

A Question Worth Refining

Conduct literary research with a primary text and scholarly commentary.

ELA.11.C.4.1 "Conduct literary research to answer a question, refining the scope of the question to align with interpretations of texts and synthesizing information from primary and secondary sources."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the quotation in paragraph 1 and circle the interpretation after Summary in paragraph 2. Both linked webpages are required source materials: use an internet-connected device to read them and extend these notes.

Investigating Louise's Freedom

- ① **Primary source.** Read Kate Chopin's complete *The Story of an Hour* at <https://www.katechopin.org/story-hour/>. First published in 1894, the story includes this wording in the linked version: 'There would be no one to live for her during those coming years; she would live for herself.' Nearby, Louise recalls Brently's loving face; the narrator then describes one will bending another and her rejection of control whether kindly or cruelly intended. These details invite a question about freedom and affection. Read the full story before refining your question.
- ② **Secondary source.** Read the Editors of KateChopin.org's *Kate Chopin: The Story of an Hour* at <https://www.katechopin.org/the-story-of-an-hour/>. Under Questions and answers, find the discussion of 'her' and the question beginning 'Why are there two versions'. Summary: the editors interpret the included word as emphasizing another person's control of Louise's life. They document its absence in the 1894 printing and inclusion in 1895. The site's coeditors, Bernard Koloski and Heather Ostman, have published books on Chopin. Treat this scholarly interpretation as a claim to test against the story, not proof of one authorial intention.

- ③ **Synthesis.** State how your reading changed the question's scope. Build an answer that relates a primary-text detail to the secondary interpretation, then explain a limit or alternative. A literary interpretation needs reasoning, not just two source summaries. Use MLA-style in-text citations matched to full Works Cited entries. Record author if given, page title, website, displayed date and URL; use no page number for an unpaginated page. Keep references outside the response word count.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- ① Read the full story. Record a detail about freedom not included in the printed notes, with an exact phrase or clear location.

- ② Read the specified commentary. Paraphrase one interpretation or textual-history finding and name its section.

- ③ Write your refined research question. Explain how the sources led you to narrow or change it.

- ④ Test the commentary against another detail from the full story beyond these notes. Explain support, complication or an alternative.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 110-150-word answer to your refined question. Connect evidence from the primary story and secondary commentary, explaining your reasoning and one limit or alternative. Use matching MLA-style citations and supply both Works Cited entries.

1. Research synthesis

Distinguish the story's language, the editors' interpretation and your own claim.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

2. Works Cited

Record the actual pages consulted. Do not invent page numbers or treat a site's copyright year as an article date.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the quotation in paragraph 1 and circle the interpretation after Summary in paragraph 2. Both linked webpages are required source materials: use an internet-connected device to read them and extend these notes. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Read the full story. Record a detail about freedom not included in the printed notes, with an exact phrase or clear location.	In the paragraph beginning 'Her fancy was running riot', the story reads: 'Spring days, and summer days, and all sorts of days that would be her own.' This is an unprinted detail about her imagined future. Accept other accurate new details with locators.
2	Read the specified commentary. Paraphrase one interpretation or textual-history finding and name its section.	The Q&A interprets the included her as emphasizing control over Louise's life; the version discussion documents a difference between printings. Attribute this to the editors, not to the narrator.
3	Write your refined research question. Explain how the sources led you to narrow or change it.	Example: How does the included her affect the connection between Louise's imagined freedom and the following discussion of private will? The textual difference focuses the broad freedom question.
4	Test the commentary against another detail from the full story beyond these notes. Explain support, complication or an alternative.	Example: Louise first weeps in her sister's arms. Her grief complicates an account of pure celebration; sorrow and a desire for autonomy can coexist. Other unprinted details are valid with precise evidence and reasoning.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Synthesis: The included word *her* helps connect Louise's imagined freedom with resistance to another person's control. The editors explain that the wording shifts attention toward someone else directing her life (Editors of KateChopin.org). That interpretation fits the following passage about one will bending another, where kind intentions do not erase the objection to control (Chopin). Still alone, she imagines 'Spring days, and summer days, and all sorts of days that would be her own' (Chopin). This additional detail gives autonomy a future: she anticipates directing ordinary time, not simply escaping one command. The secondary explanation connects the scenes, but it does not prove a single authorial intention. Its discussion of differing versions also means that a researcher must identify which wording the interpretation uses before extending the claim.

Works Cited: Chopin, Kate. "The Story of an Hour." 1894. *The Kate Chopin International Society*, <https://www.katechopin.org/story-hour/>. Accessed 8 Sept. 2026.

Editors of KateChopin.org. "Kate Chopin: The Story of an Hour." *The Kate Chopin International Society*, <https://www.katechopin.org/the-story-of-an-hour/>. Accessed 8 Sept. 2026.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT NOTES

Require actual reading, a documented scope refinement, primary/secondary integration and a 110-150-word answer, plus matching citations/references. The model uses the edition linked here, which includes her; the society documents the 1894/1895 variation. The society's About the Authors and Editors page documents Koloski's and Ostman's Chopin books. Their site's commentary is secondary scholarship; the story is primary evidence. Students may reasonably qualify or challenge the commentary using textual evidence. Do not require agreement with the sample or pretend fictional character psychology is a clinical diagnosis. Access dates record this example's preparation; students use their own access dates. No specific update date is asserted for the commentary.