

Week 3 – Study Questions for Heart of Darkness Chapter 1

1. Where was Joseph Conrad born, and how did his early life influence his writing?
2. What historical events and personal experiences inspired *Heart of Darkness*?
3. How does *Heart of Darkness* reflect Conrad's views on imperialism?
4. What is the significance of the Congo River and the historical context behind it?
5. Why is *Heart of Darkness* considered a key text in modernist literature?
6. What is the setting at the beginning of the novel?
7. Who is Marlow, and how is he different from typical seamen?
8. What historical comparison does Marlow make when discussing the Thames River?
9. What does Marlow say about his childhood fascination with maps?
10. How does Marlow secure a job with the Company?
11. Who is Fresleven, and what happened to him?
12. What does Marlow observe about the two knitting women in the Company's office?
13. What does the doctor measure, and what is his comment about the mind?
14. How does Marlow describe his journey along the coast?
15. What does the French warship symbolize for Marlow?
16. How does Marlow react to the sight of the chained workers?
17. What impression does Marlow get when he sees the dying native workers?
18. Who is the Accountant, and what does Marlow admire about him?
19. What is the significance of the first mention of Kurtz?
20. What impression does Marlow get of the Central Station manager?

Bonus Question: What is your favourite quote in this chapter, and why?