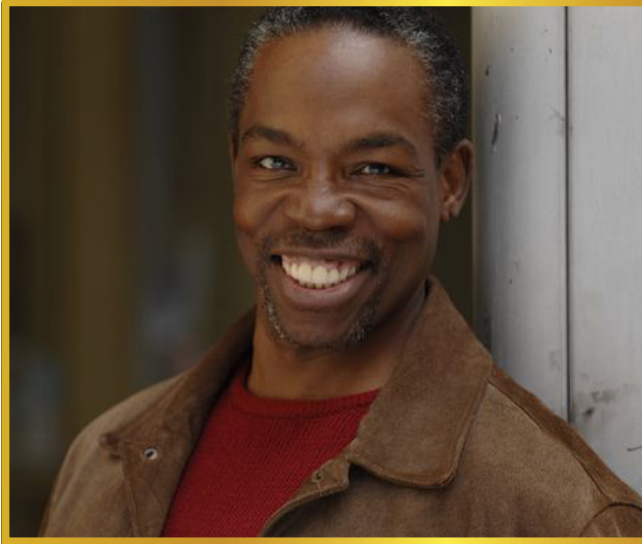


*Teacher Resource Guide:***RHAPSODY
IN BLACK**

The lessons and activities in this guide are driven by the **Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (2010)** which help ensure that all students are college and career ready in literacy no later than the end of high school. The College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards in Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language define general, cross-disciplinary literacy expectations that must be met for students to be prepared to enter college and workforce training programs ready to succeed.

21st century skills of creativity, critical thinking and collaboration are embedded in process of bringing the page to the stage. Seeing live theater encourages students to read, develop critical and creative thinking and to be curious about the world around them.

This Teacher Resource Guide includes background information, questions, and activities that can stand alone or work as building blocks toward the creation of a complete unit of classroom work.

Before the Show

- ♦ About the Performance
- ♦ About the Artist
- ♦ About the Directorial Consultant
- ♦ Coming to the Theater

Pre-Show Activities

- ♦ Huffington Post Review
- ♦ Compare and Contrast
- ♦ Respond in Writing
- ♦ The Civil Rights Movement
- ♦ Peace and Brotherhood
- ♦ Into the Words – Theater Vocabulary

Post-Show Activities

- ♦ *Rhapsody in Black* Content Vocabulary
- ♦ Comfortable vs. Challenging Conversations
- ♦ I, Too, Sing America
- ♦ Huffington Post RE-View
- ♦ Perspective in Poetry
- ♦ Cloze & Context Clues
- ♦ Dive Deeper
- ♦ Recommended Download
- ♦ Works Cited

This guide contains pre-show/post-show classroom activities that include specific student learning targets to use in their existing curriculum. The classroom activities are purposefully open ended and educators/youth service professionals are encouraged to make appropriate adaptations to specific learning targets in order to meet the individualized needs of their students.



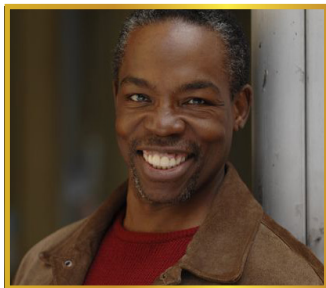
ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Written and performed by LeLand Gantt and developed at NYC's Actors Studio by Academy Award Winner Estelle Parsons, *Rhapsody in Black* is a one man show that explores LeLand's personal journey to understand and eventually transcend racism in America.

The play follows his spellbinding life story – from an underprivileged childhood in the ghettos of McKeesport, Pennsylvania to teenage experiments with crime to scholastic achievement and an acting career that lands adult LeLand in situations where he is virtually the only African American in the room.

In his own words: "Objective truth strikes a chord." How he manages to cope with the various psychological effects of consistently being marked "The Other" is recounted in remarkable and exquisitely moving detail, guaranteed to leave lasting impressions.

ABOUT THE ARTIST



LeLand Gantt first unveiled *Rhapsody in Black* at the Workshop Theater Company's Sundays@Six reading series in March 2013. Further development at The Actors Studio yielded a slot in their

Playwrights/Directors Unit's spring festival in May 2013 and, subsequently, a three-week workshop run last fall.

