; she could have no faith, therefore, that its result would be for good. Day after day, she looked fearfully into the child’s expanding nature; ever dreading to etch some dark and wild peculiarity.”</p> <p>Then, “By its perfect shape, its vigor, and its natural dexterity in the use of all its untried limbs, the infant was worthy to have been brought forth in Eden, worthy to have been left there, to be the playthings of angels . . .” This time students</p>	<p>Readers take notes from their reading and then take time at the end of class to share with peers and discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are my main character’s complex qualities?• What purpose do those qualities serve in shaping the big ideas in the book? <p>Partners prompt one another to cite evidence from the text as needed: “What in the book makes you say that?”</p>

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<p>9</p> <p>Readers pay attention to who has power—whether through gender, social class, race, religion, or other—who does not, and when power shifts.</p>	<p>consider what big idea these contradictions point toward. For instance, the pride Hester takes in Pearl furthers the notion that sin is too harshly judged by the Puritans, and that Pearl is actually heavenly. Pearl is a mark of shame, but also a symbol of innocence.</p> <p>The teacher models creating a hierarchy of characters according to the status and power they wield, leaving room for shifts in that hierarchy. Focus on scenes from Chapters 7 and 8.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="737 656 1274 1247"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="737 656 843 859">Character and Ranking</th> <th data-bbox="737 859 843 1062">Text Evidence</th> <th data-bbox="737 1062 843 1247">Relevance and/ or How the Power Shifts</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="843 656 1020 859"> Governor Bellingham is high up because church and state are so intertwined. However, other evidence hints that the grand show of power and status is a veneer. </td> <td data-bbox="843 859 1020 1062"> p. 89 "... matters of even slighter public interest . . . were strangely mixed up with the deliberations of legislators and acts of state." </td> <td data-bbox="843 1062 1020 1247"> Bellingham has immense power and authority, but this power is more artificial than genuine. </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1020 656 1274 859"></td> <td data-bbox="1020 859 1274 1062"> p. 93 Portraits of the Bellinghams with "stately ruffs and robes of peace," and like "ghosts." </td> <td data-bbox="1020 1062 1274 1247"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Character and Ranking	Text Evidence	Relevance and/ or How the Power Shifts	Governor Bellingham is high up because church and state are so intertwined. However, other evidence hints that the grand show of power and status is a veneer.	p. 89 "... matters of even slighter public interest . . . were strangely mixed up with the deliberations of legislators and acts of state."	Bellingham has immense power and authority, but this power is more artificial than genuine.		p. 93 Portraits of the Bellinghams with "stately ruffs and robes of peace," and like "ghosts."		<p>Students create their own visual sketches, charts, or notes to reflect the hierarchy of characters in their book, also representing how power is mutable and may change throughout the text.</p>
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Governor Bellingham is high up because church and state are so intertwined. However, other evidence hints that the grand show of power and status is a veneer.	p. 89 "... matters of even slighter public interest . . . were strangely mixed up with the deliberations of legislators and acts of state."	Bellingham has immense power and authority, but this power is more artificial than genuine.									
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Teaching Point

Possible Text Excerpts

What Students Will Try

Character and Ranking	Text Evidence	Relevance and/ or How the Power Shifts
Hester is subject to Bellingham and all the men's decisions, but she is not entirely powerless or subservient in the face of their judgment.	Hester calls him "the worshipful Bellingham," and yet she also enters his house after being told she cannot see him, saying, "Nevertheless, I will enter."	Later on in the chapter, the scarlet letter is reflected in a mirror in "exaggerated and gigantic proportions," and Hester is "absolutely hidden behind it," which cements her lower status and diminishment in the face of others' judgment. Ultimately, she can't escape her low status.
Pearl, despite being a product of sin, does not let taunting children have power over her and in fact controls them.	p. 91 "[Pearl] made a rush at the knot of her enemies and put them all to flight . . . [Her] mission was to punish the sins of the rising generation."	Pearl upsets the natural order by punishing the judgmental children, showing cracks in the Puritans' desired effects of judgment.

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<p>The servant is a free-born Englishman, but he is treated like a slave.</p>	<p>p. 92 “[He was] as much a commodity of bargain and sale as an ox, or a joint-stool.”</p>	<p>Puritans fled the hierarchy of the English church but created similar power structures such as bondservants. Their mindset is unlikely to shift.</p>
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Readers consider what genre they are reading, the qualities of that genre, and how their text both adheres to and perhaps departs from the genre.

