Study Guide

1. What rhyme scheme does Dante use?
2. What does the setting of the Vestibule look like?
3. What does the inscription on the gate mean?
4. How does Dante react to seeing the Opportunists punished?
5. Are the Opportunists cowards? Explain.
6. Who is Charon?
7. Give an example of a simile Dante used in Canto 3.
8. Give an example of personification Dante used in Canto 3.
9. What textual evidence from Canto 3 tells the reader that Dante is concerned with the current state of politics in Italy?
10. Dante (the author) created this version of hell, so why do you think Dante (the protagonist) reacts in disgust and even faints?
11. Review the Contrapasso article.
12. How is the number three symbolic in the epic?
13. How is Satan described?
14. How does the appearance and actions of Satan add to the allegorical meaning of the epic?
15. What does “I did not die, and yet I lost life’s breath” mean when Dante says it in Canto 34?
16. How would you describe the tone of the epic?
17. What is the theme of the epic?
18. Explain Dante’s idea of Divine Justice (sin and consequence)
19. Identify a simile used in Canto 34.
20. What makes this epic poem an allegory? Explain in paragraph form.