

REBECCA

DAPHNE DU MAURIER

LIVING
LITERATURE
SERIES

A PERMA-BOUND PRODUCTION

TEACHER'S GUIDE

GUIDE WRITTEN BY MARY ELLEN SNODGRASS

SYNOPSIS

Told in flashback by an unnamed first person narrator, *Rebecca* begins with the memorable opening, "Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again." The speaker, who is later identified as the second wife of 42-year-old widower Maximilian de Winter, tenderly reads to her patient, uncomplaining husband and reviews the tragic circumstances which interrupted their first four months together at his family's romantic country manor near Kerrith on England's western shore sometime in the 1920's.

The speaker, a naive, plain young English girl, recalls how she came to the hotel Cote d'Azur in Monto Carlo in late winter as traveling companion to Mrs. Van Hopper, an American snob who sends the girl on errands as part of devious schemes to manipulate and ingratiate herself with others. They encounter Maxim, friend of Mrs. Van Hopper's nephew Billy. During Mrs. Van Hopper's illness with flu, the speaker has unanticipated free time, which she spends with Maxim but keeps a secret from her employer. Just before Mrs. Van Hopper takes passage to New York, Maxim abruptly proposes marriage to her companion. Mrs. Van Hopper does not predict a happy union.

The marriage takes place immediately; the de Winters honeymoon in Italy. They arrive at Manderley in early May in the seventh week of their marriage. The responsibilities of mistress of so large an ancestral home terrify the fearful bride, who is more intimidated by the housekeeper, Mrs. Danvers, than any other facet of her new life. Slowly, the speaker acculmates bits and pieces of information about Maxim's life with his first wife Rebecca from several sources—his sister, Beatrice Lacy, the estate manager, Frank Crawley, Maxim's grandmother, and even Ben, a retarded beachcomber. One fact stands out above all—Mrs. Danvers, who was Rebecca's nurse in childhood, adored her mistress and resents Maxim's replacing Rebecca with a second wife.

On a ramble about the colorful grounds, Maxim and his bride approach Happy Valley, which is rich with spring blossoms. They enjoy being together until Jasper, the family dog, escapes, precipitating an argument. After the speaker dashes ahead to a little-used cove to find string to tie up the dog, she enters the seaside hideaway of her predecessor, Rebecca. On rejoining Maxim, the speaker finds him inexplicably short-tempered and argumentative.

The speaker is too diffident, too unsure of her place in Maxim's life, to demand clear answers. Her mind begins to fill in the blanks with negative fantasies. She comes to the conclusion that Maxim is still longing for the beautiful and clever Rebecca, whose presence clings like a ghost to every aspect of life at Manderley. The speaker lacks the

initiative to confront Maxim or battle in her own behalf.

Events in the third month of the marriage bring the situation to a momentous turn. At a revival of the estate's annual fancy dress ball, the speaker, at Mrs. Danvers' suggestion, appears in a costume based on an antique portrait of Caroline de Winter. The speaker shocks the early guests and Maxim, who demands that she change her outfit. Stung with humiliation and believing that her marriage is foundering, the speaker barely gets through the tedious chore of greeting guests and posing as the serene, contented bride.

The next morning, the speaker goes to Rebecca's boudoir, a well-tended room on the west side of the estate. Beguiled by Mrs. Danvers' malevolent voice, she examines Rebecca's belongings, gazes from the window, and, in her despair at so formidable a rival, contemplates leaping to her death. Explosions in the bay announce the grounding of a German steamer. The sound pulls the speaker out of Mrs. Danvers' clutches and back to reality.

Captain Searle, the harbormaster, announces the discovery of Rebecca's sailboat, *Je Reviens*, which lies intact on the ocean floor near the site of the recent accident. A diver locates a skeleton in the cabin. Maxim, who had spent the night away from his wife, returns to admit to her that the skeleton is that of Rebecca, who he shot in the beach cottage and dragged to her boat. He describes how he scuttled the little yacht by opening the seacocks and piercing the hull. He explains how he later led police astray by identifying as Rebecca the ragged remains of another woman who washed ashore two months later. The speaker, who has matured during the harrowing events, vows to stand by Maxim and face a probe of the death.

An inquest in Lanyon raises questions about how and why the holes were created in the hull of the yacht. James Tabb, the carpenter who outfitted the secondhand craft, declares that the boat did not capsize by accident. As the coroner begins questioning Maxim's relationship with his deceased wife, the speaker faints. Later, she learns that the hearing labeled the death a suicide. She feels secure until Favell, Rebecca's cousin and lover, comes to Manderley late in the day and threatens to blackmail Maxim as Rebecca's murderer.

Maxim arrives during their meeting and summons Colonel Julyan, a local magistrate, who supports him in his refusal to be intimidated. Colonel Julyan gathers more information from Mrs. Danvers. He learns that Rebecca ridiculed both her husband and her lover. After Mrs. Danvers produces a red leather appointment book, Julyan backtracks to the day of Rebecca's death and discovers that she drove north of London to keep an afternoon appointment with a physician.

