



Remember the Time: An Exploration of History Through Drama

Curriculum Unit 93.03.10
by Nicolette W. Perrault

When I thought about participating in this seminar I immediately knew what I wanted to call my unit. I love that new video by Michael Jackson called "Remember The Time." I love the costumes, the music, the dancing, and the visual effects. As I watched the video more and more I began to think about traveling back in time. Wouldn't it be great to travel back to any period in history and experience first hand what it was like to have lived during that time? What better way to do that than through drama.

Once I had decided on the title for my unit, I needed to think about what I hoped to accomplish, and how at the same time, I could best meet the needs of my students. After careful consideration I knew that I would have to outline my goals for the unit and state objectives as guidelines for the students. I also knew that I wanted my unit to include the following:

- A Historical Overview of Drama
- Exposure to Plays of Ethnic Diversity
- Creative Activities and Experiences to Reinforce the Reading

In recent years we have been working diligently to improve the curriculum in our school. Because of our diverse ethnic population we have been developing a multicultural-based literature program. We hope to expose students to characters and situations with whom they share a common bond. We hope to strengthen cultural awareness and increase tolerance of cultural differences. Keeping this focus in mind I wanted to include some dramatic works which would be consistent with our curriculum.

The most difficult part of designing the unit for me was deciding on a workable format. In order to give myself some type of direction I decided to make an outline. In order to determine what I wanted to accomplish through the presentation of this unit, I thought it would be a good idea to set up my objectives first. The unit objectives are listed below.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

1. To increase general knowledge of students with respect to the history of the theatre.
2. To expose students to plays whose merit has endured through present day.
3. To expose students to terminology used in the dramatic arena.
4. To help students identify the elements essential to the success of a dramatic work.
5. To effectively teach students to analyze a dramatic work in both oral and written form.
6. To explore and experience the various techniques of performance.
7. To reinforce the ability to express emotional response to a dramatic work.
8. To help students to recognize similarities Which exist in different cultures through the use of drama.
9. To help students to develop an awareness of cultural differences through dramatic works.
10. To help students to become more tolerant of values, ideas, and customs associated with minority cultures.

This unit is designed to be used with College English III, Advance English III, or College English IV classes. It will span a period of nine weeks. of course, we all know about “the best laid schemes of mice and men.” With all of the constant interruptions that take place in the course of a normal school day, it’s virtually impossible to stick to a planned schedule, or lesson plan. Therefore, as a classroom teacher, one has to constantly make adjustments. I find that I have a tendency to over plan. If I find that I am going overboard on one particular segment of my unit, I can adjust the next segment in my weekly plan. Therefore, if the unit covers more than one marking period and perhaps carries over to a tenth week. this is fine. If one particular part of the unit is not successful, I may decide to spend less time on this area or substitute a work with which I feel I will achieve a higher level of success. The schedule outlined below is subject to revision.

TIME SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: History of Drama (An overview)

(Read *Much Ado About Nothing*)

- A. *Oedipus the King*
- B. *Oedipus At Colonus*
- C. *Antigone*

WEEK 2: The Medieval Period

- A. History of the Medieval Period
- B. Discussion of *Everyman*

WEEK 3 & 4: The Elizabethan Period

- A. Introduction to the life of Shakespeare
- B. Discussion of *Much Ado About Nothing*
- C. Movie Review of *Much Ado About Nothing*

WEEK 5 6: The Modern Period

(Read *The Colored Museum*)

- A. A Brief Overview of This Period
- B. *A Doll's House* by Ibsen
- C. *Arms and the Man* by Shaw
- D. *The Glass Menagerie*
- E. Discussions
- F. Oral Readings
- G. Essays

WEEK 7 & 8: Multicultural Theatre

(Read *My Children! My Africa*)

- A. *The Colored Museum*
- B. Discussing The Play
- C. Oral Readings
- D. Essays
- E. *My Children! My Africa!*

(Practice scenes and prepare projects)

F. Discussing The Play

G. Oral Readings

H. Essays

WEEK 9: Lights! Camera! Action!

A. Presentation Of Projects

B. Monologues/Duet Scenes

C. Unit Exam

To initiate the activities presented each week in this unit I plan to use the following criteria to help me organize my ideas and remain focused on the goals that I want to achieve each week. Thanks for the suggestion Dr. Whitaker. I'll call this my Seven Step System (SSS).

1. First, I will tell what I plan to do.
2. Next, I will present questions I would like to pose to students
3. I will tell what I want students to understand.
4. I will discuss what aspects of dramatic form and style concern me.
5. Next, theme or content will be discussed and analyzed.
6. Specific objectives will be stated for each section.
7. Measurement or Form of Assessment will be stated.

WEEK 1: History Of Drama (An Overview)

STEP 1: In this first week the unit will be introduced to students. A reading schedule, an assignment list, and a list of suggestive ideas for a final project will be issued to students in the form of handouts. During the first two days of the week students will attentively listen and record notes in class as I begin to give background information on the Greek Theatre.

STEP 2: Here are some sample questions I will be using in our discussions: When the actors performed on stage, how do you think they were able to be heard by the 20,000 spectators? Can you imagine the costumes of this day? Would they have been simple or ornate? what, do you suppose, were subjects of the plays? How did the playwrights of this period intensify certain scenes of their plays? What part did the chorus play in productions? Does any musical instrument come to mind when you think of Ancient Greece?

STEP 3: I want students to be familiar with the lifestyles of the people and realize the importance of the drama and the role it played in their daily existence. I want students to be able to identify specific sections of the theatre and be able to recall famous playwrights of this period. I would like students to be able to identify the plot in a Greek tragedy. I want students to read passages from the translations of *Oedipus the King*, *Oedipus at Colonus*, and *Antigone* and analyze the action using clues found in preceding scenes. I want students to be able to identify themes found in Greek tragedy.

STEP 4: Most students will find the language in a Greek tragedy to be a bit of a challenge. In order to achieve fluidity and any measure of comprehension, oral readings are a must. Students will practice speeches made by a character of his or her choice and read and interpret them.

