

<b>The Glass Menagerie Post-Show Activity: Review</b>		
<i>Length</i>	<i>Grade Level</i>	<i>Content Area</i>
1-2 class periods (45 – 90 minutes each)	Middle School & High School	ELA, Theatre
<b>Objective</b>		<b>Materials Needed</b>
Students will analyze and reflect on the performance of <i>The Glass Menagerie</i> by expressing their understanding through a review of the play.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to <i>The Glass Menagerie Alley</i> Re-Sourced guide</li> <li>• Paper and pen or laptops for writing</li> <li>• Whiteboard for group discussion</li> <li>• Story Map document (included)</li> <li>• Example review (included)</li> </ul>
<b>Activity Overview</b>		
<p><i>NOTE: This activity has been aligned with TEKS and <a href="#">Universal Design for Learning</a>. TEKS can be found at the end of this document. Check out the “Notes” section for ideas on how to expand activities or provide additional scaffolding.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduction   <a href="#">Two Truths and a Lie</a></li> <li>2. Example   <a href="#">What is a Review?</a></li> <li>3. Guided Practice   <a href="#">Group Discussion</a></li> <li>4. Independent Practice   <a href="#">Writing Your Review</a></li> <li>5. Reflection   <a href="#">Headlines</a></li> </ol>		
<b>1. Introduction   Two Truths and a Lie</b>		<b>5 minutes</b>
<p><i>Activity Steps</i></p> <p>a) Engage students with a quick round of “Two Truths and a Lie” about <i>The Glass Menagerie</i> (examples below, but feel free to use your own).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The play is set in St. Louis during the Great Depression (true).</li> <li>- Laura’s glass collection includes a unicorn (true).</li> <li>- The play ends with Tom reconciling with his sister, Laura (lie).</li> </ul>		<p><i>Notes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You can enhance the discussion by asking:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What was your initial reaction to the play?</li> <li>- What would you rate this play (1 out of 10, 5 stars, certified fresh, etc.)?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p><b>2. Example   What is a Review?</b></p>	<p><b>10 minutes</b></p>
<p><i>Activity Steps</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Present a sample play review of a different production, highlighting its structure and key components.</li> <li>b) Discuss the elements of theater that critics typically analyze (acting, directing, technical aspects).</li> <li>c) Explain the balance between objective analysis and subjective opinion in a review.</li> <li>d) Introduce specific theater terminology relevant to reviewing <i>The Glass Menagerie</i>.</li> </ol>	<p><i>Notes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A review of the Alley's production of <i>Pictures from Home</i> (another family drama) from Houston Press is included in this document. You can see the article online <a href="#">here</a>.</li> <li>• A Story Map is included in this document. Encourage students to utilize this outline to organize their notes during this section and the guided practice.</li> <li>• A common misconception to address: A play review is not just a summary of the plot or a list of likes and dislikes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Guided Practice   Group Discussion</b></p>	<p><b>25-30+ minutes</b></p>
<p><i>Activity Steps</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Divide the class into small groups, each focusing on a different aspect of <i>The Glass Menagerie</i> production.</li> <li>b) Groups will brainstorm and discuss their assigned element (e.g., acting, set design, comedic timing).</li> <li>c) Each group will present their observations to the class, encouraging whole-class discussion.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guide students in crafting effective thesis statements for their reviews during the group discussion.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p><i>Notes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a visible timer while the students are creating and give them verbal warnings during group work.</li> <li>• Structure outlines, sentence stems, and potential questions to answer in a review can be found in this <a href="#">resource from Austin Peay State University</a>.</li> </ul>

<p><b>4. Independent Practice   Writing Your Review</b></p>	<p><b>15-20+ minutes</b></p>
<p><i>Activity Steps</i></p> <p>a) Students will begin drafting their 500-word play reviews.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of any provided templates and incorporation of class discussions.</li> <li>- Balance description, analysis, and personal opinion.</li> </ul> <p><b>Extension Activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students can create a visual companion piece to their review, such as a poster or digital presentation that highlights key points and incorporates relevant imagery from the production. Production photos can be found at <a href="https://www.alleytheatre.org/plays/the-glass-menagerie/">https://www.alleytheatre.org/plays/the-glass-menagerie/</a>.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Notes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulate to provide individual guidance and answer questions.</li> <li>• Offer multiple options for drafting: traditional writing, voice recording, or digital mind-mapping.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Reflection   Headlines</b></p>	<p><b>5-10 minutes</b></p>
<p><i>Activity Steps</i></p> <p>a) If your review had a headline, what would it be?</p> <p>b) Share with your neighbor.</p> <p>c) Who heard a headline from someone else that they thought was particularly good at getting to the core of things?</p>	<p><i>Notes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This activity is an Artful Thinking routine. You can learn more about this activity <a href="#">here</a> and explore more thinking routines <a href="#">here</a>.</li> </ul>