Questioning of the doctor clears up a serious gap in the investigation—the reason for Rebecca's unexplained change of behavior the day of her death. She had learned that she would die in half a year from cancer. Colonel Julyan says this is enough evidence to prove Rebecca's death was a suicide.

On the eight-hour drive back to Manderley, the speaker and Maxim at first feel relieved of the police inquiry and Favell's attempted blackmail. They stop for dinner along the way and intend to stay the night at an inn. Maxim telephones home and learns from Frank Crawley that Mrs. Danvers left the premises with no explanation. Maxim grows suspicious and hurries to be home by 2 a.m. In the early morning sky at a distance, he and his wife see the evidence of the fire that destroys Manderley.

BIOGRAPHY

The daughter of English actress Murial Beaumont and actor and theater manager Gerald du Maurier, Daphne du Maurier, whose wealthy family gravitated to both England and France, was born on May 13, 1907, in London and educated in Paris and Meudon, France. She came from an illustrious and creative ancestry. Her grandfather, George du Maurier, was a noteworthy novelist and illustrator in the last half of the nineteenth century. Her father, an early twentieth century matinee idol who was knighted in 1922, starred in plays by J.M. Barrie and delighted audiences with his portrayal of Mr. Darling and Captain Hook in *Peter Pan*.

Daphne showed early literary promise and produced her first novel, *The Loving Spirit*, in 1931, as a means of escape from family pressures. The next year, on July 19, she married Sir Frederick A.M. "Tommy" Browning, who was treasurer to the Duke of Edinburgh and one of Daphne's admiring fans. The couple settled in her beloved Kilmarth, Cornwall, near which she set many of her period romances. They had two daughters and a son. Du Maurier lived out her days in Par, Cornwall, enjoying walking, sailing, gardening, and country life, and died on April 19, 1989.

Du Maurier's writing career spanned a variety of literary genres. When her father died of cancer in 1934, she wrote his biography, *Gerald: A Portrait*. She also produced biographies of the Brontës and Sir Francis Bacon, an autobiography, *Myself When Young: The Shaping of a Writer* (1977), and literary memoirs, *The Rebecca Notebook and Other Memories* (1980).

Her reputation as a writer of mystery thrillers and Gothic suspense novels resulted from two early successes—*Jamaica Inn* (1936) and *Rebecca* (1938). Later fiction that achieved bestseller status include *Frenchman's Creek* (1941), *My Cousin Rachel* (1952), *The Scapegoat* (1957), *Castle D'Or* (1962), *The Flight of the Falcon* (1965), and *Don't Look Now* (1971). She also wrote numerous short stories, collected in *Kiss Me Again Stranger* (1953), which contained her most famous short story, "The Birds"; plays, such as *The Years Between* (1945) and *September Tide* (1948); a saga novel, *The du Mauriers* (1937), depicting her family; and a travel guide, *Vanishing Cornwall* (1967). She edited her grandfather's letters in 1951.

CRITIC'S CORNER

Daphne du Maurier lived a long and productive life and produced well-appreciated page-turners, although some critics fault them for excessive melodrama and frequent use of unlikely coincidences. An obvious appreciator of Victorian literature, particularly the Brontës, she gained fame as a storyteller. Her work never achieved classic status, but she did receive a National Book Award for *Rebecca* and was appointed Dame Commander in the Order of the British Empire in 1969.

While her husband was on military assignment with the Grenadier Guards, the novelist lived in Alexandria, Egypt, where she wrote the first drafts of *Rebecca*. Homesick for Cornwall and her small children, she avoided social gatherings and poured herself into her writing. Upon her return to England, she worked for four months at the finer points of the novel, which she feared her publisher would reject as overdone and stupid. To her credit, the work was a hit in Europe, America, and the British Empire.

Du Maurier's novels made notable stage and film material. She herself wrote the three-act version of *Rebecca*, which was produced at Queen's Theatre in 1940. That same year, David O. Selznick filmed *Rebecca* for United Artists as a black-and-white mystery romance starring Laurence Olivier as Maxim, Joan Fontaine as his wife, George Sanders as Favell, and Judith Anderson as Mrs. Danvers. Alfred Hitchcock directed the film, which was nominated for five Academy Awards. It won two, including best picture.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To delineate the characteristics of a Gothic romance
2. To comprehend the role of suspense
3. To account for the importance of setting
4. To note examples of coincidence
5. To list minor details upon which the plot turns
6. To characterize the tone of the novel
7. To comment on diction, particularly Continental terms
8. To sample significant poetic devices, particularly allusion, metaphor, simile, alliteration, cacophony, and euphony
9. To discuss the theme of insecurity.
10. To explain the purpose of the chapter.

