Short Story Study Guide

Stories include: “Lamb to the Slaughter”, “In A Grove”, “The Lottery”, “The Cask of Amontillado”, “Hills Like White Elephants”, Outliers (intro. to chapter 3)

“Lamb to the Slaughter” by Roald Dahl

Characters – Mary Maloney – housewife; Patrick Maloney – police detective; Jack Noonan – works with Patrick; Sam – grocery store; O’Malley – another police officer

Setting – Maloney house and grocery store; 1950s

Plot – P. tells wife M. that he is going to leave her; she kills him; alibi – grocery store; police come; they eventually eat the murder weapon (leg of lamb)

Questions –

1. What unexpected news is Mary surprised by? *Her husband wants to leave her.*
2. What does Mary do after she kills Pat?  *Lamb goes in the oven.*
3. Who/What is Mary’s alibi? *Sam grocery store*
4. What was the murder weapon? *Leg of Lamb*
5. T/F – Patrick is a doctor. *FALSE*
6. T/F – The P.D. ate the murder weapon. *TRUE.*

*BONUS –* Why was it important to go to the grocery store? ALIBI.

*BONUS* – How is knowing the other police officers an advantage?

“In a Grove” by Ryunosuke Akutagawa

Characters – MAIN - Takehiko – m. to Masago; Masago – m. to Take;; Tajomaru – thief, possible murder?

SECONDARY -Woodcutter; Priest; Policeman; Masago’s mom; Medium

Setting – Japan (near the city of Yamashina); 1400s (feudal Japan)

Plot – TJ leads Tako in the woods; he rapes Macy; he fights Tako; he escapes; she escapes; the story begins

Questions –

1. How did Takehiko die? *Knife to chest*
2. Tajemaru is a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *Rapist, Murderer, Robber, Bad guy*
3. What is the setting?  *Japan, near Yamashina, in a grove*
4. Masago is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *Shamed and beautiful and short.*
5. T/F – Tako and Macy are greedy. *True –*
6. What drove them into the woods? *Greed (swords, mirrors)*

“The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson

Characters – MAIN Bill and Tessie Hutchinson; Mr. Summers; Mr. Graves; Old Man Warner;

SECONDARY – the young boys; the Hutchinson children; Ms. Dunbar; Ms. Delacroix

Setting – small village in New England (300 people); June 27, 1947, morning

Plot – One town gathers for a lottery in which the “winner” is stoned to death.

Questions –

1. How old is Old Man Warner? 68, 71, 77, 92 *77 years old*
2. Who “wins” the lottery? *Tessie Hutchinson*
3. Why was the lottery started? *Sacrifice for plentiful crops.*
4. *T/F –* The winner of the lottery is NOT banished from town.
5. The lottery is on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *June 27*
6. Bonus: Why did Old Man Warner approve of the lottery?

“The Cask of Amontillado” by Edgar Allan Poe

Characters – Montresor – crazy; murderer; family history; Fortunato – proud, buried alive; Luchesi – popular wine dude, used as bait (never seen in the story)

Setting – Venice, Italy during Carnival season (February); 1830s; streets and catacombs

Plot – Montresor tricks Fortunato into getting drunk so that he can bury him alive in the catacombs.

Questions –

1. Where was the story based? *Italy.*
2. What type of alcohol did Montresor use to intoxicate? *Medoc (NOT Amontillado)*
3. T/F – Is Montresor a Freemason? *FALSE (joke he made about being a mason – bricks)*
4. BONUS – Why didn’t Fortunato go back up with Montresor offered? *(GREED! EGO!)*
5. How does Montresor get Fortunato into the catacombs? *Baited him with wine.*

“Hills Like White Elephants” by Ernest Hemingway

Characters – Man (the American); girl (Jig); bartender (woman)

Setting – Spain, between Barcelona and Madrid, train station w/bar; post WWI

Plot – A husband and wife have a discussion.

Questions –

1. What is the topic of conversation? *Abortion.*
2. Where are the couple headed? *Madrid.*
3. Who is older? *Man (vs. girl)*
4. Punet Square – Where do you stand on the story? Opinion?

Outliers (intro to chapter 3)

Questions – 1) T/F – Chris Langan successful won $250,000 on 1 vs. 100. TRUE

2) How does opportunity influence success? ESSAY topic?

3) How does month of birth affect the success of hockey players? Cut off in January, you’re always one of the oldest.

4) What unique opportunities lead Bill Gates to success? *College opportunities, success afterwards, $$$$, IBM, Microsoft.*