**Discussion Inception**

**Members**

**Part I**

**What do you think is/are some big and abstract idea(s) centering the film? Why?**

About the subconscious of each person

Incepting and idea, and stealing and idea

Distinguishing reality and dream

Possible themes:

Danger/Power of manipulating one’s ideas – conflict between Cobb and Mal

Guilt, reconciliation with the self – Cobb’s guilt as the main problem -> his internal resolution as the resolution of the film

Illusion of utopia, it may be not as beautiful as it seems, danger of living one’s dream – Cobb and Mal builds their world in their dreams but they commit suicide to return to the real world

(Blurred) line between dream and reality; dream vs reality

Importance of living in the present; embracing the imperfect reality

**Part II**

**Discuss the following questions:**

1. **Who is the protagonist? What is his/her motivation or goal? What characterize(s) him/her?**
2. **What is the main conflict of the narrative, and who/what is the main antagonist?**
3. **Is there any other important event, moment, or other element in the narrative? What are they?**

**Part III**

**Try to draw a connection between the best answers in Part I and Part II.**

Golden Bishop

Ariadne has a golden bishop chess piece that she creates for herself in order to know if she is in the real world or not. This specific totem represents her strategic nature in the grand scheme of the heist they are pulling off as she is the architect of the dream worlds that they will be traveling to. Thus, she is the one who must master the moves on the board in order to place the King in checkmate.

Spinning Top

At the end of the film, we see Cobb's top spinning on the table as he walks away to his children. The top continues to spin as Nolan cuts away to black. The symbol is that Cobb may or may not be in reality yet. Only more time will tell if the top will continue to spin or will topple over letting him know he is finally home.

Paper Pinwheel

Robert finds a paper pinwheel in his father's safe next to his deathbed. It is a symbol that his dad has held on to Robert's childhood as the most precious thing he's ever created. It is a symbol that he loves his son and wants what is best for him, not to rip his life apart and diminish him. Finally, it is a symbol that the team has done its job and infiltrated Robert's mind to convince him to dissolve the company.

Toy House

Cobb places a spinning top inside of a toy house in the subconscious realm when he is with Mal. The toy home represents the deepest place in Mal's mind, a place so deep that she may not even know it is there. The home is a symbol of safety, and by Cobb placing the top there he has betrayed this safety as he has implanted the thought that "this world isn't real."

Trains

Cobb and Mal lie down on the train tracks in the subconscious level of their minds after spending a lifetime there with each other. The train runs them over and it is a symbol that one must die to the unreal world of our minds as they hold us back from creating a life in the real world. Unfortunately, it is also the idea that Cobb plants into Mal's head, and as that idea persisted into reality, evenually that leads her to kill herself. In other words, a literal train of thought.

Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien by Edith Piaf

The soundtrack is made from slowed and speeded versions of this song. It is also the song played diegetically to make the characters wake up, thus blurring the line between fiction and reality.

Motif in Inception

Paradoxical/unrealistic structure - Penrose stairs, Hotel’s gravity, Ariadne’s creation of first dream

Circular movement/shape - Cobb’s spinning top, Ariadne’s labyrinth, toy windmill, dream feedback (diagram), returning to the similar situation or the same moment in the past (ex. Mal) – repetition, inability to get out, being trapped in guilt/the past

Falling/downward movement – actual falling, death by falling, going down in dreams, falling vehicle

Image of children (Cobb’s desire to meet his children, but has to avoid since if he sees his children’s faces he won’t be able to return to the future) or child (Fischer’s child picture)

Water

Safes and locks