

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Exploring Mood

Mood is the feeling you get from reading a piece of writing. Another way to describe mood is *atmosphere*. When you walk into a place, it has an atmosphere that makes you feel a certain way; when you “walk into” a story, it too has an atmosphere that creates a feeling. Writers create mood through word choice, imagery, dialogue, setting, and plot.

At many points in the play *Beware the Thunder*, the mood could be described as **uncanny**. Now let’s look at what creates this mood.

Psst!  
*Uncanny* means  
 “strange in a way that  
 seems mysterious and  
 supernatural.”

## Whispers: Prologue – Scene 3

1. In the prologue and in Scenes 1, 2, and 3, the Odd Fellows whisper Rip Van Winkle’s name from offstage. This whispering helps create an uncanny mood.

**Read the reason why:** Whispers have a secretive or mysterious feeling—and these whispers are particularly spooky because they come from offstage, so that you can’t tell who is whispering. The whispers seem like they might be coming from ghosts.

## Odd Fellows: Scenes 3 – 4

2. In Scenes 3 and 4, Rip meets the Odd Fellows. The uncanny mood continues.

We’ve listed one detail and explained how it helps create an uncanny mood. Provide two more details and explain how they help create an uncanny mood.

**Detail:** The Odd Fellows are dressed like the Dutch explorers who came through the Catskills some 50 years earlier.

**How this helps create an uncanny mood:** The Odd Fellows’ old-fashioned style of dress helps create an uncanny mood because it is strange and unexplained. It suggests that the Odd Fellows might be ghosts or some sort of supernatural beings from another time.

**Detail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**How this helps create an uncanny mood:** \_\_\_\_\_

Detail: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How this helps create an uncanny mood: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Rip Awakens: Scenes 5 – 7**

3. After drinking from the Odd Fellows' barrel, Rip falls into a deep sleep. What happens in Scenes 5-7 that helps create an uncanny mood?

Write three details about what happens when Rip wakes up that help create an uncanny mood.

Detail: \_\_\_\_\_

Detail: \_\_\_\_\_

Detail: \_\_\_\_\_

Explain how the details you listed help create an uncanny mood.

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

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# Exploring Mood

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## Whispers: Prologue – Scene 3

1. In the prologue and in Scenes 1, 2, and 3, the Odd Fellows whisper Rip Van Winkle’s name from offstage. This whispering helps create an uncanny mood.

**Read the reason why:** Whispers have a secretive or mysterious feeling—and these whispers are particularly spooky because they come from offstage, so that you can’t tell who is whispering. The whispers seem like they might be coming from ghosts.

## Odd Fellows: Scenes 3 – 4

2. In Scenes 3 and 4, Rip meets the Odd Fellows. The uncanny mood continues.

We’ve listed two details and explained how one of them helps create an uncanny mood. Explain how the second detail helps create an uncanny mood.

**Detail:** The Odd Fellows are dressed like the Dutch explorers who came through the Catskills some 50 years earlier.

**How this helps create an uncanny mood:** The Odd Fellows’ old-fashioned style of dress helps create an uncanny mood because it is strange and unexplained. It suggests that the Odd Fellows might be ghosts or some sort of supernatural beings from another time.

**Detail:** The Odd Fellows are silent. They do not respond to Rip or talk to him at all.

**How this helps create an uncanny mood:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Rip Awakens: Scenes 5 – 7**

3. After drinking from the Odd Fellows' barrel, Rip falls into a deep sleep.

**Here are three details about what happens when Rip wakes up that help create an uncanny mood:**

**Detail:** Rip wakes up with a long, white beard that he did not have before falling asleep.

**Detail:** Rip does not recognize anyone in the village.

**Detail:** Peter Vanderdonk says that the mountains have always been haunted by strange beings.

**Explain how the details above help create an uncanny mood.**

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# Mood Words

Mood is the feeling the reader gets from a work of literature. There are *many* different words you can use to describe the mood of a piece of writing. Here are some to get you started. They are organized into groups of words with similar meanings. We've left space in each box so you can add your own words.

## angry

aggravated, enraged, hostile, irate,  
violent

## happy

content, joyful, delighted, ecstatic, elated

## boring

dreary, dull, uneventful, tiring

## loving

warm, delicate, romantic, touching,  
sympathetic

## calm

quiet, serene, tranquil, mellow, harmonious

## sad

depressed, melancholy, mournful, tragic,  
gloomy

## exciting

exhilarating, lively, rousing, thrilling,  
energetic

## scary

creepy, nightmarish, spooky, haunting,  
threatening

## fun

amusing, bouncy, cheerful, playful

## worried

anxious, nervous, restless, suspenseful, tense,  
uneasy

# Identifying Mood

*Mood* is the feeling the reader gets from a work of literature. Another way to describe mood is atmosphere. When you walk into a place, it has an atmosphere that makes you feel a certain way; when you “walk into” a text, it too has an atmosphere that makes you feel a certain way. For example, the mood could be *calm*, *creepy*, *romantic*, *gloomy*, or *tense*. Authors create mood through word choice, imagery, dialogue, setting, and plot. The mood can stay the same from the beginning to the end of a text, or it can change.

