Close and Critical Reading of

*The Monsters are Due on Maple Street*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Hour: \_\_\_\_

Background Information: This teleplay comes from a popular, eerie, and suspenseful television series called *The Twilight Zone* which aired from 1959-1965. (Reruns still air on the Sci-Fi channel.) The shows often depicted ordinary people involved in out of the ordinary situations. They were entering a window into an imaginary world beyond ours- the twilight zone. As the characters faced the unknown, they reacted in both typical and unexpected ways.

Before Reading: **Preview the attached first page of the teleplay.**

1) Write an example line of stage directions which show camera use:

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2) Write an example line of stage directions which show character vocal expression/intonation:

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3) Write an example line of stage directions which show action(s):

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4) From the title and previewing the first page, *predict* what this teleplay could be about.

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During and After: Answer the prompts for the four close and critical reading questions. You should be detailed and respond to each bullet point, but they do not have to be in complete sentences.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Question One: What does the teleplay say? (Summary)* **These questions are on the next page**
 | Question Two: How does it say it? (Format/Genre/Literary Elements)* Genres-
* Format-
* Characterization (describe **two** characters)-
* **3** examples of suspense-
 |
| Question Three: What does the teleplay mean? (Theme)What is the message/theme that the author is trying to get across in the teleplay? (various possible answers) EXPLAIN why that theme applies. | Question Four: So What? (Connect it to my life or others.)How do you relate to the message/theme?  |

Question 1: What does the teleplay say? (Summary)

“The Monsters are Due on Maple Street” Plot Chart

On the following diagram, plot the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution

Plot contains the main events of a play, novel, movie, or other similar work.

Exposition

1. Who are the characters and what is happening in the beginning of the story?

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2. What are the external conflicts in the story (conflicts occurring between characters or with forces of

nature)? What are the internal conflicts in the story (conflicts occurring within a character’s mind)?

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3. What is the setting?

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Rising action

List the series of events that make it hard for the character(s) to get what he or she wants.

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Climax

Describe the most emotional or suspenseful moment in the story. This is the point that the conflict is

decided one way or the other.

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Falling Action

The events that happen in between the climax and the resolution.

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Resolution

Explain how the story comes to an end.

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Theme

Explain the theme/message/lesson of the story.

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Plot Answer Key

Exposition

1. Who are the characters and what is happening in the beginning of the story?

MAIN CHARACTERS THEY MUST HAVE: Steve Brand (protagonist), Tommy,

Charlie, Les Goodman.

2. What are the external conflicts in the story (conflicts occurring between characters or with forces of nature)? What are the internal conflicts in the story (conflicts occurring within a character’s mind)?

External: (Man vs Society—Aliens/ humans)

There’s a flash and a roar. They see something in the sky, “Was that a meteor?” The electricity is off, phone and radio won’t work. Internal: Tommy says, “They don’t want us to leave…they shut off everything.” Tommy thinks something supernatural has happened.

External: (Man vs Society—Mob against “the accused”)

The people of Maple Street turn on different people

Internal: (Fear of the Unknown—Fear of what they don’t see/understand)

Shooting Pete, fear of what they can’t explain

3. Setting: Summer evening, Maple Street, typical small town, USA.

Rising action:

Ship overhead

Pete Van Horn says he’s going to check things out, and leaves.

Tommy tells comic book plot

Charlie tells Les Goodman that it’s suspicious that his car started.

The neighbors immediately become suspicious of each other.

Could be additional complications.

Climax

A shadow approaches, and Charlie, without waiting to see who it is, aims and fires, killing

Pete Van Horn, who had left earlier to see what was going on. All of a sudden, lights and appliances begin to turn on.

Falling Action

Charlie tries to blame others for what he’s done, “I didn’t know who he was…how was I supposed to know he wasn’t a monster or something?” The neighborhood loses control and dissolves into an angry mob, smashing things and grabbing items to be used as weapons.

Resolution

The camera pans out and we see aliens in a spaceship. They set up the whole situation to turn the humans against each other. It was the humans who thought there was an outside force creating the problems, when it was in fact, themselves.