

Andre's mother



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

1. Discuss the many symbols in the play and what they represent. Andre loved to play the role of Hamlet, a character in Shakespeare's play. This symbolizes Andre's character. In Hamlet, Prince Hamlet struggled in deciding whether or not to avenge his father's death. This situation was similar to Andre's. Andre, as a homosexual, had personal struggles regarding gender issues. Specifically, he struggled in terms of whether or not to tell his mother about his conditions. Cal provides a direct symbolism of the balloons he brought to the scene.

The balloons represent the souls of departed loved ones. As the balloons rose in to the sky, the souls of the departed loved ones were slowly unbound from their earthly ties. Arthur, Cal's father, called Andre " Mensch" which means a person of integrity and honor (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2008). Andre may have AIDS or be homosexual, but still he is a good man. In Yiddish, it also means " nice guy. " This symbolizes that Arthur has accepted Andre's condition. He sees Andre as a family.

2. Who is to `blame` at the end of the play? Andre's mother has to be blamed for her son's agony. Andre died in grief and pain, knowing that her mother would never accept his condition. Being homosexual and having AIDS, Andre suffered the tremendous disapproval of the society. The only person left for Andre to ask for help is his mother. In the play, McNally, Andre's mother, seems to be a person of few words. In Cal's monologue, he described Andre's mother as someone like Lulu's mother, anonymous in her remoteness.

Her remoteness severed her relationship with Andre. Her silence messed Andre's thoughts. Andre died in fear of her mother's disapproval, and death was the only way for him to be accepted. 3. What are McNally's themes about friendship, unconditional love, and respect? McNally provided a concrete description of love through Cal and Andre's relationship. McNally's theme of friendship, unconditional love and respect, was shown through Cal's attitude towards Andre.

In the play, Andre had AIDS and was homosexual, a condition which was not easy for Cal to accept, but he still did. It surpassed the love a mother could give her son. It is hard for Andre to gain any respect from anyone, but Cal respected him unconditionally. As the play reached its end, the monologue given by Cal proved that he was not just a friend but family to Andre. He was enraged by the silence of Andre's mother. This emotion heightened the theme of unconditional love.