Comprehension Strategies

This selection is broken into two parts. On the first day, read Scene 1 on pages 90–95. On the second day, read Scene 2 on pages 96–101.

❶ Clarifying Teacher Modeling: *Authors sometimes set off words by using special types of print, such as italics. We can see that these words describe the setting and what the actors are doing. We can remember from reading other plays that these are called stage directions.*

❷ Clarifying Teacher Modeling: *I wonder what Langston means when he says that his father wants to make him into what he thinks he should be. Why don't they know each other very well? We will keep reading to find out.*

❸ Adjusting Reading Speed Teacher Modeling: *When we read, we should take into account the kind of text we are reading. That helps us understand it better. A play is a script that tells the actors what to say and do. A lot of stage directions interrupt the flow of the dialogue. We might have to read more slowly when we get to stage directions.*

Comprehension Check

Why doesn't Langston finish the accounting problems before his father returns? He had been writing instead of working on the problems.

CHARACTERS

Langston Hughes, *Black American writer*

Mr. James Hughes, *his father*

Señora Garcia, *housekeeper*

Thad, *medical student*

Scene 1

TIME:
  Summer, 1920.

SETTING:
  Study in James Hughes's home near Mexico City. A desk, chair, and wastebasket are center. Accountant's ledger lies closed on edge of desk. Floor vase with tall pampas grass is nearby.

AT RISE:
  Langston Hughes *sits writing at desk.* Señora Garcia *enters, holding feather duster.*

Señora Garcia:
  Señor Langston, how can you sit in one place for hours just writing?

Langston *(Leaning back)*:
  Señora Garcia, if I could spend my whole life writing, I'd be happy.

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🍎 ## Teacher Tip

DIFFICULT WORDS *Hijo querido* means "only son."

Word Structure

Inflectional endings:
  plural *-s*   **hours**
  continuing action *-ing*   **writing**
  past tense *-ed*   **finished**