**ACTOR’S BREAKDOWN**

**THE GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES**

Careful readings of the play (many times) will reveal the world of the play and the character.

**THINK about the following:**

I. Inspiration and stimulus from the script

A. What do I say?

B. What do I do?

C. My relationship to other characters:

1. To the environment?

2. To myself

3. What do other characters say about me?

4. Whom do I trust?

D. What actions does the playwright suggest?

**You need to WRITE OUT the answers to these questions below (either in outline or essay form).**

II. The world of the play and the character

A. Sociology

1. Class: upper, middle, lower

2. Occupation: type of work, hours, income, attitude toward occupation, suitability of work to your view of yourself

3. Education: amount and kinds of schools, grades, favorite subjects, poorest subjects, aptitudes

4. Home life: parents living?, parents divorced, parents habits, neglect or care, vices

5. Your marital status

6. Religion

7. Race, nationality

8. Kind of community -- your place in it

9. Political affiliations

B. Psychology

1. Amusements, hobbies, books, newspapers, etc.

2. Sex life, moral standards

3. Personal ambitions

4. Frustrations, chief disappointments

5. Temperament: easy-going, pessimistic, optimistic, fiery, etc.

6. Attitude toward life: rebellious, resigned, defeatist

7. Complexes, obsessions, inhibitions, superstitions

8. Personality: extrovert, introvert

9. Abilities, talents

10. Qualities (negative and positive), imagination, judgment, taste, poise

C. Environment of the play

1. Climate, time of year

2. Time of day

3. Sensory conditions of the environment (heat, cold, stuffy, polluted…)

4. The setting (cramped, deluxe, too clean, comfortable, attractive, ugly..)

5. What’s directly outside the room (more of the same, grass, a place to be free, a tighter space…)

D. Physiology of the character

1. Gender, age, body build

2. Appearance (good-looking, over or under weight, clean, neat, messy..)

3. Defects, deformities, abnormalities, diseases, alcoholism, drug addiction

4. Heredity

E. Spine of the character

1. What do I want in the play? (super objective)

2. Why do I want it?

3. What is in my way from getting it? (obstacle)

4. What am I willing to do to get what I want?

5. Who do I want it from?

6. Why do I want it now?

7. What do I fear?

**THINK about the following:**

1. How am I like the character?

2. How am I different from the character?

3. What can I use from my own experience to help me imagine the things about the character’s life that I have NOT encountered?