



2003

# What Shall I Do?

Charlene Gan

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Burgess, C. V. *What Shall I Do?* University of London Press Ltd., 1957. Contact publisher regarding price. 8 pp.

Reviewer: Charlene Gan

Reading Level: All;

Rating: Dependable;

Genre: Contemporary Realistic Play;

Subject: Drama--Reviews; Employment--Juvenile drama; Finance--Juvenile drama;

Theme: You need to be skilled to keep a job.

Production Requirements: A living room type set, modern costumes will do.

Acts: 1

Run Time: 13 min

Characters: 2 F, 3 M

Cast: 2 Female adults, 2 male adults, 1 teen boy.

Time Period: 1950's

Benny is just about to graduate high school and has not decided what to do with his life. His parents ask him what he wants to do. Benny says that he would just like to try out different things until he finds what he likes. His father says that Benny should stick to one job and become skilled in it because companies are now looking for skilled labor. Benny's uncle and aunt unexpectedly show up at his house. Benny's uncle, Arthur, has spent his life going from one job to another. Arthur has been laid off again and can't find work. Arthur comes to see if Benny's father can help him find work or lend him some money. Benny sees the situation that Arthur has gotten into because he isn't skilled in anything. This makes Benny decide that he better find out what he should do with his life.

This play is very reflective of the 1950's lifestyle in the wording and the characterization of the characters. The females are the homemakers, while the fathers sit on the couch reading the newspaper, while the son does his daily newspaper job and is very well behaved. It is very much like a "Leave it to Beaver" episode. I think that this play would be good for getting younger kids interested in something like career day or they could put this show on for other classmates to get them excited about looking into other jobs. The story is very easy to follow and the pace is constant but there is very little action. The theme is important for children to understand that what they are learning will help them get somewhere in life.