

PinkMonkey® Literature Notes on . . .

SAMPLE MONKEYNOTES FOR "Fathers and Sons"

These are only excerpts from the complete summary to show you the format of the complete MonkeyNote booknotes.

Fathers and Sons

by

Ivan Turgenev



MonkeyNotes by PinkMonkey Staff

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KEY LITERARY ELEMENTS

SETTING

The setting is in the mid-nineteenth century in the countryside of Russia. The Kirsanov family live in a mansion called New Suburb, which due to lack of sufficient money and income has a shabby derelict air around it. The land around it has been rented out to the serfs who farm on it. Most of the scenes in.....

LIST OF CHARACTERS

Major

Nicholas Kirsanov - The father of Arcady, he is an old, contended gentleman, with few accomplishments and a deep love for his son.

Paul Kirsanov - Nicholas' brother, who is a totally different character from Nicholas. Aristocratic and a dandy, he dislikes the modern modes of behavior and thinking.

Arcady - Nicholas' son, he has just returned from the university to spend time with his father.

Bazarov - Arcady's friend; a medical student. He is a firm Nihilist and invites debate and discussion on it without rancor.

Minor

Fenichka - A poor innkeeper's daughter, who later begins to live in Nicholas' house and bears him a child.

Madame Anna Sergeyevna Odintzov - A brilliant, beautiful but cold-hearted woman with.....

CONFLICT

Protagonist - In this novel, the protagonist is clearly Bazarov. The entire novel revolves around him. There is a clear-cut development of his character in the novel. He has been structured as an

Antagonist - Though there is no evil character in the novel, who would create problems or crisis for the plot, it can be said that Paul Kirsanov is an antagonist to Bazarov. He dislikes him.....

Climax - The climax of the novel is reached when Bazarov, who always considered himself above.....

Outcome - What happens thereafter is ordained. Bazarov, a crushed man, returns to his parent's house and tries to lead a solitary life, devoted to medicine. He has no more interest left in love or life now. A final attempt at renewing his relationship with Anna turns out to be in vain and he

PLOT (Synopsis)

'*Fathers and Sons*' is a novel, which revolves around the intricate relationship between the father and the son. Bazarov and Arcady are close friends. Arcady brings his friend home to meet his father, Nicholas Kirsanov. Nicholas is happy to have his son, back home, and gladly accepts any friend of his as a welcome guest in their house. His brother, Paul however is wary of this stranger, who spouts nihilistic ideologies to them.

Nicholas is a little apprehensive of his son's reaction to the new woman in his life, Fenichka and their son, Mitya. But Arcady is an open-minded youth and welcomes them both into his family.

Bazarov and Arcady meet Madame Anna Odintzov at a ball, and their lives undergo a drastic change. Arcady is captivated by Madame Odintzov's brilliance but Madame has eyes, only for Bazarov. Bazarov tries to maintain his detached, indifferent manner towards her, but fails totally, and is finally captivated by.....

THEME(S)

Major

Father-son relationship theme - The prominent theme in Turgenev's '*Fathers and Sons*' is the relationship between the two generations one of the fathers and the other of the sons. When a conflict does.....

Minor

Theme of impact of main character on other characters - Along with the major theme we see a minor theme, almost correlated to the major one. This is the sheer impact that an individual like Bazarov can.....

MOOD

The mood in the entire novel varies from scene to scene and from situation to situation. However, the main thing is that there is no frivolity or light heartedness in the novel. The love between the.....

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Author Information

Ivan Turgenev one of the most critically acclaimed writers in Russian literature of the 19th century was born in Orel, in 1818. Educated at home, he later attended the Universities of Moscow and St. Petersburg. In 1839 he had a stint at the University of Berlin where he acquired the Western values and culture for which he was much criticized in Russia.

His first venture into literature was through his publication 'Parasha' a tale in verse. In 1852, Turgenev abandoned poetry and drama to devote his time to fiction. His first successful novel, '*A sportsman's sketches*' (1852) gave the contrast between the hapless peasants and unpleasant masters. During the next ten years, he produced '*Rudin*' (1856), '*A Nest of Gentle Folk*' (1858), '*On the Eve*' (1860), '*First Love*' (1860) and '*Fathers and Sons*' (1862) some of which attracted the critics attention.

Ivan Turgenev through his novels transcended topical problems. His greatest novel '*Otsy-idei*' (1862: *Fathers and Sons*) dealing with the generation gap, set left-wing writers against him, and he never.....

Historical Information

The term 'Russian literature' is used to describe the literature of different areas, in different periods namely, the old Russian period which extends from the 11th to the end of the 17th century and the modern period which is sub-divided into the pre-Revolutionary period extends from the end of the 17th century to 1917, and the post revolutionary period extends from 1917 onwards.

During the whole of the Old Russian period, literature was influenced by the connections between Russia and Byzantium and between literature and the Orthodox Church. The beginnings of modern.....

CHAPTER SUMMARIES WITH NOTES

Chapter 1

Summary

Nicholas Petrovich Kirsanov with his valet, Peter, are waiting for the arrival of his son. Nicholas owns a

farm, which is rented out to some serfs. Both he and his brother Paul were born in Russia and had led a tutored life. Both had registered in the army but Nicholas had to leave, because of an injury. Paul meanwhile had continued and has got his commission in a Guards regiment. Nicholas had later married a cultured girl called Masha, who had borne him their son, Arcady. Ten years later his wife had died, leaving him in a shock, which he never came out of.

