

FENCES

AUGUST WILSON

LIVING LITERATURE SERIES

A PERMA-BOUND PRODUCTION

TEACHER'S GUIDE

GUIDE WRITTEN BY PATRICIA BUTLER

SYNOPSIS

ACT ONE

Scene One

It's Friday night, and Troy Maxson and Jim Bono, his longtime friend, celebrate the end of their work week with their ritual of drink and "men talk." Troy and Bono are garbage collectors, but Troy has recently filed a complaint with his union concerning the lack of black garbage truck drivers. Since only the blacks do the actual "lifting," Troy hopes that his actions will open opportunities for himself and other blacks to drive the trucks.

Unexpectedly, Bono broaches the subject of Alberta, the "gal" from Florida. Bono has observed Troy "eyeing" her, but Troy cleverly dismisses Bono's suspicions just before his wife Rose enters. She informs Troy that their son Cory has an opportunity to be recruited to play college football, but Troy is displeased. He views sports as a dead end for blacks because his own negative experiences with baseball have colored his opinions about sports. Though Rose and Bono try to convince Troy that times have changed, Troy is adamantly against his son playing football.

Throughout the evening, Troy drinks heavily. Rose warns him that he is going to drink himself to death, but Troy only spins a yarn about his three-day bout with Death. Troy's older son Lyons enters and borrows ten dollars from Troy but not without being criticized by his father. Rose steps in to mediate the situation.

Scene Two

The next day Troy exhibits a number of moods — from disgust toward those who gamble to anger toward Cory who has elected to play football rather than help him build a fence. When his mentally ill brother Gabriel visits, Troy's mood changes to remorse, for he knows that without his brother's disability income, received because of a war-related injury, Troy would not have been able to purchase his home.

Scene Three

Cory engages his father in conversation as they build the fence. This is Cory's opportunity to get his father to agree to sign the necessary papers for his recruitment. But when Troy attempts to convince Cory to find a trade and abandon his sports opportunities, Cory questions his father's feelings toward him. Troy makes it clear that his only responsibility is to take care of Cory, not to like him. Without success, Rose endeavors to show Troy that his son needs his approval.

Scene Four

Promoted to driver two weeks later, Troy shares his good news with family and friends. But the subject of Cory's recruitment puts a damper on Troy's moment of triumph. He remembers the unpleasant details of his childhood and young adult life, including his dysfunctional relationship with his father and his imprisonment for murder. Upset that his father has ruined his chances to play football, Cory accuses Troy of being jealous of him. Troy warns him to watch it before he strikes out.

ACT TWO

Scene One

The next morning, Rose promises Cory to discuss the recruitment issue with his father when he returns from posting bail for Gabriel, who has been arrested for disturbing the peace. Troy returns home accompanied by Bono, who advises him to choose wisely between Rose and Alberta. Bono leaves and Troy announces that he has fathered a child. Astonished and hurt, Rose laments over the death of her eighteen-year marriage. An argument ensues, Troy becomes violent, and Cory attempts to protect his mother. Troy gives Cory his second warning.

Scene Two

Over the past six months, Troy and Rose's relationship has spiraled downward. Troy's routine is to come home, change clothes, and leave. On this particular day, he plans to visit Alberta who is in the hospital awaiting the premature birth of their child. Rose questions him about committing his brother, but Troy denies any wrongdoing. Before he leaves, the hospital calls to report that Alberta has died giving birth. In a quiet rage, Troy demands that death bypass his family and come for him.

Scene Three

Three days later, Troy returns with his daughter and requests Rose's aid in raising her. Rose agrees but severs her relationship with her husband.

Scene Four

Troy has his final argument with Cory and orders him out of the house.

Scene Five

It is eight years later. Troy is dead, and Cory, now a corporal in the Marines, reappears for his father's funeral. At first he is reluctant to attend, but Rose encourages him to forget the past and move on. Finally, when he and Raynell, Troy's daughter, sing Troy's song about Blue, Cory is anxious to attend the funeral along with the other family members.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

August Wilson's interest in black history began at an early age. The son of a white father and a black mother, Wilson developed pride in black culture due to his mother's influence, since his father abandoned the family of six children. Though Wilson dropped out of school in the ninth grade, his neighborhood experiences and the books he read were invaluable influences on his thoughts and attitudes towards literature.