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# Story Planner

**Directions:** Read the play *Beware the Thunder* and the informational text "What If You Fell Asleep for 20 Years?" Then jot down ideas to answer the questions below. Your ideas will help you plan the story you will write in response to the writing prompt from page 16. Don't forget to enter your story in the contest!

## Writing Contest

**Write a story about someone who falls asleep and wakes up 20 years from now. Use the play and the informational text to help you come up with your plot. Your story can be in the form of a play, video, or short story. Group entries accepted.**

**1.** Describe the protagonist, or main character, of your story. Include the character's name as well as information about his or her age, appearance, personality, and background.

**2.** Describe the circumstances under which your protagonist falls asleep for 20 years. In the play, Rip falls asleep after drinking the Odd Fellows' beverage. What happens to your character?

**3.** Where is your character when he or she wakes up? Who are the first people your character sees?

**4.** Of the seven changes predicted on page 16, choose at least three to work into your story. Which ones will you use?

**5.** How does your character find out about the changes that have taken place in his or her world?

**6.** How does your character react to the changes that he or she finds? For example, is your character frightened? Thrilled? Not surprised? Horrified?



# Close-Reading Questions

## *Beware the Thunder*

1. In Scene 1, what do you learn about Rip and Cornelia? How are they different? (character)
2. At the start of Scene 4, the Odd Fellow, Rip, and Wolf walk back and forth across the stage in front of the curtain. What does this indicate? (text structure)
3. In Scene 5, why does Rip wince and clutch his back when he stands up? (inference)
4. In Scene 6, why does the crowd gasp when Rip says he's a loyal subject of the king? (inference)
5. In Scene 7, John asks Rip what his name is. Why does Rip reply, "I don't think I know"? (inference)



## ***Beware the Thunder* and “What If You Fell Asleep for 20 Years?”**

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# ***Beware the Thunder***

## **Character Thinking Tool**

**1.** How does Cornelia feel about Rip? Explain your answer using details from the play.

**2.** If you were in Cornelia's place, would you have similar feelings about Rip? Explain.

**3.** List Rip's strengths and weaknesses as a person. Support your answers with details from the play.

strengths	weaknesses

4. Rip's dog, Wolf, is a character in the play, though he doesn't have any speaking lines. What is the purpose of Wolf's character? In other words, what does he add to the play?

5. Is Rip a static or dynamic character? Explain your reasoning.

A **static character** does not change in any important way over the course of a story.

A **dynamic character** undergoes an important internal change over the course of a story.



# ***Beware the Thunder***

**Is change always for the better?**

Respond to each statement by checking “agree” or “disagree.” Be prepared to justify your responses.

	Agree	Disagree
1. Avoiding your responsibilities will make them disappear.		
2. The world can change a lot in 20 years.		
3. It's important to stop and smell the roses.		
4. Hard work is rewarded; laziness is punished.		
5. If you don't keep up with the world around you, you'll get left behind.		
6. Change and progress are the same thing.		
7. Change is inevitable—it cannot be avoided.		
8. People should be satisfied with the lives they have.		
9. The world is changing faster today than it ever has before.		
10. Change can be positive or negative.		

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## ***Beware the Thunder Quiz***

**Directions:** Read *Beware the Thunder*. Then answer the questions below.

1. In Scene 2, Cornelia says to Rip, “Busy? Sitting here like a pumpkin in the field?” This line contains
  - (A) a simile that reveals that Rip has spent his day sitting in a field.
  - (B) a metaphor that indicates that Rip physically resembles a pumpkin.
  - (C) a simile that emphasizes that Rip has spent the day sitting around doing nothing.
  - (D) symbolism: The pumpkin represents Rip.
2. In Scene 2, Cornelia “marches on stage.” The author’s use of *marches* helps the reader understand that
  - (A) Cornelia is happy to see Rip.
  - (B) Cornelia is angry at Rip.
  - (C) Cornelia is a soldier.
  - (D) Cornelia is walking slowly.
3. In Scene 3, the detail about Wolf’s tail being tucked between his legs
  - (A) tells you that Wolf is scared of the Odd Fellows.
  - (B) hints that something eerie or bad is going to happen.
  - (C) tells you that Wolf is excited by the Odd Fellows.
  - (D) both A and B
4. In Scenes 6 and 7, the author establishes that Rip has been asleep for a long time in all of the following ways EXCEPT
  - (A) by describing the changes that have been made to the Village Inn.
  - (B) by having Katrina dab Rip’s forehead.
  - (C) by drawing attention to Rip’s long beard.
  - (D) by including the detail that one of Rip’s friends has been dead for 18 years.
5. Which detail should NOT be included in a summary of the play?
  - (A) Cornelia accuses Rip of sitting like a pumpkin in a field.
  - (B) Rip wakes up with a long beard and doesn’t recognize anyone in his town.
  - (C) Rip meets the Odd Fellows in the mountains.
  - (D) Rip learns that a revolution was fought while he was sleeping.
6. Which of the following claims could BEST be supported with information from “What If You Fell Asleep for 20 Years?”
  - (A) People will be healthier in 2037.
  - (B) People will eat only bugs in the future.
  - (C) Traveling will be more difficult in 2037.
  - (D) Technology will continue to play a large role in our lives over the next 20 years.

