

Roger Ebert: The Enigma of Rosebud (Questions 1-10)

Read the article on pp. 35 - 46 in the Support Booklet and answer the following questions on the discussion link to this page.

1. What does Ebert mean when he suggests on pp. 35 a – b that “upon closer examination the inevitable diversity of opinions amongst these writers makes it harder to describe the ‘Kane as a masterpiece’ position as unified”?

2. In what sense can the point made in by Ebert in Q.1 and again in his conclusion on p. 43b be used by you to good effect in your own essay introductions and conclusions?

3. Explain the strategy that Carroll uses in his writing (p. 35b).

4. Based on your reading of p. 36a define the Enigma Theory and Rosebud Theory.

Explain why the trashing of Susan’s room scene is a good one to focus on when considering both the Rosebud Theory and the Enigma Theory. Support your answer to each with filmic references (p. 36a).

5. Why is the “News on the March” so important in discussing the Enigma Theory (p. 36a)?

6. Restate Carroll’s argument for the Rosebud Theory (p. 36a).

7. Why does Kane supposedly randomly acquire the objects that he does (pp. 36 a – b).

8. Why has the Rosebud Theory been criticised (p. 36b)?

9. How are the Rosebud and Enigma Theories in opposition to each other (p. 36b)?

10. In your own words explain what Carroll means when he argues that “ Citizen Kane is structured in such a way as to afford the opportunity for the general audience to interrogate prevailing cultural views of the nature of human life by setting them forth in competition” (p. 37a)?