When answering any of these questions, you must address the author’s purpose in using a particular device or technique. E.G.: Instead of stating, “Chopin uses irony when ...” and giving examples, you might say “Chopin uses irony in order to …” and identify a purpose. The examples would come afterwards—and they should all be related/serve the same purpose.

1. Why was it assumed that Desiree was the reason her child was not white?
2. Why do you think Armand did not consider Desiree's origins before marrying her?
3. Before the last few lines of this story, are there any clues given by the author which hint at the true cause of the baby's appearance?
4. Why did Desiree ask her husband if he wanted her to go and then act on his decision? Do you think this merely reflected her character, or society at the time of the story?
5. Look at the names in the story: Desiree, La Blanche, L’Abri. What is the associated meaning of each name and how does that relate to the story?
6. Examine the character of Armand. Is he pitiable or not? What motivates him? What is his background? Does he have a choice at the end of the story regarding Desiree and the baby?
7. What does the fire symbolize at the end of the story?
8. How does Chopin use color in the story? Identify the 3 main colors & who is associated with each/their significance?
9. Argue whether or not Armand loves Desiree. Support your answer with specific textual references.
10. Find a few examples of irony in the story, and address their purpose/effect.
11. Look for and find at least 2 examples of foreshadowing that prepare the reader for the ending.
12. How does Chopin use diction in her favor to evoke feelings of sympathy for Desiree and her child as they are walking into the bayou?