**“The Question” Analysis**

**Literary Devices**

For each device, fill in the missing columns

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| **Device** | **Example (quotation with page number)** | **Effect on the story as a whole (Why did the author use this device in this way?)** |
| Diction | “I am an electrocutioner. I prefer this word to executioner. I think that words make a difference” (Ellin 1) | Pointing out the significance of the word-makes his job seem less horrific – covers up the true meaning of his job-justifying it to himself 🡪 goes with the theme |
| Anecdote | Story about his dad shooting the dog and the question he askedTalking about his grandfather taking over the job after the first electrocution was botched  | -illustrates his opinion on not asking questions🡪 asking questions makes our life harder because they lead to the truth -more humane, so his family helped make the job better – emphasizes tradition and the importance of carrying it on – another way he justifies it to himself |
| Imagery | “Apparently the man was still conscious and continued to scream until his tongue burnt to a crisp between with scorched teeth” (Elllin 1).Description of an execution at the end – in the second person  | Shows the true effect it has on people and how horrific it as – how bad his job actually is to the reader |
| AnalogySimile  | “We’ll all end up like a bunch of monkeys just sitting around scratching our heads” (Ellin 2) | -less horrific, contrasts the electrocution-shows his distaste for people who ask questions 🡪 he’s better than these people |
| metaphor | “There are some sleeping dogs that should be left to lie” (Ellin 1) | -comparing sleeping dogs and questioning things -bad things happen if you bring up these questions – because you may get the truth you didn’t want to hear |
| Repetition  | Electrocution – nicer termEnjoy it – shows us the true nature of the narratorSomebody’s gotta do it (idea) – justifies it – emphasizing dutyAsking questions – doesn’t like them – bad – justify it to himselfDuty – son – show the fact that it’s not what he’s making it seem like it is |  |

**Characterization**

1. What do we know about the narrator and how do we find this out?
2. What is the impact of hearing this information from him as opposed to from someone else.
3. When does the narrative point of view change from 1st person the 2nd person? What is the impact of changing to 2nd person at this point?

**Theme**

1. How are tradition and duty emphasized throughout this story?
2. What is the theme of this story? Don’t forget the theme needs to be stated in a sentence. Provide 3 quotations as evidence

It’s easy to justify your actions through duty.

Not all traditions are ok and should be carried on through generations.

Not all questions lead to the best answers.

Questions lead to answers that we don’t always want, ` `but they need to be asked anyways.