

TAPPP Home Page	TAPPP Mission	4400 Syllabus	4401 Syllabus	4410 Syllabus	4460 & 4470 Syllabus	1999-2000 Schedule
READ 4030 Schedule	Virtual Library	Portfolio Rubric	Unit Rubric	Quality Assurance Contract	Send to Faust	Send to St. Pierre
Send to Sekeres	Send to Smagorinsky	Smagorinsky Home Page	Faust Home Page	St. Pierre Home Page	Links Index	TAPPP Graduates

To download this file, you will need [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#), *which is available to download by clicking here*

The American Social Drama

Jobie Johnson

Materials

[The Crucible](#) by Arthur Miller

[Ma Rainey's Black Bottom](#) by August Wilson (can be found in multiple anthologies)

[Into the Woods](#) by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine (American Playhouse Production, on VHS)

"The Chitlin Circuit" by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Essay, photocopied from [The New Yorker](#))

[Into the Woods](#) by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine (Libretto)

"Into the Woods" by Sheryl Flatow (Essay, photocopied from the libretto)

Rationale

American authors have often turned to the stage in order to not only entertain, but to illuminate as well. By examining the plays of particular authors, students are presented with multiple opportunities to expand their own understanding of a sect of American literature. When reading a play intended to raise social consciousness, students are exposed to

1. the play itself,
2. the issue or problem the play is bringing to public attention, and
3. the tools actually used by the author to bring the issue to the foreground.

Inherent within each of these three exposures are three educationally significant products.

1. The play itself introduces the student not only to an important form and genre, but also a prolific American author;

thus the unit has **literary significance**.

2. The issue or problem the play is bringing to public attention is often one already deemed important enough to discuss in history classes, and thus provides enrichment to the learning achieved in those classes while further illuminating a particular issue in American history. Here, then, through illuminating the United States' national heritage, the unit has **social significance**.
3. Finally, through learning and gaining some understanding of how individuals have brought social issues to light in the past, students themselves will gain some understanding of how to use those tools and will be better able to address injustices they feel are significant to themselves and their community. This adds to the unit a component of **civic awareness**.

The **literary significance** of the American Drama has been determined by the American public itself.

Community theaters are found in every state and every metropolitan region of the nation. Public school sponsored plays are put on by nearly every school district in the nation. American playwrights such as Eugene O'Neil and Thornton Wilder sit on the shelves with and are taught in the same curriculum as Mark Twain and F. Scott Fitzgerald. The drama as it is known today has been a staple of the American cannon since the 19th Century, and it shows no signs of slowing down. Since that time, and continuing through today, American Drama is performed around the globe.

The authors selected for this unit are each at the top of their form as well. Arthur Miller, Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine, and August Wilson are all dramatists who have received the Pulitzer Prize for their work. The Crucible is held up today as a textbook example of social drama. Ma Rainey's Black Bottom is part of Wilson's library resetting the stage for African authors to bring their heritage to the theater. Sondheim and Lapine's Into the Woods is one of the most frequently produced plays on high school and college campuses. Not one of these authors, or pieces, is an 'obscure' off Broadway production. Each has been performed for and acclaimed by audiences and critics alike.

Social significance has been a part of drama since before Shakespeare. From biblical "passion plays" to Shakespeare's Macbeth to Henrik Ibsen's A Doll's House and An Enemy of the People; social and political issues have always been prevalent in stage work. It has been the same in the States as well. William Gibson brought us not only the life of Helen Keller, but also an examination of the status of handicapped individuals in The Miracle Worker. Tony Kushner examines AIDS, religion, and the Republican Party in Angels in America, and, years before "Dilbert," Abe Burrows, Jack Weinstock, and Willie Gilbert humorously questioned office politics in How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying.

Here, in the texts chosen for this unit, students will be exposed to important issues of both the present day, and troubling times in America's past, both of which are intended to provide students a frame of reference to which they can look back upon when examining similar issues in their own lives. The Crucible allegorizes, of course, Joseph McCarthy's persecution tactics as the head of the House Un-American Activities committee with the Salem Witchcraft trials- both are instances, blackened by history, as mistakes that America does not want to repeat. Ma Rainey's Black Bottom is one of a series of plays by August Wilson which he intends to represent a "century of Black theater." Setting the play in a jazz studio in the 1920's, Wilson writes to address an issue he sees crucial in the lives of Black America, although it is an issue addressed by all cultures in all countries: To what do we owe our ancestors? What happens when a younger generation is at odds with the generation which brought it up- perhaps even provided for it? Into the Woods masquerades, at first, as a whimsical braiding of several familiar fairy tales into a musical comedy. It descends, though, into a frightening commentary on how the parents of the latter 20th Century are faced with deciding how much to shield their children from the perils of an increasingly uncensored media and violent society- and the costs of doing so.