Regional credits include: *Two Trains Running* and *Radio Golf* (Syracuse Stage); Walter Mosley's *The Fall of Heaven*, world premier (Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park); *Gem of the Ocean* (Arena Stage), *Jitney* (Pittsburgh Public Theater), and *In Walks Ed* (Longwharf Theater).

Off-Broadway/Broadway: *Slippery When Wet* (La Mama), *Another Man's Poison* (Peter Jay Sharpe Theater), OyamO's *Killa Dilla* and *Let Me Live* (Drama Desk and Audelco Award nominee for Featured Actor), and the revival of *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (u/s Rock Dutton).

Film and television credits include: *Miracle at St. Anna*, *Requiem for a Dream*, *Malcolm X*, *Presumed Innocent*, *Law and Order*, *Law and Order SVU*, *J.A.G.*, and HBO's *The Affair*.

ABOUT THE DIRECTORIAL CONSULTANT



Estelle Parsons won an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress in 1967 for her role as Blanche Barrow in *Bonnie and Clyde*. Among her most noted television roles, she played Roseanne's mother on

the award-winning sitcom *Roseanne*. She played the title role in *Miss Margarita's Way* on Broadway and the National tour, and Violet Weston in *August: Osage County* on Broadway and the national tour.

Ms. Parsons' directing credits include: a multi-cultural *Anthony and Cleopatra* described as "the most exciting and innovative presentation in English since Peter Brook's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Belasco Theater; Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* adapted by Adrienne Kennedy at the Signature Theater, NYC; *Oedipus the King* (Yeats adaptation) and *Salome: The Reading* (Oscar Wilde) with Al Pacino on Broadway and the National tour. Nominated four times for the Tony Award, Ms. Parsons was inducted into the American Theater Hall Of Fame in 2004.

Coming to the Theater

Playhouse Square is an exciting field trip destination! As the country's largest performing arts center outside of New York, the not-for-profit Playhouse Square attracts more than one million guests to 1,000+ performances and events each year. Playhouse Square thus acts as a catalyst for economic growth and vitality within the region. When you visit, be sure to note the GE Chandelier, the world's largest outdoor chandelier, and the retro Playhouse Square sign with its 9-foot-tall letters!

As audience members, you and your students play a vital role in the success of the performances. You are part of a community that creates the theater experience. For many students, this may be their first time viewing a live theater production. We encourage teachers to discuss some of the differences between coming to the theater and watching a television show, attending a sporting event or viewing a movie at the cinema. Here are a few points to start the discussion:

- ♦ Students are led into the theater and seated by an usher.
- ♦ Theaters are built to magnify sound. Even the slightest whisper can be heard throughout the theater. Remember that not only can those around you hear you; the performers can too.
- ♦ Appropriate responses such as laughing or applauding are appreciated. Pay attention to the artists on stage; they will let you know what is appropriate.
- ♦ There is no food, drink or gum permitted in the theater.
- ♦ Photography and videotaping of performances is not permitted.
- ♦ When the houselights dim, the performance is about to begin. Please turn your attention toward the stage.
- ♦ After the performance, you will be dismissed by bus number. Check around your seat to make sure you have all of your personal belongings.

An exciting destination for field trips and more!



Pre-Show Activities



Huffington Post Review

Required Resource

RHAPSODY IN BLACK HUFFINGTON POST REVIEW

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jaime-lubin/rhapsody-in-black_b_4209595.html

Student Learning Objective:

I can be engaged and actively participate in a close read of the *Rhapsody in Black* review in the Huffington Post Arts & Culture article.

CCLS: RL 6-12.6

Compare and Contrast

Required Resource

RHAPSODY IN BLACK VIDEO TRAILER PREVIEW

Excerpt Sample 1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vDzhpDtwrGk&feature=youtu.be>

Student Learning Objective:

I can compare and contrast the video version to the written transcript.

CCLS: RL6-12.7

Respond in Writing

Student Learning Objective:

I can create and develop a *Rhapsody in Black* Response Journal.

