

THEATRE OF YOUTH



Secret Soldiers: Heroines in Disguise

STUDY GUIDE

THEATRE OF YOUTH

Welcome to the *Secret Soldiers: Heroines in Disguise* educational packet. The study guide is written by Melissa Chernowetz with input from Leonora Bernstein. This packet is based on the play of the same name, written by Wendy Lement, and first performed by Theatre Espresso of Boston, Massachusetts.

About Theatre of Youth

Theatre of Youth stimulates the imagination, nurtures the creative spirit, and enhances the education of young people by engaging them in relevant, child-centered, and professionally produced live theatre programs.

TOY believes meaningful childhood experiences in the theatre develop confidence in creative thinking skills, cultivate empathy and establish a life-long connection to the arts and theatre.

Drama participation also has dramatic positive results: self-expression learned through drama instills life skills and fosters teamwork and confidence. Youth who participate in the arts don't just do better in school, they perform in areas that drive success outside the classroom. Children active in the arts demonstrate higher academic performance and standardized test scores; they are more likely to participate in community service and be elected to class office.

TOY, housed at the historic Allendale Theater, was founded in 1972 by Daemen College theatre instructors Rosalind Cramer and Toni Smith Wilson who felt that children should have their stories told. What started as a small company of local actors working out of the theatre at Daemen College has grown into a cornerstone of the Buffalo arts and cultural community.

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Learning Goals

- To understand that the Civil War was not only a conflict about the institution of slavery, but it was also a complex period of developing social conscience
- To unearth the stories of the women who fought in the Civil War during an era of strict gender roles
- To unearth the stories of the people of color who fought in the Civil War despite not receiving the equal treatment they were promised by the federal government
- To use critical thinking skills to debate the issues presented in the story and determine possible resolutions to the conflict

About the Play

Sarah Rosetta Wakeman was born in 1843 in Afton, New York. Called Rosetta by her family and friends, she was the eldest daughter in a family of struggling farmers. Rosetta was determined to help her father reduce her family's debt but the domestic jobs offered to girls paid meager wages. Rosetta was inspired by the true story of Ellen Craft, a Freedom seeker and abolitionist who disguised herself as a white man to escape slavery. Although her family opposed her actions, in 1862, Rosetta disguised herself as a man, took on the alias Lyons Wakeman and began working on the Chenango Canal.

Lyons was approached by army recruiters. They talked about an enticing enlistment bonus: \$152 just for signing up (almost \$5000 today.) In addition to this bounty, soldiers would earn \$13 a month. This was an offer too good to refuse and so after a medical test consisting of only a handshake, Rosetta became Private Lyons Wakeman of the 153rd New York State Volunteers. But Lincoln needed more soldiers and issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863.

The Proclamation changed the legal status of more than 3.5 million African Americans from enslaved to free. But it took more than the Emancipation Proclamation to free the enslaved: many had to rely on their own efforts to secure freedom. Harriet Tubman led hundreds of enslaved people to safety. And with the Proclamation, African Americans like Joseph O. Cassell and Mary Lewis (alias Private William Kemp) enlisted with the promise to be paid the same pay as white soldiers, a promise that was broken.

Secret Soldiers explores the Civil War from the perspective of the unacknowledged soldiers who were a part of these historic events. Students will observe key moments of these stories. After Lyons Wakeman is taken ill, her identity is discovered by the nurses who take care of her. Students will assume the roles of doctors and hear testimony from two nurses, one who testifies that Rosetta should be exposed as a woman so that people will know that there were women who fought bravely in the Civil War. And an opposing view from a nurse who debates that Rosetta's identity must remain a secret so that she will be able to receive a pension when the war is over. Students will ask questions of the characters and offer their recommendations on how the doctor should proceed.

New York State Learning Standards and Arts Standards Implementation Resources

Grade 5

5W1: Write an argument to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

TH:Re7.1.5 a. Explain personal reactions to artistic choices.

TH:Re8.1.5 a. Connect personal experiences to theater as a participant or observer.

TH: Cn11.1.5 a. Investigate historical, global, and social issues expressed in a drama or theater work.

