Henry V Act 2 Discussion Questions

Chorus

1) Read the following passage. Explain the mood in England as Henry has made it public that he will invade France. Use evidence from the text to support your explanation. Look at the rest of the chorus. What is the reaction of the French?

Chorus
Now all the youth of England are on fire,
And silken dalliance in the wardrobe lies:
Now thrive the armourers, and honour's thought
Reigns solely in the breast of every man:
They sell the pasture now to buy the horse,
Following the mirror of all Christian kings,
With winged heels, as English Mercuries.
For now sits Expectation in the air,
And hides a sword from hilts unto the point
With crowns imperial, crowns and coronets,
Promised to Harry and his followers.

Scene 1

2) Explain the history between Pistol and Nym’s dispute in scene one. Why are they fighting? Do you feel like this dispute is trivial considering that these men are going off to war? Explain your reasoning.

Scene 2

3) In scene 2 Henry is dealing with the conspirators who took money to kill him. Henry also speaks of a “drunk” man who “rail’d against our person” (1.43). Why mention this man? How did Henry react to this man’s “betrayal?” What do the lords who took money to kill Henry think that he should do with this man? Why is this ironic based on what happens later on in the scene?

Scene 3

4) In scene 3 we find out about Falstaff’s death. In scene 2 the Hostess explains what killed him. What is her explanation?

Scene 4

5) Explain the difference between the attitude that King Charles has to the news of Henry’s invasion with the attitude his son, the Dauphin, has. What proof does Charles offer to his son to take Henry seriously?
6) Explain the nature of the message that Exeter sends to Charles on Henry’s behalf. Is the message consistent with the message that Henry gave to the Ambassador in Act 1 to be delivered to the Dauphin? Explain.