The unit provides the students with tools to enhance their **civic awareness**. It illustrates how one might bring an issue to the foreground indirectly, when a straight comment upon the situation may not be a viable option. In a community where a particular sect of people is being unjustly treated, a dramatization of the situation may be more accessible to the general public than an editorial, political campaign, or other "direct" addresses of an issue.

The tools and methods these specific authors used are varied. In The Crucible, Miller made direct connections between individuals in Salem and individuals in the Communist hearings. Methods used by the Salem judges and the U.S. Senators are one and the same. He veils the actual issue in a parallel issue. August Wilson takes some very modern ideas and issues, and places them into the 1920's. His ideas, characters, and dialogue often come from the 1980s, but by setting the piece 60 years earlier, Wilson himself avoids being accused of turning on his own elders. His "angry young man" attitude turns

upon not the men of the 1960s, but the men of the 1900s- and yet the argument his character Levee makes against his predecessors is the same argument Wilson's generation often used on their predecessors. Sondheim and Lapine are both more subversive and yet more overt than Miller and Wilson. While they completely shroud the problems of the world in the fantasy world of fairy tales, they have the characters of these fairy tales relay, in poetic song, very specific attitudes about the world we live in. An audience can become immersed in the childish tale of Jack and the Beanstalk and then, once they are hooked, be informed that "Witches can be right/ Giants can be good/ You decide what's right/ You decide what's good."

It is not unlikely to find flaws with both these works, indeed, with the idea of social drama itself. The Crucible is often read as an attack on the American government in general- an accusation of the system as being completely dismissive of the individual. Ma Rainey's final few moments contain several expletives as well as an argument concerning the word "nigger-" and therefore may be too offensive or profane to study. Into the Woods might be construed as simply musical "fluff," with no literary value. Then there is occasionally the accusation that all texts of this type are subversive and exist only to subtly sow seeds of discord with authority.

Yet, it should be pointed out that when read closely, each of these texts is exactly the opposite of each of these accusations. Miller's work does not attack the government as a whole, but rather individuals who, for a short time, abused their position within it, blinded by their own sense of righteousness. Wilson attacks the profanity within his own play- having one character use the language he does only that others may show him the folly of it. Sondheim and Lapine begin their musical on a very light note, but it grows into a philosophical treatise on the responsibility of parents and children. Finally, it *can* be conceded that these are subversive texts- each of them. They do, not however, exist to incite rebellion. They are intended to open a window of thought to an otherwise complacent public. Each author takes an idea he feels has been ignored by the public and uses the theater to show the public what that issue is.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Biggsby, Christopher. Introduction in Miller's The Crucible. 1995. Viking.

Flatow, Sheryl. "Into the Woods" from Into the Woods by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine. 1988.

BMG Music

Klaus, Carl, and Miriam Gilbert and Bradford S. Field, Jr.; eds. Stages of Drama: Classical to Contemporary Theater, 3rd Edition. 1995. St. Martin's Press. Pages 1-3, 951-957, 1235-1238

Miller, Arthur. The Crucible. 1953. Viking.

Objectives

Let us readdress the three major goals outlined in the rationale of this unit:

1. The student will become familiar with three plays.
2. The student will become familiar with the issues the plays address.
3. The student will become familiar with the tools the author uses to address these issues.

In addition to becoming familiar with these, the student will be responsible for producing two texts:

1. A written personal essay identifying him or herself with one of the characters in one of the plays. This essay will be dependent upon the familiarity with the plays and the issues the play addresses.
2. A text which either reflects his or her understanding of the tools authors use to create social drama, OR a text which applies the use of some of the tools authors use in social drama. There will be a presentation before the class of this text.

These two texts will also serve as assessments for the goals of this unit. The first text will assess and aid in the student's

understanding of the literary and social significance of the unit. The second text will measure the student's understanding of the civic awareness component of the unit.

Although each text focuses on specific aspects of the unit, crossover information is certainly possible. Between these two texts, each of the broad aims of the unit, as outlined at the beginning of the Unit Rationale, are served.

