

FENCES FILM COMPARISON

Name: _____ Period: _____

COMPARING AUGUST WILSON' PLAY TO DENZEL WASHINGTON'S 2016 FILM

PART ONE: ANALYZING THE SETTING

Directions: Compare how the setting is depicted in the play with how it is presented in the film.



Setting	How described in the play <i>(Look in your books to find words and phrases describing each of the different settings.)</i>	How shown in the movie <i>(Give specific examples of how the setting is depicted, including changes from the play).</i>
The porch		

What is the time period of the play?

How does the film depict the time period? How effective is the presentation? Explain.

PART TWO: ANALYZING THE MAJOR CHARACTERS

Directions: For each of the major characters listed, analyze their appearance in terms of the qualities listed below.

	Troy Maxson (Denzel Washington)	Rose Maxson (Viola Davis)	Cory Maxson (Jovan Adepo)	Gabe Maxson (Mykelti Williamson)	Jim Bono (Stephen Henderson)	Lyons (Russell Hornsby)
Appearance <i>(Consider costumes, personal props, looks, etc.)</i>						
Acting <i>(How believable was the character? How would you rate their acting?)</i>						



And the Oscar goes to.... Which actor do you think does the best job portraying his or her character? Why

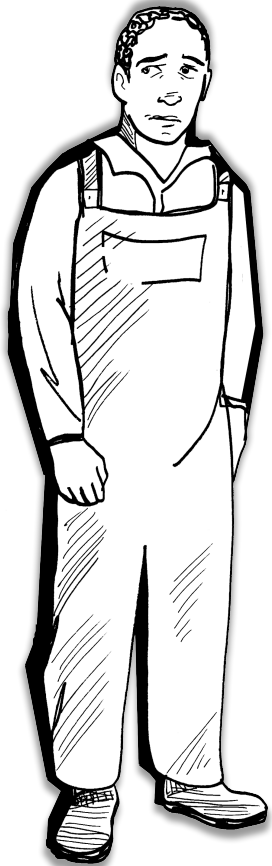
PART THREE: ARTISTIC DIFFERENCES

Directions: With any adaptation, there are bound to be artistic differences. In the movie, there are several minor changes from Wilson's play. For each of the elements below, explain why you think Washington made the change for his movie.

Element changed from the play	Why do you think the director made this change?	What effect does this have on the story overall?
The play begins with the Troy and Bono sitting on Troy's porch. In the film, the two characters are shown riding on the back of a garbage truck.		
The scene in Act Two between Troy and Bono takes place in bar.		
The thunderstorm added when Rose tells Troy about Alberta.		
A short scene is added showing Troy visiting the commissioner's office.		
Gabriel's last line occurs right after a cloud has blocked out part of the sun.		

PART FOUR: ANALYZING CRITICS' VIEWS

In Richard Brody's review of the film for *The New Yorker* magazine, he wrote: "It goes without saying that the actors in *Fences*, among them Washington and Viola Davis, are some of the most talented and skillful in the business. But Washington's filming of the play, despite his evident deep commitment to it, is far less imaginative and less original than Wilson's creation of the play; the performances resemble theatrical ones and spurn the distinctive exhilarations of movie acting." Do you agree with his viewpoint? Does the play successfully make the leap from stage to screen? Explain.



In his review of the film, Paul Asay of *Plugged In* wrote: "Even though its dialogue can be harsh and its protagonist can be a monster, *Fences* has some important things to say." What does this play/film have to say? Identify two.

- 1.
- 2.

How does the movie stack up against the play? Which do you think was better, the play or the film? Why?

If you were to make a film of *Fences*, what is one thing you would do differently from the current version?