*The Stranger*

By Albert Camus

Study Questions

Intro Questions (in your journal)

* Before we start reading The Stranger, I want you to answer the following questions as thoughtfully as you can in order to possibly understand the main character Meursault in a better way. Be prepared to share your responses.

1. Why are some people alone? How does it feel to be alone?
2. Why do we judge others? What effect, if any, is there when one judges another? Is there anything good that comes from judging others? If so, please explain.
3. If we were to make our thoughts public (without any type of self-consciousness or censoring), what would happen? Would this cause problems? Please explain.
4. Who are your friends and what does having these friends say about you?

Answer the following questions in your notebook (don’t squeeze them in here…)

***Chapter One***

1. What are the first two sentences of The Stranger? Why are they curious/memorable?
2. How is ***time*** a possible problem for Meursault (especially in the first paragraph)?
3. How does a funeral put “an official feel” on someone’s death? (Write from personal experience if you can.)
4. How is Meursault made to feel guilty?
5. Describe Meursault’s relationship with his mother? Is Meursault insensitive?
6. How long will Meursault spend with his mother?
7. What choice does Meursault make that he immediately regrets?
8. How is Meursault mistaken about the Arab woman?
9. For a moment, what does Meursault think his mother’s friends have come to do at the vigil?
10. How does Meursault act at the vigil? Does he talk to anyone? Is his behavior appropriate? Why or why not?
11. Meursault doesn’t want to see his mother one last time. What do you think this reveals about Meursault?
12. How does Meursault describe Thomas Perez’s ears? Is he being cruel in any way?
13. What is Meursault thinking about as he walks behind the horse-drawn carriage (hearse) carrying his mother?
14. What happens to Thomas Perez as they walk to the church? How does Meursault seem to feel about it?

# Chapters 2 & 3

1. a) What day is it at the beginning of Chapter 2? b) Where is Meursault at the beginning of this chapter?
2. Describe Meursault’s relationship with Marie.
3. What does Meursault do for the most part on Sunday? Explain.
4. What is your reaction to Meursault’s statement at the end of Chapter 2, “Really, nothing in my life had changed”?
5. What is Salamano’s relationship with his dog like?
6. Why does Sintes hurt his hand?
7. a) Why is Raymond upset at his girlfriend? b) What is their relationship like?
8. What does Meursault do to help Raymond?

# Chapters 4 & 5

1. What kind of movie is it that M. and M. go to see? Is it a problem that they go to see this kind of movie? Why or why not?
2. What is the new game that Marie teaches Meursault? What does he think of it?
3. How does Meursault respond to Marie when she tells him that she loves him for the first time?
4. How does Meursault react to the fight between Raymond and the female?
5. What does Meursault agree to do for Raymond?
6. How does Salamano send mixed messages about how he feels about his lost dog?
7. What does the sound of Salamano weeping remind Meursault of?
8. Who’s following Raymond (beginning of Ch. 5)?
9. Why doesn’t Meursault accept the new job position in Paris even though it is like a promotion?
10. a) How does Meursault react to Marie’s marriage proposal? b) What is your reaction to Meursault’s reaction?
11. What do we find out concerning how much Salamano cared for his dog? Did this surprise you? Why or why not?

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# Chapter 6

1. How does M. feel about the Arabs he and Raymond see across the street?
2. Describe the Arabs according to M. Is he prejudiced here? Why?
3. Why does Raymond make the first move at the Arab?
4. How much do you know about Arabs? Why are these Arab scenes appropriate in today’s culture?
5. What advice does Meursault give Raymond about shooting at the Arabs? Is this good advice? Explain.
6. How do you explain M.’s comment that to shoot or not to shoot at the Arab would amount to the same thing?
7. What is M.’s state of mind when he shoots the Arab? Are the sun and weather responsible? Explain.
8. What will happen to M. now that he has shot the Arab? What do you think should happen to him

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Part II Questions (as with your Part I questions, please put these in your notebook as well)

1. What is the setting now?
2. Why is the whole problem for Meursault “killing time”?
3. How have the tables been turned on Meursault in the courtroom? How does the press act toward Meursault?
4. How has Meursault’s past come back to haunt him in the courtroom?
5. How do small details of what Meursault does at his mother’s funeral get turned into damaging evidence at his trial? Is this evidence appropriate in your opinion?
6. Is there such a thing as coincidence or does everything happen because choices are made that lead to a particular result? How has coincidence/chance played a part in Meursault’s trial?
7. Do you agree with the Prosecutor that Meursault is a criminal based on his behavior at his mother’s funeral?
8. How has keeping quiet caused problems for Meursault outside of prison and in the courtroom too?
9. Meursault claims that he has always lived in the present, in the now. How has this caused problems? What are your thoughts about living in the moment—the now?
10. What is Meursault’s sentence, and how does he feel about it?
11. How does Meursault act toward the priest who visits him? Should he have acted differently? Explain.
12. Does Meursault feel like his life has made a difference in the world? Do you feel like Meursault in any way? Explain.
13. Does Meursault change on the last page of the novel? How?