

STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS

The Pit and the Pendulum

1. What is the first scene the narrator describes?

2. After "swooning" and describing various states of being conscious, where does the narrator come to his senses?

3. How did the narrator first explore his dungeon?

4. In what way did he venture to explore after his first circuit? What problem did he encounter?

5. After they realized he would now cautiously avoid the pit, what fate did the narrator's captors plan for him?

6. What else was in the room with the narrator?

7. How did the narrator get free from the table under the pendulum?

8. After the narrator became free from the table, he was subjected to yet another means of death. What was it?

9. Just as he was about to be forced into the pit, what happened?

10. What effect does the ending (the narrator's being saved) have on us as readers?

11. One of Poe's favorite conflicts is that of madness vs. reason. How is that conflict resolved in his story?

12. There are many references to "hope" in this story. Based on evidence from the story, is there hope? Explain.

13. Describe the climax of the story.