Lessons

Week 1

Day 1

5m Housekeeping/ Writing Prompt:

"Write about a play you have seen. If you've never seen one, tell why you would or would not like to."

10m Response Recitation

25m Full Class Discussion Question: "How do we experience a play differently than we do a book?"

Discussion Guidepoints:

- A play is in dialogue.
- A play often only presents one point of view.
- A play is usually seen, not imagined.
- A play involves 3 factors- the text, the audience, and the production.

If conversation stands still, attempt to use the idea of another visual medium- film- to segue into these theatrical ideas.

10m Lecture on Social Drama- how plays are used to change & raise social consciousness (i.e.- theater other than Shakespeare.)

5m Flex time; ask students to write down and inform teacher if they're uncomfortable reading aloud.

Day 2

PC (Prior to class) Arrange desks in a circle.

5m Housekeeping/Tool Sharpening: "Crucible Vocabulary"

5m Pass out "The Crucible"

5m Introduce Arthur Miller, mention "Salesman" Mention Marilyn Monroe.

10m History Lecture- Salem Witch Trials

5m Assign Crucible "Roles" for the day

UB (Until Bell) Read Aloud from "The Crucible" starting on Page 1, going as far as possible. Assign reading through the end of Act I for homework. (Note to students to skip Miller's in-text commentary.)

Day 3

5m Housekeeping

10m Summary of Plot Action in Act I, take objective questions, clear up misunderstandings.

15m Class Discussion of Act I

Discussion Guidepoints/Questions

- Why do the girls do what they do?
- Is there really a demonic presence in Salem?
- Who are (or who, at this point, do we think, are) the protagonist & antagonist?
- Since this is a "history," do we know how it will end? How/Why?

20m Small groups, pass out "Casting Couch" activity, do be done in class, and presented at the beginning of tomorrow's class.

5m Flex time, assign reading of Act II for tomorrow.

Day 4

5m Housekeeping/Tool Sharpening: "Writing Dialogue/Using Quotations"

15m Summary of Plot Action in Act II; take objective questions, clear up misunderstandings

20m Recitation (and discussion?) of Casting Couch answers.

15m Read Act II, Scene 2 aloud in class.

Day 5

5m Housekeeping/Summary Quiz of Act II.

20m Class Discussion of Acts I & II:

Discussion Guidepoints/Questions

- Who do we now think of as the protagonist & antagonist (protagonistS & antagonistS?)?
- What do we think of Abigail?
- Is Proctor getting his "just deserts?"

20m Reminder that this IS a unit on Social Drama. Lecture on McCarthyism, Miller's connection to it, ask if we've seen examples of anything in the play that would be "like" McCarthyism."

5m Tool Sharpening Review: Quotations & Vocabulary

5m Flex Time- Assign Acts III & IV for weekend. Tell Students we will choose which one to read aloud in class.

Week 2

Day 6

5m Housekeeping/Summary Quiz

5m Vote on which Act to read aloud.

15m Summary of Plot Action in Acts III and IV, take objective questions, clear up misunderstandings.

10m Introduce "Readers' Theater" activity.

5m Split into groups based on who wants to be a "reader" and who wants to be in the audience. Assign readers, if necessary.

UB "Readers' Theater" activity (Groups prepare)

Day 7

5m Housekeeping

UB "Readers' Theater"

Day 8

5m Housekeeping

UB "Readers' Theater"

Day 9

5m Housekeeping/ Tool Sharpening: "Writing about something you've seen or read... "I like, or I thought..." and defending it."

UB Discuss "The Crucible."

Discussion Guidepoints/Questions

- What tenets of McCarthyism did we see?
- What is important to Proctor- his "name," or "life?" Why?
- BLAME- have you done it?
- All student responses welcome as well.

Day 10

5m Housekeeping/ Tool Sharpening: "Ma Rainey Vocabulary."

10m Wrap up "The Crucible."

15m Discussion of Millers' techniques in raising social consciousness, lecture on public response to the play.

10m Lecture/Introduction to August Wilson

- Mention "Black Theater" and Wilson's attack on "New Urban Theater"
- Mention Wilson's goal (or overarching theme, if you will) of writing 10 plays, one for each of the decade of the 20th Century reflecting the "Black Experience."

10m Begin Reading "Ma Rainey" aloud in class.

5m Flex time; assign all of "Ma Rainey" for the weekend.

Week 3

Day 11

5m Housekeeping/ Summary quiz on "Ma Rainey."

