

## Before You Read

# *The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street, Act II*

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## Connect to the Teleplay

Think about a time when someone you know was afraid. How did that person's behavior change?

**Partner Talk** With a partner, talk about why a person might behave differently in a group than when he or she is alone.

## Build Background

This teleplay reflects the political situation in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s.

- After World War II, many people feared that the Soviet Union, a Communist country, might start a war against the United States.
- Because of the political climate, paranoia (an irrational fear or distrust) gripped many people. U.S. Senator Joseph McCarthy claimed that Communists were influencing Americans, including members of the movie industry and government officials.
- McCarthy's claims were investigated, and none was found to be true. Still, many wrongly accused people suffered because they had lost their jobs, marriages, and families.

## Vocabulary

**legitimate** (li jĭt'ə mit) *adj.* authentic or genuine (p. 816).  
*Experts determined that the vase was a fake and not a legitimate antique.*

**warrant** (wôr'ənt) *n.* a written document giving permission to do a search or seize a person or property (p. 819). *The officer would not enter the house without a warrant from a judge.*

**converging** (kən'vurj'ing) *v.* coming together at a place or point (p. 822). *The fans were converging on the stadium for the big game.*

**explicit** (eks plis'it) *adj.* clearly expressed or revealed (p. 825). *She told us exactly what to do; her directions were explicit.*

## Set Purposes for Reading

### **BQ** BIG Question

As you read, ask yourself, what message does this story send about how a group of people might react when they are afraid?

### **Literary Element** Suspense

**Suspense** is the feeling of curiosity and uncertainty about what is going to happen next in a literary work. Authors can build suspense by raising questions in the reader's mind about the characters, by describing a mood that is threatening or mysterious, and by **foreshadowing**, or providing clues that prepare readers for events that will happen later.

The feeling of suspense that an author creates draws readers into the story. As you read the selection, look for events that advance the plot and determine whether they foreshadow future events.

### **Reading Strategy** Analyze Historical Context

When you **analyze historical context**, you look at how the ideas and themes of a literary work reflect the historical period in which it was written. You look at features of the historical period, such as the political and cultural atmosphere, and you consider how these features might have influenced the author.

Analyzing historical context is important because it provides you with a background to better understand author's purpose and theme, or the message about life that the author wants to convey. To analyze historical context,

- research the historical period in which the teleplay was written using an encyclopedia or another reliable source
- think about how the setting, mood, and events of the teleplay relate to the historical period in which it was written
- think about how the historical period might have influenced the author's purpose for writing

Use a chart like the one below to help you analyze historical context.

| "The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street" | What does it relate to in history? |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Setting                                |                                    |
| Mood                                   |                                    |
| Events                                 |                                    |

### Learning Objectives

For pages 812–828

In studying this text, you will focus on the following objectives:

**Literary Study:** Analyzing suspense.

**Reading:** Analyzing historical context.

### TRY IT

**Analyzing** Suppose that your class is staging a play written during a historical period of peace and prosperity, or wealth. With a partner, discuss what the setting of the play would look like. What would the mood, or emotional quality, of the play be like?

# **the Monsters** are due on **MAPLE STREET**

Rod Serling

## **ACT 2**

*[We see a medium shot of the GOODMAN entry hall at night. On the side table rests an unlit candle. MRS. GOODMAN walks into the scene, a glass of milk in hand. She sets the milk down on the table, lights the candle with a match from a box on the table, picks up the glass of milk, and starts out of scene. MRS. GOODMAN comes through her porch door, glass of milk in hand. The entry hall, with table and lit candle, can be seen behind her.]*

*Outside, the camera slowly pans down the sidewalk, taking in little knots of people who stand around talking in low voices. At the end of each conversation they look toward LES GOODMAN's house. From the various houses we can see candlelight but no electricity, and there's an all-pervading quiet that blankets the whole area, disturbed only by the almost whispered voices of the people as they stand around. The camera pans over to one group where CHARLIE stands. He stares across at GOODMAN's house.*

*We see a long shot of the house. Two men stand across the street in almost sentry-like poses. Then we see a medium shot of a group of people.]*



*Room for Tourists*, 1945. Edward Hopper. Oil on canvas, 30 1/4 x 42 1/8 in.  
Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT. Bequest of Stephen Carlton Clark.