STEP 5: Students will attempt to identify the theme(s) in *Oedipus the King*. Students will be afforded the opportunity of letting their creative juices flow when they develop their own Greek tragedies.

STEP 6: Students will be able to define the following terms: a) Dionysus b) dithyramb c) orchestra d) thymele e) skene f) proskenion g) trilogy h) tetralogy

Students will be familiar with four playwrights of the Greek period. (Sophocles, Euripides, Aeschylus, and Aristophanes) Students will be able to fluently read and interpret a passage taken from a Greek play.

Students will be able to identify the qualities of a tragic figure in written form. (Essay)

Students will be able to identify the theme in three Greek plays: *Oedipus the King*: *Oedipus at Colonus*. and *Antigone*.

Students will develop characters, a setting, and a plot for a Greek tragedy.

STEP 7: Students will be assessed on their a) oral readings and interpretations b) essay on a tragic Greek figure c) plot development of a Greek tragedy.

I will begin the unit by asking students to take an imaginary trip in time with me. Softly pulsating in the background ritualistic drums can be heard. (A tape of South African music is played throughout this segment of the discussion.) If we were to travel back to the very beginning of time when man was quite primitive, we would see that man has always been ceremonious. Primitive people would act out little dramas to communicate their desires to the all powerful spirits or gods. Most of these ceremonies were religious in nature. Sometimes they would perform dances or rituals in hopes of attaining a plentiful food supply, or they would desire the gods to open the heavens to bring forth rain in a dry season. Sometimes these ceremonies would last for hours, or sometimes they would last for days. Since these earliest dramas were not written they were preserved much like the myths and folktales of the past. They were passed down from generation to generation mainly by tribal and religious sanctions. But the point that I would like to make here is that drama has always been around.

Now let's move forward in time. Let's travel to a period in time to Ancient Greece. If the students want to close their eyes to travel back in time this would not be inappropriate. Softly, in the background Greek music, especially strings, would be played to create the mood or atmosphere closely akin to this period. As they listen to the music, I would ask them to imagine what it must have been like during that time. I would ask them to describe what they see. I would ask them to describe how the people are dressed. I would ask them what the people are doing. I would ask students to imagine and describe the houses of the Ancient Greeks. "Let's knock on a door and see how hospitable the Greeks of this time period are. what luck! We have found someone at home." I would then ask students to describe what they envision. Is the furniture simple or ornate? Are the rooms spacious? "Um! What is that I smell?" I would ask students to describe a typical meal of the Ancient Greeks. At the completion of the warm-up activity, I would ease into the first phase of the unit, The History of Drama. In lecture form I would give students information about the origin of drama.

You have studied Greek and Roman mythology. The Greeks worshipped many gods and goddesses. Belief in

many gods ... what is this called? Polytheistic ... right. This means that they believed in many gods. The Greeks believed that the gods governed every aspect of their daily lives. one of these gods was called Dionysus, the god of wine and vegetation. Each year a celebration was held in his honor. "In all the country districts the villagers dressed in goat skins like the mythical satyr attendants on the gods, smeared their faces with wine lees, and danced about a man chosen as their leader to impersonate Dionysus." In their revelry the people became the mouthpieces of the god. In poetic language they would tell of the god's triumphs or sufferings. On these occasions a choral hymn called a dithyramb was sung. Dances, impersonations, songs and narratives were also a part of the ritual. Now as time passed these ceremonies became more elaborate. Therefore, a permanent theatre was erected to honor the god.

"The famous Theatre of Dionysus in Athens was begun about 500 B.C." ² The theatre was semi-circular in shape and situated at the foot of the Acropolis. (I will show students this location on a map.) This open arena resembles a large football stadium. Just as you sit in the bleachers to watch players on a field engaged in sport, so did the spectators of this period sit in the tiers to watch an eagerly anticipated performance. This theatre had very distinct areas as you see here on the overhead. (I would show students a slide or drawing of the theatre). This is the orchestra or dancing floor. (I would point to the large circular space). This section, the altar of the god, is called the thymele. Behind the orchestra a building called a skene serves as a dressing room for the actors. Later this became known as a proskenion. "This theatre held more than 20,000 people." ³ Everyone attended the performances. The state paid for the poor people of Athens to attend performances.

Now the festivities have begun, and we have been looking forward to this day with eager anticipation. It is now time for the presentation of drama. Each playwright is allowed one day to display four plays. "The term tetralogy was employed to denote such a group. When three of the plays dealt with the same myth, they were called a trilogy." ⁴ The fourth play was required to be a satyr drama, comic in intention and in character. The most outstanding playwrights of this period who participated in the competitions were Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. A comic playwright of this period was Aristophanes.

Just as writers today write about contemporary ideas, the playwrights of this period wrote about events of their time. "What do You think they wrote about?" Hopefully, students will come up with ideas to open a discussion about concepts which were the basis for plot development of Greek tragedies. I would ask students if they could think of a contemporary tragic hero. (ex. Steven Segal- *Above the Law*) What makes him a tragic hero? Can you name another tragic hero? (ex. Job from *The Book of Job* in the *Bible* .) I may briefly share the story of Job with students. Then in class or as a home assignment, students will write an essay whereby they will describe a tragic figure and relate the qualities or circumstances which qualify this person to be considered tragic.

Greek plays were excellent in both content and presentation. The actors wore platform shoes so that they could appear taller on stage. Even today we can't seem to get away from those platforms. Now, so that they could be heard by spectators, mouthpieces were used to amplify their voices. All roles were played by men, for no females were allowed to perform. The chorus was dressed in colorful draped costumes on stage. They were accompanied by musicians. In order to emphasize the spoken word actors used broad gestures. Facial masks were used to indicate strong dramatic emotion.

Obviously, we won't have time to read an entire Greek play, but I would like to share the plots of at least three of them with you. All three of these Plays were written by Sophocles: *Oedipus the King*, *Oedipus at Colonus*, and *Antigone* . Then in storytelling form I would begin to relate the plots of the plays in succession.

