

# 12.4.1 Lesson 11

## Introduction

In this lesson, students consider their analysis of the entire play *A Streetcar Named Desire* in relation to three film segments from the 1951 film version of *A Streetcar Named Desire*, directed by Elia Kazan. Students analyze the film, comparing the directorial choices to Tennessee Williams's play and identifying aspects that demonstrate a unique interpretation by Kazan. As they view the film, students record their observations on the *A Streetcar Named Desire* Film Viewing Tool. Students use their observations as the basis for a discussion of character development, setting, and cinematic choices in the selected film segments. Student learning is assessed via the 12.4.1 Lesson 11 Exit Slip, in which students analyze how the discussion confirmed or changed their initial responses to the following prompt: What do you notice about the characters, setting/set design, and cinematic choices the director makes in the film?

For homework, students respond briefly in writing to the following prompt: What does Kazan choose to emphasize or omit in his treatment of the selected scenes from *A Streetcar Named Desire*? Analyze 1-2 directorial choices that represent Kazan's interpretation of Williams's play. Additionally, students conduct a brief search into the Hays Code and respond briefly in writing to the following prompt: How does your research of the Hays Code impact your interpretation of the film version of the play?

## Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
RL.11-12.7	Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)
Addressed Standard(s)	
W.11-12.9.a	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. a. Apply <i>grades 11-12 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., "Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics").
SL.11-12.1	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues</i> , building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

## Assessment

Assessment(s)
<p>Student learning is assessed via an Exit Slip following a group discussion at the end of the lesson. Students explain how the discussion confirmed or changed their initial responses to the following prompt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do you notice about the characters, setting/set design, and cinematic choices the director makes in the film?</li> </ul>
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide evidence of how the discussion changed or confirmed students' initial ideas from the <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> Film Viewing Tool.</li> <li>See <a href="#">Model 12.4.1 Lesson 11 Exit Slip at the end of this lesson.</a></li> </ul>

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## Vocabulary

### Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- None.\*

### Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)

- None.\*

### Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)

- None.\*

\*Because this is not a close reading lesson, there is no specified vocabulary. However, in the process of returning to the text, students may uncover unfamiliar words. Teachers can guide students to make meaning of these words using the strategies outlined in L.11-12.4.a-d.

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## Lesson Agenda/Overview

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Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
<b>Standards &amp; Text:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards: RL.11-12.7, W.11-12.9.a, SL.11-12.1</li> <li>Text: <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> by Tennessee Williams</li> </ul>	
<b>Learning Sequence:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda</li> <li>2. Homework Accountability</li> <li>3. Film Viewing and Analysis</li> <li>4. Group Discussion</li> <li>5. 12.4.1 Lesson 11 Exit Slip and Assessment</li> <li>6. Closing</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 5%</li> <li>2. 10%</li> <li>3. 55%</li> <li>4. 15%</li> <li>5. 10%</li> <li>6. 5%</li> </ol>

## Materials

- Copies of the 12.4 Common Core Learning Standards Tool for each student (optional)
- Copies of the *A Streetcar Named Desire* Film Viewing Tool for each student
- Excerpts from Elia Kazan's Film *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951) (00:00-07:22, 32:04-43:51, and 1:08:46-1:19:37)
- Copies of the 12.4.1 Lesson 11 Exit Slip for each student
- The restored version of *A Streetcar Named Desire* includes scenes that were not available in the 1951 version. The restored version used in this lesson is the streamed version available on <http://amazon.com> (Search terms: *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Elia Kazan, 1951).

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## Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence	
Symbol	Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol
10%	Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.
no symbol	Plain text indicates teacher action.
	<b>Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.</b>
	<i>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</i>
►	Indicates student action(s).
💬	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.
❗	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

### Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

5%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standard for this lesson: RL.11-12.7. In this lesson, students consider their analysis of the entire play *A Streetcar Named Desire* in relation to three film segments from the 1951 film version of *A Streetcar Named Desire*, directed by Elia Kazan. Students analyze the film, comparing Kazan's directorial choices to Tennessee Williams's play and identifying aspects that demonstrate a unique interpretation by Kazan. As they view the film, students record their observations on the *A Streetcar Named Desire* Film Viewing Tool.

