

# SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT: C.P. AMERICAN LITERATURE

**Total Point Value: 100**

## **PART I: BIOGRAPHY (30 PTS)**

**Instructions:** Choose *either* Karen Thompson Walker, Lorraine Hansberry, or Langston Hughes. Write a short biography (1-2 pages) with the following requirements:

- Two paragraphs (approximately 7-10 sentences each)
- Make it interesting! Do NOT begin with, “\_\_\_\_\_” was born on...” Hook me!
- Avoid flooding this part with dates of marriages, children, graduation dates, etc.
- INSTEAD, **select intriguing and sophisticated information** about the author’s life and analyze how that may offer insight into the writer’s subject matter/summer reading.
- Sources:
  - MUST include at least one video interview (properly cited)
  - MUST use strong, academic sources. Use the database. (NO Wikipedia or Biography.com).
  - MUST cite in-text and have a works cited page (see the [Purdue Owl website](#) for detailed information about how to cite in MLA format)

## **PART II: GENDER ROLES in *A Raisin in the Sun* (25 PTS)**

**Instructions:** Complete each highlighted section below **USING COMPLETE SENTENCES.**

Lorraine Hansberry anticipated changes in gender relations and the rise of feminism that transformed America in the 1960s. In *A Raisin in the Sun*, the author addresses abortion (illegal in 1959), marriage, and changing gender roles. Each of the Youngers provides a different perspective on these topics, revealing an important facet of his or her character.

- **Assignment A - Act 1:** Each female character - Ruth, Beneatha, and Lena - represents a different generation’s perspectives on women’s roles in the family and in society. Provide evidence from Act 1 - **actions, words, and textual evidence** - that reveals the character’s view of womanhood.
  - *Instructions: Copy and paste the chart into your document. Then complete it.*

<b>Ruth</b> <i>*this one is completed for you as an example.</i>	<b>Actions</b> (describe things she <i>does</i> ) and connections to gender roles (EX. she gets up before everyone else and makes breakfast, she’s mother and wife)	<b>Words</b> (describe <i>how</i> she talks) and connections to gender roles (EX. she speaks directly to her son. She tells Walter to “eat your eggs” instead of saying “be quiet.”)	<b>Text evidence</b> (with page #) “Honey, you never say nothin new. I listen to you every day, every night and every morning...” (34).
<b>Beneatha</b>	<b>Actions</b> (describe things she <i>does</i> ) and connections to gender roles	<b>Words</b> (describe <i>how</i> she talks) and connections to gender roles	<b>Text evidence</b> (with page #)

<b>Lena</b>	<b>Actions</b> (describe things she <i>does</i> ) and connections to gender roles	<b>Words</b> (describe <i>how</i> she talks) and connections to gender roles	<b>Text evidence</b> (with page #)
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- **Assignment B - Acts 1-2:** Lorraine Hansberry uses symbols to characterize the women and reveal their views. Describe the relevance of each item to the character and what it reveals.

- *Instructions: Copy and paste the chart into your document. Then, complete it.*

<b>Ruth</b>	Eggs	Text Evidence	Relevance to character and ideals of womanhood
<b>Beneatha</b>	Natural Hair	Text Evidence	Relevance to character and ideals of womanhood
<b>Lena</b>	The Plant	Text Evidence	Relevance to character and ideals of womanhood

- **Assignment C - Acts 2-3:** The relationships between female characters and male characters also indicate changing ideas about the role of women. Explain the significance of the relationships below and what they reveal about different views of male/female dynamics.

- *Instructions: Copy and paste the chart into your document. Then, complete it.*

<b>Beneatha and Asagai</b> <i>*this one is completed for you as an example</i>	What are the male/female dynamics of this relationship? Example? (Example: Asagai treats Beneatha like a prize to be won. He values her thoughts, but wants her to marry him and move to Africa with him. He waits patiently for her and doesn't pressure her, yet he still wants her to give up her dream for him.)
<b>Beneatha and George</b>	What are the male/female dynamics of this relationship? Example?
<b>Walter and Ruth</b>	What are the male/female dynamics of this relationship? Example?
<b>Lena and her husband</b>	What are the male/female dynamics of this relationship? Example?

- **Assignment D - Acts 1-3:** Overall observations from a gender perspective.

- *Instructions: Make a bulleted list of your overall observations about Ruth, Beneatha, and Lena that reveal Hansberry's ideas about the changing role of women in the family and society.*

### **PART III: SIGNIFICANT PASSAGES in *The Age of Miracles* (25 PTS)**

*Instructions: Choose 3 passages from The Age of Miracles that you feel are significant to the novel and comment on their significance. Passages can represent a variety of lengths though none should be longer than half a page nor shorter than a single sentence.*

- **These passages can:**
  - Offer insight into the characters, especially the protagonist(s)
  - Present images that introduce or reinforce important symbolism
  - Represent such importance that the novel or play would lose so much without them.
- **Set up as follows:**

(Example)

**Passage:** “That night the baseball playoffs went on without interruption. To play on in the face of uncertainty seemed the only American thing to do. But that night’s game was terrible. It was harder than ever to defy gravity. Seven pitchers were pulled. No one could hit. With each new hour, every bit of matter on the earth was more and more fettered by gravity”(Walker 57).

**Significance:** *Instructions: Write in bullet point format BUT with sophisticated wording and complex sentences. Minimum of 3 bullet points for each passage. No maximum.*

- *Your bullet points should NEVER include just plot.*
- *For example, you would **not** write:*
  - *This describes a baseball game that was not very good.*
  - *This describes first effects of the slowing*
- *Here are examples of what you **should** write:*
  - An important part of American life is rooted in sports.
  - Baseball playoffs return every year as vital to early autumn as leaves changing color. Thus, because of gravity’s interference, a sense of normalcy is impossible.
  - This captures the power of nature and the weakness of humans to overcome it, including Julia.

### **PART IV: Grammar/Usage (20 PTS)**

*Instructions: Throughout your work, you must demonstrate attention to detail and effort. Note the following qualities which make up these 20 points.*

- **Effort/following directions**
- **Works Cited page** at the very end for the novel and play and for the interviews and whatever other sources you choose to use.
- **Proper use of grammar and punctuation**
- **Evidence of proofreading and editing**
- **NO EVIDENCE of plagiarism. All thoughts should be your own.**

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Your work will be **due on August 23/24 (A or B day)**. This means you will have one more weekend before you must turn it in. Turning it in means **submitting it to the Google**

**Classroom assignment and clicking “Turn In.”** Late grades will be assessed according to the syllabus after this point. Save your summer reading books; we will be discussing them at length, and you will be given some assignments associated with them.

I look forward to meeting you and discussing these works.

Welcome to American Literature!

-Mrs. Vitatoe