

# ***A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry (Published by Signet)**

Approved for use in Advanced Placement Communication Arts III and Communication Arts III

## **Summary**

Mama Younger, the matriarch of a struggling black family living in Southside Chicago in the fifties, receives \$10,000 from a life insurance settlement following the death of her husband. Her family members have lots of dreams for how the money should be spent, but she decides to use part of the money on a down payment for a home, which just happens to be in a white neighborhood.

## **Connection to the Curriculum**

This play provides an in-depth view of the newly emerging middle class African American family struggling to achieve their dreams during the 1950s. Since an over-arching theme for both AP III and CA III is the American dream, this piece examines one family's struggle to define that dream. As a social realism drama, the play depicts the trials of an inter-generational family who discovers the importance of family, their heritage, and a collective hope for a better future. This is excellent reading for any student with a serious interest in United States drama or African American literature.

## **Standards**

### **Course Objectives (Benchmarks)**

**Reading:** 1.2- The students will read fluently. 1.3- The students will expand vocabulary.

**Literature:** 2.1-The students use literary concepts to interpret and respond to text. 2.2- The students understand the significance of literature and its contributions to various cultures.

### **Possible Skills Taught (Indicators)**

#### **Reading:**

1.2.1- The student adjusts reading rate to support comprehension when reading narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive texts.

1.3.5- The student identifies, interprets, and analyzes the use of figurative language including similes, metaphors, analogies, hyperbole, onomatopoeia, personification, idioms, imagery, and symbolism.

1.3.6- The student discriminates between connotative and denotative meanings and interpret the connotative power of words.

1.4.8- The student understands the purpose of text features and use such features to locate information in and to gain knowledge from appropriate-level texts.

1.4.9- The student uses prior knowledge, content, and text type features to make, revise, and confirm predictions.

1.4.10- The student generates and responds logically to literal, inferential, evaluative, and critical thinking questions before, during, and after reading the text.

1.4.11- The student uses information from the text to make inferences and draw conclusions.

1.4.13- The student compares and contrasts varying aspects in one or more appropriate-level texts.

1.4.17- The student analyzes and evaluates how an author's style and use of literary devices work together to achieve his or her purpose for writing text.

#### **Literature:**

2.1.1- The student identifies and describes different types of character and analyzes the development of characters.

2.1.2- The student analyzes the historical, social, and cultural contextual aspects of the setting and its influence on characters and events in the story.

2.1.3- The student analyzes and evaluates how the author uses various plot elements to advance the plot and make connections between events.

2.1.5- The student identifies, analyzes, and evaluates the use of literary devices in a text.

**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

*According to The New York Times, this play "changed the course of American theatre forever." It originally appeared in the Blue Valley Curriculum through the adopted anthology. The play gives students an opportunity to discuss race and its impact on our society.*

## **AP Connections**

*A Raisin in the Sun* has appeared as a choice on the open-ended question for the AP Literature exam.

## **Additional Unit Design Connections**

Coming soon:  
To be completed during future curriculum development activities