Count of Monte Cristo questions

1. The central theme in The Count of Monte Cristo is one of revenge. In the case of this book, is Dantes' quest for vengeance understandable? Is he morally responsible or did he just 'set the stage' for their demise?

2. There are a trio of characters initially responsible for Dantes’ imprisonment. Why does Dantes treat Caderrouse more lightly than he does Danglars and Mondego? Was that fair and did Caderrouse deserve special consideration?

3. Discuss Villefort's decision to imprison Dantes. He believes Dantes has been unfairly accused, but at the same time he fears what? How does Villefort’s character grow or change throughout the story? Is there redemption/repentance for him?

4. What role does the Abbe Faria play in Dante's life? Why does Dantes consider him a second father?

5. Dumas often writes of Edmond Dantès’s time in prison as if it were a death. What do you think is the significance of this choice of language?

6. Discuss Dantes' alienation when he escapes from prison and his gradual movement back into reconciliation with humanity. What are the plot benchmarks and who are the characters who help him regain his humanity?

7. The next generation of children: Valentine de Villefort; Eugenie Danglars, Maximilian Morrel and Albert de Morcerf (son of Mercédès and Mondego). How different/similar are they to their parents?

8. As he takes his leave from Maximillian, Dantes claims that "there is neither happiness nor misery in the world; there is only the comparison of one state with another, nothing more.” What does that statement mean—in the context of the story and in real life—and how does it reverberate throughout the novel?

9. Does the Count succeed in taking his revenge? Is he happy/satisfied/content at the end of the novel? How has he changed from the Edmond at the beginning of the novel?

10. Monte Cristo’s last words to Maximilian are “Wait and hope.” What is the significance of this statement? How does it connect to the larger narrative of the novel? Does the ‘wait and hope’ admonition fit with the Count’s actions throughout the story?

(Questions modified from LitLovers, Spark Notes, Shmoop)