CCLS: W6-12.3

The Civil Rights Movement

Required Resource – Martin Luther King, Jr. Video (4 minutes, 3 seconds)

<http://www.brainpop.com/search/search.weml?keyword=civil+rights+movement>

Student Learning Objective:

I can activate my prior knowledge about the Civil Rights Movement and its purpose.

CCLS: RI6-12.2

Peace and Brotherhood

Required Resource

“LETTERS FROM A BIRMINGHAM JAIL” BY MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. (Common Core Recommended Text for Grade 7)

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/letter-from-birmingham-city-jail-excerpts/>

Student Learning Objective:

I can examine Dr. King's concepts of peace and brotherhood.

CCLS: RI6-12.6, RI6-12.8, RI6-12.10



INTO THE WORDS

THEATER VOCABULARY

Create a 'Performance Vocabulary Booklet'

Student Learning Objective:

I can define, construct contextual sentences, and illustrate performance vocabulary.

CCLS: L6-12.4

Suggested Theater Vocabulary

Blocking – the instructions that actors use to know exactly where they are supposed to be on stage at all times

Cast – the people who perform in a show

Company – the cast and crew of a show and any other staff who work on the show

Downstage – the part of the stage which is closest to the audience

Dialogue – the words which are spoken in a play

Director – the person who provides the vision of how a show should be presented, who works with the actors on their roles, develops the blocking, and is in charge of the rehearsals

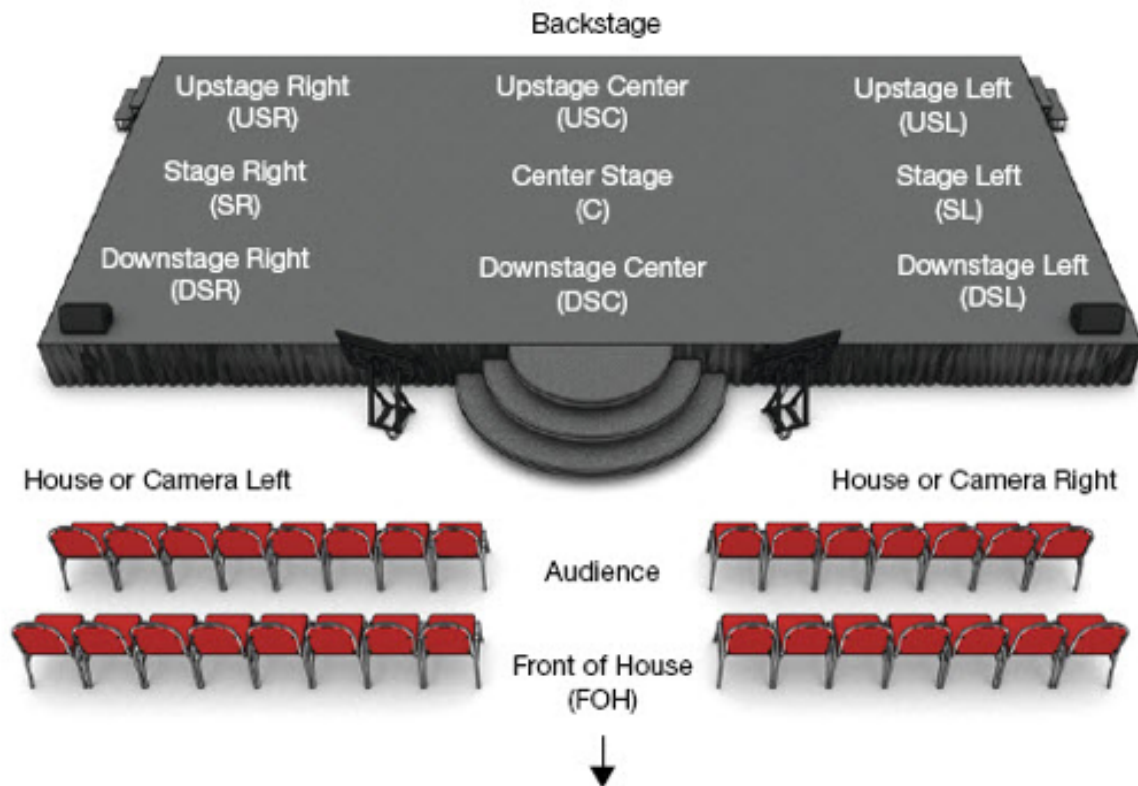
Monologue – a speech given by one actor

Set – the setting of the stage for each act and all the physical things that are used to change the stage for the performance

