Chapter 1
1. What has happened to Meursault? How does he initially react?

2. Is he taking his circumstances seriously? Give an example.

3. What question does the attorney feel compelled to ask? Why? How does Meursault respond?

4. What explanation does Meursault give regarding his “nature”?

5. How many times did Meursault fire his revolver? Why?

6. The magistrate becomes frustrated with Meursault. What does he retrieve from his filing cabinet? Why?
7. What’s the big question the magistrate finally asks Meursault? Why is it significant?

8. On page 70, Meursault says, “I thought about it for a minute and said that more than sorry I felt kind of annoyed.” Does Meursault have a conscience? Why or why not?

9. In your opinion, does Meursault feel complemented when referred to as Monsieur Antichrist? Explain.

Chapter 2
1. Briefly describe Meursault’s prison cell. Is this what he has expected? How does he feel about his confinement?

2. Who is Meursault’s first visitor? Describe visitor’s mood during the visit.

3. In a sense, what was more difficult for Meursault to lose than his freedom?

4. On page 79, Meursault states that having “a memory” is “an advantage.” Explain why.
5. The last stences on page 81 refer to Meursault’s mother’s funeral and to what nights in prison are like. In your opinion, is there a connection between the two? Explain.

Chapter 3

1. What is Meursault’s first impression of the jury?

2. What clues is the reader given to show that the Algerian court system is different than the U.S. Judicial System? Be detailed and specific.

3. Who are the eight witnesses that will testify at Meursault’s trial?

4. A previous incident occurred between the caretaker and Meursault, which is briefly discussed during the trial. This leads to Camus’ title of the novel. What is the incident?

5. When Celeste, the fourth witness, is called to testify, how does he show support for Meursault?

6. How does the prosecutor attempt to prove that Meursault has no conscience? In your opinion, is the prosecutor correct?
7. What is the prosecutor implying when he questions Raymond (note: focus on the references to “chance”)?

8. Explain what Meursault means when he says, “it was back to my cell... sleep of the innocent” (page 97)?

Chapter 4
1. Does Meursault feel like he has anything to say to defend himself? If so, what? If not, why not?

2. In your opinion, does Meursault believe that his crime was premeditated? Explain.

3. On page 100, Meursault reveals the key to his character/personality. What is this?

4. What penalty does the prosecutor ask of the jury?

5. Does Meursault have faith that his attorney will convince the jury of his innocence? Why/Why not?
6. On page 104 Meursault describes his feelings: “Left me with the impression.... Was making me dizzy.” In your opinion, what is Meursault feeling at this point?

7. Why can’t Meursault return Marie’s smile in the courtroom?

8. What is Meursault’s sentence? In your opinion, is his reaction normal? Explain.

Chapter 5

1. According to Meursault, why is witnessing an execution so important?

2. What is “the trouble with the guillotine”?

3. What is ironic about this when compared to how Meursault originally got into this predicament?

4. When Meursault’s situation finally “sinks in,” what are the two things he always thinks about?
5. What is Meursault’s pessimistic view on life and living? Be specific.


7. Meursault shows no respect for religion or the priest. Give one example of this.

8. What does the priest mean when he says, “Your heart is blind”?

9. In the last few paragraphs, how does Meursault finally relate to Maman?

10. Why does Meursault wish that a large crowd of spectators greet him with cries of hate at his execution?