

Reproducible

OUR TOWN

Choose the letter of the word or phrase that comes closest to the meaning of the main word.

Act I

1. **trellis**
 - a. platform on wheels
 - b. support for vines
 - c. frame for a door
 - d. piece of furniture
2. **burdock**
 - a. fruit
 - b. vegetable
 - c. weed
 - d. tree
3. **heliotrope**
 - a. plane
 - b. flower
 - c. gas
 - d. cylinder
4. **pneumonia**
 - a. drill
 - b. insurance
 - c. post
 - d. disease
5. **fatigue**
 - a. cheerfulness
 - b. weariness
 - c. briskness
 - d. uneasiness
6. **gingham**
 - a. fabric
 - b. spice
 - c. liquor
 - d. carriage
7. **phosphate**
 - a. photograph
 - b. candy
 - c. drink
 - d. fruit
8. **unobtrusively**
 - a. noisily
 - b. forcefully
 - c. slowly
 - d. unnoticed
9. **legacy**
 - a. inheritance
 - b. illness
 - c. law
 - d. legend
10. **traipsing**
 - a. traveling rapidly
 - b. sleeping soundly
 - c. walking idly
 - d. working busily
11. **savant**
 - a. scholar
 - b. fool
 - c. artist
 - d. administrator
12. **pince-nez**
 - a. bookmark
 - b. pocketwatch
 - c. eyeglasses
 - d. club pin
13. **vestiges**
 - a. layers
 - b. traces
 - c. pockets
 - d. outcroppings
14. **brachiocephalic**
 - a. short-headed
 - b. short-armed
 - c. short-legged
 - d. short-lived
15. **illiterate**
 - a. unhealthy
 - b. unsophisticated
 - c. unimaginative
 - d. uneducated
16. **remorse**
 - a. rebirth
 - b. warning
 - c. excess
 - d. regret
17. **belligerent**
 - a. confused
 - b. warlike
 - c. timid
 - d. kind
18. **diligent**
 - a. intelligent
 - b. quarrelsome
 - c. hardworking
 - d. gentle
19. **careen**
 - a. sway
 - b. plan
 - c. run
 - d. seize

Act II

20. **farce**
 - a. tragedy
 - b. prank
 - c. fantasy
 - d. comedy
21. **gangling**
 - a. immature
 - b. irresponsible
 - c. ungraceful
 - d. athletic
22. **meditative**
 - a. thoughtful
 - b. peaceful
 - c. graceful
 - d. painful
23. **barren**
 - a. spiteful
 - b. unproductive
 - c. interesting
 - d. silly
24. **alacrity**
 - a. quickness
 - b. watchfulness
 - c. assertiveness
 - d. earnestness

25. **crestfallen**
a. alarmed
b. confused
c. dejected
d. rejected
26. **affront**
a. insult
b. frighten
c. anger
d. embarrass
27. **musingly**
a. tunefully
b. reflectively
c. noisily
d. flippantly
28. **contrive**
a. shove
b. pull
c. accept
d. scheme
29. **exasperation**
a. irritation
b. excitement
c. happiness
d. depression
30. **tableau**
a. tapestry
b. tablet
c. picture
d. symbol
31. **cynicism**
a. flattery
b. sarcasm
c. humor
d. warmth
- Act III**
32. **lugubrious**
a. stiff
b. peaceful
c. sharp
d. mournful
33. **sentiment**
a. reason
b. discretion
c. emotion
d. attachment
34. **genealogy**
a. behavior study
b. society study
c. rock study
d. ancestry study
35. **weaned**
a. accustomed
b. detached
c. reduced
d. rejected
36. **lumbago**
a. headache
b. lung disease
c. back pain
d. sore throat
37. **bereaved**
a. deprived
b. rebuked
c. depraved
d. wreathed
38. **epitaph**
a. execution
b. description
c. inscription
d. equation
39. **subside**
a. agree
b. quiet
c. join
d. follow
40. **patent**
a. leather strap
b. illegal contract
c. minor adjustment
d. protected invention
41. **anguished**
a. painful
b. furious
c. solemn
d. cheerful

