

# Teacher's Answer Key to the Study Guide

1.	Life without conflict is not possible. Men return home to fight a war against a corrupt mayor and reinstate the values and principles for which they had fought in a foreign land. All good things must be earned or the fruits of each person's labor is at the expense of what we believe is "familiar and good." Each character is called to participate in the war against corruption that jeopardizes democracy. For some, the call to work has been left to others. For a few, the call is an opportunity to personally benefit or walk away from what is considered a hopeless cause. Finally, there are the soldiers, who work through their personal conflicts to faithfully take a stand and risk all they have to serve their community and save it from the expectation of always being tainted because that is what everyone thought was normal.
2.	The music "Til Then" represents the long indefinite community wait for the war to end. The parade symbolizes victory, the slow motion effect creates a sense of warning, of something gone wrong because the music does not fit the cadence of a triumphant march. The marquee symbolizes what everyone wants, "It's a Wonderful Life," and yet gives the appearance of a question more than a statement of happiness. One is left asking, "Is it a wonderful life?"
3.	Some people take for granted what they have and enjoy. They view citizenship as a job with a beginning and an end, like fighting a war, rather than a lifetime commitment that requires continued participation to serve fellow members of the community.
4.	Barbara is a shallow person who is easily impressed with appearance. When she tells us that "the uniform did the trick," we are given a clue to her personality and how she will use her husband to further their social position.
5.	George is shocked at his wife's disregard for his friends who were in the group photo. Although she tells him the war is over, this was his family. He feels her lack of sensitivity when she tells him that she only wanted a picture of him.
6.	In civilian life, race and ethnic background were so important that it became the reason for discrimination. During the war, however, many prejudices were set aside because survival and life itself depended on every soldier regardless of background or color.
7.	Jesse had received a head injury.



8.	The head injury would take time to heal and Jesse would feel confused and have problems with speech. In time, he would start to walk again.
9.	George wants to tell Hope about her brother, Tim. George was present when Tim died.
10.	People don't want to consider the human cost of war and what it did to families. They want to enjoy the victory.
11.	Tim wanted his sister to know that he was thinking of her when he died and that he loved his sister.
12.	She saw the two of them as opposites. She felt that Tim would "change the world" and George would "own it."
13.	Tim said, "Don't look so scared, George. You're dead already anyway. You've been dead ever since law school. You just don't know it."
14.	Jesse is trying to understand his own feelings. He realizes that life would be different upon his return because of his injury and that people would see him differently. However, he wishes he could turn the clock back to a time when he had more control over his environment and personal affairs. He underestimated the power of the memories he had when he left to go to war. Those memories contributed to his fighting spirit, a spirit that brought him home to something less than what he had hoped and something for which he was unprepared to handle.
15.	Becky Meadows
16.	Jesse is especially upset because the mayor is making a profit off the valiant efforts of the war machine designed to supply the U.S. and Allied Forces. His actions undermine the sacrifice and support given by the local citizens to help our soldiers win.
17.	Ironically the mayor underscores the work necessary to maintain a valued principle such as freedom. If people want to maintain a lifestyle which holds core democratic values, there will always be challenges to the American way of life.



18.	It gives Tom credibility. George represents glory, victory, medals and respectability.
19.	Tom doesn't realize that his call to action for George is the beginning of his own undoing as mayor. What Tom hopes for is a war hero on his election ticket. The more George finds out about the mayor and his campaign, the more he becomes convinced that he must take a stand, depart from the mayor's corrupt platform and serve his community.
20.	Sheriff McMillan
21.	George says that the mayor has brought jobs to the county.
22.	George says that the mayor is too "powerful" and has been at it a long time.
23.	Jesse has a cause that he believes in and George doesn't. George is still allowing his wife to control his future.
24.	Jesse returned home to find that his wife was a more efficient business manager than he. Although his excuse is to tell her that he needs her at his side for his campaign, in reality, she represents a threat to his ability to succeed as he tries to bring his life back to what it once was.
25.	Juan is asked to come back at closing to work as a janitor and sweep the place.
26.	Juan is a Mexican.
27.	Juan is not like the rest of the people employed in the firm. He is Mexican.
28.	It may appear that George is trying to save Juan from the embarrassment of knowing the real reason for his not being hired. However, George knows why Juan wasn't hired. He doesn't think it is appropriate, but he accepts the decision because he has yet to take a stand regarding his own convictions.
29.	Juan misses the sense of equality and family closeness the war provided.



30.	Barbara thinks that running for office is a civic duty based on self-advancement, not social cause or community need. She sees leadership as a tool of authority, not changes.
31.	Gas attendant
32.	Sheriff McMillan
33.	He thinks Juan is not telling the truth when he tells the sheriff that he has no knowledge of the pay-off envelopes which the sheriff plans to collect.
34.	The veterans feel betrayed because George won't run on the Veteran Party ticket and because George is so removed from the need to right the social injustices caused by a corrupt system.
35.	Jesse believes in something and is willing to take the risk to follow his belief, even if he loses.
36.	George has yet to feel a real sense of purpose. Although he sees things that are wrong, he has no real feeling of ownership that would make him want to make any changes. He is still controlled by the prospect of maintaining what people have come to expect from a respected family name.
37.	Tom Cantrell knows that he can't dismiss the accusations, but he can ask questions involving the workings of the city to discredit Jesse's knowledge of the mayor's job and his ability to solve the city's problems.
38.	The sheriff believes that Andy would have told Juan about the payoff and where he kept the money.
39.	The sheriff gives Juan a beating because he thinks Juan is pretending that he doesn't know about the money.
40.	The mayor recognizes the importance of courage and convictions to successfully accomplish a plan even though his own convictions are corrupt.



