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Close Reading Organizer - Chapter 26 **Sample Answers**

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.

Note: There is not always a definitive set of “correct” answers for which themes should appear in the Theme Tracker. Answers that differ from the ones we propose below should therefore not automatically be treated as incorrect, and in fact can serve as great discussion starters.

Themes Key

1	Gender Roles
2	Religion and Theocracy
3	Fertility
4	Rebellion
5	Love
6	Storytelling and Memory

Summary	Theme Tracker						Your Analysis
Offred found the next Ceremony awkward in a new way. Before, she and probably the Commander too both managed to drift absent-mindedly through it, but now Offred felt, for the first time, self-conscious and shy about her body. Offred’s feelings towards Serena Joy changed too, moving from pure hatred to jealousy and even guilt. Offred enjoyed her small power over Serena Joy, but knew that if Serena Joy found out, or if the Commander were slightly careless, she would be horribly	1	2	3	4	5	6	The Commander isn’t the first man for whom Offred has been a mistress. Luke was also married when they began their relationship, and that time, Offred did it for love, not because she had to follow the whims of her superior. Perhaps now Offred doesn’t need to feel guilty, since she must do what the Commander wants. Or perhaps Offred is in the wrong, selfishly focusing on her own love and life. It is interesting though how Gilead would describe Offred’s relationship with Luke as a sin punishable by death but

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punished. At one point during the Ceremony the Commander seemed to want to touch Offred’s face, and later she warned him to be careful, teasing him a little.							officially sanctions and creates her current almost identical “mistress” situation. Gilead’s issue seems not to be with a woman serving as a mistress, but a woman having the choice to act in a way she pleases.
Offred remembers Aunt Lydia talking about future generations, when the population will rebound and there will be enough Handmaids to stay in each household and live like a family. Aunt Lydia says that it’s freer when women work together to run the home, and that in the future each Handmaid might have her own garden.	1	2	3	4	5	6	Aunt Lydia again proves her prowess at presenting Gilead as an improvement over the former world. Her words show how she presents Gilead as a “women’s culture,” as Offred imagines in Chapter 21.
Offred feels that she’s become a traditional-type mistress to the Commander . She thinks that maybe Serena Joy even knows about it and lets it happen to take away some of the burden of being the wife. Offred is happier than before, now that she’s interested in the Commander and that he sees her as a person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	Offred never goes so far as saying she loves the Commander, but this passage shows how much she cares about relationships. She even tries to justify away her guilt about Serena Joy.