Wilson's successful career began in 1978 when he was invited to write plays for a black theater in St. Paul, Minnesota. His first two plays received little attention, but the third, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (1984), started a trend that all of Wilson's plays have followed: National Playwrights Conference, Yale Repertory Theater, Broadway.

These plays followed *Ma Rainey: Fences* (1985); *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* (1986), which debuted while *Fences* was still running on Broadway; *The Piano Lesson* (1987), which won a Pulitzer Prize before appearing on Broadway; and *Two Trains Running* (1990).

Wilson insists that his purpose is to "place the tradition of black American culture, to demonstrate its ability to sustain us. We have a ground that is specific, that is peculiarly ours, that we can stand on, which gives us a world view, to look at the world and to comment on it."

CRITIC'S CORNER

During the 1980s, August Wilson emerged as the new voice of American theater. His highly accredited plays have earned him such prizes as the Tony Award, the New York Drama Critics Circle Award, and the Pulitzer Prize. Each of his plays examines an important issue confronting black Americans during one particular decade of the twentieth century and usually focuses on racism and the conflicts between blacks who accept their African ancestry and culture and those who deny it. His historical emphasis has led essayist Samuel Freedman to refer to Wilson as "one part Dylan Thomas and one part Malcolm X, a lyric poet fired in the kiln of black nationalism."

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To research the decade of the 1950s
2. To explore family values
3. To analyze the importance of the father in the family unit
4. To examine the development of character in the play
5. To identify the themes expressed
6. To explain the dynamics of human relationships
7. To react to the ways in which males bond
8. To discuss family conflicts and explore possible solutions
9. To examine literary devices
10. To explain the significance of the title

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To report on the economic, political, and social climate in America during the 1950s

2. To respond to how Troy and Rose view the purpose of family
3. To examine how Troy's relationship with his father impacted his relationship with his sons
4. To develop an understanding of Troy, Rose, and Cory
5. To apply selected themes in the play
6. To define and evaluate the relationships between Troy and the women in his life
7. To analyze Troy's relationship with Bono
8. To judge whether the family conflicts in *Fences* are typical
9. To discuss the allusions in the play
10. To explore reasons why people build "fences"

MEANING STUDY

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have particular meaning in the play. Explain each. Page numbers are given so that you can note the context from which the item is taken.

1. Uncle Remus (p. 13)
(*Uncle Remus is an old slave and folk philosopher in the tales of Joel Chandler Harris.*)
2. "You still trying to get something for nothing. Life don't owe you nothing. You owe it to yourself." (p. 18)
(*Troy is disgusted with Lyons' lifestyle – he is unemployed and has no qualms about being supported by his woman. By shaming his son, Troy hopes to get him to change his behavior.*)
3. Gabriel (p. 24)
(*Gabriel, which in Hebrew means "man of God," is an archangel. In Judaism, Christianity and Islam, Gabriel is portrayed as God's messenger.*)
4. Battle of Armageddon (p. 47)
(*Armageddon is the biblical site of the world's great battle in which the powers of good will destroy the powers of evil.*)
5. "Just cause you didn't have a chance! You just scared I'm gonna be better than you, that's all." p. 50)
(*Cory is convinced that his father is jealous of his skills in sports and his opportunity for a better life.*)
6. Joe Louis (p. 61)
(*Joe Louis, Joseph Louis Barrow, was known as the "Brown Bomber." Louis was heavyweight boxing champion of the world from 1937 to 1949.*)
7. "You's in control . . . You responsible for what you do." (p. 63)
(*Bono wants Troy to make the right decision: He is aware that Troy is leaning towards Alberta. Bono reminds him to be loyal to his family.*)
8. "I done locked myself into a pattern trying to take care of you all that I forgot about myself." (p. 69)
(*Troy is explaining why he is having an affair.*)
9. "You don't count around here no more." (p. 85)
(*Cory expresses his lack of respect for Troy.*)
10. "You got to take the crooked with the straights." (p. 94)
(*Lyons recalls his father's expression, which means to deal with whatever life gives you.*)

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COMPREHENSION STUDY

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages in the play.

