Study Guide - Select Readings from Dante’s *Inferno*, first part of the trilogy known as *The Divine Comedy.*

First Week’s Readings: Introduction Slides, Cantos 1-5

1. Introduction - Who is the author of *Inferno*, where did he live, and under what circumstances did he write his book?

2. Canto 1 – How does Dante find himself in the dark forest?

3. Canto 1 – What bars Dante’s taking the direct way back to “the straightforward path”?

4. Canto 1 - Who comes to serve as Dante’s guide, and is he alive or dead?

5. Canto 1 - Where must Dante go to get back to the straightforward path?

6. Canto 2 – Who asked Virgil to guide Dante in his journeys, and who was she to Dante?

7. Canto 3 – What is written above the entrance to the underworld?

8. Canto 3 – When Dante and Virgil reach the shores of Acheron, who do they ask to help them cross? As usual, what is his problem with this?

9. Canto 3 – 4 - Who lives in the first circle, Limbo?

10. Canto 5 – Who guards the Gates of Hell and judges all who enter? What was he originally famous for, and in what other book did he guard the gates of the underworld?

11. Canto 5 – What is the second circle of Hell?

12. Canto 6 – What is the third circle of Hell, and what guards it?