

### *The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street* Text-Dependent Questions

<b>Text-dependent Questions</b>	<b>Evidence-based Answers</b>
How does the author establish the that this is a teleplay (how is this different from the writing of another genre like short story,	The narrator keys you into the genre (science fiction or fantasy) through words and phrases like “fifth dimension”, “space between science and superstition”, “imagination”, “twilight zone”.
What mood does the narrator establish on page 1, and what words and phrases does the narrator use to draw the reader into the text?	The narrator sounds mysterious, using words that draw the reader into a world that holds possibilities just beyond, but possibly within, the grasp of man. (For example: “dimension of imagination,” and “between science and superstition.”) There’s no opinion involved (sounds factual), and the repetitive lines (“it is”, “there lies”, “it will”) allow the narrator to seem disconnected from the story, adding to the sense of mystery.
Looking at the opening descriptions of the setting of Maple Street, what does the author want the reader to understand about the situation and the characters? Cite examples to support your answer.	There’s the Good Humor man (students can determine what a Good Humor man is through context) on a bicycle, children playing, quiet tree-lined street, people sit and swing on gliders on front porches, chatting across their porches, women gossiping, and men watering lawns. These details (selling ice cream on a bicycle, gliders on porches) show that it’s an “average” suburban neighborhood in an older time period or small town. Everyone seems happy or content, living a “normal” life in a suburban neighborhood, including a little bit of gossip. Students may identify how these minor, common things, such as gossip and watching others, can develop into extreme behavior.
What does the narrator’s dialogue on page 1 & 2 tell the reader about what will occur later in the plot?	The phrase “last calm and reflective moments” shows that there will be chaos later on, and the phrase “before the monsters came” is foreshadowing later events. It creates a feeling of dread and anticipation. The ellipses also reinforces that there is a moment of reflection and/or buildup (suspense).

<p>What is the effect of the author including the “Voices” dialogue on page 2?</p>	<p>The buildup of the anxiety of the characters can be seen when they all speak together in small, mildly disturbed voices. It shows their immediate fright and concern. In the stage notes on page 62, the author’s use of the word “creep up” and later use of the phrase “again murmur softly in wonderment and question” indicate a rising and falling of tension that will build up to violence.</p>
<p>On page 3, when the author says (through Charlie), “A little power failure and right away we all get flustered and everything,” what does the word flustered mean? How does this tie into the character reactions?</p>	<p>Context clues students could use: the notion that the power failure is “little” and that people will think they’re “crazy”. Flustered means that people get nervous and start acting odd. This fits because they are rattled out of fear and nervousness at the unknown.</p>
<p>What do Steve’s words and the stage directions reveal about him or his intentions? (ACT 1)</p>	<p>Steve is trying to be optimistic and encourage others. He says “you’ll see”, “just a...meteor or something”, “or something”, “likely as not”, “no doubt it (the meteor) did have something to do with the power failure or something”. The ellipses and dashes convey his uncertainty. In the stage directions, it says, “Steve is trying to weigh his words with an optimism he doesn’t feel...”</p>
<p>What does the word “murmur” mean, and why is it used repetitively in Act I (twice on page 3, once on page 4, three times on page 6 and page 8, and on page 9)?</p>	<p>Murmur means to quietly and discreetly say something, often a complaint. (Students might be able to identify this word in context with the words “of reaction”, “looks from face to face”, “of assent”). As it says on page 64: The people are saying things they don’t want to say directly, they’re unsure, there are fears being brought up that shouldn’t be brought up. The murmur shows uncertainty.</p>
<p>When Tommy says, “They sent four people. A mother and a father and two kids who looked just like humans... but they weren’t,” what is the effect on the crowd?</p>	<p>It describes the crowd as, “another silence,” “Steve wears a tight grin,” “there’s a laughter... but it’s a laughter that comes from a desperate attempt to lighten the atmosphere,” “Charlie laughs nervously, slightly forced,” and Charlie rubs his jaw nervously. This shows that even though Tommy’s idea is outlandish, it gives a direction for their fears and suspicions. As such, people are becoming more fearful, nervous, and suspicious.</p>
<p>How do different people view Les Goodman in Act I? What do their actions and statements reveal?</p>	<p>As the people are already murmuring and nervous, his car starts up. This gives some people in the crowd a target for their fears. Woman One realizes that he didn’t come out with everyone else to look at the thing in the sky, so he becomes the target of the mob. Charlie singles Les out, calls him a “real oddball”, cuts off Steve to insist that Woman One be able to talk. Charlie only wants people to talk who reinforce what he thinks. Most of the crowd turns on Les as a mob, with Don asking why he didn’t come out with the rest to look. On the other hand, Steve is the Devil’s Advocate, questioning their finger-pointing, stating, “We’re all on a monster kick...”</p>

