

You Can't Take it With You

Review Questions - Act 1, Scene 1

1. What genre of play is "You Can't Take It With You?"
2. What is the purpose of the cluttered and chaotic living room of Grandpa Vanderhof?
3. How does the reader or audience member know that this room serves more than one purpose?
4. How are the characters introduced?
5. What is Penny Sycamore doing?
6. Why is Essie Carmichael making candy?
7. Why does Rheba enter the room?
8. From where do Paul Sycamore and Mr. DePinna emerge?
9. Who is the most aimless of the household and periodically plays notes on the xylophone so that Essie can dance?
10. Why does Ed ask Rheba about the dinner menu?
11. On what does Ed work?
12. Why does Donald arrive with flies?
13. Who is the patriarch of this zany family?
14. From where does the patriarch of this zany family come home?
15. What takes place at Columbia University?
16. Who does Grandpa not know?
17. What does Grandpa enjoy doing?
18. Who is Penny's daughter?
19. From where does Penny's daughter arrive?
20. What does Alice Sycamore do for a living?
21. How is Alice compared to the rest of her family?
22. How does Alice feel about her family?
23. What does Alice reveal about her evening?
24. On what does Penny comment?
25. Where are Alice and Tony Kirby going?
26. Where does Tony attend college?
27. Whose son is Tony?
28. How does Alice feel about Tony?
29. What does Alice ask her family to do?
30. Where does Alice go to get ready for her date?
31. Why does Alice wonder if a visitor has arrived?
32. Who does Alice think the visitor might be?
33. What does Penny do when the doorbell rings?
34. What does Penny assume about the man standing in the doorway?
35. Who is Mr. Henderson?
36. Why is Mr. Henderson at the house?
37. What has Grandpa never done?
38. To what has Grandpa not responded?
39. What is Mr. Henderson's job?
40. For what can Grandpa see no need?
41. How does Grandpa challenge Mr. Henderson?
42. What is not a good enough reason for Grandpa to part with his money?
43. How does Mr. Henderson leave?
44. What occurs in the basement?
45. What scares Mr. Henderson out of the apartment without another word?
46. Who passes Mr. Henderson in the hall?
47. Who has come for dinner with the Sycamore family?
48. What does Grandpa ask God to allow?

You Can't Take It With You

Short Answer Questions - Act 1, Scene 2

1. The curtain goes down temporarily and rises on what scene?
2. What is unusual about the apartment?
3. How is the apartment as Alice and Tony return from their date?
4. Where do Alice and Tony go on a date?
5. How does the couple act?
6. What do Alice and Tony declare?
7. What is happening at the same time Alice and Tony are making declarations to one another?
8. How does Alice feel when she tells Tony she cannot marry him?
9. Why does Alice tell Tony she cannot marry him?
10. How does Alice feel about her family?
11. How does Tony feel about Alice's family?
12. What does Tony remind Alice?
13. Why might Tony feel the way he does about the Sycamore family?
14. How does Alice respond to Tony?
15. What does Alice agree to do?
16. What must Alice and Tony do?
17. What does Tony ask Alice to do?
18. Why does Tony ask Alice to do this?
19. What does Alice say to Tony?
20. Where does Alice go?
21. Who does Alice find?
22. What is this person's name?
23. What does this person show Alice?
24. Why is what this person shows her important?
25. What does Alice declare?
26. What else does Alice declare?
27. Why does Alice declare this?
28. From what type of family does Alice come?
29. What does Alice initially refuse?
30. What is Ironic about Alice's refusal?
31. Why does Alice feel she has to refuse this?
32. What do the authors show, despite the difficulties and differences in Alice's family?
33. What scenario mirrors the challenges of the American family endured during the dire economic times of the Depression?
34. Why does Alice assume Tony will not be able to accept her family?
35. What does Tony mention about his family?
36. How might Tony's family compare to Alice's?
37. How might Alice feel about being interrupted by her family members?
38. How might Tony feel about being interrupted by Alice's family members?
39. What might be some of the unusual noises heard throughout the apartment?
40. Why are the family members interrupting Alice and Tony?
41. What do the family members think of Tony?
42. What does Tony's comment about family dynamics foreshadow?
43. Why must the two part for the evening?
44. Why does Alice relent?
45. Why does Paul show Alice his new fireworks?
46. Why does Alice say about everything in the world?
47. Why might Tony like Alice's family?
48. Why does Alice love Tony?

