



TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

The Glass Menagerie

based on the play by  
Tennessee Williams

Written by  
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A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR  
Tennessee Williams

WILLIAMS, Tennessee (1911-83). The dramas of Tennessee Williams are some of the most moving and powerful ever written for the American stage. His Southern settings and Characters depict a world of human frustration in which sex and violence underlie an atmosphere of superficial, faded gentility. He was born Thomas Lanier Williams on March 26, 1911, in Columbus, Miss. He attended the University of Missouri from 1931 to 1933 and Washington University in Saint Louis (1936-37), where he became interested in writing. Williams worked at it during the Great Depression while employed in a shoe factory. He studied dramatic writing at the University of Iowa, from which he graduated in 1938. Afterward he traveled around the country, working at insignificant jobs and writing short plays that were often produced at community theaters. He won some recognition for 'American Blues' (1939), a group of one-act plays.

Williams continued doing odd jobs, however, until his first real success in 1944: 'The Glass Menagerie', a play about a decadent Southern family living under great emotional tension in a city tenement. The play won the New York Drama Critic's Circle award, as did three more of his plays. His next major play was 'A Streetcar Named Desire' (1947), a study of the mental and moral ruin of a former Southern belle, Blanche Du Bois. Her genteel pretensions are no match for her brutish brother-in-law, Stanley Kowalski. This success was followed by 'Camino Real' (1953), 'Cat on a Hot Tin Roof' (1955), 'Suddenly Last Summer' (1958), 'Sweet Bird of Youth' (1959), and 'Night of the Iguana' (1961). 'A Streetcar Named Desire' and 'Cat on a Hot Tin Roof' were both awarded Pulitzer prizes. In addition to long theater runs, all of these plays were filmed. His novel 'The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone' (1950) also became a motion picture.

Williams's later writing was compromised by health problems, addiction to alcohol and sleeping pills, and a nervous breakdown. His last plays were not well received. He died in New York City on Feb. 25, 1983.

—Courtesy of Compton's Learning Company

## INTRODUCTION

This unit has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, and language skills through exercises and activities related to *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams. It includes twenty lessons, supported by extra resource materials.

The **introductory lesson** introduces students to the idea of hobbies and things to do in one's spare time through a bulletin board activity. Following the introductory activity, students are given a transition to explain how the activity relates to the book they are about to read. Following the transition, students are given the materials they will be using during the unit. They are also given the **unit project assignment** in which they will prepare a presentation about their own hobbies/spare time activities.

The **reading assignments** are divided into segments that could be read orally in one class period, depending on the reading abilities of your students. Students have approximately 15 minutes of pre-reading work to do prior to each reading assignment. This pre-reading work involves reviewing the study questions for the assignment and doing some vocabulary work for 8 to 10 vocabulary words they will encounter in their reading.

The **study guide questions** are fact-based questions; students can find the answers to these questions right in the text. These questions come in two formats: short answer or multiple choice. The best use of these materials is probably to use the short answer version of the questions as study guides for students (since answers will be more complete), and to use the multiple choice version for occasional quizzes. It might be a good idea to make transparencies of your answer keys for the overhead projector.

The **vocabulary work** is intended to enrich students' vocabularies as well as to aid in the students' understanding of the book. Prior to each reading assignment, students will complete a two-part worksheet for approximately 8 to 10 vocabulary words in the upcoming reading assignment. Part I focuses on students' use of general knowledge and contextual clues by giving the sentence in which the word appears in the text. Students are then to write down what they think the words mean based on the words' usage. Part II nails down the definitions of the words by giving students dictionary definitions of the words and having students match the words to the correct definitions based on the words' contextual usage. Students should then have an understanding of the words when they meet them in the text.

After each reading assignment, students will go back and formulate answers for the study guide questions. Discussion of these questions serves as a **review** of the most important events and ideas presented in the reading assignments.

