

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

LOOKING BEYOND MUSICAL THEATRE:
AN EXPLORATION OF DOCUMENTARY THEATRE AS AN ALTERNATIVE THEATRE
EDUCATION METHOD

A graduate project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

For a degree of Master of Arts in Theatre

By

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Dedication

This graduate project is dedicated to my past, present, and future students: may you strive to find passion and love for theatre throughout your lives. May theatre be a vehicle of positive change for you and your audience.

Also to my children, Hartley June Johnston Wexler and Harrison Kirk Volovar Wexler “Life will certainly throw obstacles in your path. Finding your way around them is the best part. Never give up!”

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Abstract

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This graduate project uses documentary theatre to encourage middle school students to look beyond conventional theatre methods (specifically musical theatre) and towards less common theatre approaches to encourage a deeper understanding of theatre and the greater world. This is accomplished in two ways: first, by working with two groups of middle school students from The Prescott School in Beverly Hills, California to create an original piece of documentary theatre utilizing the methods of the Tectonic Theatre Project. Second by creating a curriculum based on the process used to create the above-mentioned piece of documentary theatre at the Prescott School. This curriculum is available for use by theatre educators looking for new ways to expose their students to alternative approaches to theatre. This curriculum adheres to the Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools. Accompanying this curriculum is a specific day-by-day lesson plan to aid in the implementation of the curriculum.

The purpose of these two exercises is to show the potential of theatre as a teaching tool, to show that many theatre styles are useful, have the potential to enhance one's educational experience, and inspire a social awareness and change.

Introduction

Examining the aesthetics of the complementary fields of educational drama and theatre is like looking through a kaleidoscope. If you turn it one-way, you see one colorful pattern; if you turn it the other way, you see yet another. The multiplicity of approaches to drama and theatre education, each with its own aesthetic pattern, often obscures the common ground they all share. As a result, in its unique emphasis on art, pedagogy, and society, each may have its own aesthetic pattern; yet only by looking closely at each distinct pattern can we understand more of the power of drama and theatre to develop human consciousness. (Martin-Smith 3)

I was hired in 2013 by The Prescott School, a middle school, to direct their annual musical. The Prescott School's middle school musical theatre program began in the Fall of 2008. In the years that have followed, the program has flourished. Student participation has increased, the audience size has grown, and general interest improves with every passing year. The Prescott School's administration continues to show support and enthusiasm for the program because of the benefits the program generates for the school.

The immediate benefits and lifelong influence of a musical theatre education are great, very often musical theatre is the only theatrical outlet available. Through this project I hope to explore how other approaches to theatre might also influence and benefit students.

It is important to establish the benefits of musical theatre and theatre education in general. First and perhaps the most important to the Prescott School's administration is the strong sense of community that the annual musical promotes. Musical Theatre seems to bring out a very eclectic mix of students at any institution, students that might not otherwise interact are placed in a pressure cooker of creativity. This pressure forces them to get along and quickly move past possible differences. The students who participate come from various grades and social groups, as they work towards their final production these lines are blurred and they become a new group where they are accepted and appreciated. Also as the production days draw close other members of the school and community get involved. The parents, the faculty and staff, other students, alumni, and administration all gather around the production. The sense of community truly deepens.

Second, performing in a musical helps participants overcome possible insecurities. Musical theatre puts students in situations that are sometimes embarrassing or uncomfortable, which forces them to face and overcome vulnerabilities. If students at the middle school level can learn to accept differences and interact with others despite insecurities, they will find success later in life with this ability to enter new situations and overcome vulnerabilities.

Additionally, musical theatre forces students to express themselves both physically and vocally. When students are in front of a group of any size to sing, dance or act, their imaginations and creativity are at work and they are simultaneously enhancing self-expression, self-esteem and confidence. This practice builds confidence and a belief that they are able not only to survive but also to thrive in any situation. People are expected in life to perform and present, in higher education, work, or other personal

activities. Gaining performance experience at a young age will allow for a confident approach to such opportunities. Whatever their future responsibilities may be, students can rehearse for them now.

A fourth benefit to participating in musical theatre is a sense of selflessness. Specifically, a willingness to prioritize the success of the group over that of the self, to collectively recognize that the artistic creation is bigger than any one individual. These students commit to each other, to the process, and in turn, grow as individuals.

Problem solving skills are another valuable benefit of participating in musical theatre. Performers must think on their feet during each step of the theatrical process. There are no mistakes in live theatre, only the unexpected. When the unexpected occurs, student actors must be able to solve the problem quickly without letting the audience know there is a problem. Quick thinking and problem solving are skills that will be utilized later in life as well as throughout the academic future of students.

No one part of the musical theatre process is more important than the other; the actors need the set, the set needs the lights, the costumes need the actors etc. Each aspect works together to ensure a final product. This model will repeat itself through life, again learning to respect each other and each other's work will be invaluable.

I asked the participants of the 2014-2015 musical at The Prescott School, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, what they thought the benefits of participating in musical theatre are. Anecdotal support of the benefits of participating in musical theatre can be found in the following responses.

“I think that my experiences in our musical really helped me to open up both socially and musically.”

“I learn in musical theatre that teamwork is very important or else we can't have a show. It influences me socially because I get to hang out with my friends and I get to work with new people on stage. Overall, musical theatre is a very fun and uplifting experience.”

“Helps you overcome fear and some ways show off all that you got. It teaches discipline and takes time. It's also a great bonding experience with all different kinds of people.”

“Being in the school musical was an incredible experience. I bonded with people who I hadn't known before, and I learned more about performing than I ever thought I would. Musical theatre in general is where I've gotten most of my confidence, and where I feel like I'm most able to shine, no matter what else is going on in my life.”

I see great value in exposing all students various styles of theatre, something different than musical theatre; an approach that looks at entertaining an audience but also stretching the students to look beyond themselves and intensely explore the world. This practice will prepare them for the diversity that they will surely encounter as they leave middle school for high school and definitely when they leave high school for higher education.

Middle school students can benefit from this type of exploration of theatre as explained in the research by Roaten and Roaten in their article “Adolescent Brain Development: Current Research and the Impact on Secondary School Counseling Programs.” Roaten and Roaten observe that during adolescence, the hormones of middle school students go through major development but more importantly the brain goes through major development as well (6). According to Sheryl Feinstein, author of the

book *Secrets of the Teenage Brain: Research-Based Strategies for Reaching and Teaching Today's Adolescents*:

This period of brain ‘reconstruction’ exists for teens. This ‘use it or lose it’ period is critical; thoughts, beliefs, interests, abilities, and skills developed now will endure a lifetime. . . or may be lost forever. Overproduction provides teens with the opportunity to learn and excel in a variety of areas as synapses are ‘spawned all over the brain’ through experience. The synaptic pruning is just as important, and the neural pathways that teens make endure a lifetime; unused connections will be lost. If they aren’t reading, doing science, or solving problems, the synapses for those activities will be pruned and lost forever. (11)

Alternative Theatre Programs

In my quest to bring this theatre study to The Prescott School I have found other theatre educators who have strived for similar goals. The following are examples of this work.

In Hannu V. Tuisku's article "Exploring Bodily Reactions: Embodied Pedagogy as an Alternative for Conventional Paradigms of Acting in Youth Theatre Education" the author chose to "challenge certain dominant discourses around youth theatre education and acting in general. Among these are the predominance of delivering the lines and concentrating on the supposed feelings of the character, perceived through analysis of the scene and relating to life that is elsewhere" (Tuisku 15). Tuisku chose to create theatre through embodied tools rather than from ideas from a page created by someone else, putting acting into the body instead of reading ideas from a script. Tuisku, like myself, hoped to approach typical theatre work from a new angle. Tuisku found through addressing the body the work was "unexpected, colorful, and even unruly" (29) a welcome departure from conventional youth theatre educational practices.

The Dambe Project is a nonprofit organization that specializes in African performing arts education and mentorship. In the article, "Critical Postcolonial Dance Pedagogy: The Relevance of West African Dance Education in the United States," Ojeya Cruz Banks focuses on "the implications of the organization's dance pedagogy in light of its postcolonial context and the importance of West African dance education in the United States" (18-19). She states that most western dance curricula feature western dance styles such as ballet and modern contemporary dance. Banks closely examines her "experiences as a dance teacher and ethnographer, and examines the impetus of the work

conducted by the Dambe Project” (18). The Dambe Project works to construct meaningful connections to the world outside of the classroom and maintaining that a multicultural education should be about emerging students in the practices of other cultures to reach a true understanding and picture of that culture. “Hence, the dance pedagogy that the Dambe Project brought to the school moved the emphasis from technique (as done in Western Dance) to dance as a marker of important social occasions and a tool for emotional and spiritual development, as in Guinea” (Banks 20). This African dance education is an example of using an alternative style to stretch these students of dance to look beyond their Western dance education. When the African dance unit ended, the students were asked to reflect on what they learned about themselves through exploring African dance. They expressed that their minds were opened to learn about other people in the world as well as respect for other cultures and languages. This excerpt was taken from Banks’s field notes:

How does the dance make you feel?’ I would ask students. Strong, open, proud and happy, some of them would reply. Another student as a joke would say, ‘tired.’ We all laughed. I wanted to encourage awareness about the inner transformation brought upon by the dance. I felt their confidence grew from my dancing with them. I noticed when they had stopped following me, but rather danced with me. (Banks 20)

Banks observes “students were able to reap positive notions of self through a dance resource normally not available to them. One might ask whether this came from West African dance or the pedagogy in particular. I think it is a combination of both”

(29). Banks' study exemplifies my hopes for exposing the students of The Prescott School to experience alternative theatre.

Dana Edell wrote the article, "Say It How It Is: Urban Teenage Girls Challenge and Perpetuate Stereotypes Through Writing and Performing Theatre". Edell is the cofounder and served as executive director of viBe Theater Experience, a community-based performing arts education organization whose mission is "to empower underserved teenage girls by engaging and inspiring them to write and perform personal and truthful collaborative theater pieces"(52). ViBe Theatre Experience serves "underserved" female students. Edell refers to them as "underserved" because they have limited access to creative opportunities, "all-girls" groups, or positive adult mentorship. Edell takes a group of students who have no experience with theatre, because of limited resources and exposes them to a highly creative experience. These girls are given the opportunity to express themselves through writing and performing. Edell pushes her students to "construct theatre performances that might help their communities better understand their desires, struggles, and experiences" (52). The results of Edell's work with the girls are complicated. Here is Edell's reflection of one of the participants' performances:

Audiences file into the theatre and assume they are hearing uncensored, "real" stories from the voices of their peers, daughters, students, and sisters. However, through an in-depth analysis, this study reveals that girls are heavily influenced by and saturated in race and gender stereotypes. In the devising of new stories and redefining of their own best and worst experiences, girls subconsciously repeat and re-embody stories of oppression. Audiences, often dazzled by the strength and courage it takes

for girls to perform personal stories on stage in public, reward them with applause, cheers, and further validation that these are the “real” and important stories to keep telling. So they keep telling them. (Edell 53)

Methodology

After my first successful year at The Prescott School in which I directed a musical I was asked back in 2014 to direct the musical but also to teach a sixth grade drama elective. I was thrilled at this prospect. The school does not provide curriculum for its elective classes, teachers are hired and are permitted to engage their students in the types of lessons that they choose. This was an opportunity to continue to instill the values of musical theatre while directing the musical but also to begin to instill the value of an alternative theatre education experience with the drama elective class. In addition, 2017 I was given a second opportunity to create the curriculum for an elective class and I decided to focus on documentary theatre with hopes of continuing my exploration with a new group of students. To clarify, this work is focused on two different projects that took place in two different years, the first part in 2014 and the second in 2017.

The musical selected for 2014 for the first year of my elective class was *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. Thirty-five students, including stage crew, chose to participate in the musical. The drama elective, which was offered only to sixth graders, had four participants. The electives at The Prescott School are offered at the same time during the school day and the students are permitted to pick one elective that most interests them. This particular semester, the students could decide between drama, music, science fair, and art. On the first day of class I had eight students, four of whom did not show up because they did not want to take drama and instead were trying to get into other elective classes. The remaining four entered the classroom with great trepidation, not sure that they wanted to be involved in drama at all and wishing they were somewhere else. This was an eye opening display that confirmed my desire to implement an alternative look at theatre. There was a huge response to the musical, in a

school with about one hundred students in total; over thirty-five students were excited to participate in the musical theatre experience. They signed up and paid the participation fee without hesitation. Four students were willing, reluctantly so, to participate in the drama elective. See Appendix A for the syllabus for the drama elective that students and parents received when making the choice of which elective to take.

