As you watch the film, take careful note of differences between the film and the play, as well as techniques that the filmmakers used that might be more suitable to film than the stage. Why were certain changes made? Do they help or hurt the production?

Take notes on this paper as you watch. We will discuss the film when we’re done viewing.

**Cast:**

Blanche…Vivien Leigh  
Stanley…Marlon Brando  
Stella…Kim Hunter  
Mitch…Karl Malden

**Running through the entire film:**

1. This is a black-and-white film, so the filmmakers could not reproduce some of the colors and color symbolism specified by Tennessee Williams in the text. However, they do a lot with lighting. Note the use of shadows, darkness, light, and the way it is used on the screen.

2. Comment on the use of flames, cigarettes, matches, and candles in the film. Many times, their use takes on a symbolic character.

**Chronologically:**

1. Describe the music that plays over the opening credits. What adjectives would you use to describe it? What aspect(s) of the story does it fit?

2. What important scene and symbol from the first part of the play are missing from the film?

3. Why is a train an appropriate opening image?

4. Blanche is supposed to look out of place at the beginning. How is this suggested by the filmmakers and the actress?

5. Note the look of the neighborhood, Elysian Fields. How does the film version compare to your mental version from reading the play?

6. What reasons can you think of for the filmmakers to move the reunion of Stella and Blanche to the bowling alley?

7. Comment on the use of lighting in this scene, the conversation between Stella and Blanche at the table as they have their drink.

8. Stella asks if Blanche likes her bath water hot. “Scalding,” Blanche replies. Comment on the use of the heat and steam of the baths in the film.
9. Will Stanley like me? asks Blanche. Yes, says Stella. Just try not to compare—and she is interrupted. Do you remember from the play the rest of that line? What is cut out?

10. When Stanley makes his appearance, comment on your reaction. How appropriate was the casting of Marlon Brando in the role of Stanley?

11. Mention of Blanche’s earlier marriage definitely has an effect on her. How have the filmmakers shown her state of mind?

12. How is Mitch immediately set off as different from the rest of the poker players in the first glance at the poker game?

13. Comment on the use of music in the scene between Mitch and Blanche.

14. Describe the music that plays during the “Stella!” scene, as Stanley and Stella are reunited after their fight. When does this same music re-appear minutes later in the film?

15. Comment on the use of thunder and rain—What does it correspond to or symbolize?

16. In the long scene between Blanche and Mitch on their date…
   • Describe Blanche’s manner toward Mitch.
   • Can you think of a reason the scene is set near the water, on a foggy night?
   • How has the story of Blanche’s marriage been changed? Can you think of any reason(s) it may have been changed? Does it change the effect of the memory for the audience?

17. There is a quick scene in the machine shop where Stanley and Mitch work. What is happening in this scene? What was said just before we joined the scene?

18. Comment on the use of music and sounds that play under and during and interrupting Blanche’s “parrot story”.

19. Comment on the name on the liquor bottle: Southern Cheer.

20. In the stage directions of the play, it says that Mitch shows signs of being a bit drunk when he confronts Blanche. Examine the way it is played in the film, and Karl Malden’s performance. Does it seem to you that he’s been drinking, or is he just angry?

21. What is the effect of the blinking light flashing through the window in this scene?

22. Can you think of some symbolic meaning for Blanche closing the windows?

23. In the scene with Stanley which follows, does it seem that he has been drinking? Similar to question 20, is Stanley just alternately excited/sarcastic/domineering/angry, or has he been drinking alcohol?

24. Comment on the possible symbolism of a heart-shaped box of jewelry.

25. Can you explain Blanche’s extreme reaction to Stanley ripping off the paper lantern? Does it match the description of the moment in the text of the play?

26. The ending of the film is quite different from the ending of the play. Contrast the endings. What is the effect or “message” of each ending? Which do you prefer and why?