



TIME-LINE THEATER

DURATION: 5 – 1hr. classes

BIG IDEA and DESCRIPTION:

History can be understood as a series of connected events. TIME-LINE THEATER is a performance structure that is defined by a series of frozen scenes (called Tableau Vivant, French for 'living picture') constructed around a specific moment in time. A narrator or poster board sign can provide significant dates and a brief description to bring each frozen scene, or tableau, to life.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

How can viewing history as a series of chronological events deepen our understanding of a larger event? How can tableau be used to depict a series of events?

OBJECTIVE:

Students will be able to:

- Identify and list important events within a specific historical period.
- Summarize why these specific events were important in the larger context.
- Demonstrate an understanding of historic moments by creating timelines.
- Demonstrate an understanding of an historical event through both written and performance modes.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT:

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaboration | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Creative Writing | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Critical Thinking | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Media Literacy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Self-Expression |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Creative Thinking | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Empathy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project Development | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Time Management |

LESSON SEQUENCE:

Step 1: As a class, choose a topic and create a chronological list of events from the history of that topic that you are interested in exploring. Time-Line Theater is adaptable and topics can range from an historic event, such as the Trail of Tears, to the life of a famous educator, editor, and social justice activist, such as Ida B. Wells.

ELA:

Common Core
National Standards

THEATER:

National Core
Arts Standards

See below for details

MATERIALS LIST

- Primary sources
- Period photographs, paintings, or prints.
- Biographical passages
- Simple costume pieces such as hats, scarves, etc.
- Poster board
- Markers

ESSENTIAL WORDS & CONCEPTS

- tableaux/tableau
- timeline
- chronological order
- sequence of events
- essential
- fact
- narrative



ENCHANTED CIRCLE

Arts Inspired Education

For example: IDA B. WELLS (a sample of 4 of 8 scenes)

- 1862: Born a slave in Holly Springs, Mississippi
- 1865: June 19th (Juneteenth), Freedom Day, the abolition of slavery in Texas, and the emancipation of African Americans in the former Confederate States -- 2 ½ years after President Lincoln delivered the Emancipation Proclamation.
- 1882: Ida Barnett Wells attended Fisk University to continue her studies in education.
- 1892: Begins anti-lynching crusade after the lynching of three men and is forced to leave Memphis, never to return.

Divide the class into small work groups, each with an assigned event from the list you have created. Each group will create a tableau of that moment in time.

Step 2: Each group will research their event and write a brief narrative or caption for their tableau, including essential factual information such as time and place, relevant and compelling statistics, and/or related historical content.

Step 3: If not using a narrator, each group will create easy to read poster-board narrative signs with the brief caption they've developed for their tableau. Period photographs and paintings are an excellent resource for this staging work. (Remember to assign someone the responsibility for setting up the narrative sign for your tableau if there is no narrator.)

Step 4: Each group will cast characters and stage their tableau, creating a still-life picture to represent the event they are exploring.

Step 5: Everyone will gather simple costumes and props to help portray the characters in your Time-Line Theater production. Simple costumes, such as a shawl, a hat, and a vest can give the tableau believability and depth. This is "low-budget" theater! They can be passed from one student performer to the next, as needed.

Step 6: Rehearse the whole production. (If using a narrator, practice introducing each tableau as it occurs.) Explore theatrical techniques such as the sound of a bell or turning the actors away from the audience to signal the end of each tableau.

Step 7: Focus one rehearsal on getting a sense of the production timeline from start to finish. Hold a constructive criticism session. What worked? What specific choices did the actors make that helped the scene? What suggestions can you offer to make the scene more believable? Discuss what you need to do before you are ready to perform for invited guests.

Step 8: Decide on the best performance space for the piece. The classroom? The stage? The cafeteria? Create invitations and come up with your desired guest list. Send out invitations. Notify school administrators and the local newspapers, if applicable. Rehearse some more!



ENCHANTED CIRCLE

Arts Inspired Education

Keep in mind the age and skill level of your students. A classroom can be transformed into a performance space by rearranging furniture, displaying artwork, and hanging signs. Select a performance space that will help your students feel most prepared for success.

Step 9: Rehearse. Rehearse again. Practice moving from one tableau to the next, without pausing for applause from the audience.

Step 10: Prepare the stage for the performance. Prepare your welcoming introduction to the performance to highlight the work your students accomplished to create this event.

Congratulate the students and ENJOY THE FRUITS OF YOUR LABORS!

ASSESSMENT TOOLS:

- ECT Student Pre Self-Assessment
- ECT Student Post Self-Assessment
- ECT AI Assessment Rubric

RESOURCES:

- Enchanted Circle's *Social Justice Movers and Shakers*
- *Illustrated Timeline* of Ida B. Wells
- *Digital Accordion Book* of Ida B. Wells

NATIONAL CORE STANDARDS:

ELA:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9](#)

THEATER:

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS

CREATING

TH:Cr1.1.6.	TH:Cr1.1.I.	HS Proficient
TH:Cr1.1.7.	TH:Cr1.1.II.	HS Accomplished
TH:Cr1.1.8.	TH:Cr1.1.III.	HS Advanced
TH:Cr2-6.	TH:Cr2-I.	HS Proficient
TH:Cr2-7.	TH:Cr2-II.	HS Accomplished
TH:Cr2-8.	TH:Cr2 -III.	HS Advanced
TH:Cr3.1.6.	TH:Cr3.1.I.	HS Proficient
TH:Cr3.1.7.	TH:Cr3.1.II.	HS Accomplished
TH:Cr3.1.8.	TH:Cr3.1.III.	HS Advanced

PERFORMING

TH:Pr4.1.6.	TH:Cr1.1.I.	HS Proficient
TH:Pr4.1.7.	TH:Cr1.1.II.	HS Accomplished
TH:Pr4.1.8.	TH:Cr1.1.III.	HS Advanced
TH:Pr6.1.6.	TH:Cr2-I.	HS Proficient
TH:Pr6.1.6.	TH:Cr2-II.	HS Accomplished
TH:Pr6.1.6.	TH:Cr2 -III.	HS Advanced