

The Secret Life of Walter Mitty

The events in James Thurber's story "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" follow a pattern. Something triggers Mitty's daydream and becomes part of it. The daydream proceeds until something interrupts it. Use the graphic organizer below to find the details that create the story's pattern.

Cause	Daydream	Interruption
Sound of car engine reminds him of a ship's engine.	Navy hydroplane	Mrs. Mitty complains that he is driving too fast.
Mitty puts on his gloves, just as a doctor would. He also drives past a hospital.	surgery/anesthetizer	The parking lot attendant tells him to back up his car.
Mitty imagines his right arm in a sling as an excuse to have someone else take the chains off his tires. He also hears a newsboy shouting about a trial.	courtroom scene	When the person in his daydream calls Mitty a "cur," he remembers that he needs to buy puppy biscuit.
Mitty looks through an old copy of a military magazine and sees pictures of bombers and bombed cities.	Air Force pilot	Mrs. Mitty finds him in the hotel lobby.
Mitty smokes a cigarette and stands against a wall to stay out of the rain.	firing squad	None

When Mrs. Mitty says, "It's one of your days," she tells the reader that Mitty daydreams often. If you were to write another daydream for him, one that takes place the next day, what might be the trigger? What would the resulting daydream be about? What might interrupt it? Jot down some ideas here: