

PRE-SHOW EDUCATION PACKET

Welcome to Theatre of Youth's 48th season and **ANNE OF GREEN GABLES**

This packet has been designed with an educator, parent and student in mind! We want to broaden our audience's experience and help you to prepare for future visits to The Historic Allendale theatre! To the right you will find a table of contents that will help you navigate through the packet. All of our activities have been assigned a title to help you connect this experience with the NYS Next Generation Standards. Those titles are COMPREHEND, CHALLENGE, COMMUNICATE, CREATE, COMMENT and CONNECT. We hope that this will help you lead a discussion or inspire you to create your own show and book based activities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Theatre

Theatre Etiquette

The Author

The Show/The Characters

Lesson Plan

Discovering Diversity Page

Get Ready for Your Trip!

Students that attend performances with their school also have access to our playbill which includes a post-show educational guide. These activities will also be titled for educators to connect the classroom to the children's experience when they visit Theatre of Youth. Activities include vocabulary, an opportunity to be inspired artistically, or to engage in a conversation about a topic or a concern.

THE THEATRE:

The Allendale, one of Buffalo's first neighborhood theatres, was built in 1913 on the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy of Nations. It originally included gold trimmed walls, leaded glass windows and a stunning domed ceiling with dozens of modern light bulbs. At first, the popular movie house specialized in silent films and photoplays of Broadway productions, with a custom-built symphonic organ for accompaniment. The years were not kind to The Allendale Theatre. Fortunately, the Allentown Association saved it from demolition and in 1986, Theatre of Youth entered into a partnership with the City of Buffalo to raise funds and renovate the theatre for its permanent home.

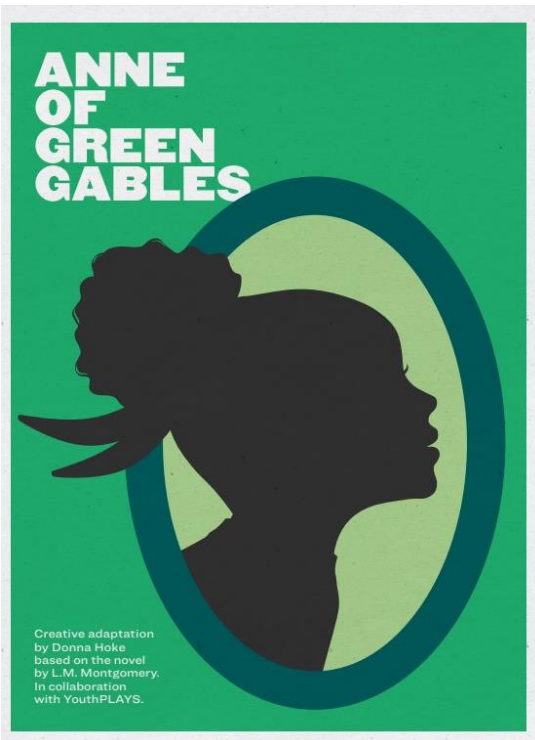


Preserving the original integrity during the "make-over", the theatre is equipped with a proscenium stage, fly and wing space, a sound and lighting system, dressing rooms, rehearsal space, and seating for 469 people.

THEATRE ETIQUETTE:

Theatre etiquette is a simple set of rules to help audience members fully enjoy the show, and for actors and the backstage crew to safely perform their work for you! Here are some important elements of theatre etiquette:

- Arrive on time and get to your seat without running.
- Visit the restroom before the performance begins.
- Respect the theatre. Don't put your feet on the seats and avoid bouncing up and down.
- Turn OFF and put away phones and other electronic devices.
- Please do not talk to your neighbor during the performance.
- No foods or drinks inside the theater.
- If you like something that you see, you may clap or laugh- it shows the actors that you like what they are doing!
- Open your eyes, your hearts and your minds and enjoy the show!



