

Discussion questions for *The Real Inspector Hound*

**Questions about the Hound**

1) Stoppard gives Moon and Birdboot comically florid and meaningless lines to spout as "criticism" of the play (24, 31). What does he want from us as critical readers? Are we to be mocked for our attempts at interpretation, or does he want us to speculate about our own speculations? Can it be said of *The Real Inspector Hound* that "close examination is the least tribute that this play deserves" (31)?

2) There doesn't seem to be a balance between the critics who get sucked into the play and the actors who later act as critics. Why? The actors mimic the language of the critics but they don't bring up personal aspects about themselves, such as details that we learn about them onstage. Moon and Birdboot do tell us personal things.

7) Characters are often talking at cross purposes (for example Birdboot and Moon on p. 19) so they either do not understand each other or they are not attending to each other at all with each giving voice to their own thoughts. Why can't Birdboot and Moon understand each other if they are both "audience members"?

10) How does the dialogue between Moon & Birdboot make the audience aware of itself? What effect does this dialogue have on the audience? Will the audience become more critical of performance (and writing) of plays in the future?

11) What are your expectations when you see a comedy? How does "Hound" satisfy them (or not)?