



**FORMAN
CHRISTIAN
COLLEGE**
(A CHARTERED UNIVERSITY)

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH (COLLEGE)

BOOK III

PLAYS

Play 1

Heat Lightning

By: Robert F. Carroll

Questions Answers

Q 1: Why couldn't the Girl describe the killer?

Ans: The Girl could not describe the killer because she had not seen him clearly. She was too frightened and confused to remember him.

Q 2: What were the circumstances that forced the girl to leave the car?

(or) Why was the girl forced to leave the car on the road?

Ans: The Girl was coming from a party, and her car ran out of gas. She locked her car and started walking on the road. She thought she could get the bus when it came along. So, these circumstances forced the girl to leave her car.

Q:3 Why did the Girl ask for the help from the First Man?

(or) Why did the Girl consider the First Man her helper?

Ans: When the Girl reached the bus station, the First Man was the only person. She therefore instantly sought his help. It never occurred to her that the murderer could reach there before her. Moreover, the First Man established his trust by being kind and supportive.

Q:4 What was the condition of the weather?

Ans: The weather was stormy. It was raining heavily and continuously. There were flashes of lightning followed by large bursts of thunder.

Q:5 How did the Second Man accuse the First Man of lying?

Ans: The Second Man had already seen the Girl through the glass of the door, but he found the First Man hesitant to tell him about the Girl. Therefore, the Second Man accused him of lying.

Q:6 Does the Girl become suspicious of the First Man as the play progresses?

Ans: No, the Girl does not become suspicious of the First Man as the play progresses, because when she enters the bus station, the First Man is already present there before her. His kind words and supportive attitude also make her believe that he is her well-wisher. Therefore, she finds no reason to suspect him to be the killer.

Q:7 What was the Girl's impression about the Second Man?

Ans: The Girl got terrified by the arrival of the Second Man. She thought him to be the killer. She was, in fact, very much frightened. Moreover, his remarks greatly confused and disturbed, and his inquisitiveness further upset her.

Q:8 Why didn't the Girl accompany the Second Man?

Ans: The Girl didn't accept the offer of the Second Man to accompany him because she suspected him to be the killer who was chasing her. Besides, she was also under the influence of the First Man who established his trust as a helper and a friend and signaled her not to accompany the Second Man.

Q:9 Describe the setting of the play.

Ans: The play "Heat Lightning" is set in the drab interior of a bus station along a deserted highway somewhere in the Midwest. There are two benches back-to-back; one faces the audience, and one faces the rear wall. A door up Center leads out onto the road. There are two doors, up Left and down Left. The room is lighted by an overhanging light with a dull green shade. There is a large bus schedule on the wall up Right Center.

Q:10 What were the factors that played role in saving the girl?

Ans: In the beginning, the pitch darkness and the heavy storm became very helpful for her. Later, the thick woods and twisted way proved to be a great blessing. At the bus station, her ignorance was of value as the killer didn't kill her instantly for he was checking whether she could identify him or not. The Second Man's presence also prevented the First Man from attacking her. Her flashlight also paved the way for her narrow escape. In the end, a dog that attacked the killer made her escape possible.

Q: 11 What is the significance of storm in the play?

Ans: The stormy weather creates an environment of suspense and horror. The storm signifies the troubled feelings of the Girl. It increases her fear. The stormy weather is very unfavorable and adds to the misery of the Girl throughout the play. The suspense of the play reaches its climax due to the storm. It was due to the storm that a dog comes there to take shelter and saves the Girl.

Q: 12 How did the Girl realize the truth?

Ans: It was only when the light went out and the killer took out the flashlight which the Girl identified as hers. It was the same flashlight which she had dropped while running from the killer.

Play 2

A Visit to a Small Planet

By: Gore Vidal

Questions Answers

Q:1 How does Kreton prove his extraordinary powers?

Ans: Kreton, the alien, has extraordinary powers which he proves through his actions. He can hear the minds. He can sense what is going to happen in the future too. When the troops try to take his ship apart, he erects an invisible wall around it. Besides, he also knows all Earthian languages. When General Powers and Aide rush to seize him, they cannot touch him.