After students complete reading the work, there is a **vocabulary review** lesson which pulls together all of the fragmented vocabulary lists for the reading assignments and gives students a review of all of the words they have studied.

A lesson is devoted to the **extra discussion questions/writing assignments**. These questions focus on interpretation, critical analysis and personal response, employing a variety of thinking skills and adding to the students' understanding of the novel.

There is a **group activity** in which students work in small groups to discuss symbolism and characterization in the novel.

The group activity is followed by a **reports and discussion** session in which the groups share their ideas about the themes with the entire class; thus, the entire class is exposed to information about all of the themes and the entire class can discuss each theme based on the nucleus of information brought forth by each of the groups.

There are three **writing assignments** in this unit, each with the purpose of informing, persuading, or having students express personal opinions. The first assignment is to express personal opinions: students tell about a relationship they have with someone in their families. The second assignment is to persuade: students write a letter to Laura convincing her that she can and should think better of herself and work towards becoming self-sufficient, a letter to Amanda convincing her that Tom needs to go out on his own, or a letter to Jim convincing him to break his engagement with Betty to pursue his attraction to Laura. The third assignment is to inform: students inform you what their project will be about and how they are going to do it.

In addition, there is a **nonfiction reading assignment**. Students are required to read a piece of nonfiction related in some way to *The Glass Menagerie*. After reading their nonfiction pieces, students will fill out a worksheet on which they answer questions regarding facts, interpretation, criticism, and personal opinions. During one class period, students make **oral presentations** about the nonfiction pieces they have read. This not only exposes all students to a wealth of information, it also gives students the opportunity to practice **public speaking**.

The **review lesson** pulls together all of the aspects of the unit. The teacher is given four or five choices of activities or games to use which all serve the same basic function of reviewing all of the information presented in the unit.

The **unit test** comes in two formats: multiple choice or short answer. As a convenience, two different tests for each format have been included. There is also an advanced short answer test for students who need more of a challenge.

There are additional **support materials** included with this unit. The **Unit Resources** section includes suggestions for an in-class library, crossword and word search puzzles related to the novel, and extra vocabulary worksheets. There is a list of **bulletin board ideas** which gives the teacher suggestions for bulletin boards to go along with this unit. In addition, there is a list of **extra class activities** the teacher could choose from to enhance the unit or as a substitution for an exercise the teacher might feel is inappropriate for his/her class. **Answer keys** are located directly after the **reproducible student materials** throughout the unit. The student materials may be reproduced for use in the teacher's classroom without infringement of copyrights. No other portion of this unit may be reproduced without the written consent of Teacher's Pet Publications, Inc.

## UNIT OBJECTIVES - *The Glass Menagerie*

1. Through reading *The Glass Menagerie* students will gain a better understanding of family relationships.
2. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text on four levels: factual, interpretive, critical and personal.
3. Students will consider the importance of having self-confidence and taking the responsibility for one's own success or failure in life.
4. Students will be given the opportunity to practice reading aloud and silently to improve their skills in each area.
5. Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in *The Glass Menagerie* as they relate to the author's theme development.
6. Students will enrich their vocabularies and improve their understanding of the novel through the vocabulary lessons prepared for use in conjunction with the novel.
7. The writing assignments in this unit are geared to several purposes:
  - a. To have students demonstrate their abilities to inform, to persuade, or to express their own personal ideas  
Note: Students will demonstrate ability to write effectively to inform by developing and organizing facts to convey information. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to persuade by selecting and organizing relevant information, establishing an argumentative purpose, and by designing an appropriate strategy for an identified audience. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to express personal ideas by selecting a form and its appropriate elements.
  - b. To check the students' reading comprehension
  - c. To make students think about the ideas presented by the novel
  - d. To encourage logical thinking
  - e. To provide an opportunity to practice good grammar and improve students' use of the English language.
8. Students will read aloud, report, and participate in large and small group discussions to improve their public speaking and personal interaction skills.