### **Constructed-Response Questions**



**Directions:** Write your answers to the questions below on the back of this paper or type them up on a computer.

7. How does the author characterize Rip Van Winkle in Scene 1? Support your answer using text evidence.
8. The captions on pages 14-15 explain that life changed a lot after the American Revolution. How is this idea expressed in the play? Use text evidence to support your response.

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## ***Beware the Thunder Quiz***

**Directions:** Read *Beware the Thunder*. Then answer the questions below.

1. In Scene 2, Cornelia says to Rip, “Busy? Sitting here like a pumpkin in the field?” This line contains a simile that
  - (A) reveals that Rip spent the day sitting in a field.
  - (B) explains that Rip is round and orange like a pumpkin.
  - (C) emphasizes that Rip spent the day sitting around doing nothing.
  - (D) tells the reader that Cornelia doesn’t like pumpkins.
2. In Scene 2, Cornelia “marches on stage.” The author’s use of *marches* helps the reader understand that
  - (A) Cornelia is happy to see Rip.
  - (B) Cornelia is angry at Rip.
  - (C) Cornelia is a soldier.
  - (D) Cornelia is walking slowly.
3. In Scene 3, the detail about Wolf’s tail being tucked between his legs
  - (A) tells you that Wolf is scared of the Odd Fellows.
  - (B) hints that something eerie or bad is going to happen.
  - (C) tells you that Wolf is excited by the Odd Fellows.
  - (D) both A and B
4. In Scene 7, SD2 says, “Rip touches his face and is astonished to find he has a foot-long beard.” This line
  - (A) shows that Rip doesn’t like having a beard.
  - (B) helps the reader understand that Rip has been asleep for a long time.
  - (C) tells you that Rip decided to grow a beard while in the mountains.
  - (D) explains that Rip forgot he had a beard.
5. Which detail should definitely be included in a summary of the play?
  - (A) Rip meets the Odd Fellows in the mountains.
  - (B) Rip thinks the Catskills are beautiful.
  - (C) Cornelia asked Rip to milk the cows and feed the chickens.
  - (D) The drink that the Odd Fellows give Rip is delicious.
6. Which of the following claims could BEST be supported with information from “What If You Fell Asleep for 20 Years?”
  - (A) People will be healthier in 2037.
  - (B) People will eat only bugs in the future.
  - (C) Traveling will be more difficult in 2037.
  - (D) Technology will continue to play a large role in our lives over the next 20 years.

### **Constructed-Response Questions**



**Directions:** Write your answers to the questions below on the back of this paper or type them up on a computer.

7. How is the character of Rip Van Winkle portrayed in Scene 1? Support your answer with text evidence.
8. The captions on pages 14-15 explain that life changed a lot after the American Revolution. Choose two details in the play that support this idea and explain how they support it.



Note: *Scope* does not accept Google Docs. If you are e-mailing your entry, please send a .pdf or .doc file.

## Rip Van Winkle Contest

Write a story about someone who falls asleep and wakes up 20 years from now. Use the play and the informational text to help you come up with your plot. Your story can be in the form of a play, video, or short story.

Group entries accepted. Five winners will each get a copy of  
*The Wells Bequest* by Polly Shulman.

### Entries will be judged on:

- ⇒ creativity
- ⇒ grammar
- ⇒ clarity
- ⇒ strength of descriptive language

My name: \_\_\_\_\_

My home phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ My grade: \_\_\_\_\_

My teacher's name: \_\_\_\_\_ My teacher's e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

School address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

School phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

My parent or legal guardian consents  
to my participation in this contest.

Parent's or legal guardian's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Include this form with your written entry and send both to: [scopemag@scholastic.com](mailto:scopemag@scholastic.com)  
or mail them to: Rip Van Winkle Contest, c/o *Scope*, P.O. Box 712, New York, NY 10013-0712

**ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY January 15, 2018!**