

The Glass Menagerie

by Tennessee Williams

Teacher's Guide

Written By Matthew Jewell

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Synopsis

Scene 1

The play is set in the Wingfield apartment in a lower-middle class St. Louis tenement. Tom, the narrator and a character, enters and explains to the audience that this is a "memory play," drawn from his own recollection and that he has taken whatever artistic licenses he felt necessary. Providing background, he sets the play during the late 1930s, mentioning domestic labor unrest and the bombing of Guernica. The Wingfield father left the family years ago, though his portrait looms over the set.

Amanda, Tom's mother, calls him to the table for dinner, then criticizes his manners vocally and in detail. After he storms from the table, she forbids Laura, Tom's sister, from helping with domestic duties and begins what is obviously a familiar recitation of the time she received seventeen "gentleman callers" as a girl in Blue Mountain, Mississippi. Amanda's nostalgic memories turn into a litany of her various suitors and their subsequent fortunes. The scene ends as Laura attempts to explain to her mother that she expects no callers, that she isn't "popular" like Amanda was.

Scene 2

Amanda comes home visibly upset. Laura, caught polishing her glass menagerie, tries to appear to be practicing her typing. Amanda has just visited the business school in which Laura is enrolled and learned that she dropped out after the first few sessions, but has been leaving the house as if she were still going to class. Laura, abashed at being discovered, explains that after she quit going to class, she wandered the parks and zoo, afraid of crushing her mother's expectations. Amanda wonders aloud what will become of them

now that Laura's career prospects are gone and decides that Laura must marry. She asks her whether she ever liked a boy. Laura drags out her high school yearbook and points out Jim, the high school hero, who used to call her Blue Roses after mishearing her when she told him she had had an attack of pleurosis. When Amanda opines that she must marry "some nice man," Laura objects that she's "crippled," indicating her leg brace. Her mother forbids her from using that word and tells her she must cultivate charm.

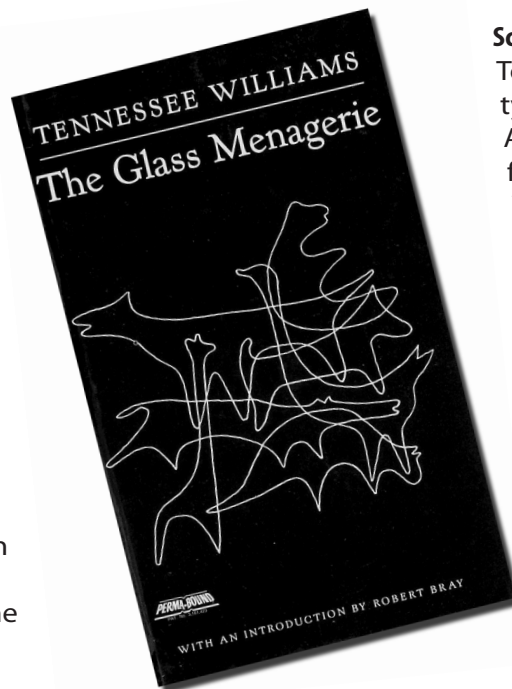
Scene 3

Tom opens the scene in his capacity as narrator. He describes how Amanda became obsessed with finding a match for Laura, how the idea of a gentleman caller haunted the apartment. To earn extra money for the campaign, she began selling subscriptions to a homemakers magazine over the telephone.

Amanda enters with a telephone and delivers an enthusiastic sales pitch. The lights dim, then rise on an argument between Amanda and Tom. She has returned his D.H. Lawrence novel to the library, declaring it filthy and unfit to

be in her house. He replies that he pays the rent and bills and begins to leave. She accuses him of being selfish, of jeopardizing his job and thus the family's welfare by staying out late. He responds hotly that he hates his job at the warehouse, that he envies the dead when she wakes him in the morning, and that if her were truly selfish, he would have already left the family.

As he begins to leave, she demands to know where he's going, refusing to believe his stated destination of the movies. He spins an outrageous tale of a second life in which he is an assassin and spends his time in casinos and opium dens, ending the



The Glass Menagerie Tennessee Williams

diatribe by calling her a “ugly—babbling old—*witch*” and hurling his coat, which strikes Laura’s glass figurines, shattering some. Laura cries out, wounded. Amanda demands an apology, then leaves, while Tom picks up the glass.

Scene 4

Tom comes home drunk, waking Laura. He says he went to the movies and a magic show, then enthusiastically describes how the magician escaped a nailed coffin. He wishes he could pull the same trick with his life.

The next morning, Amanda, refusing to talk to Tom until he apologizes, sends Laura to wake him. She begs him to apologize to their mother. Amanda then sends Laura out to buy butter on credit. After a long silence as Tom sips his coffee, he apologizes to his mother. She cries, then talks about her devotion to her children. She begs him not to become a drunkard like his father was. While he is impatient to leave for work, she insists he stay to talk. She asks him about his nights out, and he explains that he goes to the movies for vicarious adventure, that “Man is by instinct a lover, a hunter, a fighter,” which explanation she dismisses out of hand.

Amanda switches to planning for Laura. She says she knows that Tom has received a letter from the Merchant Marine and that he wants to leave the family, but begs him to stay until someone can take care of his sister. She asks him to bring home a nice man from work to meet Laura. He reluctantly agrees, then leaves. The scene ends with Amanda on the telephone, selling subscriptions.

Scene 5

After dinner, Tom steps out to the fire escape to smoke a cigarette and address the audience. He describes the seedy surroundings, social environment, and world events. Amanda breaks in, switching Tom to a character. As the moon rises, they wish on it. Tom casually mentions that he’s invited a gentleman caller from work, James O’Connor, to dinner the next night. Amanda is thrilled, but she obsesses over the many preparations to be made in so short a time. She questions Tom about Jim, who makes slightly more than him and attends night classes in Radio Engineering and Public Speaking.

Tom says that he hasn’t told Jim about his sister

and that he thinks it’s just a dinner invitation. He also asks his mother not to expect too much from Laura, noting her minor disability and extreme social anxiety. Amanda brushes his concerns aside, saying that Laura is peculiar in a good way. Tom leaves for the movies, and Amanda calls Laura out to wish on the moon.

Scene 6

Tom addresses the audience, describing Jim’s past and their relationship. Jim was extremely popular in high school and excelled in all endeavors, but now works in the same warehouse as Tom. He seems to need Tom because he remembers his glory years. Jim is the only person who knows of Tom’s habit of slipping off to the bathroom to write poetry when work is slow.

The lights dim, then rise on the evening of Jim’s arrival. Amanda stuffs Laura’s bosom, saying that women are pretty traps, luring men with appearance and charm. She puts on an old dress, one she wore to balls as a girl. When Amanda mentions Jim’s name, Laura recognizes him as her high school crush and panics. She is terrified and refuses to sit at a table with him.

Jim and Tom arrive. Amanda forces Laura to answer the door, which she does reluctantly. Laura awkwardly greets Jim, then scurries away to put on a record. Jim and Tom talk about the future. Jim boasts of his plans and informs Tom that he, too, should attend night school, that upward mobility is just a matter of social poise. Tom replies that he has his own plans, eventually revealing that he has used the money for the electric bill to join the Union of Merchant Seamen.

