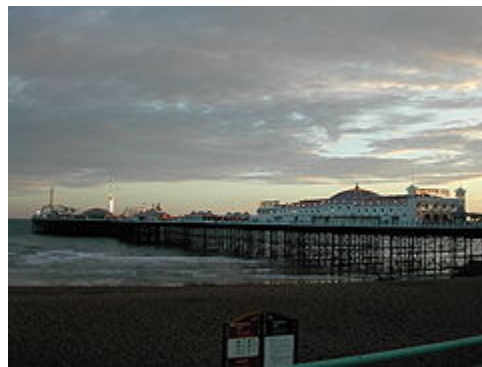


Great Book Discussion Questions – *Brighton Rock*

On the surface, *Brighton Rock* appears to be a straight-forward tale of petty criminality, situated in the seaside resort town of Brighton, England. Below the surface a variety of subtexts are dealt with, and our questions will focus on these subtexts.



1. Ida Arnold is concerned with right and wrong; she pieces together details of Fred's death because it is the right thing to do. Later in the novel, Rose says that while Ida deals in right and wrong, she knows nothing of good and evil. What does Rose mean by this comment?
2. Pinkie feels that Rose completes him – that she is the “good” mirror image to Pinkie’s “evil.” Can we also read the “completeness” of Rose and Pinkie as a mirror image of sadism and masochism in the novel?
3. Is Ida's morality any better than that of Rose and Pinkie? Is Ida's investigation a search for truth, or just a way for Ida to experience some excitement in her life?
4. Are Pinkie and Rose damned, or is there redemption for them – a step “between the stirrup and the ground?”
5. Is Greene arguing that life is deterministic, or is there a way to exert free will with the novel?

6. Pinkie thinks that he cannot understand the concept of hell, since he only experienced depravity during his childhood. Does Greene argue that we are conditioned by our environment within the context of the novel?