

AP Language and Composition Summer Reading Assignment  
Book Analysis for AP English Language

Novel:

*The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde

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The purpose of creating book analyses on the AP novels and plays is to have you actively and reflectively think as you read (Emerson refers to this as *creative reading*) and to give you a record of the works that are covered. Through reading, researching, analyzing, and interpreting (i.e. THINKING about) each work, you gain an intimate knowledge of the piece and its place in literature. Moreover, you will have a comprehensive study guide for preparing for the AP Exam and for future college courses.

**DO NOT** use Wikipedia as a source! Also, do not rely on *Cliff's Notes/Spark Notes* etc. because I am interested in what YOU think about the work, not what Cliff thinks. **This is NOT a collaborative assignment**, and it will be submitted to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com).

With regards to typing and citations, you must use MLA citations at all time (refer to <https://owl.english.purdue.edu> for assistance), double space your text, and section off each piece of the assignment (formatting explained further at end of assignment). **Include indents in your typing and formatting of each piece.**

1. **Authorial Background:** (5%) Give some background on Oscar Wilde. Identify the author's purpose with regards to writing the novel. **DO NOT USE WIKIPEDIA OR BIOGRAPHY.COM AS A SOURCE!** Acceptable websites would be <http://www.wilde-online.info/oscar-wilde-biography.htm> and <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/oscar-wilde> (approx. ½ page).
2. **Time Period and Literary Movement:** (10%) The novel takes place during the late Victorian era. Why is that important to the novel? What are some of the major historical events going on during that time? Look up Aestheticism and Gothic Horror/Fiction – what are these movements and why are they important to the novel? Do they have specific instances of influence in the novel? The library has databases to obtain this information – Gale Literary Criticism Online, Facts on File, Gale Online Resources, etc. (approx. 1 page).
3. **Setting:** (10%) Time, place – significance of the work. Milieu – customs and culture of the area. Provide specific examples from the work (quotes) indicating the page number on which the quote appears (approx. ½ page).
4. **Characters:** (10%) The following characters need to be discussed in your writing: Lord Henry Wotton, Basil Hallward, Sybil Vane, James Vane, Lady Victoria Wotton, Alan Campbell, & Dorian Gray. Describe the personality of the character and their impact on the novel. Use quotations in your support of the characters, indicating the page number the quote appears on. Also describe any changes they undergo due to their experiences or the influence of others (1-2 pages typed).
5. **Themes:** (15%) In your reading and research of the work, you should also discover the major themes of the book. After identifying at least TWO (2) themes, briefly explain how each is developed throughout the course of the work. Give specific support (at least three quotes) from the work (1 page typed, double-spaced). Remember, theme should be a PHRASE that could serve as part of a thesis statement. For example: "Unrequited Love" is a MOTIF not a theme, whereas "How unrequited love leads to depression" would be a theme.

6. **Literary Devices:** (15%) At least THREE particular literary techniques/devices/styles used including (but not limited to) symbolism, allusion, diction, figurative language, irony, etc. Explain how each is developed with a specific quote from the work, documented with the page number. Evaluate whether the techniques are suitable for the targeted audience and the author's purpose (1 page typed, double-spaced).
7. **Significant Passage:** (10%) Choose ONE (1) passage from the book that struck you as memorable or outstanding (esp. if it is quotable). Explain why the passage is significant to the work, relating it to a major theme, character's development, or a significant plot element (rising action, climax, etc.). Also explain WHY you consider the passage to be significant and its impact on YOU personally. Be sure to provide the page number the passage appears on, and quote the passage IN ITS ENTIRETY (1-2 pages typed, double-spaced). Make sure to include a citation for your work.
8. **Review:** (5%) Write a review of the work; discuss at least 3 of the positive and negative aspects of the characters, plot, literary techniques, etc. Any possible combination of the literary elements mentioned above will suffice (2 positive aspect of specific character developments & 1 negative aspect of a specific thematic development, for example). This should reveal enough information to indicate that you have fully read the work. You should end with a rating of the novel on a scale of 1 to 5 stars, and ½ stars are acceptable (approx.. ½ page)
9. **Works Cited** (10%) Create a works cited page that lists the novel and any additional sources. It must be formatted correctly according to MLA guidelines. Check <https://owl.english.purdue.edu> for assistance (1 page).

