

Study Guide Questions for part 1 of *The Stranger*

1. Describe the style of part 1. How does this style of writing contribute to the character of the narrator (Mersault)?
2. Does Mersault lack emotions and a moral basis (like a sociopath), does he just fail to reflect upon his emotions, or can he simply not identify them for what they are? Why do you think so? Explain how your interpretation of this point affects your understanding of Mersault's actions. In particular, reflect on passages in which he describes
 - The death of his mother, and her funeral. (and the fact he calls her "Maman" which is like a child calling his mother "mommy.")
 - The requests placed on him by Raymond
 - His description of, and conversations with, Marie
 - His reactions to the ongoing saga of Salamone and his dog
3. Why has he holed himself up into one room of his apartment since his mother has gone to the home?
4. Why the constant return to the imagery of the sun, and sky? What is Mersault like at times when he mentions the sun? How does he react to it? What do you think the sun represents to Mersault? What do you think the sun is supposed to represent to the reader?