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Reflections:

A Student Response Journal for...

A Streetcar Named Desire

by Tennessee Williams

written by Lisa L. Burris

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A Streetcar Named Desire

To The Teacher

In order to allow the teacher maximum flexibility in his or her approach, we have grouped the prompts by sections. The teacher may, therefore, assign specific prompts or allow the students to select one or more prompts from each section

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To The Student

Although we may read a novel, play, or work of non-fiction for enjoyment, each time we read one, we are building and practicing important basic reading skills. In our ever-more complex society, in which reading has become more and more crucial for success, this, in itself, is an important reason to spend time reading for enjoyment.

Some readers, however, are able to go beyond basic reading techniques and are able to practice higher thinking skills by reflecting on what they have read and how what they read affects them. It is this act of reflection—that is, stopping to think about what you are reading—that this journal is attempting to encourage.

To aid you, we have included writing prompts for each section; however, if you find something that you wish to respond to in the book more compelling than our prompts, you should write about that. We hope you enjoy reading this book and that the act of responding to what you have read increases this enjoyment.

After you read the indicated sections, choose the questions to which you will respond. Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers to these prompts, and there is no one direction in which you must go.

Class Record Sheet

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Response Sheet

Name_____ Section_____ Date_____

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A Streetcar Named Desire

Pre-Reading

1. This play has a very unusual title. Judging by the title, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, what do you think this play is about? Without looking at the play, make a list of plot points or events that you think will happen in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Then, using those plot points, write a paragraph in which you explain what happens in the play.
2. Like many of Tennessee Williams' plays, *A Streetcar Named Desire* was made into a film. In your opinion, which is a more valid or more important art form, film or theater? Write a short article for *Arts Monthly* magazine, explaining whether film or live theater is a better art form and why. If you feel that both forms are equally valid, write your article comparing and contrasting the positive and negative aspects of each form.
3. The playwright of *A Streetcar Named Desire* is known by his nickname, "Tennessee." His given name, however, was Tom. "Tennessee" was a sort of stage name for him.

What would you call yourself if you were creating your own stage name? Create a stage name for yourself. Then, in a short essay, explain why you selected that name and why you think it suits you.

Introduction

4. In the introduction, Tennessee Williams writes about how the production of his previous play, *The Glass Menagerie*, changed his life forever. I'm sure you've had events happen to you that have forever changed you, too.

Write an e-mail to Tennessee Williams, describing an event in your life that forever changed your circumstances or your view of the world.

5. Williams tells us that he never wrote with success on his mind. He wrote because he felt compelled to, not just to become rich or famous.

Write a blog posting for an arts website, explaining whether you think modern artists, writers, novelists, playwrights, musicians, or singers work for the sake of their art or simply to become rich and famous. Make sure you use plenty of examples to support your opinion.

6. Tennessee Williams says that the fame he got from writing *The Glass Menagerie* made him listless and depressed, so much so that he even distanced himself from his friends. Later, when he went to Mexico, though, he found comfort in being a stranger to the people there.

In what other ways could Williams have found comfort and respite? Think of at least 10 things a person can do to relax and relieve stress. Then, using five (5) of those things as examples, write a section about relaxation for the self-help book, *Stress and You: A Handbook*.

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7. Williams' first play was, indeed, an enormous success. It figures, then, that he would be extremely well-known after it was produced. Williams found his version of success, though, in simply writing. Writing is what brought him joy and satisfaction.

In a humorous paragraph or two, write the script for a stand-up comedian, detailing your own definition of success. What makes a person successful? How can one achieve success?

8. In the introduction, Tennessee Williams tells us all the bad things about fame. Rhetorically, he asks, though, "What is good?"

Make a list of 20 things that you consider "good." Using at least five (5) of these, write the lyrics for a song entitled "It's All Good."