View the Art What mood does the artist create in this painting? How is the mood similar to, or different from, the mood of the teleplay?

SALLY. [A little *timorously*.]<sup>1</sup> It just doesn't seem right, though, keeping watch on them. Why . . . he was right when he said he was one of our neighbors. Why, I've known Ethel Goodman ever since they moved in. We've been good friends—

<sup>1</sup> *Timorously* (tim'ər əs lē) means "lacking courage or self-confidence; timidly."

CHARLIE. There's nothin' else we can do! *[He turns back looking toward STEVE and GOODMAN again.]* One of 'em'll tip their hand. They got to.

STEVE. *[Raising his voice.]* There's something you can do, Charlie. You could go home and keep your mouth shut. You could quit strutting around like a self-appointed hanging judge and just climb into bed and forget it.

CHARLIE. You sound real anxious to have that happen, Steve. I think we better keep our eye on you too!

DON. *[As if he were taking the bit in his teeth, takes a hesitant step to the front.]* I think everything might as well come out now. *[He turns toward STEVE.]* Your wife's done plenty of talking, Steve, about how odd you are!

CHARLIE. *[Picking this up, his eyes widening.]* Go ahead, tell us what she's said.

*[We see a long shot of STEVE as he walks toward them from across the street.]*

STEVE. Go ahead, what's my wife said? Let's get it all out. Let's pick out every idiosyncrasy<sup>2</sup> of every single man, woman, and child on the street. And then we might as well set up some kind of kangaroo court.<sup>3</sup> How about a firing squad at dawn, Charlie, so we can get rid of all the suspects? Narrow them down. Make it easier for you.

DON. There's no need gettin' so upset, Steve. It's just that . . . well . . . Myra's talked about how there's been plenty of nights you spent hours down in your basement workin' on some kind of radio or something. Well, none of us have ever seen that radio—

<sup>2</sup> An *idiosyncrasy* (id' ē ə sing' krə sē) is a personal way of acting; an odd mannerism.

<sup>3</sup> A *kangaroo court* is an unofficial, irregular trial in which the verdict is often decided beforehand and fair legal procedures are ignored.

#3

**Suspense** How might the use of a long shot heighten the suspense of the teleplay at this point?

CHARLIE. That don't prove a thing. Any guy who'd spend his time lookin' up at the sky early in the morning—well, there's something wrong with that kind of person. There's something that ain't **legitimate**. Maybe under normal circumstances we could let it go by, but these aren't normal circumstances. Why, look at this street! Nothin' but candles. Why, it's like goin' back into the dark ages or somethin'!

[STEVE walks down the steps of his porch, walks down the street over to Les Goodman's house, and then stops at the foot of the steps. GOODMAN stands there, his wife behind him, very frightened.]

GOODMAN. Just stay right where you are, Steve. We don't want any trouble, but this time if anybody sets foot on my porch, that's what they're going to get—trouble!

STEVE. Look, Les—

GOODMAN. I've already explained to you people. I don't sleep very well at night sometimes. I get up and I take a walk and I look up at the sky. I look at the stars!

MRS. GOODMAN. That's exactly what he does. Why this whole thing, it's . . . it's some kind of madness or something.

STEVE. [Nods grimly.] That's exactly what it is—some kind of madness.

CHARLIE'S VOICE. [Shrill, from across the street.] You best watch who you're seen with, Steve! Until we get this all straightened out, you ain't exactly above suspicion yourself.

STEVE. [Whirling around toward him.] Or you, Charlie. Or any of us, it seems. From age eight on up.

WOMAN. What I'd like to know is—what are we gonna do? Just stand around here all night?

