

Answer Key

The Scarlet Ibis

Selection Test, pp. 101–102

A. (8 points each) Notes will vary but should include points similar to the following:

1. a. The narrator realized that he was sometimes cruel and mean to his brother, as he was when he took Doodle to see his own casket.
- b. Suggested Theme: We hurt those we love the most.
2. a. The narrator realized that he took Doodle for granted and never expected much from him; he also realized that some of the other things he did for Doodle were less than kind.
- b. Suggested Theme: People often become what we expect them to be.
3. a. The narrator realized that much of what he did for Doodle was done for selfish reasons or pride, because he was “ashamed of having a crippled brother.”
- b. Suggested Theme: We sometimes do things that seem well-intended, but we do them for the wrong reasons.

B. (5 points each)

1. d
2. b
3. a
4. d

C. (4 points each)

1. a
2. c
3. b
4. b
5. a

D. (20 points; students should answer one of the two)

1. Answers will vary. Students could say that the scarlet ibis and Doodle
 - a. die tragically.
 - b. appear similar in death—the blood on Doodle’s neck and chest match the red color of the bird.
 - c. are innocent victims of forces beyond their control.
 - d. are physically similar—both have long, thin necks and legs.
 - e. have traveled long distances—one in miles, one in years—at risk to their lives.
 - f. are rare, exotic, special, and vulnerable.
 - g. don’t fit in with their surroundings.

2. Answers will vary but should reflect students’ understanding that the narrator’s pride cements his relationship with Doodle. In addition, answers should include points similar to the following:

- a. The narrator’s pride results in his forcing Doodle to do things that Doodle otherwise would not have accomplished. The narrator doesn’t want to be embarrassed by his brother’s being different, so he forces him to try to become “normal.” As a result, Doodle comes to trust him and look up to him.
- b. The narrator’s pride results in his not always considering Doodle’s best interests and refusing to recognize Doodle’s limitations. As a result, Doodle suffers more from the relationship than does his brother.

Some students may blame the narrator’s pride for killing Doodle because it leads the narrator to push Doodle beyond his capabilities and to cruelly abandon him.

E. (16 points) Answers will vary widely, depending on students’ personal experiences, situations, and viewpoints. Accept any answers that address the concern of the question and are elaborated by examples or details from the literature or from life.