Scene One

9. Williams' description of the setting at the opening of this scene is extremely detailed and creates a vivid image in our minds as we read it. He not only tells us what the scene looks like, but also how it smells and the kinds of sounds that surround it. "You can almost feel the warm breath of the brown river beyond the river warehouses with their faint redolences of banana and coffee." Even the color of the sky is specified as "a peculiarly tender blue, almost a turquoise." He puts us into the scene.

Think of a setting familiar to you: your classroom, your room at home, or a favorite outdoor place, etc. Using the sort of description Tennessee Williams uses, write the notes for a play about your life, setting the scene as thoroughly as Williams does. Remember to describe what it looks like, what it sounds like, and any smells associated with it. Put your audience into a scene from your life.

10. Williams' stage directions compare Blanche to a moth, noting that her clothes and her "uncertain manner" are like the insect. Which animal do you think best represents your personality? A coat of arms was originally used by Knights as a way to make their shield stand out so that they could be quickly identified during combat. In a short essay, describe what your coat of arms would look like based on an animal that you think represents your personality. Then, explain why you think the animal you selected represents you well.
11. The directions Blanche refers to tell her that she should take a streetcar named Desire to get to the house. This, we will see later, is Tennessee Williams' way of creating irony. Desire, as indicated by the play's title, has a significant role in this work.

Write a list of other ironic street names and situations. Then, write a brief note explaining to a visitor from a foreign country why those names are ironic. Here are a few to get you started

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12. When Stella rushes home to see Blanche, Blanche blurts out a cutting comment about Stella's apartment. In fact, she calls it "a horrible place."

What would you consider the absolute worst place to live? Write the script for a 60-second TV commercial, describing the worst place to live. Make sure you explain why that particular place is "horrible."

13. Blanche seems to need alcohol to cope with things. She takes a drink before Stella comes home, and then when Stella gets there, she makes a show of looking around the apartment for more liquor. This is liquor which, by the way, she prefers to drink straight, without a mixer.

As a substance abuse counselor, write a brochure to be given to Blanche, explaining why it is better to live life free of dependence on alcohol.

14. Saying "I'm not going to be hypocritical," Blanche seems to have no problem telling her sister exactly how she feels about her living conditions. Some people may find this rude, while others may think it is simply being honest.

Write a note to Blanche, supporting her decision to tell Stella exactly what she thinks.

15. Blanche's personality was so overpowering when she and Stella were children that Stella "got the habit" of just being quiet around her. After all, Blanche never gave Stella a chance to talk. Blanche, however, considers this "a good habit."

Think about habits for a moment. What are some good ones? What are some bad ones? Write the text for a children's book in which you describe the five (5) best habits anyone can have.

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16. Even though Stella's apartment is not up to her standards, Blanche will not consider staying in hotel. She always wants to be with someone; she can't be alone.

Is it better to always be with someone, to always be alone, or to have a combination of the two? Write a posting for the discussion board of an online dating agency, explaining whether people should be alone, always with someone, or have a combination of both of those things.

17. Plays like *A Streetcar Named Desire* are often read by students like you. There are benefits and drawbacks to both reading a play and seeing it performed. Do you learn more by reading a play or by seeing it performed? Write a short listing for the syllabus of a theater class, explaining whether students can best study plays by reading them or by seeing them in performance.

18. Blanche's true love is her family plantation, Belle Reve; perhaps she loves it more than she cared for other people. Even so, financial trouble forces her to sell Belle Reve, an act that is devastating to Blanche and also sad for Stella.

In cases such as this, homes are often auctioned off for payment of money owed to the bank. Write the newspaper announcement for the auction of Belle Reve. Your announcement should include the amenities of the property. Remember, you will want people to bid a lot of money for the house.

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19. When Stanley first enters, Tennessee Williams gives us stage instructions about what kind of man Stanley is. We know what he looks like, what he treasures in life, and how he treats others, particularly women.

How do you think Tennessee Williams would describe you if you were a character in *A Streetcar Named Desire*? Write a character description of yourself that accurately portrays who you are and what you stand for. Be sure to include a physical description of yourself, as well as a description of your personality.