Example of Deep Analysis & Complexity of Thought:

Statement you are trying to prove: *Dorian is self-centered and shallow. He only thinks of his own pleasure.*

Weak Analysis with No Complexity of Thought: *He spends all of his time chasing women and taking drugs.*

Strong Analysis with Complexity of Thought (Societal Connections): *Dorian asks, "Is insincerity such a terrible thing?" (p. 149). While he has a surface point in regards to the "white lies" of society, this rhetorical question displays his complete lack of a moral foundation. Dorian's only concern is Dorian.*

Your final document should be between 6-11 pages. CLEARLY label the sections:

*The Picture of Dorian Gray Book Analysis*

Authorial Background:

Oscar Wilde.....

Time Period and Literary Movement:

Wilde's work is part of the late Victorian.....

Setting:

Most of the novel takes place in.....

Characters:

Lord Henry Wotton – A nobleman and a close friend of Basil Hallward, Lord Henry Wotton is...

Dorian Gray – A radiantly handsome, impressionable, and wealthy young gentleman, whose portrait the artist Basil Hallward paints, Dorian Gray is...

Themes:

One should not judge others based on appearances –

Literary Devices:

*Irony* – Wilde uses irony throughout....

Significant Passage:

The most significant passage in the novel is.....

Review:

*The Picture of Dorian Gray* is....

AP Language and Composition Summer Reading Assignment Rubric  
Book Analysis for AP English Language

	1 (25%)	2 (50%)	3 (75%)	4 (100%)
Author's Background	Improper documentation; incomplete author biography; lacks significant additional works	Improper documentation; incomplete author biography; partial list of significant additional works	Complete author biography; complete list of additional significant works; lacks connection to author's purpose	Complete author biography; complete list of additional significant works; offers explanation for motivation to write the work (author's purpose)
Time Period	Improper Documentation; OR does not define characteristics of literary period; does not offer textual evidence as support	Improper Documentation; defines incorrect literary period and characteristics; lacks understanding of the literary period; provides	Defines correct literary period; displays a limited understanding of literary period and/or characteristics; provides 2	Defines correct literary period; demonstrates full understanding of period and characteristics; provides 3-4 pieces of textual evidence demonstrating the characteristics

		only 1 piece of textual support	pieces of textual support	
Setting	Improper documentation; does not identify specific settings; offers only 1 textual evidence correlating to the setting	Improper documentation; does not properly identify specific settings; offers only 2 pieces of textual evidence correlating to the setting	Defines settings and showcases shifts/changes in setting; correlates 3 pieces of textual evidence demonstrating how the plot is affected by setting	Defines settings and showcases shifts/changes; correlates 4 or more pieces of textual evidence demonstrating how the plot is affected by setting
Characters	Improper documentation; does not identify conflict and resolution; uses no textual evidence	Improper documentation; does not identify conflict and/or resolution; misunderstands/misidentifies conflict and/or resolution; uses only 1 piece of textual evidence	Identifies 1 major and 2 minor characters; identifies conflict and resolution; uses 2 pieces of textual evidence	Identifies at least 1 major and at least 2 minor characters; identifies conflict and resolution; uses 3 or more pieces of textual evidence
Themes	Improper documentation; one word theme; uses only 1 piece of textual evidence to demonstrate theme	Improper documentation; one word theme; uses only 1 piece of textual evidence; only chooses one point where theme exists	Defines theme; uses 2 pieces of textual evidence; demonstrates how theme exists throughout the novel	Defines theme; uses 3 or more pieces of textual evidence; demonstrates how theme exists throughout the novel
Literary Devices	Improper documentation; lists two or fewer literary techniques and their development	Improper documentation; lists 3 techniques and their development	Lists 4 techniques and their development	Lists 5 or more techniques and their development
Significant Passage	Improper documentation; lacks crucial element of plot; shortened quote; lacks explanation of importance to novel and self	Improper documentation; lacks crucial element of plot; shortened quote; lacks explanation of importance to novel OR self	Passage reflects crucial element of story; shortened OR inaccurate quote; OR lacks explanation of importance to self	Passage reflects crucial element of story; passage is fully and ACCURATELY quoted; provides explanation of importance to novel AND importance to self
Review	Review reflects no original input regarding whether or not book has been read; repeats	Review reflects very little input regarding whether or not book has been	Review reflects up to 3 positive & negative effects of the novel; lacks	Review reflects numerous (more than 3) positive & negative effects of the novel; includes references to

