

True West Study Questions

ACT I

Scene 1

1. Why might the playwright ask the director of the play to not change some things?
2. From the description in Scene 1, what profession do you believe Austin is in?
3. From page 5 to page 6, which brother do you think is the oldest? Why? (use a line from the play)
4. Where is the brothers' mom?
5. At the bottom of page 6, where did Lee go? What is Lee's reaction like when Austin tells him he had done the same?
6. Based on the dialogue from page 7 to page 8, what line of work is Lee in?
7. Because of this, why do you think Austin is hesitant to lend Lee his car?
8. Why does Lee react so harshly when Austin offers him money?
9. Where was Lee living before he came to his mother's house?
10. Why might Lee not want to go up north with Austin?

Scene 2

1. What was Lee really doing when he found out his mother had locks on everything?
2. What is Lee's reaction when Austin offers him breakfast?
3. Why did Lee go out to visit his father in the first place? How long was he in the desert for?
4. Who is Austin expecting to come by later in the day?
5. What kind of project does Austin say he is working on?
6. Why does Austin want Lee to leave while his visitor visits?
7. On page 14, what does Austin agree to do in order to get Lee out of his hair?
8. What does Lee tell Austin to tell the producer if Austin's project doesn't workout?

Scene 3

1. Who walks in during the middle of Saul and Austin's conversation? What is he holding?
2. Where does Lee invite Saul, at the bottom of page 16?
3. How does Lee explain the stolen television to Saul?
4. On page 18, what does Lee proceed to tell Saul?
5. Why do you think Lee recounts the movie about the man dying for the love of a horse?
6. Why is Lee so pushy about the Western?

Scene 4

1. What are the boys, Austin and Lee, doing as scene 4 begins?
2. Briefly describe the story Lee is trying to tell.
3. On page 22, what does Lee accuse Austin of being? Why does this not make sense?
4. What does Lee threaten to do if Austin doesn't write this outline for him?
5. What does Lee say he ought to do instead of writing this outline, page 24?
6. What does Lee believe about the work Austin does for a living?
7. How does story, on page 27, relate to the overall story of *True West*?

ACT II

Scene 5

1. What does Lee get from Saul Kimmer?
2. How does Lee explain he sealed the deal (with his story) with Saul?
3. What does Saul Kimmer want Austin to do with Lee's script?
4. At first how does Austin react to the news of Lee's script deal? How does he react after hearing about his own script?
5. (Predict) Did Lee do something to Saul?

Scene 6

1. What does Saul want Austin to do about the two projects? Was Lee lying about what he told Austin in scene 5?
2. What was a part of the deal between Saul and Lee that involves their father?
3. How do the characters characterize their father?
4. How does Saul compliment Lee on page 34?
5. Because of Austin's refusal to complete the script, what is Saul doing about Austin's script?

Scene 7

1. What do you notice about the character roles in the beginning of scene 7? What is Lee trying to do in the beginning? What is Austin doing?
2. What bet do Austin and Lee make on page 38?
3. Where does Austin want go on page 39?
4. What does Lee ask of Austin on page 40? What is Austin's response?
5. Describe the story that Austin tells Lee on page 41 and 42.
6. What do you think the point of Austin's story was?

Scene 8

1. Describe the scene in scene 8.
2. What does Austin go out and steal?
3. What is Lee in the process of doing during the beginning conversation?
4. What does Lee want on page 44?
5. Where does he want to go, page 45?
6. Who is Lee looking for?
7. How does Lee know this person?
8. Why might Austin like beginnings and Lee like endings? Make a prediction on what will happen based off of this comment.
9. Austin reminisces about his childhood. Why is he so troubled now by it?
10. Where does Austin say he wants to be?
11. Why does Lee explode at the end of the scene?
12. What is the deal that Lee and Austin make?

Scene 9

1. When we enter the scene what are Lee and Austin doing?
2. On page 51, what is Lee so particular about in the dialogue?
3. What do they change the line to? Does the line make sense to you?
4. Who walks in during the boys conversations?
5. What is Austin's explanation for all the toasters?
6. Who does Mom say is in town? Who is this person?
7. Why do you think Lee's attitude suddenly changes on page 56 and 57?
8. Why does Lee dismiss taking Austin to the desert?
9. What does Austin begin to do to Lee? What does he say while he is doing it?
10. Why might Austin actually be doing this?
11. What does Austin want from Lee during the fight?
12. Why won't Austin let him go?
13. What is the final thing the audience sees? How was this foreshadowed?