Raisin in the Sun reading guide questions

**Act One, Scene 1**

1. What does the word deferred mean? What does it have to do with dreams?
2. Describe the room using details from the play? What adjective would you choose to describe it?
3. Why does the author spend so much time on the description of the room? What is the purpose?
4. What is the setting (**Place, time period)?**
5. What does the term “settled woman” mean?
6. What are the up’s (pro’s) and downs (Cons) of sharing a bathroom?
7. As of this point on **page 5,** what is the important point of contention (**argument**) between Ruth and Walter?
8. What is Ruth angry at Walter? Is she justified in being so?
9. Characterize the relationship between Travis and Ruth?
10. Why was Ruth upset when Walter gave Travis the fifty cents?
11. What is Walter arguing with Ruth so early in the morning? How does Walter feel at this point in relation to the marriage? How does Ruth feel?
12. What does the word graft mean on page 11?
13. What is Walter accomplishing with Ruth when he says, “**No thanks to the colored woman**” **on page 12?**
14. What is the profession that Benetha has decided to pursue? How is that significant? Is that different from today? Why?
15. What is Walter’s point of view about his sister pursuing her career? What does that make him? (**What type of man?)**
16. Where did the money come from?
17. Why does Walter want the money?
18. What does Ruth mean when she says, “**Something is happening between Walter and me**”?
19. What does Mama want to do with the money?
20. Why did Benetha say she wouldn’t marry George?
21. What is Benetha’s first priority? Is that accepted practice back then for women? How about now? Why did things change?
22. What has happened to Ruth?
23. What is the potted plan a symbol for?

**Act One, Scene Two**

1. Who is Joseph Asagai? How is he different from George?
2. What did Ruth find out at the doctor’s office?
3. How does Ruth feel about her pregnancy?
4. How does Asagai feel about Benetha? How does Benetha feel about Asagai?
5. Why is Asagai’s nickname of “**One For Whom Bread- Food- is Not Enough**” for Benetha appropriate?
6. What was the ultimatum mama gave Walter?
7. Why is it “**dangerous**” for a man to go outside of his house to look for peace?
8. Describe how Walter feels in his explanation to his Mama on **p.41.**
9. Where did Ruth really go when she said she was going to the doctor?
10. What does Mama want Walter to do in regard to Ruth?

**Act Two Scene One**

1. What was Ruth’s reaction to Benetha’s attire when she walked out of the room?
2. What was Walter’s state of being when he enters the room where Benetha is dancing?
3. What is George’s reaction to seeing Benetha’s hair? How would his reaction differ from Asayai’s?
4. What are “**assimilationist Negroes**?”
5. What does Ruth mean when she says to Walter, “**I don’t know where we lost it... but we have**…?”
6. What did Mama do with the insurance money?
7. What was Walter’s reaction? What was Ruth’s?
8. Where is the house located? Why is that a problem for Ruth?

**Act Two Scene Two**

1. What is the setting of this scene?
2. What does George want Benetha to be? How does George see her?
3. Who knocks on the door? What news did he tell them?
4. How did Ruth find out Walter hadn’t been going to work?
5. Where had Walter been going instead of work?
6. How has Walter changed since Mama gave him the money?

**Act Two Scene Three**

1. What is the setting of this scene?
2. How has the relationship between Ruth and Walter changed from the beginning of the play?
3. Who is Karl Lindner and why does he come to the Younger’s house?
4. What was Walter’s reaction to Lindner? What did Walter tell Lindner?
5. What do the gardening tools represent?
6. What news did Bobo bring to Walter? How much was taken?

**Act Three Scene One**

1. How is the gray light used on stage important (**significant**) for setting the mood of the act?
2. Why does Benetha not want to be a doctor anymore? What has changed for her personally?
3. How do Benetha and Asayai’s views of the world differ?
4. How are Benetha an Asayai’s desires for others similar?
5. What does Asayai ask of Benetha?
6. Is there anything wrong with aiming high for your dreams? Explain your answer.
7. How does Walter try to fix the situation he has put the family into?
8. How is he justifying his actions?
9. How are the words ***you people***in the following quote of, “**I certainly was glad to hear from you people**,” a derogatory phrase?
10. Why does Walter change his mind about accepting the money from Lindner?
11. What was the ending result of their meeting with Lindner and the Youngers?
12. How did Walter “Come into his manhood” at the end of the play?
13. What does the plant represent now at the end of the play as opposed to the beginning of the play?