Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Lit. Notes

“The Lamb to the Slaughter” by Roald Dahl

**Selected Literary Terms**

Idiom – A commonly used *figurative* expression (examples: “Driving me up the wall,” “Hit the roof,” “Raining cats and dogs,” \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Allusion – A reference to another work of literature, the Bible, a famous person, a historical time period/event, etc.

Symbolism – An image or object used repeatedly to represent another thing, usually carrying a deeper meaning.

Irony – 3 Types of Irony—see separate handout

Discuss the meaning of the allusion/idiom, “…like a lamb to the slaughter…”

**Text Dependent Questions** – Be sure to use textual evidence and include page #’s.

1. At the beginning of the text, how does Dahl describe Mary’s characteristics? What textual evidence does the author use to describe Mary and her house in order to achieve this effect?

2. Describe Patrick’s characteristics. What textual evidence does the author use to describe him in order to achieve this effect?

3. Dahl describes the husband’s glass of whisky and ice several times. How is it described? Why do you think he focuses on this object? Cite textual evidence to support your analysis.

4. Describe the ways that Patrick’s demeanor and comments change Mary. Why does Mary undergo these changes? Use textual evidence to prove the effect Patrick’s comments have on Mary’s actions.

5. How does Mary’s behavior at the grocery shop contradict what has happened earlier in the story?

6. Reread the paragraph that begins “And now, she told herself as she hurried back…” This paragraph starts off with a long sentence. How does the structure of the sentence reflect her thinking at that moment?

7. The police officers do not suspect Mary for the murder. How does her behavior play a role in assuring this didn’t happen?

8. What happens to the murder weapon? How does Dahl assure his readers understand the irony of this event? Cite the evidence from the story that foreshadows this event.

9. Trace the use of light in the story. Cite examples of how Dahl used light as a symbol to represent Mary’s soul.

10. Why does Dahl title this story “Lamb to the Slaughter?” Who is the “lamb” in the story? Who, or what, is being “slaughtered”?