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❧ ACT 1 ❧

Central Quote:

Answers will vary. Example:

Ely: We are blessed in the change.

Canterbury: Hear him but reason in divinity / And, all-admiring, with an inward wish / You would desire the King were made a prelate; / Hear him debate of commonwealth affairs, / You would say it hath been all in all his study; / List his discourse of war, and you shall hear / A fearful battle rendered you in music; / Turn him to any cause of policy, / The Gordian knot of it he will unloose"

— (1.1.40-49)

PRE-GRAMMAR | Preparation

*Prepare the student for understanding the Central One Idea
by drawing upon his or her prior knowledge or experience.*

1. Recall a time in your life when you changed into a more virtuous person. For example, for a time you may have been impatient or unkind to your siblings, but then you realized this and began to change. This is just one example. Almost any period or situation in your life would qualify here—as long as it reflects a change in your character. Describe the experience and include what it was that helped you see or realize that you needed to change.

GRAMMAR | Presentation

The student is presented with and discovers essential facts, elements, and features of the play.

READING NOTES

Prologue

1. **muse** (Pro.1.1) – one of the nine sister goddesses in Greek mythology who were called upon for artistic inspiration
2. **port of Mars** (Pro.1.6) – the appearance of the Roman god of war
3. **(Leashed in like hounds,) should famine, sword, and fire** (Pro.1.7) – famine, sword, and fire – the instruments of war, personified here as three hunting hounds on a leash
4. **casques** (Pro.1.14) – helmets worn by soldiers
5. **Agincourt** (Pro.1.15) – Agincourt, Pas-de-Calais, France. The battle of Agincourt, fought on Friday, October 25, 1415, between England and France is the battle on which this play is centered.
6. **And let us, ciphers to this great account, On your imaginary forces work.** (Pro.1.18-19) – Though we, playwright and actors, are nothing (ciphers) compared to this great, actual event, let us, by means of this play, awaken the powers of your imagination.
7. **For 'tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings** (Pro.1.29) – Again, the Chorus reminds the audience to use their imagination when viewing the play.

Act 1, Scene 1

8. **consideration** (1.1.30) – self-awareness
9. **offending Adam** (1.1.31) – original sin
10. **Hydra-headed willfulness** (1.1.37) – many forms of willfulness/rebellion; Hydra was the nine-headed monster killed by Hercules.
11. **prelate** (1.1.43) – bishop
12. **Gordian knot** (1.1.49) – A complex knot that bound the chariot of Gordius, the founder of the Phrygian capital Gordium and the father of the legendary king Midas. Ancient prophecy held that the man who could untie the Gordian knot would conquer Asia. In 333 B.C., Alexander the Great sliced through the knot.
13. **chartered libertine** (1.1.51) – licensed free-roaming being
14. **glean** (1.1.56) – to pick up; to learn
15. **courses vain** (1.1.57) – useless activities
16. **crescive in his faculty** (1.1.69) – increasing because it was in its nature to increase
17. **embassy** (1.1.100) – ambassador's message

Act 1, Scene 2

18. **fashion** (1.2.16) – to give a false shape to
19. **titles miscreate** (1.2.19) – illegitimate claims
20. **under this conjuration** (1.2.33) – in response to this solemn invocation
21. **sovereign** (1.2.37) – a supreme ruler; a monarch
22. **defunction** (1.2.63) – death
23. **liege** (1.2.124) – a feudal superior or sovereign
24. **pavilioned** (1.2.135) – encamped [*pavilions* = tents]
25. **the spirituality** (1.2.138) – the clergy
26. **assays** (1.2.157) – expeditions; military missions
27. **congreeing** (1.2.189) – agreeing together; cooperating
28. **Dauphin** (1.2.229) – the eldest son of a king of France and heir to the throne
29. **large and ample empery** (1.2.234) – complete sovereignty
30. **tun** (1.2.264) – large treasure chest or casket
31. **mock out of** (1.2.298) – to cheat; to deprive of
32. **well-hallowed** (1.2.306) – most holy
33. **proportions** (1.2.317) – military forces
34. **anaphora** – a rhetorical device: the repetition of a word or group of words at the beginning of two or more lines, clauses, or sentences

WORDS TO BE DEFINED

Definitions Bank		
adversely; in an opposite way	encircling; surrounding	removal or separation
agile; quick; graceful	one who seizes by force without a legal right	stir up; prompt to action
ancestors; originators	physical robustness	thieving; stealing
approval; support	place; stead	twist or turn
awaken; inspire; excite	plentiful; sufficient	uncivilized; brutal
celebrate; carouse; make merry	power; influence; force	very dangerous; risky
	put to death; subdued	walked slowly with heavy steps

1. The **perilous** narrow ocean parts asunder (Prologue, l. 23) very dangerous; risky
2. And make imaginary **puissance** (Prologue, l. 26) power; influence; force
3. But that his wildness, **mortified** in him (1.1.28) put to death; subdued

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the opening **setting** in the Prologue? What is significant about that particular location?
In London at the Globe Theatre. It is significant because it is Shakespeare's theatre that he and his playing company built in 1599.

