



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1990 Volume II: Contemporary American Drama: Scripts and Performance

Preparation of a Play to Be Performed before a School Audience

Guide for Curriculum Unit 90.02.05
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My curriculum unit will deal with the preparation of a play to be performed before a school audience. I work as a drama/dance instructor for the Comprehensive Arts program. I teach seventh and eighth graders in the New Haven public middle schools. Most of the schools I teach in have either a racially mixed population or a population of predominantly African-American students. I know, based on my own experiences and also the experiences of my students, that the schools' curriculum doesn't always meet the specific needs of certain ethnic groups. For this reason, one of my major goals with this project is to select materials which will not only be age-appropriate for the levels I teach but will also provide a positive description of the image of African-Americans. I want the young actors' experience to be one which will make them proud of who they are, where they come from and where they are going.

If we want our children to have high aspirations in life we have to show them that they don't have to be a junkman or a maid but that they can be doctors and lawyers. They don't have to be prostitutes and drug-dealers. I am going to show them through theater that they can believe in Bill Cosby but also that they don't have to be ashamed of Sanford and Son. They have to be able to see both sides of the economic line. For this reason, it's going to be real important to select excerpts that are realistic but not too real, positive without being too much fantasy, and on the reading level of the students I teach.

(Recommended for Drama, grades 7-8)

Key Words

Poetry Musical Theater Drama Performances Exercises Drama Play Production General

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