#### Vocabulary

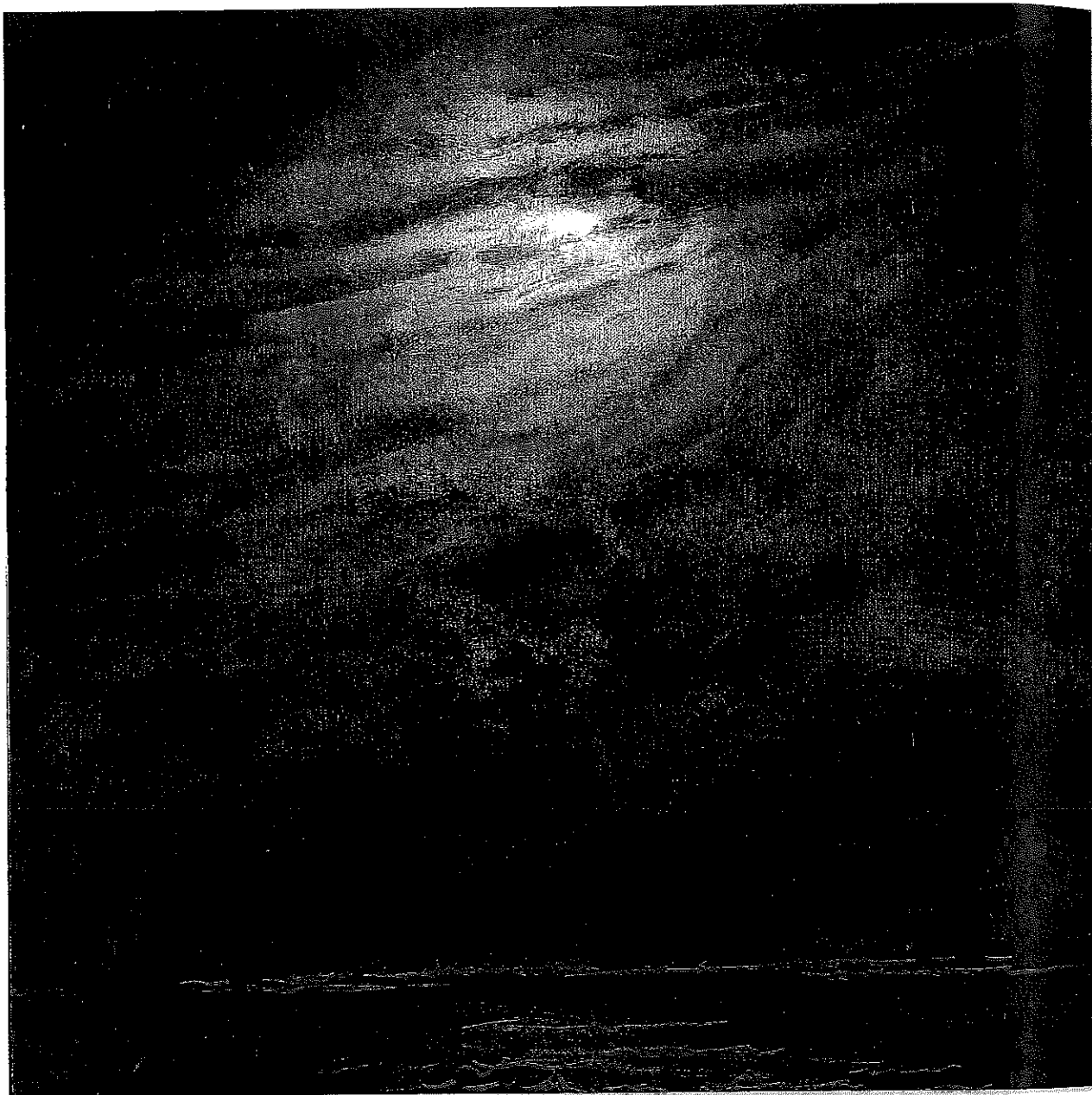
**legitimate** (li jit'ə mit) *adj.* authentic or genuine

#### #1 Analyze Historical Context

How do Charlie's words relate to the historical context of the 1950s and 1960s?

#### #2

**Suspense** What sort of incident might this line foreshadow?



*Stormy Midnight*, 1995. Jane Wilson. Oil on linen, 18 x 18 in. Private Collection.

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[By this time STEVE has reached the group. He stands there defiantly close to them.]

CHARLIE. Go ahead, Steve. What kind of "radio set" you workin' on? I never seen it. Neither has anyone else. Who you talk to on that radio set? And who talks to you?

STEVE. I'm surprised at you, Charlie. How come you're so dense all of a sudden? [A pause.] Who do I talk to? I talk to monsters from outer space. I talk to three-headed green men who fly over here in what look like meteors.