THE SHOW: ANNE OF GREEN GABLES

Recommended for school grades 4-9th

Written by DONNA HOKE

Adapted freely from the novel by L.M. Montgomery

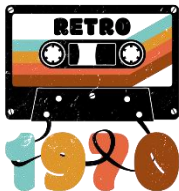
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When Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert decide to take in a foster child, they request a boy. Imagine their surprise when Anne, a girl of boundless imagination with a mouth to match, shows up on their doorstep. Still, the two of them take a chance on her in hopes they can do some good. As Anne comes of age, her curiosity and wonder may get her in trouble, but ultimately her capacity for love teaches them all what it means to create and commit to family in this inventive and timeless free adaptation of the heartwarming classic by L.M. Montgomery.

About The Play

Theatre of Youth's presentation explores this timeless classic from the perspective of Anne Shirley as a young woman of color coming of age in the early 1970's. We aim to give our audience a chance to experience a bygone era while still relating to the show's themes and lessons. However, in setting this classic in the 1970's and Anne Shirley as a person of color, it is a new way for our audiences to hear what was already there. Compassion, forgiveness, and



the desire to find a place to belong remain. Anne Shirley enters a homogenous community and is advised to conform to societal expectations but this is never a possibility for Anne. Whether she is filled with rapture or wracked by despair, Anne never filters or censors herself. She is hopeful despite everything that has occurred in her life. Join us as we explore Anne's continuing story- **and enjoy the show!**



CHARACTERS: Who's Who

ANNE SHIRLEY	A talkative orphan from the city, full of spirit and looking for somewhere to belong.
MARILLA CUTHBERT	Anne's adopted "aunt," a stern country woman with a moral code. She helps Anne mature.
MATTHEW CUTHBERT	Marilla's brother who has a soft spot for Anne, a quiet man and a farmer. Anne's kindred spirit. The Cuthberts' neighbor and a busybody who believes orphans are trouble.
RACHEL LYNDE	The Cuthberts' neighbor and a busybody who believes orphans are trouble.
DIANA BARRY	Anne's best friend and a sweet spirit who never treats Anne as "other." Anne invites her into the world of play and imagination.
GILBERT BLYTHE	The most popular boy in school, and considered the most handsome. Anne's rival.
JOSIE PYE	The queen bully. Those around her don't have strength to resist the bully's behavior.
MRS. STACY	Anne's teacher, a role model for Anne because of her forward thinking

About Lucy Maud Montgomery, Author of Anne of Green Gables

Lucy Maud Montgomery was born on November 30, 1874 on rural Prince Edward Island. Just before she turned two, her mother died of tuberculosis. Her grief-stricken father took her to live with her maternal grandparents Alexander and Lucy Woolner MacNeill at their home on Cavendish, Prince Edward Island.

Maud, as she was called by her loved ones, spent a good part of her youth escaping into her imagination, which she nurtured by copious amounts of reading and writing. At nine years old, Maud began writing poetry and keeping journals and started writing short stories in her mid-teens. When her father remarried, Maud moved in with her father's new family but felt homesick as well as disheartened by her marginal position. After one year, she moved back with her grandparents. Though her grandparents were not affectionate people, Maud enjoyed helping her grandfather with his postmaster duties.



Montgomery in 1908, the year she published Anne of Green Gables. Courtesy Canada.CA. Source: Smithsonian Magazine

As the post office was a part of the house, Maud witnessed many of the island's residents as they congregated, shared news, gossiped and talked politics. These gatherings may have been the inspiration for many of the characters Maud would come to create. Maud's first



publication, a poem, was published just before her 16th birthday. As with many female authors over the centuries, Maud disguised her name as "L.M." in order to be taken seriously in a male-dominated industry. In 1894, Maud completed a two-year teachers' training course at Prince of Wales College in Charlottetown after only one year.

When her grandfather passed in 1898, Maud left her teaching position and returned to Cavendish to take care of her grandmother and to help run the post office. For an aspiring novelist, being assistant post mistress gave her access to paper, an expensive commodity at the time. Maud was able to write her stories and poems on the backs of official letter bills. It was during this period that Maud wrote her first and most famous novel, Anne of Green Gables.

