

## **Katherine Anne Porter, “The Jilting of Granny Weatherall,” p. 727—Discussion questions**

### **Group 1**

1. Write a one-paragraph summary of this short story.
2. Identify: George, Hapsy, Cornelia, John, Jimmy, Lydia
3. What happened to Hapsy?
4. What is the significance of Ellen Weatherall’s “seeing” Hapsy and of Hapsy’s “conversation”?  
    . . . Hapsy came up close and said, ‘I thought you’d never come,’ and looked at her very searchingly and said, ‘You haven’t changed a bit.’ They leaned forward to kiss when Cornelia began whispering from a long way off. . . . (p. 731)
5. What was Granny’s relationship with her children? What kind of mother has Granny Weatherall been?

### **Group 2**

1. Read the opening paragraph. What does the opening paragraph tell us about Ellen Weatherall?
2. What does the story reveal about Ellen Weatherall? What traits does this character have? List those traits and identify passages that illustrate those traits.
3. What is the significance of Ellen Weatherall’s name?

### **Group 3**

1. What is Granny’s philosophy of life? (See paragraph 7, p. 727; paragraph 16, p. 728; paragraph 28, p. 730).
2. How does Granny relate to God? Does that attitude/relationship change in the story? How?
3. Discuss the symbol of the bridegroom. What is the significance of that symbol?
4. What does Granny regret at the end of her life? What are her final thoughts?

### **Group 4**

1. How does Katherine Porter portray a person’s dying in this story? How realistic does that portrayal seem to you? Cite examples (passages) from the story to support your conclusion.
2. How does Porter show us, through the character of Granny Weatherall, that we are never prepared for death, no matter how independent we are? (Cite passages from the story to support your answer.)
3. Discuss the significance of the last line in the story: “She stretched herself with a deep breath and blew out the light.”

**Everyone:** Compare Ellen Weatherall with Phoenix Jackson (“A Worn Path,” by Eudora Welty). What significant conclusions can we draw from such a comparison?