

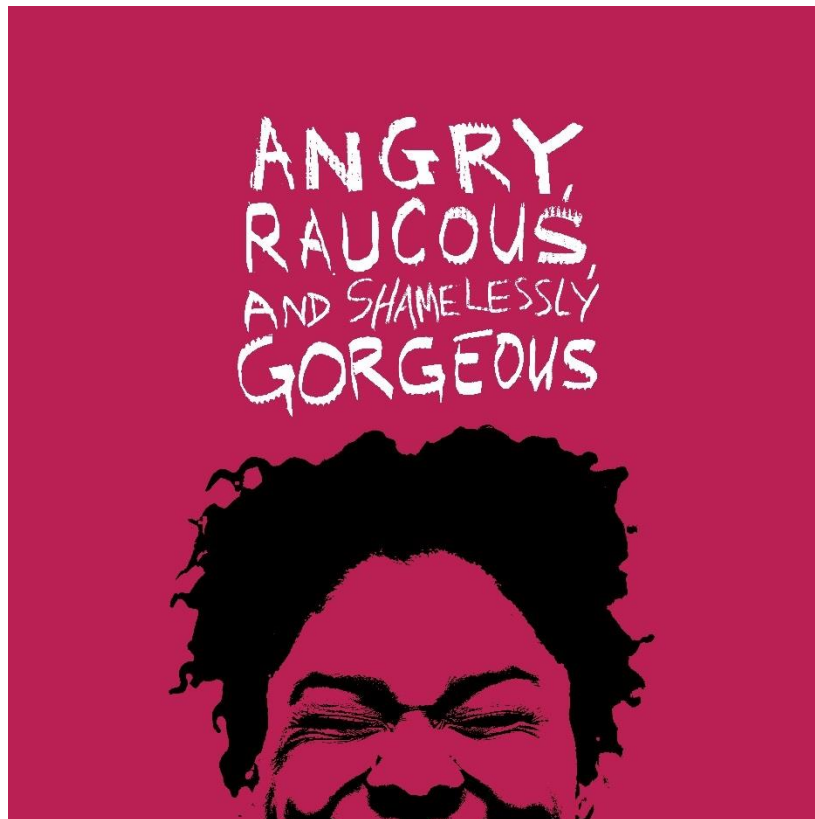
# Alliance Theatre

*institute*

Study Guide:

## *Angry, Raucous and Shamelessly Gorgeous*

Created as part of the Alliance Theatre's Dramaturgy by Students program  
by Theresa Davis, Teaching Artist  
with LAB Atlanta's spring 2019 cohort  
and their educator: Mike Pardee



By Pearl Cleage  
Directed by Susan V. Booth

Coca-Cola Stage  
March 20 – April 14, 2019  
*Recommended for audiences 14 and up*

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## Curriculum Connections

### Georgia Standards of Excellence - English Language Arts:

- ELAGSE9-10RL3: Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
- ELAGSE9-10RL4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone.)
- ELAGSE9-10RL9: Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).
- ELAGSE11-12RL3: Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
- ELAGSE11-12RL5: Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
- ELAGSE11-12RL6: Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).
- ELAGSE11-12SL1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

### Georgia Standards of Excellence – Theatre

- TAHS.A.RE.1 Engage actively and appropriately as an audience member. a. Examine and reflect on the relationship between actor and live audience in historical and contemporary performances.
- TAHS.A.RE.2 Critique various aspects of theatre and other media using appropriate supporting evidence. a. Develop and utilize meaningful, structured criteria for assessing the work of an actor.
- TAHS.A.CN.2 Examine the role of theatre in a societal, cultural, and historical context. a. Examine and apply theatrical theories, performances, and conventions from a variety of theatrical literature, historical periods, and cultures.
- TAHS.A.CR.2 Develop scripts through theatrical techniques. a. Utilize theatrical conventions to produce scripts based on personal experiences, imagination, literature, and history.
- TAHS.A.PR.1 Act and direct by communicating and sustaining roles within a variety of situations and environments. a. Examine and implement the skills and tasks associated with acting, incorporating voice, body, observation, and imagination to create characters for formal and informal performances.
- TAHS.A.CN.1 Explore how theatre connects to life experience, careers, and other content. a. Explore the relationship between theatre and other non-arts disciplines to synthesize concepts and skills from other disciplines to create theatre.

## The Playwright: Pearl Cleage



Writer, playwright, poet, essayist, and journalist Pearl Michelle Cleage was born on December 7, 1948 in Springfield, Massachusetts. Cleage is the youngest daughter of Doris Graham and Albert B. Cleage Jr., the founder of the Shrine of the Black Madonna. After graduating from the Detroit public schools in 1966, Cleage enrolled at Howard University, where she studied playwriting. In 1969, she moved to Atlanta and enrolled at Spelman College, married Michael Lomax and became a mother. She graduated from Spelman College in 1971 with a bachelor's degree in drama.

