Guides for *On the Waterfront*

- ➔ Pay attention to the character of Terry...
  - ◆ Who is he?
  - ◆ What are your expectations of him when you first meet him?
  - ◆ What are his weaknesses?
  - ◆ How does he change or transform?
  - ◆ What about his conflict--really think about this!
  - ◆ What is his experience of love?

- ➔ Pay attention to the character of Edie…
  - ◆ Who is she?
  - ◆ What kinds of changes does she provoke?
  - ◆ Pay attention to the lighting of her face compared to other things in the scene… What does this mean?
  - ◆ Think about her as a person--is she weak or strong? Innocent or not?
  - ◆ What is her experience of love?

- ➔ Pay attention to the character of the priest…
  - ◆ Transformation? How?
  - ◆ Who helps him to change?

- ➔ Pay attention to these themes:
  - ◆ Transformation -- Crucifixion / Resurrection
  - ◆ The plight of the working man (what is their experience?)
  - ◆ Slavery vs Freedom and Truth vs Freedom
  - ◆ Human desire and/or the desire for Truth -- What is Truth?
  - ◆ The reality of love as a sacrifice
  - ◆ Encountering Christ through another

- ➔ Symbolism
  - ◆ The pigeon--what does it mean?
  - ◆ Watch Joey's jacket throughout the film--what's the significance?

- Look for crosses in unlikely places
- Look for light vs darkness in the lighting of the scenes

➔ Scenes to pay attention to…

- The first reaction of Edie to the priest. “Did you ever hear of a saint hiding in a church?”
- The way the workers scramble like animals for the chance to work. Pay attention to the visual cues and music.
- Pay attention to the walk home from the church (Edie and Terry) Pay attention to the way Terry plays with Edie’s glove. Thier whole interplay!! Honesty and ease in body language.
- The bar scene--observe the way Terry looks at Edie… This is where he begins to change… Observe his face!
- The scene where Terry tells Edie his secret… Pay attention to the sounds here. How does this change your mood?? Look at the gloves that were part of the other scene… How has this symbol of innocence changed?
- The cab ride with Charlie and Terry. Watch their faces! Are you surprised here??
- The fate of Charlie… What is his fate? What is Terry’s choice at this point? What does he choose?
- The priest says: “I want to see you Terry”
- Terry says: “I’m not a bum, Edie” (he puts on Joey’s jacket) “I’ve been ratting on myself all these years”
- The kiss between Edie and Terry in her apartment after he breaks down the door...

➔ Other cues:

- Pay attention to the music--How does the intensity vs silence play with your mood and understanding of the character’s moods?
- Pigeon coop (like a confession screen)
- “Who do you like in the 3rd? Gotta be new hope”
- Local 374 / 437 River St ...Significance?