The Scarlet Letter

**Due: Sunday, October 20th**  Worth: 50 points

Hawthorne makes extensive use of symbols in *The Scarlet Letter*—the letter “A,” light, dark, the Black Man, the scaffold, the forest, the rose bush, etc. Author Henry James (1843-1963) makes the following observations about Hawthorne’s use of symbols:

In *The Scarlet Letter* there is a great deal of symbolism; there is, I think, too much. It is overdone at times and becomes mechanical; it ceases to be impressive and grazes triviality. The idea of a mystic A which the young minister finds imprinted on his breast and eating into his flesh, in sympathy with the embroidered badge that Hester is condemned to wear, appears to me to be a case in point. This suggestion should, I think, have been just made and dropped; to insist upon it, and return to it, is to exaggerate the weak side of the subject. Hawthorne returns to it constantly, plays with it, and seems charmed by it; until at last the reader feels tempted to declare that his employment of it is puerile.

~*Hawthorne* by Henry James

**Prompt:** Despite Henry James’s opinion on Hawthorne’s overuse of symbols, symbols are used in the story to create feelings, connotations, and bigger ideas. Choose one symbol, explain what it represents throughout the novel (does it change or stay the same), and provide support to prove your theory about the symbol’s meaning. You should have at least 3 examples of that how the symbol’s meaning is created throughout the novel.

You will be composing this essay in class, every day for one week (the week of Oct 16) on your Chromebook! *YOU ARE REQUIRED TO BRING A CHARGED AND FUNCTIONAL CHROMEBOOK EVERY DAY THAT WEEK.*

Reminders:

* Use MLA format
* Textual Citations are REQUIRED
* Use formal, academic language (NO SLANG! Use 3rd person)
* Check grammar and spelling- DON’T USE BIG WORDS YOU DON’T KNOW!
* Proofread!

\*SUBMIT TO TURNITIN.com by **SUNDAY night by 10 pm (OCTOBER 20th)**

HARD COPY to CLASS on **Monday, October 21st**