20. Stanley's motto, or so he says, is "be comfortable." In a short essay, create a motto by which you live your life and explain why that motto fits you so well.
21. Blanche was an English teacher, while Stanley says he "never was a very good English student." What is your best subject in school? Do you have a favorite subject? Write a letter to the teacher of your favorite subject, telling him or her what you like about the class.

Scene Two

22. While Stella is getting ready to take Blanche out to dinner, she is telling Stanley how to treat Blanche. Apparently, Blanche is emotionally delicate and she considers herself a refined lady. As Stella, write a short section for a non-fiction book, telling people how to properly treat a lady of refinement.
23. In this scene, we see the beginning of the major conflict in this play. Blanche has lost her family home, but Stanley wants to know where Stella's share of the money is. Stanley thinks that Blanche took all the money for herself.

Write the dialogue for a television talk show in which Stanley and Blanche are the guests. The topic of the show is Feuding In-Laws. You may choose to begin like this

Host: We're here today with Stanley and Blanche...

24. As Stanley rages about Blanche's high-priced wardrobe, Stella is caught between loyalty to her husband and loyalty to her sister. Write an e-mail to Stella, offering her advice on how to deal with the rift between Stanley and Blanche.
25. Blanche says she "never cared for wishy-washy people." You would think that she would like Stanley, then, because he certainly tells it like it is. In fact, Stanley won't even give a woman a compliment because he says there's no point. He has never met a woman who didn't know whether she was pretty or not.

Honesty may be a virtue, but is there ever a time when one should not be honest? Write a short essay, explaining an instance when it is better not to be honest.

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26. Stanley tells Blanche that “if (he) didn’t know (she) was (his) wife’s sister, (he’d) get ideas about (her).” When Blanche asks him what he means, he just says that she knows what he’s talking about. Write an instant message to Blanche, telling her what Stanley means.
27. Blanche becomes greatly agitated when Stanley grabs her love letters. She says that “everyone has something he won’t let others touch because of their intimate nature.” In other words, we all have a possession that is very dear to us, one we shy away from sharing.

Do you own such an item? Write a well-constructed paragraph in which you describe an item you own and of which you are very protective. Make sure to include the reason why you so treasure that item.

28. Because this is a play, it is written in dialogue format. It’s not unusual for novels to be rewritten into dialogue for a movie or play or for movies or plays to be rewritten into novel form. Select a section of this play and rewrite it in a paragraph form.

Scene Three

29. We get the impression that Mitch is pretty lonely. He lives with his mother and worries that when she dies, he'll be completely alone. As the director of a dating service, write a note to Mitch, giving him advice on how to meet and woo a woman.
30. Stella tells Blanche that one can tell that Stanley will be a success just by looking at him. Blanche responds, however, that she doesn't see the "stamp of genius" on his forehead.

Is it possible to really tell if a person will be successful just by looking at him? Write a short article for *Business Week Magazine*, explaining whether you can tell who is going to be successful just by looking them.

31. Blanche reads the inscription on Mitch's cigarette case aloud. It is a stanza from a poem by Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Write an interpretation of this stanza for a study guide for *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Make sure you mention how the inscription on the cigarette case relates to what's happening in the play.
32. Blanche believes that unless you know sorrow, you are superficial and lack sincerity. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Write a dialogue in which you and a classmate debate whether one must know sorrow or risk being shallow. A good start may be

You: I think that what Blanche says...

33. Stanley gets drunk at the poker game, hits Stella, and then falls apart because she walks out and won't come back. As Stanley, write a letter to an advice columnist, asking for tips on how to get Stella back.

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34. As an advice columnist, respond to Stanley's letter above, telling him how to treat his wife so she won't leave him.
35. This scene includes one of the most famous lines in all of theater and movie history. That, of course, is Stanley's line, "*Stelll-lahhhhhh!*" Make a list of some other famous movie quotes. Then, write an essay that explains why people are so affected by this part of the play. What makes this one of the most memorable lines in all of theater and movie history?