	numerous themes and inferences made by internet sources; lacks references to plot instances, literary devices, or character development; fails to give final rating with stars.	read; repeats numerous themes and inferences made by internet sources; lacks references to plot instances, literary devices, or character development; fails to give final rating with stars.	references to plot instances, literary devices, or character development; gives final rating with stars included.	plot instances, literary devices, and character development; gives final rating with stars included.
Works Cited	No works cited page present.	Works cited page is not its own stand-alone page; more than two citations are incorrect via link provided in source overview.	Full works cited page with appropriate and correct citations using MLA format; <b><u>no more than two</u></b> citations are incorrect via link provided in source overview.	Full works cited page with appropriate and correct citations using MLA format; <b><i>all</i></b> citations are correct via link provided in source overview.

**Summer Assignment 2016 Sample**

*Title of Novel*

**Authorial Background: Arthur Miller (Author of *Death of a Salesman*)**

Arthur Asher Miller was born on October 17, 1915, in New York City, to a family that was of moderate affluence until the Wall Street Crash of 1929, with which they lost everything as his father’s coat business began to fail. This event went on to affect his early works, with loss and financial struggle accompanied by the inner turmoil of a pink-collar worker chasing the American Dream typically being the primary topics. It is assumed that the struggle endured by both society and his family, especially his father, during the Great Depression and World War II influenced his outlook on life, which was something he translated into and coped with through writing.

After high school, Miller worked until he could afford college and eventually studied writing under Kenneth Rowe at the University of Michigan. Rowe taught Miller how to construct a play so that the intended effect was achieved. After graduating college, Miller moved back to New York with the intention of staging plays on Broadway, the first success of which came in 1947 when his play *All My Sons* was published. Miller continued to gain fame and success

with his later plays. He is most known for his plays *All My Sons*, *The Death of a Salesman*, *A View from the Bridge*, and *The Crucible*.

*Death of a Salesman* is said to reflect his opposing stance on “The American Dream”, onto which many Americans held firmly as a piece of hope in the times of war that made up the twentieth century, a habit he strongly wished for Americans to break.

### **Time Period & Literary Movement: Realism (From *Death of a Salesman*):**

*Death of a Salesman* was written in 1948 as the United States economy was thriving after the end of World War II. The Marshall Plan had helped prop the United States up into a position of dominance in world trade. However, due to the fact that it had taken a world war for the country to be freed from the catastrophic economic situation of the stock market crash, many Americans, including Arthur Miller, considered a second depression imminent. This is important to remember when considering how the play was received upon its release and continues to be received decades later. According to Miller, “*Salesman’s* ability to somehow transcend the moment it was written in has contributed to its long-lasting success, but that’s really an enigma to start with...The psychology of the audience was still that of depression people... When considering the income of Willy Lowman, we’re talking about a world that already was disappearing. Indeed, I can tell you that I myself had difficulty placing this play in its proper time. I kept being surprised by Biff’s reference to being at war because it seemed to me later that this play had taken place before the war... It’s not a documentary of a period and never tried to be.”