Q:2 What is the purpose of the visit of Kreton?

Ans: Kreton has been studying planet Earth for years. He calls the Earth people his hobby. The purpose of his visit is to see human civilization and development more closely. Towards the end of the play, he says that he has come to take charge of the world.

Q:3 How advanced is the civilization of Kreton than that of the Earth?

Ans: Kreton comes from a planet which is much more advanced than Earth. He has extraordinary powers, and his flying saucer works without any instruments. He can also read people's minds.

Q:4 Can the people of Earth compete with the people of Kreton?

Ans: The people of Earth cannot compete with the people of Kreton. His civilization is much more advanced and developed. According to him, human civilization is in the initial stages of development. His flying saucer and extraordinary powers also assert that there is no comparison between both the civilizations.

Q:5 How much damaging is violence in life? Write five sentences.

Ans: Violence is an immoral and inhuman act. It is a tool that spreads terrorism. It destroys the peace of society. Such hurdles prove to be highly destructive and hinder the cause of

development of society.

Q:6 What type of life do you foresee in the year 5000?

Ans: People will be able to travel in space. Spaceships and advanced aircrafts will be seen all around. They will be liberated from the evils of violence, hatred, and enmity.

Q:7 How impressive were the morals of Kreton?

Ans: Kreton was well-mannered. Even the harsh treatment by the troops and General Powers did not make him lose his calm.

Q:8 What is the role of General Powers in the play?

Ans: General Powers is a product of the National Guard of the US Army. He is an important and influential figure who has contacts with the high official of the country. He is also the first official who meets Kreton. He investigates the whole matter, and his job is to guard the security of his country.

Q:9 What is the theme of the study of Kreton?

Ans: Kreton says that he has made a thorough study of the planet Earth. He says that Earth is divided into five continents with a number of large islands, there is one moon, and civilization is only just beginning. He also says that the people of Earth are his hobby.

Q:10 How does Kreton impress General Powers?

Ans: When General Powers comes to know about the extraordinary powers of Kreton, he gets much impressed. Kreton hears his thoughts and tells him that he is thinking of his promotion. He further startles General Powers by building an invisible wall around his spaceship.

Q 11: What kind of a girl is Ellen?

Ans: Ellen is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Spelding. She is a lively girl of twenty. She is engaged to John, who is a farmer. She wants to live a happy life with him on his farm after getting married.

She likes Kreton and wishes to travel in his spaceship.

Q 12: Draw a character sketch of Mrs. Spelding.

Ans: Mrs. Spelding is a simple and loving lady. Although she knows that her husband's job is important for running house, she is not interested in the live broadcast of her husband and looks bored and vague. She becomes worried about the safety of her house when the spaceship lands right in her rose garden. She likes Kreton and welcomes him to her house.

Play 3

'The Oyster and the Pearl'

By: William Saroyan

Questions Answers

Q 1: What is Harry's philosophy of life?

Ans: Harry's philosophy of life is "take-it-easy way."

Q 2: What type of a play is *The Oyster and the Pearl*?

Ans: The play *The Oyster and the Pearl* is a sentimental comedy that is based on tender feelings. It has plenty of humor and wit. It has a happy ending and demonstrates faith in the basic goodness of human nature.

Q 3: Where does the play take place?

(or) How does the barber shop serve as the stage?

Ans: The play takes place in the barber shop of Harry Van Dusen in O.K-by-the-Sea in California.

Q 4: Why is Harry sitting in the barber's chair?

Ans: Harry is sitting in the chair because a boy of nine or ten named Clay Larrabee is giving him a haircut.

Q 5: What is Harry doing when the play begins?

Ans: When the play begins, Clay Larrabee is giving Harry a haircut. While getting the haircut, Harry is reading a book.

Q 6: According to Harry, how does one bring merriment to the tired human heart?

