

Question 1-11 are based on the following passage.

This passage is excerpted from Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The House of the Seven Gables*. Originally published in 1851. In this scene, set in the American Colonies when they were still governed by England, Colonel Pyncheon holds a party at his home for a visiting English dignitary.

One inauspicious circumstance there was, which awakened a hardly concealed displeasure in the breasts of a few of the more punctilious visitors. The founder of this stately mansion—a gentleman noted for the square and ponderous courtesy of his demeanor, ought surely to have stood in his own hall, and to have offered the first welcome to so many eminent personages as here presented themselves in honor of his solemn festival. He was as yet invisible; the most favored of the guests had not beheld him. This sluggishness on Colonel Pyncheon's part became still more unaccountable, when the second dignitary of the province made his appearance, and found no more ceremonious a reception. The lieutenant-governor, although his visit was one of the anticipated glories of the day, had alighted from his horse, and assisted his lady from her side-saddle, and crossed the Colonel's threshold, without other greeting than that of the principal domestic.

This person—a gray-headed man, of quiet and most respectful deportment—found it necessary to explain that his master still remained in his study, or private apartment; on entering which, an hour before, he had expressed a wish on no account to be disturbed.

"Do not you see, fellow," said the high-sheriff of the county, taking the servant aside, "that this is no less a man than the lieutenant-governor? Summon Colonel Pyncheon at once! I know that he received letters from England this morning; and, in the perusal and consideration of them, an hour may have passed away without his noticing it. But he will be ill-pleased, I judge, if you suffer him to neglect the courtesy due to one of our chief rulers, and who may be said to represent King William, in the absence of the governor himself. Call your master instantly."

"Nay, please your worship," answered the man, in much perplexity, but with a backwardness that strikingly indicated the hard and severe character of Colonel Pyncheon's domestic rule; "my master's orders were exceeding strict; and, as your worship knows, he permits of no discretion in the obedience of those who owe him service. Let who list open yonder door; I dare not, though the governor's own voice should bid me do it!"

"Pooh, pooh, master high sheriff!" cried the lieutenant-governor, who had overheard the foregoing discussion, and felt himself high enough in station to play a little with his dignity. "I will take the matter into my own hands. It is time that the good Colonel came forth to greet his friends; else we shall be apt to suspect that he has taken a sip too much of his Canary wine, in his extreme deliberation which cask it were

best to broach in honor of the day! But since he is so much behindhand, I will give him a remembrancer myself!"

Accordingly, with such a tramp of his ponderous riding-boots as might of itself have been audible in the remotest of the seven gables, he advanced to the door, which the servant pointed out, and made its new panels reecho with a loud, free knock. Then, looking round, with a smile, to the spectators, he awaited a response. As none came, however, he knocked again, but with the same unsatisfactory result as at first. And now, being a trifle choleric in his temperament, the lieutenant-governor uplifted the heavy hilt of his sword, wherewith he so beat and banged upon the door, that, as some of the bystanders whispered, the racket might have disturbed the dead. Be that as it might, it seemed to produce no awakening effect on Colonel Pyncheon. When the sound subsided, the silence through the house was deep, dreary, and oppressive, notwithstanding that the tongues of many of the guests had already been loosened by a surreptitious cup or two of wine or spirits.

"Strange, forsooth!—very strange!" cried the lieutenant-governor, whose smile was changed to a frown. "But seeing that our host sets us the good example of forgetting ceremony, I shall likewise throw it aside, and make free to intrude on his privacy."

He tried the door, which yielded to his hand, and was flung wide open by a sudden gust of wind that passed, as with a loud sigh, from the outermost portal through all the passages and apartments of the new house. It rustled the silken garments of the ladies, and waved the long curls of the gentlemen's wigs, and shook the window-hangings and the curtains of the bedchambers; causing everywhere a singular stir, which yet was more like a hush. A shadow of awe and half-fearful anticipation—nobody knew wherefore, nor of what—had all at once fallen over the company.

1

Over the course of the passage, the main focus shifts from
A) the unusual behavior of a single character to a general sense of mystery.

B) the characterization of the party guests to the actions of the host.

C) a celebration of a certain social class to the denunciation of that class.

D) a description of a bygone era to a lament for the passing of that era.

2

The narrator implies that the Colonel's behavior is

- A) eccentrically charming.
- B) generally lenient.
- C) unusually withdrawn.
- D) overly servile.

3

Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A) lines 3–8 (“The founder . . . festival”)
- B) lines 9–13 (“This . . . reception”)
- C) lines 18–22 (“This . . . disturbed”)
- D) lines 36–38 (“my . . . service”)

4

What can reasonably be inferred about the reason for the lieutenant-governor's attitude?

- A) He believes himself to be more valued in the political hierarchy than he actually is.
- B) He is used to being treated with deference because of his position.
- C) He is not intelligent enough to understand what is happening in the house.
- D) The Colonel's absence hurts his feelings, because they are old friends.

5

Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A) lines 13–17 (“The . . . domestic”)
- B) lines 28–32 (“But . . . himself”)
- C) lines 38–40 (“Let . . . it”)
- D) lines 41–44 (“Pooh . . . dignity”)

6

The actions of the Colonel's servant can best be described as motivated by

- A) his over-eagerness to please the Colonel.
- B) the pretentiousness that his position requires.
- C) his confusion over the high-sheriff's request.
- D) a sense of duty to his employer.

7

According to the passage, what does the high sheriff give as the reason for the Colonel's absence?

- A) He wants to snub the lieutenant-governor.
- B) He has fallen asleep.
- C) He is still reading letters from England.
- D) He has forgotten about the party.

8

The passage's account of the high sheriff's behavior primarily serves to

- A) add depth to a secondary character.
- B) transition from the guests' arrival to the discovery of the Colonel's absence.
- C) accentuate the gravity of the Colonel's absence.
- D) highlight existing class structures at work within the narrative.

9

As used in line 50, “ponderous” most nearly means

- A) oppressive.
- B) heavy.
- C) troublesome.
- D) thoughtful.

10

What is the main purpose of the words “reecho,” “banged,” and “racket,” used in the sixth paragraph (lines 50–61)?

- A) They demonstrate the turmoil caused by the lieutenant-governor.
- B) They highlight the raucous nature of the Colonel's party.
- C) They characterize the lieutenant-governor as a primarily violent man.
- D) They illustrate the differences between characterizations of the Colonel and the lieutenant-governor.

11

The lieutenant-governor's utterance in paragraph seven (lines 67–71) mainly serves to

- A) summarize previous events.
- B) characterize the Colonel's attitude.
- C) introduce a new phase in the story.
- D) juxtapose the character's words with his behavior.