

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# August Wilson

Frederick August Kittel was born in 1945.

Out of six kids, he was the fourth child.

His mom was Black, his dad was White,

Coming out of Pittsburgh at the start of his life.

His mom's name was Daisy Wilson.

After his dad left the family, mom raised the children.

They would relocate to the Hill District,

Which would be the setting most of his plays would live in.

Daisy later remarried; the family moved

To a White suburb where people were being cruel—

Racial discrimination and a whole bunch of threats

Received daily due to difference in their color of flesh.

At age 15, Kittel was accused

Of plagiarizing a paper, so he quit school.

He focused on educating himself by reading books,

Learning about people's experiences and what it took—

To be a shining star like a gem of the ocean.

The wisdom of his words put hearts into motion.

Heartfelt poems that evolved into plays,

Told Black people to stand up through the stories he conveyed.

He broke down fences; he knew he was a writer.

Through the greatness of his words, his spark got brighter.

Writing poems in his room, he didn't yet know they'd turn to plays

And make it on Broadway.

On the journey to award-winning playwright, literary scholar,

Changed his name from Frederick Kittel in his mother's honor.

Became August Wilson when he started to see

He was more, way more than what he dreamed.

The cofounder and director of Black Horizon Theater,

With his poetry published it became clear to

See he had a gift. Then he moved to Minnesota

Where he wrote his first play, Jitney—it was over.

Five years later, Ma Rainey's Black Bottom

Opened on Broadway, and it was so popular.

Three years later, Wilson received a Tony and Pulitzer

For his play Fences.

Another Pulitzer awarded in 1990

For The Piano Lesson, Wilson was on a high streak.

These were part of Wilson's "Pittsburgh Cycle,"

A series of 10 plays set in different decades.

He loved to write about the human condition,

Depicting how we are thinking about our position.

Wanted Black folks to know their culture and roots,

And wanted Black folks to thrive in all our pursuits.

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