

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

Pre-Reading: Anticipation Guide

Directions: Please read the play, *A Raisin in the Sun*. Complete each activity given prior to the start of class.

The following statements will give you some insights into many of the themes present in the play. Answer true or false for each statement based on your own personal opinion. Explain your reasoning.

1. You should hold onto your dreams; if you work hard enough for them, they will come true. _____

Reasoning:

2. Once children are grown, their parents are no longer responsible for them. _____

Reasoning:

3. We should think of the United States as a “melting pot” in which people from many cultures leave their differences behind. _____

Reasoning:

4. Neighbors have the right to decide what kind of community they want to have – including who lives in that neighborhood. _____

Reasoning:

5. Most people don’t try hard enough to see the other fellow’s problem. _____

Reasoning:

6. When someone insults you, it’s best to “turn the other cheek.” _____

Reasoning:

7. Based on the above statements, make three predictions about what you think will happen in the play.

a.

b.

c.

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Mother to Son

BY LANGSTON HUGHES

Well, son, I'll tell you:

Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

It's had tacks in it,

And splinters,

And boards torn up,

And places with no carpet on the floor—

Bare.

But all the time

I've been a-climbin' on,

And reachin' landin's,

And turnin' corners,

And sometimes goin' in the dark

Where there ain't been no light.

So boy, don't you turn back.

Don't you set down on the steps

'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.

Don't you fall now—

For I've still goin', honey,

I've still climbin',

And life for me ain't been no crystal stair

Annotation Instructions “Mother to Son”:

1. Underline the line you feel is the most important. Why did you choose this line?
2. In what ways could you relate this poem to the mother and son relationships in the play, *A Raisin in the Sun*? Explain your response in three or more sentences.

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Harlem

BY LANGSTON HUGHES

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun?

Or fester like a sore—

And then run?

Does it stink like rotten meat?

Or crust and sugar over—

like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags

like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

Annotation Instructions “Harlem”:

1. Underline the line you feel is most important. Why did you choose this line?

2. Answer the following two questions:

a. What do you think this poem has to do with dreams?

b. What do you think this poem has to do with *A Raisin in the Sun*?

NOTE: Choose one poem, *Mother to Son* {includes bonus points} or *Harlem*, to memorize. Each student will be required to recite (do a dramatic interpretation) of the chosen poem upon return to school in the Fall as a project presentation grade.

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A Raisin in the Sun questions for Act I

1. What overall impression/mood does Hansberry create in describing the apartment?
2. What point is Joseph Asagai making about Beneatha's hair?
3. What conflicts develop in Act I? Which are the most important and why?
4. How does Hansberry introduce the theme subject of hopes and dreams in Act I?

A Raisin in the Sun questions for Act II

1. Beneatha Younger's hairstyle is discussed in Act I and again in Act II. What is the importance of this detail?
2. Describe Karl Lindner's approach to his reprehensible (shameful) mission.
3. What is assimilation? What views on assimilation and African Americans does Hansberry explore through her characters?
4. How does Hansberry further develop her theme subject of dreams in Act II?

A Raisin in the Sun questions for Act III

1. Identify one item from the play that serves as a symbol. How does Hansberry add layers of meaning to the item? What is the purpose of the symbol?
2. What is Hansberry's ultimate message regarding the dreams of African Americans? To what degree does this message resonate today? Explain.

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A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansberry

Writing Activity #1

Directions: Type a 5-paragraph essay using MLA format (12 font size, Times New Roman, Double Spaced) to respond to the essay prompt #1. Use at least two quoted pieces of evidence from the story/play to support your ideas in the body of the essay. After each quote, put the page number of the quote in parenthesis. EX: "... (28).

1. In literature, as in life, a character may search for a better way of life. Show how *two* characters from *A Raisin in the Sun* are searching for a better way of life. Explain what each character is hoping to gain through this search and discuss the ways in which each character attempts to bring about a change in his or her life.

Writing Activity #2

Directions: Think about how you would have liked for this play to end. Type an extension to the play that is at least 10 detailed sentences (narrative writing) or 20-character lines of dialogue (play script format) using the same characters as Lorraine Hansberry used in her play. Follow prompt #2 as listed below.

2. Add another ending to the already existing ending of the play, *A Raisin in the Sun*. Describe what you think happens next — after the Youngers have left their Southside Chicago apartment and have moved into their new house. You might write a composition (narrative writing), or you may wish to continue in Hansberry's genre, using the dialogue (a play script format) of the characters to show your plot.