



A Streetcar Named Desire

by Tennessee Williams

Teacher's Guide

Written By Matthew Jewell

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Synopsis

Scene 1

The play opens in New Orleans on a corner of Elysian Fields, which runs between the railroad tracks and the river. The setting is the exterior of a two-flat at dusk in May. Williams notes that the music from the bar a few doors down will set the mood throughout the play.

Stanley Kowalski and Mitch, his friend, appear around the corner. Stanley calls for Stella, his wife, and tosses her a package of meat. The three leave for the bowling alley. Shortly after, Blanche, Stella's sister, arrives, dressed as if she were en route to a cocktail party, looking uncertainly at the addresses. Eventually Eunice, Stella's upstairs neighbor, asks if she can help her. Blanche informs her that she is Stella's sister come to visit, and after a brief exchange, Eunice lets Blanche into Stella and Stanley's flat.

After Eunice leaves, Blanche regards the small flat in horror and sneaks a drink of whiskey. When Stella returns to greet her, Blanche briefly berates her about the living conditions and then suggests a drink for her nerves. Stella mostly listens to Blanche talk. Eventually she informs Stella that Belle Reve, their home, has been "lost" and reproaches Stella for having left for New Orleans, leaving Blanche alone.

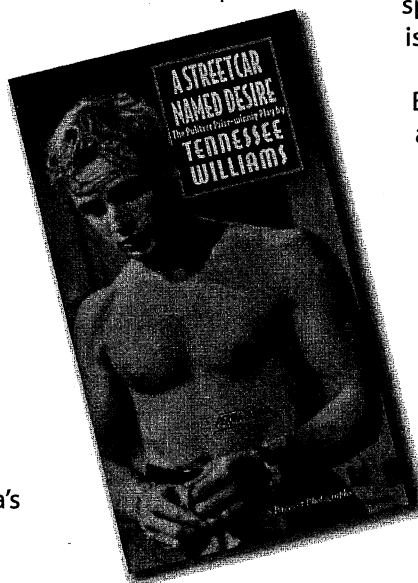
Outside, the men arrive and after a short discussion agree to have poker night at Stanley's. He enters, meets Blanche, casually notes the depletion of his liquor, and asks about Blanche's husband. She replies, "the boy died" and becomes upset.

Scene 2

6:00 P.M. the next day.

Stella is preparing to take Blanche out to dinner and a show to avoid poker night. Stanley suspiciously questions Blanche about the loss of Belle Reve, thinking that she has swindled Stella out of her share of the sale and thus also him under the Napoleonic Code. He digs through Blanche's trunk and, mistaking costume jewelry and clothes for authentic finery, accuses her of having spent a fortune on her wardrobe. Stella is appalled by his behavior.

Blanche emerges from the bath. After a short talk with Stanley, in which she notes his mood, she sends Stella to the drugstore. Stanley openly accuses Blanche of having cheated her sister. To refute his claims, she shows him a stack of letters that reveal that she lost the home to the mortgage. Despite her protests, he also paws through her old love letters. Once satisfied, he informs her that Stella is pregnant with his child.



Scene 3

Around 2:30 A.M. that morning.

Blanche and Stella return to find poker night still in progress. Stanley refuses to end the game and dismisses the women to the bedroom. Blanche proposes to take a bath for her nerves and meets Mitch on her way. She expresses interest in him to Stella, and then turns on the radio, infuriating Stanley. She continues flirting with Mitch. When she turns the radio back on, Stanley stalks into the room and throws it out the window, then beats Stella. The women flee upstairs to Eunice's flat, while the men wrestle Stanley into the shower to sober him up. After they leave, he stands outside bellowing for Stella until she slips down the stairs to him.

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Scene 4

The following morning.

Blanche comes downstairs to find Stella tranquil. She insists that they must flee Stanley immediately, but Stella refuses to entertain the notion. Blanche proposes writing to Shep Huntleigh, a wealthy former beau, for money with which to travel. She starts to call, then to write a letter, and eventually gives up. As Blanche rants about Stanley's animal nature, he enters unnoticed, listens, then exits and reenters loudly. Stella flies into his arms.

Scene 5

Later that day.

Blanche has just finished composing a letter to Shep announcing her plans to "drop in." Her conversation with Stella is interrupted by a brawl upstairs between Steve and Eunice, who stalks off threatening to call the police. Stanley comes home and, in response to queries, says that Eunice went for a drink instead of the police, an idea of which Stella approves. Steve rushes off to find her.

After a short exchange, Stanley starts making accusations about the nature of Blanche's past and promises to investigate. As she waits for Mitch to arrive for their date, a paperboy knocks on the door. She flirts with him outrageously, then dismisses him shortly before Mitch arrives.

Scene 6

Around 2 A.M. the same evening.

Mitch and Blanche have just come back from their date, which evidently didn't go particularly well. She invites him in, they have a drink, flirt, and converse. Eventually she divulges the story of her late husband, who was a closet homosexual and committed suicide after she expressed revulsion.

Scene 7

Late afternoon, mid-September.

Stella is decorating for Blanche's birthday, while Blanche takes a bath. Stanley arrives with urgent news for Stella. Evidently in Laurel, Blanche slept around until she was run out of town and lost her teaching position for having an affair with a seventeen-year-old boy. Stella refuses to believe the news. Blanche enters briefly; Stella places only

twenty-five candles on Blanche's cake. There is an awkward wait for Mitch to arrive, which will not happen because Stanley has apprised him of Blanche's history and bought her a bus ticket out of town.

Scene 8

Forty-five minutes later, Dusk.

