

## Moonstone Discussion Questions

The story opens with the Prologue explaining how the Moonstone came to be in the possession of John Herncastle and the suspected curse that would accompany future owners. He, in turn, bequeaths it to his niece Rachel to spite her mother, his sister, Lady Verinder, with whom he is estranged. Franklin Blake was tasked with delivering the jewel to Rachel for her birthday, and then the stone 'disappears.'

1. Why do you think Franklin Blake asked Gabriel Betteredge, house steward, to be the first to write his observations, which comprises all of part 1 and 40% of the story?
2. Some of Betteredge's digressions are both humorous and telling of the era in which it was written. What are they and how might they appeal to readers, both then and today?
3. At the end of Betteredge's testimony, whom did you suspect of taking the moonstone; why did they take it; and was it still at the Verinder estate or somewhere else?
4. Miss Drusilla Clack's narrative is next; why was she chosen to recall details of the theft? What is her relationship with Godfrey Ablewhite? Why wasn't Godfrey chosen to share his observations?
5. Sergeant Cuff stated, "If you look about you (which most people won't do) you will see that the nature of man's taste is, most times, as opposite as possible to the nature of man's business." How is that reflected in the characters of Betteredge, Clack, Godfrey, Cuff and others?
6. Describe Ezra Jennings' character. What is your assessment of him? Why do you think Collins inserted him in the story as the catalyst for solving the mystery?

7. Who in the story qualifies as a 'red herring?'

8. Collins wrote this mystery "to trace the influence of character on circumstances." What source of truth and knowledge influences the characters of Betteredge, Clack and Jennings, which in turn determines how they view their circumstances?

9. Were you surprised by the ending? At what point did you suspect the real culprit?

10. Based on what was revealed in the story, is Rachel and Franklin's relationship a "match made in heaven?"