**Students are likely on their second book at this point in the unit.*

The teacher shares a description of the qualities of the romance genre in nineteenth-century fiction, such as that at www.teachervision.com/reading/scarlet-letter. The commentary section describes romances as “concerned with internal truths” and exaggerating “the relationship between humans and nature.” The teacher shares how *The Scarlet Letter* is an example of the genre and why, using examples such as the following:

p. 73 “Hester Prynne, therefore, did not flee. On the outskirts of town . . .”

p. 72 “Her sin, her ignominy, were the roots which she had struck into the soil. It was as if a new birth, with stronger assimilations than the first, had converted the forest-land . . .”

Readers look up their book’s genre if they don’t already know it, using the book’s jacket, reviews, or other online sources. Then, they also look up qualities of that genre and consider how their book may fit into and/or subvert genre.

Readers share their findings in small groups at the end of class.

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	<p>p. 85 "The pine-trees, aged, black, and solemn, and flinging groans and other melancholy utterances on the breeze, needed little transformation to figure as Puritan elders; the ugliest weeds of the garden were their children, whom Pearl smote down and uprooted, most unmercifully."</p> <p>These examples show the supernatural quality of nature and how it reflects the humans within it, which was typical of the romance genre in nineteenth-century lit. Also, the reader roots for the stranded heroine alone in nature (romance), and the impending doom at the borders of the forest seem to make the secret affair all the more subversive.</p> <p>"Readers, consider the genre of your book and what makes it so, as well as what is specific to that book that could exist in no other to make it part of that genre."</p>	
11	<p><i>Readers track images that come up again and again, knowing the author put them there for a reason.</i></p>	<p>Readers read and reread to see what images have come up again in their books, and what their reappearance emphasizes. They can also look at how the image is described differently and consider the author's</p>

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<p><i>Readers question the purpose of each image, and how its appearance changes throughout a text.</i></p>	<p>this symbol has been altered to show more of its beauty and promise. This could show Hester's pride in her daughter and a fondness of the love that created her.</p> <p>p. 95 "Pearl, seeing the rose-bushes, began to cry for a red rose, and would not be pacified."</p> <p>The teacher highlights how this image of a rose in a decaying garden was also in the beginning of the story, and what the repetition might emphasize in terms of natural beauty or survival.</p>	<p>purpose in providing that new description.</p>
<p><i>12 Readers consider the author's word choices, understanding that those words were chosen for a purpose. Readers can consider the impact of those words in terms of tone and mood that other words would not provide.</i></p>	<p>p. 113 "He now dug into the poor clergyman's heart, like a miner searching for gold; or, rather, like a sexton delving into a grave, possibly in quest of a jewel that had been buried on the dead man's bosom, but likely to find nothing save mortality and corruption . . . Sometimes, a light glimmered out of the physician's eyes, burning blue and ominous, like the reflection of a furnace, or, let us say, like one of those gleams of ghastly fire that darted from Bunyan's awful door-way in the hill-side, and quivered on the pilgrim's face. The soil where this dark miner was working had perchance shown indications that encouraged him."</p>	<p>Readers can work in partners to circle strong words, words used in unusual contexts, words that give a feeling or mood, or words that simply catch their attention. Then they share and discuss what connotation those words provide, such as the sinister, unearthing, and dark connotation of words like <i>miner</i>, <i>grave</i>, <i>mortality</i>, <i>furnace</i>, and <i>ghastly</i> in the passage from <i>The Scarlet Letter</i>.</p> <p>Then, students do the same noticing of strong words in their own books as they read in class.</p>

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Teaching Point	Possible Text Excerpts	What Students Will Try
	<p>The teacher asks students which words stand out in this passage, whether they provide a positive or negative connotation, and why that's important.</p>	
13	<p><i>Readers know that names are important. They consider the author's purpose in naming the characters as he or she did.</i></p> <p>p. 122 Chillingworth is described as having "a quiet depth of malice, hitherto latent, but active now, in this unfortunate old man, which led him to imagine a more intimate revenge than any mortal had ever wreaked upon an enemy."</p> <p>The teacher asks students to briefly consider the choice of Chillingworth's name, or offers his or her own ideas such as showing how <i>Chillingworth</i> is cold-hearted and calculating, but <i>worth</i> also highlights his social standing.</p> <p>p. 123 Dimmesdale is described as a "poor, forlorn creature" and "suffering under bodily disease, and gnawed and tortured by some black trouble of the soul."</p> <p>The teacher asks students to consider the choice of name or offers his or her own ideas regarding the secretive dark nature of Dimmesdale.</p>	<p>Readers list the names of characters in their books and reflect on the possible significance of those choices by the author.</p>
14	<p><i>Readers track characters' changes and consider</i></p> <p>p. 139 "[Dimmesdale's] nerve seemed absolutely destroyed. His moral force was abased into more than childish weakness. It grovelled helpless on</p>	<p>Readers look back at old notes on their main characters and pay close attention to how those</p>

