

“The Glass Menagerie” Essay Prompts

1. As you work through the play, make one list of references and descriptions of objects you counter that embed the action in the “real” world of life in the Wingfield apartment and another list of what you perceive as “non-real” devices that enhance the development of the play. Be prepared to share and defend items on your lists with explanations of how they contribute to various aspects of the play. Give thought, particularly, to how Williams interweaves items on the two lists to effect “innuendo and nuances” that contribute to his development of characterization, narrative and theme.

3. Build a specific explanation of how you think symbols contribute to the development of a specific dramatic theme of the play.
 - the fire escape
 - the movies
 - phonograph records
 - stage lighting
 - the D.A.R.
 - the jonquils
 - the warehouse
 - Blue Roses
 - the coffin
 - the unicorn
 - the candles at the end of the play

3. Many people live in a world of illusion and non-reality. Some understand their dilemma while others maneuver themselves through life unaware of their dependence on non-real events and truths. Study the characters in “The Glass Menagerie” and explain how their illusions reflect upon much larger social issues of the pre-World War II era.

4. *The Glass Menagerie* has been described as a “memory play.” How is it a “memory play” and what objects best illustrate your definition?