

# The Night the Bed Fell

by James Thurber

p. 254-258

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Per: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Before you Read:** Complete the following *before* you read the story.

Use p. 253 in the text book to help you complete the following:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ are brief works of \_\_\_\_\_ that are meant to \_\_\_\_\_ readers. In "The Night the Bed Fell," James Thurber produces a \_\_\_\_\_ effect by \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ of a situation with the characters' \_\_\_\_\_ of what is happening.

2. One way that writers create humor is through **characterization**.

**Characters** are: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Characterization** is: \_\_\_\_\_.

A writer can develop a character through \_\_\_\_\_, through the character's \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_, or through the reactions of \_\_\_\_\_.

3. **Vocabulary Development:** define the following words, using page 253.

**Ominous:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Allay:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fortitude:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Perilous:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Deluge:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Pungent:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Extricate:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Culprit:** \_\_\_\_\_

Now, flip through the story. The drawings in the story were created by the author and connect to the story. Be mindful of them.

Review the footnotes at the bottom of each page and define the following, using the information at the bottom of the pages:

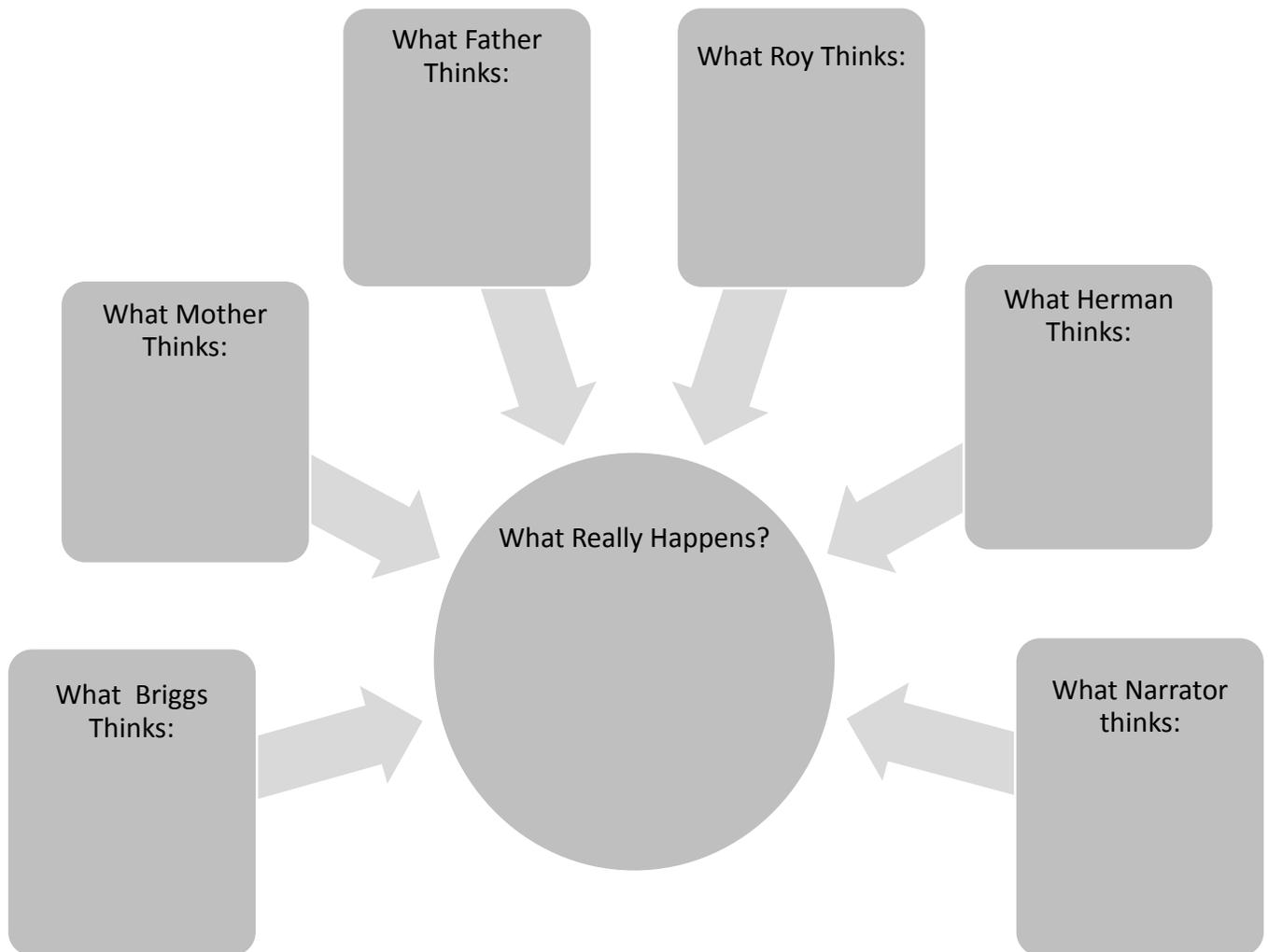
**Verisimilitude:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Crotchets:** \_\_\_\_\_