2. Identify two arguments about the French Salic law that Canterbury asserts in his discussion with Henry in scene 2.

He first says that Salic land is in Germany between Sala and Elba, not actually the realm of France—where Charles the Great set up the law to prevent German women from obtaining the throne. Secondly, the French did not possess the Salic land until 400 years after King Pharamond, who founded the law. And lastly, French kings such as Pepin, Capet, et al., have obtained their claim to the throne through descent of their mother.

3. *May I with right and conscience make this claim?* (1.2.101)

Provide a brief **paraphrase** of Henry's line.

Will it be right? Can I in good conscience make this claim?

4. As he continues to persuade Henry to go to war with France, Canterbury refers to an Old Testament book and to another king. Identify these two references, and include a line or two from the text that is related to either the book or the king.

Numbers 27:8

Edward the Black Prince, "Who on the French ground played a tragedy, / Making defeat on the full power of France" (1.2.111-112)

5. Read 1.2.176-180, starting at "For once the eagle England being in prey ..."

Who must be defeated first if France is to be acquired by England? What is Canterbury's counsel regarding this problem?

Scotland. Canterbury suggests that England's fighting forces be divided into four, taking one quarter into France, and leaving three-quarters at home to defend the English border against Scotland (1.2.222-228).

SOCRATIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. As it says in the “Leading Characters in the Play” section, the Chorus is traditionally played by a male actor wearing a large cloak. He is a gentleman who provides the comforting voice of a narrator or guide to the play. He contributes a patriotic voice and an idealistic view of Henry throughout the play.
2. He asks them to use their imaginations.
3. He helps them in this way: Just after he says, “And let us, ciphers to this great account, / On your imaginary forces work” (Pro.11.18-19), he continues, “Suppose within the girdle of these walls / Are now confined two mighty monarchies, / Whose high upreared and abutting fronts / The perilous narrow ocean parts asunder” (Pro.11.20-23). As is evident here, he provides beautiful language, diction, and imagery to fire their imaginative faculties. So he doesn’t just ask them to imagine, he really assists them in the activity. Another example, clearly evident from the first line to the second: “Think, when we talk of horses, that you see them / Printing their proud hoofs i’ th’ receiving earth” (Pro.11.27-28).

4. Strawberries grow beneath the nettle (an inferior plant), and wholesome berries thrive and ripen better when they grow next to fruit of lesser quality. Henry’s life story is similar: his wise and contemplative thoughts flourished, though hidden, next to his wild thoughts and behaviors. Similarly, under the cover of his wildness “by night,” his maturity (“green grass”) flourished. The metaphor provides a strong illustration of Henry’s good character—and shows his character to be much better than the reputation of his youth.
5. a) From the discussion of Canterbury and Ely, we can see just how much the king has changed, how great and sudden has been his transformation. The king is now “full of grace and fair regard. / And a true lover of the holy Church” (1.1.24-25)—but, “The courses of his youth promised it not” (1.1.26). As well, “The breath no sooner left his father’s body / But that his wildness, mortified in him, / Seemed to die too” (1.1.27-29).
b) “Consideration like an angel came / And whipped th’ offending Adam out of him, / Leaving his body as a paradise / T’ envelop and contain celestial spirits” (1.1.30-33).
6. Henry essentially says that the good and faithful Christian Canterbury should in no way give a dishonest shape to, twist, or distort his reading and interpretation of the Salic Law. And he should in no way burden his soul by making sly or subtly false claims (half truths). Henry conveys the important relationship between reading and interpreting texts and information honestly, with an aim for the whole and complete truth. Our consciences should burden us when we distort or misinterpret the truth in even subtle ways.

LOGIC | Dialectic

The student reasons with the facts, elements, and features of the play; sorts, arranges, compares, and connects ideas—and begins to uncover and determine the Central One Idea. Discussion of the Socratic Questions may include note-taking in the Literature Notebook, or they may be answered in written form in the Literature Notebook.

SOCRATIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

May be verbally discussed or answered in written form in your Literature Notebook.

1. Describe the Chorus. What kind of character is he? What perspective or **voice** does he give to the play?
2. What is the main thing the Chorus requests of the audience in the Prologue?
3. How does the Chorus *help* the audience with what he requests of them? Include at least three key lines from the Chorus’s speech that reveal how he helps them achieve what he asks of them.
4. Read 1.1.63-69, starting at “The strawberry grows underneath the nettle ...” Explain the **metaphor** that the Bishop of Ely uses here to describe King Henry. How does it enhance our understanding of King Henry’s character?
5. a) Briefly explain the **contrast** between the king’s wild youth and his mature kingship as discussed by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1.1.26-39. In your answer, include a few key lines from the text that illuminate the contrast.
b) If your quoted lines include a **simile(s)** or **metaphor(s)**, underline or highlight it. If not, add a quotation that contains a simile or metaphor that helps illuminate this contrast—and underline it.
6. Read 1.2.15-20, starting at “And God forbid, my dear and faithful lord ...” Provide a **summary** of Henry’s words. What important connection does Henry make between interpretation, conscience, and telling the truth?
7. Read 1.2.27-32, starting at “For never two such kingdoms did contend ...”
a) **Paraphrase** what Henry says here. b) Why does he say this?