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SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To discuss the significance of minor characters, particularly Ben, Colonel Julyan, Robert, Clarice, Giles, Maxim's grandmother, and Mrs. Van Hopper
2. To describe the settings in which Maxim courts and proposes to the speaker
3. To decide whether the central character is the speaker or Rebecca
4. To contrast the demeanor of Maxim with that of Frank and Favell
5. To note the importance of Jasper
6. To explain how the speaker's fantasies lead to problems
7. To analyze information the speaker gains from Ben, Beatrice, Frank, and Mrs. Danvers
8. To envision Manderley as it once was
9. To create a verbal picture of the interaction of different layers of society, notably servants, tenants, and the agent of Manderley, police and harbor officials, the bishop's wife, American tourists, Doctor Baker and the gentry
10. To outline how the murder was committed and concealed
11. To account for the speaker's sudden maturity and her acceptance of the role of mistress of Manderley

MEANING STUDY

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have particular meaning in the novel. Explain the meaning of each. Chapter and page numbers are given so that you can note the context from which the item is taken.

1. For many years now she had come to the hotel Cote d'Azur, and, apart from bridge, her one pastime, which was notorious by now in Monte Carlo, was to claim visitors of distinction as her friends had she but seen them once at the other end of the post-office. (Chapter 3, p. 12)
(The Cote d'Azur refers to the French Riviera, which extends across the southern portion of France to Italy where it borders the Mediterranean Sea. Monte Carlo, part of Monaco, has long been a playground and watering spot of the idle rich. These geographical names, therefore, carry much prestige among socially conscious people like Mrs. Van Hopper.)
2. Eh bien, Blaize, je viens . . . (Chapter 3, p. 19)
(Mrs. Van Hopper replies in French to the dressmaker, "Oh well, Blaize, I'm coming.")
3. I fled Him, down the nights and down the days . . . (Chapter 4, p. 32)
(The book which the speaker finds in Maxim's car contains a segment of Francis Thompson's Hound of Heaven.)
4. I saw myself strolling into Mrs. Van Hopper's bedroom rather late for my bezique, and when questioned by her yawning carelessly, saying, "I forgot the time. I've been lunching with Maxim." (Chapter 5, p. 41)
(The speaker contrasts two alternatives for her life: employment requiring her to play cards as a means of humoring Mrs. Van Hopper or freedom to enjoy the company of Maxim, whose attentions she keeps secret from her nosy, cynical employer.)
5. We would wash and clean our teeth in that stuffy little compartment with the rattling doors, the splashed basin, the damp towel, the soap with a single hair on it, the carafe half-filled with water, the inevitable notice on the wall "Sous le lavabo se trouve une vase," while every rattle, every throb and jerk of the screaming train would tell me that the miles carried me away from him, sitting alone in the restaurant of the hotel, at the table I had known, reading a book, not smiling, not thinking. (Chapter 6, p. 46)
(The speaker's mind carries her forward in time to another miserable train journey aboard a wagon-lit or Pullman car. She envisions the standard, mundane French sign, "There is a vase under the lavatory." Her thoughts contrast with the picture of Maxim, sitting at a restaurant table without her.)
6. My faux-pas was so palpably obvious, so idiotic and unpardonable, that to ignore it would show me to be an even greater fool if possible, than I was already. (Chapter 8, p. 84)
(The speaker commits an unthinkable social blunder in not recognizing herself as the current Mrs. de Winter.)
7. We passed out together on to the landing beyond, and I saw we were at the head of the main staircase now, behind the minstrel's gallery. (Chapter 9, p. 91)
(While lost amid the maze of hallways that thread through Manderley, the speaker comes out behind a little balcony which serves as an entertainers' platform overlooking the large hall below.)
8. The water is far too cold, and the beach is shingle. (Chapter 9, p. 95)
Beatrice notes that the bay is not a good place to swim because the water is cold and the beach is rocky.)
9. More like a divorce heard in camera. (Chapter 12, p. 136)
(This Latin phrase is common to lawcourts, where it refers to intimate testimony that witnesses give in the judge's chambers to shield the information from public scrutiny. This method of obtaining and evaluating information is more applicable to divorce cases, particularly those involving children.)

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10. "It's a very fine sight, Manderley, en fete," said Frank. (Chapter 16, p. 194)
(Frank, the agent of the manor, looks forward to seeing Manderley decorated for a special occasion.)
11. "I know it's only Dutch courage, but it sometimes works wonders." (Chapter 17, p. 219)
Beatrice, who realizes the severity of the speaker's shock at Maxim's rejection of her costume, advises her to drink some brandy, which will enable her to face the testy situation.)
12. There was Lady Crowan too, monstrous in purple, disguised as I know not what romantic figure of the past, it might have been Marie Antoinette or Nell Gwynne, for all I knew, or a strange erotic combination of the two . . . (Chapter 17, p. 223)
(Lady Crowan, not one of the speaker's favorites among the ball guests, wears an unidentifiable costume that suggests two characters: a queen of France who was guillotined and the orange seller who became the mistress of Charles II of England.)

COMPREHENSION STUDY

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answer with quotations from the novel.