Now, I have fun off sections of the three plays and each of you have been assigned a given speech. You will take it home, practice reading it until you feel comfortable with the selection, and attempt to analyze it. Tomorrow come to class with your passage memorized and be prepared to read your analysis to the class.

As a culminating activity, I would like for each of you to select a theme on which to develop a Greek tragedy. Think about your characters. What will happen to them? How will you develop the plot? What tragic end will befall each of them? This essay should be a minimum of 300 words but no more than 500.

WEEK 2: The Medieval Period

At the beginning of the second week I will ask students if they have started to read the first play on their reading list. They should have begun to read *Much Ado About Nothing*. I would also ask if they have started to think about monologues or scenes for their final projects. Softly, in the background I would play The Love Theme from *Romeo and Juliet* by Nino Rota or Andre Castalan. I don't know if it would be considered Medieval. but I simply love this piece. Again, students would Prepare to take notes and listen carefully as I begin the week's discussion.

STEP 1: I will attempt to help students to understand what happened to bring about the decline of the Greek Theatre. Then I would like to focus on the period in drama when it was trying to make a come back. I would like for students to identify the types of plays of the period. namely, miracle, mystery, and morality plays. In introducing the play or rather excerpts from the play representing this section, we will be discussing theme. Since the representative play is *Everyman* the theme here will be death. Also, since the play falls into the category of what would be classified as an allegory, it would be beneficial for students to be able to define allegory.

STEP 2: Here are some suggested questions since drama was reborn in the church, what types of plays do you suppose were written? What do you think comprised the content of the plays? How were the plays presented? Do you think the plays of this period gained a large following? what were some of the issues you think were concerns of the people of this period? Every man or woman has his or her own ideas about death and what it's like. What are your thoughts? Morality, good vs. evil, has been a constant theme since the beginning of time. Do you think good always triumphs over evil? Can you share instances of both sides from other forms of literature?

STEP 3: I want students to understand the nature of Medieval drama. I want students to see that this type of drama developed mainly out of a need for religious expression. I would like for students to be able to envision a display of pageant wagons depicting successive scenes in Biblical episodes. I would like for students to read through passages of the play *Everyman* and tell what the character is feeling or thinking. I would like for students to analyze the stages through which *Everyman* must pass before coming to the realization of what virtue is most important, according to the play, in the very end.

STEP 4: Students will read passages from the play *Everyman* so that they will be familiar with the language of it. Students will attempt to analyze specific speeches or dialogues in the play.

STEP 5: The theme of the play will be discussed as we read specific segments which show how *Everyman* tries to enlist the aid of worldly values to accompany him on his final journey. We will divide the play into three distinct sections, and we will call them The Summoning, The Transformation, and The Final Passage.

STEP 6: Students will be able to define and give examples of a mystery play, a miracle play, and a morality

play. Students will be able to read and interpret verse taken from a Medieval play.

STEP 7: Students will submit a research report on “The Decline of The Greek Theatre.” This will involve library research. Students will prepare thesis statements and attempt to support them in a typed five page report. Mainly, they will focus on the dramatic developments which transpired between the Greek and Medieval period. Students will contemporize the scene which takes place between *Everyman* and Fellowship. (Lines 205-317)

Though Greek theatre with it’s wonderful spectacle left lasting impressions on thousands and thousands of spectators, the glory of this magnificent era sadly passed away. The beautiful temples and amphitheatres fell into ruin. Well, I think this is an ideal question for an assignment. Topic: What happened to Greek Theatre?

Drama remained dormant for several centuries. “About the ninth century A. D. there began to appear in the churches of Europe simple playlets enacted as part of the Easter or Christmas service.”⁵ As time passed these productions became more elaborate. The trade associations or guilds of the medieval cities became responsible for these elaborate productions. The poets of the period began to compose whole cycles of plays dealing with Biblical events from The Creation to The Judgment Day. “This religious drama was split up in 30, 40, or 50 episodes, and each one was put into the hands of an appropriate guild.”⁶ “How do you suppose these individual scenes were represented? Right! They were represented on pageant wagons. It was very competitive. You’ve seen parades haven’t you? Well, pageant wagons were very similar to these the only difference being that the wagons were constructed with two levels. The upper level, of course, was used for the dramatization. For what, do you suppose. the lower level was used? The lower level was used for a dressing area.”

There were basically three types of plays presented during this period. They were mystery plays, miracle plays, and morality plays. “A dramatization of Biblical events is known as a mystery play; a presentation of an episode in the life of some saint or some prodigy performed in behalf of religion based on church history or tradition is a miracle play. Morality plays were plays which dealt with the struggle for man’s soul through the use of abstract or allegorical characters (personifications of the virtues and the vices).”⁷

Now for a word on *Everyman*. You have before You copies of the play that we will be reading, discussing, and analyzing as a representative work for this period. *Everyman* is a play of character conflict. It is a play which deals with struggle between vice and virtue. *Everyman* confronts dramatically the human horror of death. In fact, at the onset of the play death is imminent. Now, what makes *Everyman* the ideal example of a morality play? Take a look at the list of characters. You see Beauty, Knowledge, and Good Deeds. Abstract ideas such as these are represented as human forms. “*Everyman* is one of the three great English allegories. The other two are Edmund Spenser’s *Fairie Queene* and John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*.”⁸

As a means of expediency I have divided the play into three distinct sections. The first section I have elected to call The Summoning. Let’s read this section. (Lines 1-65) What is the purpose of the messenger? To what Biblical aspect does he elude in line 15? of what does he warn Everyman? In lines 29-35 what scene does God depict? Interpret lines 42 and 40. Why is God so angry?

An interesting conversation takes Place between Everyman and Death. Two fairly fluent readers will read lines 64-204. I will read the brief passage spoken by God. What does Death tell Everyman? What is Everyman’s reaction? How does Everyman try to put Death off? Now the scene which follows this one would be excellent as a choice for a duet scene. (Lines 205-318). The dialogue here is simple and easy to follow. After Everyman

is unsuccessful in enlisting the company of Fellowship, so too is he unsuccessful in acquiring the company of Kindred, Cousin, and Goods.