- Students look at the agenda.
- Differentiation Consideration:** Distribute a copy of the 12.4 Common Core Learning Standards Tool to those students who would benefit from the support of a tool.  
Post or project standard RL.11-12.7. Instruct students to talk in pairs about what they think the standard means. Lead a brief discussion about the standard.
- Student responses should include:
  - This standard is about viewing or listening to several interpretations of a text.

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- Different versions of a story, drama, or poem emphasize different aspects of the source text, and this standard asks the viewer to evaluate how a given version interprets the source text.
- This standard asks the viewer to analyze how a particular production of a play demonstrates a unique interpretation of the source.
- The standard suggests that students read at least one play by Shakespeare and one by an American playwright like Tennessee Williams.

## Activity 2: Homework Accountability

10%

Instruct students to take out their responses to the previous lesson's homework assignment. (Reread the epigraph by Hart Crane at the beginning of the play and respond briefly in writing to the following prompt: Select one character from *A Streetcar Named Desire* and analyze that character in relation to the play's epigraph.) Instruct students to form pairs and discuss their responses.

- Student responses may include:
  - The epigraph relates to Blanche because she enters the “broken world” (epigraph) of Elysian Fields “[w]here [she is] not wanted and where [she is] ashamed to be” (p. 81). In Elysian Fields, she attempts to recover from “hard knocks [her] vanity’s been given” (p. 95), but instead, she is abused and belittled, and her hopes for a future where she is no longer “alone in the world” (p. 103) are destroyed. Blanche pursues the “visionary company of love” (epigraph), or the dream of having true love in her life, throughout the play. She tries to find this “visionary company of love” (epigraph) in her relationship with Mitch as well as in her “*spectral admirers*” (p. 158), specifically, the illusion of Shep Huntleigh, but the tragedy of her young husband still haunts her. She is “not young and vulnerable any more” (pp. 42-43), and, thus, she is left with only “desperate choice(s)” (epigraph) such as living in Stanley’s house and presenting an idealized image of herself to Mitch to secure his affection. These “desperate choices” (epigraph) leave Blanche vulnerable to Stanley’s violence and insecurities as he destroys Blanche in hopes of reclaiming the “way that it was” (p. 133) with Stella. Blanche does not get to act on each “desperate choice” for “long” (epigraph), as her worst fears about Elysian Fields or the “broken world” (epigraph) come to be realized, and she is “[c]aught in a trap” (p. 160) in which Stanley is able to destroy her identity permanently.
  - Stella “entered the broken world” (epigraph) of Elysian Fields because she ran from Laurel and her past and chose Stanley, a “desperate choice” (epigraph), as

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she continually has to “tolerate” (p. 74) his abuse. When pressed by Blanche to leave Stanley for someone with more culture, Stella states plainly “I’m not in anything I want to get out of” (p. 74). Although Blanche sees Stanley as “a madman” (p. 73) and thinks that Stella is in a “desperate situation” (p. 78), Stella has no need for the “visionary company of love” (epigraph), as she already has actual love in her life. After Stanley rapes Blanche, Stella must make a “desperate choice” (epigraph) whether or not to leave him. She finally sees that she is “[c]aught in a trap” (p. 160) because of their baby, and her relationship with Stanley has changed for the worse, further showing how Elysian Fields is a “broken world” (epigraph).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

### Activity 3: Film Viewing and Analysis

55%

Distribute the *A Streetcar Named Desire* Film Viewing Tool. Explain to students that they will view three different film segments from Elia Kazan’s 1951 film of *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Instruct students to make notes during the film, recording their observations about the characters in the first column, their observations about setting/set design in the second column, and their observations about cinematic choices that the director makes in the third column. Inform students that they will use this tool in the following lesson (12.4.1 Lesson 12) as they continue to view more film segments.

