

Group Questions: “The Paper Menagerie”

Discussion Rules: You cannot make a claim without pointing to a specific line, paragraph, or detail in the text. No Skips: Every group member must contribute at least one piece of evidence or analysis per question. Don't Just Agree: Use phrases like “I agree, and to add to that...” or “I see your point, but what about in paragraph...”

Review:

- A **coming-of-age story** (*Bildungsroman*) is about a character growing up, learning who they are, and finding their place in the world.
- A **tragic hero** is a character who is generally good, but makes a major mistake—a **fatal flaw**—that leads to a heartbreaking loss. By the end, they usually have a painful **moment of realization** where they finally see the truth of what they did.

1. How is Jack's desperate desire to fit in with his classmates his **fatal flaw**?
2. How does his attempt to grow up actually backfire, forcing him to cruelly reject his mother and her Chinese culture?
3. When Jack finally reads his mother's letter at the end of the story, he has a major **moment of realization**. How does this painful moment finally help him truly grow up, and what is the sad cost of learning this lesson too late?