**Exploring Themes in a Variety of Genres**



**“Two Fisherman” Questions**

**By Morley Callaghan**

1. How does Smith seem to feel about his job as a hangman? What is Michael’s reaction to this?
2. Are Smitty’s character traits presented to us *directly* or *indirectly*? Provide an example of where characterization takes place in this story.
3. Explain Michael’s behaviour at the hanging of Thomas Delany. Why was Michael staring at the hangman “with his mouth open”?
4. When the hangman is pelted by the townspeople, Michael shrinks back into the crowd. Why? What does this reveal about Michael? What does it show us about the effects of group pressure on the individual?
5. When the big fisherman, James Mortimer, throws Michael’s two trout at the hangman, this action seems to be symbolic. What do the fish symbolize? What would be symbolic about the throwing of the fish?
6. Titles are often keys to the story. “Two Fishermen” is a very simple, yet deliberate and effective title for the story. Why do you think Callaghan chose this title? He might have called the story “The Hangman”, but this wouldn’t be as appropriate. Why not?