Questions 1-10 Literal Level

1. Indicate Troy's Friday night ritual.
(Every Friday, Troy and Bono get together, drink, talk, and reminisce. Sometimes Rose joins in, but she doesn't drink.)
2. Describe Troy's relationship with Bono.
(Troy met Bono when they were in the penitentiary. Now they are co-workers at the sanitation department. Often Bono is the observer and seems to be the "yes" man. However, when Bono sees Troy committing one of the biggest mistakes in his life, he protests loudly and reminds Troy of his responsibilities to his family. When Troy chooses to have an affair, which leads to pregnancy, Bono severs the relationship.)
3. According to Troy, why does Lyons visit?
(He visits only to borrow money.)
4. How has Gabriel's condition been advantageous to Troy and his family?
(Because he suffers from a mental illness caused by a war-related head injury, he is receiving compensation. Troy has used a portion of Gabriel's compensation to buy his family a house.)
5. Characterize Rose.
(Rose is Troy's wife of eighteen years. They have one son, Cory. Rose is supportive, understanding, and loving. Though torn between her son and her husband, she remains loyal to her man. And when he gets involved with another woman and has a baby by her, Rose accepts the child, rejects the man, but stays with him. Perhaps she is victimized by her own dreams. Nevertheless, she is the adhesive that keeps the family together.)
6. Explore Troy's relationship with his sons.
(Troy's relationship with his sons mirrors his relationship with his own father. From Troy's own mouth, the reader learns that Troy doesn't think highly of his father: "Sometimes I wish I hadn't known my daddy. He ain't cared nothing about no kids. A kid to him wasn't nothing. All he wanted was for you to learn how to walk so he could start you to working" (p. 50). Though he leaves home because he and his father are interested in the same girl, Troy admires his father's sense of duty: "But I'll say this for him . . . he felt a responsibility toward us. Maybe he ain't treated us the way I felt he should have . . . but without that responsibility he could have walked off and left us . . . made his own way" (p. 51). Troy repeats some of the same patterns with his own sons – he stresses responsibility and gainful employment, but he is not able to relate to them as people: "It's my job. It's my responsibility! . . . A man got to take care of his family. You live in my house . . . sleep you behind on my bedclothes . . . fill you belly up with my food . . . cause you my son. You my flesh and blood. Not 'cause I like

- you! Cause it's my duty to take care of you. I owe a responsibility to you!" He states his concern for Cory – "I don't want him to be like me! I want him to move as far away from my life as he can get.", but he sabotages his chances to make it in sports – "Papa done went up to the school and told Coach Zellman I can't play football no more. Wouldn't even let me play the game. Told him to tell the recruiter not to come.")*
7. Why does Troy admit to having an affair? Why does he feel he needs to be with Alberta though he claims to love Rose? How does Rose respond to Troy's affair?
 - (a. *Troy admits to his affair because his mistress is pregnant; he confesses that he cannot give her up: "I can sit up in her house and laugh . . . I can laugh out loud . . . and it feels good. It reaches all the way down to the bottom of my shoes. Rose, I can't give that up."*
 - (b. *When he is with Alberta, he feels differently. The pressures and problems seem to disappear. "I can just be a part of myself that I ain't never been."*
 - (c. *She is devastated. She has built her life (fence) around Troy, but somehow he has escaped.)*
 8. How does Alberta's death affect the Maxsons?
(Troy is left to raise his daughter on his own. He appeals to Rose who agrees to help in his daughter's rearing.)
 9. What incident causes Cory to leave home?
(On two other occasions, Troy and Cory have a serious confrontation. The first one is after Troy tells Cory's coach that football is out of the question for Cory; the second situation is when Troy attacks Rose and Cory tries to defend her. The final episode takes place when Cory tells Troy that he doesn't count. Troy forces him to leave.)
 10. When Cory returns for Troy's funeral, how has he changed? How is he still the boy who left eight years earlier?
 - (a. *Cory returns a successful Marine.*
 - (b. *He is still fighting Troy.)*

Questions 11 and 12 Interpretive Level

11. Indicate the significance of the title, *Fences*.
(Bono states the theme plainly: "Some people build fences to keep out . . . and other people build fences to keep people in. Rose wants to hold on to you all.")
12. What does Troy represent to Rose?
(Troy is her world. She tries to build a fence around those she loves, but she loses her son and her husband.)

Questions 13-15 Critical Level

13. Share your feelings about the play.
14. Evaluate Troy as a father and a husband.
15. How does Wilson portray women in the play?

