

Key Questions:

- *Is there significance in their name?*
- *Key Appearance/features*
- *Does the author's description influence the reader to endorse or condemn this character?*
- *Personality*
- *Values (revealed by behaviour/actions, responses, dialogue)*
- *Outlook (How would the character describe the world they live in?)*
- *Personal History – what events from the past seem to have influenced the development of this character?*
- *Relationships – who is the character in a relationship with/connected to? What is the nature of the relationship?*
- *What is the quality of the relationships this character has? Which relationships change?*
- *Turning points for the character*
- *Changes in the character – values, views, relationships, outlook, future...*
- *Is the character rewarded or punished for the values they possess?*
- *Through the character – what values seem to be important to Williams?*

Character	Key Questions	Quotes/Supporting Evidence
Margaret		
Brick		

Character	Key Questions	Quotes/Supporting Evidence
Big Daddy		
Big Momma		
Mae		
Gooper		

Character	Key Questions	Quotes/Supporting Evidence
Reverend Tooker		
Dr Baugh		
The Children		
The Servants		

CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF

By Tennessee Williams

Discussion questions

1. Who is the most sympathetic character in the play? Is one character more sympathetic than others in different acts?
2. Big Daddy tells Brick that one has to live with lies in this world. Do you agree? What is Tennessee Williams's attitude toward telling the truth? Which of the characters tell the truth? Which ones lie? Are there times when a lie is more valuable than the truth?
3. Why does Brick drink so much? What kind of relationship do you think he and Skipper had? Why do you think that? How do you think Skipper feels about Maggie?
4. What kind of statement is Williams making about sexuality in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*? Do you consider this to be a "gay play"? Why or why not? How have attitudes toward sexuality, especially homosexuality, changed since the play was first performed in 1955? How have they remained unchanged?
5. How much love do you think there is in the Pollitt family? How much respect? How are they expressed?

6. What are the functions of the “offstage” elements of the play: the children, telephone calls, Dr. Baugh, and Reverend Tooker’s conversation? What do you think the rest of the house and plantation look like outside Brick and Maggie’s bedroom? What do you think life is like out there?
7. Do you approve of Maggie’s lie about being pregnant? Why do you think Big Daddy supports her? What do you think her relationship with Brick will be like after the play ends? Will they make good parents?
8. Williams wrote that the set of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* should not be entirely realistic, although he felt that the characters he created in *Cat* were among his most realistic. Do you find the set “unrealistic”? Do you find the characters “realistic”? (How do you define those terms?) How might an unrealistic setting serve realistic characters?
9. What elements normally associated with the post–Civil War (Antebellum) South appear in the play? What more modern elements appear? How can elements from such diverse eras coexist in this play?
10. How have women’s economic and social roles changed since the first production of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* in 1955—in the world in general, and in the American South in particular? In what ways have they remained unchanged?