Questions 1 - 5 Literal Level

1. Describe the speaker.
(The speaker, who becomes the second Mrs. de Winter, is an orphan girl from England who works for a living as traveling companion to the odious Mrs. Van Hopper. The girl has short, straight brown hair and plain, unadorned features. Her skill in dressing herself is unremarkable, and she lacks coordination and finesse in social situations. Her strong points are obedience, loyalty, and sincerity, all of which bring about Maxim's love for her.
After she marries Maxim, the speaker lives in a self-induced fantasy of scorn, rejection, and abuse. She believes that she should follow the routine that Rebecca established. She blames herself for being awkward, uninformed, and naive. The embarrassing situations she causes, such as the broken cupid and the ball gown, are excusable, but she is unrelenting in self-punishment.
Following her decisive confrontation with Mrs. Danvers, however, the speaker discovers strength, poise, and self-confidence that she never recognized in herself. She begins to direct her house staff and to assert her role as wife and mistress of Manderley. By the end of the story, she is a mature, loving wife capable of bringing solace to her troubled husband.)
2. Explain how Maxim kills Rebecca and disposes of her body.
(On the day that Rebecca dies, she pushes Maxim too far by telling him he has no way to prove her infidelity. Maxim, angered by her boldness and corruption, challenges her, then shoots her through the heart. He

washes away the blood with water from the cove, then around 11:30 p.m. carries Rebecca's body to the boat. He leaves the corpse in the cabin. As the boat drifts out to deep water, he opens the sea-cocks and drives a spike into the hull so that the boat will sink. He fastens the hatches and bolts the door before returning to the deck. After jettisoning a life-buoy, pair of sails, and coil of rope, he rows the dinghy back to the buoy. Returning to the cottage, he re-examines the scene of the crime.)

3. What information does Dr. Baker provide?
(From their interrogation of Dr. Baker, Colonel Julyan, Favell, Maxim, and the speaker learn that Rebecca knew that she was dying. She drove to his office near Barnet, north of London, on the day of her death. Posing as Mrs. Danvers, she kept her appointment as a follow-up of a visit a week before. At her request for a bluntly accurate diagnosis, Dr. Baker informed her that the x-rays proved that she had cancer.
In relaying the information to his questioners, Dr. Baker adds that Rebecca was pale and too thin. Her malformed uterus made her incapable of having children. She received without emotion the news that surgery would not save her and that in a few months' time she would have to rely on painkillers.)
4. Where does the speaker turn for comfort at Manderley?
(Because Mrs. Danvers intimidates her, the speaker never feels at home in the lavish setting and formal living arrangements that are standard for Maxim's country estate. From the beginning, she accepts what shreds of kindness Frith, Robert, and the other servants extend as a part of their job. But her only warm solace is the younger dog, Jasper, whom she strokes and takes for walks. Brief moments alone with Maxim give her some comfort, but because she is often alone, she has to rely on other sources of contentment.
When the speaker begins to doubt the soundness of her marriage, she turns to Beatrice and Frank Crawley for advice. From Beatrice she gets a kind of jolly, slap-on-the-back girl talk. From Frank she gets a warmer, more intimate uplift as well as the idea for reviving the annual fancy dress ball. Later, her personal maid, Clarice, becomes a kind of girlish ally, yet because she is a member of the servant class, she never achieves true friendship with her mistress. Fortunately, by the end of the novel, the speaker is able to talk openly with Maxim and to turn to inner resources.)
5. Describe Caroline de Winter.
(The portrait of Caroline de Winter gives a glimpse of one of Maxim's ancestors, the sister of his great-great-grandfather. The picture was painted before Caroline married a great Whig politician and established her reputation as a London beauty. In the formal pose, Caroline wore a white dress with puffed sleeves, small bodice, and a flounce. Her hair was curly and she held her hat in her hand.)

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Questions 6 - 8 Interpretive Level

6. Why did Maxim kill Rebecca?

(From the first, Maxim realized that his marriage to Rebecca would not be satisfying. Because of her willfulness, deceit, and promiscuity, she conducted frequent affairs and was careless about her reputation. He and Rebecca at first made a pact that she could do what she liked in her London flat, but at Manderley, she would behave properly, as society would expect of the mistress of so noble a household.)

Then Rebecca began to renege on her promise. She openly chased Frank and Giles, thereby leaving Maxim open to the contempt and pity of his sister and agent. Rebecca carried on a long liason with her cousin, Jack Favell. Maxim knew of their relationship and would not allow Favell on to the estate. However, Favell continued to visit on the servants' day off. On the day she died, Rebecca summoned Favell to the cottage so she could share the news of her illness, but Favell did not receive the note in time to meet her.

When Maxim met her at the cottage, he knew nothing of her summons to Favell. Independent of Rebecca's situation, Maxim had made up his mind to rid himself of Rebecca and end his misery. She ridiculed the notion of divorce and countered, "All your friends, even the servants, believe our marriage to be a success."

