AUGUST WILSON... IN HIS OWN WORDS

“ I wanted to present the unique particulars of black American culture as the transformation of impulse and sensibility into codes of conduct and response, into cultural rituals that defined and celebrated ourselves as men and women of high purpose. I wanted to place this culture on stage in all of its richness and fullness and to demonstrate its ability to sustain us in all areas of human life and endeavor and through profound moments of our history in which the larger society has thought less of us than we have thought of ourselves."
Common Core Standards

The themes and topics presented in August Wilson’s plays offer rich, timeless lessons in American history through the medium of dramatic literature. The issues Wilson raises are also highly relevant today. His body of work, the documentary August Wilson: The Ground On Which I Stand, and the discussions and activities featured in this guide can all address key state education standards in English/Language Arts, History, and Drama/Theater.

In Common Core states and non-Common Core states, some relevant 9th – 12th grade standards include those related to:

- Historical & Cultural Contexts for Arts and Humanities
- Critical Response
- Aesthetic Response
- Reading, Analyzing & Interpreting Literature
- Characteristics & Function of the English Language
- Historical Analysis & Skills Development
- United States History
- Literary Elements & Devices
- Dialogue, Character, & Plot Development
- Principles and Ideals of Civic & Political Life
- Cultural Change
- Interpretation of Historical Events
- Ethnic & Racial Relations