In the next phase of the play which I have elected to call *The Transformation*, Everyman, through the assistance of Good Deeds, is introduced to Knowledge. Knowledge leads Everyman to Confession where his transformation begins to take place. Everyman begins his penance and Good Deeds rises and walks with Everyman. As Everyman puts on the garment of contrition, he is given the virtues of Discretion, Strength, Beauty, and the Five Wits. All earnestly promise to remain with Everyman.

In the final phase of the Play as Everyman approaches the grave, the virtues one by one desert him. (Lines 785-917). Let's read this final section orally. After this final reading the question which remains is ... By what, according to the play, is the ultimate measure of every man's worth? As a culminating activity, some students will share their written assignments with the class.

WEEKS 3 & 4: The Elizabethan Period

STEP 1: I think it's time for a change in strategy. Instead of opening with a lecture format, I have elected to introduce this period through the use of film. The video is called *Introducing Great English Authors*, and it's approximately 15 minutes. This is a short film which introduces the Elizabethan Age to students, and it also introduces the great playwright and poet William Shakespeare. At the conclusion of the video I may elect to give students additional notes.

STEP 2: All questions for discussion have been outlined below.

STEP 3: I want students to be able to recall significant biographical facts on the life of William Shakespeare, to read Shakespearean verse with ease and confidence, to follow the message being communicated in speeches or passages of great length, to trace the development of major characters throughout the play, and to relate details in chronological order.

STEP 4: The aspects of dramatic form and style with which I am most concerned are rather difficult for me to explain. My hope is that the students can capture the flair, the eloquence, and wit that can only be found in the style of Shakespeare when they attempt to read his lyric verses.

STEP 5: The age old theme of love will be discussed. I suppose we will have to discuss jealousy, betrayal, deceit, fidelity, the institution of marriage, and relationships, All of these and possibly more can be found in just this play.

OBJECTIVES

STEP 6: Students will be able to describe all characters in the play in written form.

Students will be able to depict the action in the play in individual scenes.

Students will be able to write a detailed summary of the events surrounding the plot of the play.

Students will be able to write a 300-500 word comparative essay based on their reading of the play and a screening of the video.

STEP 7: Students will be evaluated on numbers 2, 3, and 4 above.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

DAY 1: Students will view the film and take notes.

DAY 2: Students will review definitions for the following; Setting, Plot, sub-plot, protagonist, antagonist, rising action, climax, falling action, and outcome.

DAY 3-7: Discussion of play

ACT 1: SCENE 1

1. In the opening scene of Act I Shakespeare immediately sets the play in motion. He creates an atmosphere of expectation. Where is this evidenced?
2. What news is conveyed which also helps to give information that we may need to understand present events?
3. From her tone and the nature of her description of Benedick, what can we assume are Beatrice's feelings toward him?
4. The action of the play advances with the arrival of Benedick, Claudio, and Don Pedro. Benedick and Beatrice become engaged in verbal banter. What does this reveal about their relationship?
5. The plot is advanced with the arrival of Claudio. What is the significance of his conversation with Benedick? (Is there such a thing as love at first sight?)
6. When Don Pedro enters and hears of the discussion, what does he volunteer to do?
7. What are Benedick's views toward love and marriage? Do you think this is a view typical of most men?

ACT 1: SCENE 2

8. What news transpires between Leonato and his brother in this scene?

ACT 1: SCENE 3

9. What news does Borachio bring forth that sets this miserable trio into action?

ACT 2: SCENE I

10. What does Beatrice believe to be the ideal suitor?

11. Don Pedro asks Hero if she will walk with him. What is the nature of his business with her?

12. When Beatrice unknowingly engages in conversation with Benedick, believing him to be a stranger, the topic that is brought up is the subject of Benedick himself. What does Beatrice say about him?

13. John and Borachio recognize Claudio in spite of his disguise. By what name do they address him? To set their evil plot into motion what bits of gossip do they leave with him?

14. After hearing the news to what conclusion does Claudio arrive?

15. Why is the scene which takes Place between Claudio and Benedick necessary?

16. When Don Pedro and Benedick meet, what does Benedick first tell him in relation to his teasing of Claudio?

17. Of what does Don Pedro assure Benedick?

18. At the end of their conversation Benedick tells Don Pedro how ill Beatrice had spoken of him. in brief what were Beatrice's thoughts?

19. As Claudio, Beatrice, Hero, and Leonato reenter, a funny scene takes place between Benedick and Don Pedro. Rather than endure the tongue of Beatrice what does Benedick request of Don Pedro?

20. After Benedick's hasty departure, what announcement is made by Don Pedro?

21. Don Pedro engages in conversation with Beatrice. What question does he asks her and why?

ACT 2: SCENE 2

22. Borachio after hearing the news of the impending wedding tells John that he can cross it. How does he propose to do this?

23. How much does John offer as payment to Borachio?

ACT 2: SCENE 3

24. Benedick while alone confesses his thoughts on the news of Claudio. Examine his speech. What are his thoughts?
25. When Benedick hides what news does he overhear when Don Pedro, Claudio, Leonato, and Balthasar enter? What does Benedick think of Balthasar's singing?
26. As Benedick continues to hide what news does he overhear?
27. What reason do the men offer as to their denial of revealing this news to Benedick?
28. After the bait has been placed on the hook. what is the reaction of the fish (Benedick)?
29. Describe Benedick's behavior when Beatrice is sent to fetch him to dinner.

ACT 3: SCENE 1

30. What request does Hero make of Margaret and why?
31. Of what does Hero advise Ursula?
32. How do Hero and Ursula bait the hook for Beatrice 33. What reason do the women offer for refusing to divulge this information to Beatrice?
34. What counsel does Hero plan to give Benedick?
35. when Beatrice hears these new developments, what is her reaction and what does she say?

