

# Glass menagerie outline 1

[Literature](#), [Play](#)



Glass Menagerie Outline 1 Summarizing Sentence: Amanda Wingfield is the most prominent and dynamic character in the play. I. Amanda begins the play with the first impression of being overprotective and critical of her children A. In the play she appears to be a constantly worried about her families future. 1. She comes up with foolish ways to some how secure their lives. a. She asks Tom to find Laura a gentle man at the factory B. Even as grown ups she would try to control them and teach them lessons 1. " Honey, don't push with your fingers. If you have to push with something, the thing to push with is a crust of bread. And chew chew! " 2. Argues that Tom is spending to much of his time at the movies 3. Nags at him to help find someone for his sister C. She uses Laura to relive her past when she was married to Mr. Wingfield 1. In her younger days, she was a typical Southern Belle, brought up in a genteel family and pampered by her seventeen beaux. a. When Jim comes over for dinner her southern accent comes into play 2. she continuously repeats the story of the " one Sunday afternoon in Blue Mountain" D. Amanda went from having it all to struggling to help her children succeeded so they could one day have a better life 1. She encouraged both her children to enroll in activities so that they could improve themselves a. An example would be Laura attending business school 2. Amanda always tries to get Laura gentleman callers II. After Laura is deeply hurt by her situation with Jim and after, Amanda consoles her daughter in a real motherly approach A. Amanda then realizes in her attempt to help her daughter she has only hurt her and made her face reality 1. Jim gave her false hopes 2. She feels lonesome now more than ever before B. Amanda blames Tom for the whole thing 1. She thinks Tom has " played a

wonderful joke" on her and Laura. 2. She thinks Tom purposely " had us make such fools of ourselves. " C. She learns to accept not only her unsuccessful life but Laura's as well Glass Menagerie Outline 2 Thesis: Mr. Wingfields absence leads to Laura taking comfort in things that do not help her become any less socially awkward. When Jim O'Connors comes into her life she uses his presence to replace that of which she had longed for from her father, but later leads to nothing but false hopes. I. Laura escapes to an imaginary place where there is feeling and security. A. She resorts to her glass collection to deal with difficulties of not having any gentle man callers or social life. 1. Jim says she resorts to " a world of her own—a world of little glass ornaments" B. She constantly replays her fathers old records 1. These records help her stay in her imaginary world a. When Amanda confronts Laura about this, Laura " Crosses to the victrola and winds it up. " C. She stops going to Business School 1. Walks around pretending like she does 2. Her mother finds out and becomes more worried that her future will come to destruction if she does not find a gentle man caller soon II. Jim O'Conner is her high school crush that she reminisces about time to time and is very nervous to see after so many years A. She remembers Jim as this perfect guy that everyone liked 1." He was a star in basketball, captain of the debating club, president of the senior class and the glee club and he sang the male lead in the annual light operas." B. After seeing him she becomes infatuated by him and his welcoming presence 1. Jim helps build her self confidence a." Unicorns—aren't they extinct in the modern world" b. Laura's problem is she has an " Inferiority complex. " C. His presence replaces her father, which she has evidently been longing for 1. She plays his old records and 2. Chooses to

stay home and be an outcast A. This leads to a tragic heart break for Laura

1. Laura has no place in the " modern world" and that she is like the unicorn.
  - a. The horn symbolizes her heart while the unicorn itself is her detachment from the real world.
2. She should not be touched, since she breaks so easily.
  - a. Even she seems to realize this when she tells Jim, " if you breathe... it breaks. "

B. Jim has " abandoned" her with false hope just as her father did

1. She does not cope with abandonment well
2. In this way Jim's presence occupied her fathers for that moment in time

C. Mr. Wingfields abandonment to Laura is what makes her the " unicorn she is and Jim does not make it any better

III. Jim accidentaly breaks her glass unicorn kisses Lauren and then confesses to her that he is engaged to be married

### Glass Menagerie Outline 3

Thesis: Tennessee Williams uses the setting of the Wingfield's apartment to help symbolize that Amanda deludes herself from her social and economic fall by clinging to another time and place.

- I. Mr. Wingfields portrait is the only photo that hangs on the wall of their apartment.
  - A. It is a constant and painful reminder that the man of the house has left them to handle these difficult situations by themselves
1. Represents life she use to have when he was around.
  - a. His smile helps signifies the happy life she once had
  2. Makes her constantly think of the past
- B. Makes Amanda focuses on Laura and finding her a gentlemen caller to escape the reality of her situation.
  1. Begs Tom to bring one of his coworkers to dinner for Laura.
  - a. Jim is invited over to have dinner with Amanda and Laura
  2. Becomes upset when she finds out Laura has dropped out of school.
- II. The shafts of light illuminate selected areas or characters.
  - A. The lighting keeps Laura the center of attention even when it is not apparent from the action in the scene.
  1. For example, in the

argument between Tom and Amanda in scene 3, it does not directly involve Laura, but the light shines on her anyway. 2. Another example is the scene where they are eating dinner. Laura is lying on the sofa, taking no part in the conversation, but the light is still focused on her. III. Leading out of the Wingfields' apartment is a fire escape with a landing. A. The fire escape represents exactly what its name implies: an escape from frustration and dysfunction that is in the Wingfield's house. 1. When Tom lets the screen door to the landing slam shut, it is made clear that Amanda is denied escape from her reality. a. She becomes obsessed with Laura because it reminds her of her past. 2. Laura slips on the fire escape in Scene Four, representing her inability to escape from her situation. 3. However, Tom frequently steps out onto the landing to smoke which foreshadows him eventually escaping.

Glass Menagerie Outline 4 Thesis: By using Tom as the narrator, Tennessee Williams tells his play from the retrospective point of view which shows Tom not only as the narrator but also as the character from his past memory. I. As the narrator he plays an older Tom who is remembering the past. A. Tom sometimes addresses the audience directly, providing a more detached explanation of what has been happening onstage B. These memories make him confront his past which he cannot seem to escape 1. He now understands more about himself and about life than he was able to before leaving home C. There is now sadness in him where before there had been anger, resentment and longing. 1. Oh Laura, Laura, I tried to leave you behind me, but I am more faithful than I intended to be!" (Scene VII). a. He seems to feel guilty at having left her behind II. Tom also played a character who he acted in the recollections of his memory. A. Tom struggles with

choosing between his own personal dreams versus accepting the reality of his families situation. 1. Tom wants adventure, excitement, new experiences, new places a. He desires are to write poetry and escape the daily life of the factory and his struggling family. 2. Tom describes his current situation as imprisonment a. Amanda knows the day is coming that Tom will leave. She says, " But not till there's someone to take your place." 3. Tom is loosing patience and wants to pursue his journey. a. " I'm like my father. The bastard son of a bastard! See how he grins? And he's been absent going on sixteen years!" b. He has justified his not feeling obligated to his family by saying this III. Tom was a sensitive, artistic man, who was forced by circumstances into a tough situation having to choosing between his family and his dreams. A. He is now has to live and relive the situation of the play 1. Although he escapes the situation, he does not find freedom 2. his consciousness forces him to recall the situation over and over again until he finds meaning in it.