Stage Left – (these left/right directions are seen from the ACTOR'S point of view on the stage) this is when the actor standing in the center of the stage moves to his left (This even stumps some pros so it is best to learn it now)

Stage Right – this is when the actor standing in the center of the stage moves to his right

Upstage – (1) the area of the stage that is the farthest away from the audience (2) when one actor moves to the back of the stage and causes another actor to turn away from the audience...This is called "Upstaging" when an actor draws attention to himself and away from the main action of a play



Post-Show Activities

RHAPSODY IN BLACK CONTENT VOCABULARY

Student Learning Objective:

I can create a word study guide to help me understand the show's dialogue, thoughts and themes.

CCLS: L6-12.4, L6-12.6

The following word list is a compilation of academic vocabulary that is explored throughout the performance through dialogue, thoughts or themes. Please be encouraged to add and/or delete items at your discretion.

adversary • bigotry • conversation • discrimination
diversity • hypocrisy racism • rhapsody
resonance • prejudice • racial identity
transcending adamant rapier • minotaur
ubiquitous • subterranean • largess indoctrinate
fraudulent • vitriol • amalgamation • aberrations

Comfortable vs. Challenging Conversations

Student Learning Objective:

I can participate in provocative conversations based upon both facts and feelings.

CCLS: SL6-12.1, SL6-12.4

1. What are some ways we can make ourselves and our classmates feel comfortable when we are talking about challenging or confusing topics?
2. Have you experienced prejudice (in regards to any nationality, sex, religion, sexual orientation)?
3. Have you been prejudiced?
4. Do you think our country has made acceptable progress in race relations since the Civil Rights Movement?
5. Based on what you know, how would you explain the fact that racism is still prevalent in many parts of American society today?



"As a duo, Ieland and Estelle craft a gorgeous magic; she emphasizes physicality in her direction and he exercises enviable mastery over his body." —Jaime Lubin, Huffpost Arts & Culture



I, Too, Sing America

Required Resource

"I, TOO, SING AMERICA"

by Langston Hughes, 1902-1967

**I, too, sing America.
I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.**

**Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
"Eat in the kitchen,"
Then.
Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed –
I, too, am America.**

Student Learning Objectives:

I can read and interpret the poem "I, Too, Sing America."

I can participate in provocative conversations based upon both facts and feelings.

CCLS: RL 6-12.1, SL6-12.1, SL6-12.4

Patriotism is a pretty complicated concept. It can mean standing up for your country or criticizing it. If you want to sum up patriotism, you can simply call it "love for one's country." But how does one love a country? Unconditionally?

"I, Too, Sing America" is, in fact, a patriotic poem, but in some very unexpected ways.

Freedom and equality. Now those are two concepts that we can get behind, right? Those are two concepts that good citizens of the United States should champion, right? Right. So in very few words, and with some startling imagery, Hughes is really teaching us how to assert ourselves, and how to be true Americans – Americans who aren't afraid to try and improve their country, and who aren't afraid to claim its citizenship, no matter what.



Huffington Post RE-View

Required Resource

RHAPSODY IN BLACK HUFFINGTON POST REVIEW

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jaime-lubin/rhapsody-in-black_b_4209595.html

Student Learning Objectives:

I can reread the *Rhapsody in Black* review in the Huffington Post Arts & Culture article and formulate an opinion on the statements made in the review. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jaime-lubin/rhapsody-in-black_b_4209595.html

I can write my own “official” review of the *Rhapsody in Black* performance.

I can present my review to my peers (and even mail a copy to Mr. LeLand Gantt).

