**Fitzgerald**

**Class Brainstorm – Evidence of Suspense**

**being used in “The Monkey’s Paw”**

**Prompt – Discuss the use of suspense in “The Monkey’s Paw.”**

**Class Topic Sentences**

* **W.W. Jacobs creates suspense in “The Monkey’s Paw.”**
* **In “The Monkey’s Paw,” W.W. Jacobs creates suspense by introducing a perceived danger, describing the weaknesses of the main character, and the having the main character choose to put himself and his family in danger.**

**(Note - All evidence is stated in the present tense. Literature is always discussed in the present tense.)**

**Perceived Danger**

* When Mrs. White first sees the paw, she “drew back with a grimace” (376).
* The Sergeant-Major tells the Whites that the paw “had a spell put on it by an old fakir. . . . He wanted to show that fate rules people’s lives, and that those who interfered with it do so to their sorrow” (377).
* When asked what the first man wished for, the Sergeant-Major says, “I don’t know what the first two were, but the last one was for death” (378).
* The Sergeant-Major throws the paw in the fire when asked if he would want another three wishes, saying “Better let it burn.” He then throws it on the fire, and when Mr. White snatches out of the fire and asks if the Sergeant-Major will give the paw to him, the Sergeant-Major says, “I won’t. . . . I threw it on the fire. If you keep it, don’t blame me. Pitch it on the fire again like a sensible man” (377).
* When Mr. White wishes on the paw, he says it “twisted in [his] hand like a snake” (378).
* When Mr. White sits alone gazing into the fire at night after the first wish, imagining he sees faces in it, the last face he sees “is so horrible and so simian that he gazed at it in amazement” (379).

**Character Weakness**

**Alone**

* The story starts on a cold, wet night, and the Whites have the blinds drawn (374).
* Mr. White says that their home is one of only two houses on the road and complains, “That’s the worst of living so far out. . . . Of all the beastly, slushy, out-of-the-way places to live, this is the worst” (374).

**Old**

* Mrs. White is described as a “white-haired old lady” (374).
* Mr. White is described as having a “thin, gray beard” (375).

**In Grief**

* After Herbert’s death, the Whites are described as having “the hopeless resignation of the old” (381).
* The White’s grief is described as being a “load too heavy for old hearts to bear” (381).

**Character Puts Self in Danger**

* In the exposition, Mr. White is established as the main character and his conflict is that he is someone who “possessed ideas . . . involving radical changes” that lead to him putting himself into “sharp and unnecessary perils” (374).
* When Mr. White says, “What was that you started telling me the other day about a monkey’s paw or something, Morris?” (376), the reader realizes that Mr. White invited the Sergeant-Major to his house in order to get the paw.
* The Sergeant-Major throws the paw in the fire when asked if he would want another three wishes, saying “Better let it burn.” He then throws it on the fire, and when Mr. White snatches out of the fire and asks if the Sergeant-Major will give the paw to him, the Sergeant-Major says, “I won’t. . . . I threw it on the fire. If you keep it, don’t blame me. Pitch it on the fire again like a sensible man” (377).
* Mr. White does not throw the back on the fire. He asks how to make wishes and puts it in his pocket (177).
* Mrs. White demands that her husband make the second wish, even though her husband thinks she is “mad [crazy]” (382).
* Mrs. White “with a sudden wrench [breaks] free” from her husband who had grabbed her arm and “held her tightly” and runs downstairs to open the door when she hears the knocks, even though her husband says, “Don’t let it in!” (384).