As expected, in my short time at The Prescott School, I observed that there is little to no exposure to any form of theatre other than the annual musical. As stated above by Alistair Martin-Smith, there is a “multiplicity of approaches to drama and theatre education” (3) The intent of this graduate project is to interest the students of The Prescott School in alternative types of theatre, specifically documentary theatre. Documentary theatre’s origins are rooted in politics. Its earliest practitioners used newspapers as source material to teach their audience about the world around them. It was designed and has developed into a tool used help its audience look beyond themselves and look at the world and culture around them. My hope with this project is to help my students see that musical theatre does not define theatre and that there are many other forms of theatre to explore and many other skills and lessons to learn. In doing so, I hope to show the potential of theatre as a teaching tool, to prove that many theatre styles are useful. Most importantly to show that different of uses theatre can inspire a social awareness and change.

The Tectonic Theatre Project was selected as the model for this project firstly because of the company's emphasis on groundbreaking work that looks at the shape of theatre and how it is presented. This approach to theatre is completely different than the approach that The Prescott School takes to musical theatre; rather than acquiring the

script written by someone else, being led step by step by a director, and allowing the themes and lessons of the piece to be forced upon the students the methods of The Tectonic Theatre Project are rooted in group exploration and creation. Their process starts with nothing but an idea and through group collaboration a theatrical event is born. The Tectonic Theatre Project model was also selected due to the company's commitment to fostering an artistic dialogue with audiences on the social, political, and human issues (tectonictheaterproject.org).

The execution of this idea is twofold. First is the creation of an original piece of theatre with the students in my sixth grade drama class in the style and method of the Tectonic Theatre Project. In a 2005 article about Moises Kaufman, the founder of Tectonic Theatre Project, Rich Brown states:

Moises Kaufman's explorations over the past ten years have led to his Tectonic Theatre Project's current mission to produce innovative work that explores theatrical language and forms to foster, through this art, a dialogue with their audiences on social, political, and human issues.

(Brown 51)

It is the skills that these students will acquire, during process of creating this piece of documentary theatre that will truly highlight the differences between the musical theatre experience and the process of creating their own original piece of documentary theatre.

In the article, "Performing Personal Narrative: Anna Deveare Smith's *Fires in the Mirror*," Elizabeth M. Meyers relates that Smith encourages the use of *Fires in the Mirror*, her 1993 one-woman docu-play based on the riots that took place in Crown

Heights, a neighborhood in Brooklyn, NY, in the secondary level language arts classroom. Smith suggests that *Fires in the Mirror* “is a model for a multicultural, multimedia curriculum” (52). Smith succinctly states the skills acquired by students who participate in the creation of documentary theatre:

Through this project students gain experience preparing for an interview, transcribing from audiocassettes, and creating a monologue. They experience the challenges of portraying someone other than themselves, and through their encounter with their character's language, they analyze roles as interviewer, dramaturge, and performer. Finally, students consider the ethical issues and practical problems of collecting personal narratives for performance and come to understand the complex relationship among interviewer, interviewee, text, and context in the interviewing process. (Meyers 52)

In addition to these skills, students who participate in the creation of documentary theatre also have the potential to think and act creatively by solving problems individually and collaboratively by employing originality, flexibility and imagination. They will also develop the acting and storytelling skills necessary to create a dramatic performance, the knowledge and elements of a theatre production, the history and culture of theatre methods. Also they will develop the skills to critique their work and the work of their peers, develop the knowledge of how to the safely and ethically use materials, methods, and technologies.

It is important to note that the typical subject matter of a Tectonic Theatre Project production is provocative and perhaps inappropriate for a middle school audience. Their

best-known works include, *The Laramie Project Cycle*, based on the 1998 murder of Matthew Shepard, a gay 21-year-old student in Laramie, Wyoming. The Tectonic Theater Project created the 2000 docu-play based on interviews with 200 people who were connected to the crime that the company conducted in Laramie, Wyoming after the tragic beating and death of Matthew Shepard. Also, the one-man play *I Am My Own Wife* based on the life of Charlotte von Mahlsdorf, 65-year-old German transvestite who, against all odds, hid from the Nazis in plain sight as a woman. Due to this sensitive subject matter the students will be exposed to the methods that the company employs to create documentary theatre, but not the specific details on which their work is based. The students will, however, know the significance of The Tectonic Theatre Project subject choices. These works are used because they put a magnifying glass up to an event or situation and force their audiences to join in a dialogue about said issues.

Executing this project in 2014 with just four participants was disappointing. I had naturally hoped to share documentary theatre with a much larger group, but I felt that the size of the class spoke to the need for this work. If only four students signed up for the drama elective at The Prescott School, then there perhaps was a lack of understanding, knowledge or even a fear of what a drama, not musical theatre, class might be. Hopefully through this work an interest will spark throughout the school and alternative theatre practices would become a priority to the students and school. The size of my class was also the catalyst for the second part of this graduate project. I needed to find a way to expose a wider audience to this work. In light of this, the potential to recreate this work for another group of students in the Fall of 2017 was a welcome opportunity. After creating an additional piece of documentary theatre with the later group a survey will be

conducted to reflect on their experience and the effectiveness of the project. See appendix B for the survey questions.

The second part of the plan is the creation a curriculum based on my observations and analysis of the documentary theatre pieces that were created at the Prescott school. This curriculum is relevant because it will be an easily accessible tool for any educator who is looking for a way to expose students to an alternative theatre production process, and it will help schools deal with and work through specific social, political, and human issues that their communities may be experiencing. This is a way for my interest in exposing middle school students to alternative types of theatre, specifically documentary theatre, to grow and reach a wider audience.

Chapter 1: Documentary Theatre

I chose documentary theatre as a model for this graduate project for many reasons. I feel that students can learn great deal of life skills from practicing the interview process, and from finding and researching source material. The experimental approach of creating something from nothing can be liberating and hopefully an inspiration. I think creating a play based on real events is risky and thrilling, the students will be force to look within themselves as well as their community and they will be forced to develop a specific point of view of their subject. Lastly, I think that the potential is great for continued work in creating documentary theatre based on other school, community, and worldwide happenings. The history of documentary theatre demonstrates my reasons for picking it as a model for this project. In order to truly understand that and to respect the importance and impact of documentary theatre, one must understand where it came from, how it started, and the challenges it faced as it developed. Throughout my work on this graduate project I will often refer to three specific documentary theatre exemplars: Emily Mann, Anna Deavere Smith, and The Tectonic Theatre Project. These examples provide a variety of approaches to creating documentary theatre. As I explore the beginnings of this theatre method, I will end with their stories and experiences.

History

Documentary theatre is designed to confront its audience with facts, forcing a closer look at events that shape history and one's involvement in it. In a 1973 article about Peter Weiss, documentary theatre practitioner, Irmeli Niemi, a professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Turku, Finland describes documentary theatre in a succinct, clear manner:

In documentary theatre the author shapes the social and political theme by choosing particular text material often from statistical tables, memoirs, newspapers and letters; the material may be worked up and revised to such an extent that the form of presentation is different and only the core ideas remains. Sometimes, however, the documentary material is quoted unchanged, but here again it is the choice of the quotations, which actually determines the nature of the text. (Niemi 29)

Based on real events, this theatre style strives to put its finger on an issue that engages a group. In Gary Fisher Dawson's book *Documentary Theatre In The United States: An Historical Survey And Analysis Of Its Content, Form, And Stagecraft* is states:

In the 1960s and 1970s, politically committed playwrights turned to the form to explore such issues as racial prejudice in the United States and the protest against the war in Vietnam, with works like Martin Duberman's *In White America* and Daniel Berrigan's *Trial of the Catonsville Nine*. Other plays dealt with the trial of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, the surrender of the Pueblo spy ship, and the hearings of the House Un-American Activities Committee. (qtd in Stoller 589)

Erwin Friedrich Maximilian Piscator is said to have coined the phrase “documentary theatre” “when he looked back at his monumental production *Trotz alledem!* (“In Spite of Everything” 1924) as exemplifying “for the first time a production where the political document is the sole base for text and scenic work” (Irmer 18). In this production, Piscator used projected film. Piscator acquired a large quantity of war newsreel footage, which had never been shown because the censor considered that it would adversely affect war morale among the civilian population. The screening of the film as part of the whole stage montage, which added authenticity to the documentary material presented in front of it, created a sensation. In this instance it established a principle, which has been built on by other political and documentary playwrights and directors, that one function of the political stage should be to make manifest what is concealed in politics. “Piscator was after theatre; total theatre. A theatre of awareness that could comment and communicate beyond the linear progression and fragmentary story of the page-play itself. Brecht agreed with him. Piscator felt strongly that the theatre was a forum that could and should deal with questions that were politically taboo”(Kerz 364).

Bertolt Brecht was simultaneously producing documentary theatre in Berlin. However he was less interested in giving out information (most records are public property) Brecht was more interested in the attitude and feelings taken by the audience and the actors. Brecht himself shelved his plans, or modified them as his notions of Epic Theatre began evolve.

Piscator left Germany, and he settled in New York City, where he started the Dramatic Art Department of New School for Social Research. During the McCarthy purges, he moved back to Germany, where he worked with the Theater der

FreienVolksbuhne in West Berlin. By the time he died in 1966 Piscator's name was barely known outside of theatrical circles while Brecht's name lives on.

Piscator by no means invented documentary theatre. He is in good company with the likes of Peter Wiess, Heinar Kipphardt, and Rolf Hochhuth, all of whom were active in the German implementation of documentary theatre after WWII. In "A Search for New Realities: Documentary Theatre in Germany," Thomas Irmer defines three different periods of German documentary theatre:

First, in 1920 when Erwin Piscator incorporated film footage and scenes from recent history and political events into his mass spectacles.

Understanding of staged scenes was shaped by political ideas. Next, in the 1960s, documentary plays by Hochhuth, Weiss, and Kipphardt used historical documents as the source of plays offering new historical insights into the course of history through the mid-20th century. Understanding of events was shaped by analytical interpretations of documents, and assumptions about history were taught to the directors' projects, critical of historical or sociological knowledge-making while exploring history as an open project that could not be known through accepted principles and ideas. This work often engaged smaller subjects with complex social contexts that demonstrated the heterogeneity of contemporary events.

(Irmer 17).

It is important to note that documentary theatre is a predecessor of agit-prop theatre. The word "agit-prop" refers to agitation and propaganda. It is a political strategy in which the techniques of agitation and propaganda are used to influence and mobilize

public opinion. In the 1920s, agit-prop theatre troupes could be found in most German cities, Piscator's troupe being the most prominent. Agit-prop theatre helped to educate illiterate members of society, teaching and informing them of the facts of news and events in and around the country.

While agit-prop theatre was beginning in Germany the "living newspaper" was beginning in Russia. What started as a spoken newspaper developed into theatrical presentations of the new, including posters, diagrams, etc.

The Federal Theatre Project (FTP) was the first and only national theater supported by the United States government. The Federal Theatre Project originated as a social service agency to employ jobless theater workers and to enhance their future possibility for employment in commercial theatre. Its members, in particular Hallie Flanagan, hoped that the FTP would do more than provide jobs. She hoped that it would be a platform for creating social awareness and highlight civil responsibilities to American citizens. Another example of documentary theatre is the FTP's Living Newspaper, which is perhaps the Federal Theatre's most well known work. Living Newspapers were plays written by playwrights turned researchers. These men and women clipped articles from newspapers about current events, mostly important issues affecting large groups of Americans. These newspaper stories were then adapted into plays intended to inform audiences of issues such as agricultural reform, labor relations, public ownership of utilities, housing problems, and public health.

Descended from the Soviet Red Army's Zhivaya Gazeta ('Alive 'or 'Living Newspaper') and German and American agit-prop troupes, the living newspaper contemporary political and social issues in theatrical terms. (Nadler 615)

The techniques and methods of the Tectonic Theatre Project are the model for the creation of two original pieces of theatre with students of the Prescott School. However, the curriculum will include the work of two of other leading documentary theatre makers, Emily Mann and Anna Deavere Smith. These three were selected because of the strong influence of their work and for their different approaches to creating documentary theatre. I am especially interested in highlighting the work and careers of two very successful women.