The theater in Arthur Miller’s day was “bound by conventional realism. You could hardly tell who wrote any play.” Realism defined by Miller is “a play representing real rather than symbolic or metaphysical persons and situations, its main virtue verisimilitude, with no revolutionary implications for society, or even a symbolic statement of some general truth. Quite simply, conventional realism was conventional because it implicitly supported the conventions of society...” (Miller 2009c: xii). Realism attempts to portray character’s dialogue, stage setting, and plot development in a rational way that seems to mirror the real world. Miller aspired to convey messages through the medium of captivating plays that only he could write. The plays he wrote before *All My Sons* were very expressionistic, almost the exact opposite of the current literary movement. Despite his striking literary stance, Miller still struggled to find his signature writing touch. He found inspiration in the plays of Tennessee Williams which purposefully explored

abstract methods of presenting truth in opposition to the realistic movement. Miller drew many similar techniques from other playwrights as well, including Eugene O’Neil. Perhaps the most realistic aspect of *Death of a Salesman* is its material. It deals with very realistic struggles specific to American society. However, the way these issues are presented and explored is entirely opposite to the movement of conventional realism.

To understand the ways in which Miller’s work broke away from conventional realism, specific examples from *Death of a Salesman* must be examined. First, the setting plays a major role in defining a less realistic approach to this play. In Act One, “A melody is heard, played upon a flute. It is small and fine, telling of grass and trees and the horizon.” The use of the flute to provoke recurring musical themes specific to certain characters is a technique uncharacteristic to realism, first employed by Williams, to allow the audience to view different scenes through a unique lens rather than a broad, bland, realistic view. Similarly, the lighting is also used to produce dramatic tones as seen in Stage Two when “The light of green leaves stains the house, which holds, the air of night and a dream”(79). In these ways, the stage setting is used to escape the realistic style.

The methods used to portray the psychological elements of *Death of a Salesman* also stand in stark contrast to the traditional methods of realism. For example, as Willy and Charley play cards Ben appears and the following dialogue ensues: “Ben: Opportunity is tremendous in Alaska, William. Surprised you’re not up there. Willy: Sure, tremendous. Charley: Heh? Willy: There was the only man I ever met who knew the answers. Charley: Who? Ben: How are you all? Willy (taking a pot, smiling): Fine, fine” (31). This demonstrates another hard break from realism as Ben, who is not actually present but represents a previous conversation, speaks to Willy without Charley knowing what is going on in Willy’s head. Another instance Willy’s thoughts are analyzed in this unique manner is when “Young Bernard enters and knocks on the door of the house” frantically screaming, “Mrs. Loman, Mrs. Loman!” (81). during the restaurant scene in which Biff attempts to confront Willy about his business pursuits. As Willy begins chastising Biff about his failure in life, his motives are revealed through the portrayal of his memory of when Biff flunked math on a different part of the stage. Both of these instances lie opposite from the straightforward, time-bound, scene-by-scene plots that are often prevalent in conventional realism.

**Setting (From *The Crucible*):**

The entire setting of the play takes place within New England in Salem, Massachusetts in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. New England had been predominately characterized as an extremely religious faction of Colonial America where different religious tolerances and settlements had settled, and among these settlements was the Massachusetts Bay Colony with Puritan foundations. Massachusetts, like most colonies in New England at the time, was ruled by a theocracy, and thus was governed by Christian principles. Many of the aspects of religion in the play center around the Christian-Puritan biblical laws that govern the citizens of the society, such as the “Ten Commandments”, the severe crime of adultery and infidelity, lying in the face of God, and the nefarious acts of witchcraft.

Many of these elements are evident throughout the play and contribute to the growing internal and external conflicts of the characters. An example would be the forest within Massachusetts where “the Salem folk believed that the virgin forest was the Devil’s last preserve...To the best of their knowledge the American forest was the last place on earth not paying homage to God” (Miller 5). While the town of Salem is led by theocratic governors and officials, the forest is seen as ruled by the Devil which sets the origin of the hysteria that grows within Salem when Abigail and the girls are found dancing in it. Their incident also goes on to affect Reverend Parris, and, ultimately the entire play, as he seeks to convince himself as well as the town that his niece had not been practicing witchcraft, which served to be vital if he wished to keep his reputation as a member of the clergy. “Now look you, child, your punishment will come in its time. But if you trafficked with spirits in the forest I must know it now, for surely my enemies will, and they will ruin me with it” (Miller 10).