Amanda enters and turns on her Southern charm, engaging Jim. They sit for dinner. It becomes apparent that Laura’s anxiety has transformed to physical illness. She is excused from dinner and sits on the couch while the other three eat.

Scene 7

As they finish dinner, the lights flicker, then go out. Amanda lights candles and asks Jim to check the fuse box. He finds nothing wrong, of course. She asks Tom if he paid the bill. He admits that he didn’t, though she assumes that he simply forgot.

As Amanda and Tom clean up, Jim comes out with

a candelabra and a glass of wine for Laura. He convinces her to sit on the floor with him. She asks if he still sings, then if he remembers her. Once she reminds him that he called her “Blue Roses,” he recalls her vividly. After Jim dismisses her concerns about her brace as a product of oversensitivity and low self-esteem, she convinces him to autograph the program from an operetta he sang in high school. They discuss what they’ve done since school. Jim describes his post-graduation slide, then his passion for a career in television.

Laura talks about her glass menagerie and shows him her favorite, a unicorn. Music from the dance hall seeps into the apartment, and Jim convinces her to dance with him, despite her protests. While dancing, they bump into the table, knocking the unicorn to the floor and breaking off its horn. Jim is very apologetic, but Laura seems unfazed, saying it makes the unicorn just another horse, less freakish. He suddenly tells her that she’s pretty, that someone should kiss her, and then kisses her. She sinks dazed to the couch, while Jim curses himself, then explains that he’s engaged to be married to a woman named Betty. Laura is crushed, but gives him the broken unicorn as a “souvenir.”

Amanda enters gaily with a pitcher of lemonade and macaroons. Jim tells her that he must leave to get Betty at the train station and that they’re to be married in June. After he leaves, Amanda accuses Tom of having played a cruel trick on her and his sister. He replies defensively that work is where he works, not where he knows intimate details about people. He leaves for the movies.

Tom addresses the audience while Amanda silently comforts Laura. He says that he left them, that he’s traveled extensively since, but that the image and memory of Laura haunt him everywhere he goes. Laura bends over and blows out the candles, ending the play.

Tennessee Williams Timeline

- Mar. 26, 1911** born in Columbus, Mississippi as Thomas Lanier Williams
- 1929** decides to become a playwright after attending a performance of Henrik Ibsen’s *Ghosts* while a student at the University of Minnesota
- 1931** forced by his father to leave school

- and work in a St. Louis factory, where he meets a man named Stanley Kowalski, who will become the basis for a character in *A Streetcar Named Desire*
- 1937** *Candles to the Sun* and *The Fugitive Kind*, two plays, are produced in St. Louis.
- 1938** graduates from the University of Iowa with a B.F.A.
- 1939** moves to New Orleans and changes his name from “Tom” to “Tennessee”
- Dec. 26, 1944** *The Glass Menagerie* successfully opens in Chicago.
- Mar. 31, 1945** *The Glass Menagerie* moves to Broadway and eventually earns Williams a New York Drama Critic’s Circle Award.
- 1947** meets and falls in love with Frank Merlo, who will become his partner
- Dec. 3** *A Streetcar Named Desire* opens on Broadway, eventually earning him a Pulitzer Prize.
- Oct. 6, 1948** *Summer and Smoke* opens on Broadway.
- Feb. 3, 1951** *The Rose Tattoo* opens on Broadway, earning him a Tony Award.
- Mar. 17, 1953** *Camino Real* opens on Broadway.
- Mar. 24, 1955** *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* opens on Broadway, earning both a Pulitzer Prize and a Tony Award.
- Mar. 21, 1957** *Orpheus Descending* opens on Broadway.
- Mar. 10, 1959** *Sweet Bird of Youth* opens on Broadway.
- Nov. 10, 1960** *Period of Adjustment* opens on Broadway.
- Dec. 28, 1961** *The Night of the Iguana* opens on Broadway, winning another Tony Award.
- 1963** Frank Merlo, his partner, dies of lung cancer, sending Williams into a decade of depression.
- Jan. 16, 1963** *The Milk Train Doesn’t Stop Here Anymore* opens on Broadway.
- Mar. 27, 1968** *The Seven Descendents of Myrtle* opens on Broadway, closing after 29 performances.

The Glass Menagerie Tennessee Williams

- Mar. 1, 1973** *Out Cry* opens on Broadway, closing after 12 performances.
- Nov. 23, 1976** *The Eccentricities of a Nightingale* opens on Broadway, closing after 24 performances.
- May 11, 1977** *Vieux Carré* opens on Broadway, closing after 6 performances.
- Mar. 26, 1980** *Clothes for a Summer Hotel* opens on Broadway, closing after 14 performances.
- Feb. 24, 1983** Williams dies in his New York City residence from choking on a bottle cap.

Projected Image and Text

Scene 1

- p. 6** "Ou sont les neiges."
p. 8 Amanda as a girl on a porch, greeting callers.
p. 9 "Ou sont les neiges d'antan?"

Scene 2

- p. 11** The Blue roses,
p. 13 A swarm of typewriters.
p. 15 Winter scene in a park.
p. 15 "The Crust of Humility,"
p. 16 Jim as the high school hero bearing a silver cup.
p. 17 Blue roses.

Scene 3

- p. 19** "After the fiasco—"
p. 19 A young man at the door of a house with flowers.
p. 19 The cover of a glamour magazine.
p. 20 "You think I'm in love with Continental Shoemakers?"
p. 24 "The Glass Menagerie."

Scene 4

- p. 32** "Laura."
p. 33 A sailing vessel with Jolly Rodger.
p. 34 "Plans and Provisions."
p. 36 The cover of a glamour magazine.

Scene 5

- p. 38** "Annunciation."
p. 41 A caller with a bouquet.
p. 49 The Moon.

Scene 6

- p. 50** The high school hero.
p. 50 The Clerk.
p. 51 "The accent of a coming foot."
p. 52 "A pretty trap."
p. 53 "This is my sister: Celebrate her with strings!"
p. 54 "Not Jim!"
p. 56 "Terror!"
p. 56 "The Opening of a Door!"
p. 59 Executive at his desk.
p. 60 The sailing vessel with the Jolly Rodger again.
p. 63 Amanda as a girl.
p. 65 "Terror!"
p. 65 "Ah!"

Scene 7

- p. 67** "Suspension of public service."
p. 68 "Ha!"
p. 70 "I don't suppose you remember me at all!"
p. 79 "What have you done since high school?"
p. 87 Blue Roses.
p. 88 "A souvenir."
p. 90 "Love!"
p. 91 "Things have a way of turning out so badly!"
or Gentleman caller waving goodbye—gaily.
p. 96 "And so goodbye . . ."

Author Sketch

Tennessee Williams was born Thomas Lanier Williams in Columbus, Mississippi on March 26, 1911. The family lived in Clarksdale, Mississippi until 1918, when they moved to St. Louis, Mo. At the age of 16, Tennessee showed the first promise of his literary career, winning third prize in an essay competition. The next year, he published a short story, "The Vengeance of Nitocris" in *Weird Tales*. He entered the University of Missouri in 1929, where he enjoyed dubious success, leaving two years later to work in a St. Louis shoe factory.

