

# ***The Miracle Worker***

Viewing Guide & Assignments

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Viewing Guide: *The Miracle Worker***

### **Act One**

1. In real life, the discovery that Helen was deaf occurred several weeks after the discovery that she was blind. How did Gibson change this in the play? Why did he change it?

2. Describe Helen at age 6 1/2 (the beginning of scene 2).

3. What is James' solution to the problem of Helen?

4. Why does Captain Keller change his mind about writing to the doctor?

5. What do we learn about Annie Sullivan's life?

6. What three reasons does Annie give for her confidence in her ability to work with Helen?

7. What does Helen do to Annie?

8. After Annie is rescued, she watches Helen. What does she see Helen do with the key?

9. What does the key symbolize?

## **Response to Act One of *The Miracle Worker***

**Directions:** Respond to the following prompt in at least two, full paragraphs.

A drama critic has declared that a successful first act must gain and hold the audience's attention, sketch in the necessary background, and set up the central conflict. Using these three criteria, evaluate the first act of *The Miracle Worker*. Whenever possible, support your points with specific references to the play.

## **Viewing Guide: *The Miracle Worker***

### **Act Two**

1. How do Kate and Annie differ in working with Helen?
2. During breakfast, what does Helen do?
3. What does Annie think of Helen's behaviors?
4. What three things has Annie managed to get Helen to do?
5. When Annie tells Kate that Helen folded her napkin, how does Kate react?  
What does her reaction show?

6. What had happened to Annie's brother Jimmie?

7. Why does Captain Keller think that Annie should be fired?

8. What does Annie propose should be done?

9. How does Annie get Helen to let her touch her?

## **Response to Act Two of *The Miracle Worker***

**Directions:** Respond to the following prompt in at least two, full paragraphs.

In the second act of the play, Annie demonstrates both determination and shrewdness in her conflict with Helen. Take a stance and either defend or contradict this statement. Be sure to include specific references from the movie to support your stance.

## **Viewing Guide: *The Miracle Worker***

### **Act Three**

1. What common problem does Annie have with using a dictionary?
2. Annie says to Kate, "I go to bed with--writer's cramp from talking so much." To what is she referring.
3. Kate and Captain Keller are really pleased with the changes in Helen. How has Helen changed during her two weeks in the garden house?
4. William Gibson wrote that Annie was "like a defeated general on the deserted battlefield. What battle has Annie lost?
5. How does Helen act at her "welcome home" dinner?

6. How do the other people at the table react to her behaviors?

7. James finally stands up to his father. What does he tell his fathers

8. What "miracle" takes place at the water pump?

9. Why is Kate Keller "torn both ways" by what has happened at the pump?

10. How has the relationship between Helen and Annie changed after the "miracle" at the pump?

## **Response to Act Three of *The Miracle Worker***

**Directions:** Respond to the following prompt in at least two, full paragraphs.

One of the great dangers in writing about a physically challenged person is sentimentality—the exhibition of tearful, gentle, or delicate feelings in an excessive, superficial, or foolish way. Do you think that William Gibson has avoided sentimentality in his portrayal of Helen Keller in *The Miracle Worker*? Write at least two paragraphs expressing your opinion on this matter. Whenever possible, support your arguments with specific references to the play.