Tectonic Theatre Project

Moisés Kaufman, along with Jeffrey LaHoste, is the founder of the Tectonic Theatre Project. Tectonic refers to the art and science of structure and was chosen to emphasize the company's interest in construction — how things are made, and how they might be made differently. Since 1991 Moisés Kaufman's Tectonic Theater Project have created some of the most thrilling and important American theater of our day, while building a unique way of developing, analyzing, and re-imagining theater called "Moment" Work. Moment Work has been used to create all of Tectonic's pieces including *The Laramie Project Cycle*, *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde*, *I Am My Own Wife*, and *33 Variations*. The company's "current mission to produce innovative works that explore theatrical language and forms and to foster, through their art, a dialogue with their audiences on social, political, and human issues" (Brown 1). Their body of work reflects this mission exposing the world to details of modern and historic events in innovative ways, which stir controversy and true emotional reaction. This group approaches theatre from the point of view of structure and how it can be changed. They choose to explore language and its many unexpected uses.

Emily Mann

Emily Mann (1952-) is a multi-award-winning director and playwright. She is also the Artistic Director of McCarter Theatre where she has overseen over 125 productions. Mann found inspiration to create theatre based on true events through her father, Arthur Mann and a family friend, Professor John Hope Franklin, a very prominent educator. Arthur Mann dealt with the Jewish American experience while Professor Franklin dealt with the African American experience. In an interview in 1999, Mann shared the following about her inspiration:

Franklin was always with my father in terms of historical understanding of this country. And they both backed the idea of learning about history through authentic experience. Through oral history. Talk to people who lived it. If they are alive now—catch them. (Jordan 2)

Mann found that plays were less interesting than the stories she heard from real people so she started creating documentary theatre. The focus of her work is oral history, capturing the real stories of real people and presenting them to the world. Some of her work includes “*Still Life* (1980), the story of three individuals coping with the aftermath of the Vietnam War and *Greensboro* (1996), an account of the Ku Klux Klan’s assault on an anti-Klan rally in 1979 that left five people dead. Mann has won international acclaim for forging a compelling approach to documentary political theatre. This theatre of testimony weaves oral history and verbatim interview into often chilling dramatizations of private stories and public events, particularly those dealing with both victims and survivors of violence and oppression. Her canon also includes such celebrated works as *Annulla* (1985), the recollection of a Holocaust survivor; *Execution*

of Justice (1986), a courtroom drama of the trial of Dan White, the man who killed San Francisco's openly gay city supervisor Harvey Milk and mayor George Moscone; and *Having Our Say* (1994), an oral history that documents the struggles and achievements of two centenarian African American sisters (Jordan1).

Anna Deavere Smith

The career of Anna Deavere Smith (1950-) spans theatre, television and film. Early in her career as she studied acting she became most interested in words and language. After working with the words of Shakespeare she “then started thinking that if I listened carefully to people’s words, and particularly to their rhythms, that I could use language to learn about my own time. If I could find a way to really inhabit the words of those around me, that I could learn the spirit, the imagination and the challenges of my own time, firsthand” (Smith xxiii). She found inspiration from her grandfather who said “If you say a word often enough it becomes you” (xxvi) Smith found that if she could reenact something a person said as they say it she could create the illusion of being another person thus starting her journey through documentary theatre.

Fires in the Mirror and Twilight Los Angeles, 1992 are a combination of journalism and performance art, which caused a bit of controversy. In his 1997 *Los Angeles Times* article “The Tangle Over 'Twilight', Sean Mitchell states “Since its prominent premiere last year at the Mark Taper Forum, which commissioned it, *Twilight* has been both hailed as a sensational theatrical event and bedeviled by disagreement in the theater community and press as to how it should be measured-whether it is truly a work of the imagination and therefore pure dramatic art, or whether it is a form of journalism as performance art and therefore something less” (1). In the end the Pulitzer Prize committee disallowed "Twilight" for final consideration on the grounds that its language was not invented but taken from interviews. This attention for Deavere’s work did not hinder her. She pushed audiences to look at theatre in a new way, she helped the world to see that theatre comes in many forms. She is a master of giving voice to people

who would not otherwise be heard. She re-tells stories from the perspective of the people who lived through these tragic events.

Chapter 2: *The Origins Project at The Prescott School*

From October 2014 to January 2015, I spent Thursday afternoons from 2:15 to 3:45 with a group of four 6th grade students. On the first day of class I had eight students on my attendance sheet, four of whom did not show up because they did not want to take drama and instead were trying to get into other elective classes. The remaining four entered the classroom with great trepidation, not sure that they wanted to be involved in a drama class at all and obviously wishing they were somewhere else.

I was shocked that there were only four students in the class. I worried that the class would be canceled and that my plan for this graduate project would be foiled. The success of this class and the implementation of this graduate project had the potential to change the student's feelings of trepidation so I pressed on with enthusiasm. The opportunity to teach these few students was a golden one. If this project is a success then perhaps enthusiasm for alternative types of theatre will spark interest in theatre practices other than musical theatre.

There were four students in the class, all girls. Student #1 was an amazing student. She was always on time; she turned in every assignment and went above and beyond in the classroom and with homework. Student # 2 was an equally amazing student. She too was on time, turned everything in, and worked diligently. She was, however, a bit more carefree than Student #1. She had a twinkle in her eye and seemed to really want to be a star. Student #3 was enthusiastic and participated well in class; however, she was very easily distracted and forgetful. She turned her work in roughly 50% of the time, and it was usually incomplete. Student #4 was a great challenge. She was unfocused and disruptive. She rarely turned in her work and when she did, it was not

complete and was accompanied by an excuse of not understanding the assignment. She had a good heart and wished to do her best, but she is simply unable to focus. It was clear to me that Student #4 has learning challenges but she and the school chose not to inform me of any formal diagnosis.

On the first day of class, my goal was to find out what the students knew about theatre, what plays they may have seen, whether they had ever taken a drama class or participated in a theatre experience of any kind. It was important for me to know how clean the slate really was, from where was this work beginning? First I asked them if they had ever seen a play. Student #1 attended the musical at The Prescott School with her mother every year. Other than that, she at some point saw the ballet, *Swan Lake*. She had never taken a drama class. Student #2 saw the musical, *The Sound Of Music* at The Prescott School, and she recalled seeing plays at school but could not be more specific than that. She had never taken a drama class. Student #3 saw her friend in a children's production of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. She had never taken a drama class. Student #4 said she had seen plays before but could not remember where or what plays. She too had never taken a drama class. As the discussion went on, the girls revealed to me that they love musicals. All four mentioned Disney's *Frozen* and the Broadway musical *Wicked*. In general, the majority of my students have seen a musical or a musical movie; none of them have seen a straight play.

The next question I asked was "why is theatre important?" Why go see theatre when you can see a movie? How is theatre still relevant? The purpose of this inquiry was to help highlight the importance of live theatre and perhaps spark an interest. Here are the students' answers to these questions:

1. To bring people together
2. To learn about history, to record history
3. To tell a story from a new perspective
4. To talk about taboo topics
5. To educate
6. To look inward at ourselves
7. Being present with a group (audience)

I was very encouraged by these answers. These answers demonstrated a great deal of insight and open-mindedness for students who have little to no experience with theatre.

The next step was to explain to the students the plan for the class, how our time together would be spent, and to tell them about the project. I started off by introducing documentary theatre. I explained that documentary theatre is theatre that uses pre-existing documentary material such as newspapers, trial documents, government reports, interviews, etc. as source material for a script. I explained to the students that documentary theatre is a movement that attempts to bring social issues to the stage by emphasizing facts through real source material and/or memories of the event. The creator or playwright starts a conversation with the audience by focusing on relatable and poignant aspects of a particular event. I used Emily Mann's *Annulla*, the recollection of a Holocaust survivor, as an example of documentary theatre that uses oral history, as source material. Next, I mentioned The Tectonic Theatre Project's *Gross Indecency*, a play that uses authentic trial records as the basis for its script. Preceding these examples, the students and I came up with other events or circumstances that might warrant a piece of documentary theatre. Some ideas the students had were:

1. The 6th grade trip to Israel
2. The birth of a teacher's baby
3. The first trip to the moon

Next I introduced The Tectonic Theatre Project. We had a discussion about Moises Kaufman's goal to engage his audience in social, political, and human issues. This was an eye-opening discussion for my students. They had not thought of or heard about theatre that addresses such topics. We explored why documentary theatre is important and what our audience and we as creators of theatre might learn from it. The students felt that documentary theatre might make an audience "feel bad for not knowing more or for being a bystander of an important event or movement." I explained that those were very natural concerns and as our process went forward we would see if those concerns change. Additionally we thought about how documentary theatre differs from musical theatre. The class agreed the musical theatre is fun and silly while documentary theatre seemed more serious. Also that documentary theatre explored important information that one might find in the news and musical theatre was less about current events and more about history like the Great Depression or Bible stories. Documentary theatre forces its audience to think while musical theatre is more for entertainments. The class agreed that this project would be a challenge and that documentary theatre was very different than anything they had ever experienced.

Next I asked them to brainstorm ideas for topics or themes we would like to explore for our piece of documentary theatre. I reminded them that we wanted to address social, political, and human issues. I explained that the topic should be broad enough to

cover a great amount of information from a variety of people. Here is the list of possible topics the students thought of:

1. Friends fighting with friends
2. Community
3. Hanging out
4. Love
5. Differences
6. Challenges
7. Bullying
8. Being too busy
9. Race: The color of your skin, hair
10. Religion
11. Fighting with your friends: being right
12. Ethnicity

Once this list was compiled, we put these ideas into categories exploring similarities, differences, and level of importance to our community. We talked extensively about how or why a certain topic was worthy of becoming a play. The students were mostly worried about picking a topic about which they could “find a lot of people of interview.” Finally we decided to focus on origins. The subject of one’s origins covered many of our topic suggestions; race, religion, ethnicity, differences, love, and community. We decided that we would interview people about their origins and then examine how our different backgrounds unite or divide us. The group was very excited to have officially established our docu-play subject. The first assignment was to speak

informally to their mothers or fathers about their origins and to record their experience well enough to have a group discussion about their parent's backgrounds for the next class. They were also instructed to observe the experience of interviewing their parents so that we could refine our interviewing skills.

The interviews with the parents for the most part did not go well. Student #1 felt that she had succeeded. She spoke to her father. She came up with questions on her own and dictated everything her father said. Despite needing a little clarification on some details, this interview actually became the first scene of *The Origins Project*. Student #2 spoke to her mother about her origins and when asked where she is from, her mother replied "California." This interview, while a good start, did not go as deeply into her mother's background as we had hoped. Student #3 did not conduct an interview with either of her parents for various reasons. Student #4 interviewed her father and besides learning that he is from Russia, she could not remember any other information. When asked whether or not this round of interviews was a success, the students agreed that it generally was not a success and that we needed to come up with a plan of attack. First, we needed a specific list of questions that could be used for every interview. Second, the questions needed to be open ended, to encourage thorough answers that would inspire the subjects to give useful information. Student #2 suggested that they record the interviews with their I-pads so that they could remember everything that was said and have something to refer to. Next, we came up with a comprehensive list of questions. Once the questions were established, the next step was to try them out on a different subject. The next interview to conduct was with their grandparents. These interviews went very well. They found that having set questions was most beneficial. It alleviated

some of the awkwardness and helped the girls to remain focused throughout the interview. Some still struggled with getting more than a “yes” or “no” answer to many of the questions. This sparked a conversation on how to make the subject feel comfortable with the questions being asked and with the project as a whole. We decided that before each interview, the project and its purpose should be explained, and so a brief statement was created by the group and recited before each interview. The statement is as follows:

“Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview process. I will ask you a few questions about your background. Please understand that you are not obligated to answer any of these questions and you may stop the interview at any time. We are creating a piece of theatre based on this interview. The theme of our play is origins: where people come from, how they got here and how that information affects our community. We are hoping to find stories and relevant information about your background that will fuel an engaging and insightful piece of theatre. Thank you again for being a part of our process.”

Once the standard interview questions were established and this statement was added, the interviews started to cook. After the grandparent interviews, we moved on to neighbors, then to someone at the school, then to members of the community. The member of the community round of interviews was very tricky. This meant speaking to individuals they do not necessarily know and scheduling a time for the interview to take place. The first day of class after this round of interviews was assigned, no one completed the task. The students had very valid reasons as to why this was difficult:

1. We can't find the time. It's hard to ask someone to give up his or her time for this school project.
2. It's scary. What if the person isn't nice?
3. Who should we ask?

