

“Just Lather, That’s All” Questions & Response

Part A

In small groups, discuss the following questions.

1. What is the central conflict of the story? Is it a dilemma? (Look up the parameters of dilemma if you need help with this distinction)
2. What considerations tempt the barber to kill Captain Torres? What considerations motivate him not to? How would you characterize his motivations (selfish, admirable, rationalizing, etc.)?
3. What is the difference between a revolutionary and a murderer?
4. On pg 127 the barber thinks of what people might say if he killed the captain: ‘he slit his throat while shaving him—a coward.’ Consider the significance of this remark.
5. Would the barber have been a ‘murderer’ or a ‘hero’ if he killed the captain?
6. There is a strong element of suspense in this story. Consider how delay, foreshadowing, and timing develop this suspense; find specific examples of each of these techniques.
7. What is the theme of this story? Could this theme be considered a ‘moral’ or didactic lesson? Would the theme of the story change if the barber had killed the captain?

Part B (for homework)

Write a response to the question listed below. Your response should be about 500 words (maximum of 750), double spaced (in ink if you hand-write), and you may use ‘I’ in your response. I will be looking for a clear voice, deep understanding, and a thoughtful analysis supported both by your own reasoning and by the text. Be sure to take time to proof read for grammar and conventions.

Do you agree with the decision the barber made? Support your answers with evidence from the story as well as your own reasons.

Your response is due **Monday, October 1st at the beginning of class. Remember—late assignments do not lose marks, but do go the bottom of my marking pile for all classes and may not receive feedback.**

Rubric below

