Active Reading
The Metamorphosis Chapter One

In the first chapter of The Metamorphosis, Kafka portrays Gregor as a dual being, both human and insect. For example, Gregor must figure out how his new body functions and learn how to use his legs and turn over. At the same time, he has the thoughts and feelings of a human being. As you read, use the word webs below to note words, phrases, and other information about Gregor’s two “selves.”
As the title *The Metamorphosis* suggests, the characters in the novella undergo significant changes in their lives. Use the table started on this page to make notes about changes that each character undergoes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Changes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gregor</td>
<td>seems to give up hope of becoming human again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grete</td>
<td>has started working as a salesgirl, learning French and shorthand</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Samsa</td>
<td>wears his bank uniform at home, as if always ready for duty</td>
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TEST: *The Metamorphosis*

Recall and Interpret (40 points total; 5 points each)

Write the letter of the best answer.

1. Gregor’s first thoughts and emotions when he wakes up and finds he has been transformed are
   a. concern about his sister Grete.
   b. worry about being late for his job.
   c. hunger for breakfast.
   d. desire to call a doctor.

2. Gregor’s feelings of isolation increase after his metamorphosis because
   a. people cannot understand him.
   b. he cannot understand people.
   c. he can no longer play the violin.
   d. he is estranged from his boss.

3. One possible reason why Gregor might feel strong resentment against his father is that
   a. he wants Gregor to get married.
   b. Gregor is forced to work long hours.
   c. he makes Grete get a sewing job.
   d. Gregor wants his own apartment.

4. Grete decides to remove the furniture from Gregor’s room
   a. to punish him.
   b. so that she can clean it more easily.
   c. so that he will have more space.
   d. so that the family can rent the room.

5. The second time Gregor leaves his room,
   a. he frightens the office manager down the stairs.
   b. Grete plays the violin for him.
   c. his father pelts him with apples.
   d. he clings to a picture in the hallway.

6. The character who undergoes a metamorphosis from weak and ineffective to strong and forceful is
   a. Mr. Samsa.
   b. Grete.
   c. Gregor.
   d. Mrs. Samsa.

7. Gregor’s appreciation of his sister’s violin playing shows
   a. he has retained some human elements.
   b. his desire to grow closer to his father.
   c. his need for independence.
   d. that he wants to evict lodgers.

8. “It has to go. That’s the only answer” are words spoken by
   a. Mr. Samsa.
   b. Grete.
   c. Mrs. Samsa.
   d. the lodgers.

Evaluate and Connect (60 points total; 30 points each)

Answer two of the following essay questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Analyze *The Metamorphosis* in terms of this statement: “Gregor’s death is both self-sacrifice and wish-fulfillment.”

2. What do you feel are this novel’s strengths and weaknesses? Use examples from the text to support your evaluation.

3. Most of *The Metamorphosis* takes place within Gregor’s room, but the first two chapters end with Gregor’s venturing out of his room and being chased back in by his father. How does Kafka use this recurring pattern to help convey the overall themes of his work? Support your reasoning with evidence from the text. You may wish to consider one or more of the following questions:
   — For what reasons does Gregor leave his room?
   — How do the other characters react to his “escapes”?
   — What do these events suggest about the relationship between Gregor and his father?