1. How would you describe the opening scene in one to two words? Why? Give words/phrases that help to create the mood/atmosphere.

2. How would you describe Mary Maloney after murdering her husband? Give specific words/phrases from the text to support. Why is she this way?

3. How does Mary Maloney’s husband’s job affect the way that she goes about the next few hours after killing her husband?

4. What would you have done if you were put in the position of Mary Maloney right after she killed her husband?  
  
5. The style of this short story is “black humor”. Black humor is the use of morbid or gross actions for darkly comedic purposes. What aspect of this story makes it fit into the category “black humor”? Give evidence from the text.   
  
6. Do you think the story would be better if it were told in first person instead of third person? Why/why not?  
  
7. Why does it matter that Mary was pregnant, and more specifically 6 months pregnant? How, in other words, does Mary’s pregnancy influence the story?

8. Why does it matter that the beginning of the story is so descriptive of Mary’s life and actions?

9. Why do you think Roald Dahl included the mirror scene where Mary talks to herself? What does this show about her character? Use textual evidence to support your answer.

10. Find an irony in the story—quote the section and describe how/why it’s ironic.

11. What is Patrick Maloney implying when he says “I know it’s kind of a bad time to be telling you this”?

12. Who is the protagonist and antagonist in the story Lamb to the Story? Why would you label them as such?

13. What are at least two different ways that we can think about the title, “Lamb to the Slaughter,” as an apt title? (Who/what is the lamb? What deeper meanings/connotations come with the word “lamb”?)

14. Is Mary a cold murderer or a victim of circumstances in the story? Why? Use textual evidence to support your assertions.

15. How does Roald Dahl’s portrayal of Mary and Patrick in traditional gender roles affect our connection or disconnection with the characters, the characters’ actions/words, and/or the outcome of the story? (choose one or more to discuss)