

**CP English 11**

**Performance Task: The Scarlet Letter**

One of the main themes of the novel The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne is sin and its consequences. The novel, published in 1850 and set over a century later in the Puritan world of Massachusetts Bay Colony, is clear on one thing: we all make mistakes. But surely some sins are worse than others. There are private sins and public sins; then there are crimes of passion and of betrayal of duty and of moral conduct. After reading The Scarlet Letter, you will now consider the following question: based on the text of the novel and your analysis of it, what does it mean to sin and who is the novel's greatest sinner? Complete the following thinking chart with a partner or small group in preparation for writing about this issue.

	<b>Hester Prynne</b>	<b>Arthur Dimmesdale</b>	<b>Roger Chillingworth</b>
<b>SIN:</b> What is this character's sin?			
<b>COMPARE:</b> Compare this character's sin to that of the other two in terms of nature of their act/acts, their motivation, and its impact upon others			
<b>QUOTATION:</b> Find and copy a quotation from the novel (including page #) that comments on or gives insight on the character's sin and/or their attempt to make up for it			
<b>QUOATATION:</b> Find and copy another quotation per the instructions in the box above			

**Writing Directions:**

You will have 15 minutes to plan and 45 minutes to write an essay in which you argue which character from the novel you think committed the greatest sin. Support your choice with examples from the novel and present an analysis of the events and characters from the novel to build your argument. Your essay must also address the counterarguments; in other words, why are the sins of the other two main characters not as grievous as those of the one you have chosen.

Remember to begin your essay with an appropriate introduction that includes the thesis. All body paragraphs must be organized around a main idea that supports the thesis and the main idea should be expressed in the topic sentence. A short but effective conclusion is necessary as well. Proofread your essay before handing it in for errors in grammar, mechanics, and spelling.