Stella, Blanche, and Stanley are finishing dinner, Mitch never having arrived. The mood is sullen, Blanche artificially cheerful. When Stella comments on Stanley's table manners, he hurls his dishes to the floor. She reproaches him while Blanche tries to call Mitch. Shortly after, Mac calls to talk to Stanley about bowling. After the call, Stanley gives Blanche her "birthday present," a bus ticket to Laurel. She runs to the bathroom, while Stella demands an explanation from Stanley. He begins to explain that they'd been happy together until Blanche arrived with her pretensions and dim view of him, but Stella interrupts, demanding to be taken to the hospital, presumably to deliver their child.

Scene 9

Later that evening.

Blanche is drinking when Mitch rings the doorbell. She makes a show of forgiving him his cold shoulder and offers a drink. He refuses it, accusing her of leeching Stanley's liquor. He comments that it's dark in the flat and that he's never actually seen her in full light. He rips the shade off the bulb and inspects her, noting that she's older than he'd thought, that he wouldn't have minded, but he's disgusted by her pretense of morals and virtue. When she realizes the nature of his accusations, she freely admits everything: intimacies with strangers, depression, and the loss of her job to an affair. She denies having lied to him, however, saying that she never lied in her heart. She claims that her life has been filled with death and that desire is the opposite of death. Mitch roughly embraces her, saying that he wants what he's been "missing" all summer, meaning sexual relations. She tells him to marry her and he replies that she's not clean enough to bring into his house with his mother, at which point she screams him out of the flat.

Scene 10

Several hours later.

Blanche has been drinking steadily when Stanley comes home. The baby isn't due until the morning, so he's been sent home to rest. Blanche spins several extravagant lies about Mitch apologizing and a telegram from Shep, none of which Stanley believes. He verbally assaults her, then physically assaults her and drags her to the bed, presumably raping her.

Scene 11

Several weeks later.

Mitch is hosting another poker night, while Stella packs Blanche's things. From the conversation, it becomes apparent that: 1) Blanche has become mentally unstable after the trauma of Stanley's assault, 2) that they have arranged for someone to come take charge of her, 3) that they told her it was a trip to the country, but 4) she's confused it with a trip with Shep. A doctor and a nurse arrive, evidently from a mental hospital. Blanche panics and refuses to go and has to be restrained by the nurse, then is led off stage while the men continue their poker game. Stella weeps while Stanley gropes her.

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 Descendants of Myrtle* opens on Broadway, closing after 29 performances.

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.

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 literary 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.

Critic's Corner

A Streetcar Named Desire enjoyed immense critical and popular success on Broadway. Opening December 3, 1947 at the Barrymore Theatre, it ran for 855 performances over two years. Some have estimated that it enjoyed over 20,000 performances worldwide in its first fifty years. It was the first play to capture a Pulitzer, Donaldson, and a New York Drama Critics' Circle award. Thomas P. Adler claimed that *Streetcar* "may arguably be the finest play ever written for the American stage." The play also enjoyed the approbation of fellow playwrights. Robert E. Lee, author of *Inherit the Wind*, enthused, "There are very few nearly perfect plays. *Streetcar* is one of them," and William Hauptman elaborated: "Everything about *Streetcar* is beautifully, uniquely theatrical—right down to the title."

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Selected 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

DVD

A Streetcar Named Desire, Warner Home Video, 1951, starring Marlon Brando

VHS

A Streetcar Named Desire, 20th Century Fox, 1995, TV movie starring Alec Baldwin

General Objectives

1. To read a play by Tennessee Williams
2. To develop critical reading, thinking, and writing skills
3. To access multiple readings
4. To follow and understand divergent thematic threads
5. To visualize the staging of a play
6. To track intertextual 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

Specific Objectives

1. To compare Stella and Blanche
2. To expound on Blanche's understanding of illusion
3. To characterize Stanley and his actions
4. To discuss the depiction of domestic violence in the play
5. To comment on the use of background scenes and music
6. To analyze Blanche's late husband as an absent character
7. To formulate an understanding of the importance of setting to the play
8. To differentiate between the play's specific details and universal ideas
9. To investigate the play's portrait of sexuality
10. To consider the play's portrayal of death

Literary Terms and Applications

Characterization: in drama, the use of dialogue, situational reactions, and actions to develop and communicate the full personality of a character. In *A Streetcar Named Desire* both Blanche and Stanley are extremely well developed characters. Blanche is characterized by her affectations, while Stanley is characterized by his plain, often grammatically incorrect, speech and blunt, sometimes brutally direct, behavior.

Denouement: French word meaning "unknotting" or "unwinding." In a play, the denouement unravels a complex set of events, coming right after the catastrophic climax in tragedies. In *A Streetcar Named*

Desire, the denouement comes in the final scene with Blanche being taken into custody by the doctor after her rape and subsequent mental and emotional trauma in the previous scene.

Regional Literature: literature that strives to accurately represent or is commonly associated with a specific geographic region, often incorporating regional dialects, history, customs, and other idiosyncratic details. Tennessee Williams is often considered a Southern playwright, since many of his plays are set in the American South and are rich in local detail.