Questions 16 and 17 Creative Level

16. Predict what will happen to Cory, Lyons, Raynell, Gabriel, and Rose after the funeral.

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17. Create and present one of these scenes:
 - a. Troy's funeral
 - b. Gabriel's arrest
 - c. Troy confronting his father
 - d. Troy and Alberta
 - e. Cory meeting Raynell

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

History

Research one of the following topics:

- a. McCarthyism
- b. Blacks in the armed forces (1940s and 1950s)
- c. Montgomery Bus Boycott
- d. Causes of the Korean War
- e. Little Rock, Arkansas Desegregation Crisis
- f. Brown vs. Board of Education
- g. Cold War
- h. Early Days of Television
- i. Negro Baseball League
- j. Life in post World War II America

Music

1. Report on the music/musicians of the 1950s:
 - a. "Cool" Jazz
 - b. Miles Davis
 - c. John Coltrane
 - d. B. B. King
 - e. Origins of Rock 'n Roll
 - f. Chuck Berry
 - g. Elvis Presley
 - h. Fats Domino
 - i. Sam Cooke
 - j. Nat King Cole
2. Compose a song on the life of Troy or Rose Maxson.

Health

Research and report on these brain syndromes/disorders:

- a. delirium
- b. dementia
- c. delusion
- d. fabrication
- e. fantasy
- f. mania

Art

1. Report on pop art and pop artists.
2. Create a model set of the play.
3. Illustrate these scenes:
 - a. Gabriel selling discarded fruit and vegetables
 - b. Troy with his newborn daughter
 - c. Cory returning home for Troy's funeral
 - d. Raynell meeting Cory

Drama

Role play these situations:

1. Alberta and Troy meeting for the first time
2. Bono warning Troy to be responsible
3. Troy's confrontations with Cory
4. Rose accepting Raynell and rejecting Troy
5. Cory returning home for his father's funeral

Speech

Write and present a speech on one of the following:

1. When Running Away is the Only Way
2. Facing Death
3. Why People Build Fences
4. Weighing Consequences
5. Anger Can Heal or Anger Can Kill
6. Commitment Means _____
7. Bargaining with Death
8. Protecting a Loved One

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. Write an essay on one of the following:
 - a. The Importance of a Father
 - b. The Psychological Effects of War
 - c. Putting Up Fences
 - d. Men and Women and Emotions
 - e. Qualities of a Good Parent
 - f. Making a Change
 - g. Facing the Truth
 - h. When Duty Calls
 - i. Needing Room to Breathe
 - j. What Do Men Talk About?
2. Discuss the difference between a house and a home.
3. List and discuss the characteristics of a good father and mother. Evaluate Troy and Rose using the attributes listed.
4. Write Troy's Ten Commandments of Life.
5. Explain the effects of the following incidents in the play:
 - a. Troy's affair with Alberta
 - b. Troy's failure in sports
 - c. Cory's fight with Troy
 - d. Lyon's irresponsibility
 - e. Alberta's death
6. Debate whether Rose made herself a victim.
7. Contrast the strength of Rose with her personality.
8. Defend this statement: Troy's motives were right, but his methods were wrong.
9. Research and report on these topics related to the 1950s:
 - a. Beat Generation
 - b. Ed Sullivan
 - c. James Dean
 - d. Marilyn Monroe
 - e. Mickey Spillane
 - f. McDonald's
 - g. "I Love Lucy"
 - h. polio vaccine
 - i. NASA
10. Contrast the ideal family of the 1950s to the ideal family of the 1990s.
11. Predict the future of these characters:
 - a. Cory as a father
 - b. Lyons as a husband
 - c. Raynell as a wife and mother
12. Report on these sports figures referred to in the play:
 - a. Babe Ruth
 - b. Josh Gibson

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- c. Jackie Robinson
 - d. Satchel Paige
 - e. Lew Burdette
 - f. Hank Aaron
 - g. Wes Covington
 - h. Sandy Koufax
 - i. Warren Spahn
13. Write Rose's diary entry for the following scenes:
- a. After Troy admits his affair
 - b. After Cory leaves
 - c. After Troy's funeral
14. Make a list of the conflicts in the play. Then discuss the possible solutions to each one.