TEKS			
TEKS – MS ELA	TEKS – HS ELA	TEKS – MS Theatre	TEKS – HS Theatre
<p>Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Drama (TEKS 110.5(b)(8)): Analyze and interpret the elements of drama, including character and plot.</p> <p>Writing/Writing Process (TEKS 110.5(b)(10)): Engage in the writing process to develop essays, storyboards, or scripts that articulate analyses of the play.</p> <p>Writing/Expository and Procedural Texts (TEKS 110.5(b)(11)): Write reflections focusing on themes, character dynamics, and personal responses to the performance.</p> <p>Speaking/Listening (TEKS 110.5(b)(12)): Participate in discussions and presentations, sharing work with peers.</p>	<p>Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Drama (TEKS 110.5(b)(8)): Analyze and interpret complex elements of drama, including character motivations and thematic depth.</p> <p>Writing/Writing Process (TEKS 110.5(b)(10)): Develop sophisticated written reflections through essays, storyboards, or scripts that demonstrate a deep understanding of the play.</p> <p>Writing/Expository and Procedural Texts (TEKS 110.5(b)(11)): Compose clear and coherent reflections that analyze themes, character dynamics, and personal insights regarding the performance.</p> <p>Speaking/Listening (TEKS 110.5(b)(12)): Engage in meaningful discussions and presentations, practicing advanced com. skills while providing peer feedback.</p>	<p>Theatre Arts I (TEKS 117.202(b)(1)): Analyze and interpret various forms of theatre, including the structure and elements of a play.</p> <p>Theatre Arts I (TEKS 117.202(b)(3)): Evaluate the roles of actors, directors, and playwrights, understanding their contributions to the theatrical experience.</p> <p>Theatre Arts I (TEKS 117.202(b)(4)): Demonstrate skills in performance and presentation through group activities and reflections on the play.</p> <p>Theatre Arts I (TEKS 117.202(b)(5)): Engage in collaborative projects, contributing to group discussions and providing feedback to peers.</p>	<p>Theatre Arts II, III, and IV (TEKS 117.202(b)(1)): Analyze and interpret complex forms of theatre.</p> <p>Theatre Arts II, III, and IV (TEKS 117.202(b)(3)): Evaluate the roles of actors, directors, and playwrights, understanding their contributions to the theatrical experience.</p> <p>Theatre Arts II, III, and IV (TEKS 117.202(b)(4)): Develop advanced skills in performance and presentation.</p> <p>Theatre Arts II, III, and IV (TEKS 117.202(b)(5)): Engage in collaborative projects, contributing to group discussions and providing feedback to peers.</p>

## How to Use this Story Map

This graphic organizer provides a structured way to analyze key elements of the play. It highlights character dynamics, conflicts, themes, and the setting to help students critically engage with the material.