When his son Arcady grew up, he took his son to St. Petersburg and stayed with him for three years, while he pursued his course. Though the last term, Nicholas is unable to stay with his son and he returns to his farm. He is now waiting for his son's return after having completed his studies.

Peter, the valet, spots his arrival and reports it to Nicholas and soon Arcady comes forward to hug his father.

Notes

The novel begins with a detailed description of Nicholas' background and life. The characters are introduced but less importance is given to Arcady in this chapter. He will be drawn out in detail, later.

A regimental childhood is what Nicholas had gone through with great importance been given to education, the military and later, the degree. His marriage to Masha was probably considered an ill match by his parents but they were happy while she lived. The wife's loss had probably strengthened and intensified the tie between father and son, which is why Nicholas is seen awaiting his son's arrival so eagerly.

Arcady is merely introduced as a beardless sun tanned youth, in this chapter but the bonding with his father is already evident.

A technique of the author to be noted is the manner in which he interrupts the narrative to provide background information.

Chapter 2

Summary

Nicholas is brimming with happiness on seeing his son and cannot take his eyes off him. Arcady introduces his friend Bazarov to his father. His full name is Eugene Vassilich. Nicholas is pleased and happy at Bazarov's visit. Arcady and his father ride the horses in their barouche, a carriage, and Bazarov follows in another vehicle.

Notes

This chapter is an interim very short chapter. The deep bond between the father and son is evident in the manner in which they greet each other. Another character is introduced, a friend of Arcady, who has come along with him to visit. He is a tall, lanky man with an air of self-assurance and intelligence about him.

When Nicholas worries as to how Bazarov would travel, as the barouche could accommodate only two, Arcady interrupts him, saying that Bazarov would adjust in the carriage and asks him not to be ceremonious with him. As he puts it "he's a grand fellow and very simple at heart."

OVERALL ANALYSES

Character Analysis

Bazarov - Bazarov, the son of Vassily and Arina Ivanich, was a friend of Arcady Kirsanov. A medical student he had accompanied Arcady to his father's home, before proceeding to his own village.

Bazarov was a tall man, with a long face a broad forehead, greenish eyes and bushy whiskers. His whole

appearance was animated by a serene expression on his face.

Bazarov was a strong believer in the ideologies of Nihilism. He did not believe in principles.....

Arcady - Arcady is the son of Nicholas Kirsanov. He has returned to his father's home after a long stint and is glad to be back home.

Arcady is a cheerful, lively young man, very unlike his serious, melancholic friend, Bazarov. Yet

Madame Odintzov - Anna Odintzov is an exceptionally beautiful woman, striking in appearance and bold in countenance. She had married the late Mr. Odintzov and had realized that a married life was not her forte. After her husband's death, she revealed in a secluded, rich lifestyle, entertaining men but never letting them come too close to her.

Bazarov instantly captivates her attention and she is magnetically pulled towards his charisma. But when she realizes that Bazarov is getting too deeply involved, her innate frigidity and sense of aloofness brings.....

Paul Kirsanov - Paul is Arcady's uncle, who lives with Nicholas Kirsanov. Paul is very unlike his brother. He is suave, dapper, aristocratic and polished. In his youth, he had fallen in love with a woman but had not managed to marry her. He had therefore never married and lived as a bachelor in his

PLOT (Structure)

Ivan Turgenev's much acclaimed novel '*Fathers and Sons*' is an awesome novel, which clearly depicts his craftsmanship as a writer. The entire novel moves in a supple flow, without any breaks of norm. He has neither broken his novel into divisions or books, since the flow is natural enough to be comprehended.

The plot of the novel itself is developed with ease and aplomb. The plot begins simply enough with the introduction of the main character, Bazarov, along with the others, Arcady, Nicholas and

THEME(S)

Major

The theme of the generation gap has been very evocatively patterned out in '*Fathers and Sons*.' The differences between these two generations is a classic one. Nicholas Kirsanov is a simple-minded, good-natured man. His estate is hopelessly mismanaged. He does proclaim an air of liberalism, yet keeps a former peasant girl for a mistress, like any old fashioned feudatory. His brother, Paul is a dandified gentleman, living on a long-lost love.

On the other hand, we have Arcady who is a cheerful character, trying to be on the better side of every individual. He accepts Fenichka's presence in the house, with good grace and is even.....

Minor

Bazarov's impact on every individual he meets is magnetic. He has Arcady virtually in his grasp, nodding his approval at every word of his. Madame Odintzov, who doesn't reveal her innermost feelings to anyone, almost falls for his magnetic charm. It is only her selfishness and innate frigidity that keeps.....

OTHER ELEMENTS

Style

Ivan Turgenev's '*Fathers and Sons*' is filled with significant touches, which hint on to the various conflicts arising in the plot. Certain realistic strokes have been given which adds to the novel's character, and gives it

a certain shape.

Turgenev has depicted the intensity of the father-son relationships in a very intriguing style. At the.....

Nihilism

The word 'nihilism' has been taken from Latin, which means simply, "nothing." It was a philosophy of skepticism that originated on 19th century Russia, during the early years of the reign of..... **QUESTIONS**

1. Give a character sketch of Bazarov

Elaborate on the theory of Nihilism as Bazarov sees it.....

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