[STEVE's wife steps down from the porch, bites her lip, calls out.]

MRS. BRAND. Steve! Steve, please. [Then looking around, frightened, she walks toward the group.] It's just a ham radio<sup>4</sup> set, that's all. I bought him a book on it myself. It's just a ham radio set. A lot of people have them. I can show it to you. It's right down in the basement.

STEVE. [Whirls around toward her.] Show them nothing! If they want to look inside our house—let them get a search warrant.

CHARLIE. Look, buddy, you can't afford to—

STEVE. [Interrupting.] Charlie, don't tell me what I can afford! And stop telling me who's dangerous and who isn't and who's safe and who's a menace. [He turns to the group and shouts.] And you're with him, too—all of you! You're standing here all set to crucify—all set to find a scapegoat<sup>5</sup>—all desperate to point some kind of a finger at a neighbor! Well now look, friends, the only thing that's gonna happen is that we'll eat each other up alive—

[He stops abruptly as CHARLIE suddenly grabs his arm.]

4 **Ham radio**, also known as amateur radio, is a hobby in which a person operates his or her own radio station, sending messages by voice or Morse code.

5 A **scapegoat** is someone who is made to take the blame and suffer for the mistakes or misfortunes of another person or a group.

#### Vocabulary

**warrant** (wôr'ənt) *n.* a written document giving permission to do a search or seize a person or property

#4

#### Analyze Historical Context

At the time that this teleplay was first aired on television, Communism was commonly called "the red menace." How would the use of this word affect the teleplay's first audience?

CHARLIE. *[In a hushed voice.]* That's not the only thing that can happen to us.

*[Cut to a long shot looking down the street. A figure has suddenly materialized in the gloom and in the silence we can hear the clickety-clack of slow, measured footsteps on concrete as the figure walks slowly toward them. One of the women lets out a stifled cry. The young mother grabs her boy as do a couple of others.]*

TOMMY. *[Shouting, frightened.]* It's the monster! It's the monster!

*[Another woman lets out a wail and the people fall back in a group, staring toward the darkness and the approaching figure. We see a medium group shot of the people as they stand in the shadows watching. DON MARTIN joins them, carrying a shotgun. He holds it up.]*

DON. We may need this.

STEVE. A shotgun? *[He pulls it out of DON's hand.]* Good Lord—will anybody think a thought around here? Will you people wise up? What good would a shotgun do against—

*[Now CHARLIE pulls the gun from STEVE's hand.]*

CHARLIE. No more talk, Steve. You're going to talk us into a grave! You'd let whatever's out there walk right over us, wouldn't yuh? Well, some of us won't!

*[He swings the gun around to point it toward the sidewalk. The dark figure continues to walk toward them. The group stands there, fearful, apprehensive, mothers clutching children, men standing in front of wives. CHARLIE slowly raises the gun. As the figure gets closer and closer he suddenly pulls the trigger. The sound of it explodes in the stillness. There is a long angle shot looking down at the figure, who suddenly lets out a small cry, stumbles forward onto his knees and then falls forward on his face. DON, CHARLIE, and STEVE race forward over to him. STEVE is there first and turns the man over. Now the crowd gathers around them.]*

#5

**Suspense** Which details of these stage directions increase the suspense in the teleplay?

#6

**BQ** **BIG Question**

What message is the author sending about how people behave when they are fearful?

STEVE. [*Slowly looks up.*] It's Pete Van Horn.

DON. [*In a hushed voice.*] Pete Van Horn! He was just gonna go over to the next block to see if the power was on—

WOMAN. You killed him, Charlie. You shot him dead!

CHARLIE. [*Looks around at the circle of faces, his eyes frightened, his face contorted.*] But . . . but I didn't know who he was. I certainly didn't know who he was. He comes walkin' out of the darkness—how am I supposed to know who he was? [*He grabs STEVE.*] Steve—you know why I shot! How was I supposed to know he wasn't a monster or something? [*He grabs DON now.*] We're all scared of the same thing, I was just tryin' to . . . tryin' to protect my home, that's all! Look, all of you, that's all I was tryin' to do. [*He looks down wildly at the body.*] I didn't know it was somebody we knew! I didn't know—

[*There's a sudden hush and then an intake of breath. We see a medium shot of the living room window of CHARLIE's house. The window is not lit, but suddenly the house lights come on behind it.*]

WOMAN. [*In a very hushed voice.*] Charlie . . . Charlie . . . the lights just went on in your house. Why did the lights just go on?

