

“The Monkey’s Paw” (p. 32) Questions

Use the book to answer the following questions on your own paper.

1. Describe the setting at the beginning of the story. How does that description set the mood for the story?
2. How does each of the Whites react when he/she first learns about the monkey’s paw? Contrast the reactions of the mother, father, and son to the paw as the story progresses.
3. What are some of the hints that Sergeant Major Morris gives that suggest the paw is dangerous?
4. When Mrs. White comments that Mr. White should wish that she have four pairs of hands, why does the sergeant major have a look of alarm on his face? (p. 52)
5. At first, why doesn’t Mr. White know what to wish for? What is the irony here?
6. How does the setting and mood change by the next morning?
7. In what way is Mr. White’s first wish fulfilled? Do you think the results of this first wish were coincidence? Explain.
8. Why does Mr. White hesitate to make the second wish?
9. How did Mr. White phrase the second wish? How could Mr. White have phrased the second wish more carefully so that things might have turned out better?
10. What is Mr. White’s third and final wish? Is it granted? Explain.
11. Do you think Mr. White was right to make this final wish? Explain.
12. Explain whether you think the events of the story prove the fakir’s point that “fate ruled people’s lives, and that those who interfered with it did so to their sorrow.”
13. List one example of foreshadowing in this story.
14. Who is the protagonist of the story? Antagonist?
15. Does this short story remind you of any book you have read or movie you have seen? If yes, explain.