

# a raisin in the sun study guide

**A Raisin in the Sun Study Guide** is an essential resource for anyone looking to delve into the profound themes, character dynamics, and social commentary present in Lorraine Hansberry's iconic play. First performed in 1959, it was groundbreaking for its portrayal of African American life and aspirations, setting the stage for discussions about race, identity, and family in America. This study guide will explore key elements of the play, including its characters, themes, and historical context, providing a comprehensive understanding of its significance.

## Overview of the Play

A Raisin in the Sun centers on the Younger family, who live in a cramped apartment on Chicago's South Side. The play unfolds as they await a \$10,000 life insurance check following the death of the family patriarch, which each member of the family hopes to use to pursue their own dreams. The title of the play is derived from Langston Hughes's poem "Harlem," which questions what happens to a dream deferred.

## Major Characters

Understanding the characters is crucial to grasping the thematic depth of the play. Here are the main characters:

- **Lena Younger (Mama):** The matriarch of the family who dreams of buying a house to provide a better life for her family.