



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1980 Volume III: Drama

Introduction

Drama is more than a verbal art. Recognizing that fact, the teacher of English discovers a variety of problems and opportunities. How can we lead our students toward the thoughts, feelings, and actions that are implicit in a play's dialogue? How can we begin to imagine a performance? How can students begin to become actors in the play they are reading? If we turn such problems around, we may find clues to pedagogical strategies. The teaching of English may itself benefit from recognizing the power of the non-verbal. Can non-verbal performance be, for some of our students, a useful preparation for engaging a text? Can dramatic improvisations increase motivation for study of the language arts? Can drama provide a bridge between the texture of the students' lives and certain preoccupations of our culture? Can it provide a context for exploring the situations of bilingual students? Of black? Of adolescents as a group? Such questions formed the basis of our seminar discussions and activities, and they are variously reflected in these curricular units. Each unit explores some ways by which dramatic performance might be integrated with the teaching of English. Each unit might well serve as the basis for yet further experiment in such directions.

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