Chapter 1

1. What does the reference to “a soldier” tell you about the time period of the story?

2. After Meursault arranged for his mother to live in a nursing home, why did he visit her so infrequently?

3. Why was it odd that Madam Meursault desired a religious burial?

4. Does Meursault give an explanation for wanting/not wanting to see the open casket? Why would someone respond in this way? In your opinion, is this normal behavior?

5. Where is the caretaker from? His age? What is he like?

6. Describe Meursault’s dream-like experience beginning on page 9. What is happening?

7. What is the purpose of holding a vigil? How long does it last? What is it like?

8. What is Thomas Perez’s relationship with Maman?
9. How do they reach the church? How long does it take? How is the casket transported?

10. What are three of Meursault’s last thoughts about the burial?

Chapter 2
1. Who does Meursault meet the day after his mother is buried? Where/how does the meeting occur?

2. On page 21, what hint is the reader given as to where Meursault lives?

3. What does Meursault choose to do on Sunday? What does this demonstrate about his character/personality?

4. What does Meursault mean when he says, “It occurred to me... really, nothing had changed.” (See last sentence of page 24 for clarification).

Chapter 3
1. What is your opinion on Meursault’s compulsion to wash his hands?

2. In your opinion, offer an explanation for why Meursault takes a “flying leap” onto a truck with Emmanuel.
3. Who is Salamano? Explain his relationship with his pet. Do you think Salamano cares about its health care?

4. Who is Raymond Sintes? What is “the word around the neighborhood” regarding Raymond?

5. What prompted Raymond’s fight with “the man”?

6. What prompted Raymond to beat his girlfriend “till she bled”?

7. What does Meursault do for Raymond to have Ray say, “Now you’re a pal, Meursault.”

Chapter 4
1. What do Meursault and Marie hear coming from Raymond’s room? What is happening?

2. How do you know if Meursault is upset or calm about what just happened?

3. What happens to Salamano’s dog?

4. How does Salamano react?
5. Why do you think Meursault has anything to do with Raymond at all?

6. How are Raymond and Salamano similar?

Chapter 5
1. Where/who does Ray invite to spend Sunday together?

2. What ethnicity is Marie?

3. What opportunity does Meursault’s boss offer? How does Meursault respond? What might his response signify about his personality?

4. What offer does Marie propose?

5. In your opinion, is Meursault’s behavior normal regarding his job and his girlfriend? Why/why not?

6. What explanation can you offer as to why Meursault follows the woman from Celeste’s?

7. What two places does Salamano check for his missing dog?
8. During a brief discussion between Salamano and Meursault, what new information does Salamano convey about Meursault’s Maman?

9. How has Salamano’s loss brought out his humanitarianism? Give one example.

Chapter 6
1. When leaving for the beach, whom do Ray, Meursault, and Marie see across the street?

2. Who is Masson? How often is he here?

3. When they first arrive at their destination, what do Marie, Meursault, and Masson embark upon?

4. Who do the three men see on the beach?

5. On page 53, what is symbolic about Meursault’s statement, “The blazing sand looked red to me now.”

6. What happens to Raymond?

7. On the second trip to the beach, where do the three men find the two Arabs?
8. Do the Arabs seem frightened by the approach? Why/why not?

9. What does Raymond consider doing to the Arabs?

10. Why don’t the Arabs react to this discussion unfolding directly in front of them?

11. On page 57, Meursault returns to the beach by himself. Camus uses symbolism when he states, “There was the same dazzling red glare,” and “With every blade of light...”. In your opinion, what is being inferred?

12. When Meursault encounters the lone Arab, he is once again overcome by the sun’s heat. What event does the heat force him to recall?

13. What occurs to “shatter the harmony” of Meursault’s day?

14. Why does Meursault feel threatened and consequently pull out a gun?

15. On page 59 (last sentence), what is meant by “it was like knocking four quick times on the door of unhappiness.” Explain briefly.