As assistant post mistress, Maud could mail her manuscripts to publishers throughout Canada and the United States without anyone in her community being aware. Later in life, Maud admitted that if it hadn't been possible for her to keep her early rejections a secret, she may never have had the courage to pursue her writing career. Anne of Green Gables was published in 1908 and introduced the world to the ever-optimistic Anne Shirley. The book was an instant success, translated into dozens of languages and is still being adapted for television, film, and theater.



COMPREHEND: Adapting the Setting

Our adaptation of *Anne of Green Gables* is set in the 1970's, a decade of newly awakened political awareness around race, sexuality, the environment, and the economic liberty of women.

When playwright Donna Hoke chose to set her adaptation in the seventies, she chose this decade for three reasons:

- 1) It was a time without modern technology, which made it easier to adhere to some of the plot and story factors from the novel;
- 2) It had a very distinct style fashion-wise;
- 3) The foster care system was part of the period of peak years when the detachment style of fostering was prevalent. It wasn't until the eighties that it started to be believed that not becoming attached might be detrimental to a child's well-being.

Director Annette Daniels Taylor was also enthusiastic about setting the play in the seventies. She lived through this time and holds many fond remembrances of being young in the 1970's. It was an exciting time because more non-white women were leaving domesticity and entering other jobs. Yet at the same time that women and girls were told to go and make something of their lives, the subtext was, "Don't shine too brightly." And it is the same for Anne Shirley, who does not gain the confidence of the adults until she wins a scholarship.



Mrs. Daniels Taylor also wanted to show the influence that a young person living in the home of the older generation would have on *Green Gables*. Through working with the props artisan Camille Roosevelt, our director wanted to show that as time passes in the play, technology (like touchtone phones) begins to be incorporated.

Annette Daniels Taylor also sees this adaptation as a way to establish a more modern world where the characters can look as different as they feel. Anne is a person of color from the city. This precocious young lady enters a rural environment. As a newcomer to a homogenous town where the same families have lived for several generations, Anne is not privy to the secrets, the relationships, the grudges. When Anne arrives and Mrs. Lynde treats her with suspicion, Anne is horrified because the way she is treated is not the way that she feels. Anne never filters herself and this authenticity can be scary for those who experience reality as a consensus. However, because Anne is completely open, she also helps others feel seen. Anne's imagination is so singular and unique that those who were critical of her at first find their own youthful spirit rekindled in the end.



COMMENT AND CONNECT: City Kid, Country Kid Discussion

Goals:

To prepare for the play by understanding the challenges Anne Shirley will face. In our adaptation, Anne Shirley is a young orphan and a person of color who is moving from the city to the country.

Objective/Aim: Students will...

1. Compare and contrast the city and the country.
2. Imagine what it would be like to suddenly move to an unfamiliar place.
3. Use dramatic skills to create a tableau vivant
4. 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. Have the students brainstorm the differences between the city and the country, perhaps utilizing a Venn diagram. Ask the students the following questions: Do you live in the city or the country? How do you know? Have you ever visited the other (city or country) before? If not, what examples do you know from pop culture, movies and TV? How do you think life might be different for kids in the (city/ country?) What are the sounds in the environment? What is the housing like? What is their method of transportation? What kind of jobs do they have? What do people need to survive in the (city/country?) What are the challenges/joys of life in the (city/country?) In what ways are the city/country similar? Do the places we live in create who we are?
2. Inform students that they will be creating a tableau. Hand out the Pre-Performance Handout: *Create a Tableau: Country Kid, City Kid*. You may wish to show images of tableau vivant.
3. Break the students into groups of 3 or 4. **Suggestion:** Pair theatrical students with those who are supportive and can offer feedback to help them establish their ideas.
4. Students will rehearse their tableau.
5. Students will share their tableau with the class.
6. Have students respond to the Reflection.

