**The Themes in Cat on a Hot Tin Roof**

**Truth**

*Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* is a play about the destructive power of lies, about how people lie in order to maintain harmony and to not disturb preconceived notions, and about the difficulty families have with telling the truth. Brick Pollitt is stuck in a constant state of disgust and unhappiness due to a lie he keeps up about Skipper to protect himself from the world. We find that a family functions in much the same way that society does: it possesses strict definitions of what one should or should not be. The lie that eats away at the heart of the play is Brick's denial of Skipper's love for him.

***1. If Brick were not so upset about Skipper, how would things be different?***

***2. What do you think Big Daddy thinks about Skipper?***

**Dreams**

In *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, dreams are important, and each character dreams differently. Some perceive money to be the most important thing. Others crave love and physical affection. Still others want everlasting life. We watch what happens when characters realize that their dreams will never come true. Some fight, while others give up. In each case, dreams are made of either money, love, or death. Failed dreams and plans make characters to act desperately.

***3. Does each character have a hope, dream, or plan?***

***4. Is any character successful in achieving his or her hopes, dreams, or plans?***

***5. What role does money play in characters' hopes, dreams, and plans?***

**Sexuality**

We see Brick struggle with his sexual identity in a time when American society does not accept homosexual relationships.

***6. What do we know of each character's relationship to his/her sexuality?***

***7. Is Brick more concerned with his sexual identity than with the mendacity in his life?***

**Alcohol and Drugs**

Alcohol functions in this play as a way of numbing the pain of living with lies. Brick drinks constantly in search of a "click" of peacefulness, and, in some ways, to kill himself faster. Alcohol is his way of coping with the world, when Brick can no longer deal with societies expectations for him. Alcohol functions as an escape from reality.

***8. How is Brick’s drinking affecting his life?***

***9. Is alcohol good or bad in the play?***

***10. Can Maggie cure Brick of his drinking?***