

Teacher Resource Page
A RAISIN IN THE SUN and CLYBOURNE PARK
at Dallas Theater Center

QUICK FACTS

- *A Raisin in the Sun*, written by Lorraine Hansberry in 1959, has been called “The play that changed America Forever.” Nominated for four Tony Awards, *A Raisin in the Sun* was the first play by an African-American woman to open on Broadway, and the first Broadway play to be directed by an African-American (Lloyd Richards). It was the first time a Broadway play had African-Americans in charge of their representation to the theatrical public.
- *Clybourne Park* was written by Bruce Norris as a response to *A Raisin in the Sun*; it portrays fictional events set before and after the Hansberry play and is loosely based on historical events based in the city of Chicago. It won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 2012.
- DTC is not the first company to produce the shows in rep, but we’re the first to cast the same actors in both (i.e. Tiffany Hobbs plays Beneatha in *Raisin* and Francine/Lena in *Clybourne*).
- Steve Walters plays Karl Linder in both plays.
- At the end of *Raisin*, the audience will get to see what the new house is that the Youngers are moving into (the set for *Clybourne*).

Glossary: *A Raisin In The Sun*

investment: money that is put into use for the purpose of making more money.

prophet: a person who predicts the future

ledger: a book used to record all of the financial transactions of a business

elaborate: planned or carried out with great care and attention to details

neurotic: suffering from needless fears and worries

tyrant: a person who exercises authority in a cruel or harsh way

bureau: a chest of drawers

missionary: a person who is sent by a church or religious order to a foreign country to teach, convert, heal, or serve

acute: sharp; severe

mutilated: to harm or damage by taking off or destroying parts

accommodate: to do a favor for; meet the needs of by changing one's own plans

assimilation: the process by which minority groups, such as immigrants, slowly absorb the characteristics of the dominant culture.

evading: to avoid or fail to obey

eccentric: not behaving or thinking in an ordinary or accepted way; odd

Prometheus: in Greek mythology, the Titan who stole fire from the gods and gave it to man

idealist: a person with high or noble principles, goals, or codes of action.

Glossary: *Clybourne Park*

chafing dish- A dish raised on a platform above direct flames; used for gentle cooking.

mongoloid- In this context, an offensive term for those diagnosed with Down syndrome.

rotary club- A service organization that brings businesses and leaders together for meetings about humanitarian opportunities in a community.

spinnet Piano- A smaller sized piano, less expensive to buy but with worse sound quality than a standard upright piano.

truss (back)- A medical brace made of leather and steel used to support the back while healing

voila- A French term used for recognition or revelation.

crux- A puzzling or difficult problem.

Zoning department- The department of city government in charge of deciding how much land is set aside for a specific use (for example, housing).

De Tocqueville- A 19th Century philosopher who studied living standards and social conditions in the United States.

Ask your students to come up with their own definitions of the following terms:

- The American Dream
- Community Development
- Economic Development
- Gentrification

COMMUNITY PROJECT FOR A RAISIN IN THE SUN & CLYBOURNE PARK

A Raisin In The Sun and *Clybourne Park* together raise questions around issues of social justice, community, and economic development. We hope that you and your students think of the two plays in dialogue with one another.

BEFORE SEEING A RAISIN IN THE SUN

Lead a conversation with your students around “The American Dream”.

- At the time this play was written (1959), racial segregation was still accepted. There were housing contracts called “**restricted covenants**” that prohibited an owner of property from reselling or leasing to a person of another race. This is the dilemma the Younger family faces in *A Raisin In The Sun*.
- How does a person’s ability to choose where they live fit in with the pursuit of the “The American Dream?” What is “The American Dream”? Is it different for men vs. women, white vs. blacks vs. Hispanics? Is it different today as compared to 1959? While not legal anymore, do you see housing segregation and/or discrimination in our community? If so, where?

AFTER A RAISIN IN THE SUN/BEFORE SEEING CLYBOURNE PARK

In Project Discovery this season, we are adding a community/social justice component to the workshops and student experience. After seeing *A Raisin in the Sun*, ask your students to research **the history of their community**. Have them pull photos, interesting statistics, newspaper articles, etc. to share with the Project Discovery community at large. Below are some questions to students them started.

- Who originally “owned” the neighborhood you live in and when? Who was the next wave of people to move in to the neighborhood in search of a better life? What happened when the newcomers arrived?

AFTER SEEING CLYBOURNE PARK

Have students continue the research of their communities focusing on **where in the “economic development” arc their neighborhoods are at today**. Ask students to capture images, interviews and other materials that show where their communities. We are asking all schools to digitally share their stories and pictures with the Project Discovery community.

- One suggestion is to create a class **Pinterest** board and have students pin photos articles etc. to the board. (Students can pin from their phones—this platform does not require a computer once the board is set up.)
- Another suggestion is to have students create online collages using **glogster.com**. (This is an online education website. Students can upload pictures, sound files and other materials.)
- The final suggestion is to have students share images of their communities on **Instagram** using the hashtag **#DTCProjectDiscovery**.

RESOURCES

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