You Can't Take It With You

Short Answer Questions - Act 2

1. How does the second act open?
2. What is Penny doing as the scene opens?
3. Who is Gay Wellington?
4. Why is Gay Wellington at the home?
5. What is Gay interested in?
6. What is Alice happily doing?
7. What is special about tomorrow night's dinner?
8. What has been finalized?
9. To what does the family agree?
10. What continues as usual tonight?
11. With what does Mr. DePinna emerge from the basement?
12. What had Penny begun for Mr. DePinna?
13. When had Penny begun this for Mr. DePinna?
14. Why does Penny change into her artist costume?
15. What is Mr. DePinna required to do?
16. What does Ed need to do?
17. Why is Ed hesitant to leave the apartment?
18. What does Essie urge Ed to do?
19. What does Essie want Ed to do?
20. What has Paul Sycamore brought upstairs?
21. Why does Paul descend again into the basement?
22. What is Grandpa doing, amid all the chaos in the room?
23. What does the doorbell bring?
24. Why is the visit unexpected?
25. What is immediately clear upon the arrival of the unexpected guest(s)?
26. What is contrasting about the guest(s) and the Sycamores?
27. What is Alice's reaction to this mistake?
28. What does the family have for the guest(s)?
29. What do Ed and Donald do?
30. What is not appropriate about what Ed and Donald do?
31. Why does Penny initiate a word game?
32. What does the word game reveal?
33. What happens to Mrs. Kirby?
34. What does Mrs. Kirby announce?
35. What does Tony decide to do?
36. Why does Tony make this decision?
37. What is believed about Ed's candy sales?
38. What happens as the Kirbys prepare to leave?
39. Why does this surprise turn of events occur?
40. How is Paul's fireworks operation uncovered?
41. What is mistakenly thought about the fireworks?
42. What suddenly happens?

You Can't Take It With You

Short Answer Questions - Act 3

1. What does Donald read in the next day's paper?
2. What happens to all thirteen people of the household, including the Kirbys?
3. What does Rheba recall?
4. Why do Rheba and Donald feel compassion for the Kirbys?
5. How does Alice feel about last night's events?
6. What is Alice preparing to do?
7. For what does Tony plea?
8. In what does Tony remain undaunted?
9. What adds to the confusion in the house?
10. Who is the Grand Duchess Olga?
11. What does the Grand Duchess Olga do for a living?
12. What has the Grand Duchess not had since leaving Russia?
13. Why has Kolenkhov brought her to the Sycamore house?
14. What is Olga anxious to do?
15. What does Olga offer to do?
16. What does the doorbell announce?
17. Who has come to find Tony?
18. Why will Tony not leave?
19. Who is Tony trying to convince not to leave?
20. What does Grandpa finally do?
21. Who will stay at least through dinner?
22. Who else agrees to stay?
23. To what does Tony admit?
24. What does Tony want his parents to realize?
25. What does Tony hope?
26. How does Mr. Kirby react when Tony tells him he plans to leave the family firm?
27. Why does Tony want to leave the firm?
28. Where might Tony have gotten the idea to leave the firm?
29. What is Mr. Kirby's reaction to this announcement?
30. What does Grandpa do to help Mr. Kirby?
31. How does Grandpa's help change Mr. Kirby?
32. According to Grandpa, what should not be squelched?
33. To what can this squelching lead?
34. What do not provide long-term satisfaction?
35. What can the pursuit of money be?
36. Of what does Grandpa remind Mr. Kirby?
37. What is true in this scene?
38. How does Mr. Kirby feel about Grandpa's philosophizing?
39. After Grandpa's philosophizing, what does Mr. Kirby decide to do?
40. What happens to Grandpa's Internal Revenue Service problem?
41. To what does the family sit down?
42. What has Grand Duchess Olga done for the family?