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET - *The Glass Menagerie*

Date Assigned	Assignment	Completion Date
	Scenes 1-2	
	Scenes 3-6	
	Scene 7	



UNIT OUTLINE - *The Glass Menagerie*

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Introduction Project Assign. Parts Assign.	Practice Parts PV 1-2	Read 1-2 PV 3-6	Study ?s 1-2 Read 3-6 PV 7	Study ?s 3-6 Read 7
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
Study ?s 7 Writing Assignment #1	Extra Discussion Questions	Vocabulary	Group Activity	Writing Assignment #2
<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
Library	Nonfiction Reports	Writing Assignment #3	Project Presentations	Project Presentations
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	
Project Presentations	Speaker	Review	Test	

Key: P=Preview Study Questions V=Prereading Vocabulary Worksheets

## LESSON ONE

### Objectives

1. To introduce *The Glass Menagerie* unit.
2. To distribute books and other related materials
3. To make the project assignment for the unit
4. To assign the speaking parts for the unit

NOTE: Prior to this unit you need to have made a bulletin board with background paper and titled: HOBBIES: THINGS WE DO FOR FUN AND RELAXATION. Post colorful pictures on the board of things that represent activities people do for hobbies. Leave ample room for students to do their writing in Activity 1.

### Activity #1

Have each student go to the bulletin board and write up one thing he/she does as a hobby. Use different colored markers so the bulletin board will be bright and cheerful.

TRANSITION: "In the play we are going to read, *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams, Laura, one of the main characters, has a hobby of collecting glass animals. Thus, the title of the play.

### Activity #2

Distribute the materials students will use in this unit. Explain in detail how students are to use these materials.

Study Guides Students should read the study guide questions for each reading assignment prior to beginning the reading assignment to get a feeling for what events and ideas are important in the section they are about to read. After reading the section, students will (as a class or individually) answer the questions to review the important events and ideas from that section of the book. Students should keep the study guides as study materials for the unit test.

Vocabulary Prior to reading a reading assignment, students will do vocabulary work related to the section of the book they are about to read. Following the completion of the reading of the book, there will be a vocabulary review of all the words used in the vocabulary assignments. Students should keep their vocabulary work as study materials for the unit test.

Reading Assignment Sheet You need to fill in the reading assignment sheet to let students know by when their reading has to be completed. You can either write the assignment sheet up on a side blackboard or bulletin board and leave it there for students to see each day, or you can duplicate copies for each student to have. In either case, you should advise students to become very familiar with the reading assignments so they know what is expected of them.

## WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1- *The Glass Menagerie*

### PROMPT

*The Glass Menagerie* is, among other things, a play about family relationships -- a mother who cares about her children's future, a son who feels trapped in his everyday routine, a daughter who cannot cope with the outside world -- and their interactions with each other.

Your assignment is to write a composition about your relationship with one of your family members: your mother or father, a sister or brother, a grandparent, an aunt or uncle, or some friend of the family who is close enough to be considered family.

### PREWRITING

One way to begin is to sum up your relationship with that person in one sentence. Then jot down a few reasons why you have chosen to describe your relationship that way. Find a couple of specific examples to show your reasons and jot those down, too. From these notes, you can begin to write your paper.

### DRAFTING

Begin with an introductory paragraph in which you introduce your reader to your family member. Lead up to your single sentence which describes your relationship with that person.

The paragraphs in the body of your composition should relate to your reasons why you have chosen to describe your relationship in that way. Write one paragraph for each of your reasons. Use the specific examples you chose to support your reasons.

Your final paragraph will summarize your points and give your final thoughts on the topic.

### PROMPT

When you finish the rough draft of your paper, ask a student who sits near you to read it. After reading your rough draft, he/she should tell you what he/she liked best about your work, which parts were difficult to understand, and ways in which your work could be improved. Reread your paper considering your critic's comments, and make the corrections you think are necessary.

### PROOFREADING

Do a final proofreading of your paper double-checking your grammar, spelling, organization, and the clarity of your ideas.