In addition, as the setting changes throughout the play in each scene, the characters within that scene take on the atmosphere of the location they stand. In Act II, we are introduced to the house of the Proctors, and as opposed to the house of Parris that has a Puritanical essence, the house of the Proctors serves as a contrast where they practice their personal faiths, lives, and deal with personal troubles instead of troubles pertaining to God. This allows the reader to see the true side of John and Elizabeth Proctor and their personal conflicts with each other, as opposed to conflicts between society and government in the other acts. “I cannot speak but am doubted, every moment judged for lies, as though I come into a court when I come into this house!” (Miller 52).

It is then seen in the extracted scene from the play that John and Abigail meet in the woods at night to discuss their act of adultery, and how Abigail begs for John’s love. We are able to see the hidden past of the two that is detrimental to their reputation, and how they are able to freely speak of it together in isolation from religious law as

opposed to every other act where they show tension and rivalry. "Why, you taught me goodness, therefore you are good...I used to weep for my sins when the wind lifted up my skirts; and blushed for shame because some old Rebecca called me loose. And then you burned my ignorance away...Oh, John, I will make you such a wife when the world is white again! You will be amazed to see me every day, a light of heaven in your house!" (Miller 140). Abigail is free to express her emotion and lust for John in hidden view, just as their past is hidden, and to exclaim to him her desire to be his wife while accusing Elizabeth for witchcraft. "Never in this world! I know you John- you are this moment singing secret hallelujahs that your wife will hang!" (Miller 143). It is evident that the setting influences the characters and their encounters with each other, and affects the growing conflict within the plot as the setting continually sets the different atmosphere in the story.

## **Characters (From *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*):**

### **Brick:**

Brick is a major character and the protagonist of the novel. Brick is best described as someone who has lost all hope in life and has nothing to hold on to. This causes him to drink and become addicted to alcohol so that he may find a 'click' of peacefulness that comes from getting so drunk. Brick follows the archetype of masculinity: a self-contained and untouchable individual. Brick's main conflict is how to move on from his dead friend Skipper's death and how to forgive others for the mendacity and lies they have told him. He blames himself for Skipper's death, and wants nothing more than to undo the hurt he caused his friend. Brick finds peace when Big Daddy says, "A man that drinks is throwing his life away. Don't do it. Hold onto your life, there's nothing else to hold onto" (Williams 41). Brick's resolution is a work in progress, starting with throwing out old alcohol and giving his wife a child. Brick goes through apparent emotional and mental changes throughout the book ranging from hatred towards Maggie, sorrow for Skipper, and finally the acceptance of Skipper's death and his duty to Maggie.

### **Margaret:**

Margaret, also called Maggie, is Brick's wife, who is also a major character in the play. She is seen by readers as a frantic wife trying to keep a dying relationship alive. She often feels rivaled by Mae who has six children, while she has none. Maggie's archetype is best described as a survivor, it is because of this that she is dubbed as a cat. She grew up poor and worked her whole life to find stability. Since she grew up poor, Maggie wants nothing more than for Brick to inherit the Pillott Plantation from a bed-ridden Big Daddy so that she can have a stable life. Without a child, Maggie and Brick's place in inheriting the house is not assured, and causes Maggie to become desperate to reconnect with Brick. At the indifference of her husband, Maggie begins to fall to pieces. Maggie's resolution happens when she lies to Big Daddy by telling him "a child is coming, sired by Brick, and out of Maggie the cat! I have Brick's child in my body" to assure Brick's inheritance (Williams 78). She then threatens Brick to give her a child or else she will take away his alcohol.

