

“The Veldt” Discussion Questions

1. GO OVER your notes and make sure they are complete and accurate.
2. You should be imagining the veldt, or African savannah, in the playroom. Describe what a person in the room would see in lots of detail.
3. Explain what George and Lydia see in their first visit to the playroom; be specific (1-2). Why does it make him laugh when she almost cries? Give quotes as evidence.
4. Why is Lydia unhappy in her home (3)? Contrast this with the way George seems to feel. Give quotes as evidence.
5. What did the kids used to create in the playroom (4)? Give quotes as evidence. Why is it so important to the adults that the room has not changed lately?
6. Describe and explain the conversation George and Lydia have with their children (5). Give quotes as evidence.
7. Did Wendy change the room (5-6)? Give quotes as evidence.
8. Describe and explain Peter’s conversation with George (7-8). Give quotes as evidence.
9. How much control do these parents have over their children? Give quotes as evidence. Is this a good or a bad thing?
10. Maclean explains what’s wrong and gives advice (8-10). Summarize and give your own opinion of his ideas. Give quotes as evidence.
11. How do his family members react when George shuts off the playroom (10-11)? Give quotes as evidence.
12. Does George regret his decision to turn off the playroom (10-11)? Give quotes as evidence.
13. Why do George and Lydia go back in the playroom? Why can’t they get out? What do they realize (11-12)? Give quotes as evidence.
14. What happened to George and Lydia in the room? How is this possible?
15. When Maclean comes back, what does he find (12)? How are Peter and Wendy different? Why? Give quotes as evidence.
16. What do you think happens next?
17. The story ends in violence and death. Would you call it an accident, or murder? Who is most responsible for what happened? Who is innocent? How could this ending have been avoided? Give quotes as evidence.
18. Why did Bradbury choose these names for his 5 characters? Especially pay attention to the children’s names.
19. Authors often put their own ideas in the voice of a character. Which character speaks for Ray Bradbury? Why do you say that? Explain the message of this story: what was Bradbury trying to say? Is the play a warning?
20. Is “The Veldt” still applicable today?

SOCIAL COMMENTARY ESSAY PRACTICE

Prompt: Readers who examine literature closely will find criticism of human nature or of society’s flaws. Create a thesis and then write one essay paragraph that explores this idea using Bradbury’s “The Veldt” as an example.

Thesis ideas:

Society is too _____.

Society is not _____ enough.

Society’s biggest problem is _____.

Authors who criticize society for _____ are wrong/right.

Writers who predict that society will _____ are wrong/right.

Note: You can replace “society” with “people” in the first four.