

We Have Always Lived in the Castle

By Shirley Jackson

Study Questions for Chapters 1-5

Chapter 1

1. When Mary Katherine went to the village on Fridays and Tuesdays, what places did she pass by and how did she go?
2. Who were the Clarkes and the Carringtons? Where they villagers?
3. How did Mary Katherine feel about the villagers? What did she imagine doing to them?
4. What did Mary Katherine buy at the grocery and how do the villagers react to the items?
5. What did Mary Katherine (Merricat) do at Stella's?
6. What song did the children sing as Mary Katherine walked along the fence?
7. What do you know about the Blackwoods from this chapter?

Chapter 2

8. Why are there locks and signs around the Blackwood property?
9. Who came to have tea with Constance and Merricat? What advice do they have for Constance?
10. What do we find out about the Blackwood family when Uncle Julian joins the tea party?
11. Where was Merricat when her family was poisoned?
12. Does Constance take the advice she is given?

Chapter 3

13. What has Merricat buried around the Blackwood property? Why?
14. Is Merricat a normal eighteen year old girl? Explain.
15. What does Uncle Julian do during the day?
16. What do Constance and Merricat do on Mondays? On Saturdays?

Chapter 4

17. Why does Merricat refuse to let Charles in to the house?
18. What omen did Merricat have that a change was coming?

Chapter 5

19. Why has Cousin Charles come now and not six years earlier?

20. What motive does Uncle Julian attribute to Cousin Charles' visit?
21. What had Merricat done to get Cousin Charles to leave?
22. Is Uncle Julian always lucid? What happened to Uncle Julian?
23. What does Cousin Charles say to Jonas the cat?
24. What is in Mother's jewel box? What does Constance want to do with them? What does Merricat think of it?
25. What changes does Cousin Charles try to institute in the household?