

Inherit the Wind
Act 1 Study Guide
Scene 1: page 3-32
Scene 2: page 33-49

Study Guide Directions:

Answer each question in 3-5 sentences using details from the text. Bonus for using appropriate quotes.

How we'll do this:

- Vocabulary will be assigned. Make sure you share your words' definitions with the group. (Notice that *words'* is plural and possessive.)
- Skim the scenes before you come to class. Refer to the Allusions and Vocabulary lists as you read.
- Taking parts, we will read Scene 1 fully (dialogue and stage directions!). We may read Scene 2 together.
- We will discuss each question on the Scene 1 study guide, either as a whole class or in small groups. Each person must write his or her own answers; work on these at home to get them done. I do expect the ideas to sound very similar because we discussed them in class.

Questions for Scene 1:

1. Comment on how well the opening (between Howard and Melinda) fulfills its purpose: to introduce the conflict between science and religion.
2. Discuss Rachel. What does she truly believe? How might she affect this trial?
3. Comment on Bert's decision to teach evolution: why did he do it? Is it worth the consequences?
4. Comment on what we know about the townspeople based on their big welcome of Brady and their reaction to the news that Drummond is coming to town.
5. At one point, a hawker cries, "Hot dog!" at the same time Elijah calls, "Bible!" What dramatic effect does this create? Also explain the effect of Hornbeck's choice as a dramatic moment.
6. Explain what Brady means when he says, "What a challenge it is to fit on the old armor again! To test the steel of our Truth against the blasphemies of Science!"
7. Hornbeck says, "Brady came here to find himself a stump to shout from. That's all." Explain.
8. How has the media/visitor invasion affected the town?

Questions for Scene 2:

9. What does the judge think/believe?
10. Which side seems to have a stronger argument/case/lawyer at this point?
11. Drummond asks Rachel, "Can you buy back his respectability by making him a coward?" What does he mean? What does this tell us about Drummond?
12. How could Rachel's testimony affect the case? How could it affect her relationship with Bert?
13. Drummond's comment closes the act. Explain what he means and how this comment reflects on his view of religion.
14. Make predictions: what will happen as the trial begins?

Inherit the Wind Act 1 Vocabulary

Directions: Look up *your* words and share definitions with your group; then refer back to your notes as you read the play. The words appear in the play in this order; page numbers are provided for scene 1.

Preface:

1. genesis
2. exodus

Scene 1 (p.3—18):

3. converging (p.3)
4. obscure
5. indignant (p.4)
6. distraught
7. extradite (p.6)
8. impassive (p.8)
9. caricature (p.10)
10. rube
11. cornet (p.11)—a musical instrument
12. depot
13. sneer (p.12)
14. sophisticated
15. contempt
16. unctuously (p.13)
17. unplumbed/plumbingless—a pun.
“Unplumbed” means its depths have not been measured; “plumbingless” refers to a lack of indoor plumbing, which had been available in cities since the 1800s. Hillsboro still uses outhouses.
18. miffed (p.14)
19. infidel
20. haughtily
21. monkeyshines—playful tricks or pranks
22. hurdy-gurdy—barrel organ played by turning a crank
23. tread (p.15)
24. augmented (p.16)
25. jubilant
26. benign
27. patriarch
28. paunchy
29. indeterminate
30. alpaca (p.18)—refers to wool from an alpaca
31. arrogant
32. statute
33. suffrage (p.19)—the right to vote
34. oratorical (p.20)
35. repast (p.21)
36. blasphemies
37. precept (p.22)
38. heathen

39. dogma—principles or beliefs, especially of a religion

40. chortle (p.23)

41. saunter

42. connotation

43. agnostic

44. blithe (p.24)

45. jaunty

46. heretic/heresy (p.25)

47. rancid (p.29)

48. cynical (p.30)

49. detest

50. incredulous/incredulity

51. hinterland (p.31)

52. boob—an idiot, a boor, someone who does not know what he is talking about

Scene 2 (p.33—49):

53. sweltering

54. petulant

55. venireman

56. titter

57. poised

58. superfluous

59. askance

60. galluses—suspenders

61. affable

62. nettled

63. righteous

64. pious

65. levity

66. denounce

67. impartial

68. wrangle

69. conform

70. preposterous

71. wanly

72. conviction

73. pariah