I could not argue with any of these reasons. It's true, asking a middle school students to interview a members of their community, that they do not necessarily interact with, is a challenge. Here is how I solved this problem: As their instructor, I invited members of the community to come to our class and we conducted interviews during class time. The first in class interview was with our school principal (she is from South Africa, a unique origin which made for an incredible interview that the girls had been too shy to request previously). After the success of that interview I invited a friend of mine who moved to the United States from Canada , then a makeup artist from England and a few other teachers from the school.

After eight weeks of interviews, we were ready. We had our source material and now it was time to put it all together.

Interview Questions

The student creators of *The Origins Project* developed the following questions after two rounds of interviews. Utilizing the specific questions, the group determined that these questions were successful and were a benefit to the project. These questions led most effectively to exciting and useful interview results. The questions that the students created were insightful, challenging, and thought provoking. It should be noted that the interview subjects met each interview with support and enthusiasm. The students were never in unsafe situations or with unwilling interview subjects. One may have been put off by some of the questions asked, considering them too personal, but this portion of the process was a smooth and successful one. The interview questions are purposely intimate and trying, which was necessary to get to the core of the subject matter. All of the interview subjects understood this objective and were very cooperative. The interviews were conducted first with the students' parents, then their grandparents and immediate family members, then members of their community, and finally, people outside of their community.

Before each interview the following statement was shared with each interview subject:

“Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview process. I will ask you a few questions about your background. Please understand that you are not obligated to answer any of these questions and you may stop the interview at any time. We are creating a piece of theatre based on this interview. The theme of our play is origins: where people come from, how they got here and how that information affects our community. We are hoping to find stories and relevant

information about your background that will fuel an engaging and insightful piece of theatre. Thank you again for being a part of our process.”

Interview questions:

1. Do you mind if we record this interview?
2. Where are you from?
3. Where is your family from?
4. Why did you and/or your family immigrate to America?
5. Can you tell us a special story of your family in your home country? A favorite memory or family history?
6. Was it a difficult transition for your family to make from your home country to America? If so, how? If not, why?
7. Do you miss your home country? Why? What do you miss specifically?
8. How do you think your move to America influenced your education?
9. Do you have family in your home country? If yes do you visit them?
10. If you had to make the decision to move to America today would you?
11. Are there any food items from your country that you miss?
12. What do you do in today's times to relate to your home country?
13. Is there anything else you would like to add? Any stories or additional information?

Explanation of Script Development

Once the interviews were completed and all of the source material was collected the next step was to put together a theatrical performance. It was at this stage that we more heavily depended on The Tectonic Theatre Project's methods, beginning "Moment" work. Each student became what Kaufman calls a "performance writer," meaning he or she uses the tools of the stage to generate individual theatrical "Moments." Similar to homework assignments, the "Moments" are individually formulated outside of the workshop and then presented to other ensemble members; this is when collaboration begins" (Brown 51). Through this "Moment" work our "performance writers" found a relatable way to present the material to the audience which best illuminates the themes and social issues the students chose to highlight in their original piece of documentary theatre.

While Moises Kaufman studied at the Experimental Theatre Wing at New York University he studied with Stephen Wangh, a playwright, director, and teacher of acting. Wangh is the author of 15 plays, he was Associate Writer for *The Laramie Project* and dramaturge of Moisés Kaufman's *Gross Indecency, the Three Trials of Oscar Wilde*. In Wangh's book *An Acrobat of the Heart*, he states,

The central idea of experimental theatre is that this process of 'stumbling around' is, in fact, an excellent way to proceed. It can lead us to discoveries we might never have made if we had confined our explorations to those pathways for which we had maps, and it instills in us a willingness to enter each new project with an open mind and with the (supremely important) courage to make mistakes (xxxii-xxxviii).

“Kaufman's acceptance of and investment in "stumbling around" has been best displayed both by taking a group of actors to Laramie, Wyoming, to investigate a murder as possible subject matter for a new work and by beginning each workshop based on a "hunch” (Brown 57). When creating our piece we asked the same questions in order to establish what theatre typically looks like so that we could break that form to create something new.

Because the students had very little knowledge of theatre we decided to look at theatre and what they felt they definitely understood about the form it takes. Here are the elements of a typical theatre form of which the students felt confident.

1. There is a beginning, middle, and end.
2. Usually the story is about one person. That person is in the whole play.
3. Usually a play or story is fiction. The characters and plot are made up.
4. Usually there is a curtain or lights that tell the audience when the play begins and ends.

Now that we had established what we think typical theatre form is, we had to decide how to present our piece. How do we use these interviews to get our story across to our audience? First, we determined who our audience would be: our peers, which consist of the students of The Prescott School, first through eighth graders, as well as our parents, teachers and school administration. We determined that it was of utmost importance that our piece be exciting. We also wanted the material to be presented in a relatable way. In order to make our audience see the purpose of our play, which is to uncover the origins of the people in our community, we wanted the audience to see themselves in the characters and in the scenarios that we would create.

With these goals in mind, we began our “Moment work.” Each student studied the interview material that she had collected and was given the opportunity to present that information to the group in any way she preferred. All were encouraged to be creative and think of that particular interview subject’s origin story and how it might be best presented to an audience. Student #1’s interview with her father is a great example of our “Moment” work. Student #1’s father was clearly distracted while she was conducting the interview. In the transcript of the interview there are lots of pauses, ummms, and “can you repeat the questions?” By the end of the interview he clearly became more interested in the process and told a great story about an ancient temple. Student #1 presented her father’s interview in the form of a monologue including the pauses, ummms, and “can you repeat the questions?” When she finished the monologue Student #2 suggested that her dad seemed a little annoyed by the interview. So I suggested that Student #1 repeat the monologue only this time Student #2 joined her on stage and tried interrupt her the whole time. This exercise led to a very humorous battle between father and daughter. In the end, the scene started with the father character watching a very important football game and his daughter entering and unexpectedly asking him questions about his origins. The conflict of the father was great. He clearly wanted to watch the game but also knew the importance of his daughter’s questions. This scene was very relatable to the students and it is a likely scenario that their peers could find themselves in.

Similar work continued until the majority of our interviews were turned into a scene or a monologue. Once we had a series of scenes, we wanted to figure out an interesting way to present them. Knowing that our resources were limited and we would not be in a typical theater space, we embraced the idea of our piece having an

unconventional form. We decided that the piece and each scene would be bookended by clapping. At the end of each scene the group would clap once in unison and then move on to the next scene. The clapping established a rhythm within the piece that became a trigger for the audience. When the group clapped the audience knew gears were shifting and a new person's origins story would be depicted.

This "Moment" work proved to be the most rewarding for my students and myself. It was here that the idea that middle school students could and should be pushed beyond musical theatre was most evident. These students thrived when given the green light to create. With the basic source material and loose guidelines, they looked at each interview subject's story as a precious gift. They worked together to come up with creative and relatable ways to best show who these people truly are and why their stories are important and beautiful. I saw my students lose themselves in the creation of this script. They stopped thinking that it had to be done one way and started thinking like artists; artists who know no limits. Scene 3 of *The Origins Project* was based on an interview that Student #2 conducted. The group agreed that this was our best story. We all had a very soft spot in our hearts for the unfolding of this immigrant's journey. I explained to them that the presentation of this story should be a special one, and I challenged them to come up with something great. They said "No." They agreed that it should be simple. That the story should stand on its own. In the end, Student #2 performed the story as a monologue. She imagined she was a grandmother sharing the story of her mother with her young granddaughter while sitting on a bench in a park. It was beautiful. The students knew the best way to tell that story was in a simple and quiet

way. All four of them understood the weight of what they were doing. They were telling family stories, stories that are precious and moving.

Chapter 3: *The Origins Project*

The Origins Project

An original play created based on the methods of the Tectonic Theatre Project

The Prescott School

6th grade drama elective, 2014 and 2015

Scene 1

Lights up on whole company

All breathe in together, exhale, and clap

Performer 1: What makes us the same?

Performer 2: What makes us different?

Performer 3: Where are you from?

Performer 4: Where are you REALLY from?

Performer 1: Why do we care?

Performer 2: Why is it important?

Performer 3: Does your ethnicity affect you?

Performer 4: Does it affect your community?

Performer 1: What is origin?

Performer 2: Who are your ancestors?

Performer 3: What makes us the same?

Performer 4: What makes us different?

All clap

Scene 2

Living room

A father in his mid 40s sits on a chair watching a football game.

His daughter 11 years old, approaches.

Daughter: Hey Dad, can I interview you? It's for school. (She gets no response.)

Ummm Dad, can I interview you?

Father: What? What did you say?

Daughter: I have to do this interview thingy for school. So, can I interview you?

Father: Now? I'm watchin the game?

Daughter: Yeah now would be good or... um... I guess later.

Father: No no no now is good. Let's do it now.

Daughter: Okay... what is your ethnicity?

Father: My what? My ethnicity? Ummm.... Well everyone has their ethnicity.

Everyone's ethnicity is different. You wanna know about my ethnicity and where I come from? Okay... ummm. (he goes back to watching the game)

Daughter: Dad? Hello?

Father: Right... right... sorry. So I was born in Tel Aviv, Israel but my parents are from Baghdad, Iraq. (He stops talking)

Daughter: Yeah... What else?

Father: My father and Grandfather can trace their family roots all the way to the destruction of the first temple in Jerusalem!

Daughter: Wow... What else?

Father: Well I am Sephardic Israeli; I celebrate the holidays with a Sephardic Minhag.

Daughter: How do you like your Ethnicity? I mean like what do you think about it?

Father: (he smiles) The one thing I like most about my ethnicity is the prayer style, the food and the stories. Ethnicity is like a roller coaster, having family from all over the world, immigrating from place to place. Everybody should be proud of their Ethnicity.

All Clap

Scene 3

Outside, park bench

Performer 2: We have this photo. I remember staring at it for hours as a kid. My aunt had it fixed up or restored for my dad. It's an old timey photo of a bunch of people at a costume party. It's the story though, the story that goes along with the photo that so mesmerized me as a child.

Apparently when my Baba, that's what we called my grandmother, Baba is a grandma in Slovak, anyway when she was coming over to America on a big boat from Czechoslovakia she didn't speak any English or any other language except for Slovak, so she did not communicate too well with the other people on the ship.

Having said that they say she made friends with another little girl on the boat, that little girl is actually seated next to my Baba in the photo, and at some point the little friend invited my grandmother to a party on the ship. Not really understanding what was being said when her new friend was describing the costume party my Baba dressed in her best clothes which at the time was a very traditional Slovak dress... whatever a little peasant Slovak girl at the time would wear.

The story goes that my Baba, who was dressed in her own clothing (not a costume at all), won first prize in the costume party! I can only imagine what she must have been thinking in the moment. What is going on? Why are these people dressed this way and why are they giving me a prize.

I just love it though. Love that story. What a beginning to her life in America. She was winning right away, winning for being herself.

All Clap

Scene 4

Interview on the street

Reporter: Good afternoon. This is Justine Bookman for channel 4 PATB news on location. Today I am reporting from Beverly Hills.

You are from Canada originally, but where are your grandparents from?

Sharon: My grandparents, my father's parents were born in Russia. My mom's parents, her father was from Romania and her mother was born in Toronto but her parents were born in Austria.

Reporter: Why did your grandparents leave their home country to come to Canada?

Sharon: Well that's interesting, because I can't really. I think a lot of people asked, talked to my grandparents about things like that. And they didn't want to talk about bad things, especially to younger kids. I think times were.... It wasn't a nice situation for them, which is why they left. It was hard for them, so they didn't like to tell us the stories of why things were hard back then.

Reporter: Why do you think they didn't want to share this information with you?

Sharon: They didn't want to talk about bad things, they wanted to tell the young kids nice things like so we heard stories about like my grandfather's mother from Russia, we heard about her cat.... she had very long hair so long that she would wrap it around her head three times, and they told us nice stories like that.

My parents eventually told us they left because times were hard, times were hard because they were Jewish, times were hard because they were in Russia. And they dreamt of a better life for their children.

Reporter: You heard it here first folks. I'm Justine Bookman for Channel 4 PATB news signing off.

All Clap

Scene 5

Classroom

Teacher: Welcome to the first day of your Judaic studies. Let's get started.

Student #1 Can you tell us about your Bat Mitzvah?