ACT 3: SCENE 2

36. Don Pedro and Claudio tease Benedick. Though they believe him to be in love. of what does Benedick claim to be the nature of his problem?
37. Why does John approach his brother Don Pedro and Claudio?
38. How is the mood of the Play shifted in this scene? Explain in detail.
39. What is your immediate impression of Dogberry?
40. Of what does he instruct the men?
41. Conrade and Borachio enter. What according to Borachio. were the three pieces of evidence

which were used to deceive Claudio and Don Pedro?

ACT 3: SCENE 4

42. It is the day of Hero's wedding, and she is trying to make a decision as to which gown she will wear. What other topics of conversation are touched upon?
43. How would you characterize the role of all three women in this scene?
44. What news does Dogberry present to Leonato? How does he instruct them?

ACT 4: SCENE 1

45. During the wedding ceremony when Claudio is asked if he has come to marry Hero, he responds "No." Was his response received seriously? Explain.
46. When the Friar asks if there is any reason why the two should not be joined, Leonato answers for Claudio. How does Claudio react to this response?
47. Of what does Claudio accuse Hero?
48. How does Don Pedro reinforce Claudio's accusation?
49. How does this news affect Hero?
50. What convinces Leonato of Hero's guilt?
51. What is the Friar's plan?
52. What do Beatrice and Benedick reveal to each other?
53. What request does Beatrice make of Benedick?

ACT 4: SCENE 2

54. What information is brought forth by the first and second watch?
55. What news does the sexton bring forth?

ACT 5: SCENE 1

56. Leonato and his brother, Antonio, encounter Claudio and Don Pedro. Of what does Leon accuse Claudio?
57. How does Antonio show his loyalty and support for his brother?
58. To what do Claudio and Don Pedro attribute Benedick's "angry look?"
59. When Dogberry, Verges, and the Watch approach Don Pedro and Claudio with Borachio and Conrade, what does Borachio confess?
60. When Leonato and Antonio return does Leonato believe Borachio to be the only villain in this foul plot? Explain.
61. What request does Leonato make of Claudio to atone himself for the part he played in bringing about Hero's death?

ACT 5: SCENE 2

62. Benedick tells Beatrice that he has challenged Claudio. Then on a romantic note he asks her "which of my bad parts didn't thou first fall in love with me?"
63. At the end of this scene what news is brought by Ursula?

ACT 5: SCENE 3

64. Claudio fulfills his promise to Leonato. What does he promise to do yearly?
65. What request does Benedick make of the Friar?
66. What is Claudio's reaction when Hero is unmasked? Don Pedro's?
67. Describe the scene that takes place between Benedick and Beatrice.
68. As in the beginning of the play we hear news which comes from a messenger. What news brings forth the final curtain?

WEEKS 5 & 6: The Modern Theatre

STEP 1: "Are You working on your Projects? If You need ideas or suggestions please come and talk to me. You should be completing the reading of *The Colored Museum* by George C. Wolfe." This week I will share information with students on The Modern Theatre. I want to get students out of their seats this week by having them participate in theatre games and improvisations. I would like to have students read and walk through scenes from three contemporary plays. I have chosen scenes from Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* , George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man* , and Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie* . Scenes selected from the plays will be viewed on video, and students will be able to compare the live performances with the interpretations of the actors on the screen.

STEP 2: After giving students background information on each of the plays and the characters, I think I would ask students how they might play the role. Here are the specific questions:

- 1) How would you describe yourself both physically and emotionally?
- 2) How do You feel about yourself?
- 3) How do you feel towards your situation?
- 4) What do you want?
- 5) How can your movements help you to achieve your desired goal or goals? Well. this is called writing director's notes, and this is what you will be doing for each scene.

STEP 3: This week I will concentrate on character development, movement, and interpretation. I would like to see students really get into character and try to experience what that character is feeling.

STEP 4: The aspects of dramatic style which most concern me this week are stage presence and delivery. The main question that the student should asks him or herself is ... Is this character believable?

STEP 5: When I explain the content of each of the plays I think the students will get a better idea of what is expected in the individual scenes. I will talk briefly about the themes in each of the plays, but this will not be the focus of this week's activities.

STEP 6: Students will be able to read and analyze a dramatic scene. Students will be able to write director's notes for a dramatic scene. Students will be able to compare and contrast two distinct forms of a dramatic scene.

STEP 7: Students will be evaluated in three areas this week: a) Participation b) Written Director's Notes c) Essay of Comparison & Contrast.

"This is going to be a great week! Are you ready to have fun? Let's engage in a few warm-up activities before I introduce the lesson for the week. I learned these warm-up activities in my seminar this past summer. The first one is called mirroring. I saw this one on the Lucy Show one time, and she was great. Red Skelton,

another great comedian was also excellent with this. Everyone gets up and gets a partner. One person is the leader and initiates the movements while the other person tries to imitate as perfectly as possible." After a few minutes, the roles are reversed. "For our next activity we are going to create a moving collage with sound effects. Each person will come up to the front of the class and engage in a movement which complements the movement of the previous person. Also remember to add sound to your movement." This continues until the entire class is involved. "The next activity is my all time favorite, and I'm sure you will enjoy it. one person will assume the movements of an animal or character and continue to move in this manner until the next person in line has mastered the movements. He or she will then transform the character and will relinquish it only when the next person in line has assumed it." (At your discretion you can add more games or improvs.)

Now let's talk about the Modern Period in drama. The man who is actually credited with coming up with a formula which helped to set the stage for the basis of successful contemporary plays is a prolific playwright named Scribe. "Scribe wrote more than 400 vaudeville sketches, plays, and operas between 1830 and 1860."⁹ Scribe wrote plays which catered to the taste of his middle-classed audience, and because of this he was immensely popular. In 1836 Scribe was elected to the French Academy. The following words justify his dramatic philosophy. "You go to the theatre, not for instruction or correction, but for relaxation and amusement. Now what amuses you most is not truth, but fiction. To represent what is before your eyes every day is not the way to please you; but what does not come to you in your usual life, the extraordinary, the romantic, that is what charms you, that is what one is eager to offer you."¹⁰ In essence, I think his philosophy sums up our need not only for the live performances of the theatre but also the moments of escapism we experience while watching a movie.

