

**Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*, chapter 1 (1929)**

1. Woolf argues that women must have money and rooms of their own if they are to think and write. Women have not been counted among great thinkers and writers primarily because they have not had the material resources that support intellectual creativity. Toward the end of her book, she wrote “Intellectual freedom depends upon material things. Poetry depends upon intellectual freedom. And women have always been poor, not for two hundred years merely, but from the beginning of time.” Do you agree? Why or why not?
2. What does the metaphor about fishing tell you?
3. What is Mary's response to being excluded from the Oxbridge grounds and library?
4. Why do you think Woolf describes the meals that Mary eats in detail? What is she suggesting about differences between male and female writers?
5. Does Woolf hold Mary Seton's mother responsible for the fact that Mary did not have money to spend on a room of her own in which to write or only a modest college like Fernham to attend?
6. Woolf notes that women in her country (England) now have the right to attend college, own property, and vote. Does this mean that women will now become great thinkers and writers?
7. Woolf concludes chapter 1 by having Mary ponder "what effect poverty has on the mind; and what effect wealth has on the mind." How would you characterize the relationship between material resources and education?