10m Writing Prompt: "What image do you most clearly remember from "Ma Rainey?" How does this image reflect/fit into the rest of the play?" (Play quiet jazz during the writing?)

10m Summary of "Ma Rainey," take objective questions.

30m Recitation/Discussion of Writing Prompt answers

Day 12

5m Housekeeping/Pass out "The Chitlin Circuit," assign to read for homework.

20m Repeat Casting Couch Activity (play quiet jazz during this?)

30m Discuss Casting Couch responses.

Day 13

5m Housekeeping

30m Discuss "Ma Rainey"

Discussion Guidepoints/Questions

- Levee's entire character can be explained/summed up/ perceived in the last monologue of Act One- but even so, does his explanation of his life justify his views? His actions? Both, or neither?
- Music. How is it used in the play?
- Generation gaps- is there a distinguishable gap? If so, what about the young men who try to defend the old men against Levee? And where does Ma Rainey fit in to it?

15m Discuss "The Chitlin Circuit"

Discussion Guidepoints/Questions

- Wilson states in the article what social issues he is dealing with, not just in one play, but with his work as a whole- the creation of a "true Black theater." Does "Ma Rainey" play into this goal, or work against it?
- Wilson's own comments, within the play, upon our own generation gaps. What happens when a younger generation embraces traditions the older tries to forget? Do we see examples of it today? Are consequences always tragic?

5m Flex Time

Day 14

5m Housekeeping/Tool Sharpening: Review "Writing Dialogue/Using Quotations."

10m Sum up "Ma Rainey," take closing comments.

10m Pass out & read Social Drama activity

10m Discuss possibilities for Social Drama activity

-Brainstorm social issues, faced by both society & the individuals in the class

20m Form working groups, begin working on Social Drama activity

Day 15

5m Housekeeping

UB Work on Social Drama activity

Week 4

Day 16

5m Housekeeping/ Tool Sharpening: "Scanning Poetry"

UB "Into the Woods" (Production on Video)

Day 17

5m Housekeeping/Tool Sharpening: "Poetry Terms"

UB "Into the Woods"

Day 18

5m Housekeeping

UB "Into the Woods"

Day 19

5m Housekeeping

15m Introduction to the Musical, and Sondheim/Lapine.

20m Summary of "Into the Woods"

10m Introduce "Song Activity," form groups based on Song selections.

5m Flex Time

Day 20

5m Housekeeping/Tool Sharpening: "Review Scanning Poetry & Poetry Terms"

5m Pass out Flatow Essay on "Into the Woods;" assign as homework reading over the weekend.

UB "Song Activity"

Week 5

Day 21

5m Housekeeping/ Pass out Lapine essay on "Into The Woods"

20m Recitation of "Song Activity" answers.

20m Summary & Discussion of Flatow Essay

Discussion Guidepoints/Questions

- How do Sondheim/Lapine address the role of parents in the play? What, do they suggest, are the responsibilities of parents? How is this shown?
- What, then, are some of the responsibilities of the children? What "morals" do the children in the individual tales learn that some of the adults in the other fairy tales learn?

- Can this truly be considered a social drama? (**Teacher's Answer: Yes.**) If so, what are some of the cultural issues Sondheim & Lapine are addressing? (**Teacher's Answer, and the answer that happens to appear in the Lapine essay: The effects of society on single parent/ 'mixed' families, how modern appearances can be deceptive: "Giants can be nice, witches can be right, etc."**)

5m Pass out short essay prompt. Assign for homework.

5m Flex Time

Day 22

5m Housekeeping/ Tool Sharpening: Vocabulary Review for the Unit.

10m Discussion Review of the three plays

Discussion Guidepoints/Questions

- "Crucible" = Proctor, Abigail, Hale, Salem/ McCarthy, Hollywood
- "Ma Rainey" = Ma, Levee, Harlem/ Black Theater, Generations, Language
- "Into the Woods" = Baker, Cinderella, Jack, Witch, Rapunzel/ Parent & Children's Rights

10m Pass out "Play Worksheet" & form small groups.

30m Work in small groups on "Play Worksheet;" turn in at bell.

5m Flex Time

Day 23

5m Housekeeping

UB Social Drama Project presentations

Day 24

5m Housekeeping

UB Social Drama Project presentations

Day 25

5m Housekeeping

UB Social Drama Project presentations.

