ENG12AP “Hills Like White Elephants”

Nigro/Novak

For each of the questions below, cite lines from this subtle story to support your answer where applicable.

1. How is the setting important to the story?
2. Why do the American and the girl drink so much?
3. Why does Hemingway refer to the two main characters in the way that he does? Why not use their names?
4. Why is the woman fascinated by the hills? How is their description important?
5. How does her phrasing (“I just meant the coloring of their skin through the trees.”) match the meaning of the conversation taking place?
6. Explain the irony of the man’s comments that “It’s really an awfully simple operation.” and “It’s not really an operation at all.”
7. What are the characters really talking about?
8. Why does the man think this operation is a good idea?
9. Why doesn’t the woman agree with him?
10. Why does the woman decide to “do it”?
11. How does the man persuade her?
12. What does the woman really want? How do you know?