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"The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" Discussion Questions

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1. Is Walter "sane" or "insane"? Explain your answer.
2. What does Mitty's age have to do with the way we view his character? Could you have a similar story about a daydreaming younger man, or would this fundamentally change its meaning? Explain your answer.
3. "Walter Mitty" was published in 1939, the year after World War II began. Can you see the influence of this major event in the story at all? Explain your answer.
4. Is "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" ultimately a funny or tragic story? Explain your answer.
5. What traits are presented as typical male qualities in this story? How does Walter fit or move away from "ideal" male qualities? Explain your answer.
6. What sort of man does Walter try to emulate in his fantasies, and how are these different fantasy men different from the man Walter actually is?

7. What does Walter want in life? Does he expect to get these things through his fantasy world? Explain.
8. What events make Walter feel dissatisfied with the world around him? Are these things his fault, or the fault of those around him? Explain.
9. Are Walter's fantasies an effective way of dealing with the things he doesn't like about the real world? Explain.