

button button by richard matheson answer key

Button Button by Richard Matheson answer key is a fascinating topic that delves into the moral and ethical dilemmas presented in the short story by the acclaimed author. First published in 1950, "Button, Button" explores themes of temptation, consequence, and the nature of human desire. The story is about a couple, Norma and Arthur Lewis, who encounter a strange button with an unusual proposition that challenges their values and decisions. In this article, we will discuss a detailed answer key that covers key themes, character analysis, and moral lessons derived from the narrative.

Understanding the Plot of Button Button

At the core of "Button, Button" is a simple yet provocative premise. The couple is presented with a mysterious box containing a button. They learn that if they press the button, they will receive a substantial sum of money, but someone they do not know will die as a result. This moral quandary serves as the foundation for the story's exploration of human nature and greed.

Key Plot Points

1. **Introduction of the Button:** The story begins with the couple receiving the box and its implications, which sets the stage for the ensuing moral conflict.
2. **Norma's Temptation:** Norma is immediately intrigued by the button and the potential wealth it could bring, highlighting her internal struggle with greed.
3. **Arthur's Reluctance:** Arthur represents a voice of reason, emphasizing the ethical ramifications of their potential choice, which creates tension in their relationship.
4. **The Climactic Decision:** The pivotal moment occurs when Norma ultimately decides to press the button, leading to unforeseen consequences.
5. **The Twist Ending:** The story concludes with a shocking revelation that forces readers to reevaluate

the characters' choices and the moral of the tale.

Character Analysis

The characters in "Button, Button" are intricately crafted to illustrate the varying responses to temptation and the consequences of one's choices.

Norma Lewis

- Motivation: Norma's character is driven by her desire for financial security and the allure of wealth. She represents the human inclination towards greed and self-interest.
- Development: Throughout the story, Norma's internal conflict escalates, reflecting her struggle between moral integrity and the temptation of immediate gratification.
- Final Choice: Her decision to press the button signifies a critical moment of transformation, showcasing the darker aspects of her character.

Arthur Lewis

- Motivation: Arthur serves as the moral compass of the story, advocating for ethical considerations and caution.
- Development: His character embodies the conflict between rational thought and emotional impulse, as he grapples with his wife's growing obsession with the button.
- Final Choice: Arthur's eventual realization of the consequences of their actions adds depth to his character, culminating in a profound sense of loss and regret.

The Mysterious Stranger

- Role: The stranger who presents the button serves as a catalyst for the events that unfold. His enigmatic nature raises questions about fate and the morality of the choices presented to the couple.
- Symbolism: The stranger embodies the idea of temptation and serves as a reminder of the consequences that come with making selfish choices.

Themes and Moral Lessons

Richard Matheson's "Button, Button" is rich with themes that resonate with readers, prompting reflection on the human condition.

Greed and Consequence

- The story serves as a powerful cautionary tale about the dangers of greed. It illustrates how the desire for wealth can cloud judgment and lead to devastating consequences.
- Readers are left to ponder whether the pursuit of material wealth is worth the potential loss of life and morality.

Moral Dilemmas

- Matheson effectively presents a moral dilemma that forces characters and readers alike to confront difficult questions about right and wrong.
- The story encourages readers to consider the implications of their choices and the potential impact on others.

Human Nature and Temptation

- The allure of the button symbolizes the temptations that individuals face throughout life. It highlights the struggle between rational thought and emotional desire.
- The story ultimately questions whether people are inherently good or if they will succumb to their baser instincts when faced with temptation.

Discussion Questions and Answer Key

To facilitate deeper understanding and analysis of the story, here are some discussion questions along with answers that could serve as an answer key for educators and readers.

Discussion Questions

1. What does the button symbolize in the story?
 - The button symbolizes temptation, the allure of wealth, and the moral choices individuals face when confronted with greed.
2. How do the characters of Norma and Arthur represent different responses to temptation?
 - Norma embodies the desire for material gain and is willing to risk morality for it, while Arthur represents caution and ethical consideration, warning against the potential consequences.
3. What is the significance of the story's twist ending?
 - The twist ending serves to shock the reader and provoke thought about the consequences of one's actions, underscoring the story's themes of morality and the unpredictability of life.
4. How does the setting contribute to the story's themes?
 - The mundane setting of a suburban home contrasts sharply with the extraordinary moral dilemma

presented, emphasizing the clash between ordinary life and extraordinary choices.

5. What moral lessons can be drawn from "Button, Button"?

- The story teaches that choices have consequences, that greed can lead to moral decay, and that one must consider the impact of their actions on others.

Conclusion

In conclusion, **Button Button** by Richard Matheson answer key provides a comprehensive exploration of the story's moral complexities. By analyzing character motivations, themes, and the profound implications of human choices, we gain valuable insights into the nature of greed and the ethical dilemmas we face in life. Richard Matheson's masterful storytelling not only captivates readers but also challenges them to reflect on their own values and decisions in a world filled with temptation.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the central theme of 'Button, Button' by Richard Matheson?

The central theme is the moral implications of greed and the consequences of making choices that sacrifice ethics for personal gain.

Who are the main characters in 'Button, Button'?

The main characters are Norma and Arthur Lewis, a married couple facing the moral dilemma presented by the button.

What does the button symbolize in the story?

The button symbolizes the temptation of easy money and the ethical dilemmas associated with it, as well as the cost of making selfish decisions.

What choice does Norma face regarding the button?

Norma faces the choice of whether to press the button, which would grant her \$50,000 but result in the death of a stranger.

How does Arthur react to Norma's thoughts about pressing the button?

Arthur is initially skeptical and warns Norma against pressing the button, emphasizing the moral consequences of such an action.

What is the twist at the end of 'Button, Button'?

The twist reveals that pressing the button leads to unforeseen consequences, illustrating the unpredictable nature of human choices.

What genre does 'Button, Button' belong to?

The story belongs to the speculative fiction genre, often categorized as science fiction or psychological thriller.

How does Matheson create suspense in 'Button, Button'?

Matheson creates suspense through the moral conflict of the characters, the ominous presence of the button, and the impending consequences of their choices.

What does the story suggest about human nature?

The story suggests that human nature is often driven by greed and self-interest, which can lead to destructive consequences.

How has 'Button, Button' been adapted in popular media?

The story has been adapted into various formats, including a notable episode of 'The Twilight Zone' and a short film, demonstrating its lasting impact on popular culture.

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