Teacher: Well I'm not sure we have time for that but ummmm okay, why not. So, when I turned 13, when I had my Bat Mitzvah, my Safta, my mom's mom, took me and my sister, my little sister, to Israel for the first time, and my mom's my Safta's sister and her family all still lived there, and I had never met any of them uh, because they... I had met her sister because her sister came to United States, but I had never met any of her nieces and nephews, any of her grandchildren um and so I had, I got to spend a really special three weeks in Israel with my Safta and my sister. And I got to experience Israel, the history the culture but I also got to spend a lot of time with family that I never knew, which was really really special.

Student #2: How did your family come to live in the US?

Teacher: Great question. My mom's family moved to Canada before they moved to America, because moving straight to America from Israel was too difficult. I think it was hard for my mom and her family to leave Israel, because they were leaving everything behind. It was also hard because they missed their family.

Student #3: Why was it hard for them?

Teacher: Well because they couldn't call or Skype with them, only send letters, which took a long time. They had to learn English and French, and that was, hard because they only knew Hebrew. My mom moved from Israel when she was in 4 grade, she went back before college, and she came back with her husband on their honeymoon. She hasn't been

in Israel for 31 years, and she misses it. Part of the reason my grandparents moved was because they wanted their kids to have a good education, and America could provide that. I visit my second cousins that live in Israel, and the last time I saw them was 6 years ago, but two of my second cousins came to visit the U.S. and I got to see them while they were here.

It was a very special time for me and it will be for you too. Now class, let's get started.

All Clap

Scene 6

Interior of airplane, strong turbulence rocks the plane

Pilot: This is the captain speaking. Notice the fasten seat belt light is on. Looks like we're gonna experience a little turbulence for a few minutes. Please remain seated.

Passenger #1: *(clearly bothered by turbulence)* I hate flying.

Passenger #2: It'll be okay. Try to relax. Think of something else. *(she smiles)*

Passenger #1: Good idea ummmmmm.

Passenger #2: I have a story. A good one.... It's a flying story.

More turbulence

Passenger #1: Ummmm Okay.

Passenger #2: Okay... This is one of my favorite stories. This is how my family came to live, in a roundabout way, in America. So my family was on a plane flying to the US from Israel or at least they thought they were traveling to the United States. While they were on the plane one of the other travelers suddenly got very sick... some kind of lung disease, so the airplane had to urgently land at the closest airport. That airport happened

to be in Canada. So my family found themselves in Canada instead of California. Not sure what to do....they seized the opportunity presented to them and they started their new lives in Canada. It turned out to be the best thing, as these things often do. My family learned to farm while in Canada and it ended up being a very good life. For all of us.

Passenger #1: *(has relaxed at this point)* huh really?

Passenger #2: I am so thankful to have that great memory and stories I am able to share with my family and to share with you. (big smile)

Passenger #1: *(Takes a deep breathe, she feels better)*

All Clap

Scene 7

Lights up on whole company

Performer 4: If you could have any food from your home country right now what would it be?

Performer 2: Chocolate. South African Chocolate. I know it doesn't seem right but trust me it's amazing.

Performer 3: A Beaver's tail! I think they're called Elephant ears here.

Performer 1: Humus and Pita

Performer 4: Bill Tongue... It's like beef jerky

Performer 2: I miss the smell of bread.... Fresh bread baking in the oven.

Performer 3: Cadbury Chocolate.

Performer 1: My Grandmother makes, Pirohy and Halusky.

Performer 4: There is a lot of food I miss but I have worked really hard to find those types of foods here. It's not the same as in my home country but it reminds me of home and that's what matters.

All Clap

Scene 8

Office, a job interview

Job candidate: How did my move to the US influence my education? Oh well that's a good question. Oh my, okay I have a good story.

So in South Africa they still have corporal punishment meaning, a teacher could still hit the children in school. So you could go up to a child and I was a teacher too. You could go up to a child and hold her tight and say "I told you to be quiet now." and you could hold her tight. Or you could pull a child by the ear and pull her out of the classroom. We were hit on our knuckles with ummm rulers if we were talking, boys got a cane, a long switch on their bottom from the principal.

So we grew up with corporal punishment. We grew up being allowed to physically punish.

So by moving to the United States my mind was really opened up because what I really learned is that to discipline children you never have to hit, you do not have to use corporal punishment. You have to respect the child and if the child respects you, they will do anything.

So I never... and when my South African friends ask they say "oh you should give them a spanking if they don't listen." And I say "What? You don't have to do that, you just

talk to the child, you don't have to hit them. Just discuss it and listen. Because when you hit a child all you're saying is that hitting is okay.

So that really expanded my mind on how to discipline. That is a huge difference between these two countries. My life as an educator would be very different if I had stayed in South Africa.

All Clap

Scene 10

13 years later, INTERIOR Performer #3's house

Performer 3: Can I get you some coffee?

Performer 2: I'll have some.

Performer 4: None for me.

Performer 3: I'm so glad you all could come over today.

Performer 1: Well it has been way too long. How long has it been. 10 years?

Performer 2: No nope it's been 13 years exactly since we had that drama class together the four of us.

Performer 3: I loved that class.

Performer 4: I learned so much in that class.

Performer 1: What was the name of that play we all wrote? Remember we had to do all of those interviews.

Performer 2: It was called THE ORIGINS PROJECT right?

Performer 1: It was such an interesting project. We learned so much about where the people in our community came from.

Performer 4: It was really special to hear about what differences we all have.

Performer 2: We go to see the world through other people's eyes

Performer 4: We really did. We also learned from the mistakes that our ancestors made.

Performer 3: It was a valuable lesson. Oh yeah! Remember all those fun improv games we played.

Performer 1: Big booty!!

All: AHHHH big booty big booty (All start laughing)

All Clap

END OF PLAY

Chapter 4

2017 *Who We Are* at The Prescott School part 2

When the opportunity to teach another elective class at The Prescott School presented itself I jumped at the chance to create an additional piece of documentary theatre to expand upon the results of the first experience. The circumstances surrounding this class were a bit different. First, there were six sixth and seventh grade girls enrolled in the class as opposed to four girls all in sixth grade. Also these students signed up for the class willingly and unlike the 2014 class I was met with enthusiasm for the work. Similarly we met once a weekly on Wednesday afternoon.

A great deal happened in the time that passed between the two documentary theatre projects at the Prescott School. I believe the biggest difference between these two experiences was the change that occurred in me and the wisdom I have gained as an educator. In the time between the 2014 project and the 2017 project I continued to teach drama at The Prescott School as well as direct the annual musical. In addition, I began teaching and directing at two others schools and directed over nine productions with middle school students.. These years of experience helped me to approach the class and documentary theater project with a bit more patience and understanding of the students and their abilities. I think my intensity level decreased making the flow of information and ideas easier and the result was a more productive and interesting learning environment. The Tectonic Theatre Project endeavors to approach the creation of theatre through new methods and I was very excited to explore documentary theatre from my new point of view.

On the first day we sat in a large circle and again discussed the girls experience level and exposure to theatre. Again I wanted to know where the students were coming from, what plays they may have seen, if they had ever taken a drama class or participated in a theatre experience of any kind. It was important for me to know how clean the slate really was, from where is my work beginning? The results of this conversation were similar to the first time around, very little exposure to any theatre other than musical theatre. I had been directing and teaching at The Prescott school for four years at this point and all but one of the students had performed in at least one production that I had directed, which is an improvement. Again exposing these students to documentary theatre would be a whole new experience for all of them, which I found very exciting. I was very interested to see what this group would create and what the process would be like for them.

I decided that I would try to simplify the process a bit. Armed with my first docu-play, *The Origins Project*, I was very aware of my student's limitations and work ethic. My plan was to play to their strengths and see how their experience would differ. The basic "culture" of elective classes at The Prescott School is generally very relaxed. The thought is that the elective is a bit of a break from the student rigorous schedules. The Prescott School offers a dual curriculum education. The student's day is filled with general academics as well as religious studies. This information was utilized when making a plan for our work together. I wanted to reimagine the approach so that this work would be fruitful but realistic. The first new restriction was to keep all of the work in class, no homework. I made the decision not to ask the girls to work on the project after school hours because the 2014 group struggled endlessly with the outside

work. They felt that homework from an elective class was unacceptable. Rather than force them I restructured, which meant we would use each other as our source material.

The first subject we decided to approach was the Jewish holiday Chanukah. It was a festive time of year and is seemed appropriate to capture the mood. We had many discussions about the holiday and what it means to them, their families and the school community. This holiday definitely resonates and brings up great memories and traditions. We first had a group discussion. We simply sat on the floor and talked. This is something these middle school students excel at. I started the discussion by asking about food. What types of food do you eat for Chanukah? The discussion flew from there. After the group discussion I asked each of the students to get up in front of the class and speak freely about the holiday and any aspect of it that they find interesting and that is meaningful to them. This was a very effective approach. The girls were so comfortable with each other and once the room was warmed-up from our group discussion the ideas and stories just flowed. The students were also candid with personal information, freely speaking about a family divorce and financial situations. Afterwards the students were paired up in order to dictate their stories and get them on paper. The second subject we chose to explore was the fires that Southern California endured in late 2017. The Prescott School closed for several days because of the proximity of the fires to the school. When school was in session the air quality was too poor for students to go outside. These experiences created anxiety and compassion in the students. The class decided this would also serve as great subject matter for documentary theatre.

Chapter 5: *Who We Are*

Who We Are

A collection of monologues created based on the methods of the Tectonic Theatre Project

The Prescott School

Drama Elective, 2017 and 2018

The Chanukah Monologues

#1

To Travel or Not to Travel

No one is traveling this year. We can't go to New York because my brother broke his arm, "why is that a reason." My mom says "it's too much." My dad's family is not coming here "because they are lazy" that's what my mom says. So we're just doing Chanukah alone. My sisters and I are hoping this means we get better presents because we aren't spending money on travel. This is the first year we aren't traveling. It's kinda sad kinda not. When we travel my mom gets super weird and we end up not really having fun anyway. I just wish everyone could come to our house. Our house is bigger anyway. Maybe we can just spend the time with friends. My mom says friends are easier. Than family? I don't know. It's weird.

#2

Dollar store

We might get one nice gift, like last year I got my phone but other than that, we do the Dollar Store. So my mom gives us each \$32 dollars and she takes us to the Dollar Store. We have one dollar to spend on each of our family members for each night of Chanukah. I love it. We try to find good stuff. One time my little sister got five of the same teddy bear. We all thought she would love it and she did, times five. My mom then tried to make it so we would not buy each other the same gifts but sometimes that's fun. We think alike. Well my dad and I do at least, our gifts overlap a bunch. It's good. We try to be thoughtful but we don't spend as much money. I think it was my parent's way of teaching us something like about thoughtfulness and giving. I get it, I really do

but I really do like my real gift too. I don't know what I'm getting this year. Maybe I'm missing the point.

#3

Food

I like to cook. We go to my Grandmother's and she's a really good cook. She goes crazy with latkes. Do you like latkes? Trader Joes has a really good latke in the frozen section. My mom is always telling people to buy those; she says it's easier. But my Grandma makes everything by herself. I love the food. This year over the weekend we went to her house and my brother and I stayed the night and my parents and my little sister went home. My brother fell asleep and Grandma and I went into the kitchen and ate more latkes before we went to sleep. What other stuff do we eat? I don't know?? Brisket! I love Brisket. I didn't always love it, my sister hates it but I think little kids don't really like stuff like that. I love it now.

#4

Menorahs

We have like 27 menorahs. My parents collect them. They buy them whenever we travel. My favorite one looks like a blue tree with these beautiful birds in between each candle. We used to have this rainbow one. I loved that one when I was little. We put rainbow candles in it. We also have a giant one. It's almost as tall as me. My parents don't get that one out anymore. It's just so big. Some of them, our favorites are out all

year long. My mom brings out the whole collection for Chanukah. My uncle bought us one that was also a hookah once. I think it was a joke, my mom doesn't get that one out ever.

The Fire Monologues

#1

Stuff

I can't decide. My lovey that I got the day I was born that I still have and sleep with every night. The pillow that I love that I made at camp that no one is allowed to touch. The t-shirt that my dad gave me that he had when he was a kid. I have about 4 stuffed animals that I literally could not sleep without. Really I just need this stuff to keep my calm and to get me to sleep. I love to sleep. I'm seriously tired all the time and I think about sleep a lot so if my house was on fire and I had 5 minutes to grab one thing it would be uuumm I don't know. One of those things.