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

1. Write and present a scene which reveals the relationship between Troy and Alberta.
2. Write an essay on one of the following topics:
 - a. home
 - b. success
 - c. responsibility
 - d. love
 - e. friendship
 - f. loyalty
 - g. innocence
 - h. opportunities
 - i. dreams
3. Analyze the following quotations from the novel:
 - a. "Life don't owe you nothing. You owe it to yourself." (p. 18)
 - b. "Don't nobody want to be locked up." (p. 28)
 - c. "You responsible for what you do." (p. 63)
 - d. "You got to take the crooked with the straights." (p. 94)
 - e. "You can't be nobody but who you are . . ." (p. 97)
4. Explain how the play would change if the following occurred:
 - a. Rose and Alberta meet to discuss Troy
 - b. Lyons marries Bonnie and moves in with Rose and Troy
 - c. Alberta lives and the baby dies
 - d. Troy lives to see Cory as a successful Marine
 - e. Rose rejects Raynell

WILSON'S PRINCIPAL WORKS

Black Bart and the Sacred Hills, 1981
Jitney, 1982
Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, 1984
Fences, 1985
Joe Turner's Come and Gone, 1986
The Piano Lesson, 1987
Two Trains Running, 1990

RELATED READING

Asher, Sandy. *Everything Is Not Enough*.
Close, Jessie. *The Warping Of Al*.
Driscoll, Jack. *Skylight: A Novel*.
Farley, Carol. *Twilight Waves*

Filson, Brent. *The Puma*.
Ford, John M. *Growing Up Weightless*.
Gaines, Ernest J. *In My Father's House*.
Geller, Mark. *What I Heard*.
James, Peter. *Prophecy*.
Klass, David. *Wrestling With Honor*.
Klein, Norma. *Learning How To Fall*.
Myers, Walter Dean. *It Ain't All For Nothin'*
———. *Somewhere In The Darkness*.
Peck, Robert Newton. *A Day No Pigs Would Die*.
Stark, Stephen. *Second Son: A Novel*.
Steinbeck, John. *East of Eden*.

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Black Literature Criticism. Vol. 3. Detroit: Gale, 1992.
Brown, Chip. "The Light in August." *Esquire*. III, No. 4 (April 1989), pp. 116, 118, 120, 122-27.
Christiansen, Richard. "Artist of the Year: August Wilson's Plays Reveal What It Means to be Black in This Century." *Chicago Tribune* (27 December 1987), pp. 4-5.
Contemporary Authors. Vol. 115. Detroit: Gale, 1985.
O'Neill, Michael. "August Wilson." In *American Playwrights Since 1945: A Guide to Scholarship, Criticism, and Performance*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1989, pp. 518-27.

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READING QUIZZES

True or False

Mark each statement with a T if it is true or F if any part is false.

ACT ONE

Scene One

- _____ 1. The play takes place in the 1950s.
- _____ 2. Troy complains to his boss that only whites are assigned to drive the garbage trucks while the blacks do the lifting.
- _____ 3. Troy is pleased that his younger son Cory has been recruited by a college football team.
- _____ 4. Lyons, Troy's older son and successful musician, visits Rose and Troy.
- _____ 5. During Lyons' visit, Troy gives him \$100 to invest for him.

Scene Two

- _____ 1. Troy's brother Gabriel has a metal plate in his head because he was injured in a car accident.
- _____ 2. Gabriel attempts to sell the fruits and vegetables he has found in the garbage.
- _____ 3. Gabriel senses that Troy is angry with him because he has moved out of Troy's house.
- _____ 4. Gabriel claims that he has breakfast with St. Peter every morning.
- _____ 5. Troy is plagued by the fact that he has used his disabled brother's money to buy his house.

Scene Three

- _____ 1. When Troy returns home, he is upset, he claims, because Cory has neglected his chores.
- _____ 2. Cory persuades his father to buy a TV.
- _____ 3. Troy argues that blacks in sports are treated unfairly, but Cory disagrees.
- _____ 4. Troy insists that Cory forget about playing college football.
- _____ 5. When Cory asks Troy why he never liked him, Troy feels ashamed.

