Drawing our own conclusions

From what I’ve told you so far, can you answer the following questions?

1. Where does the play take place?

2. When (time period) does the play take place?

3. What is the general plot of the play?

4. What sort of characters will be involved?

5. Who will be the tragic hero?

6. What will be his downfall?

Cast of Characters

Alfieri - lawyer
Eddie – Italian immigrant
Beatrice - Eddie’s wife
Catherine – their orphaned niece
Rodolfo and Marco – Bea’s cousins

Act One: The stage directions

1. What clues do the stage directions give us about the setting of the play?

2. What clues do the stage directions give us about the characters that will inhabit the stage?
Act 1: The prologue

Continue on, reading Alfieri’s prologue, stopping just before Eddie starts to speak.

1. What does Alfieri’s prologue tell us about justice and the law?

2. What sort of history surrounds the characters in the play, and why do you think Miller has included this information?

3. How does Alfieri describe the setting?

4. What does he foreshadow happening?

Act 1: Eddie and Catherine’s initial conversation

1. What sort of relationship do Eddie and Catherine have? Use specific examples from the text to back up your point.

Act 1: Discussing the arrival of the cousins

2. What clues are there that the cousins coming to America are not entirely legit?

3. How is the theme of honor evident in this section of the scene?

4. What impressions do you get of the following:

   *Eddie

   *Beatrice

   *Their relationship
**Act 1: Catherine’s News**

1. How does Eddie react to the news of Catherine’s job? Why?

2. What sort of relationship do Beatrice and Catherine have?

**Act 1: Eddie Caves In**

1. What are your thoughts and feelings regarding Eddie’s reaction to Catherine’s work proposal?

2. What sort of hopes does Eddie have for his niece?

3. Beatrice mentions that Eddie always seems to have an excuse for keeping Catherine close. What are your thoughts and feelings about this?

4. Why does Eddie give in?

5. What advice does Eddie give Catherine? What does this tell us about his character?

**Act 1: Vinny Bolzano**

1. How does the mood in the house change, once Eddie has accepted Catherine’s news? Why?

2. Why are Eddie and Beatrice so nervous?

3. What happened to Vinny?

4. What do we learn about the Red Hook community, through the story about Vinny?

5. What is Eddie’s opinion on what Vinny did?
**Act 1: The Arrival**
1. What do the two men think of Eddie’s home?
2. What are their hopes for coming to America?
3. How do the two men treat Eddie?
4. What does Catherine think of the two men?
5. How do Marco and Rodolfo describe life in Italy?

**Act 1: Marco and Rodolfo**
1. What is Rodolfo’s dream? Is it realistic?
2. What is Marco’s dream? Is it realistic?
3. Why does Eddie stop Rodolfo from singing?
4. What sort of relationship do Marco and Rodolfo have?

**Act 1: Growing Suspicion**
1. How does Eddie react to Catherine’s shoes?
2. Why does Eddie start to view Rodolfo with suspicion?

**Act 1: Eddie’s Growing Concerns**
1. What do we learn has happened in the weeks that have passed?
2. What is Eddie’s view of Rodolfo? Use examples from the text to support your answer.
3. What is Beatrice's view of Rodolfo? Use examples from the text to support your answer.

4. 'Of him? Boy, you sure don't think much of me'. What does this quote tell us about Eddie?

5. How does Eddie rate Rodolfo's masculinity, versus that of Marco? Why do you think he does this?

**Act 1: Marital Troubles**

1. Why is Beatrice upset?

2. How does Eddie react?

3. Why do you think Eddie has had troubles in his marriage?

4. How does Beatrice feel about Eddie's concern for Catherine? Is she justified?

**Act 1: An Outsiders Opinion**

1. What do Mike and Louis think of Marco and Rodolfo? Use specific examples from the text to support your answer.

2. How does Eddie react to their praise for Rodolfo?

3. What does this tell us about his feelings for Rodolfo, and about Eddie as a character?

**Act 1: Eddie and Catherine Talk**

1. How does Eddie treat Rodolfo?

2. How does Rodolfo treat Eddie?
3. What does Catherine think of the relationship between Eddie and Rodolfo? What does this mean for her future?

4. What clues are there that Eddie is uncomfortable with Catherine growing up?

5. How does Eddie react when he finds out Catherine likes Rodolfo?

6. What are your thoughts and feelings regarding Eddie’s theory about Rodolfo?

**Act 1: Beatrice and Catherine Talk**

1. How does Beatrice treat and regard Catherine?

2. What does Beatrice think of the relationship between Catherine and Eddie?

3. What does Beatrice encourage Catherine to do?

4. Do you feel that Beatrice has any ulterior motives behind her advice?

5. How has the connection between Eddie and Catherine changed?

**Act 1: Eddie consults Alfieri**

1. Alfieri tells Eddie ‘there’s nothing illegal about a girl falling in love with an immigrant.’ Is this really what is bothering Eddie?

2. How does Eddie ‘judge’ Rodolfo’s intentions? Does Alfieri buy into his theory? Do you?

3. What does Eddie imply about Rodolfo’s masculinity?
4. Can Eddie use the law to help him at this stage?

5. What functions does Alfieri have in the play? When he appears on stage, what purpose does he serve?

**Act 1: A Big Happy Family?**

1. How does Eddie cause discord in the family?

2. How are Eddie and Rodolfo different from each other?

3. How do Marco and Rodolfo describe life in Italy? How does it differ from that in America?

4. What sort of relationship do Marco and Rodolfo have?

**Act 1: The Fight**

1. Why does Catherine ask Rodolfo to dance?

2. How do the other characters react to the couple dancing?

3. What more does Eddie learn about Rodolfo that makes him uneasy?

4. Why does Eddie offer to teach Rodolfo to box?

5. What is Marco trying to prove by lifting the chair? How do both Eddie and the others react?