#2

Harry Potter

Okay so honestly.... no seriously.... this may sound so weird to you but for me it would be a book. My Dad gave me all of the Harry Potter books. You all know my parents are divorced and have been forever and I never see my dad and he kinda doesn't... deal so I don't have lots of stuff from him, like totally from him. So Harry Potter and Chamber of Secrets is my totally favorite of all of the books like seriously I have read it like twenty-seven times and even tried really hard to memorize it once. So I would go back inside my burning house and I would get my copy of Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets.

#3

From my Grandparents

So we moved here from Germany. My grandparents live there. And I used to get to see them all the time but now I don't see them at all. We might be going to Germany this summer, anyway I have a blanket from my Grandma that I sleep with every night and I CANNOT sleep without it. Like I take it everywhere, even to my friend's house if I'm spending the night. Last summer I took it to Camp Ramah with me. I love it. It used to be much bigger but it has shrunk over the years. Its been washed so many times because my mom makes me and it's all like string on my side. I would really want to grab that blanket.

#4

Mom's Away

So my mom is away for business a lot. We're totally used to it. It's not a big deal, right? But I keep having these dreams. Like the fires reach our house, which is so not gonna happen, anyway I wake up and I go into my parent's room and NEITHER of them are there. My mom is away for work and my dad is not in bed. I go to get my sisters and they don't know where my dad is. Then we see smoke and want to get out of the house but for some reason we think we need to call my mom but we can't find her cell phone. So we are trapped in the house searching for a cell phone that we really don't need. I guess I'm just freaked out that my mom is gone while all this fire stuff is happening. Maybe I secretly think that my dad wouldn't be able to handle it.

#5

What do Dogs do?

My dog. I would do my best to get my dog out of my house. I'm pretty sure everyone in my family would just get the dog out but I think if I asked them the question "What one item would you get if your house was burning down?" They would necessarily think to get the dog. He's my dog really. I'm the only one that pays attention to him now anyway. So I actually think that he is so smart he might just get out of the house himself without anyone having to tell him to. I do wonder about all the animals in the fire areas. It's not good. They really just have nowhere to go and their homes are all burned up. It's really so sad. I know there are people out there that rescue animals under these circumstances but maybe the fires are too bad and they have to worry more about people and their house and stuff. I'm gonna try not to think about it.

CONCLUSION

On January 29th, 2015 *The Origins Project* debuted. A small audience consisting of school administration, teachers, parents and students gathered in the banquet hall of The Prescott School to watch a performance of this original piece of documentary theatre. The performers nervously took their places. The room was totally open, no stage, no curtain, just a few chairs that served as the set and props. The performers were feeling exposed and vulnerable. They were standing on the merits and value of their own creation, and they could not hide behind someone else's ideas or someone else's presentation.

Four months prior to this day, this small group of students nervously assembled for the first time with no script, no plan, and very little experience with theatre. Collectively they chose a topic that meant something to them. A topic that they felt needed to be addressed. An idea that they felt merited exposure through a performance. These students wanted to find out about their background and the backgrounds of the people in their community; what unites them and what separates them. Why is it important to know these things about each other and ourselves? In the following months interviews were conducted, first with their parents, then their grandparents, then members of their community, and finally people outside of their community. The information that was gathered was then used to create *The Origins Project*.

As the performers entered the space and silence fell over the audience, something truly magical happened. These very small, young people became giants. They commanded the room and commanded their material. A calm came over them as the play

unfolded. They masterfully played their parts, using the words they had found from their community to express their feelings and ideas about origin stories.

The audience listened and heard, witnessing the unraveling of not just the performers' origins but their own origins. Impressed by the vehicle in which the material was presented, the audience laughed, some cried and all were moved to see these performers embrace their backgrounds and accept each other for who they are despite their differences and because of their differences. The students spoke clearly; they stood in stillness and with confidence.

As the four students performed, I observed the audience. They were engaged, never fidgeting or whispering. They even strained to hear, not wanting to miss what was unfolding before them.

Soon the play ended and the audience applauded. The performers turned to the audience and bowed. A look of pride and accomplishment spread across their faces. In the large scheme of where theatre might be headed at The Prescott School, this might seem like a small step. However it was a beginning; the first step toward looking for a deeper way for the students to learn and teach each other about their world and themselves.

A few weeks later I ran into student #4 at The Prescott School. She hugged me. She told me she misses working on the play and that she had an idea for another play. I embrace that comment for its incredible unspoken implication. The potential that she understood the impact of *The Origins Project*, and her desire to continue with this work felt like a true victory.

Who We Are, the collection of monologues created in the 2017-2018 elective class, was a personal piece. In the true nature of The Tectonic Theater Project and because of certain class restrictions I decided we would approach this project differently. Because of the nature of the class and the attitude in which we approached the project the students were able to freely express themselves. Their stream of consciousness opened the up to reveal less obvious sides of themselves that I know we never could have achieved in the 2014-2015 class. I think that after my 5 years working at The Prescott School the students know me, like me, and trust me which meant they are more willing to look at alternative ways of doing things and they are more willing to open their hearts. The difference between the two pieces is that the first piece is about others and the second piece is about the students and their way of looking at the world, both valid and interesting approaches. The depth of the second piece is a rare look at the middle school student condition.

There were twenty-four Wednesdays in the Fall semester of 2017-2018. Because of holidays, school trips, in-service days etc. the elective class met only fourteen of those twenty-four days. With the knowledge of that major time limitation I decided early on that there would not be a performance of the piece that we created. The focus would be on the process and not the product. While that decision was not ideal to the group we were sure to treat our last class together as moment of heightened attention and we did a performance of the monologues for each other. It was short and sweet but I believe it gave the students a sense of completion and of accomplishment.

Did the project work? Did I achieve my goal? Did I show the potential of theatre as a teaching tool, did I show that different of uses theatre can inspire a social awareness

and change? The 2017-2018 group took a reflective survey inquiring about their experience. The results of the survey were encouraging. See appendix B for the survey questions.

In order to establish a starting point, the first part of the survey focused on the student's relationship with theatre before being exposed to documentary theatre in class. The majority of the students go to the theatre at least one time a year. All of the students see the annual Prescott School Musical. Three of the student's have seen multiple musicals on Broadway, including *Dear Evan Hansen*, *Hamilton*, *Matilda*, *The Band's Visit*, and *Waitress*. One student has seen a few Shakespeare plays and three students saw a production of Shakespeare through school, which seems to be a mash-up of Shakespeare's plays. None of the students have seen a contemporary straight play. Two of the students took acting class at a local establishment that puts on plays. Five of the six students have participated in the musical under my direction, as well as participating in may stagecraft elective and drama elective.

Each student seems to possess warm feelings towards theatre. When asked simply "Do you like theatre?" Their responses were positive. Here are a few direct quotes for the student's surveys:

"Yes, I think it's very interesting how the actors have to work together to solve problems, if there are any."

"Yes because I like being with my friends."

"Yes it is fun because when you are seeing or doing theatre you are in the world of the character and you can express yourself."

“Sometimes I like being in theatre if it is a play that I enjoy and it is really fun to act in new ways all the time. I also really enjoy watching plays in the theatre because it is fun to watch people really expressing their characters.”

“Yes because you can express yourself”

When asked about the purpose of theatre their responses were simple. They expressed that the purpose of theatre is to be with friends and have fun and to bring people together. One student commented on the thrill of being in a live setting with others and allowing the energy to affect you. Another student stated that theatre is about learning.

Next the survey questions turned to documentary theatre and their experience working on a piece of theatre that was not musical theatre. The students observed that documentary theatre is a chance to look at a subject matter in a new way. They felt that it's better to get information in this form rather than just watching the news.

Documentary theatre is a way of looking at real events but on stage. Also it is a method in which one can teach others about things they have little knowledge of or were not aware existed. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that the students prefer the process of musical theatre. They were clear that this experience was interesting and enjoyable but when faced with a choice they would choose a musical theatre production.

When asked if documentary theatre is useful, the majority of the students saw documentary theatre as a teaching tool, a way to get an audience to look at moments or real events in a new and more interesting way or from another point of view. “Yes, because it teaches you about things that have happened in a different way than you would normally read in the news.”

The students had a great deal to say about the feeling of sharing their own thoughts and experiences rather than the words and ideas that come directly from a script. Here are a few direct quotes from the survey:

“I think working on monologues on personal stuff really helps to build my confidence because you have to get on stage alone and perform something that you made up and now it was in front of my friends so it was not that scary but i think it would be if it was in front of more people.”

“It feels good to use my own words.” “I liked sharing this about me and telling people about my life.”

“I thought it was great to tell about how my life is going and what I would tell my friends but through acting.”

The most encouraging of the responses to the survey came when the students were asked what other subjects they might want to create a piece of documentary theatre about. The responses ranged from cake to fashion but their sincere enthusiasm for more of this work was great. Other ideas were the Holocaust, history in general, and 6th grade trip to Israel, and refugees. This is a stretch from musical theatre! This feels like a willingness to look beyond what they know and to look for a way to uncover the world around them and its issues and to move toward the unfamiliar.

In reflecting on both of my experiences with the students of The Prescott School and the process and the pieces we created I cannot help but comment on working with this age group. Middle school is a special time, it is filled with changes and insecurities as well as discoveries for these young people. While I love this age group and have dedicated my career to it, I would be curious about the outcome I might achieve with

older and more mature students. I would also love to work on documentary theatre in a public school to experience how this work would translate to them and what subjects public school students might want to explore. As I move forward I hope to push my students and the administrations of the schools in which I teach and direct to join me in my exploration of alternative theatre methods. I hope to continue to celebrate musical theatre but also to illuminate all types of theatre and approaches.

CURRICULUM

The 6th through 8th Grade Theatre Arts Curriculum,

“Alternative Theatre Unit”

This middle school theatre arts curriculum was developed for use of theatre teachers who are searching for theatre projects and productions other than musical theatre. This curriculum emphasizes the importance of instruction in the theatre arts. Knowledge and skills that students acquire through this curriculum are the abilities to think critically and globally, solve problems creatively, make informed judgments, work cooperatively within groups, appreciate different cultures, imagine, and create.

The 6th through 8th grade Theatre Arts Curriculum, *Alternative Theatre Unit* was developed through the efforts of Corey Wexler, drama elective instructor at The Prescott School, and her students. These persons collaborated in the classroom from September 2014 through January 2015 and September 2017 to January 2018 to provide the basis for this curriculum as well as specific examples of the implementation of this work.

The 6th through 8th grade Theatre Arts Curriculum, *Alternative Theatre Unit* will be available to theatre educators to use in developing curricula and lesson plans. This curriculum is based on the Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools. These are minimum requirements in the study of theatre arts that set reasonable targets and expectations for what teachers need to teach and students need to learn.

Introduction to Curriculum

The 6th through 8th grade Theatre Arts Curriculum, *Alternative Theatre Unit* acknowledges that many middle schools dedicate time and money to musical theatre curriculum and rarely explore the many other facets of theatre and the learning opportunities that alternative theatre present. After examining participants experience and exposure to theatre this curriculum gives a simple yet challenging alternative theatre experience.

This curriculum focuses on documentary theatre as a strong alternative to musical theatre. This curriculum will emphasize multiple examples of documentary theatre and the theatre practitioners who create it.

Also a step by step explanation of how to create a documentary theatre production will be provided, this lesson plan is based on the methods of Emily Mann, Anna Deavere Smith and The Tectonic Theatre Project.

Throughout the document, course content is organized into four specific content strands or topics: documentary theatre practitioners, documentary theatre methods and practices, Interviewing, and Script Development.

It is through the acquisition of the concepts, content, and skills that the goals for theatre arts education can be realized. A comprehensive theatre arts program provides students with the ability to understand their own responses and the responses of others to the many forms of theatrical experience.

This curriculum may be used by educators in the design and delivery of theatre arts instruction for a grade level or course. This document indicates how content should be taught. However, teachers are encouraged to go beyond this curriculum and select instructional strategies and assessment methods appropriate for their students.

Please see appendix C for the actual curriculum.

Please see appendix D for the day-to-day lesson plan.

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Appendix A

Syllabus for 2014 Drama Elective

Drama Elective

Thursday 2:15 to 3:40

Room 360

Instructor: Corey Wexler

Class Objective: To explore theatre/drama's place our world today. How theatre/drama can impact our lives and the lives of others. How can we use theatre/drama to change the world?

Class activities and expectations:

1. Public speaking: multiple speaking assignments
2. Study of current theatre practitioners: each student will present a theatre practitioner to the group
3. Exploration of the theatrical process: we will learn all aspects of producing a theatre production
4. Improvisation
5. Theatre Vocabulary
6. Create an original theatre/drama piece
7. Intro to theatre

A. We will introduce drama/acting through games, improvisation, team building, and public speaking which simultaneously will help to instill the four theatre fundamentals: confidence, respect, trust, and responsibility.