<p>How have the characters shifted from a crowd to a mob? What words on pages 8 and 9 reinforce the idea of a mob? How is this mob mentality significant?</p>	<p>The people have shifted from a crowd with descriptors such as, “there’s laughter at this”, “there’s silence,” and “as they stare...caught up by this revelation...”, all of which indicate that there is still thoughtfulness in the crowd. The phrases: “wild stampede,” “frightened murmuring,” “murmuring becomes a loud chant,” “accusations,” “demands for action,” show that they have developed a mob mentality. This is significant because they’re no longer thinking as individuals; they are less rational with reactions such as “fear almost turns their walk into a wild stampede” and “filling the air with accusations and demands for action.” The lack of discussion and demand for immediacy indicates irrational thought.</p>
<p>Why do you think that the author chose to use the word metamorphosis instead of change in the sentence, “...they take the first step toward a metamorphosis from a group into a mob.” What does this reveal about human nature? (p. 8)</p>	<p>It’s a scientific word that relates to a natural progression (as opposed to a choice). The words “first step,” indicate that it is a progression rather than an automatic change. (Some may also feel that it has a negative connotation from being tied to insects.) This reveals the facet of human nature for people to be fearful of the unknown and desirous of someone to blame (a scapegoat). It also reveals that fear builds more fear within groups.</p>
<p>On page 9, Les reacts to the crowd. What does he say, and what does this reveal about the theme?</p>	<p>Les says, “As God is my witness...you’re letting something begin here that’s a nightmare!” Les, because he’s the victim of suspicion and scapegoating, recognizes the destructive path that the people are on. There is no evidence to indict either man, yet the neighbors are ready to lay blame on the shoulders of any person who is unusual. This illustrates the theme that when inexplicable or emotional situations arise, civility can be destroyed.</p>
<p>How does the title relate to Steve’s joke on page 8 that “We’re all on a monster kick, Les.”?</p>	<p>He’s being sarcastic about people being monsters, but they really are monsters (the title refers to the people) because of their fear and the violence emerging from their fear. Steve actually says, “Seems that the general impression holds that maybe one family isn’t what we think they are,” and “You know anybody that might fit that description around here on Maple Street?” Steve unknowingly identifies them all as the monsters, which is what the title is revealed as meaning.</p>
<p>The dark ages were a period of intellectual darkness and regression. On page 10, why does the author choose to use the phrase “dark ages” instead of dark? How does this tie back to the narrator’s original opening?</p>	<p>They’re in the dark ages because of their loss of reason and civility versus Charlie’s basic use of the term. Terms like, superstitious, fearful, little knots of people, indicate the loss of civility. Students can connect this to the opposites presented in the quote “it is the middle ground... between science between superstition,” and “between the pit of man’s fears and the summit of his knowledge.”</p>
<p>From pages 10-11, what is the sequence of events that describe the mob’s progression? How do the plot and character actions develop a theme of the story?</p>	<p>On page 848, the characters continue picking out idiosyncrasies of people out of fear and desperation to find a scapegoat. Arguments ensue in their increasing madness. A figure begins to approach and rather than</p>

<p>plot and character actions develop a theme of the story?</p>	<p>wait for any information about who or what it is, they recoil in fear (grabbing their children and crying out), and Charlie actually gets his gun and shoots without warning. The community has progressed from denial to fear to accusations to violence. (More stages of the metamorphosis.) These events and the decisions and reactions of the characters show that people have a tendency to let fear get the better of them, leaving reason and rational thought behind. This reveals the theme that fear and the careless, reactive search for a scapegoat, particularly with group behavior, can destroy civility.</p>
<p>On page 10-11, using Charlie’s reactions and words as evidence, how do you think Charlie feels about shooting Peter Van Horn?</p>	<p>Charlie went from hunting people down, trying to find the culprits, to suddenly being the accused. His reactions are described as “contorted” and his eyes are frightened. He says, “but I didn’t know who he was,” and “how was I supposed to know he wasn’t a monster or something?” This shows that he’s mortified (he looks down wildly at the body) but trying to justify his shooting.</p>
<p>At the end of the play, what conclusion do the aliens come to about humanity?</p>	<p>They come to the conclusion that the world is full of Maple Streets, and that humanity is its own worst enemy. To destroy humanity there’s no need for weapons, as the aliens say, “We’ll go from one to the other and let them destroy themselves.”</p>
<p>What are the weapons of humanity? How can each destroy? Use specific evidence from the text to support how each of these weapons caused destruction in this story. (page 18)</p>	<p>The weapons are “thoughts, attitudes, prejudices...” as well as “suspicions” and the “search for a scapegoat.” Evidence of each is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● thoughts – Tommy’s thoughts of aliens and imposters moved the community to look inward for enemies</li> <li>● attitudes – Charlie’s accusation that Goodman is an oddball and the idea that anyone “different” must be suspicious causes them to focus on specific community members</li> <li>● prejudices – the dark figure has no chance to be identified before people assume the worst, leading to Pete being shot</li> <li>● suspicions – the lights in the houses cause people to be suspicious of others, think the worst, and fuel the fire</li> <li>● search for a scapegoat – after Charlie shoots, he becomes the next scapegoat, and then attempts to push off to another scapegoat (Tommy)</li> </ul>
<p>Why does the author title the story “The Monsters are Due on Maple Street”? What is the significance of the word “due”?</p>	<p>Initially, the reader is led to believe that outside monsters, such as aliens, will arrive, with quotes such as, “monsters from outer space” on page 842, and even when Peter van Horn enters the town and “Mothers clutch children, men stand in front of wives... as the figure gets closer and closer” (page 849). Instead, it is revealed that due to a chain of events and human behaviors, the humans themselves are the real monsters. The word “due” emphasizes the author’s idea that, unless checked by careful thought and reason, the fear of the unknown will inevitably lead to the destruction of civilized behavior.</p>