Reproducible

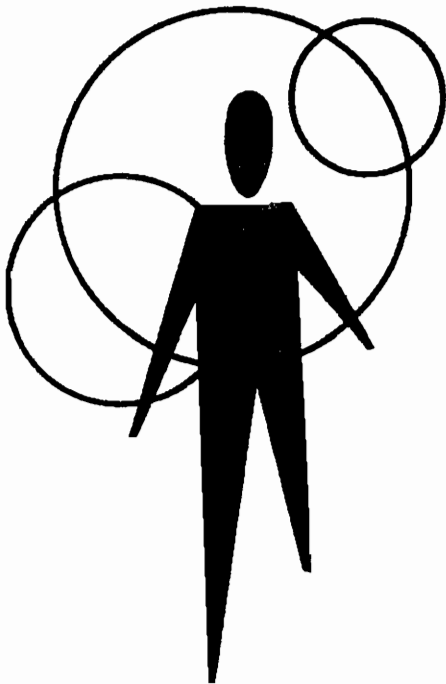
OUR TOWN

1. Grover's Corners is introduced by _____
2. Mrs. Gibbs says she dreams of _____
3. Professor Willard discusses _____
4. Editor Webb reports on _____
5. Emily promises to help George with _____
6. Doc Gibbs talks to George about _____
7. Mrs. Gibbs tries to persuade her husband to _____
8. In the mirror, George practices saying, _____
9. Doc and Mrs. Gibbs reminisce about _____
10. Mr. Webb gives George a tip on _____
11. George and Emily relive the day they _____
12. George says he doesn't want to be _____
13. Emily says she doesn't want to get _____
14. George promises to love Emily for _____
15. Emily's death comes _____
16. Emily chooses to relive her _____
17. Emily returns to _____

Transume
of Emily

Reproducible

OUR TOWN



A. Initial Character

1. Sees George as an adolescent
2. Values superficial things such as appearance
3. Takes life for granted
4. Is caught up in minor daily concerns

B. Forces of Change

1. Loving and marrying George
2. Working hard with her husband
3. Returning to her twelfth birthday after death
4. Experiencing the peace of the grave

C. Character Change

1. Believes the living are too preoccupied to notice the real nature of others
2. Matures to a warm, sensitive awareness
3. Understands the precious, bittersweet nature of human life
4. Allows her eternal part to emerge

Contemporary Classics Study Questions

Act I

1. What is revealed in the half-light on stage as the play begins?
2. How is the Stage Manager dressed when he enters?
3. How does the Stage Manager set the stage?
4. What purpose is served by the first lines of the Stage Manager?
5. Where and when is the setting?
6. What is shown in the first act?
7. How does the Stage Manager introduce Grover's Corners?
8. The Stage Manager narrows Grover's Corners by pointing out the houses of Doc Gibbs and Editor Webb. Two trellises are pushed out on each side of the stage. What dual purpose do these trellises serve?

9. Mrs. Gibbs rises to get breakfast. What is learned about the staging from this scene?

10. The Stage Manager introduces Dr. and Mrs. Gibbs, then tells the audience when and how they die. What is the purpose of this?

11. What is the point of the information about Joe Crowell, Jr.?

12. What does Mrs. Gibbs talk to her husband about at breakfast?

13. How different is the morning routine at the Gibbsses' and the Webbs'?

14. What have George and Mrs. Gibbs been discussing as the Webb children are told to eat at the table rather than read?

15. What is on Mrs. Gibbs' mind as she offers to help Mrs. Webb string beans?

16. How does Mrs. Webb deal with Mrs. Gibbs' secret?

17. Mrs. Gibbs says she is sorry she brought the subject up. Is she? Why or why not?

18. How does the conversation end?

19. The Stage Manager says he is going to skip a few hours, but first the audience will get some background information. What kind of information is given?

20. Editor Webb says that women in Grover's Corners "vote indirect." What does this mean?

21. Why is Grover's Corners described in such great detail?

22. What other purpose is achieved by using a "lecture, with questions afterwards" kind of format in describing the town?

23. What kind of place is Grover's Corners?

24. The Stage Manager returns to the play proper, picking up the action at midafternoon. What do we learn about Emily as she speaks with her father?

25. Why is Mrs. Forrest necessary?

26. What is the purpose of the short scene between Emily and George?

27. What does Mrs. Webb recognize about George?

28. What seems to be on Emily's mind as she talks with her mother?

29. Her mother tells Emily that she is attractive. Why does Emily end by saying that her mother has to say something about her?