- Students examine the *A Streetcar Named Desire* Film Viewing Tool.

Ask students the following question:

**What decisions does a director make in creating a film version of a play?**

- Student responses may include:

A director may

- choose specific costumes or props for the characters.
- direct actors to use certain gestures or to play their part in a particular manner.
- choose to change the stage directions in the play or adapt the setting.
- choose to focus on the perspective of one character through extended screen time or additional scenes.
- alter the plot by rearranging scenes, cutting scenes, or adding scenes.

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- choose the position and angle of the camera to include different reactions or a single focus.
  - choose how specific characters or objects are framed by the camera.
  - make decisions about lighting, such as how a scene is lit and what objects or people are illuminated.
  - choose to use a soundtrack or sound effects similar to or different from the original play.
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Post or project the following focus question for students to consider as they view the film:

**What do you notice about the characters, setting/set design, and cinematic choices the director makes in the film?**

Show segment 1 of *A Streetcar Named Desire* (00:00-7:22).

- Students view segment 1 of *A Streetcar Named Desire* and record their observations in the first segment of the *A Streetcar Named Desire* Film Viewing Tool.
- This section corresponds approximately to pages 3-15 in the play. Consider instructing students to review this section of the play first or follow along in their texts to note similarities and differences in the film adaptation (W.11-12.9.a).

Show segment 2 of *A Streetcar Named Desire* (32:04-43:51).

- Students view segment 2 of *A Streetcar Named Desire* and record their observations in the second segment of the *A Streetcar Named Desire* Film Viewing Tool.
- This section corresponds approximately to pages 54-67 in the play. Consider instructing students to review this section of the play first or follow along in their texts to note similarities and differences in the film adaptation (W.11-12.9.a).

Show segment 3 of *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1:08:46-1:19:37).

- Students view segment 3 of *A Streetcar Named Desire* and record their observations in the third segment of the *A Streetcar Named Desire* Film Viewing Tool.
- This section corresponds approximately to pages 108-123 in the play. Consider instructing students to review this section of the play first or follow along in their texts to note similarities and differences in the film adaptation (W.11-12.9.a).

## Activity 4: Group Discussion

15%

Transition students to a whole-class discussion. Direct students' attention to the focus question for discussion:

**What do you notice about the characters, setting/set design, and cinematic choices the director makes in the film?**

- Consider reminding students of their previous work with SL.11-12.1, which requires students to initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions.
  - See the Model *A Streetcar Named Desire* Film Viewing Tool at the end of this lesson for sample student responses.
- Instruct students to continue taking notes on their *A Streetcar Named Desire* Film Viewing Tool during the discussion.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

## Activity 5: 12.4.1 Lesson 11 Exit Slip and Assessment

10%

Distribute the 12.4.1 Lesson 11 Exit Slip. Instruct students to complete the Exit Slip independently.

- See the Model 12.4.1 Lesson 11 Exit Slip at the end of this lesson.

Collect student Exit Slips.

## Activity 6: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to consider this lesson's work with Kazan's 1951 film and respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

**What does Kazan choose to emphasize or omit in his treatment of the selected scenes from *A Streetcar Named Desire*? Analyze 1-2 directorial choices that represent Kazan's interpretation of Williams's play.**

Additionally, instruct students to conduct a brief search into the Hays Code and respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

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How does your research of the Hays Code impact your interpretation of the film version of the play?

- Students follow along.

## Homework

Based on your work with Kazan's 1951 film of *A Streetcar Named Desire*, respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

**What does Kazan choose to emphasize or omit in his treatment of the selected scenes from *A Streetcar Named Desire*? Analyze 1-2 directorial choices that represent Kazan's interpretation of Williams's play.**

Additionally, conduct a brief search into the Hays Code and respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

How does your research of the Hays Code impact your interpretation of the film version of the play?

