

# Pursuing the american dream



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Pursuing the American Dream In *A Raisin in the Sun*, Walter spends his time pursuing a dream of owning a liquor store. He honestly believes in this dream and he believes his dream has come true when he thinks Willy is at the door. He embraces his wife and says, " Sometimes it is hard to let the future begin" (Hansberry 2. 3. 153). Willy soon realizes that his hopes are dashed when Bobo turns out to be the one at the door. He tries to hold on to his dream, and tries to explain Willy's disappearance by saying, " He's somewhere - he's got to be somewhere. We just got to find him - me and you got to find him" (Hansberry 2. . 180). He tries to believe but it becomes harder and harder. His hopes are destroyed, and his dream of owning a liquor store and improving the life of his family has disappeared. Ruth, also, has a dream; she dreams of having a better life for her family. She believes that her family doesn't have to live in squalor, and she says, " Life don't have to be like this. I mean sometimes people can do things so that things are better" (Hansberry 2. 1. 133). She believes if they work hard they can change things for the better. She really wants to improve her life, and she is willing to sacrifice.

She wants to help Mama keep the house that Mama bought, and she promises, " I'll work ... I'll work twenty hours a day in all the kitchens in Chicago" (Hansberry 3. 1. 74). Her new life is what she believes her family needs, and she will work hard to keep that life. Additionally, Beneatha plans on making a difference. She wants to make a difference in life by becoming a doctor, but Walter thinks her dreams are too farfetched. Consequently, Beneatha sarcastically apologizes, " And forgive me for ever wanting to be

anything at all" (Hansberry 1. 1. 123). Beneatha is determined and she stands up for her want to be a doctor.

Beneatha gets back at her brother when he loses the money. She mocks him by saying, " Did you dream of yachts on Lake Michigan, Brother? "

(Hansberry 3. 1. 60) Through this mocking, she disguises the disappointment of having her dream destroyed and not being able to stop it. Finally, Mama has a dream. She wants what she believes is best for her family, and that is why she gets a nicer house. She wants to keep her husband's dream alive, and she tells us that, " Yes, a fine man - just couldn't never catch up with his dreams, that's all" (Hansberry 1. 1. 208).

Big Walter never had the chance to achieve his dreams, but it is his death that allows his children to try to achieve their dreams. Mama remembers her husband and says, " Big Walter used to say, he'd get right wet in the eyes sometimes, lean his head back with the water standing in his eyes and say, ' Seem like God didn't see fit to give the black man nothing but dreams - but He did give us children to make them dreams seem worthwhile'" (Hansberry 1. 1. 206). Mama's dreams are not for her, but are for her children. She reminds us of the sacrifice parents make for their children.