

## Désirée's Baby – Worksheet PDF

### Questions and Answers - Désirée's Baby – Set 1

1. Who are the main characters in Désirée's Baby?
  - The main characters in the story are Madame Valmondé, Désirée and her husband Armand Aubigny.
2. Who is the protagonist of the story Désirée's Baby?
  - The protagonist of the story is the lovely young Désirée.
3. What happened in the start of story Désirée's Baby?
  - In the start of the story, Madame Valmondé was driving over to L'Abri to see Désirée and the newborn baby.
4. What is the theme of Désirée's Baby?
  - The theme of the short story is the gender disparity in a patriarchal society and the economic inequalities between different classes, both of which were widely prevalent and socially accepted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It also showcases the slave culture and the racism that was well established and accepted within the society.
5. What is the moral of Désirée's Baby?
  - The moral of the story "Désirée's Baby" is that things are not always what they seem to be. Alternatively the moral of the story is that racism is wrong, and that racial purity is not a measure of who a person is.

### Questions and Answers - Désirée's Baby – Set 2

6. What happens at the end of Désirée's Baby?
  - Désirée's leaves with her baby and is never seen again. Armand finds a letter from his mother to his father revealing that Armand is part black and that this secret had been kept from him. Thus it is revealed that the child is part black because of him and not her.
7. What is Désirée's Baby story about?
  - Désirée's Baby is a famous short story authored by Kate Chopin and was published in 1898. It is about a white woman who has a baby with African roots and her husband rejecting her and the baby because of that.
8. What is the irony in Désirée's Baby?

- The storyline followed in *Désirée's Baby* is that Armand is extremely racist and hence ends up rejecting his wife and his baby. He thinks that his baby has African roots because of her. In the end, he finds a letter that reveals a cruel twist that Armand is part black and that this secret had been kept from him by his mother. Thus it is revealed that the child is part black because of him and not her.

9. Who is Désirée?

- Désirée is the daughter of Monsieur Valmondé and Madame Valmondé. They are very wealthy French Creoles in antebellum Louisiana.

### **Questions and Answers - Désirée's Baby – Set 3**

10. Where was Désirée found?

- When she was a baby, Désirée was found lying in the shadow of a stone pillar, abandoned by her parents. Monsieur Valmondé finds her and since she is childless, she adopts Désirée gratefully.

11. Who is Armand Aubigny?

- Armand Aubigny is the son of a wealthy French Creole family also falls in love with Désirée and courts her. They get married and have a child.
- He then distances himself from her and their baby completely.

12. Why did Armand Aubigny hate Désirée and his baby?

- The baby is revealed to have the skin color as that of a quadroon or a one-quarter African. This would mean that the baby has African ancestry. Armand Aubigny is very racist and hence rejects both of them.

13. What happens in the conclusion of the story?

- In the end, the enraged Armand burns all of Désirée's personal belongings. In what was to be burnt were the letters that his wife had sent him during their courtship. In the same drawer where the letters were present, Armand finds another old letter which he had never seen before. The letter was sent by Armand's mother to his father.

14. What is the cruel twist in the story?

- In the end, the cruel twist that Armand is part black and that the child is part black because of him and not his wife.

### **Questions and Answers - Désirée's Baby – Set 4**

15. What happens to Desiree and the baby?

- Desiree takes the child and wanders into the swamp, never to be seen again. It is implied that both mother and child likely drowned in the swamp.

16. What does La Blanche mean in Désirée's baby?

- La Blanche also known as the White was one of Désirée and Armand's slaves who is of mixed origin but looks white.

17. Is Desiree Black in Desiree's baby?

- Desiree is white in appearance. Because of Désirée's unknown parents, Armand immediately assumes that she is part black since his child has African roots.

18. Does Armand truly love Desiree?

- Armand loves Desiree only for beauty and is conditional on her being white. He did not love her for her character or for who she is. His love can best be described as superficial.

19. Is Armand mother black in Desiree's baby?

- Armand's mother, Madame Aubigny, was revealed in the end of the story to be black.

#### **Questions and Answers - Désirée's Baby – Set 5**

20. Who is the major antagonist in Desiree's baby?

- The antagonist in Désirée's Baby is her husband Armand. Her husband as he ends up rejecting her and the baby because he is racist. The society as well as his parents are to blame since his parents chose not to reveal that his mother was black which would have changed his perception about the race.

21. Is Desiree's baby Based on a true story?

- The short story is not based on a true incident but it is a work of realistic fiction. It details many of the accepted social attitudes and racist behaviour which was prevalent in Louisiana in the 1800s.

22. Why is Madame Valmonde shocked when she sees the baby?

- Madame Valmonde is shocked because she realizes that the child is of mixed ethnic origin and has African roots.

23. How did Armand treat Desiree?

- At the start of the story, Armand treats Desiree with great love showering joy and happiness in their relationship. Later, when the child is born and is not completely white, Armand begins to treat her cruelly.

24. What made Desiree believe that Armand was very happy about the baby?

- Desiree believes that Armand was very happy about the baby because after the birth of his son, Armand Aubigny had softened and he was no longer as imperious and exacting as he was once before.