



 Prestwick House

Activity Pack

A RAISIN IN THE SUN

BY LORRAINE HANSBERRY



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Item No. 201194
Written by Kathy Parks

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading**Research: Lorraine Hansberry**

Objectives: Generating public interest in the author
 Understanding the author's literary goals

Activity

Pretend that you are a writer for the Sunday magazine section of your local newspaper. Your editor has asked you to research the life of Lorraine Hansberry because a production of *A Raisin in the Sun* is coming to town. He wants a solid article, with a catchy introduction, three or four well-developed paragraphs, and a strong conclusion.

Include significant facts about Hansberry's inspiration for *A Raisin in the Sun*. Find out if the author was of the same class as the people she wrote about in the play. If not, how was her upbringing different, and how did she learn about the lives of her characters? Also, consider key events in the lives of her parents that might have influenced her. Note that *A Raisin in the Sun* is inscribed "To Mama: *in gratitude for the dream.*"

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading**Research**

Objective: Learning about the author's literary contemporaries

Activity

Use the library, the Internet, or both to locate African-American authors who were Hansberry's literary contemporaries. Pick three and write a brief summary of their lives and work.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act I, Scene One**Vocabulary Preparation****Objective:** Reviewing vocabulary**Activity**

We often encounter new words when we read and can understand them through their contexts or by looking them up in a dictionary. Reading is easier, however, if we already know the words' meanings.

Do the following matching vocabulary exercises by first seeing what words you already know, then look up the ones you don't. Keep the sheets as references while reading.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act I, Scene One

Irony

Objective: Recognizing and understanding verbal irony in the text

Activity

One of the most important things about verbal irony is to recognize it for what it is. When people are being ironic, they don't mean exactly what they are saying; in fact, sometimes they mean exactly the opposite. Consider the following exchange on page 34:

Walter: That is just what is wrong with the colored woman in this world...Don't understand about building their men up and making 'em feel like they somebody. Like they can do something.

Ruth: (*Drily, but to hurt*) There are colored men who do things.

Walter: No thanks to the colored woman.

Ruth: Well, being a colored woman, I guess I can't help myself none.

In the brief scene above, Walter, frustrated with Ruth's lack of support, reacts to her hurtful remark. Ruth's final comment, on the surface, coincides with Walter's opinion. However, as we get to know Ruth more throughout the play, it is clear she isn't helpless at all and that she does want to believe in her husband. The communication has gotten so bad between Walter and Ruth that he does not even realize she is being ironic. He thinks she is serious and replies, "We one group of men tied to a race of women with small minds." Ruth, in fact, does not have a small mind; she merely has reservations, as does Walter's mother, about the people with whom Walter wants to do business. She is actually much more perceptive about Walter's dealings than he is.

As you read Act I, Scene One, read with a sharp eye. Look for statements that might be the opposite of what they seem. Put an "I" for irony in the margin next to the spot where you find irony, or hand in a list of the statements you found, according to your teacher's directions. To stay a sharp reader, you may continue to put an "I" in the margins every time you see irony.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act I, Scene Two**Vocabulary Preparation****Objective:** Reviewing vocabulary**Activity**

We often encounter new words when we read and can understand them through their contexts or by looking them up in a dictionary. Reading is easier, however, if we already know the words' meanings.

Do the following matching vocabulary exercises by first seeing what words you already know, then look up the ones you don't. Keep the sheets as references while reading.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act II, Scene One**Vocabulary Preparation****Objective:** Reviewing vocabulary**Activity**

We often encounter new words when we read and can understand them through their contexts or by looking them up in a dictionary. Reading is easier, however, if we already know the words' meanings.

Do the following matching vocabulary exercises by first seeing what words you already know, then look up the ones you don't. Keep the sheets as references while reading.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act II, Scene Two**Mind Reading****Objective:** Inferring characters' true feelings**Activity**

This is an exercise, in which you get to allow characters to express what they really mean. In this scene, sometimes the characters honestly say what they mean, but very often they do not, particularly when Mrs. Johnson appears. Mrs. Johnson herself never says what she means but always has a hidden agenda. Pick any five statements and instead of having the characters say what is written, have them say what is really on their minds.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act III**Vocabulary Preparation****Objective:** Reviewing vocabulary**Activity**

We often encounter new words when we read and can understand them through their contexts or by looking them up in a dictionary. Reading is easier, however, if we already know the words' meanings.

Do the following matching vocabulary exercises by first seeing what words you already know, then look up the ones you don't. Keep the sheets as references while reading.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act III**Persuasive Essay****Objective:** Writing a persuasive essay**Activity**

Pretend that Beneatha has reconciled herself to the fact that the family has no money to send her to school. She has decided, therefore, to apply for a scholarship. She must write an essay explaining what she wants to do with her life and why she thinks she deserves this scholarship. Use any information or language from the text that will support your essay, such as Beneatha's conversation with Asagai on page 133. Think creatively about other textual information you could use, such as her search for identity or her family values.