Email all copies to kchurchill@bardavon.org

CCLS: RI 6-12.6, W6-12.1, SL6-12.3, SL6-12.4

Perspective in Poetry

Required Resource

“YOU DON’T KNOW, OR DO YOU?”

by Shari M., East Chapel Hill High School

You don’t know, or do you?

Who are you to tell me who I am?

Who are you to tell me who I will be?

Although you think you do, you don’t know jack about me.

You don’t know the pain, the hate, or the sorrow inside.

You don’t know how it feels to have to compete and to constantly have to prove yourself.

You don’t know how it feels to battle the stereotypes and the prejudice.

You don’t know, or do you?

Who are you to tell me how to act?

And who are you to tell me how to dress?

How dare you deny me the right to be me?

It is killing me softly, can’t you see?

You want me to assimilate, yet you still want to put me on a leash.

You smile in my face and yet you stab me in my back.

You only want me to be a reflection of you and not me, Shari.

You don’t know, or do you?

Who are you to judge me?

And who gave you the right?

If you can’t accept me, my brain, my love, my hate, my heart, my soul,

my ghetto-fabulousness and all the rest.

Then your best bet is just to step.

Because before you can judge me, tell me who

I am, who I’m gonna be, how to act and dress,

You’d better take the time to look at yourself.

Do you know what I’ve been through?

You haven’t experienced what I have.

You haven’t been judged based solely on your looks.

You haven’t been discriminated against.

You haven’t walked into an honors class and gotten the dirty looks.

Ignorance, pride, strength, have you experienced them?

You don’t know, or do you?

Student Learning Objectives:

I can read and interpret the perspective of the author in the poem “You Don’t Know, Or Do You?” by Shari M., East Chapel Hill School

I can create my own poem based on my interpretation/ reaction to the performance.

I can present my poem orally to the class/group.

CCLS: W6-12.3, W6-12.4, SL6-12.3, SL6-12.4

Cloze & Context Clues

Cloze refers to the “reading closure” practice required when readers must fill blanks left in text, using whatever knowledge and experience they have (Teach On by David Hornsby).

The teacher uses the cloze procedure to model a variety of problem-solving reading strategies.

In a cloze activity words or letters are omitted from text in ways that require the readers to use specific reading strategies, or to focus upon specific cues in the text. The teacher guides students through the text, helping them to focus on one of the following:

- ♦ phonics/visual cues
- ♦ sight and/or speaking vocabulary
- ♦ predication skills
- ♦ cross-check cues

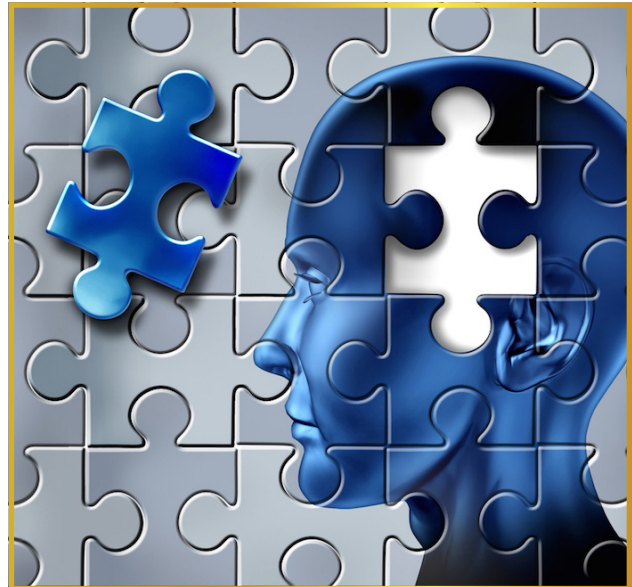
Lessons using the cloze procedure can also expand student's use of language structure cues, meaning cues, and background knowledge to predict unknown words.

Student Learning Objectives:

I can utilize my preshow vocabulary definitions to create a cloze summary of the performance.

I can create Civil Rights Movement context clue sentences with performance vocabulary.