Here are a few famous movie lines to get you started:

"There's no place like home." – The Wizard of Oz

"Are you talkin' to me?" – Taxi Driver

36. Blanche and Stella may sometimes be at odds, but they are sisters, so they also share a close bond. Using Blanche and Stella as examples, imagine a poster for National Sisters Week. Describe what your poster will look like and write a paragraph or two that explains the bond of sisterhood that Blanche and Stella share.
37. As mentioned in the introduction of this play, *A Streetcar Named Desire* was first produced in 1947. Although this play is still vibrant and engaging today, society's views of marriage and spousal abuse have changed.

Using information from Scenes Three and Four, write the text for a brochure about preventing domestic abuse. Another possibility would be to write a letter from Blanche to Stella explaining some views on domestic abuse and how Stella could avoid it.

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38. Stella and Blanche have two opposite opinions about what happened with Stanley after the poker game. Choose one sister's side, and write a text message of encouragement to her.
39. In this scene, we see a comparison of Blanche and Stella. Blanche is unmarried and depressed. Stella is married to someone who occasionally beats her, yet she's happy. If you could trade places with one of these women, which one would you choose? Write an e-mail to Tennessee Williams, telling him if you would prefer to be Blanche or Stella, and explaining your choice.
40. Blanche can't see how Stella can possibly love Stanley. She thinks he is crass and common, even animal-like. She thinks Stella is far too refined and, thus, too good for the likes of Stanley Kowalski.

Stella loves Stanley, though. She can't say just why, but she loves him just the same. As Stella, write a short posting for a discussion board for a romance writers' website, telling readers how people sometimes fall in love without knowing exactly why. Then, offer your opinions on what constitutes true love.

Scene Five

41. Blanche thinks that she can charm her former boyfriend, Shep Huntleigh, into giving her some money. She is desperate, and she tries all she knows how to do to gain financial independence. Other than writing to old boyfriends for loans, what can Blanche do to get money? Write out a financial plan for Blanche, giving her instructions on how to regain financial security.
42. Blanche has probably always relied on her good looks and charm to get what she wants. Is it easier, do you think, for good-looking people to get ahead? Write the script for a radio show that discusses whether good-looking people have an advantage in life. You may begin like this

Announcer: Good evening. We begin tonight...

43. When Stella asks Blanche if she wants Mitch, Blanche replies that she “want(s) to rest...[and] breathe quietly again.” It seems that she worries more about being in a relationship than the person with whom she shares that relationship. Create a flyer to be handed out to teenagers, explaining why it’s not good to be in a relationship with someone you don’t love.
44. When the Young Man comes collecting for the newspaper, Blanche remarks about how rainy afternoons in New Orleans make it seem like you have all eternity to do what you want to do. If you had a wealth of free time with no obligations, no school, no work, no worries, what would you spend it doing? Write an essay that describes what you would do if you had unlimited leisure time.
45. You’ve probably noticed that even though this play isn’t a musical, Tennessee Williams has incorporated a lot of music into his stage directions for it. Which modern song do you think best exemplifies this scene of Blanche and the Young Man? If you were directing a modern version of this play, which song would you choose to play during this scene? In a cohesive paragraph, explain which modern song you think would be appropriate to play during this scene and why you would choose that song.

Scene Six

46. When Blanche and Mitch go out, it seems like they don't have a lot of fun. Mitch feels dejected because he thinks he isn't entertaining enough, and Blanche, though unrepentant, says she just couldn't "rise to the occasion." Write an instant message (IM) to Mitch, giving him advice on how to make his date interesting.
47. Just as you wrote an instant message to Mitch, write another one to Blanche telling her how to be gracious on a date.
48. In the first part of this scene, it looks like Blanche is just going to send Mitch home after their date. Once Mitch tells Blanche that he's never known anyone else like her, though, Blanche invites him in for a drink. Why does she have this change of heart?

