

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher \_\_\_\_\_  
Subject \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

## The Monkey's Paw Critical Thinking Questions

**Directions:** Read the short story "The Monkey's Paw" by W.W. Jacobs. Annotate the short story as you read. On a separate sheet of paper, answer the questions provided. Remember to restate the question within your answer and to write in complete sentences.

**Literal Questions:** Answers can be pulled directly from the text. There is a "right" answer.

1. What is Mr. White's reaction to losing the chess game to his son?
2. Why did the sergeant-major keep the monkey's paw?
3. What is Mr. White's first wish? How does the wish come true?
4. What happened to Herbert?
5. In a developed paragraph, answer **one** of the following prompts:
  - a. There are several examples of irony in this story. Record one example, identify the type of irony, and explain why it is ironic.
  - b. The author W.W. Jacobs uses descriptive words to develop the suspense and foreshadowing mood in the story. Identify two passages that establish the mood and explain.

**Inferential Questions:** Answers need to be interpreted from information found in the text.

6. Answer **one** of the following questions provided in a developed response:
  - a. What is the sergeant-major's opinion of the monkey's paw? How do you know? Find at least two specific examples to support your answer.
  - b. What things does the sergeant-major say that foreshadow, or hint at, the white's fate? Find at least two specific examples and explain how they foreshadow future events.
7. The following is an excerpt from the story, immediately after Mr. White makes his first wish: "And I don't see the money" said his son (Herbert), "and I don't never shall."

Identify what literary element is being used and explain how the literary element is being used to drive the plot forward.

**Evaluative Questions:** Answers need to be developed by evaluating aspects of the text.

8. Answer **two** of the questions provided. Each response should a developed paragraph and supported with specific reasons pulled from the text.
  - a. "Be careful what you wish for; you may receive it" – Explain this quote and how it could relate to the theme of the story.
  - b. Why does Mr. White resist his wife's command to bring back their son? Explain.
  - c. Based on the reactions of Mr. and Mrs. White, what do you think was Mr. White's third wish? Explain.