**Discussion Questions:**

**Act 1**

1. Why would Peter Stockman be jealous of the Stockman family?

2. Why does he never admit that he came just to visit the family?

3. What might this say of Peter’s character?

4. How are character descriptions in a play different than in a short story or novel?

5. What is Tom and Peter’s relationship like?

6. What could their relationship foreshadow about the play?

7. From what we’ve read so far, do you think Tom is a likeable character?

8. What do you think Miller meant by his description of Captain Horster and that having a “courageous, quiet man for a friend” is not a bad thing?

9. What do you think this description foreshadows about Captain Horster’s role in the play?

10. Mrs. Stockman and Petra are the only women in the play. Are they similar? Are they different?

11. What do you think Miller meant by his description of Petra as being a “clear-eyed hope for the future—and probably ours”?

12. What do you think this description foreshadows about Petra’s role in the play?

13. How is Ejlif and Morten’s relationship similar and different to Tom and Peter’s?

14. What is a heathen? Why do you think Billing says “soon we’re all going to be heathens!”?

15. What is the value of keeping something secret until you know all the information? Is there ever a time when you shouldn’t keep information secret?

16. Why is it good to make sure you have correct information before making a decision? Would there ever be an instance to go against that information?

17. Do you think Tom is being modest about the attention Billing and Hovstad want to give him, or do you think he secretly wants that attention?

18. Think back to your bell work prompt yesterday. Has is your answer similar or different to Tom and Peter’s interactions in this scene?

**Act 2**

19. Why do you think Hovstad wants to print the story about the Springs, even without approval?

20. Why would Tom refer to Peter as a dictator? What is Peter doing that would make him seem like a dictator?

21. Why does Aslaksen wants to remain moderate?

22. What do you think Aslaksen means by “People change”?

23. What is the significance of Petra and Hovstad’s conversation? How does it relate to the elements of journalism we have just talked about?

24. If Peter doesn’t hold much stock in the newspaper, why do you think he goes to them for help?

25. What do you think Peter means by saying “you’ll forgive me for talking about facts in a newspaper office”? What might this say about newspaper reporting in this town?

26. Does Peter really believe that Tom is being vindictive, or is he afraid of losing his power in the town if the truth gets out?

27. How has the idea of a “friend” changed so far in the story?

28. How do Hovstad and Aslaksen’s actions both show that they are “watchdogs” but also biased?

29. How do Petra and Mrs. Stockman both try to protect Tom?

30. Which scene in Act two would you consider to be the more climactic scene? Why?

31. How do Captain Horster’s actions in this scene fit the description of him given back in Act 1, scene 1?

32. How did Billing’s statement at the beginning of the scene to Catherine Stockman end up being true and false? “If we printed his report it only would have hurt your husband.”

33. What is the role of the drunk, besides being comic relief? What might he represent in a democracy?

34. How does Tom lose control of his meeting? Is it entirely his fault?

35. How are Tom’s and Peter’s speaking abilities different? What does this say about their characterization?

36. How does Petra’s actions live up to her description from Act 1, scene 1?

37. How much of an influence does mob mentality have in this scene?

38. Is Tom really an enemy?

39. Do you think Peter, Hovstad and Aslasken have any sympathy for the Doctor? Do you think they regret their actions after watching the way the crowd reacts?

**Act 3:**

40. Why does the poison of parents’ opinions spread to their children?

41. Mrs. Stockman says the glazier won’t come fix their windows because “people don’t like to be pointed out.” Why won’t people want to help Tom anymore?

42. What do you think Tom means by saying “When a man goes out to fight for the truth he should never wear his best pants”?

43. Why would living in America seem so appealing to Tom right now?

44. What more do we learn about Petra’s character in this scene? How does it compare to the foreshadowing we identified in Act 1?

45. What does Tom mean by this statement: “Oh, God, on the wreckage of all the civilizations in the world, there ought to be a big sign: ‘They Didn’t Dare!’”?

46. Why would it seem hypocritical to have a strong opinion that does damage to someone, but keep it anonymous?

47. What more do we learn about Captain Horster’s character in this scene? How does it compare to the foreshadowing we identified in Act 1?

48. Do you think Peter does really care for Tom? Do you think Tom does really care about Peter? What might this say about their relationship?

49. How has Tom been both irresponsible and responsible?

50. Tom asks Kiil “What right have you to gamble my family’s future on the strength of my convictions?” How has he himself done the same thing?

51. Why does *The People’s Daily Messenger* keep changing sides? What is the common denominator in them switching sides?

52. Think back to the beginning of the play. Who was all on Tom’s side? Now whose side are they on? How does this relate back to the title of the play?

53. Did Tom do the right thing?