Write a text message to your English teacher, explaining why Blanche invites Mitch in after all.

49. Mitch is a big guy. He says that he goes to the New Orleans Athletic Club. In fact, he received his membership as a Christmas gift, and he considers it the best gift he ever received.

What is the best gift you ever received? Write a short section for a holiday newspaper supplement, detailing the best gift you ever received. Tell your readers, too, why that gift meant so much to you.

50. Mitch and Blanche talk about how much Mitch weighs. This is not exactly stimulating conversation for a date. Make a list of at least 10 good topics of conversation for a first date. Using the top five (5) of those topics, write a how-to pamphlet, telling people the best ways to start a conversation during a date.

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51. Blanche's living arrangement with Stella and Stanley is cramped, to say the least. Write a poem that reflects Blanche's experience staying with the Kowalskis.

52. Blanche describes in great detail what happened to the boy she loved so dearly. Write a newspaper article, describing how Blanche's husband died. Remember the who, what, when, where, and how of a well-written article.

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Scene Seven

53. As Stanley tells Stella the rumors about Blanche, Blanche sings a song about a paper moon. How does that song relate to what Stanley's telling Stella? Write a posting for a group study blog for *A Streetcar Named Desire*, explaining how Blanche's song relates to what Stanley is telling Stella.
54. According to Stanley, Blanche got into a lot of trouble in Laurel. We already know that Blanche drinks a lot, but apparently she is also pretty promiscuous. If Blanche and Stella were living today, Stella might call for an intervention to stop Blanche's self-destructive behavior. Write a speech to be given by Stella at an intervention for Blanche. Make sure your speech includes examples of how hurtful Blanche's actions are to her and to those who love her.
55. Blanche was fired for having an affair with one of her students. Usually when something like this happens, a form is filled out or a letter written explaining why the teacher was fired.

Write a termination of employment form for Blanche, detailing why she was fired and giving a written testimony of the situation from both Blanche and the young student.

56. We can assume that the stories Stanley tells about Blanche are true, yet Stella says that it is mean to tell them. Is it better to tell the truth, even if it may be hurtful, or just to keep it to yourself?

Think of a time in your life when you knew a secret that may have been hurtful to someone else. Write an essay about that incident. Did you tell the secret or keep it hidden? Why did you choose to tell it or hide it?

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57. Stanley thinks he is protecting Mitch by telling him about what Blanche did in Laurel. It's true that Stanley and Blanche don't get along, but do you think it was right for Stanley to tell Mitch about her? Was Stanley being a true friend to Mitch, or was he just looking for a way to get back at Blanche?

Write a letter to Stanley, telling him if you approve or disapprove of telling Mitch what Blanche has done. Make sure you use lots of examples to back up your opinion.

58. Stella is worried about Blanche. She thought that Mitch would ask Blanche to marry him. Blanche probably thought so, too.

Why is marriage so important to Blanche, especially if she doesn't really love Mitch? Think about all the benefits and drawbacks that marriage affords. Then, write an article for the wedding website The Knot, explaining both the good and bad things about being married.

Scene Eight

59. In the world in which Blanche and Stella were raised, it was probably proper for a guest to send a written note of regret when he couldn't attend a get together. Write a note of regret from Mitch to Blanche, telling Blanche why he cannot attend her birthday dinner.
60. At this point, we've gotten to know all of the major characters in this play. Of all of these people, which would you most like to have as a friend? Write a short essay in which you select a character from *A Streetcar Named Desire* whom you would like to befriend and list what you most like about that character.
61. Stanley apparently has some anger issues, throwing plates and being otherwise aggressive. Write a brief psychological study of Stanley, trying to explain what makes him so angry.
62. Blanche continually and insultingly refers to Stanley as a "Polack." Stanley finally tells her that "people from Poland are Poles," but he is "one hundred percent American."

We live in an age where it is preferable to refer to Americans according to their citizenship. For example, if this play were written today, Stanley might stress that he is "one hundred percent" Polish-American. Some people believe that it honors a person's culture to refer to his heritage this way, while others believe, like Stanley, that we are all Americans and there is no need to separate us by cultural background.

