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Close Reading Organizer - Section 8

Directions: Read each summary entry and think about which themes listed in the Themes Key apply to it, then color in those themes in the Theme Tracker. Next, write a few sentences of Analysis to explain how the themes you chose apply to each summary section.

Themes Key

1	Privacy, Loneliness, and Communication
2	Social Criticism
3	Time
4	Psychology and Perception
5	Death

Summary	Theme Tracker					Your Analysis
Peter Walsh hears the ambulance rush by to pick up Septimus's body, and he thinks of ambulances as a triumph of civilization. The English health system seems admirable to him after India, and he admires how all the cars and carriages stop to let the ambulance pass. Peter thinks of how easily the ambulance could be coming for him, and as he grows sentimental and morbid thinks that this is the "privilege of loneliness" - he can think whatever he wants in privacy.	1	2	3	4	5	
Peter remembers how he and Clarissa used to ride the omnibus and explore London together. Clarissa had a theory then that to know someone, you also had to know all the people and places that "completed" that person. She thought that people existed beyond their single selves, and so might even	1	2	3	4	5	

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survive beyond death through the attachments and memories of others.						
Peter reminisces about his thirty-year-long friendship with Clarissa . They have fought often, but overall Clarissa has influenced him more than anyone else. Peter returns to his hotel and reminisces about Bourton. He and Clarissa would walk in the woods, argue, and discuss people, poetry, and politics (Clarissa was a “Radical” then).	1	2	3	4	5	
Peter goes to his room and finds a letter from Clarissa , saying how “heavenly” it was to see him that morning. He is upset by this and wishes she would have “let him be,” left him to remember the old days before she married Richard and lived “in perfect happiness.” Peter suddenly finds the hotel cold and impersonal.	1	2	3	4	5	
Peter imagines the moments after their meeting that afternoon – he pictures Clarissa regretting her refusal of Peter’s marriage proposal, wishing that she had changed the world with him instead of slipping into middle-aged conventionality with Richard . Peter imagines Clarissa weeping as she wrote him the note.	1	2	3	4	5	
Peter has been successful with women recently, and the narrator muses about why this is – it may be that he is both respectable-looking and unsure about life, and can be easily	1	2	3	4	5	

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ensnared by a young woman. Peter takes off his boots and looks at a photo of Daisy with a fox-terrier on her knee. She is dark and beautiful, and looks much more “natural” than Clarissa . Their relationship has also been very different, as Daisy caused Peter no torment and totally adores him.						
Peter thinks about his situation and wonders if marrying Daisy would be a good idea. She would probably lose her two young children and the respect of society. Peter imagines himself as a man of the world, writing books, having left Daisy behind to idealize him from afar. Then Peter feels dissatisfied with himself, and wonders why he cannot keep out of social situations and women’s company despite his love of privacy.	1	2	3	4	5	
Peter dislikes the idea of staying devoted to Daisy , but he knows he would be furious if she was with anyone else. He interrupts his musings to go down to dinner. The other hotel guests find Peter interesting and respectable based on his appearance and composure in dealing with the waiter, especially the way he orders “Bartlett pears.” The guests want to talk to him, and eventually they make small talk.	1	2	3	4	5	
Peter makes up his mind to go to Clarissa ’s party. He tells himself that he wants to ask Richard about what the Conservatives are doing in India,	1	2	3	4	5	

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and he wants to hear the latest gossip. Peter then thinks of the human soul as something swimming along deep underwater, suddenly needing to leap to the surface, brush against other souls, and gossip together.						
Peter sits down in a wicker chair on the hotel steps and watches the city wake up for the evening. The night is lighter than he is used to, as daylight savings has been introduced to England while he was away. He watches the young people pass by on their way to the movies and admires their fashion. He remembers Clarissa's Aunt Helena , who pressed flowers , had a glass eye, and seemed to belong to a different era.	1	2	3	4	5	
Peter muses that the past and tradition can enrich experience, and then he sets off for Clarissa's with great expectations. As he walks he looks at the lighted windows of people's houses, each with a different kind of life behind it, and he admires the beauty and richness of life. When Peter comes to Clarissa's house he makes his soul "brave itself to endure," opens his pocketknife, and goes inside.	1	2	3	4	5	