

The Scarlet Letter

Nathaniel Hawthorne

What changes the instant Dimmesdale makes his hidden identity public?

TOTAL TIME

PASSAGE

30 minutes	Dimmesdale chooses public confession
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FIND THE ANCHOR TEXT

Use the Anchor Text Table of Contents in the Enhanced Reader to open the START anchor. Then use the dropdown to select the END anchor.

SECTION / LOCATION	Chapter XXIII · The Revelation of the Scarlet Letter
START	Madman, hold! what is your purpose?
END	Then, down he sank upon the scaffold!
PASSAGE ID	sec-sl-04

THE MOVE

Track how confession changes power

WHY THIS PASSAGE

Dimmesdale's secret has given him authority because the community sees holiness where there is hidden guilt. Public confession collapses that arrangement in an instant: his reputation, Hester's isolation, and the crowd's understanding all change at once.

MARK

Underline the phrases that show how the crowd sees Dimmesdale before the confession. Box the words in which he names his hidden identity. Then mark each immediate change in how people respond to him.

NOTICE

- What kind of power does Dimmesdale possess while the truth remains hidden?
- What does he lose the moment he names himself publicly?
- Who gains power or freedom when the secret stops belonging to Dimmesdale alone?

THINK

Answer provisionally: What changes the instant Dimmesdale makes his hidden identity public? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response to: What changes the instant Dimmesdale makes his hidden identity public? Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and explain why.

STRONG ANSWER	Public confession destroys the gap that gave Dimmesdale power: the community's image of holiness can no longer coexist with the hidden identity he has controlled. The confession redistributes knowledge and therefore changes authority instantly.
EVIDENCE	Use how the crowd sees Dimmesdale before the confession, the language of self-revelation, and the immediate change in the crowd/Hester/Dimmesdale relationship.
WATCH FOR	Do not answer only that everyone 'learns the truth.' Explain why public knowledge changes who controls the story and the moral power of the scene.
SOLO	Read the exact passage independently.
SUPPORTED	Use narration and sentence highlighting while reading the same passage.
LISTENING	Listen to the exact passage; visual following is optional. Same question and evidence demand.

STUDENT PAGE · SAME PASSAGE, SAME THINKING

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What changes the instant Dimmesdale makes his hidden identity public?

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END ANCHOR	Then, down he sank upon the scaffold!

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OPEN THE MARKED PASSAGE IN TUMBLELIT

SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration + highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the exact passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. MARK - Underline the phrases that show how the crowd sees Dimmesdale before the confession. Box the words in which he names his hidden identity. Then mark each immediate change in how people respond to him.
2. NOTICE - What kind of power does Dimmesdale possess while the truth remains hidden? What does he lose the moment he names himself publicly? Who gains power or freedom when the secret stops belonging to Dimmesdale alone?
3. THINK - Answer provisionally: What changes the instant Dimmesdale makes his hidden identity public?
4. WRITE - Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.

Use evidence from the assigned passage. Show what you noticed and how the text supports your interpretation.