Ironically, her final bit of blackmail turned against her. When she threatened to bear an illegitimate child to inherit Manderley, she had Maxim in an untenable position. Because the property was entailed, he could not alter his will and cut out the child. After Rebecca sneered, "You would enjoy it, wouldn't you, seeing my son lying in his pram under the chestnut tree, playing leap-frog on the lawn, catching butterflies in the Happy Valley?," Maxim could no longer contain his anger and disgust. He shot his wife through the heart and watched her wide-open eyes and evil smile as she sank to the floor.)

7. Why does Maxim mislead the speaker about his relationship with Rebecca?

(Part of the misunderstanding that mars the speaker's marriage to Maxim is her misinterpretation of his motives. From the beginning, she learns from Mrs. Van Hopper that Maxim is recovering from a sad loss. She perceives his silences and abruptness as sorrow for his drowned wife. On their outings, he treats her like a child. When he proposes, he makes no clear explanation of his feelings for the speaker. Rather, he compliments her youth and immaturity, which prove detrimental to her initial experience as a bride and as mistress of Manderley.)

The situation worsens when the couple returns from Italy. There, the speaker is on Maxim's home turf. He knows the house and staff; she is a stranger. She has no ties to the land or the way of life. He continues to patronize her. The speaker comes to think of herself as a pet, like Jasper.

Each day, the speaker must explore for herself and delve into the past. By the time that Maxim divulges his role in the killing, the speaker feels that pieces of a

puzzle are falling into place. To the betterment of their marriage, Maxim confesses his hidden hatred for Rebecca and his guilt at having killed her and concealing his crime. From that point on, the speaker has a better chance of surviving as the second Mrs. de Winter.)

8. Explain Mrs. Danvers' role in the novel.

(Not only is Mrs. Danvers the housekeeper at Manderley, she was Rebecca's nurse and maid. From Rebecca's wayward childhood, "Danny" played a major part in spoiling and catering to the girl. She knew of Rebecca's illicit love for her cousin and laughed with delight over her boldness and deceit. As she helped Rebecca prepare for bed, she condoned Rebecca's ridicule of Favell, Maxim, and the other men who shared her life.)

When the speaker arrives at Manderley, she falls into Mrs. Danvers' twisted plot to punish any woman who would displace Rebecca. Mrs. Danvers continues to see Favell on the sly and to promote dissension between Maxim and his wife. She pretends to be a loyal housekeeper while all the time she is helping the speaker make a fool of herself. By playing upon the girl's insecurity, Mrs. Danvers brings her to the brink of suicide.

In the end, Mrs. Danvers inadvertently helps bring Maxim and his wife closer together. Because Mrs. Danvers can no longer exist at Manderley, she packs and leaves the premises without going through the gate. Evidence suggests that she sets fire to the house and destroys it.)

Questions 9 and 10 Critical Level

9. Explain the role of coincidence in the novel.

(Happenstance plays an important part in the structure of the novel. The meeting between the speaker and Maxim is unlikely because of the differences in their backgrounds and social status. The fact that Maxim not only courts the girl but proposes as well results from Mrs. Van Hopper's illness and subsequent decision to board a ship bound for New York. Also, the speaker's last-minute farewell hastens Maxim's decision not to let her go.)

An earlier event seems even more unlikely. Rebecca's discovery of her fatal cancer brings to a head her husband's jealousy and outrage. Ironically, she summons her lover on the day that her husband plans to confront her with her promiscuity and deceit. Her promise to change her ways has a double meaning which Maxim does not realize until he talks with Dr. Baker. He does not perceive until later that he did Rebecca a favor by shooting her and sparing her the pain of death from cancer. Rebecca's smile in the face of death suggests that she deliberately baited Maxim to bring about a quick, romantic death rather than a lingering demise.)

10. Discuss the reasons for the novel's popularity.

(It is rare that a romance novel, particularly one so sparing of sex and violence, remains popular with a wide reading audience. Rebecca maintains its position as a thriller because it rises above less skillful mystery novels. The subtle delineation of character in the unnamed speaker lends credibility to the plot. As the

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speaker becomes more knowledgeable, so too does the reader, who must filter through false messages before arriving at an understanding of the undercurrent that permeates Manderley.

The flashback technique stirs the reader to curiosity by leaving unexplained why she is cut off from Manderley and why she and her husband share so sedate and confined a life. By leading the reader through the speaker's courtship and marriage, du Maurier justifies the character's naivete and her near-destruction at the hands of a vengeful, lurking villain. The quick wind-up of the plot and the burning of Manderley leave the reader with many points to ponder and many questions still unanswered, such as where Mrs. Danvers goes and how the de Winters deal with their loss.

Another useful technique in the novel is the peripheral view of its title character, Rebecca. A year after her death, she seems like a viable presence in the house. In places, the author hints that Manderley is haunted by her ghost. Because Rebecca remains at a distance, the reader has to reach harder for palpable evidence of her role in the plot. This involvement achieves lasting satisfaction in the final pages as facts from Dr. Baker unravel the mystery of Rebecca's death. Ironically, even the killer did not understand how she came to die.)

