*Pygmalion* Study Guide:

**Act I**

1. What is revealed about Freddy's character and his relationship with his mother and sister in the argument about the cab?

2. What is the mother's true motivation for giving the flower girl sixpence?

3. Why is the flower girl so upset that the gentleman is recording her speech?

4. What does the flower girl mean when she cries, "My character is the same to me as any lady's."

5. What idea is the note-taker trying to emphasize with his speech which begins, "A woman who utters such depressing and disgusting sounds...

6. What did Higgins mean when he told Pickering that "this is an age of upstarts"?

7. Why would better English be required of a lady's maid or shop assistant than of a lady?

8. Why does the flower girl tell the taxi driver to take her to "Buckham Pellis"?

9. Why does the taxi driver tell her to keep her money?

10. What is the symbolic significance of having to play open with all types of people huddled from the rain under the portico of St. Paul's church?

11. Why does Higgins throw the girl a handful of coins as he leaves?

**Act II**

1. How does Mrs. Pearce feel about the people the professor invites in to talk into his machines?

2. Why is Higgins not interested in recording the girl's voice?

3. Why does Eliza want to take lessons?

4. Why is Pickering successful at getting Eliza to sit down when Higgins is not?

5. What impresses Higgins about Eliza's offer of a shilling for her lessons?

6. Explain Higgins exclamation that life is only a "series of inspired follies."

7. What is ironic about Higgins' instructions to Mrs. Pearce about how to deal with Eliza?

8. In what ways does Pickering treat Eliza better than Higgins?

9. How does Mrs. Pearce prove that she looks farther into the future than either of the gentlemen?
10. What is Eliza's reaction to the bedroom? Bathroom? Why is this significant?

11. Explain Mrs. Pearce's statement to Eliza, "You know you can't be a nice girl inside if you're (sic) a dirty slut outside."

12. How does Higgins view of himself compare with others' views of him?

13. Why does Alfred Doolittle come to see Professor Higgins?

14. In what way does Higgins react differently from what Doolittle expects?

15. What type of father/daughter relationship has Eliza obviously experienced?

16. Explain Doolittle's theory about the "undeserving poor." Define middle class morality. (see page 58)

17. What seems to be the basic differences between Pickering and Higgins? Find passages to prove your point.

**Act III**

1. Describe the relationship between Higgins and his mother.

2. Why does Higgins bring Eliza to his mother's "at-home"?

3. What are the differences between Mrs. Higgins and Mrs. Eynsford-Hill?

4. How has Eliza changed since act 1? Note evidence that shows she has not totally mastered the social graces.

5. How do Mrs. Higgins' guests react to Eliza?

6. What social class is Shaw criticizing in this act? Not lines that are examples of character flaws of this class.

7. How does Mrs. Higgins feel about the experiment? What problems does she see arising?

8. What is Nepommuck's purpose in the play?

9. How is Eliza's behavior at the ball different from her behavior at the at-home?

10. What is the reaction of the others when Higgins tells them the truth about Eliza?

**Act IV**

1. How has the experiment progressed?

2. How do Higgins and Pickering feel about the adventure ending?

3. How does Eliza react?

4. Why is Higgins so surprised at Eliza's fury?
5. What is Eliza really upset about? When has this problem been mentioned before?

6. What is Higgins’ solution to her dilemma?

7. What is Eliza speaking of when she says. “We were above that at the corner of Tottenham Court Road”?

8. How does Eliza really feel about the professor? Find lines that hint at her feelings.

9. What conflicts are now left to be resolved in act 5?

**Act V**

1. Why does Eliza go to Mrs. Higgins?

2. What does Higgins’ reaction to Eliza’s disappearance show about Higgins’ character?

3. Describe the tremendous change in Alfred Doolittle’s status. Who is truly responsible for it?

4. What comments is Shaw making on society through this metamorphosis of Doolittle?

5. From whom does Eliza say she learned good manner?

6. What is Higgins’ opinion of manner?

7. How has Eliza’s character developed in acts 4 and 5? How has she become more of an individual?

8. How does Higgins seem to feel about Eliza? What offers does he make to her, and how does she react?

9. What problems are left unresolved at the end of this act? Why does Shaw leave it this way?

10. Shaw called his play a "Romance in Five Acts." Is it a romance? Why?