41.	"The right thing" for the mayor was to clean up on every opportunity he could to enhance his personal power, even if it required breaking the law.
42.	The mayor accepts the notion that all of his people have a bad side to their character. It implies that there is an inherent weakness in character that has brought them together to share the same interest in corruption.
43.	Jesse doesn't have his health, his job or the social recognition he has expected. Instead, he feels that he has the pity of the community.
44.	Why doesn't Becky want to stop working? Work, for Becky, is central to her being. She has gained confidence and self worth, something she did not have before and something she is not willing to give up. When Jesse asks her to choose between a job or a husband, she tells him to choose between the election and a wife.
45.	Juan believes "we have to fight to change things."
46.	Jesse only plans to stop the corruption. He doesn't have any plans for running routine city business. His time has been spent on assuming a position of leadership that he had not planned rather than build a platform for the election.
47.	Tom Cantrell knows that Jesse is filled with a noble cause but lacks the health and a specific plan to stand before an audience.
48.	Jesse wants things to be the way it used to be. He wants it all back. He sees George as a traitor.
49.	George never really gave it much thought. He allowed his wife and father to plan his future. He states, "I was just lost."
50.	Individuals should not wait until they are asked to participate as active citizens who serve their community. People must take the time to see the needs in their community and be willing to take the responsibility to meet these needs.



51.	George sees things as they are and not what they should be.
52.	For a long time he didn't know where he stood. Now he knows.
53.	He feels that George would have to start his life over in another town and that, in time, George would be doing what he condemned the Mayor for because "it's the nature of the beast."
54.	Barbara made all the arrangements. She made the contacts, told her husband that he would run for office and set the social engagements.
55.	He tells his wife that he has drifted, but now he has the chance to do something good to really make a difference and he is going to take it.
56.	Barbara is too shallow to realize that she is forecasting her own demise. Although she thinks George is a loser, it is she who becomes the real loser for removing herself from a team of honest people who are trying to lead others to the truth.
57.	Barbara pays the ultimate price for parting with her husband. She no longer has the respect that George has gained or the recognition of fighting for what was right. Barbara saw power as a personal goal and not one that is achieved by enabling other people to realize their potential.
58.	We must have a cause, take a stand, see it through and believe it is the right thing to do because we know that it is right.
59.	It has a Mexican on the ticket.
60.	He offers political favors.
61.	Henry believes politics is about being ruthless, which would require dropping Juan from the ticket because he is Mexican. He also believes that politics has nothing to do with right or wrong but rather reality.



62.	She believes that a person must be willing to take a risk to make a difference in society. She confirms this belief when she tells George, "If we compromise today, what are we going to compromise tomorrow?"
63.	To lose on principle is to lose based on immediate differences; to lose the chance to make a change is to lose the seed which could grow and feed the minds and souls of others.
64.	Juan doesn't want to get kicked out or lose the election. He prefers to leave on his own terms rather than suffer the possibility of humiliation..
65.	Juan's father tells Juan that this is his world, his family. He has people who understand him.
66.	Juan quit.
67.	She knows that Juan fought for a country whose people gave little more than curious credit for his valor in the war, yet he chooses to remain in the community with all of its prejudice to become a part of changing what is wrong.
68.	A hero is a person who goes beyond consideration of self to perform a philanthropic act for others.
69.	The mayor closed the polls because the Veterans' Party was winning two to one.
70.	The Veterans' Party, with George as its leader, was the only real opposition the mayor was unable to destroy.
71.	George gets the keys to the Armory and passes out guns to the veterans and the town's people.
72.	Tom Cantrell calls the Governor to send in the National Guard.
73.	He gives the mayor sixty seconds.



74.	Juan sets up explosives and blows open the entrance to the building.
75.	Tom Cantrell escapes. We are left with the feeling that Cantrell will move to another town to do the same thing over again and that society is filled with people like Tom who need to be stopped.
76.	Meaningful change is man's only course for building and maintaining a vibrant community. Without change, philanthropic acts would be limited to needs of the past and never for the present or future. A strong community depends on active involvement and service of its members.
77.	Mission accomplished is the pervasive feeling at the end. People in the community have come to realize how victory can be temporary without constant vigilance and how long and arduous is the journey to freedom. When George speaks of being tainted, he is referring to the absences of thought or lack of commitment by others concerning issues of importance. It is not until one becomes involved that there is a realization or understanding of the role each must play in a growing community.
78.	The local people made concessions to improve economic conditions at the cost of personal freedom. It wasn't until a group of citizens, who had personally experienced the cost of democracy, arrived to challenge corruption.
79.	When core democratic values are in immediate danger of being lost, citizens have a duty to take appropriate action to protect freedom.
80.	The election process was used as a channel. However, this right was short circuited by the opposition party when they stole the ballot boxes. In order to prevent the possibility of compromising the election by breaking into the ballot boxes, local citizens were forced to take the best action in the amount of time given.

