

Henry V Act 1 Discussion Questions

Scene 1

- 1) In the first 20 lines of Scene 1, Bishop of Ely and Bishop of Canterbury are worried about a bill passing. Explain the bill and explain why the two clergymen might be concerned with the passing of this bill.
- 2) Read the following passage, what observations are the two clergymen making about Henry?

Bishop Canterbury

The king is full of grace and fair regard.

Bishop Ely

And a true lover of the holy church.

Bishop Canterbury

The courses of his youth promised it not.
The breath no sooner left his father's body,
But that his wildness, mortified in him,
Seem'd to die too; yea, at that very moment
Consideration, like an angel, came
And whipp'd the offending Adam out of him,
Leaving his body as a paradise,
To envelop and contain celestial spirits.
Never was such a sudden scholar made;
Never came reformation in a flood,
With such a heady currance, scouring faults
Nor never Hydra-headed wilfulness
So soon did lose his seat and all at once
As in this king.

Scene 2

- 3) The Bishop of Canterbury has told Henry that he is entitled to the throne in France; however, French Salic law prohibits his taking the throne. Explain what Salic law is and why Henry has a right to the French crown according to Canterbury.
- 4) Besides being “right” in his reasons for invading France, what other concern does Henry have regarding taking men to invade France lines 135-160? In lines 212-228, Canterbury gives Henry some advice that is supposed to alleviate this concern. What advice does he give him?

- 5) The ambassador to the Dauphin delivers a gift and a message to Henry, explain the gift and the nature of the message as you understand it.
- 6) In lines 268-310, Henry reacts to the Dauphin's message. How does he react? Is it appropriate? Explain your answer.