

Post-Reading Worksheet for “The Broken Ring

1. Paraphrase the two quotes below.

Quote from Story	Paraphrase the Quote
“I know you are bothered by this ring of mine with no stone” (232).	
“Knowing that this misfortune was a result of my own lack of foresight and understanding, my unhappiness multiplied, and I spent all my days for the next two years deep in sorrow” (238).	

2. What do the two passages above reveal about views of female identity and female duty?

3. At the end of the story, we are told that “my only remaining hope is that this broken ring may somehow be restored to its perfect form by the hand that gave it to me. But I know, of course, that such a thing is not yet . . . ”(239). What did the narrator mean by this? Why end the statement with an ellipsis? What is the effect of this punctuation?

4. The narrator reported that her father “has now come to have great sympathy for my long years of suffering” (239). How might the father’s change of heart serve as a symbol? What might this reveal about social attitudes of early 20th-century Japan?

5. How does Shimizu Shikin's story comment on the social landscape of 20th-century Japan?

6. The narrator asked, "Ah, will it take a hundred years before even a few will come to understand the precious value of this ring?" (232). Do you find the narrator's confusion to be sincere? Why or why not? What do you think she hoped people would realize?

7. Why did the narrator never tell us her name? What was achieved by her anonymity?

8. What characteristics of modern Japanese literature are reflected in this story? Reference your notes on Japanese Modernism to support your position.

9. What perspectives on modernization does this story illuminate?