## 12.4 Common Core Learning Standards Tool

CCS Standards: Reading—Literature		I know what this is asking and I can do this.	This standard has familiar language, but I haven't mastered it.	I am not familiar with this standard.
RL.11-12.7	Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)			

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## A Streetcar Named Desire Film Viewing Tool

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Class:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
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**Directions:** Use this tool to record your observations about Elia Kazan's directorial choices in the film *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

**Focus Question:** What do you notice about the characters, setting/set design, and cinematic choices the director makes in the film?

Character Development	Setting/Set Design	Cinematic Choices
<i>e.g., Which characters are in each scene? How do the actors portray their characters? How are the characters dressed? Which character(s) is the focus of each scene? How do the characters interact with each other?</i>	<i>e.g., Where is this scene set? What do you notice about this environment? What do you notice about the time and place?</i>	<i>e.g., How is sound used? How is lighting used? How are camera angles used? Who or what is framed by the camera?</i>
<b>Segment 1: 00:00-07:22 (pages 3-15)</b>		
<b>Segment 2: 32:04-43:51 (pages 54-67)</b>		

<b>Segment 3: 1:08:46-19:37 (pages 108-123)</b>		
<b>Segment 4: 1:30:30-1:41:10 (pages 132-150)</b>		
<b>Segment 5: 1:52:00-2:04:30 (pages 162-179)</b>		

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## Model A *Streetcar Named Desire* Film Viewing Tool

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Class:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
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**Directions:** Use this tool to record your observations about Elia Kazan's directorial choices in the film *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

**Focus Question:** What do you notice about the characters, setting/set design, and cinematic choices the director makes in the film?

Character Development	Setting/Set Design	Cinematic Choices
e.g., Which characters are in each scene? How do the actors portray their characters? How are the characters dressed? Which character(s) is the focus of each scene? How do the characters interact with each other?	e.g., Where is this scene set? What do you notice about this environment? What do you notice about the time and place?	e.g., How is sound used? How is lighting used? How are camera angles used? Who or what is framed by the camera?
<b>Segment 1: 00:00-07:22 (pages 3-15)</b>		



<p>Blanche emerges from the steam of the train. A soldier helps her get to the streetcar.</p> <p>Stanley is “making all the rhubarb” by getting into a fight with several men at the bowling alley.</p> <p>Blanche seems anxious about being in the bowling alley.</p> <p>Stella and Blanche go to a dark area of the bowling alley, and Blanche pushes down the light and orders a drink.</p> <p>In the play, on page 15, Blanche insists that Stella stand up so she can look at her figure and Stella does. In the film, Stella does not stand up.</p> <p>Stella cries out to the waiter, like a call of emergency.</p>	<p>Blanche arrives at night from the train; it is loud and late. This opening differs from the play in that the play opens at Elysian Fields.</p> <p>Elysian Fields has a shared courtyard and is dark, walled off from the street. The couch in the courtyard is torn.</p> <p>When Blanche enters the bowling alley, it is bright and noisy. The lights flicker because of the overhead fans. Stella has to push through bodies to get to Blanche. The bowling alley was not an original setting in the play.</p>	<p>The music at the beginning includes a lot of horns that clash with one another.</p> <p>The noise and fight in the neighborhood bar is loud. The bowling alley is also loud and chaotic. Blanche appears nervous.</p> <p>When Blanche enters the bowling alley, her face is seen in the mirror rather than facing the camera directly.</p> <p>We only see Stanley from afar, in a group of men, where Stella was watching Stanley bowl.</p>
<b>Segment 2: 32:04-43:51 (pages 54-67)</b>		

