

Eleventh English

The Red Badge of Courage

Chapter One

1. What is the setting (i.e., place and time) of the story?
2. What rumor is the most discussed?
3. Why does the youth go off by himself?
4. Why does the youth think war, which he associates with “heavy crowns and high castles,” has gone forever? Why does he expect there will be no more “Greek-like struggles”?
5. Why has the youth “burned” to enlist?
6. What role do the newspaper accounts of battle play in the youth’s decision to enlist?
7. What is his mother’s opinion of his enlistment?
8. Why does the youth go back to the seminary in his uniform?
9. Why does the youth not put much faith in what the veterans say?
10. What question caused the youth great concern?
11. How does the tall private, Jim Conklin, reassure the youth?
12. Why does the author de-emphasize proper names and use many nonspecific points of reference in a well-documented war?

Chapter Two

13. Again, the rumor of moving out to fight proves false. Why does Henry view this as an “irritating prolongation”?
14. Why, since he spends so much time thinking about it, can he not calculate the answer?
15. What is it that Henry would like to discover? Why does he not just ask someone outright?
16. Between what two opinions does Henry waver?
17. Why does he become angry with his commanders?
18. How is Henry’s mood contrasted with the mood of the rest of the men in the column?

19. Explain the incident that involves the fat soldier. What does it contribute to the regiment's mood?
20. Why does the conversation with Wilson upset Henry further?
21. Why does Henry feel like a mental outcast?

Chapter Three

22. While on the march, in what way does the regiment lose the look of new recruits?
23. In what way is the regiment still a regiment of rookies?
24. After the regiment is on the march again, how does Henry feel?
25. At this point, what does he suspect about his generals?
26. What two metaphors does the narrator use to describe war?
27. Why does the youth become angry with the young lieutenant?
28. What does Henry consider an intolerable circumstance, and why does he conclude it might "be better to get killed directly and end his troubles"?
29. What does the loud soldier give the youth? Why is Henry so surprised at the behavior of the loud soldier?

Chapter Four

30. What does Henry's brigade talk about as it is halted in the grove?
31. From this position in the grove, what do Henry and his comrades observe?
32. What does Henry observe on the faces of men as they stampede from the battle?
33. What is the "composite monster" that Henry and his comrades have not seen yet?

Chapter Five

34. As he waits for the battle to begin, Henry is reminded of what?
35. In what way does Henry experience a sense of brotherhood?
36. What effect do the continued noise, smoke, and fighting have on Henry?
37. What happens to the one man who fled?

38. At the close of this chapter, what is Henry's realization about nature?

Chapter Six

39. At the opening of this chapter, how does Henry feel?

40. Immediately after this joy, however, what surprise do Henry and his comrades get?

41. Henry sees the new attack as "an onslaught of redoubtable dragons." What does he do and why?

42. In what ways are his fears magnified by turning his back on the fighting?

43. Is Henry's act of running away the result of a conscious decision, or is he overcome by some instinctive drive?

44. In what metaphor is death compared to a dragon?

45. What important news does Henry overhear from the division general?

Chapter Seven

46. Why does Henry feel wronged?

47. Why is he angry with his former comrades?

48. As Henry walks, his feelings of self-pity, guilt, and despondency deepen. How does he use the incident with the squirrel to justify what he did?

49. As Henry walks in this very peaceable part of the forest, what does he stumble upon that upsets him?

Chapter Eight

50. Why does Henry find it ironic that he is running in the direction of the battle?

51. What prompts him to run in that direction?

52. What further conclusion does he reach about the battle he and his comrades were just in?

53. In what way does the narrator use a machine as a metaphor for war?

54. What is the column of men that Henry joins?

55. What question does the other soldier ask Henry that confounds and upsets him? Why does the question affect him?

Chapter Nine

56. Why does Henry wish that he had been wounded?
57. Who is the ghost-like soldier?
58. What does the ghost-like soldier ask Henry?
59. What is Jim looking for as he runs through the woods?
60. What makes this scene in the forest very realistic?
61. What does the last line in this chapter suggest?