Activities

Introductory Activity: Prior Play Experience

The objective of this activity is for the students to reacquaint (or acquaint) themselves with a different kind of text: A play. It is not a handout, but rather a writing prompt on the first day. The prompt states: "Write about a play you have seen. If you've never seen one, tell why you would or would not like to." This prompt allows for students who have seen live theater to draw on the prior experience of having seen that piece of theater, and as such will have a frame of reference with which to refer when talking about drama in the broadest sense. The second part of the activity, the discussion, is actually more intended to provide the student who has not seen a live performance with a point of reference as well. Rather than drawing upon live theater, though, it asks the students to recall movies or television they may recall. In both the cases of

students who have or have not seen anything live, it is hoped that they will be able to understand a little better the aspects of 'reading' visual texts.

Day1

5m Housekeeping/Writing Prompt:

"Write about a play you have seen. If you've never seen one, tell why you would or would not like to."

10m Response Recitation

25m Full Class Discussion Question: "How do we experience a play differently than we do a book?"

Discussion Guidepoints:

- A play is in dialogue.
- A play often only presents one point of view
- A play is usually seen, not imagined
- A play involves 3 factors- the text, the audience, and the production.

If conversation stands still, attempt to use the idea of another visual medium- film- to segue into these theatrical ideas.

Activity 1: The Casting Couch

The objective of this activity is for you to explore one of the three aspects of a play- that is, the production. Oftentimes, the casting of a production is meant to predispose the viewer to certain characters. If the author or director of a play wants a particular character to be the "villain" of the piece, then they may choose to cast an actor or actress who the audience has seen play a villain once or many times before. That way, even before the character's actions establish him or her as a villain, the audience is predisposed to think of him or her in that way.

In your group, select two or three characters we have been introduced to in The Crucible. Make a list of qualities each of these characters exhibits. Are they quick-tempered? Seductive? Not very smart? Funny? Write down a short phrase defending how they exhibit each quality. Once you have done that, think about an actor or actress you would cast in this role. You should not, though, simply choose a performer because you "like" him or her. You should act as casting director and consider the past work of the performer you choose. When you choose your actor or actress, you must also refer to a character in a movie or television series (or play) he or she has performed. Make a list of qualities the performer exhibited in a particular role and defend them, as you did with your Crucible character. We will discuss these in class tomorrow, after which each group will turn in their casting decisions.

MY EXAMPLE:

I am not going to use an example from The Crucible because I do not want to influence you in any way. Instead, I will cast another figure with whom many of you may be familiar: Abraham Lincoln.

Abe Lincoln:

Determined- he freed the slaves

Compassionate- he thought all men were equal.

Good Speaker- he was famous for his speeches

Tall/Big- every picture of him shows him to be an imposing man.

Courageous- he took a stance on slavery that was dangerous.

Didn't care what people thought of him- he held a very unpopular opinion.

Strong/Powerful (held a position of power)- he was President!

Okay, I've decided what qualities Abe Lincoln has. Now I'm saying to myself "What actor have I seen with these same qualities?" After thinking about it a minute, I remembered Liam Neeson, who played Oskar Schindler in Schindler's List and Qui-Gon Jinn in Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace because I saw him exhibit some of these same qualities.

Liam Neeson:

Determined to save his friends and help Anakin in Star Wars

Compassionate- saved thousands of Jews in Schindler's List

Good Speaker- in both movies, he was a diplomatic character who could persuade with words

Tall/Big- he's a big man, he looks like what I picture Abe Lincoln would look like.

Courageous- In Star Wars, he took on Darth Maul twice even though he didn't know what would happen.

Didn't care what people thought of him- he was a Nazi in Schindler's who was also a Jewish sympathizer.

Strong/Powerful- in Star Wars, he was one of the most powerful Jedi, and in Schindler's, he was an

Influential businessman.

Activity 2: Reader's Theater

The objective of this activity is to help you better engage with the play The Crucible. Rather than simply reading aloud, we are actually going to perform what is known as "Reader's Theater," a type of performance that is not a full production of a play, but is rather a dramatic reading, oftentimes directly from the text. When you come into class tomorrow, I will have arranged some of the desks in such a fashion that the classroom will resemble a courtroom setting on a stage. The rest of the desks will be on the other side of the room, where the audience will sit. We will immediately begin at the beginning of Act III and spend two days reading it aloud.