Literacy 6-12 Anchor Standards for Writing

Standard 1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Grade 6

TH:Re7.1.6 a. Describe and record personal reactions to artistic choices.

Grade 7

TH:Re7.1.7 a. Compare recorded personal and peer reactions to artistic choices.

Grade 8

TH:Re7.1.8 a. Apply criteria to the evaluation of artistic choices.

High School Proficient

TH:Re7.1.HSI a. Respond to what is seen, felt, and heard in a drama or theater work to develop criteria for artistic choices.

High School Accomplished

TH:Cn11.2.HSII b. Explore how personal beliefs and biases influence the interpretation of a drama or theater work.

High School Advanced

TH:Re7.1.HSIII a. Use historical and cultural context to structure and justify personal responses to a drama or theater work.

Historical Timeline

Election of 1860: President Abraham Lincoln of the antislavery Republican party is inaugurated. He only received 40% of the vote but was elected through the Electoral College. His election angered Southerners because they knew he was going to end the expansion of slavery. Lincoln declared war to stop the South from permanently leaving the United States.

The South Secedes 1860-1861: The South seceded from the United States and thereafter named themselves The Confederate States of America headed by Jefferson Davis. The first state seceded on December 20, 1860, and the last to secede was February 1861.

April 12–14, 1861: The Confederate attack on Fort Sumter, a federal outpost in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina, marks the first military engagement of the American Civil War. After some 34 hours of bombardment, the fort surrenders on April 13, and Federal troops evacuate the fort the next day.

July 21, 1861: The First Battle of Bull Run, or the First Battle of Manassas, takes place near Manassas in northern Virginia and ends in a Confederate rout of Union forces.

March 9, 1862: In the first battle of ironclad warships, the *Merrimack* (which had been rechristened by the Confederates as the *Virginia*) clashes with the Union *Monitor*. Although the Union navy blockades 3,500 miles (5,600 kilometers) of Confederate coastline during the war, the Confederates excel at running the blockade.

April 6–7, 1862: In a fierce battle at Shiloh, in southwestern Tennessee, Union forces rally from almost near defeat to drive back the Confederate army. Both sides are immobilized for the next three weeks because of the heavy casualties, including more than 13,000 on the Union side and more than 11,000 on the Confederate side.

August 30, 1862: Sarah Rosetta Wakeman enlists as Private Lyons Wakeman, a volunteer of the 153rd New York Infantry Regiment. Private Wakeman serves provost and guard duty in Alexandria, Virginia and on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

September 17, 1862: The battle at Antietam, Maryland, is regarded as a Union victory in an otherwise bleak year for Union forces in the East. However, the casualties set a grisly record. In what marks the bloodiest single day of the war, the South loses 10,316 troops, and the North suffers casualties of 12,401. Following this battle, Lincoln shifts the focus of the war from preserving the Union to freeing enslaved people in the Confederacy.

January 1, 1863: President Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation. It states that “all persons held as slaves” within the rebellious states “are, and henceforward shall be free.” The proclamation also allows men of color to serve in the Union army. Up until this time, the Confederate government and people had expected that the English and French governments would intervene on their side in the war, but the conversion of the struggle into a crusade against slavery makes European intervention impossible.

Jun 1, 1863 – Jun 2, 1863: Harriet Tubman, under the command of Union Colonel James Montgomery, became the first woman to lead a major military operation in the United States when she and 150 African American Union soldiers rescued more than 700 slaves in the Combahee Ferry Raid.

July 1–3, 1863: After invading the North, Confederate forces under General Robert E. Lee meet Union forces at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The battle rages over three days, involving heavy artillery duels and high casualties on both sides. The battle is considered a major turning point in the eastern theater. Lee withdraws and is forced to fight a defensive campaign for the rest of the war.

May–July 1863: In the western theater of the war, General Ulysses S. Grant lays siege to the Confederate stronghold of Vicksburg, Mississippi. The Confederates surrender on July 4. The victory leaves the Mississippi River completely under Union control and splits the Confederacy in half.