One person who rebelled this form of "escape philosophy" was Henrik Ibsen, a playwright considered to be the father of the modern drama, and the writer of the first play we will be discussing this week, *A Doll's House* (1879). When he presented this play in the late 1800's, a dramatic bomb exploded. Well, you will see what caused the great uproar when we get to the play. *Ghosts* (1881), and *An Enemy of the People* (1882) were even more explosive.

In history you have studied the period of Industrialism. During this period of rapid development there was also the growth of democracy, the rising influence of science in the modern world, and the emergence of new problems. All of these called for dramatic treatment. "Modern dramatists represented life on stage not only in realistic terms but in naturalistic terms, stressing the sordid, ugly aspects "scientifically" and presenting human beings as helpless victims of biological, social, and economic forces."¹¹

This new approach gave rise to Free Theatres being established in Paris, London, Berlin, and Moscow. In fact, in Moscow the famous Moscow Theatre was established and the most influential leader of realism, Stanislavsky, developed the Method approach. This is where the works of the famous Anton Chekhov were produced.

As we move into the twentieth century we see dramatists who produce an interesting spectrum of romantic, fantastic, and realistic elements in their Plays. Tennessee Williams, playwright of *The Glass Menagerie* (1944), belongs to this category of renowned playwrights.

Now let me tell you about the plays, the characters, and the scenes we will be focusing on during the next three days.

A Doll's House is a play which deals with the institution of marriage and the position of women. Nora, the main

character, is faced with a dilemma which she elects to hide from her husband. she forges her father's signature on a promissory note in order to get money to move Torvald, her husband to a warmer climate in the hopes of saving his life. Krogstad, an employee of Nora's husband. transacted the agreement and later discovered that the date next to the signature was not consistent with the untimely death of her father. Krogstad. in the hopes of furthering his career, threatens Nora with exposure if she does not speak favorably in his behalf so that he can gain a promotion from Torvald. Nora gains no favor with Torvald. Her friend, Christine tries to assist Nora since she at one time was romantically linked with Krogstad. Unfortunately, Torvald, in spite of Nora's engaging distractions, retrieves a letter revealing all that was written by the disappointed and disillusioned Krogstad. Torvald lashes into Nora unmercifully. In the final scene Nora leaves her husband and children. You can imagine the shocking controversy this play caused. It was simply unthinkable for a woman to desert her family particularly during this time. A contemporary counterpart would be Kramer vs.. Kramer.

ARMS AND THE MAN

This is a light hearted romance that is situated against a background of war. A young woman meets a soldier who is fleeing for his life. He climbs the balcony and enters her chamber. He holds her at bay with an empty pistol. When the house is searched in an attempt to find the fugitive, the young woman protects him with the assistance of her mother, they hide him and help him to escape the following morning. The young woman's father and her suitor return from the war with the story of a Swiss soldier who managed an escape with the aid of two women. The suitor makes advances on Louka, the servant and Louka reveals that the object of his affection has a secret lover. The Swiss soldier returns to the home of the gracious women who rescued him. This Petkoff household is where he arrives to return a coat which was lent to him. Serguis, the suitor, feeling betrayed, confronts Bluntschli. the soldier. acting on his news from Louka. All is revealed when the young woman, Raina, tells Serguis she witnessed the scene between he and Louka in the courtyard. Bluntschli is discovered to be the chocolate cream soldier. In the end all is well. Louka gets Serguis, Raina gets her chocolate cream soldier. and Nicola, the other servant who was intended for Louka, gets to be the manager of one of Bluntshli's hotels.

The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams is one of my favorite plays. There are only 4 characters in the play. Amanda Winfield, the mother, lives in the past. She recalls suitors from her younger days. Her husband took off one day and never came back. Her son, Tom, feels trapped and somewhat resents the dependence of his mother and sister on him. Laura, the daughter and sister, had pleurosis as a child, and it left her crippled. She's shy and withdrawn, and she escapes into a private little world that is filled with glass. Laura cherishes her Glass Menagerie. Excitement builds in the play when Tom invites a co-worker over to the house. Laura is finally getting a gentleman caller. This is the scene we will focus on in class. In the end Tom. like his father, leaves home and proceeds to travel from place to place. No matter where he goes he can not shake the memories of his past and his sister Laura.

Students will write director's notes for the following scenes:

- a) *Arms and the Man* , Act I, Raina and the soldier
- b) *A Doll's House* Final scene

c) *The Glass Menagerie* , Scene VII, Laura and Jim

As a culminating activity the select scenes will be shown in class. Students will then select one of the plays to complete a comparative analysis.

WEEKS 7 & 8: *The Colored Museum*

STEP 1: This week we will be focusing our energy on George C. Wolfe's *The Colored Museum* . I will attempt to guide students through the reading of exhibits. I would like to get students to think about the characters and how they would interpret the roles of each.

STEP 2: For each exhibit I have attempted to outline specific questions on which to base discussions. As I continue to analyze the exhibits. I may add more questions. Some questions may come from the discussion itself.

STEP 3: I want students to grasp the underlying meanings found in the dialogue spoken by the characters.

STEP 4: I think I am most concerned with the freedom of dramatic expression as it is a strong characteristic of these individual pieces. Sometimes strong language is used to make a point or to reinforce character, and I think this has to be taken into consideration in these selections. Students should not, however. yet carried away when writing their own scenes. The language should be colorful, lively, and character appropriate.

STEP 5: The themes in the selections are quite varied. one does prevail in all of the selections, and this is a theme which centers around either an acceptance or a denial of one's culture.

STEP 6: Students will be able to discern motive in relation to character. Students will be able to write directory notes describing how a specific scene should be done. Students will be able to write original scenes based on a real life character.

STEP 7: Students will be evaluated on their original scenes and director's notes.

