

### **DAT602 – The Veldt**

The veldt is a story set in a future imagined in the 1950's. It centres around a family consisting of Mr and Mrs Hadley and their two children Peter and Wendy. The two children are shown to have been spoilt growing up and their parents have recently invested \$15,000 building them a new nursery that uses the latest technology to let the children turn the nursery into whatever location they imagine. The story suggests that by spoiling their children as they have done has caused issues for Mr and Mrs Hadley as when they try and take this technology away, the children start to turn against their parents and because of the nature of the room, they start imagining a pride of lions eating them. Throughout the story this is hinted at with both parents expressing their worries that what appears to be almost real within the room might actually become real. At the end of the story, their worries actually come true as when they threaten to switch the room off all together the children end up locking them inside the room and it is suggested that the lions end up eating both the parents. The story focuses highly on the fact that Mr and Mrs Hadley have a lot of mod cons around their house, which would be very familiar with 1950's households as a lot of middle-class families would have spent a lot to have the latest technology in their house. It is suggested that the house is designed to do everything for them and because of that the family are worried about how they will survive if they get rid of all this technology. There is a lot of focus on ubiquitous computing as it is suggested that no matter where they are in the house, the house knows what it wants and can help them with this. An example of this is when they are walking down the hallway and the lights are coming on automatically dependent on where they are or there is an example where Peter is complaining about the fact that if they turn all the technology off, he will have to tie his own shoelaces. This is relative to the fact that a lot of technology is introduced to make lives easier and, in the story, this is done by making everything autonomous. I think the story is very interesting in it's portrayal of the impact that technology can have on our everyday lives and although a lot of the technology featured in the story does not yet exist, it still rings true today and probably would have rung true in the 1950's as there has always been a worry that this technology is making people lazy. The end of the story where the lions end up eating the parents also builds on the idea that peoples should fear technology as it will soon reach a stage where we don't know what it is capable of.