A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennesse Williams – Scene six discussion cards

Cut up and hand out the following question cards for students to discuss in pairs or groups.

1. What do you think Blanche is inferring when she asks Mitch: ‘Is that streetcar named Desire still grinding along the tracks at this hour?’

2. When Blanche suggests a night-cap, why might she suggest that they ‘leave the lights off’?

3. What is the significance of Blanche wanting to pretend that they are sitting in ‘a café on the Left Bank in Paris’?

4. ‘La Dame aux Camellias’ refers to the novel by Alexander Dumas, whose heroine is a high-class Parisian call girl. What does this reveal about Blanche’s character?

5. Give brief details of two topics of conversation started by Mitch which reveal how different his social, cultural and educational background is from Blanche’s.

6. When Blanche tells Mitch ‘I have old-fashioned ideals’, how do the stage directions show that she is knowingly deceiving him?

7. Find Blanche’s unfinished comments and suggest what she is thinking (‘…there is such a thing as the hostility of – perhaps in some perverse kind of way he – No!’).

8. What is significant in Blanche’s use of the word ‘devotion’ when she tells Mitch he has a ‘great capacity for devotion’?

9. Find evidence that Blanche’s husband was in fact homosexual.

10. Explain the use and significance of the polka music. When was it used previously in the play?

11. Find three examples or references to different kinds of light. Explain their significance.

12. Why might Williams portray Mitch as a character who lives with his mother?