

Worksheet 1 – Introduction to A Streetcar Named Desire

Recall: Lecture 1

Answer these questions after watching the video lecture to check how much you remember.

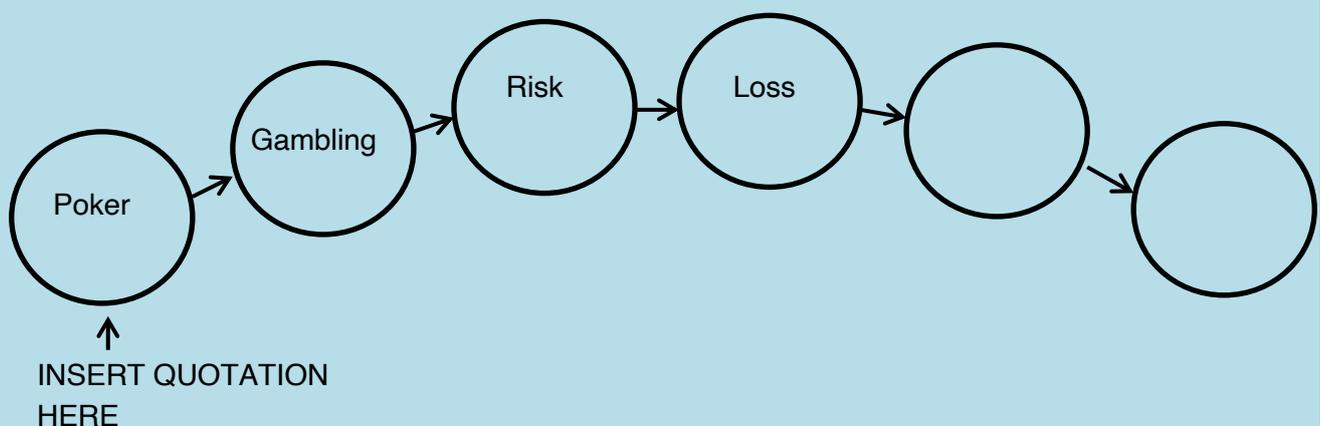
1. Which actor played Stanley Kowalski in the original Broadway production of *A Streetcar Named Desire*?  
a) Laurence Olivier                      c) Marlon Brando  
b) Tennessee Williams                d) John Wayne
2. What were the dates of the American Civil War?  
a) 1861-1865                              c) 1801-1804  
b) 1911-1914                              d) 1847-1850
3. What happened to Tennessee Williams's sister in 1943?  
a) She became pregnant                c) She was imprisoned  
b) She died                                d) She underwent a lobotomy
4. What genre does McRae say *A Streetcar Named Desire* fits into?  
a) Romance                                c) Horror  
b) Tragedy                                 d) Kitchen sink drama

Analysis

5. McRae mentions in his lecture that the original title of the play was *The Poker Game*, but Williams later changed it to *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

Use a **connotation chain** to explore the associations of the different titles.

*Note: A connotation chain is a useful technique that pushes you to explore the different possible associations of writers' word choices. Draw six circles with arrows between. In the first circle you insert a key word from a quotation. In each following circle you write in a connotation of the word before. An example has been started for you on the following page.*



Evaluation

6. Based on the connotations of the titles, why do you think Williams chose to call the play *A*

*Streetcar Named Desire?* Write your answer as an analytical paragraph.

7. In the lecture [4:12-4:25], Prof McRae says that the play explores ‘a disintegrating society’. What do you think McRae means by this statement?

### Glossary

- **Disintegrating** – (adj.) breaking up into small parts as the result of impact or decay; lose strength and fail.
- **Homestead** – (n.) a house; an area of land granted to a settler in the North West of America.
- **Lobotomy** – (n.) a neurosurgical treatment of a mental disorder that involves severing connections in the brain's prefrontal cortex.
- **Streetcar** – (n.) an electric vehicle on rails used for transporting passengers and typically operating on city streets; a tram.



[The last 19th century Ford Bacon & Davis streetcar (Ole 29), still in working service on St. Charles Avenue, 2008. Photo by Infrogmation, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=3761041>]

- **Trepanning** – (n.) a surgical intervention in which a hole is drilled or scraped into the human skull, with the intention of treating health problems.