

Guided Reading: *Cat's Cradle* (Ch. 61-127)
Critical Thinking in Science Fiction

Name: _____

Instructions: Answer the following questions and identify the thematic ideas (Science, Religion, Tribalism, and Meaninglessness) in following passages. For the thematic ideas, explain what each passage is suggesting about its respective theme(s)—decode it for our benefit. Some may encompass more than one theme. Feel free to reference the book's many motifs to support your interpretation. If you can answer these questions and connect these passages to the themes we discussed in class, you'll help yourself in understanding both the book's plot as well as its meaning.

Chapters 61-68

1. What do the signs at the airport forbid?

2. What is unique about the crowd, band, dogs, and even infants of the San Lorenzans who greet John?

3. What is Papa's background?

4. Who is to be the next president of San Lorenzo?

5. What does Mona do to the pilot?

6. Who are the Hundred Martyrs to Democracy?

Chapters 69-86

7. What ritual of Bokononism does John discover?

8. What is that art that Newt has made?

9. Why did McCabe and Bokonon make Bokononism illegal?

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10. "Truth was the enemy of the people, because the truth was so terrible, so Bokonon made it his business to provide the people with better and better lies." (Chapter 78)

Theme: _____

Interpretative Meaning: _____

11. Tiger got to hunt,
Bird got to fly;
Man got to sit and wonder, "Why, why, why?"
Tiger got to sleep,
Bird got to land;
Man got to tell himself he understand. (Chapter 81, from *The Books of Bokonon*)

Theme: _____

Interpretative Meaning: _____

12. Who is Dr. Schlichter von Koenigswald?

13. What does each Hoenikker child grab when the power returns?

Chapters 87-104

14. What is the one "catch" to being the next President of San Lorenzo?

15. What is Papa's religion?

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16. And I flattered myself that I was going to be a firm, just, and kindly ruler, and that my people would prosper. Fata Morgana. Mirage! (Chapter 95)

Theme: _____

Interpretative Meaning: _____

17. "He [Bokonon] teaches the people lies and lies and lies. Kill him and teach the people truth."

"Yessir."

"You and Hoenikker, you teach them science."

"Yessir, we will," I promised.

"Science is magic that *works*."

He fell silent, relaxed, closed his eyes. And then he whispered, "Last rites." (Chapter 97)

Theme: _____

Interpretative Meaning: _____

Chapters 105-127

18. How does Papa die?

19. How had the Hoenikker children discovered Ice Nine?

20. How is Ice Nine released on the world?

21. Who survives? How?

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22. What does Bokkonon say about the end?

23. ...the quotation captured in a couplet the cruel paradox of Bokkononist thought, the heartbreaking necessity of lying about reality, and the heartbreaking impossibility of lying about it. (Chapter 125)

Theme: _____

Interpretative Meaning: _____

24. "See the cat. See the cradle." (Several Chapters)

Theme: _____

Interpretative Meaning: _____