Six years later, his first play, *Cairo, Shanghai, Bombay*, was produced in Memphis. Two more plays, *Candles to the Sun* and *The Fugitive Kind* were produced in St. Louis in 1937. During this time, he enrolled at the University of Iowa, graduating in 1938. Near the end of World War II, he enjoyed his first major liter-



ary success, *The Glass Menagerie*, which had a very successful run in Chicago in 1944. It moved to Broadway the next year, where it won the New York Drama Critics' Circle award for best play of the season.

The 1940s and 1950s were the peak of his critical and commercial success. *A Streetcar Named Desire* won a Pulitzer Prize in 1948, as did *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* in 1955. In 1963, Williams' long-time companion, Frank Merlo, died of cancer. Williams' plays took an experimental turn in the vein of Sartre, Beckett, and Ionesco. The results produced little popular or critical enthusiasm. He spent two months in a detox program in 1969 for extended dependency on alcohol, amphetamines, and barbiturates. This is the period of *In the Bar of a Tokyo Hotel* and *Out Cry*.

Williams restored some semblance of order to his personal life in the 1970s, though his work continued to enjoy little success. In the *New York Times* (May 8, 1977), he wrote, "I am widely regarded as the ghost of a writer . . ." *Clothes for a Summer Hotel*, his last Broadway play in his lifetime, opened in 1980 and was panned by critics. Williams died of choking in New York City in 1983 after a night of heavy drinking.

Critical History

The Glass Menagerie is one of the rare plays the critical acclaim of which drove its eventual popular success. The audience at Chicago's Civic Theatre December 26, 1944 received the opening performance with a decided lack of enthusiasm. Williams himself derided the performance, saying that Laurette Taylor's Amanda oscillated between "Gone with the Wind" and "the Aunt Jemima Pancake Hour" and describing director Margo Jones as "a scoutmaster leading a wayward and desperate troop to their doom." The next day, the show's producers decided to close it, but delayed posting the notice after reading the reviews in the morning's papers. The *Chicago Daily Tribune* called the play "vividly written, and in the main superbly acted." The *Chicago Herald American* wrote, "The play has the courage of true poetry couched in colloquial prose." With extended critical acclaim and recurring favorable reviews, box office sales eventually rose. By late January 1945, performances were selling out. The mayor authorized a 50% ticket subsidy for city employees. The success allowed Williams' agent to secure a run in New York, where *The Glass Menagerie*

opened on March 31 at the Playhouse Theatre.

New York audiences received the play with more initial enthusiasm than Chicago had, and reviewers almost unanimously declared it an important dramatic event. The *New York Sun* called it "a vivid, eerie and curiously enchanting play." Two weeks after the New York opening, the play was awarded the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for best American play of the season.

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Selected Other Works by the Author

Plays

27 Wagons Full of Cotton, and Other One Act Plays, 1946
American Blues, 1948
Battle of Ages, 1945
Camino Real, 1953
Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, 1955
Clothes for a Summer Hotel: A Ghost Play, 1983
Dragon Counting, A Book of Play, 1970
The Eccentricities of a Nightingale, 1964
The Fugitive Kind, 1937
Garden District, 1958
The Glass Menagerie, 1944
Grand, 1964
I Rise a Flame, Cried the Phoenix, 1951
In the Bar of a Tokyo Hotel, 1969
Kingdom of the Earth, 1968
A Lovely Sunday for Creve Coeur, 1979
The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore, 1963
The Mutilated, 1967
The Night of the Iguana, 1961
Not about Nightingales, 1938
Orpheus Descending, 1957
A Perfect Analysis Is Given by a Parrot, 1958
Period of Adjustment, 1960
The Red Devil Battery Sign, 1975
The Remarkable Rooming-House of Mme. LeMonde, 1984
The Rose Tattoo, 1951
Small Craft Warnings, 1972
Something Cloudy, Something Clear, 1981
Steps Must Be Gentle, 1980.
A Streetcar Named Desire, 1947
Suddenly Last Summer, 1958
Summer and Smoke, 1948
Sweet Bird of Youth, 1959
The Two-Character Play, 1973
Vieux Carré, 1977
You Touched Me!, 1945

Fiction

Eight Moral Ladies Possessed, 1974
Hard Candy, 1959
It Happened the Day the Sun Rose, 1981
The Knightly Quest, 1966
Moise and the World of Reason, 1975
One Arm, and Other Stories, 1967
The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone, 1950
Short Stories, 1986
Three Players of a Summer Game, 1960

Poetry

Androgyne, Mon Amour, 1977
Five Young American Poets, 1944
In the Winter of Cities, 1956

Media Versions

CD

The Glass Menagerie, HarperCollins, 2000

DVD/VHS

The Glass Menagerie, Image Entertainment, 1973
The Glass Menagerie, Universal Studios, 1987

General Objectives

1. To read a Tennessee Williams play
2. To develop critical reading, thinking, and writing skills
3. To access multiple readings
4. To read the play in relation to its social context
5. To visualize the staging of a play
6. To track intertextual literary references
7. To understand and use literary terminology
8. To gain a deeper appreciation of literature through close-reading and analysis
9. To use biographical details to illuminate a text
10. To comment on the uses of stage directions, music, and projections

Specific Objectives

1. To discuss how memory is represented in the play
2. To characterize Laura in relation to her family, interests, personality, and history
3. To account for the influence of absent characters
4. To analyze escapism in the play
5. To contrast illusory hopes and desires with represented reality
6. To compare Laura and Amanda, Laura and Jim, Tom and his father, Tom and Jim, and Laura and Tom
7. To differentiate Tom's roles as narrator and character
8. To understand Jim's various literal and metaphorical significances
9. To explain the meaning of the title
10. To examine the play's structure

Literary Terms and Applications

Memory Play: a genre of drama characterized by non-linear structures and a preference for emotional or psychological truths over literal realism. The audience experiences the play as remembered by a narrator or character. *The Glass Menagerie* is the quintessential memory play. The action of the plot is as Tom remembers it, pausing while he comments on it. Music and projected text and image emphasize the relationship between Tom, the play, his memories, and the audience.

Mood: the predominant atmosphere, tone, or emotional state in a literary work. *The Glass Menagerie* shifts in mood between tedium, tension, despair, hope, anxiety, and nostalgia. The mood shifts depend largely on the dialogue itself, while the projections either predict a coming mood shift or comment upon one as it happens.

