

“Roger Ebert: The Essential Man” Questions

Answer on a separate piece of paper, in complete sentences. Staple this sheet to the bottom before turning in.

1. How does Jones distinguish Ebert from the other reviewers? Why is this contrast important?
2. How does Jones’s description of Ebert’s reaction to *Broken Embraces* help us understand Ebert’s character? What words or phrases reveal Ebert’s attitude toward the experience of watching this film? (Be specific.)
3. What are the connotations of “kid joy”? (What does that phrase really mean? What does it say about Ebert?)
4. Jones writes that, at the end of the film, “it looks as though [Ebert’s] sitting on top of a cloud of paper.” Jones then describes how Ebert “kicks his notes into a small pile with his feet.” Why are these images important? What side of Ebert’s personality do they reveal?
5. What effect does using the word “savoring” to describe Ebert’s quiet pause after the film ends have on the reader in terms of their understanding the type of person Ebert is?
6. What does Jones mean when he says that the moment Ebert said his last words before losing the ability to talk to cancer “wasn’t cinematic”? If you knew you were about to lose the ability to speak forever, what would you do with the opportunity?
7. Do you think that Jones is an objective observer, or does he seem to have a bias in writing this article? Explain.
8. It isn’t clear in the article that Ebert will be OK. How does that uncertainty affect how we see his attitude toward life? Would his credibility be the same if he had already defeated cancer long ago?
9. What is Ebert’s attitude toward death and what comes after? How does this philosophy relate to the way he approaches life?
10. Find at least two pieces of evidence that Ebert is **more optimistic** now than he was before his struggles. Quote.
11. If you were in his place, would you be similarly optimistic, or would you dwell on the fact that you were suffering and let that dictate your life and relationships? Explain.