Silas Marner Study Guide Questions

Chapter I

• What is *Silas Marner*’s vocation?

• From what physical handicap does *Silas Marner* suffer?

• How is Silas regarded by the people of Raveloe? What prompted this reaction?

• What special talent do people believe Silas has?

• Who is William Dane? What kind of person is he? Describe his relationship with Silas.

Chapter II

• Why did Silas move to Raveloe?

• How does Silas spend his time? Why?

• What did Silas do for Sally Oates? How do people respond to this act? What is the end result of Silas’ helping Sally Oates?

• Describe Silas’ financial situation.

• Up to this time, how long has Silas lived in Raveloe?

Chapter III

• Describe each member of the Cass family. In particular, what weakness does Godfrey display?

• Explain Godfrey’s social situation.

Chapter IV

• What characteristics of Dunstan are brought out through the incidents in this chapter?

• How does Dunstan justify to himself stealing Silas’ gold?

Chapter V
• What were Silas’s actions and thoughts after finding his gold missing?

• What hope does Silas have?

• What action does this hope lead him to take?

Chapter VI

• What kind of place is the Rainbow Inn?

Chapter VIII

• Describe how the story about the peddler grew.

• What does the growth of this story reveal about the people of Raveloe?

• Explain Godfrey’s thinking as he contemplated telling his father about his situation.

• To what extent were his thoughts and fears perfectly natural?

Chapter IX

• Characterize Squire Cass’s relationship with his sons.

• What hope does Godfrey have?

• How has Godfrey’s position changed?

Chapter X

• How is Dunstan’s absence regarded?

• What two theories about the robbery are generally held?

• Describe the change in the villagers’ perception of Silas. How might you account for this change?

• How is Christmas spent by the Cass family? By Silas?

• What event is being anticipated? What are Godfrey’s feelings about this event?

Chapter XI
• Describe Nancy Lammeter’s feelings toward Godfrey.

• What are the respective roles of the upper and the lower social levels at the party?

• During the evening’s festivities, how much progress does Godfrey make in winning Nancy’s approval?

• Does he have any right to try to win her approval? Why or why not?

Chapter XII

• What is Molly’s plan? How does it end?

• What is Silas’ reaction upon finding the child?

• What is the significance of Silas’ mistaking the yellow curls for his gold?

• What immediate change does the child bring about in Silas?

• What discovery does Silas make at the end of the chapter?

Chapter XIII

• What effect does Silas have on the gathering at the party? On Godfrey?

• What is Silas’ reaction to suggestions that the child should be taken from his care?

• What justification does Silas offer for wanting to keep the child?

• What is Godfrey’s reaction when he recognizes Molly?

• With what feelings does Godfrey return to the party?

• What is your opinion of Godfrey at this time?

Chapter XIV

• How does Silas come to learn how to care for the child?

• What effect does Eppie have on Silas’ life? (Consider how he spent his time and what he valued.)

• Describe Silas’ efforts to discipline Eppie.
Chapter XV

• In what ways is Godfrey a changed person?
• What are Godfrey's main interests now? What are his hopes?
• What has been decided about Dunstan?

Chapter XVI

• Describe Eppie and the other major characters now that 16 years have passed.
• What changes are there in Silas' home?
• What kind of person has Eppie grown to be?
• What are Eppie's plans for the future?

Chapter XVII

• Describe the changes that have taken place in the Red House.
• What is Godfrey's great unfulfilled desire? To what does he attribute this condition?
• What is Nancy's reason for not agreeing to adopt a child?
• Describe Nancy's personality and approach to life.
• Overall, how successful do you believe Nancy and Godfrey's marriage has been?

Chapter XVIII

• What discovery is made?
• Why does Godfrey now confess all to Nancy?
• How does Nancy handle Godfrey's news? What does this reveal about her character?
• What do Godfrey and Nancy decide to do?

Chapter XIX
• What are Godfrey’s arguments for adopting Eppie? Compare these arguments with those of Silas and Eppie.

• How fully does Eppie comprehend the significance of her decision?

Chapter XX

• What decisions are made by Godfrey?

• What reasons might he have for these decisions?

• Describe the state of Nancy and Godfrey’s relationship. To what extent has Eppie’s stand affected their relationship?

• What changes are evident in Godfrey’s character? What has he learned?

Chapter XXI

• What do Silas and Eppie find when they return to Lantern Yard?

• What significance does this chapter have to the novel as a whole?

• What statement does Silas make that clearly shows the change he has undergone?

Conclusion

• What contributions do Godfrey and Nancy make to Eppie’s wedding?

• Why don’t they attend the festivities?

• What sort of day do you suppose Eppie’s wedding day is for Godfrey?