Cross-Curricular Sources

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
Suddenly, Last Summer, Sony, 1959
Summer and Smoke, Paramount, 1962 (VHS only)
Sweet Bird of Youth, Warner Home Video, 1962

Opera

A Streetcar Named Desire: Opera in Three Acts by Andre Previn

Paperback

G. Schirmer, 1999

CD

Deutsche Grammophon, 1998

DVD

Image Entertainment, 1998

Literature

William Faulkner, "A Rose for Emily," *Light in August*
Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*
Zora Neale Hurston, "The Conscience of the Court"
William Inge, *Come Back Little Sheba*
Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*
Arthur Miller, *All My Sons*, *The Crucible*, *Death of a Salesman*
Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man Is Hard to Find"
Eugene O'Neil, *Long Day's Journey into Night*, *Mourning Becomes Electra*
Katherine Anne Porter, *Pale Horse, Pale Rider*
Allen Tate, "Last Days of Alice"
John Kennedy Toole, *A Confederacy of Dunces*
Robert Penn Warren, *All the King's Men*, *Promises: Poems 1954-1956*
Thornton Wilder, *Our Town*

Internet

Glossary of Technical Theatre Terms
<http://www.theatre crafts.com/glossary/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 University Press

The Oxford Encyclopedia of Theatre and Performance, Oxford University Press

The Oxford Illustrated History of Theatre, Oxford University Press

The Importance of Setting

A Streetcar Named Desire is set on a corner of Elysian Fields Avenue in a two-flat building. Elysian Fields runs between two rail lines and was accessible by streetcar from the early to mid-20th century.

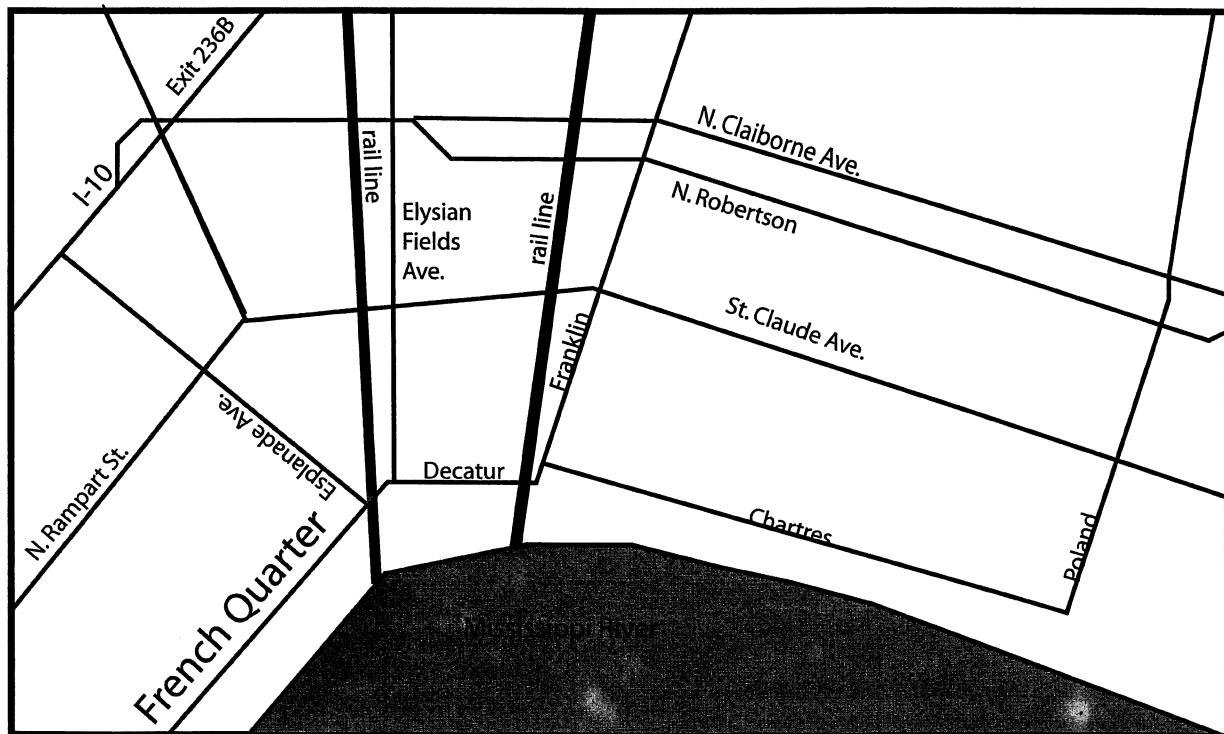
Themes and Motifs

Themes

- sexuality (preference)
- sex and desire (physical)
- gender relations
- passion (emotional)
- death
- domestic and sexual violence
- class
- illusion
- masculinity
- memory
- personal history

Motifs

- background events and music setting the tone of a foreground scene
- denial of obvious facts, situations, and conditions
- desire as the foundation of human relationships
- violence portrayed as inherently masculine and as an outgrowth of vivacity
- sex placed in polar opposition to death
- fabrication of personal history



Meaning Study

Below are significant lines from the play. Explain each in context. Page-numbers pinpoint entry so that you can re-read the passage in which it appears.

1. Blanche: I, I, I took the blows in my face and my body! All of those deaths! The long parade to the graveyard! Father, mother! Margaret, that dreadful way! So big with it, it couldn't be put in a coffin! (Scene 1, p. 26)
(Shortly after she arrives, Blanche suddenly turns on Stella. In explaining that Belle Reve has been lost, she accuses Stella of having abandoned her there, leaving her alone to bear the various hardships. This passage does several things. First, it establishes Belle Reve as a place in opposition to New Orleans and, more specifically, Elysian Fields. Belle Reve is a place of death, while Stella is surrounded by vital life. In the context of later events, Blanche's claim that she "took the blows" sets up a contrast between her and Stella. Stella has been and is abused by Stanley, while the blows Blanche "took" in Belle Reve were primarily emotional. The "it" in "so big with it" reads variously. One assumes that "it" refers to an unborn child, but it could also refer to her manner of death, meaning that her corpse was distended or bloated.)
2. Stanley: I never met a woman that didn't know if she was good-looking or not without being told, and some of them give themselves credit for more than they've got. (Scene 2, p. 39)
(In this exchange, Blanche fishes for a compliment, even explaining that she is doing so, and Stanley flatly refuses, saying he doesn't "go in for that stuff." Stanley's world-view is pragmatic and prosaic to the extreme. He is, in every way, Blanche's polar opposite. She is a fabulist, while he is a realist. The "some give themselves credit for more than they've got" takes on a specific reference to Blanche once one realizes that she deliberately never appears in full light to appear younger than she is. This flat refusal to play along with conventions is, perhaps, the full meaning of Blanche's description of him as an uncouth animal, since civilization is, in essence, a set of conventions.)
3. Blanche: ...I know I fib a good deal. After all, a woman's charm is fifty percent illusion, but when a thing is important I tell the truth, and this is the truth: I haven't cheated my sister or you or anyone else as long as I have lived. (Scene 2, p. 41)
(These lines are Blanche's reply to Stanley when he openly accuses her of having swindled her sister out of her half of Belle