### **Big Daddy:**

Big Daddy is the owner of the Pillott Plantation, worth millions of dollars. He is the patriarch of the family, and is best described as a large and brash person who hates his wife and grandkids. The only thing he loves dearly is his son Brick, whom he sees as the rightful heir to the plantation. Big Daddy's biggest conflict is facing his inevitable death in the near future. Big Daddy believes he can cheat death and buy his way out of his demise; however, once he figures out he

has cancer and is going to die he decides to live his life to the fullest and take all of the possibilities life throws at him. He feels, "Time goes by too fast. Nothin' can outrun it. Death commences too early- almost before you're half acquainted with life- you meet the other" (Williams 75). This resolution that he will meet death soon in the future changes how he reacts to others and what he wants to do in life. Before he dies, he wants to see Brick quit alcohol and give him a grandchild. The complex character of Big Daddy goes through a multitude of changes including his change of health and his outlook on life from a somber way to an excited and optimistic way.

### **Gooper:**

Gooper is the antagonist of the play and best fits the archetype of the villain through jealousy. Gooper is Brick's older brother, but is not favored by Big Daddy or Big Mama, and is always second-best to Brick. This causes Gooper to become vengeful and start scheming a way to swindle the Pillott Plantation away from Brick. His biggest conflict is getting his parents to choose him over Brick, so he plays on the weaknesses of Brick and Maggie's relationship. His wife, Mae, has already given birth to six children while Maggie is childless and Brick's addiction to alcohol makes him appear to be an irresponsible choice. The resolution to this scheming comes at the end of the Third Act when Gooper introduces a plan of his inheritance after big daddy's death. However, Big Mama still favors Brick and reacts by saying "I want Brick! I want Brick! Where's my only son" (Williams 68). This outrages Gooper and finally gets him to show his true emotions of jealousy and contempt.

### **Themes (from *A Raisin in the Sun*):**

- *The deference of dreams and its consequences*

The theme of deferred dreams and their consequences is the most obvious theme in *A Raisin in the Sun*. Mama, Beneatha, and Walter all have deferred dreams with various consequences. Mama wishes to "[buy a] house and [fix] it up and [make] me a little garden in the back" with her husband, a dream that did not come to fruition during his lifetime, but did come true during hers. In addition, Beneatha dreams of becoming a doctor and being able "to cure"; though her motivation and passion fades somewhat, she eventually wins the support of her brother and it is very likely that she eventually achieves her goals (Hansberry 45).

Though both characters experience the negative consequences of their inability to reach their dreams, these examples prove that a dream does not die permanently, and can be postponed and achieved later. Despite these

important examples, the theme is mainly developed through Walter's dream to become rich by investing in "this little liquor store" (33). However, he does not have enough money to fulfill his dream and is frustrated both by his inability to pursue his goals and the perceived lack of understanding from his family. This bitterness is expressed during his conversation with George when he describes his dreams as "stars gleaming that you can't reach out and grab" (85). When Mama uses part of the inheritance money to buy a house, Walter's increased bitterness is shown when he tells her that "you butchered up a dream of mine – you – who always talking 'bout your children's dreams" (95). His frustration is temporarily abated when Mama entrusts him with the rest of the money, but returns even stronger when the business deal goes south and he loses all the money.

After the failed deal, Walter becomes even more selfishly obsessed with his dream, considering not moving into the new house to get money despite his family's protests. However, Walter ultimately sacrifices his dream for the time being in order to fulfill his family's dreams of moving into the house, a decision that reflects his new entrance into true manhood. The development of Walter's dream portrays two alternate endings to a deferred dream – it can result in bitterness and unhappiness, or it can be used for the greater good of fulfilling another's dream.

- *The importance of sacrifice in a family:*

The other major theme of *A Raisin in the Sun* is the importance of a family's sacrifices for each other. This theme is apparent through the Younger family's sacrifices for their dreams and ultimately, each other. Mama and Big Walter made some of the largest sacrifices to ensure their children's happiness – Big Walter "[grew] thin and old before he was forty ... working and working and working like somebody's old horse ... killing himself" (129), and Mama is willing to sacrifice her time to work to raise money for a house for Travis and some of the inheritance money for Beneatha's education.