Write an e-mail to your local congressperson, telling her whether it is more appropriate to refer to someone according to his culture, such as Polish-American or Italian-American, or to just refer to him as "an American."

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63. In many ways, Blanche represents the genteel Southern way of life while Stanley represents raw animal passion. Write a list of Blanche's personality traits and Stanley's personality traits. Then, write a scholarly essay, comparing and contrasting Blanche and Stanley.
64. Stanley blames Blanche for interfering with his marriage. He says that everything was fine until Blanche came to New Orleans. Still, if Stanley treated Blanche nicely, she might not be so critical of him. Can this conflict be quietly resolved?

Write a short paragraph in which you predict how *A Streetcar Named Desire* will end and how the conflict between Stanley and Blanche will be resolved.

Scene Nine

65. As Blanche reminisces, she keeps hearing a particular polka tune in her head. Everyone has had a time when a particular song keeps playing in our heads. Write a humorous paragraph, telling your readers what to do to get rid of a song that keeps replaying in their minds.
66. When Blanche hears the polka tune, she is actually reliving the night that her husband killed himself. She is haunted by that night, particularly because she feels responsible for his death. Write the transcript of a phone call between you and Blanche in which you tell her that Allan's death was not entirely her fault and offer some other reasons why he might have committed suicide. You may begin like this

Blanche: I just feel awful...

67. Blanche's whole life, at least as much as we see of it, is about illusion. When Mitch finally shows up on her birthday, Blanche pretends not to know what Southern Comfort is, even though she has a substantial drinking habit. Even Blanche's marriage was an illusion because her husband was actually a homosexual. She has constructed her many facades to downplay the harsh realities of her life. Maybe the only way she thinks she can "catch" Mitch is by being false.

In a relationship, is it better to create an illusion of happiness or to always "keep it real"? Write a blog posting, in which you explain whether creating an illusion of happiness in a relationship is better than addressing problems outright.

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68. Adding to Blanche's emotional downfall is her age. It's fitting that Mitch stands her up on her birthday.

Many women are sensitive about their age, to the point that it is considered rude to ask a woman how old she is. Why is age so important to women? Write a section for a book entitled *Ageless*, describing why some women are sensitive about revealing their age.

69. Mitch isn't so much concerned with the fact that Blanche is older than she seems, but rather because he thinks she lied to him by not telling him her whole story. In a court of law, withholding evidence is considered the equivalent of lying. Is it the same way in love? Do you consider it lying when someone close to you fails to tell you something about themselves, even if it is embarrassing or painful?

Write a page for a divorce website, explaining whether holding back information in a relationship is the same as lying.

70. Blanche tells us that the opposite of death is desire. Keeping that in mind, write a short section for an online literature database, telling readers what motivates Blanche to drink and sleep around.

Scene Ten

71. Blanche tells Stanley that although physical beauty fades, “beauty of the mind...and tenderness of the heart...grow.” Do you find that to be true in real life?

When we think of the most beautiful people in the world, we often think of actors and actresses. Write a letter to a famous actor or actress, echoing Blanche’s comments and telling that person about how one’s spirit is more important than their physical beauty.

72. This play was a bit controversial when it was first performed, largely because of this scene. Although it is a little bit veiled and was completely downplayed in the film version of *A Streetcar Named Desire*, in this scene, Stanley actually rapes Blanche. This marks the literal breakdown for Blanche and the figurative win of brutality over gentility.

The next scene of the play takes place weeks later. What do you think happened to Blanche and Stanley the day after the attack, though? Write a brief scene for this play that takes place the very next day after Stanley attacks Blanche.

73. Go back to the introduction of this play, where Tennessee Williams describes being in the hotel room and slowly descending into depression. In an entry for the Cliff Notes for this book, compare Tennessee Williams’ real experience with depression to Blanche’s mental breakdown.