Cross-Curricular Sources

Art

Guernica, Pablo Picasso

DVD/VHS

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, Warner Home Video, 1958

The Fugitive Kind, MGM, 1959

The Night of the Iguana, Warner Home Video, 1964

The Rose Tattoo, Paramount, 1955

A Streetcar Named Desire, Warner Home Video, 1951

Suddenly, Last Summer, Sony, 1959

Summer and Smoke, Paramount, 1962 (VHS only)

Sweet Bird of Youth, Warner Home Video, 1962

Literature

William Faulkner, "A Rose for Emily," *As I Lay Dying*

Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*

Zora Neale Hurston, "The Conscience of the Court"

Henrik Ibsen, *The Wild Duck*

William Inge, *Come Back Little Sheba*

Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Arthur Miller, *All My Sons*, *The Crucible*, *Death of a Salesman*

John Milton, "Sonnet: On His Blindness"

Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man Is Hard to Find"

Eugene O'Neill, *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, *Mourning Becomes Electra*

Katherine Anna Porter, *Pale Horse, Pale Rider*

John Kennedy Toole, *A Confederacy of Dunces*

Robert Penn Warren, *All the King's Men*, *Promises: Poems 1954-1956*

Thornton Wilder, *Our Town*

François Villon, "Ballade of the Ladies of Time Past"

Internet

"Glossary of Technical Theatre Terms"

<http://www.theatre crafts.com/glossary.shtml>

"The Society for the Study of Southern Literature"

<http://www.uark.edu/ua/sssl/>

"Web English Teacher"

<http://www.webenglishteacher.com/twilliams.html>

Reference

The Companion to Southern Literature: Themes, Genres, Places, People, Movements, and Motifs, Louisiana State Univ. Press

The Oxford Encyclopedia of Theatre and Performance, Oxford Univ. Press

The Oxford Illustrated History of Theatre, Oxford Univ. Press

Themes and Motifs

Themes

- memory
- hope
- disappointment
- social anxiety
- expectations
- fantasy/escapism
- abandonment
- work
- family

Motifs

- Absent or remote characters having profound effects on present characters
- Pursuing obsessive interests
- Use of music and projected text and image to inform scenes
- Schisms between external reality and internal hopes/expectations
- Economic hardships and necessities

Meaning Study

1. When a play employs unconventional techniques, it is not, or certainly shouldn't be, trying to escape its responsibility of dealing with reality, or interpreting experience, but is actually or should be attempting to find a closer approach, a more penetrating and vivid expression of things as they are. (xix)

The Glass Menagerie Tennessee Williams

(In the production notes, Williams provides a conceptual justification for the play's "unconventional techniques." These departures from convention include the play's use of music, lighting, projections, and Tom's dual role as a narrator and character, though such methods have become relatively mainstream since The Glass Menagerie opened in Chicago in 1944. Williams argues that, though these techniques are not literally realistic, he has employed them in an effort to more accurately portray reality. The foundation of such an argument is the assumption that all art is artifice, that a photograph is as essentially false as a painting. Or rather, that its relationship to its object is still mediated and referential. All plays are systems of reference. The actor is not the person; the set is not the place. The actor refers to a person; the set refers to a place. In a realistic play, the distance between referent and reference is collapsed so that the one seems to be the other. In a play such as Williams', the systems of reference are consciously manipulated to create a desired effect, an expression "of things as they are.")

2. He [Jim] is the most realistic character in the play, being an emissary from a world of reality that we were somehow set apart from. But since I have a poet's weakness for symbols, I am using this character also as a symbol; he is the long-delayed but always expected something that we live for. (p. 5)

(In the opening monologue of the play, Tom introduces the characters. He describes Jim, the gentleman caller, as "an emissary from a world of reality," an apt description. Jim's practicality contrasts sharply with the Wingfields' penchant for escapism, and his entrance is the only intrusion into the domestic space by a nonresident. However, the most interesting claim here is that Tom, as the narrator, is using Jim symbolically. Here Tom serves as a proxy for Williams. His role as narrator is a thinly veiled substitute for the playwright explaining his methods. The literal meaning of Tom's claim is vague. If Jim is a symbol, not strictly a literal representation, then the departure from the literal may be occurring in several places. First, Jim's existence is suspect. He may be an invention, or he may not be the same Jim on which Laura had a crush. His behavior or speech during the visit may be exaggerated or invented by Tom to produce a dramatic effect. The irony, of course, is that Jim, as a character in a play, is an invention.)

3. Legend on screen: "Ou sont les neiges." (p. 6)
Image on screen: Amanda as a girl on a porch, greeting callers. (p. 8)
Legend on screen: "Ou sont les neiges d'antan?" (p. 9)
(The projections of the first scene work together as a sort of hybrid poem in the background. While Amanda fondly recalls her (perhaps exaggerated) youth full of gentleman callers, the

screen image and text cycle through poetic text about lost days and an image of her as a girl. The text is drawn from François Villon's "Ballade of the Ladies of Time Past," each stanza of which ends with the line, "Mais ou sont les neiges d'antan?" The French has been translated as "Where is the drift of last year's snow?" or "Where are the snows of yesteryear?" The poem itself asks where the great/beautiful/noble women of times past have gone. In context, the lines refer to Amanda's evaporated hopes and gentility, which are as distant and irretrievable as last year's snowfall.)

4. TOM: We nailed him into a coffin and he got out of the coffin without removing one nail . . . There is a trick that would come in handy for me—get me out of this two-by-four situation! (p. 27)
(Tom comes home drunk from the movies, loses his key, and recounts the night to Laura, including this description of the magician's act. He speaks jealously of Malvolio the Magician's feat of escaping a coffin, comparing his current life to a coffin. The comparison to a casket characterizes Tom's feelings of being trapped in a "dead-end" life. This comparison partially involves his feelings towards his mother and his desire to skip "the light fantastic out of town," but also his opinion of his work. These lines can be read as an anticipation of his eventual escape. His "trick" of using the electric bill money to pay his Merchant Marine union dues is analogous not just because it effects an escape, but it allows him to do so without "removing one nail," i.e. he escapes without actually having to confront his situation.)
5. TOM: Man is by instinct a lover, a hunter, a fighter, and none of those instincts are given much play at the warehouse!"

AMANDA: Don't quote instinct to me! . . . It belongs to animals! Christian adults don't want it! (p. 34)
(Tom explains to Amanda why he goes out every night, ostensibly to the movies, saying that it provides him with adventure. He claims that "Man" is instinctually "a lover, a hunter, a fighter" and that the vicarious adventures of the films provides that deep-seated need for him. Amanda dismisses this explanation, saying that those are animal needs and that civilized "Christian adults" don't want them.

Two interesting contrasts arise in this exchange. First, Tom, by using the word "instinct," refers to needs. Amanda's reply does not contradict his assertion of these primal drives. She uses the word "want," meaning that "civilized" adults have consciously chosen to not want or ignore their primal directives. This stance is indicative of her southern genteel sensibilities. The other

interesting contrast is gender-based. Tom's "Man" may or may not refer to humanity in general. Since the women of the play reside primarily in domestic space and the men reside in the external world, the inherent gender differences of the play's landscape make Tom's statement appear to be a distinction between male and female. The vital male, according to Tom, is not domesticated. Rather, like Mr. Wingfield, he feels a deep-seated need for adventure.)

6. AMANDA: That innocent look of your father's had everyone fooled! He smiled—the world was enchanted! No girl can do worse than put herself at the mercy of a handsome appearance! (p. 46)

(Drawing from her own experience with Mr. Wingfield, Amanda hopes that Jim, Laura's purported gentleman caller, isn't overly good-looking. These lines emphasize the play's theme of appearance and reality. Mr. Wingfield appeared charming and enchanting, but actually abandoned the family. Similarly, Jim appears sympathetic to and interested in Laura, but then abruptly reveals that he is engaged and departs, leaving her crushed.)