Questions 11 - 14 Creative Level

11. Discuss the symbolism of the broken cupid. Include commentary on the speaker's marriage to a 42-year-old widower.
12. Write a letter from the speaker to Beatrice. Emphasize the fact that Maxim is resigned to the loss of Manderley and to living in a hotel far from England.
13. Compose an oral essay in which you justify the lack of a name for the speaker.
14. Explain the madness that causes Mrs. Danvers to destroy Manderley.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. Create a ground plan for Manderley. Point out locations of flower beds, lawns, formal gardens, ponds, fountains, bays, forests, and drives. List plants for each season of the year. Color code sections which are open to the public.
2. Read synopses of Daphne du Maurier's other bestseller fiction, including *My Cousin Rachel*, *Frenchman's Creek*, and "The Birds." Make a list of imaginary settings, such as Lanyon, Trowchester, and Edgemoor. Note real settings, especially London, Exeter, Barnet, and Jamaica Inn. Pinpoint these places on a map.
3. Create a brochure as a guide to England's West Country. Note landmarks and points of interest, such as Bath, Roman excavations, Tintagel, Stonehenge, Bodmin Moor, Penzance, the Isles of Scilly, Jamaica Inn, Pendennis Point, Mousehole, St. Ives, Avebury, and other tourist attractions.

4. Draw a family tree of the de Winters. Include information about Maxim's sister, nephew, parents, grandparents, and Caroline de Winter, the figure in the portrait.
5. Sketch some unusual combinations of costumes of historical figures for the fancy dress ball, such as Catherine the Great of Russia and Rasputin or Robespierre and Josephine de Beauharnais. Add a few American couples, for example, Pocahontas and George Washington. Attach paragraphs explaining why the combinations are unlikely.
6. Write an additional chapter for the end of the novel which describes the children of Maxim and his second wife. Explain how this new generation spurs interest in a rebirth of Manderley.
7. Compose some diary pages from the point of view of Clarice, Frith, Robert, or Alice. Discuss the de Winter family's trials as seen by working class people. Emphasize any beliefs that Manderley is haunted by Rebecca's ghost.
8. Lead a discussion of how this story would have turned out if major changes were made in the plot. For instance, consider:
 - a. Rebecca's body is never found
 - b. Rebecca lives out her life and dies of cancer
 - c. the speaker does not go to Maxim's room before leaving for New York
 - d. Favell gets his extortion money
 - e. Mrs. Danvers is arrested for arson
 - f. the coroner rules that the death was murder
 - g. the speaker leaves Maxim
 - h. Rebecca has an illegitimate child
 - i. Rebecca's ghost haunts Manderley
 - j. Colonel Julyan fails to locate Dr. Baker
9. Compose a detailed theme explaining why setting is crucial to the novel. Discuss how the different locales, notably Monte Carlo and Manderley, affect character, plot, mood, tone, themes, diction, and poetic devices, particularly metaphors and similies.
10. Write a book review of *Rebecca* for your local newspaper. Give both strengths and weaknesses of the work. Conclude with your personal recommendation.

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VOCABULARY

A. Circle a word which is a synonym for the first word in each of the following lines.

1. **dirty:** raucous, sordid, odious, mediocre
2. **thin:** gaunt, stodgy, malevolent, insidious
3. **sneaky:** blatant, exotic, sardonic, furtive
4. **pale:** restive, prodigal, jocular, pallid
5. **small:** unscathed, stolid, infinitesimal, forlorn
6. **filmy:** gossamer, inscrutable, ostentatious, sombre
7. **lowly:** aquiline, subservient, complacent, fey
8. **polite:** impervious, patent, civil, elusive
9. **hidden:** clandestine, wizened, derogatory, gaga
10. **crowded:** chock-a-block, morbid, futile, querulous

B. Classify the following groups of foreign terms as either French, Latin, Italian, or British.

- _____ 1. staccato, sotto voce, gondola
- _____ 2. petrol, morphia, lorry
- _____ 3. wagon-lit, milieu, pince-nez
- _____ 4. faux pas, Cote D'Azur, chateaux
- _____ 5. wicket, vicar, shingle
- _____ 6. *Je Reviens*, consomme, au fait
- _____ 7. gaucherie, lorgnette, boudoir
- _____ 8. in camera
- _____ 9. pub, queue, sou'wester
- _____ 10. aerial, bloke, cricket

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COMPREHENSION TEST A

PART I: Character Identification (30 points)

Name the character who is speaking or thinking in each sentence below. Select your answer from the list that follows. You will have answers left over when you finish.

