

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

Close Reading Organizer - Chapter 24 **Sample Answers**

Directions: Read each summary entry and think about which themes listed in the Themes Key apply to it, then color in those themes in the Theme Tracker. Next, write a few sentences of Analysis to explain how the themes you chose apply to each summary section.

Note: There is not always a definitive set of “correct” answers for which themes should appear in the Theme Tracker. Answers that differ from the ones we propose below should therefore not automatically be treated as incorrect, and in fact can serve as great discussion starters.

Themes Key

- 1 Gender Roles
- 2 Religion and Theocracy
- 3 Fertility
- 4 Rebellion
- 5 Love
- 6 Storytelling and Memory

Summary	Theme Tracker						Your Analysis
<p>Offred goes back to bed, trying to get some perspective. We learn for the first time some basic facts about her: she’s thirty-three, five foot seven, and brown-haired. Offred realizes she now has the power to ask the Commander for some things. She remembers Aunt Lydia suggesting, but never saying outright, that “men are sex machines” and the Handmaids should learn to steer them. Offred finds the whole situation with the Commander funny, though she knows it could</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6	<p>Though Gilead oppresses women, this memory of Aunt Lydia suggests that the women don’t respect men. Aunt Lydia indicates that the men are unintellectual, more like animals ruled by crude desires. Offred’s recent encounter with the Commander seems to contradict this attitude, though she doesn’t understand the motive of his actions.</p>

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<p>change her life’s course, for better or for worse.</p>							
<p>Offred remembers a documentary about World War II that she saw as a child. Her mother tried to explain that it was all true, but Offred was too young and still thought it was “only a story.” Offred particularly remembers the mistress of a Nazi concentration-camp supervisor, who said she didn’t know about the mass extermination taking place just next to her house. The elderly, dying mistress, wearing a lot of makeup, said in the interview that her lover was not a monster. Offred imagines in detail how sweet and normal the Nazi’s behaviors might have seemed. Right after the interview for the documentary, the mistress killed herself. Offred mainly remembers the makeup.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6	<p>Offred’s strong memory of the makeup nods to the importance she attaches to self-preservation and putting on a good appearance. (It also recalls Offred’s use of the butter in Chapter 17.) Offred is aligned with the Nazi’s wife—she’s seeing the human side of a powerful and probably evil man. The anecdote may serve as a warning to Offred not to believe too many nice things about the Commander, even as she tells herself stories that make him seem more caring.</p>
<p>All of a sudden, Offred starts laughing uncontrollably. She desperately tries to be quiet, hiding herself in the closet, her laughter erupting violently like red lava. In the closet she thinks about “Nolite te bastardes carborandorum” and listens to her own heartbeat.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6	<p>Though earlier Offred thought of her body as betraying her by not getting pregnant (Chapter 13) or hated her body for determining her (Chapter 12), now she finds steadiness in it.</p>