

Name _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Unit: Character and Point of View

“Contents of the Dead Man’s Pocket” BY Jack Finney

1. In the beginning of the story, Tom Benecke is at home working, but he is having a hard time getting started. What distracts him from his work?
2. What type of conflict is Tom experiencing in the story? What is it, and does he resolve it? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
3. Using evidence from passage, explain how the author shows the importance of the yellow paper.
4. Using textual evidence, explain what Tom's ambition is. How does this relate to the conflict he experiences?
5. In the story, the character visualizes himself easily going out onto the ledge and retrieving the paper. Use evidence from the story to explain this mental process, his emotional reaction to the mental process, and his motivation for putting himself in such danger.
6. Later on in the story a second setting is revealed. What is it and how does the writer use this setting to create suspense? Use textual evidence to support your answer.

7. Finney describes the transformation that takes place in Tom from self-confidence to fear. How does this transformation affect his life's priorities?
8. What is the "sheer emptiness" Tom encounters? How does the use of the words "sheer emptiness" enhance the suspense?
9. Finney describes Tom's reaction to looking inside his own living room window from the outside. He notices the yellow sheet still "clenched in his front teeth." How has his opinion of this yellow sheet of paper changed?
10. In the story, Tom is looking into his living room with only a "sheet of glass between him and the room just before him," he thinks of several things to try to get inside. What are they and how do they work out for him?

Writing Prompt: (TO BE TYPED WITH COVER PAGE!!!!)

Can life's events cause us to change our priorities? After reading "Contents of the Dead Man's Pocket", write an essay that explains Tom's priorities and how those priorities changed. Support your response with evidence from the text.

In your response be sure to:

- Explain how Tom changes throughout the story
- Explain how do Tom's priorities change
- Use details from the story to support your response