The rest of the family also sacrifices to help each other achieve their dreams, as shown when Walter comments that "[he] and Ruth done made some sacrifices for [Beneatha]" (37). However, the largest sacrifice in the play occurs when Walter refuses the money from Lindner. Walter could have selfishly used the money from choosing not to move into Clybourne Park to invest in or start his own business, but he chooses to fulfill his family's dream of a new house, therefore sacrificing his own dream. The Younger family's willingness to sacrifice, whether it be money, time, or even their dreams, for each other is what makes them stronger and ultimately keeps them together.

### Literary Devices (From A Raisin in the Sun):

*"Its furnishings are typical and undistinguished and their primary feature is that they have clearly had to accommodate the living of too many people for too many years – and they are tired"* (Hansberry 23).

- **Personification**- Personification is a type of metaphor that gives objects or ideas human characteristics. In this example, the furniture of the Younger living room are given the characteristic of tiredness. The weary, lived-in characteristics of the furnishings reflect the exhaustion felt by the Younger family as they struggle to prosper in their difficult conditions. The use of personification is more effective when the play is read, as tiredness is more difficult to show in the scenery of a stage performance. However, the device is effective in establishing the dreary setting and rather defeatist mood of the beginning of the play.

*"They spirited all right, my children. Got to admit they got spirit – Bennie and Walter. Like this little old plant that ain't never had enough sunshine or nothing – and look at it ..."* (52).

- **Symbolism**- A symbol is an object that has a meaning in itself and stands for something larger. In the play, Mama's plant is a symbol of her children and the love and care she shows for them. Like Beneatha and Walter, Mama has done her best to care for and provide enough resources for the plant. Though neither her children nor the plant have ever had an excess of the things they need, they have just enough to survive and even prosper. In addition, Mama's continued devotion and care for the plant is unwavering, just like her devotion to her children. This makes the plant a perfect symbol for Walter and Beneatha; this symbolism is suitable for the target audience because the visual reminder of Mama's constant care would be even more obvious in a performance of the play, and it also serves the author's purpose of emphasizing familial love.

*"You must not dislike people 'cause they well off, honey."*

*'Why not? It makes just as much sense as disliking people 'cause they are poor, and lots of people do that'"* (50).

- **Paradox**- Paradox occurs when the elements of a statement contradict each other. In this example, there is a definite double standard of opinion based on wealth. Most people tend to discriminate against people based on money, but more people discriminate against the poor than they do the wealthy. The paradox in this statement is that it is acceptable to dislike someone because they are poor, but it is less right to dislike someone for being wealthy. Logically, it should be the other way around. This paradox is especially effective because everyone in

the audience has probably experienced discrimination based on money and can understand the absurdity of the situation; in addition, it aids the author's purpose of commenting on the importance of wealth in society.

*"Thirty pieces and not a coin less!"* (118).

- **Allusion**- An allusion is a reference to a mythological, literary, or historical person, place, or thing. In this case, Beneatha is referencing Judas's betrayal of Jesus in the Bible, for which he was paid thirty pieces of silver. This allusion is particularly effective because by accepting the money to not move into Clybourne Park, the Younger's would be betraying their dreams. In addition, this reminds the audience of Mama's emphasis on religion and how it has rubbed off on Beneatha, despite her markedly non-Christian beliefs. This allusion is not the most effective, because any non-Christian person probably would not understand the reference, but it does enforce the author's purpose of exploring the importance of following one's dreams and loyalty.

*"THAT MONEY IS MADE OUT OF MY FATHER'S FLESH —"* (128).

- **Metaphor**- A metaphor is a comparison of two unlike things not using "like" or "as". In this example, Walter compares the money he spent on the investment to his father's body. This metaphor is very accurate, as the money was from his father's life insurance, which they only received because he died. In addition, the comparison drives home the severity of Walter's actions, as using his father's physical body as payment would be a heinous deed. This metaphor is particularly hard-hitting to the audience, as anyone with a caring father would be shocked and horrified by the idea of losing their father's monetary legacy, and continues to enforce the author's purpose and themes of the importance of family and money.