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Scene Eleven

74. Stanley says that luck is a simple matter of believing you're lucky. You may have also heard people say that you can create your own luck.

Write a graduation speech in which you tell new graduates how, exactly, a person can create his own luck.

75. Even though Blanche tells Stella what Stanley did to her, Stella refuses to believe it. As she has throughout the play, Stella chooses Stanley over Blanche.

We never hear Blanche's discussion with Stella about what happened the night her baby was born. Write a dialogue between Blanche and Stella, with Blanche telling Stella what Stanley did to her.

76. Stella has Blanche committed to an asylum. Write out the medical papers for Blanche's entrance into the asylum. Make sure that you include evidence of her mental instability and a description of her general physical and mental health at the time she is committed.

77. This play has been produced numerous times on stage, on TV, and on film. Probably the best known version is the film version, which starred Marlon Brando as Stanley Kowalski and Vivien Leigh as Blanche DuBois.

If you were casting a new movie version of *A Streetcar Named Desire*, who would you choose to play the leading roles? Select modern actors to play Stanley, Stella, Blanche, and Mitch. In a well-developed essay, tell who you chose and why you think they would do well in those particular roles.

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78. As a theater critic, write a review of this play for the theater website Playbill Online. Did you enjoy the play? Would you recommend it to other theatergoers? What did you like or dislike about the play?
79. Now that you've completed reading the play, why do you think Tennessee Williams decided to call it *A Streetcar Named Desire*? Write a blurb for the jacket cover of this book, explaining the significance of the play's title.
80. This edition of *A Streetcar Named Desire* begins with an epigraph, poem by the writer Hart Crane. Rewrite each line of this poem into your own words. Then write a summary of the poem, explaining to your readers what the poem means. Why do you think Williams chose his particular poem as a prelude to his drama.

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Test

Select the choice that best matches each of the following

1. This play takes place in hot, steamy
A. Nashville.
B. Atlanta.
C. Dallas.
D. New Orleans.
2. Blanche doesn't like Stanley because
A. he sweats a lot.
B. he plays cards, and she detests gambling.
C. she thinks he is common.
D. he took her sister away from her.
3. Although she makes it sound like it was her choice to leave, Blanche was forced out of her job because
A. she had an affair with a student.
B. she was an alcoholic.
C. she was mean to her students.
D. she did not have the proper teaching credentials.
4. The reason Mitch breaks up with Blanche is
A. because he feels that she lied to him by not telling him everything about her life.
B. because she is no fun on a date.
C. because Stanley tells him to.
D. because Blanche hit him.
5. Blanche's breakdown probably started when
A. she lost the family home, Belle Reve.
B. she saw the conditions in which Stella lives.
C. she lost her teaching job.
D. her husband killed himself.

A Streetcar Named Desire

6. Blanche prefers the Chinese lantern in the bedroom because
 - A. bright light hurts her eyes.
 - B. the soft light is more flattering and will hide her true age.
 - C. Mitch likes it.
 - D. she thinks there is a spiritual value in it.
7. One life-changing experience that Blanche and Mitch share is
 - A. growing up in Mississippi.
 - B. being friends with Stanley.
 - C. having a lover who died.
 - D. having been married before.
8. Blanche's last hope for happiness lies in
 - A. traveling to the Caribbean with Shep Huntleigh.
 - B. her institutionalization.
 - C. her relationship with her sister.
 - D. her potential relationship with Mitch.
9. The suicide of Blanche's husband was bad enough, but it was made worse by the fact that
 - A. Blanche thinks she caused it.
 - B. it took place in the middle of a party.
 - C. Blanche found the body.
 - D. his body was never found.
10. The Napoleonic Code is a law which states that
 - A. whoever inherits land must split it equally with his siblings.
 - B. no woman can own property.
 - C. what belongs to a wife also belongs to her husband, and vice versa.
 - D. since the French settled the area, they have preference in land dealings.

