Discussion Questions for “To Build a Fire”

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions: Find evidence from the text to prepare to discuss each question. Make jottings.**

1. What does the man’s reaction to the old-timer’s advice reveal about him? What does his reaction foreshadow?

1. Compare and contrast the man’s interaction with and attitudes toward nature to the dog’s interaction with and attitudes toward nature. What is this story telling us about man’s relationship with nature versus that of animals’ relationship with nature?

1. The man encounters many difficulties in this story, but what is truly the “trouble” with him?

1. There are many similarities between “To Build a Fire” and *The Call of the Wild.* What are some differences between the two texts?

1. After reading and answering the questions above, study the definition of ***hubris*** below. How does the idea of ***hubris*** show up in “To Build a Fire”?

**Hubris** is extreme pride and arrogance shown by a character that ultimately brings about his downfall. Hubris is a typical flaw in the personality of a character who enjoys a powerful position; as a result of which, he overestimates his capabilities to such an extent that he loses contact with reality. A character suffering from hubris tries to cross normal human limits and violates moral codes. Examples of hubris are found in major characters of literary works.