CCLS: L6-12.4/L6-12.6/W6-12.2



Dive Deeper

Student Learning Targets:

I can participate in individual and group discussions about the performance themes and vocabulary.

CCLS: RL 6-12.5/SL6-12.3/SL6-12.4

1. Examine how the author/actor confronts his own hypocrisy when including the observation that “objective truth strikes a chord.”
2. Can we rise above our prejudices with honest conversation?

*** Recommended Download: Building Community and Combating Hate: Lessons for the Middle School Classroom (PDF) for Additional Activities & Lesson Plans**

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/Abstract.aspx?id=261788>

Works Cited

www.bardavon.org

www.broadwayworld.com

www.clemson.edu

www.corestandards.org

www.engageny.org/resource/text-list

www.musical-theater-kids.com/kids-theater-dictionary.html

www.partnersagainsthate.org/educators

www.shmoop.com/i-too-sing-america/

www.tolerance.org





Critical Response Questions

Students develop their comprehension when they reflect upon what they wondered about, noticed and felt. Ignite a classroom discussion with the following critical response questions:

1. Define racism. How was it shown in the play?
2. Is there a lot of racism in your home town?
3. Name one way to stop racism.
4. Have you ever been hurt by racism? How?
5. Do you think that racism will ever go away?
6. What do you do when you see racism?
7. Are there punishments for racism in the United States?
8. Name three feelings that come up when you hear the word racism.
9. Do you think that someone has ever **NOT** experienced racism?
10. Have you ever stopped racism?
11. You are in a restaurant and the owner throws someone out for being white. What do you do?
12. You are in a restaurant and the owner throws someone out for being black. What do you do?
13. Which country has the most racism? Why?
14. How should people punish racists? Why?
15. Which is worse: racism or sexism? Why?
16. Which is worse: racism or homophobia? Why?
17. Why would anyone want to be a racist?
18. How do you explain racism to a child?
19. Do you think global racism is getting better or worse?
20. What kind of place would the world be if there was no racism?



RESOURCES

Web Resources

<http://www.agoodblackman.com/portal2.htm>
<http://besthistorysites.net/general-history-resources/>
<http://www.blackpast.org>
http://www.educationworld.com/a_special/black_history.shtml
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/africanamericanheritage>
<http://librarycompany.org/paah>

The Hundred Best Websites for African Americans:

<http://www.dwatch.com/iilist/100best.htm>

YouTube Links:

Malcom X – The Ballot or the Bullet?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9BVENesn6Y>

Malcom X – On Police Brutality

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUYNgZu7si8>

Malcom X – Who Taught You To Hate Yourself?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gRSgUTWffMQ>

Martin Luther King – I Have a Dream Speech

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l47Y6VHc3Ms>

Martin Luther King – The Three Evils of Society

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j8d-IYSM-08>

Book Resources

A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr. by Martin Luther King (Author), James M. Washington (Editor). Harper One Publisher, Reprint Edition, 2003.

The Autobiography of Malcolm X: As Told to Alex Haley by Malcolm X (Author), Alex Haley (Author), Attallah Shabazz (Author). Ballantine Books; Reissue edition (November 1992)

The Big Sea: An Autobiography (American Century Series) by Langston Hughes (Author) Arnold Rampersad (Introduction). Hill and Wang Publisher; 2nd edition (August 1, 1993)

The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes by Langston Hughes (Author), Arnold Rampersad (Editor). Vintage Publisher; 1st Vintage classics ed edition (October 31, 1995).

Conversations with Myself by Nelson Mandela (Author), Barack Obama (Foreword). Picador Publisher; Reprint edition (September 27, 2011).

Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela by Nelson Mandela Back Bay Books; 1st Paperback Ed edition (October 1, 1995).

Poetry for Young People: Langston Hughes by David Roessel (Editor) Sterling Children's Books; Reprint edition (January 1, 2013).

Strength to Love by Martin Luther King, Jr. Fortress Press; Gift edition (January 10, 2010).

Rhapsody in Black Study Guide created by Heidi M. Murphy; adapted by the Community Engagement & Education Department at Playhouse Square, and Tina D. Stump, Master of Arts in Education