DON. What about it, Charlie? How come you're the only one with lights now?

GOODMAN. That's what I'd like to know.

[*A pause as they all stare toward CHARLIE.*]

GOODMAN. You were so quick to kill, Charlie and you were so quick to tell us who we had to be careful of. Well, maybe you had to kill. Maybe Peter there was trying to tell us something. Maybe he'd found out something and came back to tell us who there was amongst us we should watch out for—

#7  
Analyze Historical Context  
How does this statement  
reflect the mood, or  
atmosphere, of the 1950s?

[CHARLIE backs away from the group, his eyes wide with fright.]

CHARLIE. No . . . no . . . it's nothing of the sort! I don't know why the lights are on, I swear I don't. Somebody's pulling a gag or something.

[He bumps against STEVE, who grabs him and whirls him around.]

STEVE. A gag? A gag? Charlie, there's a dead man on the sidewalk and you killed him. Does this thing look like a gag to you?

[CHARLIE breaks away and screams as he runs toward his house.]

CHARLIE: No! No! Please!

[A man breaks away from the crowd to chase CHARLIE. We see a long angle shot looking down as the man tackles CHARLIE and lands on top of him. The other people start to run toward them. CHARLIE is up on his feet, breaks away from the other man's grasp, lands a couple of desperate punches that push the man aside. Then he forces his way, fighting, through the crowd to once again break free, jumps up on his front porch. A rock thrown from the group smashes a window alongside of him, the broken glass flying past him. A couple of pieces cut him. He stands there perspiring, rumped, blood running down from a cut on the cheek. His wife breaks away from the group to throw herself into his arms. He buries his face against her. We can see the crowd **converging** on the porch now.]

VOICES.

It must have been him.

He's the one.

We got to get Charlie.

[Another rock lands on the porch. Now CHARLIE pushes his wife behind him, facing the group.]

### Vocabulary

**converging** (kən'vurj'ing) v. coming together at a place or point

CHARLIE. Look, look I swear to you . . . it isn't me . . . but I do know who it is . . . I swear to you, I do know who it is. I know who the monster is here. I know who it is that doesn't belong. I swear to you I know.

GOODMAN. [*Shouting.*] What are you waiting for?

WOMAN. [*Shouting.*] Come on, Charlie, come on.

MAN ONE. [*Shouting.*] Who is it, Charlie, tell us!

DON. [*Pushing his way to the front of the crowd*] All right, Charlie, let's hear it!

[*CHARLIE's eyes dart around wildly.*]

CHARLIE. It's . . . it's . . .

MAN TWO. [*Screaming.*] Go ahead, Charlie, tell us.

CHARLIE. It's . . . it's the kid. It's Tommy. He's the one.

[*There's a gasp from the crowd as we cut to a shot of SALLY holding her son TOMMY. The boy at first doesn't understand and then, realizing the eyes are all on him, buries his face against his mother.*]

SALLY. [*Backs away.*] That's crazy! That's crazy! He's a little boy.

WOMAN. But he knew! He was the only one who knew! He told us all about it. Well, how did he know? How could he have known?

[*The various people take this up and repeat the question aloud.*]

VOICES.

How could he know?

Who told him?

Make the kid answer.

DON. It was Charlie who killed old man Van Horn.

WOMAN. But it was the kid here who knew what was going to happen all the time. He was the one who knew!

#8

Suspense How do the pauses in Charlie's speech add to the suspense?

CHARLIE. I tell you it's the kid.

DON. It's Charlie. He's the one.

