

## Anthem by Ayn Rand

### STUDY GUIDE

All references come from the Signet edition of *Anthem*, published 1961.

### CHAPTER ONE

1. If you found this first chapter difficult to follow, what might be a possible reason? Who is the narrator? What is the point of view?
2. What is the motto engraved in marble over the portals of the Palace of the World Council? What prayer is recited every night? What does it tell you about this futuristic world?
3. In order to understand the world Equality 7-2521 lives in: What is the Home of Infants? What transgression does he commit here?
4. What is the Home of Students? What transgressions does he commit here?
5. What is the Council of Vocations? What is the Transgression of Preference?
6. What do all of these homes have in common? What purpose does this serve?
7. What is the Science of Things? What do you understand the Great Rebirth to be?
8. What is the Home of the Useless? an Old One? an Ancient One?
9. Why is it difficult to see this as a novel of the “future”? Since it is a futuristic novel, what do you assume has happened to the world as we know it today?
10. What is a Life Mandate? What happens to Equality 7-2521 when he appears before the Council of Vocations to receive his Life Mandate?
11. How do you explain the way in which he receives his assignment?
12. What is his life like for the next four years?
13. What does his future hold for him?
14. Who are Union 5-3992 and International 4-8818?
15. What is the Uncharted Forest? the Unmentionable Times?
16. What does Equality find?
17. Why does International say, “May the Council have mercy upon both of our hearts”? (Pg.34)
18. For the next two years, what does Equality do in relationship to his discovery?
19. Just by going there, what great transgression does he commit?
20. How does International help him?
21. What other transgressions does Equality commit?

### CHAPTERS TWO-FOUR

1. Who lives in the Home of Peasants?
2. Who is Liberty 5-3000? Why is Equality attracted to her?
3. What forms of expression do their feelings for each other take? Why are they so hesitant and cautious?
4. What are the Council of Eugenics and the City Palace of Mating?
5. Read page 41 to page 43 and explain Equality’s interest in Liberty.
6. What names do they exchange? Why is this significant?
7. As he sits in his tunnel, what does Equality recognize as the WORD that describes the feeling that is always among his brothers?

8. Even though he is committing serious transgressions, for which he can be severely punished, why does he feel no fear in the tunnel?
9. What is the feeling of the Council toward happiness? Why might his behavior still arouse suspicion?
10. What would seem to suggest there are others who are also deeply troubled by the world in which they are forced to live?
11. What further details do you find concerning the Uncharted Forest? the Dawn of the Great Rebirth? the Great Script Fires?
12. What is the only crime punishable by death in this world?
13. What is the effect on Equality when, as a child, he views the execution of The Transgressor of the Unspeakable Word (the Saint of the Pyre)?
14. What is the discovery of nature that Equality makes?
15. With this discovery, to what does he dedicate himself?
16. In what way does the meeting between Equality and Liberty in Chapter Four seal the bond between them?

### **CHAPTERS FIVE-SEVEN**

1. In Chapter Five, what does he wish for now that he had not thought about before? Why?
2. What is the thing he has created in the tunnel?
3. What does he think of as the good that can come from this discovery?
4. How is he going to make his gift known?
5. Why does he think he will not be punished for his transgressions?
6. Why does he now care what happens to him? How is this linked to one theme of the novel?
7. What happens this night that results in his being caught?
8. Why is he taken to the Palace of Corrective Detention?
9. What is he subjected to there? What do you think his captors are trying to accomplish?
10. Why is it easy for him to escape from his confinement?
11. What is the ONE thing that he hopes for after his discovery is made known to the World Council of Scholars?
12. Why would the World Council of Scholars have been shocked by Equality's appearance under any circumstances?
13. What is their reaction when he shows them his discovery?
14. What are some of the reasons they reject his invention completely?
15. Why does he take his discovery and escape from everyone to the Uncharted Forest?
16. What is he sure will happen to him as a result of Solitude and the Beasts of the Forest?
17. What is the only thing that lifts his spirit?
18. What is his feeling about the Golden One?

### **CHAPTERS EIGHT—TEN**

1. What is Equality's feeling when he awakens the next day in the Uncharted Forest? How is this related to the title?
2. What is his reaction to seeing himself for the first time?
3. Why is he hindered in thinking out his feelings and coming to any real understanding

about himself?

4. What is the reason the Golden One follows him through the Uncharted Forest?
5. How do they adapt to life in the forest and manage to survive in the wilderness that should have killed them?
6. How does the happiness they find contradict everything they have been taught?
7. How do you explain her reaction after saying... "We love you"?
8. Equality says that one of his plans is to build a house in which they are to live. Instead, what do they find to take the place of this?
9. How would you describe the kind of house they find? How does this give some hint as to the setting of the novel?
10. What are some of the things in the house that puzzle them at first because they are different from the city they left behind?
11. What is the thought that plagues Equality as he looks out on his new world?

### **CHAPTERS ELEVEN-TWELVE**

1. An anthem is a song or hymn of praise or gladness; what is the ONE word of Equality's anthem? How is this tied in with the Unspeakable Word?
2. Summarize Equality's new philosophy and understanding about himself in relationship to the rest of mankind.
3. Why does he now understand why he never felt any guilt for his actions and thoughts before?
4. What is the significance of the Golden One saying, "I love you"?
5. What is the significance of the names Equality chooses for them?
6. What does he now see as his future?
7. What specific plans does he have in regard to the house and the others left behind in the city of the old world?
8. What does he see as the things that have enslaved humanity throughout the ages?
9. What does he still find difficult to understand?
10. How might this have been interpreted as a warning in 1936, 1945, or even today? Is this warning valid?
11. What is the significance of the word inscribed above the portal of this house in which he has chosen to live? Discuss.