CREATE: City Kid, Country Kid Tableau

A **tableau** is a dramatic scene by a person or group, posing silently without moving. During a tableau, the performers must:

- Remain still or frozen (including facial expression) for at least five seconds.
- Remain silent.
- Pose with energy & expression.
- Stay focused.
- Pose at different levels (different heights.)



Character 1. The Country Kid: You have grown up in the country. What are the challenges of your everyday life? What makes you happy?

Character 2. The City Kid: You have grown up in the city. What are the challenges of your everyday life? What makes you happy?

Director/s: Give 1-2 suggestions to the Characters to help them adjust their poses. Since the Characters do not have a mirror, you must help them create a tableau that will be focused, interesting and entertaining.

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1. Create a pose that shows us your personality.
 2. Now create a tableau that shows Country Kid arriving in the city. What does the Country Kid see, hear, think, and wonder about this new environment? What does City Kid see, hear, think and wonder as Country Kid enters the environment?
 3. Now create a tableau that shows the opposite. City Kid has just arrived in the country. What does City Kid see, hear, think and wonder about this new environment? What does Country Kid see, hear, think and wonder as City Kid enters the environment?

CHALLENGE: Character Packets

Goal: To introduce students to the characters and the setting of *Anne of Green Gables*

Objective/Aim: Students will...

1. Work in small groups and negotiate creative choices
2. Become familiar with characters and the setting from *Anne of Green Gables*
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

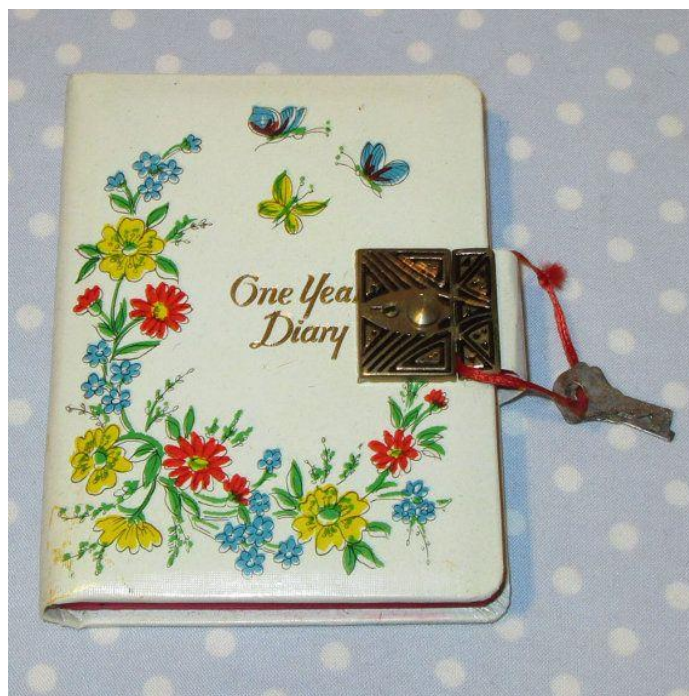
Method:

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: Anne Shirley, Diana Barry, Gilbert Blythe, Marilla Cuthbert, Josie Pye.
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: How old do you think this person is? What do they like to do? 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 *Anne of Green Gables*.

Character Pack Materials for Anne Shirley



“Big ideas need big words to express them. With all my big ideas, the big words just happen. I don’t mean anything by it. But don’t worry, I’m not afraid of the way you talk to me. I’m used to much worse.”