Reve. She clears the accusation by showing him documents showing that it was lost on the mortgage. These lines, however, reveal a great deal about Blanche. The "I know I fib a good deal" reveals her many prevarications to be self-conscious, that she is aware of her tenuous relationship with honesty and that it's directed towards a specific effect: "a woman's charm." Her assumption that a woman's charm is half illusory sets up the primary conflict between her and Stanley. She believes in illusions, and he refuses to humor them. This passage coincides with her later claim to Mitch that she never lied in her heart to him. Here she claims that she tells the truth when "a thing is important." Evidently the status of Belle Reve is "important," while exact details of herself and history are not.)

4. Stella: I was—sort of—thrilled by it. (Scene 4, p. 64)
(The morning after Stanley beats Stella, Blanche comes downstairs to find a serene Stella. Blanche insists that they must flee immediately, which idea Stella refuses to entertain, saying that "it isn't right for anybody to make such a terrible row, but . . . Stanley's always smashed things," then describes how he smashed all the light bulbs with the heel of her slipper the night of their wedding. Blanche asks if she screamed, if she ran, to which Stella replies with the above line, that she was thrilled by it. This line approaches one of the most problematic aspects of the play: the relationship between Stanley and Stella. The relationship is obviously abusive. One wonders, then, why Stella remains, why she tolerates him. Her admission that she was "thrilled" by Stanley's smashing light bulbs begins to hint that she is drawn to his animal vitality, of which domestic violence is one aspect. Feminist critiques argue that this admission is a male fantasy of female submissiveness, that Stella not only is subjugated to Stanley, she likes it.)
5. Stella: But there are things that happen between a man and a woman in the dark—that sort of make everything else seem—unimportant.

Blanche: What you are talking about is brutal desire—just—Desire!—the name of that rattle-trap street-car that bangs through the Quarter, up one old narrow street and down another . . .

Stella: Haven't you ever ridden on that street-car?

Blanche: It brought me here. (Scene 4, p. 70)
(When Blanche continues disparaging Stanley and his various deficiencies, Stella replies as above, that certain things, specifically sexual relations, make other things seem unimportant.)

Blanche responds that Stella is just talking about desire, which launches into a double exchange about the streetcar from which the play takes its name. "Desire" here reads simultaneously as lust and as the literal streetcar. When Stella asks "Haven't you ever ridden on that street car?" she's asking Blanche if she's ever allowed desire to blot out other considerations. Blanche's reply "It brought me here" is true literally insofar as she rode the streetcar to the flat and also true insofar as her past actions resulted in her expulsion from Laurel and subsequent arrival in New Orleans. "Up one old narrow street" could also be read as a reference to vaginal canals, which would make the line refer to lust spreading throughout the French Quarter, resulting in copulations.)

6. Blanche: ... Maybe we are a long way from being made in God's image, but Stella—my sister—there has been some progress since then! Such things as art—as poetry and music—such kinds of new light have come into the world since then! (Scene 4, p. 72) *(The exchange in #5 escalates into a Blanche's full-scale denunciation of Stanley as a savage. While most of the content of Blanche's monologue is unsurprising and voiced variably in other passages, the above section provides some insight into Blanche's character. The play's main focus on her previous vocation is that she was fired for having an affair with a student. Although it mentions that she was an English teacher, little is made of the point. This passage highlights her sensibilities. While her primness with Mitch is largely façade, her sensitivity is genuine. Although her jewelry and clothing are an imitation of gentility, she actually does have refined sensibilities.)*
7. Blanche: ... Then I found out. In the worst of all possible ways. By coming suddenly into a room that I thought was empty—which wasn't empty, but had two people in it ... the boy I had married and an older man who had been a friend for years... (Scene 6, p. 95) *(Blanche is here describing walking in on her husband engaged in homosexual activities, the exact nature of which is not specific. Her late husband is a ghost figure, a character who has significant influence on events in the play, who never appears, having died before the play opens. Blanche's marriage to him and his subsequent suicide are pivotal to her development, partially responsible for her indiscreet lifestyle in Laurel. A bio-historical read, taking into account Williams' own homosexuality, reads the dead husband as a symbol of silence. In the homophobic environment of America in the 1950s, the late husband represents the silence implicit in a proscribed lifestyle.)*
8. Mexican Woman: ... Flores. Flores para los muertos. (Scene 9, p. 119)

(As Mitch confronts Blanche about Stanley's uncovering of her past, a Mexican woman hawks flowers in the background. The line translates as "Flowers. Flowers for the dead." One assumes she is selling flowers to put on gravestones. This scene is one of the many examples of how background events comment on events in the foreground, much in the way that music sets the tone for other scenes. "The dead" here describes the death of the romance between Mitch and Blanche, the death of her last grab at happiness, the death of her conjured self.)

