



Inherit the Wind

Vocabulary, Study Guide- Act I

Look up the definition that best fits the use of the word in the sentence, and identify the part of speech if it isn't already given:

1. bailiff (n)

Mr. Meeker, the bailiff, enters...

2. extradite

That fella from Minnesota that chopped up his wife; we had to extradite him.

3. impassive (adj.)/ impassively (adv.)

Meeker, who has been sweeping impassively now stops.

4. caricatured

5. rubes

They are colorful small town citizens, but not caricatured rubes.

6. sneers

He is a newspaperman... who sneers politely at everything, including himself.

7. Note: Is it ever possible to “sneer politely”? Is this an oxymoron?

8. unctuously

Mrs. Krebs spoke unctuously to Hornbeck and asked if he needed a place to stay.

9. suffrage

The lady folks of this town wouldn't have the vote if it wasn't for you, fightin' to give 'em all that suffrage.

10. chortles

There are chortles of self-confident amusement.

11. saunters

Hornbeck saunters toward the picnic table.

12. indict

When this sovereign state determined to indict the sovereign mind of a less than sovereign schoolteacher...

13. agnostic

Henry Drummond, the agnostic?

14. fray

I'm scouting myself an observation post to watch the fray.

15. heretic

My typewriter's been singing a sweet, sad song about the Hillsboro heretic.

16. linotypes

Or whatever they call the leaden stuff they blow through the local linotypes.

17. benign

Brady sits...fanning himself with benign self assurance...

18. petulant

Bannister was a little petulant when he thought he wouldn't be seated as a juror.

19. venireman

Mr. Meeker, will you call a venireman to fill the twelfth and last seat on the jury?

20. superfluous

The dignity of the court will [not] suffer if we remove a few superfluous garments

21. galluses

I don't know if the dignity of the court can be upheld with these galluses I've got on.

22. affable

Brady spoke with affable sarcasm.

23 nettled

Brady is nettled; this is his show and he wants all the laughs.

24. wanly

He smiles at her wanly.

25. pariah

It takes strength for a woman to love such a man. Especially when he's a pariah in the community.

Allusions (Explain the meaning of these references):

(10) Chautauqua (historical)

(29) Goliath (biblical)

(29) St. George (religious)

(32) Sodom and Gomorrah (biblical)

(32) Happy Hooligan, Barney Google, Abe Kabibble = cartoons

(32) Socrates (historical)

(32) Dreyfus (historical)

(32) The Tree of Knowledge (biblical)

(35) “Henry’s Lizzie” / “flivver” = Henry Ford’s Model T/ cars in general

(35) Marconi (historical)

(35) Montgomery Ward (historical/ commercial)

Act I Study Questions – Scene 1

1. Name of fictional town in which the play is set:
2. Although it seems trivial, Howard and Melinda’s conversation reveals important background information (*exposition*) about the conflict and setting of this play. What does the audience learn from their conversation?
3. What does Rachel not want her father to know? Why do you suppose she feels this way?(Read until Rachel leaves the scene before you answer this.)
4. Why is Bert in jail? (Be specific.)
5. Who is Hornbeck? What facts do we learn about him?
6. How does the town react to the arrival of Brady?
7. Why is Brady coming to Hillsboro?
8. Brady is clearly has a conservative outlook on religious issues, but is there any indication in the mayor’s comments welcoming Brady that Brady is not a complete political conservative?
9. Who will be the defense attorney for Cates?

10. In your own words, how does Brady react to the news concerning the identity of Cates's defense attorney?

11. All the characters speak in prose, except for one. What character speaks in verse (stanzas)? Any thoughts on why this character is singled out in this way?

Scene 2

12. Why does Brady change his mind about allowing Sillers to be a juror?

13. How does Cates react to the news that Brady has asked Rachel to testify against Bert? Why does Cates have a reason to worry?


14. In a single sentence, describe the personality of:


 Rachel

 Bert Cates

 Hornbeck

 Brady

 Mrs. Brady

 Drummond

Do not make any statement about a character unless you can back your description up with support (actual words or logical inference) from the text.

21. Pick out your favorite quote from Act 1, write it, give the page number, and explain what you like about it.

22. So far, what do you predict will be the drama's message? Who is emerging as hero? Who is being criticized? How do the authors communicate these messages about the characters?