

Novel Cinema 3221: IT HAD TO BE MURDER Questions

"It Had to Be Murder" by William Irish, nom de plume of Cornell Woolrich
from February 1942 issue of Dime Detective
Source text for Rear Window (1954) by Alfred Hitchcock

Audio Text:

<http://www.mietecast.com/2006/02/20/it-had-to-be-murder-part-1/>

Print Text:

http://campbell3221.weebly.com/uploads/1/5/5/7/15576170/it_had_to_be_murder_story.pdf

PART A: READING QUESTIONS

(Do any ONE of the following questions. State your answers.)

1. On pp. 1 - 2, the narrator describes the inhabitants of three separate apartments. What order of the writing is used? How do the lives of the tenants fit that order?
2. On page 3, ("When I returned to my original position...") includes the first hint that there is something amiss about the third apartment. What is that hint?

PART B: ANALYTICAL QUESTIONS

(Do any ONE of the following questions. Define the underlined literary term. State your answers.)

3. What is the point of view of this story? What are the benefits and drawbacks of that point of view? What challenges might a filmmaker have in translating that point of view to the screen?
4. Look for examples of visual imagery and auditory imagery. What is the effectiveness of this imagery?
5. On pp. 3 - 4 includes the following statement: "They were all bound in them tighter than the tightest straitjacket and jailer ever devised, though they all thought themselves free." Explain this metaphor, and what the narrator means.
6. Discuss the author's use of foreshadowing.
7. Discuss the effectiveness of the irony in the story.

PART C: VISUALIZATION QUESTION

(Do the following question. You may work with a partner. Put your name on your work!)

8. Use a sheet of plain paper (ledger-size is preferable) and create a comic strip or storyboard version of the opening pages of the story*, in which the narrator describes the setting.

* as far as "The sun slanted down on one side of the hollow oblong all morning long... another day gone" (p. 3).

PART D: FILMMAKER QUESTIONS

(Do ONE of the following questions. State your answers.)

9. If you were to film this story, who would you cast for the following roles (be sure to explain your reasons):

a. Jeff

b. Thorwald

c. Sam

d. Boyne

10. If you were to film this story, what kind of adaptation would you make? Explain, using your notes "Regarding Adaptations" as a guide.