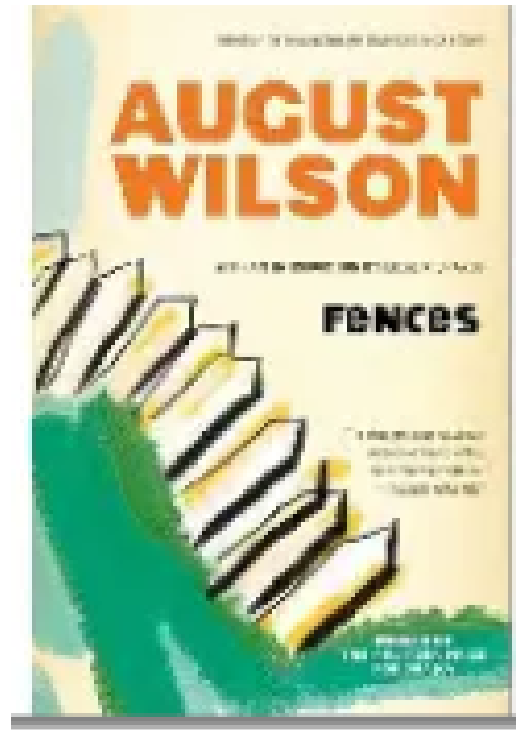


FENCES

August Wilson



RESOURCE GUIDE

Reading + Writing + Analysis

NO PREP

PRINT & GO

HIGH SCHOOL ELA

About the Play

Fences tells the story of Troy Maxson, a former baseball player who now works as a garbage collector while trying to provide for his family in the 1950s. As Troy reflects on missed opportunities and past struggles, his beliefs begin to shape how he treats the people around him, especially his wife and son.

The play explores how personal experiences, responsibility, and societal barriers influence relationships and decision-making. Through Troy's story, readers see how choices, pride, and expectations can impact both individuals and families.

Section Breakdown

- **Section 1: Act 1, Scene 1**

Introduction to Troy, his relationships, and daily life

- **Section 2: Act 1, Scenes 2–4**

Family dynamics, conflict with Cory, and Troy's worldview

- **Section 3: Act 2, Scenes 1–3**

Major conflicts, consequences, and shifting relationships

- **Section 4: Act 2, Scenes 4–5**

Resolution, legacy, and the impact of Troy's choices

Comprehension Questions:

SECTION 1

1. Who is Troy Maxson, and how is he introduced at the beginning of the play?

2. What is Troy's job, and how does he feel about it?

3. How is the setting described?

4. What does Troy reveal about his past?

5. What early conflicts are introduced?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

How does Troy's past begin to shape his attitude and behavior?

Comprehension Questions

SECTION 2

1. How does Troy's relationship with Cory begin to develop?

2. What are Troy's beliefs about responsibility and success?

3. How does Rose respond to Troy's actions and decisions?

4. What conflicts arise within the family?

5. How do Troy's experiences influence how he treats others?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

How do family expectations create conflict in this section?

Comprehension Questions

SECTION 3

1. What major decision does Troy make that affects his family?

2. How does Cory respond to Troy's actions?

3. What role does Rose play during this conflict?

4. How do relationships begin to change?

5. What moment acts as the turning point in the play?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

*What choices lead to the biggest consequences
in this section?*

Comprehension Questions

SECTION 4

1. How does the play resolve the conflict between Troy and Cory?

2. What changes for the family by the end?

3. How is Troy remembered by other characters?

4. What message does the ending suggest?

5. How do the final scenes connect to the title *Fences*?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

*What does the idea of “fences” represent
in the play?*

DRAMA ANALYSIS

- Dialogue reveals character relationships and conflict
- Stage directions help set the mood and tone
- Conflict drives the story forward
- Character interactions shape meaning

HISTORICAL CONNECTION

1950s Black America

Fences is set during a time when racial barriers limited opportunities for Black Americans. Many people were denied equal chances in jobs, housing, and sports.

Connection to the play:

Troy's experiences reflect these limitations and shape how he views success, responsibility, and opportunity.

Extension Activities

Choose one activity to complete.



Analyze the symbolism of the fence



Compare Troy to another literary character

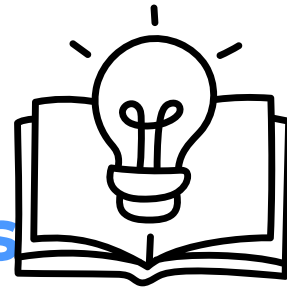


Create a character map showing relationships

Understanding the Big Ideas

This story explores:

- **Family and responsibility**
- **Generational conflict**
- **Dreams and limitations**
- **Protection vs control**



How does August Wilson use Troy Maxson to show the impact of past experiences on present decisions? Use examples from the play to support your response.

Final Project

- Analyze Troy's character and how he changes
- Explain how conflict shapes the story
- Create a presentation on the themes of the play

Character Notes