### **Significant Passage (From *Death of a Salesman*):**

*"BIFF: Yeah, but he doesn't mean anything to you. You could help him — I can't! Don't you understand what I'm talking about? He's going to kill himself, don't you know that?"*

*HAPPY: Don't I know it! Me!*

*BIFF: Hap, help him! Jesus... help him... Help me, help me, I can't bear to look at his face! (Ready to weep, he hurries out, upright.)*

*HAPPY (starting after him): Where are you going?*

*MISS FORSYTHE: What's he so mad about?*

HAPPY: *Come on, girls, we'll catch up with him.*

MISS FORSYTHE (as Happy pushes her out): *Say, I don't like that temper of his!*

HAPPY: *He's just a little overstrung, he'll be all right!*

WILLY (off left, as The Woman laughs): *Don't answer! Don't answer!*

LETTA: *Don't you want to tell your father...*

HAPPY: *No, that's not my father. He's just a guy. Come on, we'll catch Biff, and, honey, we're going to paint this town!*

*Stanley, where's the check! Hey, Stanley!*

*(They exit. Stanley looks toward left.)" (84-85).*

This scene in the restaurant in which Happy denies his father is extremely significant because it points out his indifference to his own father's condition. Although Happy probably has the most potential to help his father recover from his poor mental condition, seeing as they are on good terms and Happy is also in business, Happy disregards his father and allows him to continue down his lonely road of despair. The most consolation Happy offers is a white lie here and there to keep things running smoothly in the Loman household, but rarely does he attempt to reach out to Willy. Biff recognizes this and points it out, but this only makes Happy uncomfortable, as it distracts from his wild lifestyle, so he decides to abandon his father altogether. This passage reflects the rapid escalation of the rising action and gives a more detailed look into the characterization of Happy Loman.

I chose this passage to analyze because it reminds me of my own experiences in which I've denied something I truly love or should love. I found it very convicting in this regard. It also reminds me of Peter's denial of Jesus before his crucifixion. Although Jesus does not at all reflect the character of Willy Loman, the same element of shame on the part of the one who denies a loved one is present. For these reasons, this passage was very powerful to me personally.

### **Review: (Of A Tree Grows in Brooklyn)**

*A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Betty Smith is the heartwarming story of a young girl maturing into an elegant woman. It has captured the hearts of readers since it was written. Overall, I give the novel 5 stars because of the specific details about Francie's growth that not only make the reader admire her, but inspire the reader to be more like her. Francie's journey from sweet innocence to brash rebel is part of every girl growing up. As the reader reads the line, "I discovered I was changing into a woman," the reader can only smile in nostalgia and remember the small innocent

Francie that they met on page 1 (Smith 488). Smith adds familiar elements, such as the blush of first love, the agony of the first heartbreak, to the slow dawning of true love. Throughout the novel, the reader not only hears what Francie speaks but understands what she feels and gets to see the world through her eyes. This allows the reader to develop not a negative outlook on a poor living area, but instead nurtures a pleasant one. Furthermore, Francie's role as a modern woman inspires the reader to be grateful for what they have. Francie doesn't immediately reject a woman's role of working and housekeeping to support a family, but her love for education grows. During this time period, typically only men were the ones that were able to receive a higher education. Francie puts in the work to not only to support her family due the death of her father but to also have a shot at education. Finally, this novel receives 5 stars because of the surprising plot turns with Francie's father. At first, the reader develops a slight hatred to Francie's father due to his drinking. However, as he passes away, Francie learns how to grow as a daughter and changes her religious preferences. The reader's heart breaks as he leaves her roses for her graduation. Through the emotional rollercoaster that the reader experiences, they get to not only see but feel the growth of Francie and experience part of that growth themselves. The emotions from the details that the reader gets from Francie allows *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* to be one of the greatest novels about a young girl coming to age yet.

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**(Should be its own page, taken as example from MLA citations for College & Career Research Paper):**

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