*[We move into a series of close-ups of various people as they shout, accuse, scream, interspersing<sup>6</sup> these shots with shots of houses as the lights go on and off, and then slowly in the middle of this nightmarish morass<sup>7</sup> of sight and sound the camera starts to pull away, until once again we've reached the opening shot looking at the Maple Street sign from high above. The camera continues to move away until we dissolve to a shot looking toward the metal side of a space craft, which sits shrouded in darkness. An open door throws out a beam of light from the illuminated interior.*

*Two figures silhouetted against the bright lights appear. We get only a vague feeling of form, but nothing more explicit than that.]*

FIGURE ONE. Understand the procedure now? Just stop a few of their machines and radios and telephones and lawn mowers . . . Throw them into darkness for a few hours, and then you just sit back and watch the pattern.

FIGURE TWO. And this pattern is always the same?

FIGURE ONE. With few variations. They pick the most dangerous enemy they can find . . . and it's themselves. And all we need do is sit back . . . and watch.

FIGURE TWO. Then I take it this place . . . this Maple Street . . . is not unique.

FIGURE ONE. *[Shaking his head.]* By no means. Their world is full of Maple Streets. And we'll go from one to the other and let them destroy themselves. One to the other . . . one to the other . . . one to the other—

<sup>6</sup> *Interspersing* means "scattering or mixing in over brief periods."

<sup>7</sup> A *morass* (mə ras') is any difficult or confused condition or situation.

#### Vocabulary

**explicit** (eks plis'it) *adj.* clearly expressed or revealed

#### BQ BIG Question

What message about humans does the author reveal through Figure One and Figure Two's dialogue?

#### Analyze Historical Context

How might this remark help reveal the theme of the teleplay?

[We see a close-up of STEVE.]

STEVE. Are you all gone crazy? [Pause as he looks about.] Stop.

[A fist crashes at STEVE's face, staggering him back out of the frame of the picture.

There are several close camera shots suggesting the coming of violence. A hand fires a rifle. A fist clenches. A hand grabs the hammer from VAN HORN's body, etc. Meanwhile, we hear the following lines.]

DON. Charlie has to be the one—Where's my rifle—

WOMAN. Les Goodman's the one. His car started! Let's wreck it.

MRS. GOODMAN. What about Steve's radio—He's the one that called them—

MR. GOODMAN. Smash the radio. Get me a hammer. Get me something.

STEVE. Stop—Stop—

CHARLIE. Where's that kid—Let's get him.

MAN ONE. Get Steve—Get Charlie—They're working together.

[The crowd starts to converge around the mother, who grabs the child and starts to run with him. The crowd starts to follow, at first walking fast, and then running after him. We see a full shot of the street as suddenly CHARLIE's lights go off and the lights in another house go on. They stay on for a moment, then from across the street other lights go on and then off again.]

MAN ONE. [Shouting.] It isn't the kid . . . it's Bob Weaver's house.

WOMAN. It isn't Bob Weaver's house, it's Don Martin's place.

#9

**Suspense** What kinds of violent acts might these close-up stage directions foreshadow?



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*[Now the camera pans up for a shot of the starry sky and over this we hear the NARRATOR'S VOICE.]*

NARRATOR'S VOICE. The tools of conquest do not necessarily come with bombs and explosions and fallout.<sup>8</sup> There are weapons that are simply thoughts, attitudes, prejudices—to be found only in the minds of men. For the record, prejudices<sup>9</sup> can kill and suspicion can destroy and a thoughtless frightened search for a scapegoat has a fallout all its own for the children . . . and the children yet unborn. *[A pause.]* And the pity of it is . . . that these things cannot be confined to . . . The Twilight Zone! 🎧

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<sup>8</sup> **Fallout** is the radioactive dust particles that result from a nuclear explosion and that fall to Earth from the atmosphere.

<sup>9</sup> **Prejudices** are unfavorable opinions or judgments formed unfairly.



## After You Read

### Respond and Think Critically

1. What does Charlie do when he thinks the figure walking down Maple Street is an enemy? [Recall]
2. What causes the people of Maple Street to act so angry and scared? Explain. [Summarize]
3. Based on your personal experience, how do you think the people of Maple Street might have solved their problems differently? Explain. [Connect]
4. How do the people on Maple Street change from the beginning of the teleplay to the end? Use details to support your answer. [Analyze]
5. Does Steve play a positive role in the play? Explain your answer. [Evaluate]
6. **BQ** **BIG Question** What message or lesson does the aliens' dialogue send? Explain. [Conclude]

### TIP

#### Connecting

To answer question 3, find links between the teleplay and your own experiences.

