

*The Glass Menagerie*: Short Answer Essay Assignment

Choose one of the topics below and write an essay response. Be specific; don't speak in generalities. Use facts, examples, and incidents for support. Your essay should be one-to-two pages in length, typed in MLA form. If you choose to quote from the play in your essay, you do not have to document for the purposes of this assignment. Don't forget to organize your essay into appropriate paragraphs!

1. Read Tom's opening speech carefully. What is the "social background" of the play as he explains it, and how does the time period of the story affect the plot and characters?
2. Read Tom's closing speech carefully. What does he reveal about himself as a person, and how has he changed since leaving home?
3. Each of the four characters attempts to escape his or her reality. Explain how and why.
4. Is Jim O'Connor a sympathetic character whom we should like and admire, or does he deserve our criticism? (Take a position—one or the other!)
5. Laura experiences numerous internal and external conflicts in the play. Explain them.