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Close Reading Organizer - Chapter 38 **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
An Aunt with a cattle prod tells Offred she has fifteen minutes. Offred enters a ladies’ lounge, with has a mirror, unlike at her house. Moira comes out of the bathroom and hugs Offred, with her familiar no-nonsense attitude. Moira has slept with Offred’s Commander before, and says Commanders bring Handmaids as a “power trip,” though Offred believes he has more complex reasons.	1	2	3	4	5	6	Offred mentally defends the Commander, showing that, despite his foolish opinions, their odd relationship means something to her. Moira, on the other hand, seems hardened to life, callous and closed off to subtlety.
Moira tells Offred her story over two bathroom trips, and Offred tries to	1	2	3	4	5	6	Offred’s speaking in Moira’s voice, complete with crude expressions, shows how

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<p>tell it to her audience in Moira’s voice, adding to the bare-bones version Moira told her. Moira explained that, after tying up Aunt Elizabeth, she left without a real plan, and managed to make it through the checkpoints faking an Aunt-style frown. She made her way to a Quaker household she remembered from her feminist press’s mailing list, remarking that she might have given away the names of all the people on the list when she was tortured.</p>							<p>storytelling, for Offred, can also be a form of role-play. As it turns out, Moira’s pre-Gilead connections to activists and feminists did prepare her better than most to deal with Gilead, since she located the Resistance through them.</p>
<p>The Quaker couple let Moira in, and gave her clothes, although they were nervous keeping her since they had two little children. They brought her to another Quaker family that was part of the Underground Femaleroad. A post office worker helped Moira move to a new station, and later was executed and displayed on the Wall.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6	<p>Moira’s quest to get out (and her blunt acknowledgment of the helpers who died to help her) contrasts with Ofglen’s quest to gather information about Gilead. Moira is not so selfless.</p>
<p>Moira felt guilty that people were risking their lives for her, but her hosts explained that they helped because of their religion. This was before Gilead started gathering up the Christian sects it disagreed with. Moira spent eight or nine months on the Femaleroad and made it to Maine, but for unknown</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6	<p>The hosts’ determination to help out for religious reasons, like the nuns’ bravery in Chapter 34, is another defense of the good that religion can do, when it’s not being twisted into a theocracy. The passage suggests that faith can lead to real selflessness and even love. The strangers risked as much</p>

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<p>reasons, someone tipped off the authorities and they came for Moira and the couple helping her. Moira remembered how Aunt Lydia enjoyed torturing her. In the Eyes' van, Moira wanted to commit suicide but was unable.</p>							<p>for Moira as Luke and Offred did for each other.</p>
<p>They brought Moira to some other place that she doesn't want to talk about. After torture, they showed Moira a video about the Colonies. At some Colonies, women must burn dead bodies. At others, people have to clean up toxic waste or radiation, and since it's cheaper not to feed the workers well or give them proper protection, they all die in around three years. There might be other Colonies that are more like regular farms, but Moira didn't hear about them. The women in the Colonies are either old women, failed Handmaids, or rebels. Men make up a quarter of the population. Everyone (even men) wears gray dresses.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6	<p>It's fitting that men must wear dresses in the Colonies, which symbolically strip them of their biological superiority. The Colonies have come up throughout the book, sometimes seeming like a not-so-terrible alternative to Handmaid life, but only now are their horrors revealed. They're death camps, echoing the Holocaust.</p>
<p>Moira picked Jezebel's over the Colonies. She'll manage to stay there three or four years before her "snatch wears out," and she can have alcohol and drugs. Here Offred interjects, shocked at Moira's listlessness. She's lost her essential spark</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6	<p>In Chapter 34, Offred remembers Moira making fun of Janine for acting like a prostitute. Now, Moira has given in to her position and given up hope. Though opportunities for suicide seem to abound, Moira prefers this purgatory of easy pleasures—she still</p>

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<p>and bravery, and Offred feels she's lost a hero. Moira makes a joke about the club being "butch paradise," to make Offred feel better.</p>							<p>has her crassness, but she no longer has hope. She has chosen a drab life of being used over rebellion or death.</p>
<p>Offred wishes she could tell her audience a story about Moira managing to escape or blowing up Jezebel's. But Offred doesn't know what became of Moira, since they never saw each other again.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6	<p>Offred generally avoids these dramatic flash-forwards, preferring flashbacks. This sudden reveal makes the tragedy especially shocking.</p>