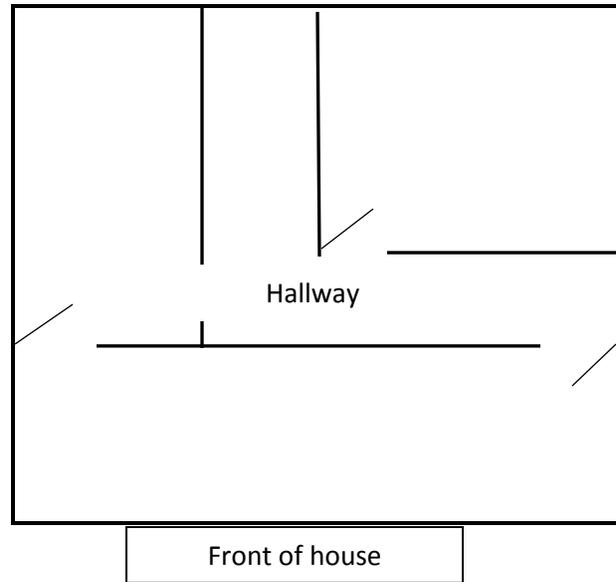
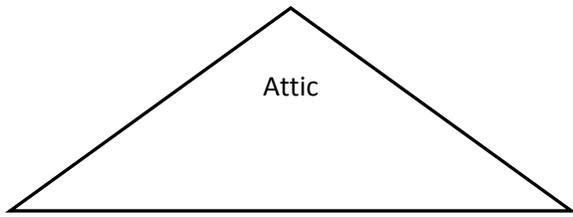
**Chloroform:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**II. While You Read:** Complete the following while you read the story, which starts on p. 254.

1. Complete the chart, recording the different ideas characters have about event in the story:



**Directions:** Using evidence from the story and the house illustration below, locate and label each character's bedroom from the author's description.



**2. Flip back to p. 252 and look at the cartoon.**

List two important objects in the cartoon and describe what each represents.

Object	Symbolizes

a. What event from the selection does the cartoon portray?

\_\_\_\_\_

b. James Thurber titled this cartoon: "Briggs Suffocating." Suggest an alternate caption for the drawing.

\_\_\_\_\_

c. Explain how your suggestion captures the image's meaning.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

2. What scenes from the story do the cartoons on p. 256, and 258 portray? Explain using character names and details from the text.

Cartoon on p. 256:   
Cartoon on p. 258:   

3. How would Gracie Shoaf defend the actions shown in the drawing on p. 256? Explain, using evidence from the text.

4. What details of Brigg's character produce humor? In other words, what makes him funny? Give at least 3 specific examples from the text, and explain in a good 5-7 sentence paragraph.

**III. After You Have Read:** Complete the following after you have read the story.

**COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS**

Directions: Write the letter of the best answer to each question on the line in front of the question. Please use CAPITAL letters.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. What sets off the chain of events in the story?

- A. Rex the dog awakens and barks.
- B. Mrs. Thurber shouts that her husband is dying.
- C. The author's bed collapses.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. Who was in the house on the night described?

- A. Mother, Father, Herman, Roy, Briggs, James, and Rex
- B. Mother, Father, Herman, Roy, Briggs, James, Grandfather, and Rex
- C. Mother, Father, Herman, Roy, Briggs, James, Aunt Melissa, Aunt Gracie, and Uncle Harold

- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. When did the bed collapse?
- A. 10:00 PM
  - B. 12:00 AM
  - C. 2:00 AM
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Which detail below helps explain why the characters behave as they do?
- A. They are not fully awake.
  - B. Their rooms are far apart.
  - C. They are all affected by the smell of camphor.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. What is Briggs's big fear?
- A. He is afraid of suffocating in his sleep.
  - B. He is afraid of cutting himself on broken glass.
  - C. He is afraid of having strangers see him through the window.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Which word most accurately describes Thurber's relatives as he depicts them?
- A. Thurber's relatives are calm.
  - B. Thurber's relatives are eccentric.
  - C. Thurber's relatives are ordinary.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. What kind of essay is "The Night the Bed Fell"?
- A. It is a humorous essay.
  - B. It is a persuasive essay.
  - C. It is an impersonal essay.

**Final Thoughts:** What does the story suggest about the importance of being fully alert when making judgments or decisions? Why? Explain fully, using good details.