- Think about a time you helped a friend or group of friends overcome fear or nervousness.
- Ask yourself, how was I able to help a friend or a group of friends overcome these fears? What strategy did I use? How did it help?

#### FOLDABLES Study Organizer

Keep track of your ideas about the **BIG Question** in your unit Foldable.

## Examine Media

### Fear as a Selling Tool

In the 1950s, people feared that nuclear weapons might be used against Americans. Fear prompted many people to build bomb shelters. This ad ran in a popular magazine.

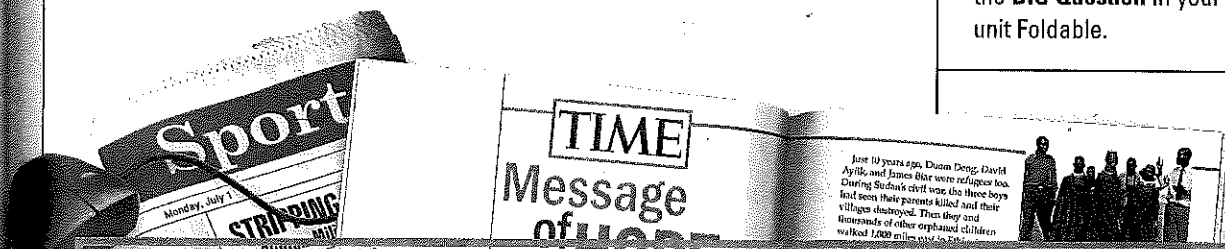
#### PROTECT YOUR LOVED ONES!

Build a Small Atomic  
Shelter for Your Family  
& Valuable Possessions

Write now for blueprints  
**Complete set \$7.50**  
**BLUEPRINTS FOR SURVIVAL**  
35 West 53rd Street, NY

**Group Activity** Discuss the following questions with classmates. Use information from the teleplay and the advertisement to support your answers.

1. To what emotion does this advertisement appeal?
2. Would the advertisement have been effective in the 1950s? Why or why not?
3. What modern products are advertised using an emotional appeal similar to the appeal in this advertisement?
4. Are these modern advertisements effective? Why or why not?



## Literary Element Suspense

### Test Skills Practice

1. Which line from the teleplay foreshadows the neighbors' behavior near the end of Act II?
  - A. Let them get a search warrant.
  - B. We'll eat each other up alive.
  - C. I talk to monsters from outer space.
  - D. Somebody's pulling a gag or something.

### Review: Conflict

As you learned on page 675, **conflict** is the central struggle between opposing forces in a story or play. An **external conflict** exists when a character struggles against an outside force, such as another person. An **internal conflict** exists within the mind of a character who is torn between opposite feelings or goals. Serling uses an external conflict among the neighbors of Maple Street to tell his story.

### Test Skills Practice

2. Which sentence gives the best description of how the Maple Street residents react to the mysterious events occurring on their street?
  - A. They cling to one another.
  - B. They hide in their homes.
  - C. They turn against one another.
  - D. They unite against the aliens.

### Reading Skill Analyze Historical Context

3. What evidence in the play shows that Serling meant to teach a lesson about the atmosphere of paranoia in the 1950s? Use both the graphic organizers that you completed to help you with your answer.

## Vocabulary Practice

Respond to these questions.

1. What kinds of directions are **explicit**—detailed directions or vague directions?
2. Which is a **legitimate** need of a young adult—healthy food or video games?
3. Who would be more likely to need a **warrant**—a detective or a sales clerk?
4. Who would be more likely to be **converging** on a music hall—a jazz band or a swim team?

## Academic Vocabulary

As the events grew more mysterious, Steve **perceived** that his once friendly neighbors were becoming hostile and suspicious. In the preceding sentence, *perceived* means noticed. Think about what words and actions Steve noticed about his neighbors, and then fill in the blank for this statement:

\_\_\_\_\_ was something that Steve perceived his neighbors doing.



Literature Online

**Selection Resources** For Selection Quizzes, eFlashcards, and Reading-Writing Connection activities, go to [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com) and enter QuickPass code GL29763u6.