Harrison Bergeron Notes

1. This work is a satire and dystopian science fiction short story

* Satire- ridicule or mocking w/ the hope to affect change
* Dystopia- typically a futuristic society where the conditions are oppressive. They are usually written as satires or warnings using depictions of a current society.

1. Presents his point of view on equality, power, freedom, and change.

* Idea of freedom is lost in this futuristic society of America that was formed because the stark desire for freedom and wanting to evoke religious change.
* Vonnegut suggests that freedom and individuality can be taken away easily because it just took the amendments to mandate these handicaps for forced equality.
* George fears change that presents a possibility for freedom.
* At the end of the text, Harrison desires to usurp the power from the HG and transfer it to himself, making a monarchy from totalitarianism.
* In this society, Hazel is the definition of normal/average. She has no handicaps and already suffers from short term memory loss and the ability to think critically. Hazel does not acknowledge or is unable to acknowledge the death of her son. She literally repeats her husband.
* Idea of McCarthyism and Communism

1. The narrator is third-person limited. He or she never passes judgment on the society or the character’s actions.

What is Harrison's motivation to come to the TV station?

What can we infer about Hazel's condition?

Why does the author write this science fiction short story?

What do you think Vonnegut is suggesting about freedom and equality?

*What is the irony in Harrison declaring himself the emperor?*