

"The School Play" Discussion Prompts

Name_____

Period_____

Page 32- Lines 1-8 *This passage introduces Robert, the story's main character, and Belinda, his intimidating scene partner in the school play. It also sets up the story's conflict—Robert's fear of forgetting his line.*

Who are Robert and Belinda?

What is Robert's line in the school play?

What part does Belinda have in the play?

What is Belinda like? How can you tell?

Page 34- Lines 42-56

What does Robert fear might happen to him if he forgets his line?

Page 35- Lines 71-81 *This passage shows that Robert's teacher and mother have high expectations for him, and that this increases his nervousness.*

What does Mrs. Bunnin want?

To what famous person does Robert's mother compare him? Why?

What does Robert say when people speak to him?

How is the tension building at this point?

Page 35- Lines 94-98

In this passage, Robert imagines being someone with a "super great" memory. How might this fantasy be related to his biggest fear at the moment?

Page 36

Connect: Have you ever struggled to memorize something? Describe your connection. How does this help you understand Robert?

Analyze: In what way does Robert's prop make him forget his line?

Evaluate: Why do you think the author included the description of the clown's mask?

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Page 36 Lines 114-126 *This passage builds suspense as Robert starts to lose his nerve just before the performance.*

How does Robert feel on the day of the play?

What happens when he ties on the beard?

What does Robert ask Belinda? How does she respond?

How do these new complications add to the tension? What do you think will be the climax of the story?

Page 37

Connect: Would you rather be in the audience or on the stage? How do you think Robert would answer this question right now?

Infer: How are the boys in snowshoes helping the audience understand the setting of the play?

Analyze: Why do some students in the audience look in the direction of the piano? What is humorous about this scene?

Page 38- Lines 158-174 *This passage contains the story's climax: Robert delivers his line before the audience.*

Does Robert forget his line? What does he say?

What does Belinda say after she and Robert have spoken their lines? How does Robert feel about Belinda's reaction?

Is this the most exciting or interesting part of the story? Why?
