Vocabulary Study

Directions: As you read “The Minister’s Black Veil” look for the boldfaced words below. Write on the chart what you think the word means under “Predicted Meaning.” After reading the story, confirm or adjust your definitions by using a dictionary and writing the definition under “Actual Meaning.”

1. The villagers felt some **ambiguity** about the minister’s veil. They did not understand why he wore it or what it meant.
2. The **zealous** Reverend Mr. Clark continually and emphatically questioned Mr. Hooper.
3. The parishioners felt that Mr. Hooper could see their sin. It was as if every **iniquity** was revealed to him.
4. Did the veil have a **preternatural** power—an “otherworldliness”—that created fear?
5. Some villagers thought quietly about the veil; others were **ostentatious** and laughed out loud at it.
6. Mr. Hooper’s funeral prayer was **imbued** with hopefulness and thoughts of eternity.
7. The bridegroom could not hold his **tremulous** hand steady when he looked at the minister’s veil during the marriage ceremony.
8. Did that veil **portend** misfortune for the couple’s future?

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<tr>
<th>Vocabulary Word</th>
<th>Predicted Meaning</th>
<th>Actual Meaning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ambiguity</td>
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<td>2. zealous</td>
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<td>3. iniquity</td>
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<td>4. preternatural</td>
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<td>5. ostentatious</td>
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<td>6. imbued</td>
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<td>7. tremulous</td>
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Vocabulary Practice

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<td>zealous</td>
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A. Directions: Fill in each blank with the correct word from the box.

1. The poem was full of ________________ and difficult to understand.
2. The football team’s ________________ supporters cheered them to victory.
3. The room was over decorated and filled with ________________ art.
4. The villain’s ________________ was so extreme that the audience booed and hissed.
5. Martine’s voice was shaky and ________________
6. The thunder and wind could only ________________ a violent storm.
7. The child’s face, as she ran to her father, was ________________ with joy.
8. There was a draft of ________________ chilliness blowing through the room.

B. Directions: Circle the word in each group that is the opposite or almost the opposite in meaning as the boldfaced word.

9. ambiguity
   - confusion
   - slowness
   - clarity
   - harshness

10. tremulous
    - shaky
    - uneasy
    - horrified
    - firm

11. zealous
    - uninterested
    - concerned
    - anxious
    - forceful

12. ostentatious
    - gaudy
    - plain
    - hardworking
    - obvious

13. iniquity
    - terror
    - caution
    - evil
    - holiness
THE MINISTER’S BLACK VEIL

Directions: Recall the events in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s short story. Then answer the questions.

1. Why are the people in Mr. Hooper’s congregation confused?

2. What does the minister mean when he “prayed that they, and himself, and all of mortal race might be ready, as he trusted this young maiden had been, for the dreadful hour that should snatch the veil from their faces”?

3. What is the minister’s fiancé’s first reaction to the veil? What is her reaction when he tells her he plans to wear it for his whole life?

4. In what ways does the black veil help Mr. Hooper become a better minister? What part of themselves do the people see in him?

5. Who is Mr. Hooper’s nurse as he is dying? What does that say about her character?

6. What do you think Mr. Hooper means when he says “On every visage a Black Veil” just before he dies?
Literary Analysis

SYMBOL
A symbol is something concrete—a person, place, object, or action—used to stand for an abstract idea or feeling. A rich symbol has many possible interpretations rather than a single precise meaning. To interpret a symbol, note its context in the work, including:

- What ideas and feelings are associated with the symbol?
- How does the symbol affect the plot or the structure of the story?

Directions: In the concept map, record as many ideas and effects of the minister’s black veil as you can think of.