7. AMANDA: All pretty girls are a trap, a pretty trap, and men expect them to be. (p. 52)

(Amanda stuffs Laura's bosom, claiming that she must be a pretty trap for Jim. This furthers the appearance/reality theme from the previous quote, but there is a significant difference. Amanda claims that men expect women to be pretty traps. Thus the deception would not be actual. Rather, it would be part of a social imperative. The power relationship in this distinction is striking. Men deceive women unexpectedly. Women deceive men expectedly while hoping they are not being deceived.)

8. JIM: A unicorn, huh?

LAURA: Mmmm-hmm!

JIM: Unicorns—aren't they extinct in the modern world? (p. 83)

(Laura shows Jim her favorite figurine from her menagerie: a unicorn. His first response is to ask what it is, and, once told, he asks "aren't they extinct in the modern world?" His response contrasts him starkly against Laura. She lives in old records and glass figurines. He, the inveterate realist, doesn't recognize a unicorn, except as something that does not exist. His question refers equally to Laura, for whom the unicorn is a symbol. His question seems to ask whether she has a place in the world.)

9. LAURA: Now it is just like all the other horses. (p. 86)

(While dancing, Jim and Laura break the unicorn figurine. Jim is extremely apologetic, but Laura insists that it's a "blessing in disguise," that the removal of the horn makes it a normal horse,

less "freakish." If the unicorn is a symbol for Laura, then her reaction to the unicorn's "operation" reveals her feelings for Jim. His dancing with and kissing her removes her own "freakish" marks. Of course, her hopes are shattered, just like the unicorn, when he reveals that he's engaged and suddenly departs.)

10. TOM: Oh, Laura, Laura, I tried to leave you behind me, but I am more faithful than I intended to be! (p. 97)

(In his final address to the audience, Tom relates how he left the family and traveled, but that the memory of Laura has haunted him ever since. In a twist of irony, the self-proclaimed narrator of a "memory play" is haunted by memories, which might explain his motives for "telling" the story to the audience: a form of exorcism. One interesting aspect of the final monologue is the blurring between past and present. In previous scenes, Tom's role as narrator and character are clearly defined. He narrates in the present, while his character acts out scenes in the remembered past. In this scene, he narrates a scene from the perspective of the present, while Laura and Amanda act it out in the background, in the remembered past. This doubling of times is a physical enactment of the haunting that Tom describes, since being haunted by memories is literally the presence of the past in the present.)

Comprehension Study

1. Explain the significance of the title.
(The menagerie in the title refers to Laura's collection of glass figurines, which serves as a central metaphor for both the play and for Laura. The defining characteristic of the glass animals is their fragility, which reflects both Laura's personal fragility and, more generally, the fragility of illusory hopes and desires. It is not accidental that Jim, the emissary from the outside world, breaks Laura's favorite animal, the unicorn, just as he shatters her crush on him and Amanda's construction of a Gentleman Caller.)
2. Explore the idea of domesticity in the play.
(The action of the play takes place entirely in domestic space: the Wingfield's apartment and fire escape. The setting builds a strict inside/outside dichotomy. Inside the domestic space, Laura and Amanda pursue their own escapist obsessions. Amanda revels in her presumably exaggerated past and obsesses over finding Laura a beau. Laura buries herself in the Victrola and her glass menagerie. Outside the home is a place of defeat. Laura is nervous and awkward at school and quits. Amanda's illusions of Laura are disrupted by her visit to the school. Tom loathes his job and escapes into alcohol and movies. Jim, the visitor from the outside, enters the domestic space and shatters Amanda's illusions of a Gentleman Caller and breaks Laura's favorite figurine.)

The Glass Menagerie Tennessee Williams

In terms of gender roles, the domestic space appears to be uniquely feminine. Laura and Amanda seldom leave the space and pursue their private obsessions in the apartment, while Tom leaves to work. It is significant that he pursues his escapes outside the home. The outside is the place of men: Mr. Wingfield, Tom, Jim, instructors, shop owners, and supervisors. The idea of domesticity is not, however, idealized in the play. Amanda is a failed homemaker, who peddles magazines of idealized domesticity to other homemakers, and Laura, despite her mother's best efforts, will presumably never have a home of her own.)

3. Discuss the influence of absent characters.
(A number of absent characters influence events in the play. Two absent characters, Mr. Wingfield and Betty, play pivotal roles. Mr. Wingfield, the father who "fell in love with long distances," is present by proxy in the play; his portrait hangs over the scene and is occasionally spotlighted. He serves as a beginning point insofar as his absence is the origin of the Wingfield's living conditions. Tom is forced to work to support the family, Amanda has retreated into her private life of fantasy, and Laura plays his records.)

If Mr. Wingfield is the from which, Betty is the to which. Jim, the gentleman caller, enters the domestic space, breeches Laura's reserve and private space, allows hope to blossom, and then leaves because he is engaged to Betty. Her existence calls him thither, forces him from the scene. Thus the play's action is suspended between two missing characters. Mr. Wingfield has left. Betty forces Jim to leave.)

4. What is the social context of the play?
(The characters in The Glass Menagerie are perched between The Great Depression and World War II in an industrial slum of St. Louis. The time period most obviously manifests itself in Tom's references to world events like the bombing of the Basque town Guernica (26 April 1937) during the Spanish Civil War and his mention of American pop figures like Greta Garbo. More subtly, the make-up of the family, displaced Southerners, is typical of the migration from the South to industrial Northern cities.)
5. List examples of escapism.
(Every main character attempts to escape his or her immediate situation through various escapist strategies. Laura withdraws into herself, focusing on her glass figurines, her father's music, and her unrealistic crush on Jim. Amanda weaves an exaggerated idealized past and obsesses over finding Laura a husband and/or career. Tom writes poetry in the factory bathroom and spends all night escaping into movies and alcohol, and eventually literally escapes, leaving the family, much like his father had. Jim, the realist in the play, seeks to regain the lost glory of his high school days by taking night classes. No single character is content with his/her immediate circumstances.)

