**“The Landlady” Questions**

1. In the paragraph five, the author uses the words: brisk, briskly, and briskness. Billy states that “briskness is a common characteristic of all successful businessmen.” What does the author mean by the word, and what is the significance of being “brisk” in the story?
2. When Billy arrives in the city of Bath, the first thing he needs to do is find lodgings. Why is he debating between staying at a pub instead of a boardinghouse?
3. Reread paragraph seven that begins “Suddenly, in a downstairs window…” and continue rereading through the next few paragraphs. What words and phrases does the author use to describe the Bed and Breakfast? What inference does Billy make about the Bed and Breakfast based on these observations?
4. In paragraph eleven, the author says that Billy turns to go, “and now a queer thing happened to him.” Summarize what happens in this scene. How does the author describe the sign and Billy’s reaction?
5. Which words in paragraph eleven suggest that Billy should be on alert?
6. The narrator emphasizes the speed at which the Landlady answers the door. What might this foreshadow about the Landlady, about Billy, and how the two might interact later in the story?
7. Reread paragraph fifteen that begins, “Please come in.” What words or phrases does the author use to describe what happens next and how Billy feels about the situation? Should he have been suspicious at this point in the story? Why or why not? Use evidence from the text in your response.
8. How does the author’s use of irony when describing the landlady make the reader question her?
9. In paragraph thirty, why does the author include the line, “There were no other hats or coats in the hall. There were no umbrellas, no walking sticks—nothing.”
10. When Billy is in the living room, what first alerts the reader that something may be wrong?
11. As Billy is remembering the connection between the two boys, what effect did the interruptions from the landlady have on the story?
12. What can the reader infer, using evidence from the text, about the two boys who are missing? What does this information lead the reader to believe concerning Billy’s possible fate?

1. What other evidence from the story suggests a possible fatal demise for Billy?