Analysis:

6. What does Hester's husband most want to know? What does he plan to do with this information?

7. Chillingworth asks that Hester keep his identity secret—he makes her swear to this. What reason does he give for asking this? What other motivations might account for his insistence on anonymity?

8. Foreshadowing is a literary device by which the author gives hints or clues about what is to come. At the end of Chapter 4, Hester asks Chillingworth, "Art thou like the Black Man [Satan] that haunts the forest round about us? Hast thou enticed me into a bond that will prove the ruin of my soul?" Chillingworth answers, "Not thy soul. . . . No, not thine!" What does Hawthorne seem to be foreshadowing here?
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Dig Deeper:

9. At the end of Chapter 4, Hester is keeping two secrets: the identity of her baby’s father and the true identity of Roger Chillingworth. Are the two secrets equal in importance? What do you think about the wisdom of keeping each of them?

10. Is keeping secrets wrong? Under what circumstances might it be wrong and under what circumstances might it be right? Read Proverbs 11:12, 13; 20:19; and 25:9, 10.

For Discussion:

Is there a difference between keeping a secret and lying?