6. Describe the function of Jim as the gentleman caller.
(As the gentleman caller, Jim performs several roles. From Amanda's perspective, he is a symbol of hope and expectation, that which one awaits. This role is greater than Jim. In fact, Amanda's perception of Jim has very little to do with him. His role as gentleman caller eclipses the particular person. For Laura, Jim is her secret hope, her old crush finally come to kiss her—for a moment. Jim is comparable to the glass menagerie, a fragile hope that shatters when confronted. He is also a complete stranger to Laura, inherently incompatible, which highlights his disconnection from reality. Jim sympathizes with Laura, but cannot understand her. More generally, Jim is the visitor from reality into the fragile illusory world of the Wingfields.)
7. Explain the role of the projections.
(Perhaps the most important function of the projections is to enforce a sense of unreality, to remind the audience that the events in the play are from memory. They change the feeling-tone of the set. The projections also interact with the dialogue and events of the play in two ways. Some function poetically, obliquely commenting on the dialogue or setting a mood. The "Or sont les neiges" and "Ou sont les neiges d'antan," from a poem by François Villon, are the most obvious examples. Most of the projections, however, perform more literal functions by highlighting the main idea or feeling of a scene or section of a scene. The images illustrate concepts or people, while the text projections predict or echo spoken statements.)
8. Characterize Laura.
(Laura, like her glass figurines, is transparent and preeminently fragile. She is shy, nervous, and overly self-conscious. She escapes from reality into her father's records and her glass figurines. Her sensitivity renders her susceptible to shattering. She drops out of business school, unable to face the class after becoming so nervous she vomits. The disappointment of Jim obviously breaks her. However, she remains something of a cipher. Amanda and Tom are much more thoroughly characterized with pasts, motivations, desires, and dialogue. Ironically, Laura's main characteristic, her shyness, prevents her from being fully defined. Her silence defines her, but also leaves the outlines of her personality vague.)
9. Discuss the structure of the play.
(The play's structure is episodic, divided between seven scenes. Each scene is a fragment as remembered by Tom, who frequently introduces each scenario. Broadly, the first five scenes act out the necessity for and anticipation of a gentleman caller. The last two depict his arrival and departure. The one anomaly of the structure is scene two, in which Tom does not appear and thus could not remember directly. One assumes from context that it

is pieced together from tangential memories.)

10. Why is Amanda obsessed with finding a suit-or for Laura.

(Amanda's motivations hover between the fantastic and the necessary. Financial realities and Laura's inability to support herself cause Amanda to assume that she must find a husband to support her daughter. Her prediction that Tom will soon follow in his father's footsteps and abandon the family forces the issue. However, Amanda's desire to find a gentleman caller for her daughter is also intertwined with her own fantasy life of exaggerated memories in which she was a center of attention and lived a privileged life. Her enthusiasm in entertaining Jim is as indicative of her own emotional needs and Laura's financial needs.)

How Language Works

1. Amanda's insistence that she serve at the table is reminiscent of her Southern upbringing: "no, sister—you be the lady this time . . ." (p. 7). The "this time" intimates that they take turns being "the lady," i.e. playacting Amanda's past in which she had servants at the table.
2. One of the major disconnects between Amanda and Laura revolves around Laura's leg brace. Amanda insists, "you're not crippled, you just have a little defect—hardly even noticeable" (p. 17), while Laura is oversensitive to it, hearing its sounds as a loud clomping. Neither woman perceives this aspect of reality clearly. Amanda waves it away, and Laura obsesses over it.
3. Amanda's side of television conversations indicates how she is perceived by others outside the home: "What?—Burning?—Oh, honey, don't let them burn, go take a look in the oven and I'll hold the wire! Heavens—I think she's hung up!" (p. 20). From context, it appears that the lady on the other end of the line fabricated an excuse to hang up, indicating that others think of Amanda as a slight nuisance but won't be overtly rude to her.
4. Tom's understanding of world events mirrors his conception of his immediate life: "In Spain there was Guernica! But here there was only hot swing music and liquor . . . and sex that hung in the gloom like a chandelier . . ."

(p. 39). This inside/outside division persists at every level of Tom's life. Outside the country is what he perceives as excitement: Guernica, emblematic of the Spanish Civil War. Inside the country there is only music, liquor, and sex. At the microcosm, inside his life is a stifling job at the warehouse and his unfulfilled desires, while outside it lies a world to be discovered.

5. Tom tells Jim that he's planning on leaving the family shortly after he arrives at the Wingfield home: "I'm tired of the *movies* and I am *about to move!*" (p. 61) The play on movies/move highlights the movies as a substitute for actual adventure.
6. After the lights go out, Jim jokes that "Shakespeare probably wrote a poem on that light bill, Mrs. Wingfield" (p. 69), despite knowing that Tom has spent the electric bill money on Merchant Marine dues. This playing along is both in keeping with the play's recurring theme of male deception and representative of Jim's easy charm, even in difficult situations. That he calls Tom, a poet, "Shakespeare" furthers his role as a semi-educated unimagi-native realist. To him, a unicorn is a horse with a horn, and any poet is Shakespeare.

Across the Curriculum

Drama

1. Choose a scene and read the dialogue aloud, one person assigned to each character and one person reading the stage directions. Discuss the importance of the stage directions to the meaning of the dialogue. Note particular instances where the stage directions inform the dialogue and characterize the relationship between the two.
2. Find and read aloud every reference to gentleman callers or Jim in the play, and then read aloud all of Jim's lines. Is a significant disconnect between expectations and reality exposed? If so, explain.
3. Act out scenes from the play. Discuss the difference between *reading* the play and *experiencing* it. Identify elements of the play that seem primarily literary or theatrical.

The Glass Menagerie Tennessee Williams

4. Choose one character and read his or her lines aloud. Make a list of defining characteristics and discuss the character in relation to the themes of the play and the other characters.

Gender Studies

1. Make a list of every domestic task performed in the play. Who performs each one? Is there a discussion about the tasks, or are they assumed? What is exposed about gender relations in the play?
2. Make lists defining gender roles in the play. Which gender performs which social, sexual, emotional, economic, and physical roles? Are the gender roles of the play indicative of its contemporary society or idiosyncratic?

Art

1. Research and write an article on the significance of Pablo Picasso's painting *Guernica*. Include an explanation of cubism and composition, world events referenced by the painting, the painting's critical and popular reception, and artistic influence.
2. Transform a scene from *The Glass Menagerie* into a comic strip. Incorporate stage directions into the drawings. Also use the projected images and text and attempt to preserve the play's sense of unreality.
3. Make a booklet of Laura's glass menagerie, one illustration of a figurine per page.
4. Sketch drawings of what you consider to be the most significant moments of the play. Indicate the significance of each drawing in its title. Present and discuss the drawings in class.

Film

1. Make an illustrated guide to movie figures of the of the 1930s. Include: Fred Satire, Charlie Chaplin, Bette Davis, Marlene Dietrich, W.C. Fields, Errol Flynn, Clark Gable, Greta Garbo, Laurel and Hardy, Myrna Lay, The Marx Brothers, William Powell, Ginger Rogers, Shirley Temple, Mae West, and Loretta Young.

2. Watch the 1973 film version of *The Glass Menagerie*, following along in your book. Note deviations from the text. Does the film version accurately convey the play's themes, moods, and settings? Are the stage directions followed in the film? How does watching the film affect your understanding of the play?

Language

1. Using a computer art program, illustrate a glossary of theatre terms. Include act, actor, backstage, baffle, black box, blackout, casting, centre stage, character, comedy, company, *dénouement*, *deus ex machina*, dialogue, director, downstage, dramatic irony, dramatis personae, dress rehearsal, ensemble, entrance, epilogue, exit, exeunt, flashback, forestage, groundling, in the round, melodrama, mime, monologue, morality play, offstage, plot, producer, prologue, props, raked stage, repertoire, satire, scene, scenery, set, soliloquy, stage, stage directions, stage hand, stage left, stage right, theatre of the absurd, tragedy, tragic-comedy, upstage, and wings.
2. Keep a reading journal as you read. List every phrase that seems important or particularly aesthetically appealing. Discuss your selections with your classmates.
3. Keep a vocabulary journal as you read the play. Note every word you do not know. At the end of every scene, look up the words and write their definitions as used in context.
4. Find and list every word in dialogue or stage directions that you think defines the tone of a scene. Make a list for every scene and compare your results with a classmate.