9. Stanley: We've had this date with each other from the beginning! (Scene 10, p. 130) *(This line is Stanley's last just before he assaults Blanche and presumably rapes her. The rape is problematic because, while reprehensible, it does read as inevitable, as Stanley claims, from a structural sense. As he claims in #2, Stanley refuses to play along with conventions or illusions; he treats things as he sees them. Thus when he uncovers Blanche's history of sexual liberty, he implicitly terms her a whore and treats her as such. While Stanley is reprehensible as a character and while his actions are repulsive, the rape does read as the natural conclusion of the conflict between the two characters. The fact that the rape happens between scenes is presumably to spare the audience the actual spectacle and, most likely, a bow to the play's contemporary sensibilities. However, it has the added effect of shrouding the act in the silence that often surrounds sexual assault. The scene breaks, then opens on a poker game, as if nothing has happened. And indeed, most of the characters seem oblivious to the traumatic event, the only evidence being Blanche's distraught state.)*
10. Steve: The game is seven-card stud. (p. 142) *(This line, the final one of the play, is a complete dismissal of Blanche, her entire existence. While Stella weeps for her lost sister and Stanley gropes her, Steve calmly calls out the next hand of poker. It is a return to normalcy, a refusal to acknowledge Blanche or her tragedy.)*

Comprehension Study

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers with quotations from the play.

1. Why does Blanche come to New Orleans? *(There are at least three viable answers to this question. Ostensibly, she comes to New Orleans to visit her sister, while taking a leave from teaching. Over the course of the play, it becomes clear that she has been fired from her teaching position, lost her home on the mortgage, and been essentially run*

A Streetcar Named Desire Tennessee Williams

out of her home town, meaning that she has come to New Orleans because she has nowhere else to go. On the interpretative level, Blanche comes to New Orleans for a last chance, a grasp at hope and happiness. She seeks to obscure her past and age, to start over, and perhaps marry Mitch. Obviously, she accomplishes none of these. Her history catches up with her, and her hopes are dashed by Mitch's rejection of her and Stanley's brutal rape.)

2. Contrast Blanche and Stella.

(The DuBois sisters seem sisterly only in their affection for one another, being stark contrasts in every other aspect. Blanche, the elder, pretends to be the younger, drinks heavily, has nothing but scorn for Stanley, and lives an illusion. Stella pretends nothing, presenting herself as she is and is perhaps too accepting of Stanley and his ways. That she appears teetotaler may be explained by her pregnancy, but also illuminates an important distinction between the sisters. Blanche is an escapist. She flees her home town and flees through alcohol, refusing to even openly admit her consumption. Stella seems to look at things plainly with acceptance, even accepting Stanley's ill habits.)

3. Characterize Stanley Kowalski.

(Blanche's characterization of Stanley is fairly accurate: bestial. He has no pretenses, coarse sensibilities, no apparent education, an unwillingness to engage in the niceties of polite company, and an animal presence. He smashes things, he hits people, he swears profusely when drinking, makes threats, presumably rapes Blanche, and mistakes her costume jewelry for authentic gems. He also adamantly refuses to go along with the illusions that are so important to Blanche, preferring plain speech and appearances. Although he is singularly unpleasant upon consideration, the play presents him as an ideal of vital, primitive maleness. He is the conductor of the streetcar named Desire.)

4. Explain the significance of the title.

(Literally, *A Streetcar Named Desire* takes its title from the streetcar that runs the nearby tracks, on which Blanche arrives. Figuratively, the title deals with desire, its momentum, and treats desire as a thing to be ridden. This figurative streetcar deposits the characters in various places. Blanche metaphorically rides her desire out of Laurel to New Orleans, being driven there by the consequences of her lifestyle. The play investigates desire and the momentum of actions performed for its sake. Stella's desire deposits her in a ramshackle flat with an abusive husband.)

5. Discuss the function of the background music and events.

(Throughout the play, music and scenes play out in the background. Most often, they set the tone of the scene. The music from the *Blue Piano* a few doors down, as Williams' notes in the

opening stage directions, sets a mood for the scenes. Frequently, anonymous characters play out scenes as well. These scenes exist in tandem with the main scene, creating a meaningful friction, usually commenting on or obliquely defining the main action. The Mexican woman selling flowers in the background as Mitch confronts Blanche about her past is an example. A more complex example is the silent scene between the prostitute, John, and African-American woman in scene ten, just before Stanley assaults Blanche. In this scene, the back action sets a tone of frenzied activity, of amoral pursuit of one's desires.)

6. Discuss the significance of the setting's lack of change.

(The entire action of the play takes place either in Stella and Stanley's flat or just outside it. Other locations are alluded to, the characters passing through, but none are actually displayed. This constancy performs several functions. First, it makes the home, the flat, the central point of the main character's lives. Stella and Blanche seem to rarely leave the flat. Stanley leaves for work and bowling, but since those places are only alluded to, they take on a secondary importance. Thus the play takes place in what is essentially private space, which makes the play's main theme, desire, a private experience. Blanche flirts with Mitch in this private space, but the one date in public that they discuss to any extent is considered a failure. Another effect of the single setting is to make other places remote. Laurel, Blanche's home town, is spoken of but never shown. It recedes from the play, even as it begins to assert increasingly influence over the characters.)

7. Evaluate domestic violence in the play.

(To the contemporary reader, Blanche's response to the violence in the play is one's own. She urges Stella to leave Stanley, to flee far and fast. Stella's placid acceptance of domestic violence is baffling, as is, to a lesser extent, Eunice's. That both Stanley and Steve are violent normalizes their actions, makes them seem common in the world in which the play takes place. This normalization, combined with the play's major themes, paints violence as inextricably bound up with desire, both aspects of vital passion. The play's problematic handling of domestic violence allows for viable discussions of both critical reading and domestic violence as a social/psychological issue.)

