

Name: _____

Date: _____

Period: _____

Brighton Beach Memoirs Study Guide: Act 1

Mrs. Howard

Brighton Beach Memoirs by Neil Simon
Act One

1. What is the setting of the play?
2. How is Eugene characterized?
3. Why is Laurie so pampered?
4. What is Aunt Blanche's situation?
5. What are the two things that Eugene wants to be when he grows up?
6. Who is Nora? What is her exciting news?

7. Who makes all the decisions in this family?
8. What mortal sin has Eugene committed?
9. What happened to Stanley at work?
10. Why doesn't Stan want to write the letter of apology to his boss?
11. How does Eugene feel about his brother?
12. What happens to Blanche?
13. Why doesn't Blanche go see a doctor?
14. What does Jack do for a living?

15.What is Jack afraid of?

16.Jack and Kate disagree when it comes to the subject of Blanche's love life. Explain.

17.What favor does Stanley ask of Nora? What is her response?

18.Describe the building tension in the dinner scene.

19.What is Eugene obsessed with during dinner? What trick did Stanley teach him?

20.What does Jack want Stanley to do at work tomorrow?

21.Why does Kate make liver even though no one likes it?

22.Jack is upset about what's happening in Europe. What are his concerns?

23. Eugene seeks advice from his more experienced older brother, Stanley. Why?
24. How long has it been since Dave died?
25. List the negative things that Kate says about Mr. Murphy.
26. What is Jack's advice to Nora?
27. What is Blanche's final decision about Nora's opportunity?
28. What happens to Eugene that makes him say, "I might as well be dead?"
29. Why does Stanley decide to write the letter?
30. What does Eugene demand as payment for helping Stanley write his letter?

Name_____

Date_____

Brighton Beach Memoirs by Neil Simon
Act One pages 3-37

1. What is the setting of the play?

Brighton Beach, Brooklyn in 1937

2. How would you describe Eugene?

He's 14 years old, he wants to either be a writer or a baseball player, he's obsessed with girls

3. Why is Laurie so pampered?

She was born with a flutter in her heart

4. What is Aunt Blanche's situation?

She's living with her sister's family because her husband is dead. She has asthma and bad eyesight

5. What are the two things that Eugene wants to be when he grows up?

A baseball player or a writer

6. Who is Nora? What is her exciting news?

Nora is Eugene's cousin and she's excited because a Broadway show producer wants her to audition for a show.

7. Who makes all the decisions in this family?

Jack

8. What mortal sin has Eugene committed?

He lusts after his cousin

9. What happened to Stanley at work?

He stood up for his co-worker Andrew and he has to write a letter of apology or he loses his job.

10. Why doesn't Stan want to write the letter of apology to his boss?

He feels like he was standing up for his principles.

11. How does Eugene feel about his brother?

Eugene looks up to his brother.

12. What happens to Blanche?

She has an asthma attack.

13. Why doesn't Blanche go see a doctor?

She doesn't want to spend the money.

14. What does Jack do for a living?

He works in a factory that makes raincoats and he also sells party favors.

15. What is Jack afraid of?

Not having enough money to support everyone.

Name_____

Date_____

Brighton Beach Memoirs by Neil Simon
Act One pages 38-74

1. Jack and Kate disagree when it comes to the subject of Blanche's love life. Explain.

Jack wants Blanche to start dating. He feels like she's still young and her husband has been dead a long time. Kate thinks that no one is good enough for her sister.

2. What favor does Stanley ask of Nora? What is her response?

He wants her to bring up principles at the dinner table. She has things of her own that she wants to ask Jack.

3. Describe the building tension in the dinner scene.

Everyone had to ask Jack something but they didn't know how to do it. No one wants to upset him.

4. What is Eugene obsessed with during dinner? What trick did Stanley teach him?

He's obsessed with Nora. Stanley taught him to drop his napkin and look up Nora's skirt.

5. What does Jack want Stanley to do at work tomorrow?

Ask for a raise.

6. Why does Kate make liver even though no one likes it?

It's cheaper than meat.

7. Jack is upset about what's happening in Europe. What are his concerns?

He has relatives in Poland (they're Jewish) and he's afraid for their lives.

8. Eugene seeks advice from his more experienced older brother, Stanley. Why?

He wants to ask Stanley some questions about girls.

9. How long has it been since Dave died?

It's been six years.

10. List the negative things that Kate says about Mr. Murphy.

She thinks he's a womanizer and an alcoholic.

11. What is Jack's advice to Nora?

He thinks that she should stay in school and that if she's really that talented she'll get another opportunity in the future.

12. What is Blanche's final decision about Nora's opportunity?

She wants her to stay in school

13. What happens to Eugene that makes him say, "I might as well be dead?"

Nora walked in on him while he was going to the bathroom.

14. Why does Stanley decide to write the letter?

His family needs the money and his father is proud of him.

15. What does Eugene demand as payment for helping Stanley write his letter?

He wants Stanley to describe Nora when she was naked.