***Title:*** The Scarlet Letter

***Author:*** Nathaniel Hawthorne

***Published in:*** 1850

***Title explanation:*** The title refers to the letter "A" that Hester is made to wear on the front of her dress as a public acknowledgment of her adultery.

***Theme:*** *Adultery;* there was a sexual intercourse between Hester and a man who was not her spouse.

***Subthemes:*** Shame and guilt; the consequences of the sin were shame and guilt.

***Motives:*** \**Revenge;* Dimmesdale agreed to flee Boston because Roger wanted to take revenge.

*\*\*Torment;* Dimmesdale suffers from failing health as well as from his guilt, because he was tormented by Roger.

***Perspective:*** *Third-person omniscient;* the narrator injects his own opinions and feelings into the story and he is sympathetic to Dimmesdale and Hester in his thoughts.

***Setting:*** Mid 1600's in Boston, Massachusetts

***Main characters:*** *\*Hester Prynne;* Hester is the protagonist of the novel. She is described as a youthful, beautiful, spirited, and proud woman. When she is first presented in the story, there is already a scandal attached to her name that is symbolized by the scarlet letter "A". When she walks to the scaffold from the prison, she holds her head high and remains in full public view without shedding a tear. Her spirit is also reflected in her decorating the scarlet letter with gold thread. She is a round character.

*\*\*Arthur Dimmesdale;* Dimmesdale is the other protagonist of the novel. He is a young Puritan pastor with handsome features and an attractive voice. Because of his pious spirit and inspired sermons, his congregation dearly loves him. The more the people honor him, the more his guilt grows.He is a round character.

*\*\*\*Roger Chillingworth;* Chillingworth is the old, ugly, cruel, deformed, and demented husband of Hester Prynne. He is presented as a scholar and physician, who has traveled to distant places before deciding to settle in America. His lack of sensitivity is shown in his choosing such a young, naive, and beautiful woman as his bride. His lack of chivalry is displayed in his act of sending his young and inexperienced wife ahead of him to a new world, leaving her to fend for herself. His cruelty is seen when he does not try to contact her in New England for two years. It is obvious that a loving relationship has never existed between Hester and Chillingworth. He is a round character.

***Conflicts:*** *Man vs. Society;* Hester Prynne, in America without her husband bears a child by Authur Dimmesdale. She wears the public shame of adultery in the form of a letter "A".

***Plot:*** The story is about Hester Prynne, who is given a scarlet letter to wear as a symbol of her adultery. Her life is closely tied to two men, Roger Chillingworth, her husband, and Arthur Dimmesdale, her minister and the father of her child. Her husband is an old, misshapen man who Hester married while still in Europe. Chillingworth sends her ahead of him to New England, and then does not follow her or correspond with her for two years. Ironically, he shows up on the day that Hester is publicly punished for her sin of adultery. Hester stands alone, clutching her infant. Chillingworth and Dimmesdale stand in the crowd watching her. Chillingworth is incensed over her sinfulness and vows to find out the identity of her partner so that he can have his revenge. Chillingworth tries to make Hester divulge the identity of her lover, but she staunchly refuses. It does not take Chillingworth long, however, to ascertain that Arthur Dimmesdale is the father of Pearl. The minister, who struggles to hide his sin from his congregation, is tormented by Chillingworth. As a result, Dimmesdale suffers from failing health as well as from his guilt. He tries to confess and cannot find the courage to do it. He even mounts the scaffold one night and calls Hester and Pearl to his side -- but it is under the cover of darkness. Unfortunately, Chillingworth watches this scene in the darkness. He now has his final proof that Dimmesdale is the father of Pearl. His revenge intensifies. Hester realizes what is going on between Dimmesdale and Chillingworth and gains permission from her husband to reveal his true identity to the minister. Dimmesdale is devastated by the news and agrees to flee Boston with Hester and Pearl. He will do anything to escape the hold that Chillingworth has on him. In the end, however, Dimmesdale realizes that he can only be rid of his tormentor by publicly acknowledging his guilt. At the end, on Election Day, Dimmesdale climbs the scaffold with Hester and Pearl. With his family at his side, Dimmesdale finally confesses his sin and shows the scarlet "A" on his chest. He then dies peacefully.