- _____ 1. He pats me now and again, when he remembers, and I'm pleased, I get closer to him for a moment. He likes me in the way I like Jasper.
- _____ 2. Of course you Englishmen are all the same about your homes . . . you depreciate them so as not to seem proud.
- _____ 3. You'll go running to him like you did before when Mr. Jack came to see me.
- _____ 4. Well, Max, old man, what have you got to say about those holes in the floor-boards, and those sea-cocks turned full on?
- _____ 5. I want the truth . . . I don't want soft words and a bedside manner.
- _____ 6. The woman who called herself Mrs. Danvers was very seriously ill.
- _____ 7. They'm cruel to folk in there. I want to stay home. I done nothing.
- _____ 8. How funny you are.
- _____ 9. Good-bye . . . forgive me if I've asked you a lot of rude questions, my dear, and said all sorts of things I shouldn't.
- _____ 10. From my point of view it's—it's very refreshing and charming to find someone like yourself who is not entirely—er— . . . not entirely *au fait*, shall we say, with ways at Manderley.
- _____ 11. Those holes weren't there when the boat left my yard.
- _____ 12. Were relations between you and the late Mrs. de Winter perfectly happy?
- _____ 13. It's about Robert, sir. There has been a slight unpleasantness between him and Mrs. Danvers.
- _____ 14. It's handsome, Madam, . . . It's a dress fit for the Queen of England.
- _____ 15. I must have watched her many times in the handicap races on Saturdays from Kerrith, and I never saw her make an elementary mistake.

Beatrice
Ben
Clarice
Colonel Julyan

coroner
Dr. Baker
Dr. Phillips
Favell

Frank
Frith
James Tabb
Maxim

Mrs. Danvers
Mrs. Van Hopper
Rebecca
the speaker

PART II: Quotation Completion (20 points)

Complete each quotation below with a word or phrase from the list that follows.

1. I can see myself now, unsuitably dressed as usual, although a _____ of seven weeks, in a tan-coloured stockinette frock, a small fur known as a stone marten round my neck, and over all a shapeless mackintosh, far too big for me and dragging to my ankles.
2. A ball of _____ lay on a shelf, a rusted clasp-knife beside it. It would be all I needed for Jasper.
3. They upset a little china _____ who had hitherto stood alone on the desk except for the candlesticks.
4. It was books. Four big volumes. *A History of* _____.
5. "We call it the _____ Valley," he said.
6. I craned my neck sideways to read the lettering. " _____ ." What a funny name.
7. "It's the _____," she said; "there must be a ship gone ashore there in the bay."
8. It's you that ought to be lying there in the church _____, not her.
9. She gave me the job of converting her and doing her up like a little _____.
10. We ate for a while without talking, and I thought of a picture _____ I had bought once at a village shop, when on holiday as a child in the west country.

book	cupid	Italy	painting	sea-cock
bride	dog	<i>Je Reviens</i>	post-card	squall
costume	gallery	mackintosh	rhododendron	twine
crypt	happy	Manderley	rockets	yacht

PART III: True/False (20 points)

Mark the following statements either **T** for true, **F** if any part is false, or **I** if there is insufficient evidence to draw a conclusion

- _____ 1. Favell suspected from the beginning that Maxim murdered Rebecca out of jealousy.
- _____ 2. Mrs. Danvers helped Rebecca select the slippers and robe that remained by the bed in the west wing after Rebecca's death.
- _____ 3. The coroner suspects that the speaker only pretends to faint during the inquest.
- _____ 4. Even though he has a sister and a grandmother, Maxim considers himself as alone in the world as is the speaker.
- _____ 5. Captain Searle looks up the doctor's telephone number in the London directory and dials it for Maxim.
- _____ 6. The speaker fails to recognize her new name when she receives a call on the house telephone.
- _____ 7. Mrs. Van Hopper wants to return to New York because she is bored with Monte Carlo.
- _____ 8. Rebecca flirted with Frank and Giles and brought strange men to the beach cottage.
- _____ 9. At the inquest Ben gives significant testimony about Maxim's identification of the wrong body.
- _____ 10. After the fire, Maxim and Frank return to Manderley to save what antiques they can from the wreckage.

REBECCA

COMPREHENSION TEST B

PART I: Short Answer (20 points)

Supply a name in answer to the following questions.

- _____ 1. Who sends the speaker a set of art books for a wedding present?
- _____ 2. Who threatened to send Ben to the asylum?
- _____ 3. Who arrives on Frith's day off?
- _____ 4. Who hides broken china in an envelope?
- _____ 5. Who helps the speaker dress for the ball?
- _____ 6. Who whimpers for Rebecca?
- _____ 7. Who questions Maxim about the state of his first marriage?
- _____ 8. Who strikes Favell?
- _____ 9. Who gloats over the embarrassing situation at the fancy dress ball?
- _____ 10. Who warns the speaker about being too forward with men?

PART II: Identification (20 points)

From the list below select the place where each of these events occurs. You will have answers left over when you finish.

- _____ 1. Colonel Julyan and Maxim interview Dr. Baker.
- _____ 2. The speaker sees Mrs. Danvers at the window.
- _____ 3. The drummer announces Caroline de Winter.
- _____ 4. Neighborhood people observe the spot where the German steamer ran aground.
- _____ 5. Rebecca kept a flat where she had affairs with strange men.
- _____ 6. A body without arms washes up.
- _____ 7. The nurse asks Beatrice to leave.
- _____ 8. A diver locates a skeleton.
- _____ 9. Maxim asks someone to take his wife outside.
- _____ 10. The speaker pretends to play tennis.