March 1864: Private Wakeman and her regiment are sent to Louisiana to take part in the Red River Campaign and forced to march hundreds of miles through the bayou with poor food and tainted drinking water.

April 9, 1864: Private Wakeman’s regiment sees action at Pleasant Hill, Louisiana. Standing shoulder to shoulder with the men in her company, Wakeman fired round after round into the advancing Confederates, beating them back six times. While the 153rd fought gallantly, the Union army was forced to retreat down the Red River, fighting another engagement at Monett’s Bluff on April 23rd. Holding back the Confederates once again, the army finally reached safety at Alexandria, Louisiana in early May.

May 1864: Wakeman reports to the regimental hospital, suffering from chronic diarrhea. She is transferred to a hospital in New Orleans, arriving there on May 22. By this time, she is gravely ill and on June 19, 1864, she dies. There is no record of her true sex ever having been discovered, and she is buried under the name Private Lyons Wakeman at Chalmette National Cemetery near New Orleans.

September 2, 1864: General William T. Sherman captures Atlanta, Georgia. Sherman adopts a strategy of “total war” on his march through Georgia and the Carolinas. His troops destroy crops, supplies, railroads, bridges, and many small industries to weaken support for the war.

April 1865: General Lee is surrounded by Grant’s forces in Virginia. He finally surrenders to Grant at Appomattox Court House on April 9.

April 14–15, 1865: On April 14 President Lincoln is shot in Ford’s Theatre in Washington, D.C., by John Wilkes Booth. The president dies on April 15. Vice President Andrew Johnson becomes president. The death of Lincoln will make reconciliation between the North and South more difficult.

1994: Sarah Rosetta Wakeman’s letters are published by editor Lauren Cook Burgess as *An Uncommon Soldier: The Civil War Letters of Sarah Rosetta Wakeman, alias Pvt. Lyons Wakeman, 153rd Regiment, New York State Volunteers, 1862-1864*. It wasn’t until then that the military discovered she was a woman.

Vocabulary

Union: Also called the North, the Union was the part of the country that remained loyal to the Federal government during the Civil War.

Confederacy: Also called the South, the Confederacy were the 11 states that broke away from the Federal government due to disagreement over the institution of slavery.

Emancipation Proclamation: On January 1, 1863, President Lincoln issued this proclamation that changed the legal status of more than 3.5 million African Americans from enslaved to free. It also proclaimed that African American men could enlist in the military.

Joan of Arc: Joan of Arc was a French peasant girl who was born in 1412. When she was a teenager, she dressed as a soldier and led the French army to defeat the English. She also crowned the king of France.

Molly Pitcher: Molly Pitcher is a folk hero probably inspired by the actions of a few different women. Women who brought water to soldiers fighting on the battlefield during the Revolutionary War may have generally been referred to by this nickname. There were at least two women who began to shoot after their husbands were wounded and could fight no more.

Ellen Craft: Ellen Craft is known for her remarkable escape from slavery. Ellen posed as a sickly white gentleman and her husband William Craft posed as her slave. They became active in the abolitionist movements and gained fame from lecturing and teaching.

Abolitionist: An abolitionist was a person who sought to abolish slavery during the 19th century.

John Rock: An abolitionist from Boston and one of the first African American men to become a doctor. He treated fugitive slaves. John Rock was also a teacher, a dentist, a lawyer and the first black attorney to be admitted to the bar of the Supreme Court of the United States.

Academic Vocabulary

Alias: a name that a person may use to conceal their identity.

Virtuous: having good qualities such as honesty, courage, compassion, generosity, fairness, and self-control.

Gallant: a person or behavior that is considered brave and heroic.

Dysentery: an infection of the intestines resulting in severe diarrhea, fever, and stomach cramps. It can be caused by a parasite or bacteria. Today it is treated with antibiotics.

Mulatto: an old-fashioned word used to refer to a person of mixed ancestry. Today this word is considered offensive.

Pension: a regular payment that is made to a person who has retired. Soldiers who had fought in the Civil War received a pension as a reward for their service.