<p>When Stanley comes in to turn off the radio, Blanche throws herself on the couch and turns away from him. This movement is not in the original text.</p> <p>The way Blanche says “DuBois” is very sexy: she purses her lips like a kiss.</p> <p>When Mitch shouts out to Stanley “Coming!” the effect is jarring to the audience.</p> <p>Stella hits the other poker players after Stanley throws the radio out of the window.</p> <p>After the shower, Stanley throws each man against the wall.</p> <p>Stanley cries out, realizing he needs Stella.</p> <p>Stella moves down the stairs as if sleepwalking, moving slowly towards Stanley and he is kneeling, rubbing his head on her belly.</p>	<p>The setting is split into two rooms: where the women laugh and talk and where the men play poker. Stella and Stanley shout back and forth across the cloth barrier.</p> <p>Stanley invades the women’s room by tearing apart the curtain. Mitch separates it gently, respecting the boundaries.</p> <p>Stella tears across the curtain to attack the poker players.</p> <p>The characters break lights, windows, and furniture.</p>	<p>Stanley is extremely loud throughout the scene, yelling through the curtains into the bedroom.</p> <p>When Stanley comes in to turn off the radio the first time, the camera angle shows him towering over Blanche.</p> <p>Mitch turns suddenly to the screen for a close-up so we can see him shout “Coming!” in a brutal way.</p> <p>When Stanley hits Stella, the violence takes place off-screen.</p> <p>The first song played on the radio is seductive and jungle-like (when Blanche is by herself).</p> <p>The second song played on the radio (when Mitch and Blanche dance) is cultured and feminine.</p> <p>When Mitch begins to compliment Blanche, music plays in the background.</p>
<p><b>Segment 3: 1:08:46-1:19:37 (pages 108-123)</b></p>		

<p>Blanche's story about her young husband is changed from the text version.</p> <p>In the film, Blanche says, "I killed him," and dramatic music plays. In the play she just says, "the person I loved I lost" (p. 113).</p> <p>Stanley's dialogue is changed from the original text. Stanley is gentle when he says, "I hate to tell you this" and skips hurtful lines from the play, such as "I'd like to have been in that office when Dame Blanche was called on the carpet!" (p. 122).</p>	<p>This scene does not take place outside of Stella and Stanley's home, as in the play. Instead, Blanche and Mitch are on a foggy pier.</p> <p>There is a new scene inserted between Scenes Six and Seven in which Stanley tells Mitch about Blanche. In this part, there are five men holding Mitch back, but no one is holding Stanley.</p> <p>This new scene also features Blanche in the bathroom, with a mirror and steam rising from the bath.</p>	<p>The Varsouviana plays when Blanche tells her story about the boy, her young husband. The audience hears the shot.</p> <p>We see close-ups of Blanche as she tells her story about her young husband's suicide. She seems softened by the lighting.</p>
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## 12.4.1 Lesson 11 Exit Slip

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Class:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
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**Directions:** Explain how the discussion confirmed or changed your initial ideas about the prompt.

**Text:** *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951) by Elia Kazan.

**Prompt:** What do you notice about the characters, setting/set design, and cinematic choices the director makes in the film?

**Provide evidence of how the discussion changed or confirmed your initial ideas from the *A Streetcar Named Desire* Film Viewing Tool.**

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## Model 12.4.1 Lesson 11 Exit Slip

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Class:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
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**Directions:** Explain how the discussion confirmed or changed your initial ideas about the prompt.

**Text:** *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951) by Elia Kazan.

**Prompt:** What do you notice about the characters, setting/set design, and cinematic choices the director makes in the film?

**Provide evidence of how the discussion changed or confirmed your initial ideas from the *A Streetcar Named Desire* Film Viewing Tool.**

The discussion challenged my analysis that Blanche is portrayed as unstable throughout the film. My peers pointed out that while Blanche is portrayed as nervous and anxious, she has a firm grip on reality. Certain symbolic images seem to follow Blanche, such as darkness and steam or fog. These directorial choices appear deliberate to separate Blanche from the harsh, bright reality that Stella and Stanley live in; however, instead of suggesting that Blanche does not have a grip on reality, they suggest that she prefers gentleness, softness, and quiet because the world has been unkind to her. For example, in segment 1, when Blanche is introduced, she emerges from the steam of the train. She appears helpless, and the straightforwardness of the young soldier contrasts with her nervousness. When Blanche enters the bowling alley, it is bright and noisy. Blanche cowers and begs to be brought to the diner where it is darker, indicating that the world of Stella and Stanley seems large and noisy and too much for Blanche.