Character Pack Materials for Diana Barry



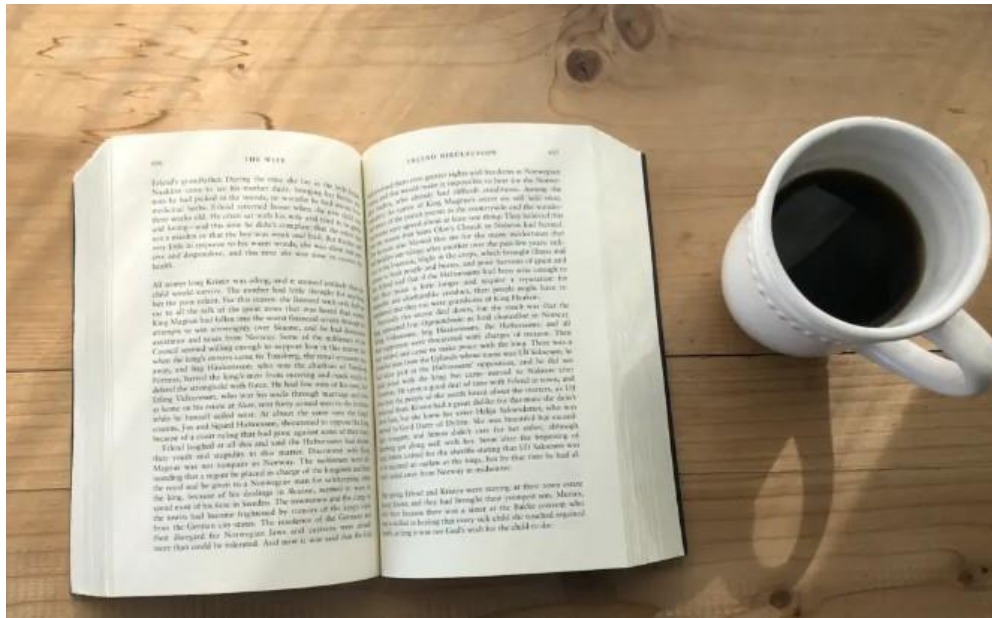
“You just watch your mouth, Josie. Anne is my best friend and her flowers **are** beautiful.”



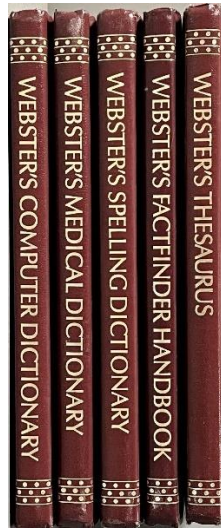
Character Packet Materials for Marilla Cuthbert



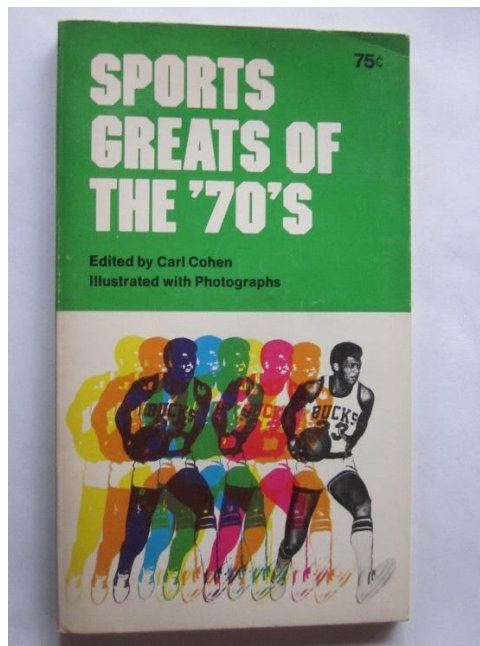
“It’s vain to think about your hair. When you imagine things about yourself, imagine the best inner things. Those are the most beautiful.”



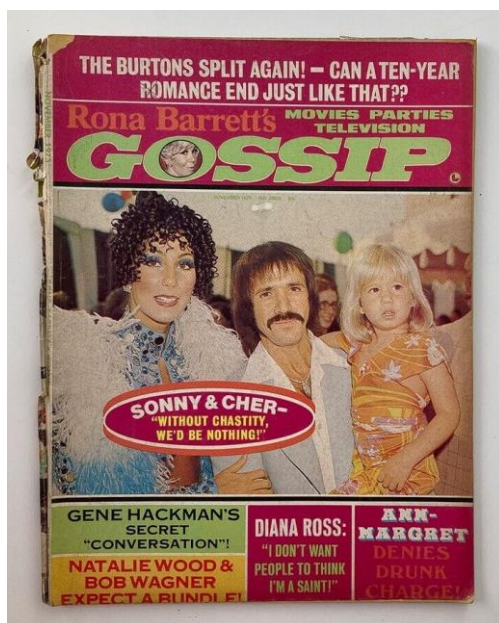
Character Packet Materials for Gilbert Blythe