Social Studies

1. Make an oral report on southern migration to northern industrial cities in the first half of the twentieth century. Include a timeline, economic and social causes, snapshots of life for the displaced, and long-term effects on northern cities and industry.
2. Construct a timeline of Tennessee Williams' life. Include birth and death dates, education, academic appointments, publication dates,

play openings, relationships, and other significant events.

Journalism

1. Research and sketch an outline for the newsreel that Tom says he watched at the theatre. Including domestic and world events likely to be featured during the play's set time.
2. Compose a review of the play. Examine online and print literary reviews and mimic the general format. Include a plot summary, comparisons to other literary works, and a judgment of its literary merit.
3. Summarize the main events of the play in a news article as if they had recently happened.

Composition

1. Compose a stream of consciousness narrative from Laura's perspective during Jim's visit, including her anticipation of his arrival, her reaction to him, her thoughts during dinner and after, her feelings while they dance, and her reaction to his revelation and departure.
2. Write a short story about Jim's travels after he leaves the family. Where does he go? Does he actually join the Merchant Marine. Include one scene where he is reminded of Laura and/or Amanda.
3. Choose a scene from the play and rewrite into a poetic format of your choice.
4. Rewrite the ending of the play as you see fit. What do you change? And why? Discuss your alternate endings in class.
5. Choose two characters from the play and write an essay comparing/contrasting them. Be sure to consider their personalities, relationships with other characters, family affiliations, actions, attitudes, and functions in the plot.
6. Select what you consider to be the most significant scene in the play and write an essay explaining it. Incorporate direct quotes, paraphrases, and MLA style citations.

Literature

1. Read a copy of the poem "Ballade of the Ladies of Time Past" by François Villon with a

facing page translation. Note that the final line of the first stanza supplies the text for projections early in the play ("Ou sont les neiges d'antan?"). Read the poem in its entirety and apply its themes to Amanda.

2. Acquire a copy of the acting edition of *The Glass Menagerie*. Compare it to your library edition, noting significant differences, such as the absence of projections and changes in lines. Discuss which you prefer and why.
3. Play a characterization game. Pick a character and read his or her lines aloud until someone guesses the character's name. Then pick another character and start again. Each correct answer counts as a point. Discuss how it's possible to tell characters apart based on 1) how they speak and 2) about what they speak.
4. Read a scholarly article on *The Glass Menagerie* and argue for or against the author's interpretation of the play. Support your arguments with quotes from both the play and the article.
5. Research and make an oral report on the dramatic genre of memory plays. How does *The Glass Menagerie* fit into the genre? What are the genre's defining characteristics? What other significant playwrights have produced memory plays?

Alternate Assessment

1. Read *The Wild Duck* by Henrik Ibsen. Compare Ibsen's use of the garret to Williams' symbolic use of the menagerie in *The Glass Menagerie*.
2. Attend a performance of *The Glass Menagerie*. Discuss how the director's interpretation of stage directions and characters changed your understanding of the play.
3. Read another play by Tennessee Williams and compare it to *The Glass Menagerie* based on themes, literary technique, structure, characters, setting, action, and your personal reactions.
4. Choose a scene from the play and rewrite it to be contemporary. Change awkward phrases and words, popular culture references, news events, the setting, character names,

workplaces, and gender roles.

Standardized Assessment Preparation

Vocabulary

1. Keep a vocabulary journal while you read the book. Note and least five words in each Act that you do not know, look them up, and write their definitions. Then add a list of synonyms and antonyms for each word.

2. Compose a multiple choice vocabulary test, using fifteen of these words:

abashed	jauntily
abate	listless
allusion	luminous
annunciation	matriculate
aptitude	menagerie
astound	motley
automatism	oblivious
avert	ominous
beleaguered	omission
conglomeration	paragon
cotillion	paranoia
decorously	patronage
demure	perturbation
differentiation	pinion
discreet	preposterous
dismal	pristine
disposition	querulous
elegiac	rendition
emulate	rhapsodic
enrapt	sashay
fiasco	sublimation
frantically	sullen
gallant	symptomatic
gesticulate	tentative
imminent	tenuous
immutable	tribulation
imperious	tumult
implore	turgid
importune	ulterior
inarticulate	unobtrusive
incandescent	veranda
incredulous	vestige
indolent	vitality
induct	
ineluctably	
insolence	
interfused	
interminable	
intolerable	

Grammar and Mechanics

1. Read the play's opening stage notes carefully (pp. 3-4), then classify each sentence as simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex. If the sentence is not simple, mark each clause as independent or dependent.
2. Find five examples in the play of each of these kinds of sentence: declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory.
3. Find examples of as many of these verb tenses as possible, copying down the specific sentence: present, past, future, present progressive, past progressive, future progressive, present perfect, past perfect, future perfect, present perfect progressive, past perfect progressive, and future perfect progressive.

Critical Thinking

1. Choose ten of the projections from the play and formulate their relationship to the dialogue in terms of an analogy. For example: Just as the screen shows Amanda as a girl (p.63), the dialogue reveals a glimmer of her former charm.
2. Read Tom's closing speech (pp. 96-97) and note every purely literal line, every purely figurative line, and mixed lines. Ignore the purely literal, write down the metaphorical meaning of the figurative, and interpret the literal, figurative, and relationship between the two for the mixed lines.

Writing

Write an essay about the relationship between the past, present, and memory in the play.. Note different levels of time and clues about duration and cite specific passages. You should have an introduction with a thesis statement, at least three body paragraphs with a main idea each, and a conclusion. Use MLA documentation when citing quotes from the play.

Vocabulary

Write the letter in the blank for the definition that *best* fits the word.

_____ 1. tentative

- A) temporary
- B) insincere
- C) performed as a test or experiment
- D) assumed without conscious thought

_____ 2. imperious

- A) overbearing or arrogant
- B) ambitious, dishonest
- C) openly hostile
- D) closed-minded

_____ 3. ineluctably

- A) stealthily
- B) unspeakably
- C) excellently
- D) inevitably

_____ 4. ulterior

- A) undisclosed
- B) dark, subterranean
- C) dispassionate
- D) pretentious

_____ 5. turgid

- A) rough in texture
- B) pompous or swollen
- C) set in one's ways
- D) dexterous

_____ 6. gesticulate

- A) to form or formulate
- B) to digest
- C) to make gestures
- D) to grow

_____ 7. listless

- A) disorganized
- B) twitchy
- C) amazed
- D) languid, dejected

_____ 8. sullen

- A) resentful, sad
- B) angry, loud
- C) dirty, stained
- D) unwanted

_____ 9. implore

- A) to beg
- B) to defeat oneself
- C) to demand
- D) to voice discontent

_____ 10. emulate

- A) to polish
- B) to remove the outer layer of something
- C) to encourage false hope
- D) to imitate

_____ 11. paragon

- A) second to last in a list
- B) model of excellence
- C) hidden quality
- D) suppressed memory

_____ 12. tribulation

- A) interrogation, trial
- B) indecisiveness
- C) misery or cause of misery
- D) hope

_____ 13. indolent

- A) unhappy
- B) anxious
- C) greedy
- D) lazy

_____ 14. perturbation

- A) agitation
- B) loss of memory
- C) prevarication
- D) dislike of social situations

_____ 15. abate

- A) to silence
- B) to invite
- C) to cease
- D) to fill beyond capacity

The Glass Menagerie Tennessee Williams

Comprehension Test A

Part I: Character Identification (30 points)

Name the character(s) who fits these descriptions.