Barnet
cliffs
Edgecoomb
Gran's house

Happy Valley
hotel Cote d'Azur
Je Reviens
Kerrith

Lanyon
London
Maxim's room
mistrel's gallery

Oxford
restaurant
rose garden
Rebecca's room

PART III: Completion (30 points)

Complete each of the following quotations with a phrase from the lettered list.

- _____ 1. You are fresh and young—and sensible,
- _____ 2. She was lying on sand, and
- _____ 3. And if you had my memories
- _____ 4. The day would lie before us both, long no doubt, and uneventful,
- _____ 5. "I'm afraid you have made a mistake," I said.
- _____ 6. When I look back at my first party at Manderley, my first and my last,
- _____ 7. I shall be at the cottage this evening, and
- _____ 8. "Mr. Favell," I said,
- _____ 9. "I don't want you to beat this alone," I said.
- _____ 10. "My dear Mrs. de Winter, you don't think I imagine for one minute that
- _____ 11. The last weeks had gone so swiftly, and
- _____ 12. You've made me very unhappy and
- _____ 13. Poor lamb, I've hustled you down here like this, and
- _____ 14. "She had a cousin," said Maxim slowly,
- _____ 15. She said nothing to anyone but apparently

- A. there wasn't the mark of a rock on her.
- B. "I want to share it with you."
- C. I can remember little isolated things standing alone out of the vast blank canvas of the evening.
- D. but fraught with a certain stillness, a dear tranquility we had not known before.
- E. you probably ought to have bought a lot of clothes in London.
- F. you have nothing to do with all that time that was gone.
- G. I—driving by his side through France and Italy—thought only of how I loved him, seeing Venice with his eyes, echoing his words, asking no questions of the past and future, content with the little glory of the living present.
- H. "a fellow who had been abroad, and was living in England again."
- I. if you get this in time you will get the car and follow me.
- J. your meeting down there was not entirely above board?" he said in a low voice.
- K. I've been crying all night because I thought I should never see you again.
- L. "Mrs. de Winter has been dead for over a year."
- M. "I don't want to be rude, but as a matter of fact I'm very tired."
- N. she'd been packing up all day, stripping her room of things, and the fellow from the station came for her boxes at about four o'clock.
- O. you would not want to go there either, or talk about it, or even think about it.

PART IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

1. Explain how both Favell and Rebecca try to blackmail Maxim.
2. Describe the scene in which the speaker gains control over Mrs. Danvers.
3. Discuss the lifestyle at Manderley when Rebecca was its mistress.

ANSWER KEY

VOCABULARY ANSWERS

- A.**
- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. sordid | 6. gossamer |
| 2. gaunt | 7. subservient |
| 3. furtive | 8. civil |
| 4. pallid | 9. clandestine |
| 5. infinitesimal | 10. chock-a-block |
- B.**
- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| 1. Italian | 6. French |
| 2. British | 7. French |
| 3. French | 8. Latin |
| 4. French | 9. British |
| 5. British | 10. British |

COMPREHENSION TEST A ANSWERS

PART I: Character Identification (30 points)

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. the speaker | 9. Beatrice |
| 2. Mrs. Van Hopper | 10. Frank |
| 3. Mrs. Danvers | 11. James Tabb |
| 4. Favell | 12. Coroner |
| 5. Rebecca | 13. Frith |
| 6. Dr. Baker | 14. Clarice |
| 7. Ben | 15. Colonel Julyan |
| 8. Maxim | |

PART II: Quotation Completion (20 points)

- | | |
|-------------|----------------------|
| 1. bride | 6. <i>Je Reviens</i> |
| 2. twine | 7. rockets |
| 3. cupid | 8. crypt |
| 4. Painting | 9. yacht |
| 5. Happy | 10. post-card |

PART III: True/False (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. T |
| 2. I | 7. T |
| 3. I | 8. T |
| 4. T | 9. F |
| 5. F | 10. I |

PART IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B ANSWERS

PART I: Short Answer (20 points)

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Beatrice | 6. Gran |
| 2. Rebecca | 7. coroner |
| 3. Favell | 8. Maxim |
| 4. the speaker | 9. Mrs. Danvers |
| 5. Clarice | 10. Mrs. Hopper |

PART II: Identification (20 points)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Barnet | 6. Edgecoomb |
| 2. Rebecca's room | 7. Gran's house |
| 3. minstrel's gallery | 8. <i>Je Reviens</i> |
| 4. cliffs | 9. Lanyon |
| 5. London | 10. hotel Cote d'Azur |

PART III: Completion (30 points)

- F
- A
- O
- D
- L
- C
- I
- M
- B
- J
- G
- K
- E
- H
- N

PART IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

Answers will vary.

TEACHER'S NOTES



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