Cleage has become accomplished in all aspects of her career. As a writer, she has written three novels: *What Looks Like Crazy on an Ordinary Day* (Avon Books, 1997), which was an Oprah's Book club selection, a New York Times bestseller, and a BCALA Literary Award Winner, *I Wish I Had a Red Dress* (Morrow/Avon, 2001), and *Some Things I Never Thought I'd Do*, which was published in 2003. As an essayist, many of her essays and articles have appeared in magazines such as *Essence*, *Ms.*, *Vibe*, *Rap Pages*, and many other publications. Examples of these essays include *Mad at Miles* and *Good Brother Blues*. Cleage has written over a dozen plays, some of which include *Flyin' West*, *Bourbon at the Border*, and *Blues for an Alabama Sky*, which returned to Atlanta as part of the 1996 Cultural Olympiad in conjunction with the 1996 Olympic Games. In addition to her writing she has been an activist all her life. Starting at her father's church, The Shrine of the Black Madonna – Cleage has been involved in the Pan-Africanist Movement, Civil Rights Movement and Feminist Movement. She has also been a pioneer in grassroots and community theater.

Cleage is the mother of one daughter, Deignan, the grandmother of one grandson, Michael, and one granddaughter, Chloe Pearl. She is married to Zaron W. Burnett, a writer with whom she frequently collaborates.

## About *Angry, Raucous and Shamelessly Gorgeous*

### Character Descriptions:

Name	Description
Betty Samson	65-year-old African American woman; manager/agent; looking for a future
Anna Campbell	65-year-old African American woman; actress and performance artist; looking for a home
Kate Hughes	45-year-old African American woman; producer; looking for a hit
Precious "Pete" Hill	25-year-old African American woman; burlesque artist; looking for a change

**Time and Place:** It is end of summer in Atlanta, Georgia. The time is now. The rain is constant.

**Setting:** The setting is a luxurious hotel suite in Midtown Atlanta with two bedrooms, a living area with couches, small dining table, wet bar and French doors that open onto a private, walled terrace garden ideal for sitting or sunbathing were it not for the constant rain. We should be able to see or not see into the bedrooms through a scrim as needed.

### The play is performed in One Act, Two Scenes:

- Scene One: Thursday morning and afternoon.
- Scene Two: Friday morning and afternoon.

**Playwright's Note:** In 1990, the year that Anna Campbell would have first performed her protest piece "Naked Wilson" (\*) at the National Black Theatre Festival in Raleigh, North Carolina, the word intersectionality was not yet in common usage. The idea that individual bodies can collide with multiple, often overlapping forms of oppression simply because of their race, gender and sexual identities was not widely acknowledged or understood. For African American women hoping to craft careers in the American theatre, the work of August Wilson presented a special challenge by forcing considerations of race and gender to be viewed exclusively through a passionate and undeniably black male lens. Many late-night sessions examined and reexamined the plays hoping they would reveal themselves to be love letters if we could just break the code. "Naked Wilson" would certainly have been part of those conversations. \*"Naked Wilson" - the performance of male monologues of August Wilson characters by a woman in the nude.

## Pre- and Post-Show Questions





### Pre-Show

1. What do you think the play might be about, based on the title alone?
2. Is it important to build bridges across generations? How do you connect with older or younger people?
3. Pearl Cleage writes about issues that affect her community. If you were to write a play, what would it be about?

### Post-Show

1. What does it mean to be an expatriate?
2. How does Cleage illustrate women in this play?
3. How would the story be different if it were about men instead of women?
4. If you were to alter this play, what would you add, enhance, or remove altogether?
5. Is there a villain or antagonist in this play?