Key Players

Sarah Rosetta Wakeman/Private Lyons Wakeman: Born into a poor farming family in Afton, New York, Sarah Rosetta's family was deeply in debt. Because the work for women did not pay well, Sarah Rosetta disguised herself as a man called Lyons Wakeman and left home to find work. Lyons got work on a coal barge on the Chenango Canal and started to send her wages home to her struggling family. Lyons was approached by army recruiters who mentioned that a young man could get \$152 for enlisting and after that \$13 a month plus food. After a medical test that consisted of only a handshake, Lyons Wakeman joined the army with the 153rd New York State Volunteers.

Private Joseph O. Cassell: Born into slavery in Maryland, Joseph escaped to freedom assisted by Harriet Tubman. Because the Emancipation Proclamation admitted African American men into the armed services, Joseph Cassell enlisted in the 29th Connecticut Infantry. He soon discovers that there are many soldiers who are women in disguise. And he also discovers that although the federal government promised soldiers of color the same pay as white soldiers, it was a promise broken.

Nurse Bartlett: A nurse who discovers that one of the sick soldiers under her care is actually a woman. Despite discovering that Lyons is really Sarah Rosetta, she does not change the medical documents. Nurse Bartlett fears that if Private Lyons is revealed to be Sarah Rosetta, her name would be smeared in the newspapers. She also wants Private Lyons Wakeman to receive a pension someday.

Nurse Hughes: A nurse who believes that everyone should know that the soldier called Private Lyons Wakeman is really a teenaged girl called Sarah Rosetta Wakeman. Nurse Hughes wants people to understand that women are equal to men in every way, including being able to be a soldier and fight bravely! Nurse Hughes also believes that if the identity of Private Lyons is never revealed, people will never know that women fought in the Civil War.

Dr. William Hire: A doctor and surgeon who has been summoned to decide what will happen to Private Lyons Wakeman, a Union soldier who is discovered to be a woman called Sarah Rosetta Wakeman. He will ask the audience to help him make a decision, as this deliberation may very well set a precedent in future cases.

Pre-Performance Lesson Plan #1- *Write a Letter as a Character*

Goals:

1. To understand the challenges facing Sarah Rosetta Wakeman, a young woman from a poor family who disguises herself as a male to try and help lift her family out of debt.
2. To understand the challenges facing Joseph O. Cassell, a man who escaped slavery and then enlisted in the army with the promise of equal pay only to discover racial discrimination from the federal government.

Objective/Aim: Students will...

1. Imagine what it was like to be a girl or woman living during a time when the only way to find well-paying work was to disguise yourself as a boy or a man.
2. Imagine what it was like to fight in the armed forces but despite facing the same dangers as white soldiers, to be denied equal pay because of your skin color.
3. Use reading and writing skills as a means of reflecting on the above.

NYS Standards: 5th grade: Text Types and Purposes

5W1: Write an argument to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

NYS Standards: 6-12 Anchor Standards for Writing

Standard 1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Method:

1. Using the Pre-Performance Handout, review the character descriptions of Sarah Rosetta Wakeman and Joseph O. Cassell. Point out to students that these were real people, and this information comes from both military records and from the letters that Sarah Rosetta Wakeman wrote to her family.
2. Assign each student a character description from the handout or have them choose.
3. Ask the students to imagine that they are the character. Ask students the following questions: What are the challenges that you are facing? What do you believe in? Who are you writing or speaking to, and what power does that person have to help you? How are you going to change their mind? What beliefs and biases stand against you? How can you present your argument respectfully?
4. Ask students to either write a persuasive letter or to create a short theatrical scene that explores how their character might try to stand up for their beliefs and to change other people's perspectives.
5. Ask students to share their work with the class.

Pre-Performance Handout: Write a Letter as a Character

It is July 1863. The war between the north (the Union) and the south (the Confederacy) has been raging for two years. President Lincoln needs soldiers to fight for the Union. To encourage men to enlist, the government offers every man \$152 just for signing up. After that, they get will get \$13 a month plus food. Lincoln has also issued the Emancipation Proclamation. This declares that all persons held as slaves are now free but it also allows people of color to enlist in the armed forces and to receive the same pay as white men. Using the character descriptions, write a letter or create a scene in which you try to convince someone to understand your perspective.