B. By answering the following questions we will also explore theatre's relevance in our lives today.

1. Why do we go to the theatre?
2. Can theatre change the world?
3. How can we incorporate theatre in our lives?

These questions will practically be answered through the creation of an original play. Following the format of the Tectonic Theatre Company we will conduct interviews around a relevant social, political or human issues that are important to the students and develop an original piece resulting in a performance at the end of the semester.

Students will be responsible for writing, directing, scoring, designing, and performing their new play.

C. Who is practicing theatre? We will also explore current theatre practitioners. Each student will research and present on a theatre practitioner actively working in theatre today.

Appendix B

2017 Reflective survey questions

1. How many times have you been to the theatre?
2. What plays have you seen?
3. Have you ever seen a straight play? A theatrical piece that does not have music or dancing. What play was it?
4. Have you ever been in a play? If the answer is yes please tell us what play and under what circumstances.
5. Have you ever taken a theatre/ acting/ drama class? Where? How did it go? What kind of activities did you participate in?
6. Do you like theatre? Why?
7. What do you think is the purpose of theatre?
8. What is documentary theatre?
9. Have you ever seen a piece of documentary theatre? Tell us about it.
10. Do you think documentary theatre is useful? How?
11. Describe your experience with documentary theatre in this drama elective class.
12. If you could create a piece of documentary theatre about any subject what would it be?
13. How did it feel to perform a monologue about your own life and experiences?
14. How did it feel to reveal personal information to your classmates?
15. Anything else you would like to say about creating monologues through documentary theatre techniques?
16. Describe the differences between your past experiences with theatre and the experience you had creating this collection of monologues.
17. Other comments regarding this drama elective?

Appendix C

Goals of Curriculum

The content of the Theatre Arts Standards of Learning is intended to support the following goals for students:

1. ARTISTIC PERCEPTION

Processing, Analyzing, and Responding to Sensory Information Through the Language and Skills Unique to Theatre

Students observe their environment and respond, using the elements of theatre. They also observe formal and informal works of theatre, film/video, and electronic media and respond, using the vocabulary of theatre.

Development of the Vocabulary of Theatre

1.1 Use the vocabulary of theatre, such as *action/reaction*, *vocal projection*, *subtext*, *theme*, *mood*, *design*, *production values*, and *stage crew*, to describe theatrical experiences.

Comprehension and Analysis of the Elements of Theatre

1.2 Identify how production values can manipulate mood to persuade and disseminate propaganda.

2. CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Creating, Performing, and Participating in Theatre

Students apply processes and skills in acting, directing, designing, and scriptwriting to create formal and informal theatre, film/videos, and electronic media productions and to perform in them.

Development of Theatrical Skills

2.1 Participate in improvisational activities, demonstrating an understanding of text, subtext, and context.

Creation/Invention in Theatre

2.2 Use effective vocal expression, gesture, facial expression, and timing to create character.

2.3 Write and perform scenes or one-act plays that include monologue, dialogue, action, and setting together with a range of character types.

3. HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Understanding the Historical Contributions and Cultural Dimensions of Theatre

Students analyze the role and development of theatre, film/video, and electronic media in past and present cultures throughout the world, noting diversity as it relates to theatre.

Role and Cultural Significance of Theatre

3.1 Create scripts that reflect particular historical periods or cultures.

History of Theatre

3.2 Differentiate the theatrical traditions of cultures throughout the world, such as those in Ancient Greece, Egypt, China, and West Africa.

4. AESTHETIC VALUING

Responding to, Analyzing, and Critiquing Theatrical Experiences

Students critique and derive meaning from works of theatre, film/video, electronic media, and theatrical artists on the basis of aesthetic qualities.

Critical Assessment of Theatre

4.1 Develop and apply appropriate criteria for evaluating sets, lighting, costumes, makeup, and props.

Derivation of Meaning from Works of Theatre

4.2 Identify examples of how theatre, television, and film can influence or be influenced by politics and culture.

Unit Title: *Exploring Alternative Types of Theatre: Documentary Theatre*

Length of Unit: One Semester

Grade level expectations: Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth grade

Key Skills:

Students will be able to (DO)

- Connect directly with community members
- Expose participants and community to an alternative theatre method
- Look passed Musical theatre as a theater education tool
- Explore a subject matter of great importance to the participants
- Develop the acting skills necessary for creative dramatic performance
- Gain interviewing skills
- Portray a character other than themselves
- Express themselves and their own feelings and thoughts on stage
- Storytelling

APPENDIX D

Day-to-Day Lesson Plan

Day #1

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: **ARTISTIC PERCEPTION, AESTHETIC VALUING**

Students will access the group's knowledge of and experience with theatre.

Vocabulary: At table work- Ground work conducted at the beginning of a theatrical process to establish the director's vision, the designer's work and the analysis of the script.

Warm-up- the act of preparing.

1. Warm-up: Exercises, games, and team building activities should be implemented everyday throughout the process. These activities should be determined by the needs of the group and the success of the process. The following warm-up is an example of a warm-up and can be used as a guideline.

A. Physical warm-up

1. 8 count Shake: Students are in a circle and all count 1-8 whilst shaking your left hand then right hand then left foot, then right foot

e.g. Left hand shake - "1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8" Right hand shake - "1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8...then left foot and right foot

Do the sequence again but this time countdown from 7. Repeat this decreasing every time and on the last set of 1 you jump up and shout something like 'shake down.'

2. Internal massage: Gently make circles with head then shoulder then wrists etc. moving throughout the body. Ensure that proper breathing and support is implemented.

B. Vocal Warm-up

1. Scales: Simple vocal movement up and down the scale on a ahh, ohh, and aaa.
2. Tongue Twisters: Repeat the following multiple times:

Good Blood Bad Blood

Red Leather Yellow leather

Unique New York

Around the rough and ragged rocks the rugged rascals rudely ran.

C. Games

1. Big Booty: Everyone in a circle. One player is Big Booty. The others, going clockwise, are numbered: 1, 2, 3 and so on. Now Big Booty establishes a 4-beat rhythm, saying Big Booty, Big Booty, Big Booty (followed by a rest) - repeat this until everyone got the rhythm. The game then goes as follows: Big Booty passes the buck to someone else, saying Big Booty to 7 (say) (this takes 2 beats, one for saying `Big Booty` and one for saying `to 7`). Number 7 then passes in 2 beats to, say number 2, saying `7 to 2`. It then continues until someone makes a mistake: if and when that happens everyone says (in 2 beats) `Oh Shit`, after which we repeat Big Booty Big Booty Big Booty (+ rest on 4th beat), twice. After that, the player that made the mistake becomes Big Booty, and everyone`s number changes. New Big Booty starts the game again.
2. Group Count to Twenty: Sit or stand in a circle. The idea is for the group to count to twenty, one person saying one number at a time. Anyone can start the count. Then a different person says the next number - but if two or more people happen to speak at the same time, counting must start again from the beginning.
2. Discussion: These questions are designed to establish how much your students know about theatre, from where are you starting?

What is your favorite play?

What was the last play you saw?

Have you ever seen a straight play? A theatre piece without music, singing or dancing?

Can you name a few plays?

Day #2

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: CREATIVE EXPRESSION, AESTHETIC VALUING, HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT, CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, APPLICATIONS

Students will access the reasons for doing theatre and its relevance within the greater world and their community. Followed by an opportunity to tell personal stories.

Vocabulary: Dramaturgy- a specialist in dramaturgy, especially one who acts as a consultant to a theater company, advising them on possible repertory.

1. Warm-up

- A. Physical
- B. Vocal
- C. Games

2. Discussion:

Why do we do theatre? Why go to the theatre when we can see a movie? How is theater still relevant?

The following are possible responses from students:

- 1. To feel like someone else
- 2. To be transported to a new place, time, or feeling. To experience change.

3. Everyone can participate
4. To learn about History
5. To share ideas
6. To teach lessons
7. To expand minds
8. To expose other to new art forms
9. Themes and lessons
10. To bring people together
11. To talk about taboo topics
12. To look inward at ourselves

Each student should take a seat in front of the group and tell a story. It can be anything, an embarrassing moment, a proud moment etc. This activity is not only to get the group thinking about how to portray an idea to an audience but to get to know each other.

Day #3

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: AESTHETIC VALUING

Students will explore alternative types of theatre and students will be introduced to documentary theatre. Also we will discuss the plan for the class, how we will spend our time together.

Vocabulary: Documentary Theatre: In the documentary theatre the author shapes the social and political theme by choosing particular text material often from statistical tables, memoirs, newspapers and letters; the material may be worked up and revised to such a extent that the form of presentation is different and only the core ideas remains.

1. Warm-up
 - A. Physical
 - B. Vocal
 - C. Games

2. Discussion

What are alternative types of theatre?

The following are possible responses from students:

Straight theatre

Opera

Dance

Puppet shows

Improv and sketch

3. Discussion: Documentary theatre

What do you think it is? What is the point of Documentary theatre? Would you be interested in seeing Documentary theatre?

Examples: Emily Mann's *Execution of Justice*, the recollection of a Holocaust survivor and The Tectonic Theatre Project's *Gross Indecency*, which uses authentic trial records as the basis for its script.

Methods: Using interviews, trial transcripts, statistical tables, memoirs, newspapers and letters to tell a story.

Day #4

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL
CONTEXT, CREATIVE EXPRESSION**

Students will brainstorm documentary theatre topics as well as list the differences and benefits of documentary theatre.

Vocabulary:

1. Warm-up
 - A. Physical
 - B. Vocal
 - C. Games

2. Discussion:

Create list of possible issues in which to create a piece of documentary theatre. For example the events of 9/11

Next, discuss why documentary theatre is relevant and what can be learned from it that isn't learned from other types of theatre.

3. Storytelling:

Now that the students have had one opportunity to tell a story to each other and learn a bit more about documentary theatre, this time they should feel a little more prepared and hopefully ready to tell an interesting story.

After the stories are complete, ask the following questions: Why did you choose to tell that story? How do you think your audience felt about your story? How did you feel about the experience? Were you nervous, confident, happy?

Day #5

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: AESTHETIC VALUING

Students will continue to learn about documentary theatre, specifically they will learn about Emily Mann.

Vocabulary: Oral History- recorded information about the past that one gets from talking to people about their experiences, families, etc.

1. Warm-up
 - A. Physical
 - B. Vocal
 - C. Games

2. Discussion: EMILY MANN

Day #6

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: **AESTHETIC VALUING**

Students will continue to learn about documentary theatre, specifically they will learn about Anna Deavere Smith.

Vocabulary: Criticism- the act of passing judgment as to the merits of anything

1. Warm-up
 - A. Physical
 - B. Vocal
 - C. Games

2. Discussion: ANNA DEVEARE SMITH

Goals: To use language to explore and uncover real truths.

Day #7

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: **AESTHETIC VALUING**

Students will continue to learn about documentary theatre, specifically they will learn about THE TECTONIC THEATRE PROJECT.

Vocabulary: Tectonic- Relating to the art and science of structure.

1. Warm-up
 - A. Physical
 - B. Vocal
 - C. Games

2. Discussion: THE TECTONIC THEATRE PROJECT

Goals: To look at Theatre form and language in order to create a new dialogue with it's audience exposing important social, political and human issues.

Day #8

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: **ARTISTIC PERCEPTION**

Students will select a topic on which to base their own piece of documentary theatre.

Vocabulary: Theme- a unifying or dominant idea in a work of art.

1. Warm-up
 - A. Physical
 - B. Vocal
 - C. Games

2. Discussion

Selecting a subject or theme on which to base our docu-play

The following are examples of possible topics

1. Too much to do, feel too busy and overwhelmed
2. Bullying
3. Interesting people in your community
4. Being kind

5. Speaking multiple languages
6. Looking beyond your education and religion

While discussing your possible theme ask the following questions:

What do you think of when you consider theme?

What kind of stories do you think will come from your theme selection?

What kind of questions will your theme inspire?

Example of subjects and/or themes for a documentary play

Where are we from? Origins? Where are the people in our community from?

Homework: Have a discussion with one of your parents. Discover where they are from and how they came to be where they are/live now.

Day #9

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: AESTHETIC VALUING, CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, APPLICATIONS

Students will discuss the interview process.

