* CANTO I: At what point in Dante's life does he "lose his way" on the path of righteousness?
* When Dante tries to travel upward toward the beautiful mountain and leave the dark valley behind, what animal blocks his path at first?
* When Dante tries to go around that beast, what second animal appears and blocks his path?
* When he tries yet again to get around that second beast, what third animal blocks his path?
* Dante then sees a spirit in the desert, and asks this spirit for help. This spirit offers to guide him through Hell. Who is Dante's guide through hell? Why does he make a suitable guide for Dante?
* Where have we seen this spirit-guide character before as a historical figure?
* Virgil claims that he has been exiled in this location because he was rebellious to the laws of "That Emperor who reigns above." Of whom is Virgil speaking?
* CANTO V: In Canto V, they meet the judge who assigns sinners to various places in Hell. What is this judge's name? What does this judge do with his tail to indicate how far down in Hell the sinner must go?
* What does Virgil tell to Minos in order to convince him to let Virgil and Dante pass?
* How are illicit lovers ("carnal malefactors") punished in their ring of Hell? Who are some of these famous lovers?
* When Dante wants to speak to some of the lovers, Virgil says he can call them down by imploring them "by [XXX]." By what force or name does Dante implore the lovers to come down? Why is that appropriate, given the nature of their sins?
* The lover that speaks with Dante in Canto V says she has "stained the world incarnadine" through her sins. What does she mean, and how does this relate to Christian beliefs about the forgiveness of sins?
* According to Francesca, what was she reading when she first gave into desire?
* CANTO IX: In Canto 9, Dante and Virgil approach the city of Dis at the center of hell. They encounter the Three Furies or Erinyes here. What are these three beings? (Consult a mythological dictionary, encyclopedia, or look online for this information.)
* What physical actions do the Three Furies take as they confront the two pilgrims Virgil and Dante? What do those gestures and actions suggest about their state of mind?
* Why does Virgil turn Dante away and cover his eyes as the Medusa approaches? Why is he so afraid of her?
* Who opens the gates to Dis so that Virgil and Dante can enter? What tool does he use to push open the doors?
* How does the Angelic messenger react to the air in Hell as he breathes?
* In lines 110-120 of Canto 9, we hear what structures make up the city of Hell. What structures are visible everywhere with flame scattered between them?
* CANTO XXXIII: In Canto 33, Dante and Virgil encounter Ugolino frozen in ice. What is Ugolino eating?
* How did Ugolino and his sons die in Pisa?
* How does Ugolino spend all eternity? What is his food?
* What does Dante promise to Friar Alberigo in hell? How does he fulfill his promise? (trick question!)
* What is Friar Alberigo's body and Ser Branca d'Oria's body doing while their souls are in hell? Who or what does Alberigo claim is controlling these bodies?
* CANTO XXXIV: What is the temperature like in the center of hell?
* When they cross over past the fog of freezing mist, Dante sees something he first thinks is a giant windmill. What is this windmill in actuality?
* What is the source of the cold winds in hell that rhythmically blow outward from the center ring?
* Describe Satan's body and appearance. What are some of his distinctive features in *The Inferno*?
* What three things does Satan snack on?
* When Virgil and Dante run between Satan's beating wings, Virgil stops and puts his feet on the *ceiling* and appears to turn upside down. What happened that allowed him to do this astonishing feat, and how is this connected to their location at the center of the earth?
* When Dante looks upward/downward to gaze at Satan, what does he see that horrifies him? Why is this funny?