Before the end of class today, you will need to split into groups based on whether you want to be a performer or be in the audience. I will read some bit roles if need be, but there should be at least 10 students to take the roles of Danforth, Giles Corey, Hathorne, Hale, Parris, Herrick, Proctor, Mary Warren, Abigail, & Elizabeth.

READER'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

Today: Discuss your role with other readers. If you are only in a short bit of the scene, discuss it with the individuals with whom you speak in the scene. Jot notes about the character as you see him or her.

Tonight: Re-read your role carefully, understanding that you will be performing it in class over the next two days. Then, write a short paragraph explaining how you view the character, and how you think you might convey this character through your reading tomorrow. This paragraph will be due at the beginning of class on Thursday.

Tomorrow & Wednesday: Perform your role in class. This will go beyond simply reading it aloud. You are not expected to have memorized the part, certainly, but you will have had a chance to prepare for it and should try to read "in character" if possible!

AUDIENCE RESPONSIBILITIES:

Today & Tonight: Choose one character from the ten listed above, and do a character sketch of that character- what qualities does he or she exhibit? Write a paragraph explaining how you view the character.

Tomorrow & Wednesday: During the performance of Act III, pay particular attention to the individual reading the part of your character. Jot notes on his or her reading- particularly how & if he or she conflicts with the notes you have already

made on the character.

Wednesday night: write one more paragraph explaining how you now view the character, having watched somebody portray him or her. The two paragraphs are due at the beginning of class Thursday.

Activity Three: Songs

The objective of this activity is to enhance your understanding of parts of "Into the Woods" and also to sharpen your poetry reading skills. Pair off with somebody and I will hand you a set of lyrics from a song in "Into the Woods." (I'll give both of you a copy of the same song, so that you can each have one to look over this evening.) As soon as class begins tomorrow, we will examine, again, a few simple tools for scanning poetry, and then I will turn you and your partner loose to analyze your particular "Into the Woods" song as a poem. You will have the entire day to work on it- I have cut down some of the longer songs so that you should be able to scan the entire piece in one class period. This is what I would like to see you actually do with your song.

1. Scan one entire verse line by line. Separate syllables and mark them stressed or unstressed.
2. Choose one image or word in the poem. Underline it each time that image or word appears.
3. Write one short paragraph about why Sondheim/Lapine may have chosen that particular image. In your recollection of viewing the play, did that image/idea/word appear more than once?
4. Write one short paragraph about why you and your partner chose that image or word- why did it stick out to you? What makes that particular image vivid for you?

MY EXAMPLE:

The attached poem is a song from another Sondheim/Lapine musical, Sunday in the Park With George.

1. I have scanned the first verse line by line.
2. The image I have chosen is finance- I have underlined everything I consider to be associated with paying for art.
3. I think Sondheim/Lapine particularly chose to address money in "Putting it Together," partially because concerns of many artists lie in who will pay them to produce their work! They have to balance their own principles and artistic goals with what their patrons/sponsors/employers want to see. This song comes at a point in the play where a young artist, George, is concerned with the fact that he only wants to produce art. He doesn't want to answer to anybody else. In order for Sondheim and Lapine to get this across to the audience, they peppered the entire song with images of the money other people have to provide George with in order that he can keep producing his work. George understands this as well, is nearly obsessed with it, and thus keeps returning to it in his song.
4. The idea of having to pay for art is particularly interesting to me. When I was working in New York City for a film production shop, I was consistently faced with the decision of how much I would have to compromise my own ideas with the ideas of the people paying for my pictures. Sometimes I would also have to work within certain financial limits- I could do whatever I wanted artistically, but I might have a particular budget I had to stay within. I know what it's like to have to both solicit your talents for money and what it's like to not get paid because you're doing your own thing. I really associate with both this character, and the points he makes in this song/poem

"Putting it Together"

Bit/ by/ bit,

Put/ting/ it/ to/ge/ther...

Piece/ by/ piece-

On/ly way/ to/ make/ a/ work/ of/ art.

Eve/ry mo/ment/ makes/ a/ con/tri/bu/tion,

Eve/ry/ lit/tle de/tail/ plays/ a/ part.

Ha/ving/ just/ the/ vi/sion's/ no/ so/lu/tion,

Every/thing/ de/pends/ on/ ex/ecu/tion:

Put/ting/ it/ to/ge/ther-

That's/ what/ counts.

Ounce by ounce,

Putting it together...

Small amounts,

Adding up to make a work of art.

First of all, you need a good foundation,

Otherwise it's risky from the start.