30. The Stage Manager stops the action again. What does he talk about this time?

31. Describe the staging of George and Emily's "balcony scene."

32. Do George and Emily have the same thing on their minds?

33. What purpose does Simon Stimson's speech serve?

34. Dr. Gibbs talks with George about helping his mother. Does this quiet talk make any impression on George?

35. Why would Dr. Gibbs mention that he plans to raise George's allowance when he does?

36. How does the moonlight affect Mrs. Gibbs?

37. Is Mrs. Soames successful in her attempt to arouse Mrs. Webb and Mrs. Gibbs over Stimson's drunkenness?

38. What becomes apparent regarding Mrs. Soames during Dr. and Mrs. Gibbs' moonlight walk in their garden?

39. How does Dr. Gibbs feel about Stimson?

40. How successful is Mrs. Gibbs in furthering her travel plans?

41. The moonlight also affects George and Rebecca. What do Rebecca's lines point out?

42. As evening comes, what happens in Grover's Corners?

43. Rebecca tells about Jane Crofut's letter. What is the importance of the address on this letter?

44. What do both Rebecca and George find startling about the letter?

Act II

45. How is the stage set for the beginning of Act II?

46. When does Act II take place?

47. What does the Stage Manager have to say about nature?

48. How does the Stage Manager describe Mrs. Gibbs and Mrs. Webb?

49. Why does the Stage Manager call the Middle West poet's lines about life a vicious circle?

50. How does the day begin in Act II?

51. Mrs. Gibbs says that weddings are awful things. Does she mean this?

52. Dr. and Mrs. Gibbs recall the fears they felt on their wedding day. What purpose does this conversation serve?

53. How does Mr. Webb feel about being left alone with George at breakfast?

54. Is all of Act II set in 1904?

55. Why is Emily upset with George?

56. Why is Emily crying as she and George enter Mr. Morgan's drugstore?

57. What further aspect of the Stage Manager's role becomes apparent in the drugstore scene?
58. What do George and Emily decide in the drugstore?
59. Did George have the money to buy Emily a soda in the first place?
60. What does the Stage Manager have to say about marriage?
61. Who is the real hero of any wedding?
62. Who are the witnesses at George and Emily's wedding?
63. How does Mrs. Webb feel about marriage?
64. Do George and Emily rush unthinkingly into marriage?
65. The vows are taken and the stage picture freezes a moment. Why does the Stage Manager choose this moment to say that one in a thousand marriages is interesting?
66. George and Emily leave through the audience after their vows. What purpose does this serve?

77. Note the use of sound. What do the mourners sing?

78. How is Emily dressed? What is the significance of her being dressed in this manner?

79. How does Emily feel as she joins the dead?

80. Did Mrs. Gibbs use her legacy for travel?

81. What concerns Emily now?

82. As the dead join in small talk and discuss the weather, what does Emily realize?

83. Why do the dead urge Emily not to return to the living?

84. Why does Emily decide to return?

85. Emily is advised to choose an unimportant day to relive. What day does she choose?

86. As Emily begins reliving her twelfth birthday, how does the stage change?

87. How does the day begin?

88. Is Emily's return painful?

89. What does Emily wonder as she returns to the dead?

90. How does the Stage Manager answer Emily?

91. Does death soften Simon Stimson's bitterness?

92. Does Mrs. Gibbs agree with Stimson?

93. Do the dead approve of George's behavior when he returns to the cemetery?

94. Does Emily want to comfort George?

95. How does the Stage Manager close the play?



Post-Reading Interview

1. How did you feel when you read the last page, closed the book, and began to reflect on what you read? Comment on whether reading this play changed your opinion about life in a small town or life in general.
2. Imagine yourself in the world of Grover's Corners. Would you have been happy there? Explain.
3. How do you think the play would be different if there were no Stage Manager? What do you think he adds to the play? takes away from it?
4. Wilder said this play was an attempt to find value in the smallest events of daily life. Do you think he achieved this goal? Explain.
5. Do you think *Our Town* is a good title for the play? Why or why not?
6. Critics have said that Thornton Wilder's play is essentially optimistic. Would you agree? Explain.
7. How well does Thornton Wilder convey the idea that childhood, marriage, and death are stages of life "repeated millions of times in the lives of millions of people"?
8. Has the book raised any questions in your mind, or have you learned something from it that you want to share with others? How could you develop your questions or ideas into a project?