

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS for “A Room of One’s Own,” chapters 1-3

- 1) How does Woolf use physical spaces, and her narrator’s movement through them, to advance her “argument”?
- 2) Can you describe Woolf’s style of sentence writing? How do the poetic techniques of imagery and metaphor contribute to her essay?
- 3) What is the significance of World War I in this essay?
- 4) How does Woolf account for women’s poverty? For the absence of women’s history?
- 5) What does Woolf mean by “patriarchy”?
- 6) What is Woolf’s attitude toward anger? How does this relate to her own writing style?
- 7) In the questions above, I have referred to Woolf? Who is the “I” in her essay?
- 8) What does the fictional professor add? What does the story of Judith Shakespeare add?
- 9) What does she mean by “genius”? Why has there been no woman Shakespeare?
- 10) What lines made you laugh?
- 11) With which statements did you agree? Disagree? How does your own historical situation affect your responses?
- 12) What are the fundamental changes that have taken place between Shakespeare’s time and Woolf’s? Between Woolf’s and ours?
- 13) Does Woolf want to be an “insider”? Does she want women to be “insiders”?
- 14) How does she illustrate the connection between material conditions, sensations, and the psyche or subjectivity? Where does she locate the soul?
- 15) What corrodes an artist’s confidence? How is this gendered?