

### *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*

Answer each of the following discussion questions with at least 2 complete sentences. Remember there is not just one correct answer to these questions. The purpose of them is to help you learn to think for yourself and make connections between ideas that other people may not have made before. Make an effort and think creatively, and you will get full credit for this assignment!

1. Check out a picture of the set used in filming *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. Describe in detail what you see in the image. Why do you think Robert Wiene decided to make the settings look so strange and unrealistic?



2. What do you think of Dr. Caligari? What are some of his characteristics, and do you think he is a static or a dynamic character? Why?

*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* is considered the earliest horror film ever made. Some of the qualities that make a work of art fit into the genre of horror are included in the list below

- An unsettling mood or tone designed to cause fright and panic and to invoke our hidden worst fears while captivating and entertaining us at the same time in a cathartic experience.
  - A focus on the dark side of life, the forbidden, the strange, the mysterious, the unknown; the monstrous
  - Deals with our nightmares, our vulnerability, our alienation, our revulsions, our terror of the unknown, our fear of death and dismemberment, loss of identity.
  - contains a very real thrill and fun factor in being scared or watching disturbing, horrific images.
  - Gothic in style - set in spooky old mansions, castles, or fog-shrouded, dark and shadowy locales.
  - main characters include "unknown," human, supernatural or grotesque creatures, ranging from vampires, demented madmen, devils, unfriendly ghosts, monsters, mad scientists
3. Which of these qualities did you notice as you were watching the film? Think of another horror film you are familiar with. Which of these qualities does the film you chose exhibit? Which film do you think better represents the horror genre and why?
4. Think about the title of the film – *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. What do you think the title might mean or symbolize? How does it relate to a main message or a theme in the film?
5. If you could ask director Robert Wiene one question about *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, what would you ask? What do you think his answer might be?