Chapter 8: The Governor’s Hall

Key Vocabulary *(Page numbers taken from teacher’s copy)*

**Expatiate (99):** to speak in detail

**Transgressions (100):** violation of law, command, or duty

**Catechism (101):** a summary of religious doctrine in the form of questions and answers

**“Scarlet woman”/“Babylonian” (101):** abusive terms meaning a disreputable woman

**Imbibe (102):** to receive into the mind and maintain

***New England Primer* (102):** schoolbook that taught the alphabet using Biblical examples

**Westminster Catechism (102):** Puritan question and answer method for teaching religion

**Perversity (103):** opposing what is right, reasonable, or accepted

**Mountebank (105):** a boastful unscrupulous pretender/charlatan

**Want to learn more about the *real* Governor Bellingham?**



Remember Hawthorne’s description of Bellingham in Chapter 8? It really *does* look like his head was on a plate in this picture. . .

Check out this site for his actual biography: <http://www.olgp.net/chs/d1/bellingham.htm>

Review: Test your knowledge[[1]](#footnote-1)

1. How did Pearl first respond to Mr. Wilson’s question about catechism?
   1. She refused to answer.
   2. She said her Heavenly Father made her.
   3. She said the Black Man of the forest was her father.
   4. She said she had been plucked from a rosebush.
2. Who interceded on Hester’s behalf regarding custody of Pearl?
   1. Chillingworth
   2. Dimmesdale
   3. John Wilson
   4. Pearl
3. Who is Mistress Hibbins?
   1. The governor’s sister
   2. A midwife who delivered Pearl
   3. John Wilson’s housekeeper
   4. Hester’s employer
4. How does Hester’s encounter with Mistress Hibbins illustrate the argument that Pearl might bring Hester to heaven?
   1. Pearl asked her mother to show compassion for Mistress Hibbins.
   2. Hester refused to go to the forest with Mistress Hibbins, but indicated she might have done so *if* she had lost Pearl.
   3. Mistress Hibbins would teach catechism to Pearl; Hester would learn from her.
   4. Hester shows charity by teaching Pearl to be gracious to Mistress Hibbins.
5. How did Dimmesdale show his anguish over his secret?
   1. His face grew ugly and evil.
   2. He held his hand over his heart.
   3. He quit preaching.
   4. His hair began falling out.

Additional Questions for Your Consideration

1. How much time has elapsed since the scaffold scene? What or who has changed since then?
2. What is the relationship between Chillingworth and Dimmesdale?
3. What is Chillingworth’s reaction to Dimmesdale’s defense of Hester Prynne?
4. What sort of person is Mistress Hibbins? Is it significant that she is the governor’s sister?

1. Answers: 1 = a; 2 = b; 3 = a; 4 = b; 5 = a. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)