Vocabulary: Open ended questions- a question that leads to thorough answer.

1. Warm-up
 - A. Physical
 - B. Vocal
 - C. Games

2. Discussion

Parent discussion:

1. What information was gathered?
2. How did your parents feel about being interviewed?

3. Did you know what to say?
4. Did you run out of questions?
5. Did you learn anything new?
6. How could you approach the subject in a more effective way?

Homework: Formulate official interview questions.

Day #10

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: **ARTISTIC PERCEPTION,**

AESTHETIC VALUING, CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, APPLICATIONS

Students will compile an official list of interview questions.

Vocabulary: Brainstorming- spontaneous contribution of ideas from all members of the group

1. Warm-up
 - A. Physical
 - B. Vocal
 - C. Games

2. Discussion:

Review new interview questions.

Compile questions and create a new and official list of interview questions.

Example: Here are the official interview questions we used for our project *The Origins Project* formulated by our participants.

Following are an example of possible interview questions:

1. Do you mind if we record this interview?

2. Where are you from?
3. Where is your family from?
4. Why did you and/or your family immigrate to America?
5. Can you tell us a special story of your family in your home country? A favorite memory or family history?
6. Was it a difficult transition for your family to make from your home country to America? If so how? If not why?
7. Do you miss your home country? Why? What do you miss specifically?
8. How do you think your move to America influenced your education?
9. Do you have family in your home country? If yes do you visit them?
10. If you had to make the decision to move to America today would you?
11. Are there any food items from your country that you miss?
12. What do you do in today's times to relate to your home country?

Homework: Interview the other parent. Interview whichever parent you did not interview the week before using our official interview question

Day #11

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: AESTHETIC VALUING, CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, APPLICATIONS

Students will learn interview methods create an interview subject agreement.

Vocabulary: Obligated- to make (a person or organization) do something because the law requires it or because it is the right thing to do.

1. Warm-up

- A. Physical
- B. Vocal
- C. Games

2. Discussion:

Interview #1

Read results out loud

1. What worked? What didn't work?
2. Did you get interesting responses?
3. Can these responses be used as a monologue or a scene.
4. What answers are the most interesting to you?

Further discussion: How do you get your subject to open up? If you are getting Yes and No answers what can you do to get more information without leading your subject?

3. Discussion:

Before the interviews move forward an agreement should be established between the interviewer and his or her subject to reach an understanding regarding the interview process and the subject's involvement. Here is an example:

“Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview process. I will ask you a few questions about your background. Please understand that you are not obligated to answer any of these questions and you may stop the interview at any time. We are creating piece of theatre based on this interview. The theme of our play is origins: where people come from, how they got here and how that information affects our community. We are hoping to find stories and relevant information about your background that will

fuel an entertaining and insightful piece of theatre. Thank you again for being a part of our process”

Homework: Interview # 2

Interview any other adult member of your family: grandparents, aunt uncles etc.

Day #12

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: AESTHETIC VALUING, CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, APPLICATIONS

Students will discuss interview results.

Vocabulary: Projection- control of the volume, clarity, and distinctness of a voice to gain greater audibility

1. Warm-up
 - A. Physical
 - B. Vocal
 - C. Games

2. Discussion: Interview #2

Read results out loud

1. How did it go?
2. Compare this experience to last weeks.
3. Did you get short Yes and No answers?
4. What responses excited you?
5. How are we fit this inter our play?

Homework: Interview number #3 phone interview:

You must interview someone via phone; it can be a family member or community member.

Day #13:

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: **AESTHETIC VALUING, CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, APPLICATIONS, CREATIVE EXPRESSION**

Students will discuss interview results.

Vocabulary: Diction - the clearness of a person's speech

1. Warm-up
 - A. Physical
 - B. Vocal
 - C. Games
2. Discussion: Interview #3

Read results out loud

1. What was it like to interview someone over the phone?
2. Was it easier or more difficult than face to face?
3. Compare this experience to last weeks.
4. Did you get short Yes and No answers?
5. What responses excited you?
6. How are we fit this inter our play?

Homework: Interview #4

Please interview a member of your community. Possible subjects: teachers, Rabbis, Bus driver, nanny, gardener, find someone you really don't know much about.

This is going to be a challenge. Look outside the box and step out of your comfort zone.

Day #14

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: AESTHETIC VALUING, CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, APPLICATIONS, CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Students will discuss interview results.

1. Warm-up
 - A. Physical
 - B. Vocal
 - C. Games
2. Discussion: Interview #4
 1. How was the interview with a member of your community?
 2. How did it compare to interviewing family members?
 3. Was it difficult to find someone to interview?

3. In class interview

Invite a member from the school community to attend class and let the student conduct an interview in front of the class. This is a great way to monitor the progress of the interviews and see how or why your students are getting the results they are.

This method can also be utilized for your students are having trouble finding people outside of their community to interview. Sometimes they are shy or have trouble coordinating schedules with people they do not have close relationship with. Bringing someone in for an in-class interview takes off some of the pressure.

Day #15

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: ARTISTIC PERCEPTION, CREATIVE EXPRESSION, CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, APPLICATIONS

The Tectonic Theatre Project's methods of script development.

Vocabulary: Performance writer- Actor's, writers, designers, director etc. all become a part of this stage of the process. Everyone is part of the writing and performing process.

Moment work- creating moments out of the source material that has been collected.

1. Warm-up
 - A. Physical
 - B. Vocal
 - C. Games
2. Discussion

Students now become performance writers meaning he or she uses the tools of the stage to generate individual theatrical moments. The students work with the interview content to come up with a way to present the information and stories gathered from the interviews.

However, before this stage begins I suggest you have a discussion with your class about what the form and language of theatre is to them.

Here are a few examples of my student's responses to this discussion

1. There is a beginning, middle, and end.
2. Usually the story is about one person. That person is in the whole play.
3. Usually a play or story is fiction. The characters and plot are made up.
4. Usually there is a curtain or lights that tell the audience when the play begins and ends.

It is important to establish what is typical theatre to your students so they are able to create something that is different, that looks at the form and language of theatre in a new way.

Day #16

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: ARTISTIC PERCEPTION, CREATIVE EXPRESSION, CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, APPLICATIONS

This is the time to determine who your audience is and what this piece of theatre hopes to accomplish.

Vocabulary: Moment work- creating moments out of the source material that has been collected. A Moment does not mean a change of locale or an entrance or exit of actors or characters. It is simply a unit of theatrical time that is then juxtaposed with other units to convey meaning. A Moment can be as simple as a single gesture or breath or as complex as an entire scene complete with multiple characters, scenic pieces, lights, props, and sound

1. Warm-up
 - A. Physical
 - B. Vocal
 - C. Games

2. Before you can put your piece of theatre together you must analyze whom it is for and how they might react to the content. This will determine the rest of your script development work. If your audience is primarily made up of students your script will be different if it is made up of all parents.

Your topic was selected ages ago. You know what it is you are saying now you have to establish what you want to accomplish. Do you want your audience to have fun? Go out and change the world? Have a discussion? How will you accomplish this?

Homework:

Moment work- each student should be prepared to present interview content in an interesting way for next class. It can be a monologue, scene, song, dance etc.

Day #17

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: **CREATIVE EXPRESSION**

Students will present their moment work

Vocabulary: Theme- a unifying or dominant idea, motif, etc., as in a work of art.

1. Warm-up
 - A. Physical
 - B. Vocal
 - C. Games
2. Each student studied the interview material that they had collected and is given the opportunity to present that information to the group in any way they preferred. All are encouraged to be creative and think of that particular interview subject's origin story and how it might be best presented to an audience. Please feel free to "stumble through" this bit of the process. Add characters; find meaningful locations for these scene to take place play with the language. Have multiple people play one character. Always keeping in mind your theme and what you want your audience to learn. If a particular interview is not lending itself to the aesthetic of the group then don't use it or come back to it.

Tectonic Theater Project member Barbara Pitts explains, "Even if the Moment doesn't

turn up in the play, you might find your way to a new form, and that's really what the Moment Work is about—finding new theatrical forms. So it's important to let it be that open, because you never know who is going to come up with something" (Brown 8).

This moment work should continue until you have established a strong representation of your source material.

Day #18

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Students will present their moment work

1. Warm-up
 - A. Physical
 - B. Vocal
 - C. Games
2. Each student studied the interview material that they had collected and is given the opportunity to present that information to the group in any way they preferred. All are encouraged to be creative and think of that particular interview subject's origin story and how it might be best presented to an audience. Please feel free to "stumble through" this bit of the process. Add characters; find meaningful locations for these scene to take place play with the language. Have multiple people play one character. Always keeping in mind your theme and what you want your audience to learn. If a particular interview is not lending itself to the aesthetic of the group then don't use it or come back to it.

This moment work should continue until you have established a strong representation of your source material.

The interviews are easily made into monologues and scenes. The moment work should easily lend itself to this step. Here are a few examples of moment work and scene development. Student #1's interview with her father is a great example of our "Moment" work. Student #1's father was clearly distracted while she was conducting the interview. In the transcript of the interview there are lots of pauses, ummms, and "can you repeat the questions?" By the end of the interview he clearly became more interested in the process and told a great story about an ancient temple. Student #1 presented her father's interview in the form of a monologue including the pauses, ummms, and "can you repeat the questions?" When she finished the monologue Student #2 suggested that her dad seemed a little annoyed by the interview. So I suggested that Student #1 repeat the monologue only this time Student #2 joined her on stage and tried interrupt her the whole time. This exercise led to a very humorous battle between father and daughter. In the end, the scene started with the father character watching very important football game and his daughter entering and unexpectedly asking him questions about his origins. The conflict of the father was great, he clearly wanted to watch the game but also knew the importance of his daughter's questions. This scene was very relatable to the students and it is a likely scenario that their peers could find themselves in.

Day #19

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: **CREATIVE EXPRESSION**

Students begin rehearsal process seeking an order of the material and ideas for introduction scenes and concluding scenes. Determine a show name.

Vocabulary: Rehearsal- a session of exercise, drill, or practice, usually private, in preparation for a public performance, ceremony, etc.

1. Warm-up
 - A. Physical
 - B. Vocal
 - C. Games

2. Rehearsal period

Now that the moment work is done it is the job of the group to determine how it will be presented. Is there an inherent, logical order? Read through the individual pieces multiple times until the show order seems obvious. Also determine who is playing what character.

3. Show title

This step should reflect the theme as well as the experience. Brainstorming is the best way to come up with ideas, followed by a group vote.

Ask the following questions:

Does this show title represent your goals as storytellers? Do you feel like your interview subjects are properly represented in this title? How would you feel if you saw this title on a poster? Would you want to see this performance?

Day #20

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: **CREATIVE EXPRESSION**

Performance writers continue to rehearse.

Vocabulary: Blocking- movement on stage.

At table work- Ground work conducted at the beginning of a theatrical process to establish the director's vision, the designer's work and the analysis of the script.

1. Warm-up

- A. Physical
- B. Vocal
- C. Games

2. The order should be established. It is now time to do an official group read-through of the script. Once you have finished the read-through it is time for at-table work. This is the time to ask questions, establish character point of view and allow the director to describe his or her vision.
3. If there is time the first scene should get up on its feet to begin blocking.

Day #21

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: **CREATIVE EXPRESSION**

Performance writers continue to rehearse.

Vocabulary: Stage directions- an instruction written into the script of a play, indicating stage actions, movements of performers, or production requirements.

Off book: lines memorized

- 1. Warm-up
 - A. Physical
 - B. Vocal
 - C. Games
- 2. Blocking continues: When the whole show is blocked meaning everyone knows from where they are entering and exiting and all stage movement is established, the next step is to carve out the moments within the script. Go beat by beat until each moment is clear and the point of the scene or monologue is clear.

Once a scene is blocked the performer should memorize the scene. All should be off book for the first run-through.

3. Run-throughs: run the show from beginning to end until the flow of the piece is smooth for performer, director and any technical aspects you may or may not have added. You may choose to keep your production very simple. It depends on how your story is best told. Because the actors maybe playing multiple characters it may be best to keep them in neutral costumes and add pieces for each new scene or monologue. Lights can be simple as well. This is completely up to you considering your budget and resources.

Day #22

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME: **CREATIVE EXPRESSION**

Performance day!!

Vocabulary:

1. Warm-up: This is a must. Do not skip a warm-up on this day the games and exercises you have done throughout this time are meant to focus you and have prepared you for this moment.

A. Physical

B. Vocal

C. Games

2. Perform your original piece.