“Your hair is pretty. But that’s not why I like you. You’re smart. You don’t just stare at me looking for something to say. Can’t we both just say we’re sorry and be friends?”



Character Packet Materials for Josie Pye



"We're playing *Truth or Dare* and it's my turn. Ready, Anne? Walk across the peak of Diana's roof."



DISCOVERING DIVERSITY PAGE:

Exploring the theme of Hair Discrimination: In this production, Anne is described to have "unruly" hair.



"Doesn't matter if she's lovely, and in fact those clothes and that hair are a far cry from lovely"-
Marilla

"Since awful things like my hair are one hundred percent unchangeable, I can at least ask for a prettier name." -Anne

"And I've never seen a mop of hair like that." -Rachel

Let's chat! - It is easy to be insensitive to things that are different than what we are used to. We tend to live in a comfort zone and are scared of change. When Anne arrives from the city, some students and adults in her surroundings make hurtful comments about her hair because she looks different than the majority of the class. Does a hairstyle influence someone's heart? **In what ways do preconceived notions about appearances impact our interactions with others?**



An excerpt from Harvard Business Review's article titled "How Hair Discrimination Affects Black Women at Work" by Janice Gassam Asare.:

Afro-textured hair is stereotyped and stigmatized around the world. Even in places where there are protections against race-based hair discrimination, Black women bear the brunt of the burden when it comes to hair bias.

- ❖ Black women's hair was two-and-a-half times more likely to be perceived as unprofessional.
- ❖ More than half of the Black women surveyed felt like they had to wear their hair straight in a job interview to be successful. Two-thirds reported that they had changed their hair for a job interview.
- ❖ One-fifth of the Black women surveyed between the ages of 25 and 34 had been sent home from work because of their hair.
- ❖ A quarter of the Black women surveyed believe they were denied a job because of their hair.

ARE YOU READY TO JOIN US?

We're bursting with excitement as we eagerly await your arrival at our theater for the upcoming performance. The stage is all set to whisk you away into a world filled with laughter, emotions, and captivating moments. The talented and hardworking members of our team have poured their hearts into creating a show that will form lasting and treasured memories. All we're missing is you, our audience!

LET'S GO TO THE THEATRE!



After reading through our pre-show education packet, I'm sure you're now familiar with what you may see on stage. Now what about your field trip?

Have you ever been to the theatre before? What's it like?

The day of your trip, you will get on school bus and drive to Allentown in downtown

Buffalo. Upon your arrival at TOY, you will quietly enter our beautiful building, visit the restrooms as needed, then find your seats. You'll see lots of chairs, big tall ceilings and a beautiful stage.



Following your instructors, you will sit with your group and start to get excited for the show, but remember to remain seated! This will allow everyone behind you to see properly.



REMINDERS:

- At the performance, you will receive a playbill (given to your teacher) that includes our post-show educational workbook to bring back to your class.
- After each on school time performance, the cast and crew will be available for a talk back. This will give you the opportunity to ask us any questions you may have about the show, the characters, the theatre, etc.

Start to brainstorm and see you soon!

Additional Resources

Marsden, Mariah, adapted by. *Anne of Green Gables: A Graphic Novel*. Andrews McMeel Publishing. 2017

Websites

HairOnPurpose, a 501(c)(3) organization that provides a safe and empowering space and community for young black & brown girls to learn about their hair and the world of hair in fun, accessible and impactful ways. <https://www.haironpurpose.org/>

Lucy Maud Montgomery:

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/montgomery-lucy-maud>

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.