

***The Metamorphoses* – Group Work**

This is your first group work for me: keep the following in mind: 1) The only way that you will finish is to be completely and utterly **FOCUSED** from beginning to end. 2) **Have a timekeeper** – give them a minute to put times next to each of the questions – that you should “be at” in order to finish. 3) Do NOT split up the questions (though if it asks you to find evidence – you can split up the parts of the text that you are looking at – all work must be done in one hand. 4) One person records (switch who records when you have permanent groups. 5) If you did not do the reading – you do not do the group work – you should read this period, and turn in the group work tomorrow for no penalty.

1. **What do you notice about the author’s last name and the last name of the character? What is a fair implication (though Mr. Scotese hates fair implications that involve ideas outside of the text)?**
2. **What precisely has happened to Gregor? If we examine this transformation from a metaphorical point of view – are there times in your lives that you have felt similarly transformed? Be thoughtful, creative, and specific. See, this is a good way to get to know each other. Try to have each member come up with at least one example. If you get stuck feel free to consult other groups.**
3. **Look (on page 1) at the shift from the 2nd to the last “...dull ache he had never experienced before.” to the last paragraph “Oh God, he thought, what an exhausting job I’ve picked on!” (that paragraph continues on to the next page). What a transition (or lack thereof)! What clue (think about his job and what you learn later in the story) does this give us about his transformation (be specific – and find at least one quote from later in the work to support your answer). Now go back to question 2 – how can you connect this to what has happened to Gregor?**
4. **Find the song by The Talking Heads entitled “Once in a Lifetime.” (I’ve included on the back of this sheet – though you also got it last week with “The Night Face Up.”) Using what you’ve talked about so far, in questions 1-3, how can you specifically (using at least 2 quotes from the story), connect this song to *The Metamorphoses*? “You may find yourself...”**
5. **Notice how the story switches from the horror of what’s happened to an almost mundane contemplation – as though life as usual was still going on. Again, how does this make this story less of a fantasy and more of an examination of our normal lives? Be specific. When incredible – mind changing things happen in our lives – can we just STOP – when 9/11 happened – for many of us (for most you – you were too young to remember) – it seemed that the world would never be the same – but in the end, what must happen? On the back is a poem I wrote the day after 9/11 – if you have time connect it to this discussion. Ah – isn’t this a bit cool? Isn’t the story (*The Metamorphosis*) – itself undergoing a change?**
6. **On page 3 (towards the top) his father calls out to him: “what’s the matter with you?” The father desperately wants to come in and talk with his son. Read the entire speech. Have any of you heard a similar imploring “talk” from your parents or other adults? (Think about this when we watch *The Graduate*) Explain.**
7. **Why are they so horrified with his voice? After this “change” he is no longer intelligible. Does this support or refute what you’ve been talking about as far as this being a natural more than a supernatural tale? Do any of you remember a day as a teenager or adolescent when you noticed in change in your voice (or other physical aspect of yourself that made you feel like you were not you). Connect with question 2.**
8. **In his instructions to his publishers, Kafka insisted that they not show any illustrations of a bug to accompany this story. Given what you’ve talked about today – why do you feel he gave these instructions. How, specifically, does this fit in with what we said at the end of our discussion of “The Night Face Up,” - with whether or not Young Goodman Brown actually went to witch’s coven or if he just dreamed the entire incident? Be specific – using what we talked about then in formulating your answer now. (Remember the dagger from *Macbeth* – the floating one – do you actually want to show it?)**

BONUS Questions: (If you don't have time to do this – you may turn it in for Extra Credit) A) You will be watching a movie about a man who undergoes a transformation – in many ways that transformation is as amazing as one from a human to an insect. Continuing with what you wrote in question 8, does it matter (ah, back to “The Night Face Up”) how that transformation takes place or even if it physically is real (does it matter if Gregor is really an insect?) or is it all about the change and what he, she, it, we, becomes? B) I wrote a poem about 9/11 (see below) – connect it to your reading.

a sky without planes
by Joe Scotese

the bell rings
we turn our heads
we turn our minds
we are simply changed

there are two towers
white tall gone
we look for answers
even before the questions come

a piece of me is washed away
drowned in the white turned
grey ash
emerging from the cloud
billowed down the corner

we are simply changed

Once in a Lifetime

Lyrics and Music by David Byrne, Brian Eno (The Talking Heads)

You may find yourself living in a shotgun shack
You may find yourself in another part of the world
You may find yourself behind the wheel of a large automobile
You may find yourself in a beautiful house with a beautiful wife
You may ask yourself, well, how did I get here?
Letting the days go by, let the water hold me down
Letting the days go by, water flowing underground
Into the blue again after the money's gone
Once in a lifetime, water flowing underground
You may ask yourself, how do I work this?
You may ask yourself, where is that large automobile?
You may tell yourself, this is not my beautiful house
You may tell yourself, this is not my beautiful wife
Letting the days go by, let the water hold me down
Letting the days go by, water flowing underground
Into the blue again, after the money's gone
Once in a lifetime, water flowing underground
Same as it ever was, same as it ever was, same as it ever was, same as it ever was
Same as it ever was, same as it ever was, same as it ever was, same as it ever was