

## Debating Beloved Answer Key

### 1. Beloved - Ghost or Symbol?

- Possible Answer: Beloved is both a ghost and a symbol of trauma.
- Evidence 1: She appears mysteriously at 124 and consumes Sethe's energy, behaving like a haunting presence.
- Evidence 2: She represents the return of repressed memory, forcing Sethe to relive the past.
- Counterargument & Response: Some argue she is simply a ghost story element, but her symbolic role as trauma embodied makes her more than just supernatural.

### 2. Sethe's Infanticide - Hero or Criminal?

- Possible Answer: Sethe is a tragic protector.
- Evidence 1: She believes death is preferable to slavery for her children.
- Evidence 2: Her fear is shaped by the violence she endured at Sweet Home.
- Counterargument & Response: Critics might call it murder, but Morrison emphasizes the desperation created by slavery, not simple criminal intent.

### 3. Paul D's Capacity for Love

- Possible Answer: He struggles but eventually opens himself to love.
- Evidence 1: His "tobacco tin heart" symbolizes emotional suppression.
- Evidence 2: By the end, he tells Sethe, "You your best thing, Sethe. You are."
- Counterargument & Response: While slavery damaged him, Morrison shows healing is still possible.