Sarah Rosetta Wakeman/Private Lyons Wakeman

You were born into a farming family. A few years of bad harvests have left your family in serious financial trouble. Your father has borrowed a lot of money just to keep food on the table. Since you are the oldest child in the family, you feel responsible to help your father get out of debt. But the only work available to girls and women pays very little. Then one day you hear an exciting true story: a woman called Ellen Craft disguised herself as a man and escaped slavery! You realize that if you disguise yourself as a boy, you can find better work. You get some boy's clothing and leave your farm. Since in the 1800s, girls and women never wear pants, everyone assumes you are a teenaged boy. Soon you get work on a coal barge and are making more money than you could as a girl! Some of your money goes to food and rent but you send everything else to your family. Despite this, your family is very angry at you because if people discover that you are really a teenaged girl, the newspapers will write horrible stories about you and bring shame to your family. But you know that there is no other way. Then one day as you are working on the canal, a man tells you that you can make \$152 just by enlisting in the army! And after that, you'll get \$13 a month plus food! It is an offer that is too good to refuse and you join the New York volunteers in the 153rd regiment. But how will you explain this to your family? Write a letter or create a short scene in which you convince your family why you have made the best decision.

Private Joseph O. Cassell

You were born into slavery. When the Civil War erupted, you risked your life to escape to freedom. Harriet Tubman found you injured and led you through the dangerous countryside to the safety of a Union army camp. Harriet Tubman also told you about an exciting prospect: Union army regiments are now seeking African American men to enlist and fight for freedom! This is not only a chance to fight against slaveholders but a chance to receive a good wage. The Union promised that all soldiers of color will receive the same pay as white soldiers. As soon as you are able, you enlist in the army with the 29th Regiment. But once you receive your first pay, you discover that you have not received the same pay as white soldiers! You also hear that some black soldiers are boycotting their pay. This means that on payday, these soldiers refuse to accept their wages. And they will continue to refuse their wages until pay is equal. Even though it has been many months since these soldiers of color were paid, they continue to fight bravely. They have even won the battle of Fort Wagner! Write a letter or create a short scene in which you convince President Lincoln to act against this racial discrimination.

Pre-Performance Lesson Plan #2: *Character Packets*

Goal:

1. To introduce students to the characters in *Secret Soldiers: Heroines in Disguise*.

Objective/Aim: Students will...

1. Work in small groups and negotiate creative choices
2. Become familiar with characters from *Secret Soldiers*
3. Use problem solving and critical thinking skills to form hypotheses about characters

Common Core State Standards:

1. Demonstrates Independence
2. Build strong content knowledge
3. Respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline
4. Comprehends as well as critique
5. Value evidence
6. Come to understand other perspectives and cultures

Materials Needed:

-5 Boxes/manila envelopes filled with pictures that represent the characters- these are the character packets. Also included are lines of dialogue that each of the characters speak.

-5 pieces of paper, writing utensil- one per group

Method:

1. Before class make the character packets. Cut out the materials and place them inside the envelopes. Make sure that the material corresponds with the names of each character. Characters are: Sarah Rosetta Wakeman, Joseph Cassell, Sara Emma Edmonds, Loreta Velazquez, William Hire.

2. Explain that each group will be given a character packet and will have to use critical thinking skills to form hypotheses about these characters. Ask students the following questions: Does this person have a job? (If so what do they do?) Are they married? Look at the line of dialogue on the strip of paper, does this tell you anything about the character? What do you imagine this person is like?

3. Now divide class up into 5 groups and have the students choose a scribe and a group presenter. Hand out character packets. Give each group paper and writing utensil. Give 10-15 mins for groups to examine the packets, discuss, and to have the scribe write down the group's ideas.

4. After 15 minutes, take turns asking each group leader to discuss what speculations their groups have made about their character. Write down their answers on the board. Have each student journal or respond to these questions: What would they like to learn about these characters? What do they hope to discover upon seeing the play *Secret Soldiers: Heroines in Disguise*?