“Git on Board”

How would you play the role of Miss Pat? At what point in the monologue would you incorporate movement? At what points would you use sarcasm in your tone? Would you be able to perform the Watusi or the Funky Chicken? Would you know how to introduce James Brown and the Fabulous Flames? What do the drums signify or represent, and why is Miss Pat so adamant about them? When Miss Pat makes the crack about being millionaires to what myth is she alluding? How does Miss Pat point out yet another stereotypical myth in relation to what is considered standard vs.. non-standard English? Miss Pat covered an entire history of war from past to present day. How does she reveal her feelings toward this phase of history? What did you think about this scene?

“Cookin’ with Aunt Ethel”

Of what is this section a spin-off? How do you envision Aunt Ethel? Analyze each verse of Aunt Ethel's song. What idea or message is she trying to get across in each one? Hopefully. this will open a discussion which deals with skin color, texture of hair, music (African-American), the issue of slavery, anger and displacement.

“The Photo Session”

Did You understand the underlying meaning in “The Photo Session?” What is it? Convey this meaning or message in two well organized paragraphs.

“A Soldier With A Secret”

This is an ideal Piece for a monologue. what did you think about this piece? Did Junie die and come back? In what war do you suppose Junie found himself, and what line or lines help you to arrive at this conclusion? Junie makes a statement about war and how it changes people. Can You relate to this? Do you know of someone who was affected by the horrors of war? What really happened to Junie?

“The Gospel According to Miss Rojo

How would you describe Miss Roj? What is Miss Roj talking about? Family relations ... Are there any for Miss Roj? To what power does Miss Roj make reference? Miss Roj’s sensitivity is revealed as he becomes more immersed in alcohol. What are some of the things that concern Miss Roj? How does Miss Roj make You feel? (Let me see who I can get to tackle this piece.)

“The Hairpiece”

This is another scene that would be an excellent choice for that final week. Students will be called on to walk through this particular segment. At the end of the first reading, suggestions from the class would be taken into consideration before attempting a second reading.

“The Last Mama On The Couch Play”

Can You think of the three major works on which this segment is based? Can You compare the characters to their counterparts? What conclusion can we draw from this piece?

“Symbiosis”

What does symbiosis mean? Did you look it up? When the man says that *Soul on Ice* has been replaced with *The Color Purple* what is he implying? Why is the man throwing away remnants of his past? Describe the struggle that takes place between the man and the kid? What does the kid represent? What is the man trying to achieve or accomplish? Does he?

“Lala’s Opening”

Of whom does Lala remind You? Why did she have to leave her native land? Can you think of an African American author who left America for the same reason as Lala? What does Lala have in common with the man in Symbiosis?

“Permutations”

What does Permutations mean? How would you interpret this segment? Is the egg symbolic? If so. what does it symbolize? When Normal says that her babies will fly, what is she implying?

“The Party”

Everything comes together in the final scene. What is Topsy’s ultimate message? To what does the madness refer?

(RECAPPING THE ASSIGNMENTS)

1. Select one of the scenes above and write director's notes for it.
2. Select one of the characters and write a letter explaining your thoughts about what the character is feeling.
3. Write a scene based on a character. You think, would be appropriate for *The Colored Museum* .

WEEK 8: My Children! My Africa!

This is the most moving and powerful play I think I've ever had the pleasure of reading. I thoroughly enjoyed the language, the intellect, the emotion, and the heart that was found in this excellent drama. I truly admire Mr. Fugard's style and artistic genius. Music for this section will be Carly Simon's theme from "Working Girl."

STEP 1: In order to begin the week's activities we will use a brainstorming approach to discuss what we know about South Africa. Each student should have before him or her articles found through research which tell of events which have occurred in South Africa. We will attempt to discuss the following issues and topics:

1. First of all, where is South Africa? (Locate on map).
2. What do we know about South Africa? (Population, size, language).
3. What do we know about the political and social situation?
4. Do we know about the historical background of the country?
5. How does the educational system in South Africa compare to our own?
6. What do we know about the culture, tradition, values, and ideas of this country?

STEP 2: After exhausting what facts we are able to discover about the country, I would then present our two quest speakers to the class. One is a student in our school who originally hails from South Africa. He has been living here for one year and he continues to communicate regularly with his friends in his native land. His name is Dini Mda.

Our second quest speaker is a friend and fellow colleague who has traveled to over thirty countries. She is one of the most vibrant and energetic speakers I have ever had the pleasure of witnessing. She holds a PhD, and is presently teaching history at Wilbur Cross Senior High and Southern Connecticut State University. Students please welcome our own Mrs. Cynthia McDaniels.

STEP 3: I want students to understand events surrounding the setting of the play. I want them to recall specific historical events that have taken place in South Africa. I want them to be able to trace the development of the three major characters from the beginning of the play and understand the place at which each arrives at the end of the play.

STEP 4: The aspects of dramatic style with which I am most concerned would simply be found in the eloquence of the spoken word as so aptly put together by the playwright. Examples can be found in the monologues. The language is befitting the character. Fugard writes simply and clearly. Perhaps, using Fugard's style of writing, students can create yet another experience for one of the three characters

STEP 5: I think definitely the theme of freedom is prevalent throughout the play. The theme of love and the inability to express it also has to be discussed. The issue of contradiction with regard to freedom in the truer sense is yet another theme. The concept of freedom should imply no restrictions. Examine Mr. M, Isabel and Thami's views of freedom. What is your definition of freedom? Lastly, fear is also a prominent theme.

STEP 6: Students will read and interpret specific scenes in the play.

Students will actively engage in oral discussion.

Students will trace the development of one of the three main characters in the play.

Students will write a 200-250 word critique of the play.