- _____ 1. is obsessed with gentleman callers.
- _____ 2. writes poetry in the bathroom.
- _____ 3. wears a leg-brace.
- _____ 4. loses a key down a crack.
- _____ 5. is extremely shy.
- _____ 6. shipping clerk at a factory.
- _____ 7. collects glass animals.
- _____ 8. once entertained seventeen gentleman callers.
- _____ 9. takes night classes in public speaking.
- _____ 10. drops out of Rubicam's Business College.
- _____ 11. spends evenings at the movies.
- _____ 12. married a telephone company employee.
- _____ 13. Blue Roses.
- _____ 14. plans a career in television.
- _____ 15. sells magazines on the telephone.

Part II: Fact or Opinion (20 points)

Mark the following statements either T for true, F for false or O for opinion.

- _____ 1. Jim is engaged to a woman named Betty.
- _____ 2. Laura declines a marriage proposal because she is waiting to finish her studies.
- _____ 3. Tom enjoys his job.
- _____ 4. Laura had a class with Jim in High School.
- _____ 5. Amanda's memories are largely exaggerated.
- _____ 6. The play is set in Chicago.
- _____ 7. Projections and music set the tone/mood for each scene.
- _____ 8. The play is not realistic.
- _____ 9. Laura gives Jim a broken unicorn figure.
- _____ 10. Tom aspires to Jim's position at the factory.

Comprehension Test A (Page 2)

Part III: Stage Directions Identification (20 points)

Name the character to whom the stage directions apply.

- _____ 1. *removes the diagram of the typewriter keyboard . . . and tears it in two pieces.*
- _____ 2. *crouches beside the Victrola to wind it up.*
- _____ 3. *submitting grimly to the brush and the interrogation*
- _____ 4. *enters with the telephone on a long extension cord.*
- _____ 5. *suddenly turns her about and kisses her on the lips.*
- _____ 6. *is like a piece of translucent glass touched by light.*
- _____ 7. *reaches quickly for a piece of glass.*
- _____ 8. *musingly unwraps a stick of gum and holds it up.*
- _____ 9. *stands . . . with clenched hands and a panicky expression.*
- _____ 10. *looks like a voyager.*

Part IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Contrast Laura and Tom.
2. Discuss the importance of stage directions to characterization.
3. Analyze the theme of memory in relation to the play's main action.
4. List absent characters and their effects on the main characters.
5. How do the glass figures function as symbols?

Comprehension Test B

Part I: Identification (30 points)

Identify speakers of quotations.

- _____ 1. He used to call me—Blue Roses.
- _____ 2. Sticks and stones can break our bones, but the expression on Mr. Garfinkel's face won't harm us!
- _____ 3. I was valuable to him as someone who could remember his former glory.
- _____ 4. Honey, don't *push* with your *fingers*.
- _____ 5. I didn't know that Shakespeare had a sister!
- _____ 6. I'm going to the *movies*!
- _____ 7. Some people say that science clears up all the mysteries for us.
- _____ 8. A—souvenir
- _____ 9. Hollywood characters are supposed to have all the adventures for everybody in America.
- _____ 10. Stumblejohn!
- _____ 11. I—don't suppose—you remember me—at all?
- _____ 12. I took that horrible novel back to the library
- _____ 13. I like a lot of adventure.
- _____ 14. That innocent look of your father's had everyone fooled!
- _____ 15. I—threw up—on the floor!

Part II: Short Answer (20 points)

Provide an answer to each of these questions:

- _____ 1. From where is Amanda originally?
- _____ 2. Where does Tom work?
- _____ 3. What is the gentleman caller's full name?
- _____ 4. Which animals did Laura visit at the zoo?
- _____ 5. What union does Tom join?
- _____ 6. Who narrates the play?
- _____ 7. Where was Mr. Wingfield last known to be?
- _____ 8. Why is the electricity shut off?
- _____ 9. Which figurine is Laura's favorite?
- _____ 10. How old is Laura?

Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

Part III: Fill-in (20 points)

Fill in the words that complete each statement.

1. Amanda describes her husband as a _____ man who fell in love with long _____.
2. Laura remembers _____ from _____ class in high school.
3. Tom apologizes to _____ while having a cup of _____.
4. Amanda wishes on the moon for _____ and _____ for her children.
5. Amanda fondly remembers entertaining _____ in _____.

Part IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Analyze the significance of the projected images and text.
2. Discuss the meaning of the play's title.
3. List and explain each main character's obsession.
4. What ideas about marriage are presented in the play?
5. How is the passage of time conveyed?

Answer Key

VOCABULARY

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

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Character Identification (30 points)

- | | | |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
| 1. Amanda | 6. Jim | 11. Tom |
| 2. Tom | 7. Laura | 12. Amanda |
| 3. Laura | 8. Amanda | 13. Laura |
| 4. Tom | 9. Jim | 14. Jim |
| 5. Laura | 10. Laura | 15. Amanda |

Part II: Fact or Opinion (20 points)

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

Part III: Stage Directions Identification (20 points)

- | | |
|-----------|----------|
| 1. Amanda | 6. Laura |
| 2. Laura | 7. Laura |
| 3. Tom | 8. Jim |
| 4. Amanda | 9. Laura |
| 5. Jim | 10. Tom |

Part IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Identification (30 points)

- | | | |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
| 1. Laura | 6. Tom | 11. Laura |
| 2. Amanda | 7. Amanda | 12. Amanda |
| 3. Tom | 8. Laura | 13. Tom |
| 4. Amanda | 9. Tom | 14. Amanda |
| 5. Jim | 10. Jim | 15. Laura |

Part II: Short Answer (20 points)

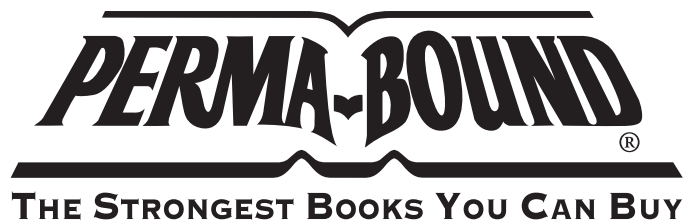
1. Blue Mountain, Mississippi
2. a shoe factory
3. James Delaney O'Connor
4. penguins
5. The Union of Merchant Seamen
6. Tom
7. Mexico
8. Tom used to money to join a union, instead of paying the electric bill.
9. unicorn
10. 23

Part III: Fill-in (20 points)

1. telephone, distances
2. Jim, chorus
3. Amanda, coffee
4. success, happiness
5. gentlemen callers, Blue Mountain

Part IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

Answers will vary.



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