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## Purpose of the Story Map

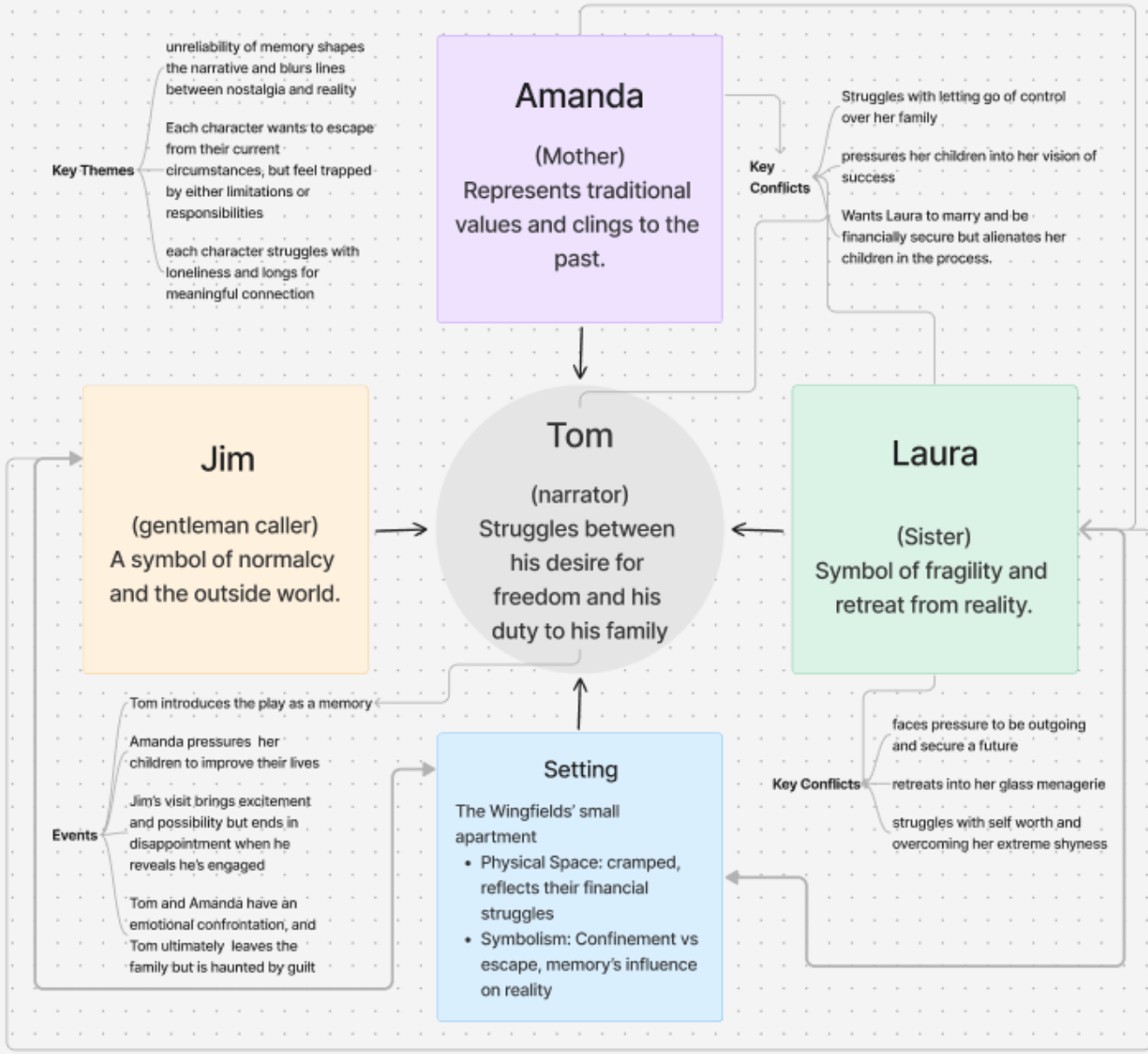
- **Support Critical Thinking:** Encourage students to identify and analyze relationships, conflicts, and themes in the story.
  - **Guide Discussions:** Use it as a visual aid to facilitate group or class discussions about the characters' roles, motivations, and the overarching themes.
  - **Build Connections:** Help students link the setting and events to the play's key messages and resolutions.
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## Tips for Effective Use

- Use the organizer as a flexible framework; adapt it for different levels of analysis based on students' understanding.
  - Encourage students to draw connections between the play's themes and real-world scenarios.
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This tool is designed to spark engagement and deeper thinking, making the play's themes and character dynamics more accessible for students.

### The Glass Menagerie Story Map



Notes & Personal Reflections

| STAGE |

## Pictures From Home Looks At The Parent Behind The Photo

JESSICA GOLDMAN | JANUARY 25, 2024 | 8:27AM



**Photo by Lynn Lane** Todd Waite and Zachary Fine as in Alley Theatre's production of Pictures from Home.

Larry's favorite photograph of his dad is the one his father hates the most.

The shot, taken by Larry, a distinguished photographer, is a close-up of his father, Irv, sleeping peacefully on the family's California living room couch. Through Larry's eyes, the image captures the vulnerability his father masks in real life. A chance to see the real him without all the masculine confidence Irv swings around daily like his beloved golf club.

