



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1997 Volume VI: Global Change, Humans and the Coastal Ocean

A Dramatic World: An Eighth Grade Theater Curriculum for Earth's Future Caretakers

Guide for Curriculum Unit 97.06.11
by Yel Hannon Brayton

This unit is one of the four curricula offered by the Betsy Ross Arts Magnet School Team from Dr. Turekian's seminar, "Global Change, Humans and the Coastal Ocean." This unit has been designed to build aesthetic awareness of science topics—with regard to the formation of the universe and the evolution of Earth's atmosphere and oceans—through creative dramatics. While each lesson in the curriculum is concerned with making interdisciplinary correlations, largely between science and theater, the subtextual content of these lessons is intended to foster a sense of appreciation and responsibility in the student for the world in which he or she lives. By making these kinds of connections, I, along with my colleagues, hope to engender critical as well as imaginative thinking within our classes. Our students have inherited a world of complex problems that will demand of them unique and innovative solutions in order to create the future (which has always been the onus of the young). They come to us from diverse backgrounds with sundry interests. It is our mission as educators not only to build a strong foundation for knowledge by teaching them how to learn, but also to help them to develop their innate talents so that they may bring their special gifts to the world. With this in mind, the goal of the unit is to empower students in their mission of becoming Earth's future caretakers. Therefore, the culminating activity of an eighth grade town meeting addressing the ecological viability of Long Island Sound is the final objective shared by our team: Lisa Alter (Science), Mary-Alice Howley (Reading), Linda MacNaughton (Study Skills) and myself (Theater).

(Recommended for Creative Writing and Theater, grade 8)

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