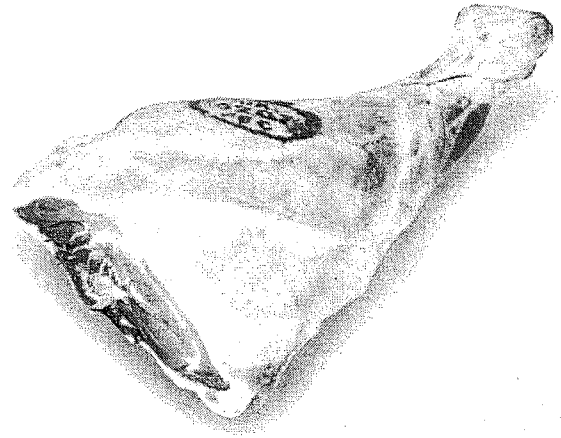


Lamb to the Slaughter

On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions. To receive credit, you must write complete, thoughtful sentences.



1. Although she killed her husband, there's plenty of evidence in the story to support the argument that Mary Maloney actually loved her husband very much. Looking back over the text, write down two passages that show her love for Patrick. Yes, I want you to write down the full sentences.

2. The author does not tell us what Patrick says to Mary to explain his reason for wanting to leave. What do you think was Patrick's reason for wanting to end his marriage? Why, do you suppose, the author doesn't tell us the reason? What is accomplished by using this story-telling strategy?

3. Dahl could have had Mary kill Patrick with a package of steak or a block of ice. Why, do you suppose, he chose the leg of lamb? Symbolically, why is this an interesting choice?

4. Dahl includes a few lines of black humor that hold a bit of dramatic irony for the reader, who knows more than the grocer or the police. Look back over the story and write two passages that make the reader chuckle at the dark humor/thick irony of the lines.

5. Technically, the ironic twist ending is a surprise, but most readers have a sense of what's going to happen long before it does. At what point in the story did you realize that Mary was going to have the evidence destroyed/consumed? It's okay to paraphrase the part of the story in your answer, but be sure to explain what it was about this section that raised your suspicion.

6. Is Mary a sympathetic character? Explain your answer.

7. What influence does Mary's pregnancy have on the story?

8. What influence does Patrick's profession have on the story?

9. One theme that could be taken from this story is that appearances are not an accurate reflection of reality. Give three examples (paraphrasing is fine) from the story that support this theme.

