

teaching a raisin in the sun

Teaching A Raisin in the Sun can be a deeply enriching experience for both educators and students. Lorraine Hansberry's seminal play, first performed in 1959, tackles profound themes of race, identity, family, and the pursuit of dreams. The play's enduring relevance makes it an essential part of the high school and college curriculum. This article offers insights into effectively teaching "A Raisin in the Sun," highlighting its themes, characters, and practical teaching strategies.

Understanding the Context

Before delving into the play itself, it is crucial to understand the historical and social context in which it was written.

The Historical Background

"A Raisin in the Sun" debuted during the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. The play reflects the struggles faced by African American families in the 1950s, including:

- Systemic racism
- Housing discrimination
- Economic disparity
- Gender roles

Understanding the societal backdrop of the play can help students grasp its significance and the challenges faced by its characters. Consider introducing historical materials, such as articles or documentaries, that detail the era's civil rights struggles.

Author's Background

Lorraine Hansberry was the first African American woman to have a play performed on Broadway. Her own experiences, including her family's fight against housing discrimination, heavily influenced the narrative of "A Raisin in the Sun." Exploring Hansberry's life and her motivations can provide students with deeper insights into the themes of the play.

Key Themes and Motifs

The play explores various themes, each rich with meaning and discussion potential.

The American Dream

The pursuit of the American Dream is a central theme in "A Raisin in the Sun." Each character has a unique vision of what this dream looks like:

1. **Lena Younger (Mama):** She dreams of owning a house and providing a better life for her family.