

Reading Questions for Spenser's *Faerie Queene* Section I (Cantos 1-4)

NOTE: this is a two week assignment

Directions: Read these questions carefully BEFORE you read the section. For each of the questions, mark and label in your book passages that pertain. Finally, list the passage page numbers on this answer sheet, along with any thoughts you have that might answer the question.

1. What elements of an epic are evident in Canto I?

For those who have read multiple epics thus far, in what ways does this epic differ in its initial circumstances and in its approach?

2. List the rhyme scheme of a "Spenserian stanza." What meter appears in the first part of such a stanza? What meter appears in the last line?

3. This epic, an Arthurian romance, involves a quest. What quest does the Red Cross Knight reveal early in the first Canto?

4. What animal does the "lovely Ladie" ride? How might this connect to biblical iconography?

5. What second little animal does she lead behind her mount? What might this symbolize in an allegory?

6. Since an allegory is all about symbolism, identify (and justify through references to passages) the ideas the following characters might represent.

Gloriana

Red-Cross Knight

Una

Duessa

Erroun

Archimago

Sansfoy

Sansloy

Lucifera

For those who have read the *Aeneid*, what obvious borrowings do you see in this section?

Pride is the first of the Seven Deadly Sins. What characters are exhibiting or representing this sin? In what circumstances?