Analysis Questions on Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour"

1. Why are Mrs. Mallard's relatives concerned about her hearing the news of her husband?

2. What kind of relationship do the Mallards have? Is Brently Mallard unkind to Louise Mallard, or is there some other reason for her saying "free, free, free!" when she hears of his death?

3. Why does Mrs. Mallard really die? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. The last line of the story is this: "When the doctors came they said she had died of heart disease-of joy that kills." In what ways is this an ironic statement? Is this situational, dramatic or verbal irony?

5. Mrs. Mallard closes the door to her room so that her sister Josephine cannot get in, yet she leaves the window open. Why does Chopin make a point of telling the reader this? How might this relate to the idea of being "free" and to the implicit idea that she is somehow imprisoned? Do other words in the story relate to this idea?

6. Mrs. Mallard is described as descending the stairs "like a goddess of Victory." In what ways does she feel victorious?

7. The story was published in 1894. What view of marriage does the story present?