Teaching Point	Possible Text Excerpts	What Students Will Try
<p><i>how those changes shed light on the novel's themes.</i></p>	<p>the ground, even while his intellectual faculties retained their pristine strength.”</p> <p>p. 139 “Hester Prynne did not now occupy precisely the same position in which we beheld her during the earlier periods of her ignominy.”</p> <p>p. 141 “. . . many people refused to interpret the scarlet A by its original signification. They said it meant Able; so strong was Hester Prynne, with a woman's strength.”</p> <p>The teacher thinks aloud about the changes in how Hester is perceived by the townspeople and what those evolutions mean in regard to the theme of sin. As the townspeople begin to forget and forgive her misdeeds and feel the A represents being able, their first judgment seems equally arbitrary since Hester has not changed in her “good” or “bad” deeds. Sin, according to Hawthorne's development of the townspeople, is oversimplified in Puritanism, and those meting out judgment of sin are often as, if not more, guilty of sin themselves.</p> <p>Students discuss in small groups Dimmesdale's deterioration and what that might mean in terms of the themes of the novel.</p>	<p>characters are developing across their books. They also consider the author's purpose in creating those developments in regard to theme.</p>

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	Possible Text Excerpts	What Students Will Try
15	<p><i>Readers pay attention when the narrator is saying one thing but seems to imply another.</i></p> <p>p. 144 "Then, she might have come down to us in history, hand in hand with Ann Hutchinson, as the foundress of a religious sect."</p> <p>p. 145 "The scarlet letter had not done its office." The teacher thinks aloud about the contradictory tone in the narrator's voice. The narrator seems to disapprove of Hester's free thinking, but throughout the novel there is substantial respect for her as a person. It's as if we get what people were supposed to think, and we sense the author's respect for her independence. It wasn't possible to outwardly support a female rebel, but Hawthorne does so in subtle ways.</p>	<p>After reading and taking notes in their own books, readers turn and talk to share their thoughts on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• When does the narrator in your book say one thing but mean another?• Why would the author not have it said explicitly? What purpose does that contradiction serve?
16	<p><i>Readers consider the author's use of light and other symbolic techniques such as weather to understand author's purpose.</i></p> <p>p. 165 "... so little relieved from the gray twilight into which the clouded sky and the heavy foliage had darkened the noontide . . ."</p> <p>Chapter 18 title, "Flood of Sunshine"</p> <p>p. 177 "All at once, as with a sudden smile of heaven, forth burst the sunshine, pouring a very flood into the obscure forest, gladdening each green leaf, transmuting the yellow fallen ones to gold, and gleaming adown the gray trunks of the solemn trees."</p> <p>The teacher can briefly narrate his or her thinking while looking at the light imagery and the detailed description of Hester when she sheds the letter A.</p>	<p>Readers look at use of light, weather, and other imagery, knowing that the author wrote with a purpose. They consider why the light and weather imagery contributes to the tone, character development, or themes in the book.</p>

Teaching Point	Possible Text Excerpts	What Students Will Try
17 <i>Readers continue to refine their understanding of the themes in the novel, adding new layers of information as the story unfolds.</i>	<p>p. 171 Hester has revealed to Dimmesdale that Chillingworth is her husband. Dimmesdale worries that Chillingworth will reveal their secret.</p> <p>“There is a strange secrecy in his nature,” replied Hester, thoughtfully; “and it has grown upon him by the hidden practices of his revenge. I deem it not likely that he will betray the secret. He will doubtless seek other means of satiating his dark passion.”</p> <p>Hester and Dimmesdale are bathed in a golden light as they reunite, seemingly devoid of any sin in their pure love. Chillingworth, however, becomes increasingly dark and vengeful. The theme of what truly constitutes sin seems to shift in Chillingworth’s dreams of revenge, in that his sin is outwardly malicious, unlike a sin of unlawful love, although Puritans make no distinction between the two.</p>	<p>Readers continue revising their notes on the central themes of their novels as new information is revealed, and share those revised theme statements from their notes with a partner at the end of class.</p>
18 <i>Readers continue to question who has power in the novel, and how that power changes.</i>	<p>Chapters 19–20, various</p> <p>Dimmesdale and Hester plan to flee to Europe, where they can be free to love one another.</p> <p>Dimmesdale thinks he is in control and is exuberant, but he still has to leave the Puritan community to have any kind of authentic life.</p> <p>So ultimately the Puritans, who fled religious persecution, are now making others flee to escape their harsh judgment. The collective religious</p>	<p>Readers continue in their books, taking notes about who wields power, if power has shifted, and what evidence supports those theories.</p> <p>At the end of class, students briefly share their findings in small groups, with one person from each group sharing the</p>

