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## Close Reading Organizer - Chapter 20 **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><b>Offred</b> sees the fancy birth day buffet laid out for the Wives, including wine and oranges. The gray-haired Wife of Warren lies on the floor as though she’s about to give birth as well. <b>Janine</b> lies on the master bedroom’s large bed, pushing hard, and Offred feels a little more sympathy for her. <b>Aunt Elizabeth</b> stands by to help, and the Handmaids sit on the floor. Offred remembers more biblical justification for Handmaids, and <b>Aunt Lydia</b> saying that all this would be easier for future</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6	<p>Aunt Lydia’s point about how the future generations would find this easier seems unlikely, given the clear inequality between the Handmaids and the Wives. While the Wives get to enjoy themselves and make believe, the Handmaids must suffer. Yet Offred remembers Aunt Lydia’s point without questioning it, showing how she has learned her role.</p>

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generations, who won't have unrealistic desires.							
<p><b>Offred</b> has another flashback to the Rachel and Leah Center. She remembers the weekly movie time, which reminded her of watching films in high school. She thinks of the camera lens, as seen by primitive populations, as a "glass eye." But instead of anthropological movies, <b>Aunt Lydia</b> shows sadistic porn and even a movie of a woman being killed. She also shows movies of Unwomen, feminists in this context, but without volume so the Handmaids can't hear their ideas.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6	<p>This scene echoes the feminist bondage-porn burnings in Chapter 7. In an ironic twist, Gilead shows the Handmaids what the feminists wanted to censor, as well as censoring what the feminists wanted to propose. At least on the issue of torture porn, Gilead and Offred's mother are unified.</p>
<p>In one film of the Unwomen that <b>Aunt Lydia</b> shows at the Rachel and Leah Center, <b>Offred</b> sees her <b>mother</b> at a feminist rally. Offred has a further flashback, to her mother talking about her decision to have a baby. She had Offred at age 37, and her feminist friends and her doctors criticized her for being too old.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6	<p>Offred's mother's desire to have a baby shows another similarity between her values and Gilead's. The disapproval of Offred's mother's feminist friends demonstrates how feminists can also be closed-minded.</p>
<p><b>Offred</b> remembers how her lively <b>mother</b> would come over to dinner with her and <b>Luke</b> and criticize their lives. Offred's mother criticized Offred's absentee father, who she found perfectly nice but distracted and frivolous.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6	<p>Offred's mother's tears echo Aunt Lydia's tears in Chapter 10. Both women were ideological leaders, hoping to draw other women to their cause, while also feeling the difficulties of being a frontrunner of a bold new movement.</p>

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<p>Luke played the devil’s advocate, playfully fighting with Offred’s mother. But it wasn’t all joking: Offred’s mother talked about how young people didn’t understand the sacrifices of earlier feminists, and cried about how lonely she’d been.</p>							
<p><b>Offred</b> feels that her <b>mother</b> put a burden on her to justify her mother’s choices and existence. But although they had a rocky relationship, in the present day Offred only longs to have everything just like it was.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6	<p>Offred herself wasn’t such a feminist as her mother or Moira, showing both independence and a distaste for being controversial.</p>