

British Literature

The Rocking House Winner



Part I

Read and annotate “the author’s biography”-write a one –sentence summary of each paragraph.

Read and annotate the story by providing evidence of your thought process as you read, using words, phrases, and/or symbols and pictures.

Part II

Answer the following questions in a **separate piece of paper** following response to literature guidelines: answer in complete statements, **provide evidence of your statements through reasoning and quotes.**

1. How would you describe Paul’s relationship with his mother? Do you think his mother’s feelings for him change over the course of the story?
2. Why might only the children hear what the house is whispering?
3. What is Paul’s motivation for seeking luck in this story? What might the rocking horse symbolize to him?
4. What does Paul’s mother reaction to the gift of money reveal about her? Why, do you think, does the money make the whispering worse?
5. In your opinion, should anyone be held responsible for what happens to Paul? Why or why not?
6. What is the theme of this story? Phrase it as the message about human nature that the story illustrates.
7. How would you describe the author’s style? Are there any specific literary elements or devices that stand out?

8. What is the point of view?
9. In your opinion, was the money worth the price Paul's mother had to pay?

Extended Response:

One critic writes that "The Rocking Horse Winner" is like a "Hans Andersen sophisticated by Freud, or Poe let loose in the nursery." Write an explanation of this interpretation taking into account the following questions: What elements of the story are like a fairy tale? A horror story? In what way does the story probe the psychology of the characters? (at least three paragraphs).

Self-guided vocabulary study (10 pts)

Stealth, parry, obstinately, reiterate, emancipate

Grading Rubric

Author's biography is thoroughly annotated ___/5

Responses are complete and include the question as a statement. ___/5

Responses clearly indicate that you understood the selection. ___/10

Quotes and/or examples are used to support your answers ___/5

Grammar and spelling are grade level appropriate, with few or no errors ___/5

Extended response thorough and demonstrates a deep understanding of the story ___/5

Total ___/35