8. What is the relationship between truth and fiction in the play?

(Blanche, the play's central character, has a tenuous relationship with truth at best. She freely admits that she "fibs" quite a lot and explicitly states her intentions of spinning illusions, claiming that a "woman's charm" is half illusory. However, it is important to note that her prevarications in no way destabilize truth as a central tenant of the play, as often happens in fiction with unreliable narrators. The play firmly establishes an incontrovertible

reality, from which her fantasies and lies are a deviation, which is demonstrated in the cataclysmic results of Stanley's investigations into her past. Much of the play is simply reported, rather than shown to the audience, but it quickly becomes simple to separate reality from illusion. When Blanche tells the story of her former husband or reveals her "true" history to Mitch, these stories are confirmed by other characters and thus treated as true by the play.)

9. Does the play transcend its regionalism? *(Williams is often cited as a Southern writer, his plays as examples of Southern writing. However, it is unsurprising that his work enjoyed popular success in the Soviet Union in the 1980s. The specifics of the play are highly regional. Blanche as a character is prototypically Southern to the point of being nearly a caricature. The setting is unequivocally New Orleans. However, the content of the play remains distinguishable from the specifics of the setting and characters. The relationships between the characters and the interplay of themes could function just as well in a 1930s New York. So the play is both regional and universal, which is, perhaps, why it endures so well. The specificity of its characters and setting make it believable, while the universality of its themes gives it lasting content.)*
10. Discuss the play's extensive stage directions. *(Compared to most drama, the stage directions for A Streetcar Named Desire are unusually extensive, describing in detail gestures, sounds, and background scenes. For one reading the play, these have a highly literary function. The play reads almost as a hybrid between drama and fiction. From a dramatic perspective, they highlight the vital importance of nonverbal action. The music and background scenes perform necessary thematic functions.)*

How Language Works

1. Stanley's lack of sophistication becomes clear when he paws through Blanche's trunk: "Look at these feathers and fur that she come here to preen herself in! What's this here? A solid-gold dress, I believe!"
2. Blanche's description of how Belle Reve was lost piecemeal puts the action of the play within a continuum of desire: "our improvident grandfathers and fathers and uncles and brothers exchanged the land for their epic fornications . . ."
3. In several passages Blanche seems to distinguish between sincerity and veracity. When she tells Mitch that "Sorrow makes for sincerity, I think," she is sincere in spirit while simultaneously letting him court her under false

pretenses.

4. Stella's approval of Eunice's going for a drink instead of the police sums perfectly her opinion of domestic violence: "That's much more practical!"
5. Blanche is honest with Stella about her intentions towards Mitch: "I want to deceive him enough to make him—want me..."
6. Blanche's use of French reveals both an education and her self-consciousness of it. When she asks Mitch, "Voulez-vous coucher avec moi ce soir?" ("Would you like to sleep with me tonight?"), she does so knowing that he will not understand.
7. Stanley explains to Stella exactly why he resents Blanche's arrival: "And wasn't we happy together? Wasn't it all okay? Till she showed here. Hoity-toity, describing me as an ape."
8. Blanche considers her fabulism as a sort of editing of reality for the better: "I don't tell truth, I tell what ought to be truth."

Across the Curriculum

Drama

1. Perform scene nine. Discuss the content of Blanche's lines in context. Is it possible to tell where she's being honest? How has Mitch's attitude towards her been transformed?
2. Following the stage directions on page 128, act out the silent scene of the prostitute, drunkard, policeman, and woman. Is it important that the scene is silent? How does it inform the foreground scene?
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.
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.

A Streetcar Named Desire Tennessee Williams

Psychology

1. Host a couple's therapy session for Stella and Stanley. What issues would each want to discuss? How would Stanley react to the idea of couple's therapy? Would the therapist consider their relationship healthy?
2. Give an informative talk about the mental health care system in 1950s America. Where was Blanche likely taken? How were patients treated? Which forms of therapy were current and popular, which theories of psychology?

Gender Studies

1. Discuss masculinity as presented in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. What traits are presented as typically masculine, which characters? Is the masculinity in the play problematic? If so, why?
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?
3. Research and make an oral report on the male gaze and the objectification of women. What specifically does it mean to "objectify" another person? What is the power dynamic of the gaze? How have feminist theorists proposed to correct the objectification of women?

Art

1. With a group, design a poster advertising a performance of *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Include graphic art, as well as performance information like location, dates, times, a cast list, and admission prices.
2. Transform a scene from *A Streetcar Named Desire* into a comic strip. Incorporate stage directions into the drawings.
3. As a group, sketch a set for a performance of the play. Include exact dimensions, scenery, and major props. Will the river and railroad tracks be shown or implied? How will the Blue Piano be presented? Will the interior and exterior of the flat be a single set?
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. Watch the 1951 film version of *A Streetcar Named Desire*. How does seeing the play performed as a film change your understanding of lines and events? Does Marlon Brando's performance alter your perspective on Stanley? Make note of deviations from the original script and discuss possible reasons for them.
2. Selecting from contemporary movie stars, choose a cast for *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Justify each selection with references to the actor's or actress' previous performances.

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.

Social Studies

1. Make an oral report on domestic violence in America. How is domestic violence defined? How common is it? What options are available to victims?
2. Research and create a web site about the history of New Orleans, concentrating first on areas and features relevant to the play.

3. 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. 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.
2. Summarize the main events of the play in a news article as if they had recently happened.

