**Questions for Updike’s story “A&P”**

**Background info**: John Updike was an American writer, born in 1932 and died in 2009. This “short story” was published in 1961, and we can assume that the story is set at that time period, late 1950s, early 60s. The story takes place inside an “A & P,” which is a grocery food store chain, like Safeway, but only in the Eastern part of the US.

**Part 1. Comprehension**. While reading the story, answer these questions:

1. Who said, “I feel so faint?”
   1. Narrator
   2. Stokesie
   3. Lengel
   4. McMahon
2. Who said, “We want you decently dressed when you come in here?”
   1. Stokesie
   2. Lengel
   3. Sammy
   4. McMahon
3. About whom is the narrator speaking: "I forgot to say he thinks he's going to be manager some sunny day"
   1. Stokesie
   2. Sammy
   3. Lengel
   4. Kingfish
4. What is on Lengel's door?
   1. Nice guys finish last
   2. Manager
   3. Jerk
   4. King
5. What does Sammy's family drink?
   1. Budweiser
   2. Miller
   3. Schlitz
   4. Cocktails only
6. Shoppers are referred to as\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Part 2. Interpretation.** After you read, think about these questions. You should write some key word notes prior to class so that when you come to class on Monday you are prepared to discuss these questions.

1. Why does Sammy quit his job? Does he have more than one reason? Why does he see it as an act of heroism? Is it?
2. As the story closes, Sammy thinks "how hard the world was going to be to me hereafter." Will it? Why or why not?
3. Why do some readers find the story offensively sexist?
4. The story is told in the first person, and the narrator is considered by readers to be “unreliable.” Give an example (quote) from the story to support this idea.
5. Do you think Sammy and Queenie would make a good couple? Do you think they might meet again?
6. Do you really think Sammy's quitting is as big of a deal as he and Lengel make it out to be? What predictions can you make for Sammy's future?