Ans: According to Harry, one brings merriment to the tired old human heart by composing a symphony, painting a picture, writing a book, or inventing a philosophy.

Q 7: What is Miss McCutcheon looking for? How does she feel about the children of the town?

Ans: Miss McCutcheon is looking for a chance to teach, but she is greatly disappointed after meeting the children of the town. She feels that the children are not serious about their studies. She finds them unruly and irresponsible. They only seem to be interested in games and the sea.

Q 8: Did Miss McCutcheon believe that there was a pearl in the oyster?

Ans: No, Miss McCutcheon did not believe that there was pearl in the oyster. She said that only one oyster in a million had a pearl in it; therefore, that was not the millionth oyster with a pearl.

Q 9: What kind of judge was Applegarth?

Ans: Judge Applegarth said that he once judged animals at a county fair. Everyone believed him and started calling him a judge.

Q:10 How does Harry describe the inhabitants of O.K-by-the-Sea?

Ans: According to Harry, the people of O.K-by-the-Sea are all poor. A few people find jobs for a couple of months, come back half dead of homesickness, and live on next to nothing the rest of the year. A few get pensions. In a town of a thousand people, there is not a single rich man. Not even one who is well off. Yet he finds these people to be the richest.

Q:11 Do you think it is right to allow Clay to believe that there is a pearl in the oyster?

Explain briefly.

Ans: Owing to Clay's tough circumstances, many people may believe that he should be allowed to believe that there is a pearl in the oyster as it will bring mental peace and comfort to him. Such an attitude may cause more harm than good in the long run.

Q:12 What year it is?

Ans: The year is 1953.

Q:13 In your opinion, does the play reveal the author's view of life? If so, what is his view of life?

Ans: In the play, *The Oyster and the Pearl*, William Saroyan appears to be a sensitive person who wants everyone to lead a carefree life. He understands the problems of the poor and is of the view that serving the people who are suffering brings spiritual happiness and peace of mind. Besides, Harry's philosophy "take-it-easy" also has its roots in the writer's viewpoint of life.

Q:14 Who is Miss McCutcheon? How does she feel about her job?

Ans: Miss McCutcheon is a new teacher at school who has come from San Francisco. She feels defeated. She wants to quit and go back to home.

Q:15 How much did Harry pay for his shop?

Ans: Harry paid seventy-five dollars for his barber shop.

Q:16 How long has he been in O.K-by-the-Sea?

Ans: Harry has been in O.K-by-the-Sea for twenty-four years.

Q:17 What has attracted Harry and other people to O.K-by-the-Sea? Do you think that it resembles an ideal town?

Ans: The simplicity, innocence, and contentment of the people of O.K by-the-Sea attracted Harry and other people. The inhabitants of the town showed that they were satisfied with their lives. They were poor, but they were loving and caring. They were the people who were poor materially, but they were rich spiritually. They never complained about their poverty. They lived simple and honest lives. It might be an ideal town considering its beauty and simplicity of its people.

Q:18 In your opinion, why is the writer willing to buy the pearl? What has he received in return? What does he mean by saying: "As far as I am concerned, the whole thing's a pearl?"

Ans: The writer is a good-natured person. He has a kind and sympathetic heart. He happens to listen to the harsh reality of the Larrabee family at Harry's shop and realizes the intensity of Clay's dream. Thus, to help him and to keep his dream intact, he decides to buy the oyster. To him, it doesn't matter whether there is a pearl in it or not. He is mainly concerned with the inner satisfaction and contentment that his selfless deed will bring, and he considers them a "pearl".

Q:19 How many barbers are there in O.K-by-the-Sea?

Ans: O.K-by-the-Sea is a town with small population of 909. Harry is the only barber in the town.

Q:20 How much does Harry charge for haircuts?

Ans: Harry says that the regular price for a haircut is one dollar, but generally he charges half or a quarter dollar because one dollar is too much. In some cases, he gives people haircut even free of cost.

Q:21 Where was Clay going when the play opened?