Chapter Ten

62. After Jim dies, the tattered soldier asks Henry again where he was hit. How and why does Henry respond in that fashion?
63. Referring to his wound, the tattered soldier says, "It might be inside mostly, an' them plays thunder." In what way is Henry's wound inside?
64. What makes Henry's desertion of the tattered soldier a cruel act?
65. Why is Henry unable to see or respond to the tattered soldier's need?

Chapter Eleven

66. Why does Henry feel vindicated when he sees a mass of men and wagons coming down the road from the front line?
67. What is it, however, that he sees next that he resents and envies?
68. Why does he envy these men?
69. Why does Henry hope that his division is defeated?
70. At this point, however, Henry accepts the fact that the division will not be defeated. In what direction does his thinking go?

Chapter Twelve

71. Henry grabs a man and tries to ask a question. What does the man do, and why does he do it?
72. After this, what is Henry's condition?

73. Who helps Henry, and what does he do for Henry?
74. What is ironic about the red badge of courage that Henry now has?

Chapter Thirteen

75. As Henry approaches his regiment's fire, he is tempted to hide rather than face the ridicule he expects from his comrades. What force, though, propels him into camp?
76. When Henry meets Wilson on sentry duty, what lie does Henry tell?
77. Why is this lie believed?
78. How is Henry treated?

Chapter Fourteen

79. As Henry awakens, for what does he mistake his sleeping comrades?
80. In what way has Wilson changed? What caused it?
81. How does Wilson's remark upset Henry?

Chapter Fifteen

82. With a good night's sleep and some food under his belt, how has Henry changed?
83. Henry felt that the previous day he had been out among the dragons. What does he conclude?
84. Why is Wilson embarrassed?
85. What does Henry imagine when he gets home?
86. What makes Henry seem less than admirable at this point?

Chapter Sixteen

87. In what way has Henry become a bore?
88. Why does the other soldier's comment about Henry's winning the previous day's battle all by himself bother Henry?
89. What of Henry's own words surprises him?
90. What does the lieutenant tell Henry?

91. What is the condition of the men in this regiment?
92. The last image, “[t]hey stood as men tied to stakes,” suggests what?

Chapter Seventeen

93. In the second paragraph of this chapter, what are Henry’s feelings?
94. What simile does he use to express his feelings of being weak in the face of larger forces?
95. How does Henry fight in this battle?
96. What is the lieutenant’s opinion of Henry?

Chapter Eighteen

97. After the battle, for what do Henry and Wilson look? What do they find?
98. How do Henry and Wilson feel about the remarks made about their regiment?
99. Why do Henry and Wilson not share this information with the others?

Chapter Nineteen

100. How do Henry and his comrades act as they lead the charge?
101. What happens to make the men vulnerable again?
102. What gets the regiment moving again?
103. What figure of speech does Crane use to describe Henry’s feelings for the flag?

Chapter Twenty

104. What is the regiment’s situation at the beginning of this chapter?
105. Knowing he has little hope of victory, on whom does Henry want revenge?
106. As the men are about to lose all hope, what appears as the smoke clears?
107. What is the result of this battle?

Chapter Twenty-one

108. When the soldiers from Henry’s regiment return from their own lines, why do the soldiers in the other regiment mock them?

109. Why is the officer who called them “mule drivers” upset with them?
110. As Henry and Wilson are discussing the good job they think they have done, what news do they hear?

Chapter Twenty-two

111. As the new color bearer, what resolve does Henry make?
112. In this new battle, what happens to the regiment?

Chapter Twenty-three

113. Why do the officers decide that it is necessary to charge?
114. How do the men react to the order to charge?
115. What is the outcome of the attack?
116. How do Henry and Wilson feel?
117. What has Wilson been able to get?

Chapter Twenty-four

118. What does Henry conclude after the regiment marches in the opposite direction toward the river?
119. After recalling all that has happened, what are Henry’s first thoughts and feelings?
120. What soon begins to bother him?
121. As he looks at and listens to his comrades, what does he observe?
122. What is Henry’s conclusion about manhood and death?
123. How does the narrator use nature to emphasize the change in Henry?