Scene Four

- _____ 1. The scene opens with Cory leaving for his A & P job.
- _____ 2. Troy announces that he has been promoted to driver.
- _____ 3. Reluctantly, Troy loans Lyons \$10.
- _____ 4. Rose wants Troy to sign the papers which will allow Cory to play football, but Troy refuses.
- _____ 5. Troy admits that his relationship with his father was not a a loving one.
- _____ 6. Troy left home at age eighteen and went to Mobile.
- _____ 7. Troy spent fifteen years in the penitentiary for murder.
- _____ 8. Before he leaves, Lyons suggests that Troy come and hear him play, but Troy turns him down.
- _____ 9. Cory arrives, angry that his father has thwarted his football career.
- _____ 10. Though Cory is angry about football, his father convinces him that he is only concerned about his safety.

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ACT TWO

Scene One

- _____ 1. Gabriel is arrested for disturbing the peace.
- _____ 2. Bono warns Troy about his relationship with Alberta.
- _____ 3. Troy tells Rose that he has fathered a child.
- _____ 4. Rose responds by physically attacking Troy.
- _____ 5. In an attempt to protect his mother, Cory attacks Troy by punching him in the chest and knocking him down.

Scene Two

- _____ 1. For the past six months, Troy has not been coming home from work.
- _____ 2. Gabe is hospitalized and wills his money to Lyons and Cory.
- _____ 3. Alberta has a girl but dies giving birth.
- _____ 4. Troy becomes angry when Rose decides to accompany him to see Alberta.
- _____ 5. The scene ends with Troy mocking death.

Scene Three

- _____ 1. When the scene begins, Rose is knitting a baby blanket.
- _____ 2. Troy appears with his infant daughter and puts the child in Rose's lap.
- _____ 3. Troy apologizes to Rose for his affair with Alberta.
- _____ 4. Troy asks Rose to help him care for his child.
- _____ 5. Rose agrees but makes it clear that their marriage is over.

Scene Four

- _____ 1. When Troy enters, Rose is on her way to a church bake sale.
- _____ 2. After not associating with Troy for several months, Bono visits him.
- _____ 3. Lately Bono has been playing checkers on Fridays.
- _____ 4. A fight ensues between Troy and Cory when Cory refuses to pay rent.
- _____ 5. Cory batters his father and then runs away from home.

Scene Five

- _____ 1. When the scene opens, Raynell is eleven years old.
- _____ 2. Troy has died and Cory, now a corporal in the Marines, has returned for the funeral.
- _____ 3. Troy has been killed in an auto accident.
- _____ 4. At first, Cory is unwilling to attend his father's funeral.
- _____ 5. Cory finally agrees to attend when Gabriel arrives and encourages him to leave the past behind.

FENCES**VOCABULARY MATCH**

Choose the correct definition for each word in the Word List. Write the answer on the blank.

	WORD LIST	DEFINITION
_____	1. atavistic	expressive language
_____	2. congruence	causing doubt
_____	3. destitute	shock
_____	4. devour	imitate
_____	5. dubious	meet unexpectedly
_____	6. eloquence	watchful
_____	7. emulate	mock
_____	8. encounter	move with skill
_____	9. guile	harmonious
_____	10. maneuver	deceit; slyness
_____	11. mimic	eat hungrily
_____	12. profound	violent
_____	13. rogue	unyielding; firm
_____	14. scrutiny	scoundrel
_____	15. taunt	impoverished
_____	16. engulf	equal or surpass
_____	17. trauma	swallow up
_____	18. turbulent	very deep
_____	19. uncompromising	close examination
_____	20. vigilant	ancestral

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VOCABULARY TEST

Write the letter of the correct definition in the blank below.

- | | | | |
|-------|--|---------------|-------------------------|
| _____ | 1. congruence
(a) harmonious | (b) deceit | (c) skill |
| _____ | 2. dubious
(a) healing | (b) doubtful | (c) stubborn |
| _____ | 3. destitute
(a) impoverished | (b) fearful | (c) evil |
| _____ | 4. tenacious
(a) stubborn | (b) sly | (c) fit |
| _____ | 5. devour
(a) eat hungrily | (b) imitate | (c) comfort |
| _____ | 6. guile
(a) shock | (b) shame | (c) deceit |
| _____ | 7. turbulent
(a) harsh | (b) bold | (c) violent |
| _____ | 8. emulate
(a) equal | (b) watch | (c) admit |
| _____ | 9. profound
(a) sharp | (b) deep | (c) eager |
| _____ | 10. vigilant
(a) watchful | (b) hopeful | (c) scornful |
| _____ | 11. scrutiny
(a) danger | (b) comfort | (c) close examination |
| _____ | 12. eloquence
(a) target | (b) style | (c) expressive language |
| _____ | 13. rogue
(a) scoundrel | (b) offspring | (c) gentleman |
| _____ | 14. uncompromising
(a) not yielding | (b) gloomy | (c) suitable |
| _____ | 15. mimic
(a) hint | (b) scold | (c) imitate |
| _____ | 16. engulf
(a) imagine | (b) excuse | (c) swallow up |
| _____ | 17. maneuver
(a) fake | (b) battle | (c) move with skill |
| _____ | 18. taunt
(a) shock | (b) persist | (c) mock |
| _____ | 19. trauma
(a) surprise | (b) shock | (c) disappointment |
| _____ | 20. atavistic
(a) ancient | (b) unspoiled | (c) ancestral |

