

Name _____



Unspoken Legacy in *Beloved*

Instructions: The closing lines of *Beloved* are deliberately ambiguous: “*It was not a story to pass on.*” Your task is to analyze these lines in three stages: literal meaning, interpretation, and legacy. Answer each section carefully, using textual evidence and your own insights.

1. In your own words, what do you think the phrase “*not a story to pass on*” means?

2. Why might Morrison choose to repeat this line twice in the final passage?

3. Does the line suggest that the story of slavery and trauma **should not be remembered**, or that it **cannot be forgotten**? Explain your reasoning.

4. How does this ambiguity reflect the novel’s themes of **memory** and **trauma**?

5. Who do you think the “you” in the final passage is addressing: the reader, the characters, or both? Defend your answer.

6. How does the ending influence your overall impression of the novel?

7. In what way does the ending affect the novel’s place in American literature and history?