RHETORIC | Expression

The student expresses in his or her own words the Central One Idea with supporting details. The ability to organize and express their thoughts in the Literature Notebook is an important skill in the presentation of their Central One Idea.

RHETORICAL EXPRESSION:

To be answered in your Literature Notebook in preparation for your essay.

1. In a paragraph, **summarize** Act 1.
2. Write the **Central One Idea** of Act 1 in a precise, eloquent sentence.
3. List three or four points that **support** your determination of the Central One Idea.

RHETORICAL EXPRESSION

1. The Chorus begins by introducing the subject of the play. He asks the audience to forgive the limitations of the theater and the actors—and to use their imaginations fervently in order to compensate. In scene 1, the king's character is reintroduced to the audience through the discussion by the Bishop of Ely and the Archbishop of Canterbury. The assessment of King Henry falls within a larger conversation about a bill being proposed that would allow the government to seize lands belonging to the church. In scene 2, Henry is deeply concerned with whether he is right and justified to go to war with France, and he asks the Archbishop to justify his cause to him. The Archbishop denies the legitimacy of the Salic Law and encourages the king to proceed to war and assert his right to the French throne. Henry concedes to the advice and decides to go to war. He then receives the French ambassadors who present him with, as a mockery, a casket of tennis balls in exchange for the French dukedoms that Henry claims are his. Henry aggressively declares war on France.
2. Answers will vary.
3. The discussion about the king's character takes up a considerable part of scene 1. The king's changed character affects and shapes all of the subsequent occurrences in Act 1. For example, his changed character affects whether he will approve of the bill being proposed in Parliament. His changed character determines whether he will justifiably choose to go to war, and whether he will possess the wisdom and strength to lead his country in war. Lastly, his changed character determines his strong response to the mockery from the French.
4. Answers will vary.
5. Answers will vary.

4. Write a **lead** (1-2 sentences) that grabs the reader's attention—such as a *quote, question, startling fact or statistic, scenario, piece of dialogue, etc.*
 5. Write an **amplification/importance** (1-2 sentences) that explains why your thesis is important in a larger or more universal sense.
- ◆ Choose a quote from anywhere in Act 1 that you think best embodies the Central One Idea. With good penmanship, write it in the Central Quote section at the beginning of Part 2.

1 Write the Central One Idea as expressed by the teacher.

The king has changed from a profligate to a wise, assertive ruler—ready to lead with strength and goodness.

ESSAY OPTION

Choose a topic below and respond with a 2-5 paragraph essay that includes an Introduction with a clear thesis; a Body with organized, logical, and specific support of the thesis; and a Conclusion with an amplification of the thesis/support.

The essay should feature appropriate tone, voice, and point of view; correct grammar, usage, and mechanics; a variety of sentence structures enhanced by subordination and parallelism; a balance of general and specific detail; and enhanced rhetorical effect through transition words, appropriate diction, strong verbs, descriptive adjectives, and other rhetorical devices. Your essay should also be written legibly, with good cursive penmanship.

Note: Some of these prompts tend toward a shorter essay, and some toward a longer. Check with your teacher to see what length he or she suggests. Both short essays (1 page) and long essays (2-4 pages) are useful and helpful, depending on the intent and purpose. Four lined pages are included to provide a maximum range of space.

1. Write an essay in which you analyze the Prologue, lines 1-36. Your essay should include a clear thesis that states an important point that the Prologue makes, or an important function of the Prologue. Your body paragraphs should include some key quotations from the Prologue to help support and explain your thesis.
2. Concerning the Prologue, lines 1-36, write an essay in which you explain how the audience, if it does what the Chorus asks in the Prologue, can take the place of (or become) the heavenly muse called upon in line 1. Explain in as much detail as possible, using lines from the Prologue in your explanation.
3. Write an essay in which you summarize the proper ordering of a state, as espoused by the Archbishop in 1.2.191-221. For your thesis, mention the bee-hive analogy for the well-ordered state. Then proceed to explain, quoting and explaining the Archbishop's argument.
4. [Central One Idea] Use the Central One Idea of Act 1 as your thesis, and support it with some evidence from your reading of Act 1 and/or your work in the study guide.
5. [Open] Write an essay in which you analyze an aspect of Act 1 that is of import to you, such as a particular theme, character, setting, element of plot, dialogue, symbol, or other literary or rhetorical motif.

SOCRATIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS CONTINUED

7. a) England and France have never contended (engaged in war) without a great quantity of bloodshed. The innocent drops of blood cry out against those who cause needless deaths without justified reason.
b) He says this because he is gravely concerned about his justification to engage France in war. He knows that many lives will be lost, and their blood will be on him if he starts a war without just cause.