Composition

1. Selecting lines from *A Streetcar Named Desire*, cut and paste a short scene that summarizes the major events of the play.
2. Choose any scene and rewrite it in a radically different time and setting. ex: Scene one in eighteenth century China or scene eleven in twenty-third century Zimbabwe.
3. Compose a set of journal entries from Blanche's perspective. Include her thoughts on: her immediate past, her arrival in New Orleans, Stanley, the flat, Stella, Stella and Stanley's relationship, Mitch, her own status in the household, alcohol, Belle Reve, etc.
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. 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.

2. Draw a chart of relationships between characters and label each with at least two themes. ex: Stella/St Stanley: passion/violence, Blanche/St Stanley: class/violence, Blanche/Mitch: illusion/desperation.
3. Read a scholarly article on *A Streetcar Named Desire* and argue for or against the author's interpretation of the play. Support your arguments with quotes from both the play and the article.
4. Compose an essay in which you track the changes in a single character. Begin by an introduction to the character, proceed to a characterization of him/her, then track his/her changes throughout the play. Include MLA in-text citations.

Alternate Assessment

1. Write a scene showing Blanche's life after she is taken into custody by the Doctor and matron. Where exactly is she taken? Does she recover? How is she treated? What is her daily routine?
2. Attend a performance of *A Streetcar Named Desire*. 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 *A Streetcar Named Desire* based on themes, literary technique, structure, characters, setting, action, and your personal reactions.
4. Read a play by Arthur Miller and compare and contrast the ideals and images of masculinity found there to those found in the work of Tennessee Williams, specifically *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

Standardized Assessment Preparation

Vocabulary

1. Keep a vocabulary journal while you read the novel. Note and least five words in each chapter that you do not know, look them up, and write their definitions.
2. Make a glossary, choosing twenty of these words: lyricism, vivacity, spasmodic, hypocritical, abrupt, lunacy, comply, heterogeneous, radiant, reproach, apprehensive, depletion, unrefined, gloss, dispose, gander, perpetrate, primitive, indefinite, capacity, delude, effeminate, unendurable, vacantly, contrapuntally, contemptible, degenerate, judicial, improvident, fornication, lurid, nocturnal, spectrum, indolent, superficial, extraction, spite, vulgar, gallantry, pinion, indistinguishable, shrill, narcotized, earnest, bestial, anthropological, daemonic, astrological, hectic, indecent, repertoire, uncouth, recriminations, improvise, destitute, slander, perplexity, inanimate, morbid, gaiety, impulsive, temperamental, gossamer, coquettish, stolid, dismal, obliged, resent, gravely, solemn, Bohemian, demure, insufferable, cynical, divest, sensual.

Grammar and Mechanics

1. Choose and outline two sentences from each scene. At least one of each pair should be a compound or complex sentence.
2. There are seven ways to use a comma in the English language. Rewrite one long monologue to include all seven usages.

Writing

1. Compose an essay on the relationship between death and desire in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. You should have an introductory paragraph with a thesis statement, a body with at least three main ideas and a topic sentence in each paragraph, and a conclusion.
2. Select a character from *A Streetcar Named Desire*. In five minutes, do a quick brainstorm on everything you know about that character. Then organize your notes into a rough outlines of a paper on that character. Trade outlines with a partner and discuss possible improvements in the structure of your outlines.

Vocabulary

In the space provided, write the letter of the definition that best fits the word.

_____ 1. perplex

- A) to confuse
- B) to bend backwards
- C) to speak quickly
- D) to consume

_____ 2. primitive

- A) first in a sequence
- B) simple or basic
- C) proper, prim
- D) resembling an animal

_____ 3. sensual

- A) worldly, sexual
- B) strongly affecting a sense organ
- C) possessing common sense
- D) violent

_____ 4. lurid

- A) sexually suggestive
- B) unstable
- C) decrepit
- D) shocking

_____ 5. slander

- A) written damaging falsehoods
- B) published damaging falsehoods
- C) spoken damaging falsehoods
- D) any falsehood communicated with malicious intent

_____ 6. destitute

- A) desiring, attracted
- B) completely lacking
- C) an unfair exchange
- D) ramshackle

_____ 7. recrimination

- A) repeatedly committing the same offense
- B) restating an accusation
- C) responding to an accusation with an accusation
- D) to be accused of the same crime twice

_____ 8. ineffectual

- A) unable to produce the desired effect
- B) resulting from
- C) lazy, indolent
- D) prohibited

_____ 9. delude

- A) to become alert
- B) to descend
- C) to alter significantly
- D) to deceive

_____ 10. insufferable

- A) stoic
- B) immune
- C) painful
- D) intolerable

_____ 11. demure

- A) aquatic
- B) conscious of class
- C) reserved in manner
- D) inclined toward heavy drinking

_____ 12. gravely

- A) in the manner of a corpse
- B) seriously
- C) with vigor
- D) roughly

_____ 13. impulsive

- A) inclined to act without consideration
- B) forceful, vehement
- C) acquisitive
- D) compulsively untruthful

_____ 14. prim

- A) proper, prudish
- B) slender
- C) slang abbreviation for "prima"
- D) a drink

_____ 15. morbid

- A) dead
- B) dangerous
- C) impolite
- D) unhealthy

Comprehension Test A

Part I: Character Identification (30 points)

Name the character(s) who fits these descriptions.