Character Pack Materials for Sarah Rosetta Wakeman



“That 100 and 52 \$ in money I got for enlisting was more than I ever did make at one time. Leaving home, I figured to be a lot more help than staying on the farm pining for some man to marry me. In this regiment, I was independent as a hog on ice.”



Character Pack Materials for Joseph O. Cassell



“And I have a wife, Sarah. Met her in Fair Haven two days after I enlisted. Found out we have a baby girl, Abigail. Hope I get to see her in my lifetime. I’ve been thinking about the night that Miss Tubman brought me to the camp.”

29th Connecticut Regiment Enlistment

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Show 10 entries

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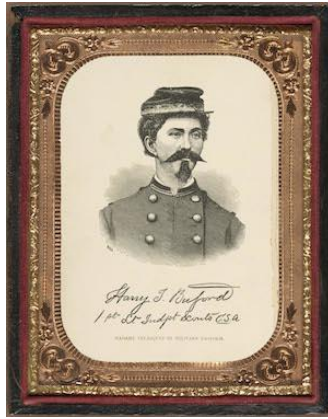
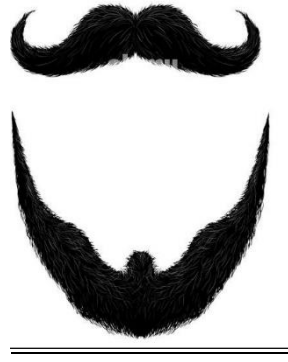
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Last name	First name	MI/name	Regiment	Company	Place of birth	Enlistment date	Enlistment location	Residence	Age	Occupation
Cassell	Joseph		29	A.	Baltimore, Maryland		New Haven	New Haven	38	Janitor

Character Packet Materials for Sarah Emma Edmonds



"I'm a woman. I can't go to a hospital in uniform. Do you get it? Got to get into women's clothes first."

Character Packet Materials for Loreta Velazquez



"This woman has killed more than she can count. But you're fortunate. I've had my fill of bloodshed."



William Hire



“We need new doctors now that nearly 6,000 hospital beds across the city are occupied by Union soldiers in capturing the city. These men are fighting for their lives, not on the battlefield, but under our care.”



Post-Performance Reflection Questions

1. During the performance of *Secret Soldiers: Heroines in Disguise*, the audience was asked to vote on whether the identity of Private Lyons Wakeman should be revealed. What were the arguments for revealing that Private Lyons Wakeman is a woman named Sarah Rosetta Wakeman? What were the arguments for keeping Sarah Rosetta's identity a secret?
2. What did you vote for and why?
3. Did you participate in the discussion? If yes, what thoughts did you contribute? If not, what would you have added to the discussion if you had been called on?
4. What did the audience decide? What do you think will happen to Private Lyons Wakeman/Sarah Rosetta Wakeman as a result?
5. Do you have any unanswered questions? If so, what are they?

Post-Performance Lesson Plan #1- *Reflecting on the Play*

Goals:

1. To thoughtfully reflect on the experiences and reactions to the performance of *Secret Soldiers: Heroines in Disguise*.
2. To realize the impact of theatrical performances to help us investigate and reflect on historical, global, and social issues.

Objective/Aim: Students will...

1. Explain personal reactions to artistic choices.
2. Connect personal experiences to theater as a participant or observer.
3. Investigate historical, global, and social issues expressed in a drama or theater work.

NYS Speaking and Listening Anchor Standards- Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

STANDARD 4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence so that listeners can follow the line of reasoning. Ensure that the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Method:

1. Review the prompts from the Post-Performance Prompts Handout. (Refer to Page 5 for grade-appropriate learning standards for your students.)
2. Assign students a prompt or allow them to choose from a list. Before engaging in a class discussion, students should be given a minute or two to think about their responses before being asked to share.
3. After everyone has shared, ask students to report back on common themes that have emerged or on something that surprised them about their peers' reactions to the play.
4. After the discussion, have students write a formal critical response essay or a reaction paper to the play.

