

*Avalon*  
Study Guide

As part of your sophomore experience, you are to watch the film *Avalon*, directed by Barry Levinson. You should view the film and complete this study guide as you watch the film. This study guide is due on **Tuesday, August 25, 2020**; it should be completed independently; and you should adhere to LFA expectations for academic honesty and integrity. You will likely want to answer these questions on a separate page, and you are expected to answer each part to the question.

1. Name five symbols from the opening scene that represent the United States of America.
  - A)
  - B)
  - C)
  - D)
  - E)
2. In what year does Sam Krichinsky arrive in America?
3. What is the significance of the “man with the shoes” when Sam first arrives? What does he believe is possible here in America because of the “man with the shoes”?
4. Why is the family so startled when the robbery occurs? How does this alter both their view of urban life but also of the United States?
5. Describe the role of men and women in 1945 America as portrayed in the family meal.
6. What role do *cars* play in American society? What does the film suggest about a woman’s place in society regarding driving? How are women characterized in this film?
7. What is the Krichinsky’s reaction to *television* when they first purchase one?
8. What might be considered noteworthy about *housing arrangements* at the time of this film’s setting? What happens to the family unit as connected to housing?
9. What does Sam suggest about *changing* and *aging*? Do you agree or disagree with him?

10. Explain a Family Circle Meeting. What happens? Bonus question: how does a *family circle meeting* differ from an *outing*?
11. How does Sam react when his son and nephew change their last name? Why do you think he reacts this way? What does their changing of the name reveal about American culture? What impact can a name have on our identity?
12. What event foreshadows the destruction of K & K's business?
13. Sam says, "One way or the other, we all have to leave." What do you think he means by this?
14. In your opinion, what does the film suggest is the beginning of the breakdown of the family unit?
15. What traditions in society exist today that we *should* cling onto? What traditions does it seem American society has let go? Is this a positive or a negative?
16. Choose **one scene** from the film to analyze. Identify the scene; explain why you chose this scene; and explain why this scene was important to the entirety of the film. In other words, choose a part to connect it to the whole. As you analyze the scene, consider central elements the direction/filmmaker is trying to emphasize. Connect your interpretations to such aspects as the film's music, the lighting, the costumes, the pauses, the characterizations, and the nonverbal and verbal communications occurring.
17. Character analysis: choose **one character** from the film and explain why this character stood out to you. Did you relate to this character? Despise this character? What were some of her or his defining characteristics? When "reading" and watching a film, what makes a particular character more intriguing than another?
18. Why do you think we had you watch *Avalon* at the start of this course? Based on this film's setting, characters, plot, and themes, what do you foreshadow this course to be about? How to you anticipate this film might help to "set up" your upcoming year? Make some inferences and predictions!