But for Irv, the shot is all wrong. He looks old, for one thing. He may be 70 but he sure doesn't feel it. Plus it's dimly lit. And who the hell would want to look at a sleeping man anyway, what's the point? Where's the rigor in that?

Images, how we see them, how we interpret them, the stories they tell about us and the slippery accuracy of those tales are at the center of Larry and Irv's prickly father/son relationship in Sharr White's, *Pictures From Home*, now getting a handsomely sensitive and whimsical production at the Alley.

Based on the acclaimed 1992 photo memoir of Larry Sultan, the show (developed at the 2020 Alley All New Festival) follows Larry (Zachary Fine) as he leaves his wife and children several times a month to fly to his aging parents' home for "the project". A loosely defined photo safari where Larry hopes to capture his parents' lives accurately through his lens. Certainly, more accurately than the family photos and Super 8 reels he's seen of them.

Retired executive salesman Irv (Todd Waite) and Larry's Real Estate Agent mum, Jean (Susan Koozin) may look like the definition of the perfectly successful American nuclear family in snapshot, but Larry doesn't want the perfect. He wants the people, warts and all. To understand his parents, to better understand himself. To keep his gaze on them, therefore keeping them present and alive.

Set mostly in the 1980s over eight years, we watch Larry drop in and photograph his parents mostly going about their lives, much to his father's piqued annoyance and mother's more measured acceptance. All the while, real photos of Larry's parents are seen projected on screens that drop in and out of the stage. A chance for the characters to discuss and disagree on them.

There's lots of humor to be mined in their encounters, parents bickering, Larry and Irv seemingly speaking different languages when it comes to expressing feelings and self-truths, Jean trying to keep the peace and her mind in the process.

Director Rob Melrose astutely never lets these funny moments fall prey to tropes. There's lots of room to laugh here at Irv's cuss-inflected exasperations, Larry's endlessly annoying probing questions and Jean's flappability. But we do so feeling the undercurrent of sadness throughout.

Funny as this family's miscommunications and inability to provide what the other wants is, we see the frustration underneath. Frustration that they can't quite be heard. Or access the tools to understand what to say. Or be respected for who they think they are. There's love there for sure though, otherwise, they wouldn't keep trying.

It could all be so sentimental, this dance they do. After all, at an hour and forty-five minutes with no intermission, we're held captive in father and son's endless and often repetitive arguments over Larry's work, all the while knowing that "the project" is a commercial success in the end.

What keeps the show fresh for us is the acting. This review could have easily been three words divided only by exclamation points. Zachary! Susan! Todd!

Returning to the Alley, this time without the lizard skin he so superbly sported in Edward Albee's *Seascape*, Zachary Fine gives an expressive sweetness to Larry that helps stretch our patience with his neediness and intrusion. Not that what he's reaching for is wrong or unworthy, it's just selfish and



a little annoying. Yet thanks to Fine's open-heartedness, we can't help but root for Larry.

It's hard to name a production that Susan Koozin doesn't make better and this is no exception. As Jean, Koozin gets to show off her impeccable comic timing, but it's her motherly, loving moments that really hit.

"You act as if you're the only child in the world and we're the only parents," she says to Larry trying to persuade him that all children yearn for the understanding he's desperate for. That Koozin can make this sound both admonishing and assuring is the work of an actor fully driving her character's emotional bus.

Finally, anyone waiting for Todd Waite to step out of the camp roles and into something meatier, more expansive and demanding – this is your chance and you will not be disappointed. As Irv, Waite is tasked with the heavy lifting in this show and he carries multitudes - abrasiveness, charm, disappointment, self-aggrandizement, self-doubt, jokester and, of course, fatherly judgment.

That we are utterly frustrated by Irv's immovability/refusal to admit to inner life/mistreatment of his wife and son and yet feel so protective of him is thanks to Waite's wonderfully nuanced performance.

As Larry's project winds up, we're not really sure what he discovered about his parents. That they're flawed people just like everyone else? Perhaps. There's no big aha moment here. No satisfying takeaway. Much like life itself, things just move on. The only difference is Larry had photographs to prove it.

*Pictures From Home runs to February 11 at Alley Theatre, 615 Texas. For more information, call 713-220-5700 or visit [alleytheatre.org](http://alleytheatre.org). \$27-\$81.*