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COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Character Identification (30 points)

Match the characters listed below with the correct action. Place the letter of your answer in the space provided.

- | | | |
|-------|--|------------|
| _____ | 1. Warns Troy about seeing Alberta | A. Troy |
| _____ | 2. Has a metal plate in his head | B. Bono |
| _____ | 3. Wrestled with death | C. Rose |
| _____ | 4. Agrees to raise Raynell | D. Lyons |
| _____ | 5. Borrows money from Troy | E. Gabriel |
| _____ | 6. Builds a fence around his yard | F. Cory |
| _____ | 7. Wants to be a musician | G. Raynell |
| _____ | 8. Refers to Lyons as "King of the Jungle" | |
| _____ | 9. Gets a job promotion | |
| _____ | 10. Sells discarded food | |
| _____ | 11. Sings about Blue with Cory | |
| _____ | 12. Has opportunity to play college football | |
| _____ | 13. Is arrested for disturbing the peace | |
| _____ | 14. Plays dominoes on Friday | |
| _____ | 15. Becomes a corporal in the Marines | |

Part II: Relationships (20 points)

Identify the relationships between the following:

1. Lyons—Rose
2. Raynell—Cory
3. Cory—football—Rose
4. Gabriel—Troy—Miss Pearl
5. Alberta—Troy—Bono

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Part III: Settings (20 points)

Discuss the significance of the following settings. Be specific.

1. A & P
2. Commissioner's Office
3. workhouse
4. Crawford Grill
5. Greentree

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

1. Evaluate Troy Maxson as a father, husband, and friend.
2. Discuss one of the the following themes as it relates to the play:
 - A. responsibility
 - B. fences
 - C. home

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COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Completion (30 points)

Fill in the blank with the name of the character indicated.

- _____ 1. has recently moved in with Miss Pearl.
- _____ 2. warns Troy about Alberta.
- _____ 3. wants Troy to hear him play.
- _____ 4. almost dies of a fever.
- _____ 5. wants Troy to buy a TV.
- _____ 6. sells discarded fruit and vegetables
- _____ 7. feels that Lyons only wants to borrow money.
- _____ 8. is serving three years for theft.
- _____ 9. is the peacemaker.
- _____ 10. has used Gabriel's money to buy his house.
- _____ 11. attacks Troy in an effort to protect his mother.
- _____ 12. has spent fifteen years in the penitentiary for murder.
- _____ 13. agrees to raise Raynell.
- _____ 14. believes he is an archangel.
- _____ 15. gets promoted from collector to driver.

Part II: Cause and Effect (20 points)

Complete each statement below by explaining the reason.

1. Troy files a complaint with the union because
2. Gabriel has a metal plate in his head because
3. Troy states that he will not allow Cory to play college football because
4. Cory leaves home because
5. Troy claims that he was not allowed to play baseball because
6. Gabriel is arrested because
7. The first time Cory attacks his father it is because
8. Gabriel moves out of Troy's house because
9. Cory does not want to attend his father's funeral because
10. Bono realizes that Rose wants a fence built because

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Part III: Quotation Identification (20 points)

Which characters make the following statements? Write the letter of your answer in the space provided.