STEP 7: Students will be evaluated on both their character sketches and their critiques.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

ACT I

1. The opening scenes take place in a classroom. How is this ideally appropriate for setting the tone of the play?
2. Almost immediately we are faced with an argument? What is the nature of the debate?
3. Let's take a minute or two to read both closing arguments. What is your reaction to each?
4. Now let's have a vote on the proposition. All those in favor raise your hand. Now, the opposed.
5. At the beginning of the play were you aware of the ethnicity of the participants? Were there any clues?
6. When Mr. M leaves why do you suppose the two young people feel awkward and uncomfortable?
7. As the two young people become more relaxed and converse more, what points are revealed about their characters? What do we learn about them?
8. How does Isabel view school as opposed to the way Thami views it?
9. Thami's resentment towards Mr. M is slightly revealed. Why does he resent him?
10. Let's examine Isabel's monologue on pages 14-18. She gives a full account of her version of how she envisions the town. How does she see herself in relation to the town, her family, and the South Africans of which she has come in contact? Going into the debate what were some of her Preconceptions about South Africans? (P. 16) What thoughts ran through her mind when she saw the classroom? Seeing the ungrateful faces of the students made Isabel realize what?
11. In scene 3 when Mr. M. enters, on what level does he address Isabel? On what level does she regard him?

12. The seed is planted in Isabel though she is not yet aware of it. It is based on the one thing that most troubles Mr. M. What is that?
13. What news does Mr. M share with Isabel, and why is he surprised by her reaction?
14. What serves Isabel's motive for agreeing to the contest?
15. Why was Isabel's mom nervous when she learned of her daughter's eagerness to Participate in the contest?
16. Why does Mr. M feel that he shouldn't ask but rather tell Thami about the contest?
17. How is Mr. M 's love for Thami revealed?
18. Read Mr. M's monologue on pages 26-29. What do we learn about him? Why is he a teacher? what is his greatest fear?
19. In scene 5 when Isabel brings up Freedom of Speech to Mr. M look at his response. "I've given him plenty of Freedom within reasonable limits, but he never uses it." what do You think about that?
20. Mr. M anticipates danger, How does he try to get Isabel to become a party to his conspiracy?
21. When Thami arrives we see that the relationship between him and Isabel has grown. How is this revealed?
22. As the study session begins, what is your impression?
23. There is a shift in focus during the study session. Thami reveals his views about freedom. what is Mr. M's reaction?
24. How does Mr. M regard the struggle of South Africans?
25. Why can't Thami talk to Mr. M? Why can't he make him listen?
26. What happened in Kliptown in 1955, in Sharpville in March of 1960, and Soweto on the 16th of June in 1976?

ACT 2

27. What is Isabel's reaction to Thami's decision to withdraw from the competition?
28. Isn't it uncanny how both the young people view the changes that are taking place around them. Explain the thinking behind both perspectives.
29. Later in this scene Thami tells Isabel that he can no longer be seen with her. Explain the irony of the situation.
30. Thami and Mr. M confront each other. What information about developing conditions is revealed here?
31. What fears do Mr. M reveal in his monologue?
32. In scene three why does Thami go to the school?
33. What does Mr. M confess to Thami?
34. Mr. M predestines Thami's future..... How?
35. At the end of scene three did You expect that startling outcome?
36. In scene four describe the action that takes place between Thami and Isabel.
37. More details of Mr. M's death are given to us from Isabel. According to witnesses how was Mr. M killed?
38. Isabel desperately needs to understand what has happened and why. what does Thami tell her to help her understand the events that have transpired?
39. what do Thami and Isabel both reveal to each other?
40. How does Mr. M's prediction come true in the end?

WEEK 9: LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!

During this week students will be presenting their final projects. The first three days of the week will be devoted to the presentation of monologues and scenes. Selections for the dramatic performances will be taken from the plays read in class. The third day of the week will be set aside for the presentation of projects not necessarily of a dramatic nature. (Research projects, essays, and artistic displays.) Performances will be evaluated in the following areas: interpretation, memorization, movement, and characterization.

The maximum amount of quality points which can be achieved for a performance is 16. This is based on receiving a score of 4, excellent, in each category. On the fourth day of the week. students will review their notes and ask specific questions as a means of preparing for the exam. The exam will be administered on Friday. This exam will mark the end of the unit.

Notes

1. Helen Louise Cohen. *Milestones of the Drama* , p.3.
2. Ibid., p.4.
3. Ibid., p.7.
4. Ibid., P.8.
5. John Gassner, *Introducing the Drama* , P. 4
6. Ibid., p.4
7. Ibid., p.5
8. Cohen, P.78
9. Gassner, p.10.
10. Ibid., P.10
11. Ibid., p.10

Student Bibliography

Fugard, Athol. *My Children! My Africa!* . New York: Theatre Communications Group. Inc., 1989.

This is a powerful Play which takes place in a small Cape Karoo town in the autumn of 1984.

Gassner. John & Sweetkind, Morris. *Introducing the Drama* . New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc., 1963.

This is an anthology of plays from Past to Present day with biographical notes on the playwrights and introductions to the Plays.

Shakespeare, William. *Much Ado About Nothing* . England: Penguin Books Limited, 1938.
This a fast paced, witty, romantic play with comic overtones.

Wolfe, George C. *The Colored Museum* . New York: Grove Weidenfeld. 1985.
This is a play composed of individual exhibits of complex caricatures.

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1. Brown, Ivor. *Shakespeare in his Time* . Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons LTD., 1960.

This is a biographical and historical account of the life of the great playwright. Excellent illustrations and pictures highlight this text.

2. Cohen, Helen Louise. *Milestones of the Drama* . New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1940.

This is collection of plays which have become hallmarks in the field of drama.

3. Fugard, Athol. *My children! My Africa !*. New York: Theatre communications Group, Inc., 1989.

This is a powerful play which takes place in a small Cape Karoo town in the autumn of 1884.

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This is an analytical study of Shakespeare's tragic figures.

6. Parrott, Thomas Marc & Ball, Robert Hamilton. *A Short View of Elizabethan Drama* . New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943.

This is a historical account of the Elizabethan period.

7. Shakespeare, William. *William Shakespeare the Complete Works* . New York: Dorsett Press, 1988.

This is an anthology of Shakespeare's plays with introductions, illustrations, translations, and notes on the text.

8. Wolfe, George C. *The Colored Museum* . New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1985.

This is a play composed of individual exhibits of complex caricatures.

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