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Close Reading Organizer - Chapter 11 **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
Offred went to the doctor yesterday morning for her regular monthly checkup. She remembers the appointment in present tense. A Guardian with a red armband drives her to the appointment and waits outside. Offred shows her pass to the armed nurse. The examination room has a red screen with an eye painted on it. Offred takes off her clothes and lies on the table, with a sheet blocking the doctor's view of her face. The doctor is more talkative than necessary and calls her honey while examining	1	2	3	4	5	6	Like the scene with Rita poking the chicken, or Offred's symbolic connection with the tulips, this scene shows how Offred is a passive, interchangeable object. Now her body is like a fruit, another fertility symbol. Yet the doctor's flirtatious “honey” bothers Offred—she'd prefer to be as impersonally treated as possible.

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her, testing her breasts like fruit, and proclaiming her healthy.						
The doctor gets close to the sheet, offering to help Offred . At first she thinks he might help her find Luke . Then he lifts the sheet, though his face is partly obscured by a medical mask, and touches her sexually. He says that many Commanders are sterile, a taboo word that shocks Offred, since only women, according to the law, might have reproductive difficulties. He says many Handmaids have taken such steps, and that it's the right time of the month for Offred.	1	2	3	4	5	6
The doctor is sympathetic but also enjoying the situation. Offred thinks it's too dangerous, frightened that it might be a trap. She could get killed for having sex with him, but she could also get killed for not being able to have a baby with the Commander . Though Offred turns the doctor down, she tries to act open, knowing that he has the power to say that she's sick and have her sent to the Colonies with the Unwomen. Though she's committed no crime, she realizes that she's most afraid of the opportunity to change her life.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Offred's quick, improbable hope about Luke shows how love, rather than sex or self-preservation, is honestly her first priority. The doctor's offer doesn't come off as a purely helpful act of resistance. He touches Offred without her permission, in a throwback to pre-Gilead harassment.

Though the doctor's offer seems to represent a tantalizing opportunity to improve her situation, Offred is paralyzed by uncertainty and risk. She'd rather follow Gilead's laws than try to improve her life, which demonstrates that Gilead, despite all its horrors, is tolerable and even reassuring to Offred.

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