Ans: Clay was going to the sea from the barber shop to find something "real good" when the play opened.

Q:22 Why does the writer not open the oyster?

Ans: The writer does not open the oyster as he claims that he wants the whole thing, and he believes that the pearl hasn't stopped growing yet.

Q:23 Why does Clark return?

Ans: Clark Larrabee returns because he has read the advertisement in "The Gull" in which his family has requested him to come back.

Q:24 What does the writer do with the oyster?

Ans: The writer buys the oyster from Clay for three hundred dollars to help his family. He puts the oyster in his coat pocket and goes out.

Q:25 Why does Clay need money? (important)

Ans: Clay needs money to bring his father back home. He also wants to buy a present for his mother.

Q:26 What had happened to Clay's father? (important)

Ans: Clay's father, Clark Larrabee, had a quarrel with his wife over money. He left his home a month ago in anger. Then he started working at Salinas.

Q:27 What does Clay want to put (place) in the local paper?

Ans: Clay wants to put (place) an advertisement in a local newspaper to call his father, Clark Larrabee, back home.

Q:28 What does Harry advise Miss McCutcheon to do? (important)

Ans: Harry advises Miss McCutcheon to go back to San Francisco while the going's good.

Q:29 What kind of haircut does Miss McCutcheon want?

Ans: Miss McCutcheon wants to have a poodle haircut.

Q:30 Why does Miss McCutcheon want a poodle haircut?

Or

What does Miss McCutcheon think that a poodle haircut will do for her appearance?

Ans: Miss McCutcheon thinks that a poodle haircut will help her fit into the scenery around there.

Q:31 Can Harry give a poodle haircut?

Ans: No, Harry cannot give a poodle haircut as he has never seen a poodle dog.

Q:32 Where has Clark Larrabee been? How does he get to O.K.-by-the-sea?

Ans: Clark Larabee has been working in Salinas since he left his family. He gets a ride down in a

truck and makes a stopover at O.K.-by-the-Sea.

Q:33 What does Clark give Harry? For what purpose?

Ans: Clark gives thirty dollars to Harry so that he could give them to Clay to them to his mother.

Q:34 How far is it to Hollywood from O.K.-by-the-sea?

Ans: Hollywood is about two hundred miles straight down the highway from O.K.-by-the-Sea.

Q:35 What work does the Man do?

Ans: The Man is a writer.

Q:36 What does Clay find near Black Rock? (important)

Ans: Clay finds an oyster near Black Rock.

Q:37 What does Clay believe is in the oyster? How much is it worth?

Ans: Clay believes that there is a big pearl in the oyster. He thinks it is worth at least three hundred dollars.

Q:38 Why does Miss McCutcheon have a chair with three legs?

Ans: Miss McCutcheon has a chair with three legs because she has brought it from the sea.

Q:40 What does Greely have in a bottle?

Ans: Greely has seawater in the bottle believing that there are little living things in the water.

Q:41 Why do they want Wozzeck to come? (important)

Ans: Wozzeck is an expert watch repairer, therefore, they think that he can open the oyster without damaging its pearl.

Q:42 How does Miss McCutcheon view Harry's thinking about the pearl in the oyster?

Ans: Miss McCutcheon thinks that Harry is encouraging people to tell a lie. Instead, he should show the people reality that there is no pearl in the oyster by opening it.

Q:43 Why does judge think that Miss McCutcheon will not last as a teacher? What kind of teacher does he think they need?

or

What does Applegarth say about Miss McCutcheon?

Ans: Judge Applegarth thinks that Miss McCutcheon is young and beautiful and can't control the children. He favors an old, experienced and a strict teacher to teach and control the children. He wants "an old battleaxe" not a "bathing beauty" like her.

Q:44 What is Applegarth's complaint about the sea? (important)

Ans: Applegarth complains that the quality of the stuff the sea is washing up isn't good any more.

Q:45 What kind of gadget does the writer describe?

Ans: The writer describes the gadget that is like a safety razor with which one can have a haircut. It is found in New York.