Post-Performance Prompts Handout: Reflecting on the Play

Now that we have seen the play *Secret Soldiers*, let's reflect and discuss our reactions together.

Personal Connections

1. Do any of the characters remind you of someone in your life? Who and how do they remind you?
2. How do your personal experiences affect the way that you feel about the play?
3. Did any of the problems that the characters faced remind you of things that are happening today? Are these things happening in your life or to people out in the wider world? What are these problems?
4. Which character taught you the most? What did that character teach you?
5. What did you think about the dialogue in the play? Was there something that sounded old-fashioned to you? What was your reaction to it?
6. Was there anything that surprised you about your peers' reactions to the play?

Setting

1. If you had a time machine and could go back into the past, what would you say to Sarah Rosetta Wakeman or to any of the other characters from the play?
2. What in the play made you feel like you were in the past? Would you like to live during this time period? Why or why not?
3. Could this play take place today? Why or why not?
4. Have your ideas about what it was like to live in the past changed as a result of seeing this play? Why or why not?

Artistic Choices

1. What is one thing that you respected or admired about the play? You can choose from: the lighting, the performances, the scene design, the music, the script, or anything else. Include details that impacted you.
2. Does the look of the play remind you of any other play, movie, tv show, video game or book? What about it reminds you?
3. If you had a chance to produce this play, what would you do differently?

Post-Performance Lesson Plan #2: *Create a New Title*

Goal:

1. To have students explore the many themes contained within the play through creation of a new title for the play.

Objective/Aim: Students will:

1. Work in small groups and negotiate creative choices.
2. Discuss themes from *Secret Soldiers: Heroines in Disguise*.
3. Use problem solving and critical thinking skills to create a new title for *Secret Soldiers: Heroines in Disguise*.

NYS Speaking and Listening Anchor Standards- Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

STANDARD 4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence so that listeners can follow the line of reasoning. Ensure that the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Method:

1. Discuss themes within the play. Women reached beyond gender roles and disguised themselves as men to be soldiers. People of color fought in the Civil War despite not receiving equal pay.
2. Divide students into groups or pairs. Ask each group to create a new title for the plays based upon what they feel are the strongest themes.
3. Have students present their new titles and why they have chosen to describe the play in this manner.
4. Discuss what groups have similar titles and/or reasons for choosing these titles. How is each title different?

Assessment/Reflection: Were the students able to reflect an understanding of the main themes in titles of the play?

Post-Performance Suggestions for Other Subject Areas

Math

In the play, we learn that Sarah Rosetta Wakeman enlists because of the \$152 bounty, a hefty sum in August 1862. In 2023, \$152 would be equal to \$4,484.90. Use the inflation calculator from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics to explore the dollar's buying power at different points in time. Choose a dollar amount and see how its value has changed by adjusting the first year (the second date should remain 2023.)

Science

1. During the Civil War, soldiers did not receive adequate nutrition. Although soldiers received rations, they spent a lot of time and money trying not to get scurvy. Students can identify key components of a good diet and come up with a nutrition plan that will keep soldiers healthy.
2. Many soldiers became very sick and some even died from drinking contaminated water or from unsanitary conditions. Students can discuss what they know about remaining healthy during an outbreak. Students can also learn how war and disease are linked.

Technology

In the play, Sarah Rosetta Wakeman and Joseph O. Cassell had to rely on writing letters to their loved ones. But there was a faster way to get messages across great distances (and it doesn't have to do with a fast horse!) Ask students to guess what kind of technology existed during the 1860s that would allow messages to be sent quickly. Share this article about the telegraph.

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/roots-computer-code-lie-telegraph-code-180964782/>

Art

Make a collage about one of the characters. Have students design a monument to a character or characters in the play that could be displayed in a public park or in front of city hall.

Additional Resources

Allen, Thomas B. *Harriet Tubman, Secret Agent*. National Geographic Children's Books, 2006.

Cline-Ransome, Lesa. *Before She was Harriet*. New York: Holiday House, 2017.

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