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Teaching Point	Possible Text Excerpts	What Students Will Try
19	<p><i>Readers know that in most narrative works, tension builds and builds toward the end, and we can pay attention to how the author creates that escalating momentum.</i></p>	<p>authorities, described in the coming chapter as being fairly hypocritical and image based similar to the religion they broke from, still wield the most power over the individual.</p>
204	<p>Hester realizes Chillingworth will travel with her, Dimmesdale, and Pearl on their escape. “Why, know you not,” cried the shipmaster, “that this physician here—Chillingworth, he calls himself—is minded to try my cabin-fare with you?”</p>	<p>Readers can go back to their previous book if they are not toward the end of their own and look for ways that the author built up the tension, raised the stakes of the conflicts, and brought all characters together to escalate momentum toward the end of the novel.</p>
208	<p>Hester is looking at Dimmesdale and his miraculous robust health, but also feels isolated and distant from him. “One glance of recognition, she had imagined, must needs pass between them. She thought of the dim forest, with its little dell of solitude . . . How deeply had they known each other then! And was this the man? She hardly knew him now!”</p>	<p>Readers can go back to their previous book if they are not toward the end of their own and look for ways that the author built up the tension, raised the stakes of the conflicts, and brought all characters together to escalate momentum toward the end of the novel.</p>

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	<p>p. 208 “Hold thy peace, dear little Pearl!” whispered her mother. “We must not always talk in the marketplace of what happens to us in the forest.”</p> <p>Hawthorne throws several curveballs right toward the end, such as Chillingworth joining their escape, Dimmesdale’s sudden physical shifts, and the descriptive detail of the crowd and ceremonies in public that suddenly force Hester toward exposure.</p> <p>The teacher can point to these and other examples of how Hawthorne lets the tension and the circumstances escalate to a breaking point.</p>	<p>Readers take a careful look at the ending in their book (current or previous) and consider the author’s purpose in crafting the resolution as he or she did. What message does it convey?</p> <p>Students share in a class discussion, making sure to supply textual evidence to support their answer and only briefly summarize the ending if needed.</p>
20	<p><i>Readers consider the purpose of the ending and the message that resolution conveys.</i></p> <p>The teacher may choose to read the bulk of Chapters 23–24 so students have the satisfaction of knowing how this story ends, or select key excerpts to reveal Dimmesdale’s confession and death, Chillingworth’s death, and Pearl’s evolution after gaining an “earthly father.”</p> <p>Then, the teacher may encourage a brief discussion or briefly sum up his or her own takes on the purpose of the book’s resolution, such as the way the townspeople interpret Dimmesdale’s confession as figurative so that everything can remain as it is. The need for order supersedes the desire for authenticity.</p>	<p>Readers take a careful look at the ending in their book (current or previous) and consider the author’s purpose in crafting the resolution as he or she did. What message does it convey?</p> <p>Students share in a class discussion, making sure to supply textual evidence to support their answer and only briefly summarize the ending if needed.</p>

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Teaching Point	Possible Text Excerpts	What Students Will Try
	<p>The hypocrisy among the Puritans seems to be the real sin, as they are unable to view the minister, and therefore all people, in less black-and-white terms. Sin is all or nothing to them, which in the end is shown as a sham but a necessary part of maintaining their social order.</p>	
Additional (Optional) Lessons	<p><i>Have readers compare themes across texts, using materials from the New York Times website.</i></p> <p>Poe, E. (n.d.). The Scarlet Letter. <i>TeacherVision</i>. Retrieved from https://static01.nyt.com/images/blogs/learning/pdf/2013/13-1553_K12_CompareText_LearnNet_RP2.pdf</p> <p>Schulten, K. (2013, September 26). "The Scarlet Letter" and "Sexism and the Single Murderess." <i>New York Times</i>. Retrieved from http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/09/26/text-to-text-the-scarlet-letter-and-sexism-and-the-single-murderess/?_r=0</p>	