- | | |
|----------|------------|
| A. Troy | E. Gabriel |
| B. Bono | F. Cory |
| C. Rose | G. Raynell |
| D. Lyons | |

- _____ 1. "Did you know when I was in heaven . . . every morning me and St. Peter would sit down by the gate and eat some big fat biscuits?"
- _____ 2. "I done learned a whole heap of things about life watching you. "
- _____ 3. "You just an old man."
- _____ 4. "Age ain't got nothing to do with it, Rose."
- _____ 5. "Lyons! King of the Jungle."
- _____ 6. "Sometimes I wish I hadn't known my daddy. He ain't cared nothing about no kids."
- _____ 7. "They got me down the workhouse. I thought I was being slick cashing other people's checks."
- _____ 8. "I don't want to be Troy Maxson. I want to be me."
- _____ 9. ". . . I was fixing to pay you back your ten dollars . . ."
- _____ 10. "I have to wait eighteen years to hear something like this."

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose one of the following essay topics.

1. Discuss Troy's relationship with one of the following characters.

- A. his father
- B. Rose
- C. his sons
- D. Bono

2. Explain how one of these themes is developed in the play.

- A. respect
- B. freedom
- C. change
- D. control

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ANSWER KEY

READING QUIZZES

Act I

Scene One

1. T
2. T
3. F
4. F
5. F

Scene Two

1. F
2. T
3. T
4. T
5. T

Scene Three

1. T
2. F
3. T
4. T
5. F

Scene Four

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. F |
| 2. T | 7. T |
| 3. F | 8. T |
| 4. T | 9. T |
| 5. T | 10. F |

Act II

Scene One

1. T
2. T
3. T
4. F
5. F

Scene Two

1. F
2. F
3. T
4. F
5. T

Scene Three

1. F
2. F
3. F
4. T
5. T

Scene Four

1. T
2. T
3. F
4. F
5. F

Scene Five

1. F
2. T
3. F
4. T
5. F

VOCABULARY MATCH

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. ancestral | 11. imitate |
| 2. harmonious | 12. deep |
| 3. impoverished | 13. scoundrel |
| 4. eat hungrily | 14. close examination |
| 5. doubtful | 15. mock |
| 6. expressive language | 16. swallow up |
| 7. equal | 17. shock |
| 8. meet | 18. violent |
| 9. deceit | 19. firm |
| 10. move skillfully | 20. watchful |

VOCABULARY TEST

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. a | 11. c |
| 2. b | 12. c |
| 3. a | 13. a |
| 4. a | 14. a |
| 5. a | 15. c |
| 6. c | 16. c |
| 7. c | 17. c |
| 8. a | 18. c |
| 9. b | 19. b |
| 10. a | 20. c |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Character Identification (30 points)

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1. B | 4. C | 7. D | 10. E | 13. E |
| 2. E | 5. D | 8. E | 11. G | 14. B |
| 3. A | 6. A | 9. A | 12. F | 15. F |

Part II: Relationships (20 points)

1. Lyons is Rose's stepson.
2. Raynell is Troy's daughter by Alberta; Cory is Troy's son by Rose.
3. Cory desires to play college football; Rose tries to persuade Troy to permit Cory to play.
4. Gabriel moves out of Troy's home into Miss Pearl's.
5. All during Troy's affair with Alberta, Bono reminds him of his responsibility to his wife.

Part III: Settings (20 points)

1. where Cory works; where Troy hopes Cory will remain
2. where Troy meets with union members to get promotion as driver
3. where Lyons is serving time for theft
4. where Lyons is playing in a band; where Troy has been invited by Lyons to see him play
5. neighborhood where Troy drives to perform his job

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Completion (30 points)

- | | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|
| 1. Gabriel | 6. Gabriel | 11. Cory |
| 2. Bono | 7. Troy | 12. Troy |
| 3. Lyons | 8. Lyons | 13. Rose |
| 4. Troy | 9. Rose | 14. Gabriel |
| 5. Cory | 10. Troy | 15. Troy |

Part II: Cause and Effect (20 points)

1. there are no black drivers on his job.
2. he sustained a head injury during the war.
3. he feels his son will be misused by the system.
4. his father commands him to leave after an argument.
5. he is black.
6. he is disturbing the peace.
7. his father is attacking his mother.
8. he wants to be on his own.
9. he is still angry with Troy; he wants to say "no" to his father for once.
10. she wants to keep her family together.

Part III: Quotation Identification (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. E | 6. A |
| 2. B | 7. D |
| 3. F | 8. F |
| 4. A | 9. D |
| 5. E | 10. C |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

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