- _____ 1. younger DuBois sister
- _____ 2. elder DuBois sister
- _____ 3. threatens to call the police on Steve
- _____ 4. becomes a father
- _____ 5. refuses to marry Blanche
- _____ 6. commits suicide
- _____ 7. hosts poker night
- _____ 8. Blanche's wealthy former beau
- _____ 9. throws a radio out a window
- _____ 10. rarely seen in full light
- _____ 11. upstairs neighbors
- _____ 12. hosts her visiting sister
- _____ 13. of Polish descent
- _____ 14. bathes often
- _____ 15. lives with his mother

Part II: Fact or Opinion (20 points)

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

- _____ 1. Stanley leads a bowling team.
- _____ 2. Blanche falls in love with Mitch.
- _____ 3. Blanche was fired from her teaching position in Laurel.
- _____ 4. Pablo asks Blanche to marry him.
- _____ 5. Belle Reve was lost on the mortgage.
- _____ 6. Stanley was unhappy when told of Blanche's plans to visit.
- _____ 7. Blanche's first husband dies in a car accident.
- _____ 8. Stella should leave Stanley.
- _____ 9. Eunice has two children.
- _____ 10. Stanley travels often for work.

Comprehension Test A (Page 2)

Part III: Stage Directions Identification (20 points)

Name the character to whom the stage directions apply.

- _____ 1. She has a tragic radiance in her red satin robe
- _____ 2. One hand rests on her belly, rounding slightly with new maternity.
- _____ 3. Appears around the corner with a bunch of roses.
- _____ 4. She is daintily dressed in a white suit with a fluffy bodice
- _____ 5. Comes down nursing a bruise on his forehead
- _____ 6. Clears his throat and looks yearningly at the door.
- _____ 7. Gives a loud whack of his hand on her thigh.
- _____ 8. He takes off his hat and now he becomes personalized.
- _____ 9. He turns the light on and stares at her.
- _____ 10. Carries his bowling jacket and a red-stained package from a butcher's ..

Part IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

- 1. Discuss the relationship between truth and falsehood in the play.
- 2. Analyze the significance of the play's title.
- 3. Contrast characters' views on domestic violence.
- 4. Explain Blanche's assertion that desire is the opposite of death.
- 5. Compare Blanche and Stella.

Comprehension Test B

Part I: Identification (30 points)

Identify speakers of quotations.

- _____ 1. STELL-LAHHHHH!
- _____ 2. I stayed at a hotel called the Tarantula Arms!
- _____ 3. I'm gonna call the police!
- _____ 4. You're not clean enough to bring in the house with my mother.
- _____ 5. Couldn't you call it quits after one more hand?
- _____ 6. These fingernails have to be trimmed.
- _____ 7. I'm collecting for *The Evening Star*.
- _____ 8. A shot never does a Coke any harm!
- _____ 9. Flores para los muertos.
- _____ 10. This man is not from Miami. This man is from Dallas.
- _____ 11. Your fingers are disgustingly greasy.
- _____ 12. Why don't somebody go to the Chinaman's and bring back a load of chop suey?
- _____ 13. She knew she was dying when she give me this.
- _____ 14. Stanley's always smashed things.
- _____ 15. Have you ever heard of the Napoleonic Code?

Part II: Short Answer (20 points)

Provide an answer to each of these questions:

- _____ 1. Where is Belle Reve?
- _____ 2. Which men attend poker night?
- _____ 3. What does Stanley buy for Blanche's birthday?
- _____ 4. How many candles does Blanche put on her birthday cake?
- _____ 5. What does Blanche claim her name means?
- _____ 6. What did Stanley do on his wedding night?
- _____ 7. Where is Blanche taken at the end of the play?
- _____ 8. What street does Stella live on?
- _____ 9. What astrological sign does Blanche claim to be born under?
- _____ 10. What does Eunice do instead of calling the police after Steve hits her?

Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

Part III: Fill-in (20 points)

Fill in the words that complete each statement.

1. Stella lives on a street that runs between the _____ and the _____.
2. Throughout the play, one can hear _____ from The Blue _____.
3. Blanche only appears in _____ light to conceal her _____.
4. Stanley puts on a pair of special _____ to celebrate Stella's _____.
5. Mitch is upset that Blanche lied about her _____, not her _____.

Part IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Discuss how sound functions in the play.
2. Contrast Mitch and Stanley.
3. Discuss Blanche's history. What is definite and what is implied?
4. Analyze the role of setting in the play.
5. List examples of violence in the play in a discussion of violence as a theme.

Answer Key

VOCABULARY

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

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Character Identification (30 points)

1. Stella
2. Blanche
3. Eunice
4. Stanley
5. Mitch
6. Blanche's late husband
7. Stanley
8. Shep
9. Stanley
10. Blanche
11. Eunice and Steve
12. Stella
13. Stanley
14. Blanche
15. Mitch

Part II: Fact or Opinion (20 points)

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

Part III: Stage Directions Identification (20 points)

- | | |
|------------|--------------|
| 1. Blanche | 6. Young Man |
| 2. Stella | 7. Stanley |
| 3. Mitch | 8. Doctor |
| 4. Blanche | 9. Mitch |
| 5. Steve | 10. Stanley |

Part IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Identification (30 points)

1. Stanley
2. Blanche
3. Eunice
4. Mitch
5. Stella
6. Matron
7. Young Man
8. Blanche
9. Mexican Woman
10. Blanche
11. Stella
12. Pablo
13. Mitch
14. Stella
15. Stanley

Part II: Short Answer (20 points)

1. Laurel, Mississippi
2. Steve, Mitch, Pablo, Stanley
3. a bus ticket
4. twenty-five
5. white woods
6. smash all the light bulbs
7. a mental hospital
8. Elysian Fields
9. Virgo
10. gets a drink

Part III: Fill-in (20 points)

1. river, L&N tracks
2. music, Piano
3. low, age
4. pajamas, delivery
5. history, age

Part IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

Answers will vary.

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