Takes a little cocktail conversation,

But without the proper preparation,

Having just the vision's no solution,

Everything depends on execution.

Link by link,

Making the connections...

Drink by drink,

Fixing and perfecting the design.

Adding just a dab of politician

(Always knowing where to draw the line).

Lining up the funds but in addition

Lining up a prominent commission,

Otherwise your perfect composition

Isn't going to get much exhibition.

The art of making art

Is putting it together

Bit by bit...

Leading to a prominent commission,

And an exhibition in addition?

Art isn't easy.

Every minor detail

Is a major decision,

Have to keep things in scale,

Have to hold to your vision-

Every time I start to feel defensive,

I remember lasers are expensive.

What's a little cocktail conversation

If it's going to get you your foundation,

The art of making art

Is putting it together-

Bit by bit-

Link by link-

Drink by drink-

Mink by mink-

And that

Is the state

Of the

Art

Activity Four: Play Review

The objective of this activity is simply to help you recall some of the basic concepts and ideas in the social dramas we have studied. With one or two other people, just fill in each blank as you feel best.

Play Title Social Issue(s) Ways it's expressed in the play

The Crucible

Ma Rainey

Into the Woods

Assessment Activities

Essay Activity/Assessment

This will be a fairly short, fairly simple personal writing assignment, and it will be graded. It will be due on _____. (This is will actually be the first Monday following the Unit, the fictitious "Day 26.") It should be between 1,000 and 1,500 words. It may be handwritten, provided it is neat and legible (meaning I don't want to see 30 scratch-outs and a coffee stain on the bottom left hand corner of the notebook paper.). This is your prompt:

Think of the different characters from "The Crucible," "Ma Rainey," or "Into the Woods" and decide upon which you think you are most like. Write a short essay explaining how you are like this character. The

criteria you may wish to use in determining similarities are:

1. Similar experiences or similar philosophies.
2. Similar relationships.
3. Similar fears or desires.

Remember that this is an essay, not a list. You should relate your similarities to your character in developed sentences, not in 'jot' form. You should then write not only how your character exhibits or displays these qualities, but also how these qualities are evident in your own life/personality. How does your character overcome his or her problems or fears? Do you find that you do so in a similar fashion? These are only things to think about- this is a general essay- explore whatever connections between you and your character you find interesting.

You are not required to cite the play or use any particular source. If your character is from "Into the Woods" and has a song which displays some of his or her qualities that you wish to re-examine, or quote, see me and I'll be happy to provide you with a copy of the lyrics. This is a "do at home" assignment. Bring me any questions you have!

Culminating Activity/Assessment: The Social Drama

The objective of this activity is to evaluate how you understand an author will bring a particular issue to the public consciousness, as Miller brought McCarthyism to light in The Crucible, and Wilson addressed African generation issues in Ma Rainey. You will have the choice to work alone or in a group and will also have the choice whether you do a 'creative' assignment or a 'research based' assignment. You will be required to turn in your written work to me by _____. (Day 23 of the Unit) Your work may be handwritten, but should be legible (Papers with teeth marks in them will not be accepted.). You will present your work to the class on _____. (Days 23, 24, 25 of the Unit)

Choice 1:

Decide whether you would like to work alone or in a group. Groups may not consist of more than four people. You will only have one class day (tomorrow) to work on it. The rest of the time you will be working outside of class, so make sure you are working with somebody you'll be able to see outside of class!

Choice 2:

Decide whether you would like to create a project or a research a project. Here's the specifics:

CREATE A PROJECT

Decide upon an issue that we either face as a society, or that you face as an individual, or that your particular generation or subset of people face. Create a dramatization concerning that issue. Write one scene from this dramatization. Make sure that you write a scene which will deal with the issue you are bringing to light! You and your group will present this scene before the class (memorization is not required, although it would be nice.). If you have access to a video camera, you may videotape as well and show the tape in lieu of performing live. Make sure you have rehearsed the scene- it will need to last between 10 and 12 minutes. You will also have two minutes at the beginning and two minutes at the end of your scene to explain what happens in your drama prior to the scene you perform, and what happens after (unless, of course, your scene happens at the beginning or end of your dramatization.). In addition to your presentation, I will need to see three things:

1. A one page (750 words minimum) summary of your drama.
2. Your written script, which you perform.
3. The attached sheet, filled out.

This option is geared towards groups, but if you feel that you can do it alone, as a monologue, speak with me, and I will make appropriate adjustments for presentation time. You will still be responsible for the same three components, however.

