One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest

Notes on the vote for the World Series

1. What do we learn about the characters that are involved in the event?

* **McMurphy**  
  We learn that McMurphy is to be a resilient and determined character through his aggressive nature to place bets and is persistent to influence the other patients to agree with his bets and how he wants them to vote for the World Series.
* **Chief Bromden**

We learn that Bromden is influenced by McMurphy and is not deaf or dumb as he describes how he puts up his hand to be “It’s too late to stop it now. McMurphy did something to it… put some kind of hex on it with his hand.” This shows that Bromden is showing signs of not being deaf or dumb and McMurphy has a positive influence on him to come out of his shell and not hide behind being deaf or dumb.

* **Nurse Ratched**  
  We learn that Nurse Ratched’s control starts to fade and deteriorate in this even as she loses control of the patients, due to McMurphy’s influence. We see her lose control as Chief Bromden describes her to “Just by the way the Nurse is staring at me with her mouth empty of words, I can see I’m in for trouble but I can’t stop it.” This shows a sense of her being naïve and oblivious to Bromden’s cover up of being dumb and deaf.

1. What are the important themes represented through the events?

* Individuality: through McMurphy and the patients standing up against Nurse Ratched, as they created their own event or achievement that the Combine couldn’t take away from them.
* Uniformity: in the way they combine together in acting against Nurse Ratched and the hospital.
* Rebellion: standing together and forcibly acting against the Combine
* Loyalty: in sticking with McMurphy in his idea about watching the world series, and even though they do not get to watch the matches, they still follow him in the act against Nurse Racthed.

1. What language features are used to show characters/themes?

* Colloquial : represents McMurphy’s attitude towards the situation “You can get back to the bloody schedule next week.”
* Metaphor: shows the characteristics of the patients and their relationship with the authority figure: Nurse Ratched “How many of you birds of you will vote with me”
* Imagery: demonstrates how Nurse Ratched starts to lose control over the patients in their rebellion “Behind the glass her smile is twisted and queer, like we’ve never seen before”
* Listing: used to describe Uniformity in the way they all act together in rebelling against Nurse Ratched “Then Cheswick goes and gets him a chair, then Billy Bibbit goes, and then Scanlon, and then Fredrickson and Sefalt”
* Symbolism: important in relating to Chief Bromden as he is finally letting go of his broom to join in with the group act of rebellion against Nurse Ratched “we all put down our mops and brooms.”