A Streetcar Named Desire

11. The most stabilizing force in *A Streetcar Named Desire* is probably
 - A. alcohol.
 - B. Stella.
 - C. the setting.
 - D. the baby's birth.
12. When Blanche tells Stella that Stanley attacked her, Stella
 - A. orders Blanche to leave her house.
 - B. attacks Stanley with a bottle.
 - C. calls Blanche a liar.
 - D. refuses to believe it.
13. If Stanley represents brute force and animal urges, Blanche represents
 - A. terror.
 - B. family values.
 - C. intellectualism.
 - D. social refinement.
14. Blanche "always depend(s) on the kindness of strangers" because
 - A. she has nowhere else to turn.
 - B. she prefers strangers over family.
 - C. she would rather not associate with people.
 - D. at some point, everyone's a stranger.
15. Which of the following phrases best describes Stella?
 - A. genteel and refined
 - B. educated and sophisticated
 - C. distant and cold
 - D. loving and nurturing

A Streetcar Named Desire

16. Even though Mitch stands up Blanche for her birthday dinner, he arrives at the apartment later that night. As they talk, he snatches the Chinese lantern from the bare light bulb. This is important in the play because
- A. the lantern was Blanche's most prized possession.
 - B. it marks the moment when Blanche can no longer hide in figurative and literal shadows.
 - C. it starts a fire in the apartment.
 - D. it proves how angry Mitch is.
17. The Varsouviana, the waltz that Blanche keeps hearing in her head, keeps coming back to her because
- A. it is her favorite song and it soothes her.
 - B. her husband loved the song.
 - C. it is the first song she heard when she stepped off the streetcar named Desire.
 - D. it is the song that was playing the night her husband shot himself.
18. Which of the following statements best describes Blanche's outlook on life?
- A. Family is everything.
 - B. Don't let people push you around.
 - C. All you need is love.
 - D. A woman's charm relies heavily upon illusion.
19. Whenever Blanche wishes to create illusions from her past, Mitch
- A. usually goes along with her.
 - B. usually objects to participating in them.
 - C. wonders what his mother would think.
 - D. asks Stanley if it is okay.
20. We know that Blanche feels guilty about her husband's death because
- A. she provoked him into joining the army.
 - B. he killed himself after she called him weak.
 - C. she threatened that she would leave him for someone else, causing his suicide.
 - D. her spending has caused him to lose all his money, which led him to commit suicide.

A Streetcar Named Desire

Test
Student Answer Sheet

Name: _____

1. _____

11. _____

2. _____

12. _____

3. _____

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15. _____

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A Streetcar Named Desire

Test
Answer Key

1. ___D___

11. ___B___

2. ___C___

12. ___D___

3. ___A___

13. ___D___

4. ___A___

14. ___A___

5. ___D___

15. ___D___

6. ___B___

16. ___B___

7. ___C___

17. ___D___

8. ___D___

18. ___D___

9. ___A___

19. ___A___

10. ___C___

20. ___D___

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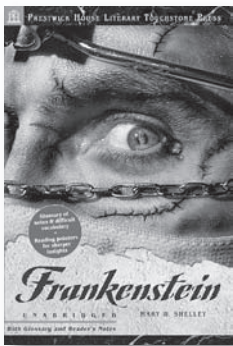
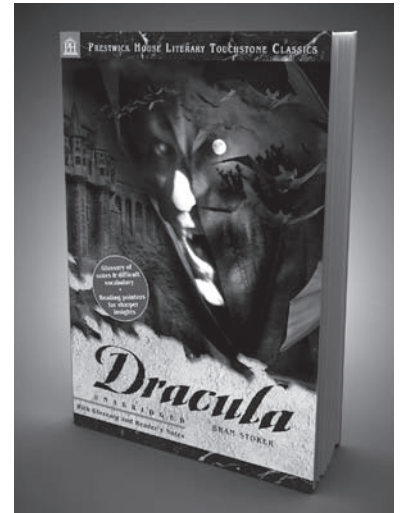
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