RESEARCH A PROJECT

Read (or attend) another social drama. You must clear your choice of play with me (I can also provide *plenty* of suggestions, if you like!). Decide upon what issue (or issues) the author is addressing. You'll be responsible for a 6-8

minute presentation. The presentation should include something about the author (other than his or her birthdate), a summary of the play, the social issue it addressed, and any specific tools the author used to address that issue. Along with the 6-8 minute presentation, you will be responsible for reading a scene (or monologue) from your play OR presenting a visual aid. (Details below) In addition to your presentation, I will need to see three things:

1. A one page (750 words minimum) summary of the play you read.
 2. One paragraph about the author of the play.
 3. One paragraph about the issue the play addresses.
 4. One paragraph about the tools the author uses to address the issue.
 5. A visual aid to help the class get a picture of your play. This should be something YOU create- it can be a design for a costume, a poster, or a set design. Discuss other ideas with me. (You only have to turn this in if you do NOT read a scene or monologue from your play)
-
1. What is the specific social issue you are addressing in this dramatization?

2. What setting have you placed this social issue in, in your dramatization?

3. What tools have you used to address the issue within the dramatization?

4. Of the three plays we studied, "Crucible," "Ma Rainey," and "Into the Woods," which comes closest to your dramatization in the way dramatic tools are used to address an issue? Why do you say that play? Give an example from both the play from class, and from your own scene.

Assessment/Activity Rubrics

The Introductory Writing Prompt, Casting Couch, Reader's Theater, Song, and Review Activities will all be graded on a pass/fail basis. Either the student turns it in or he or she doesn't.

ESSAY Rubric

A grade of "F" will be given to an essay that

- is not turned in on time.
- Does not meet the minimum requirements for length
- Does not meet the minimum requirements for content (establishing a link between one character in one of the plays and the student)

A grade of "D" will be given to an essay that

- is turned in on time

- meets the minimum requirements for length
- meets the minimum requirements for content (establishes a link between one character in one of the plays and the student)

A grade of "C" will be given to an essay that

- is turned in on time
- meets the requirements for length
- meets the requirements for content
- is written in complete sentences and paragraphs
- establishes qualities in the character in the play which the student shares.

A grade of "B" will be given to an essay that

- is turned in on time
- meets the requirements for length
- meets the requirements for content
- is written in a variety of complete sentences and paragraphs
- establishes qualities in the character in the play which the student shares and explains how those qualities are shown in the character as well as how those qualities are shown in the student.
- Explores a specific connection between the character and the student.

A grade of "A" will be given to an essay that

- is turned in on time
- meets the requirements for length
- meets the requirements for content
- is written in a variety of complete sentences and paragraphs
- establishes qualities in the character in the play which the student shares and explains how those qualities are shown in the character as well as how those qualities are shown in the student.
- Explores a specific connection between the character and the student, and backs up said connection using examples from the text and from the student's own experiences.

CULMINATING ACTIVITY Rubric

Note: Only one assignment will be required from the student, either the Created Project or the Research Project.

A grade of "F" will be given to a project that

- is not turned in on time.
- Does not contain all required parts
- Does not meet the minimum requirements for content

A grade of "D" will be given to a project that

- is turned in on time
- contains all required parts
- meets the minimum requirements for content (concerns a dramatization of a social issue and meets the guidelines set forth in the activity)

A grade of "C" will be given to a project that

- is turned in on time

- contains all required parts
- meets the minimum requirements for content
- is presented before the class
- presents an understandable and coherent narrative to the class

A grade of "B" will be given to a project that

- is turned in on time
- contains all required parts
- meets the minimum requirements for content
- is presented before the class
- presents an understandable and coherent narrative to the class
- establishes a perceptible link between the answers on the worksheet and the in-class presentation (in the case of the CREATED projects)
- uses examples of author's tools to establish a link between the play and the social issue the author is addressing (in the case of the RESEARCHED projects)

A grade of "A" will be given to a project that

- is turned in on time
- contains all required parts
- meets the minimum requirements for content
- is presented before the class
- presents an understandable and coherent narrative to the class
- establishes a perceptible link between the answers on the worksheet and the in-class presentation (in the case of the CREATED projects)
- uses examples of author's tools to establish a link between the play and the social issue the author is addressing (in the case of the RESEARCHED projects)
- shows evidence of having been prepared and/or rehearsed before going presenting in front of the class