## References & Allusions

Image	Description
	<p><b>Clytemnestra:</b> In Greek mythology, she was: wife of Agamemnon, king of Mycenae or Argos; daughter of Tyndareus and Leda, rulers of Sparta; sister of Castor, Polydeuces, and Helen. When her sister Helen (wife of Agamemnon's brother, Menelaus) was abducted by Paris and taken to Troy, Agamemnon helped his brother to bring his wife back, thus starting the Trojan War. Before the army left for Troy, Agamemnon was forced to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia, as he had caused the wrath of Artemis. While he was away, Clytemnestra started an affair with Aegisthus, with whom she plotted against her husband. Clytemnestra was angry with her husband, both because of her daughter's sacrifice, as well as because Agamemnon had killed her first husband and taken her by force. Upon his return from Troy, Agamemnon was welcomed by his wife. When he went to take a bath, Clytemnestra threw a net on him and stabbed him. Agamemnon's concubine, Cassandra, who was outside the palace, had foreseen the plot, but as she was cursed by the god Apollo, no one believed her and she reluctantly accepted her fate and was slain.</p>
	<p><b>Hedda Gabler:</b> a play written by Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen. Hedda Gabler and her new husband, George Tesman, return from their six-month honeymoon to their new house. We soon learn that Hedda, the daughter of an esteemed general, designed to marry Tesman only because she had reached the age at which society dictated she should wed.</p>
	<p><b>Lady Macbeth:</b> a leading character in William Shakespeare's tragedy <i>Macbeth</i>. The wife of the play's tragic hero, Macbeth (a Scottish nobleman), Lady Macbeth goads her husband into committing regicide, after which she becomes queen of Scotland. Later, however, she suffers pangs of guilt for her part in the crime, which drives her to sleepwalk. She dies off-stage in the last act, an apparent suicide.</p>
	<p><b>Medea:</b> the daughter of King Aetes of Colchis in Greek mythology, and wife of the mythical hero Jason. Medea met her husband when Jason and the Argonauts arrived in Colchis to claim the famous Golden Fleece from the king. She fell in love with him and told him she would help him in his quest, under the condition that he would take her with him. Jason accepted and when he presented himself in front of the king, Aetes agreed to give him the fleece if he passed several tasks. The first task Jason had to complete was to yoke fire-breathing oxen and plough a field with them. To help him, Medea gave him an ointment to apply on himself and his weapons, to protect them from the flames. Secondly, he had to take dragon teeth and sow them in the field he had ploughed. No sooner had he sowed them than an army of warriors sprang up. Having been told by Medea, though, Jason was not surprised; he threw a rock amidst the army, and the warriors, not knowing who had thrown the rock, started fighting each other and killed themselves. The third and final task was to kill the sleepless guardian dragon of the Golden Fleece. Medea provided the sleeping herbs with which the dragon fell asleep and Jason then slew him and retrieved the Golden Fleece.</p>

Oh, Susanna

I... come from A - la - ba - ma With a ban - jo on my knee For  
 go - ing to Lou - i - si - ana, My true love for to see. It... rained all night the  
 day I left The weather it was dry The sun so hot, I froze to death Su -  
 san - nah, don't you cry Oh, Su - san - nah, Oh don't you cry for  
 me I... come from A - la - ba - ma With a ban - jo on my knee

**Oh Susanna:** A minstrel song by Stephen Foster (1826–1864); first published in 1848. It is among the most popular American songs ever written. Members of the Western Writers of America chose it as one of the Top 100 Western songs of all time. Lyrics include the phrase: *“I came from Alabama with my banjo on my knee, I’m going to Louisiana, my true love for to see...”*



**Rose (from August Wilson’s *Fences*):** Troy's ever-dutiful wife. Rose is, in some ways, what you might expect of a 1950s-era housewife. She's always at home, cleaning or cooking. And, most important for a housewife of the time, she stands by her man. Even though Troy can be a jerk, Rose sticks by him for most of the play.



**Scarlett O'Hara (played by Vivian Leigh):** the protagonist of *Gone with the Wind*, Scarlett is a dark-haired, green-eyed Georgia belle who struggles through the hardships of the Civil War and Reconstruction. Scarlett exhibits more of her father’s hard-headedness than her mother’s refined Southern manners. Although initially she tries to behave prettily, her instincts rise up against social restrictions.



**Troy Maxson (of August Wilson’s *Fences*):** the protagonist of *Fences*, Troy is a responsible man whose thwarted dreams make him prone to believing in self-created illusions. Troy begins the play by entertaining Bono and Rose with an epic story about his struggle with a personified Death, or Devil, character.



**Wonder Woman:** a fictional superhero appearing in American comic books published by DC Comics. The character is a founding member of the Justice League. The character first appeared in *All Star Comics* #8 in October 1941<sup>[1]</sup> with her first feature in *Sensation Comics* #1, January 1942. The *Wonder Woman* title has been published by DC Comics almost continuously except for a brief hiatus in 1986.<sup>[3]</sup> In her homeland, the island nation of Themyscira, her official title is Princess Diana of Themyscira, Daughter of Hippolyta. When blending into the society outside of her homeland, she adopts her civilian identity Diana Prince.



## Historical Figures

Image	Description
	<p><b>August Wilson:</b> Famed playwright; born on April 27, 1945, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He wrote his first play, <i>Jitney</i>, in 1979. <i>Fences</i> earned him a Pulitzer Prize and a Tony Award in 1987. Wilson won another Pulitzer Prize in 1990, for <i>The Piano Lesson</i>. In 1996, <i>Seven Guitars</i> premiered on the Broadway stage, followed by <i>King Hedley II</i> in 2001 and <i>Gem of the Ocean</i> in 2004. Wilson died on October 2, 2005, in Seattle, Washington.</p>
	<p><b>Bette Davis:</b> Ruth Elizabeth Davis was born April 5, 1908, in Lowell, Massachusetts, to Ruth Augusta (Favor) and Harlow Morrell Davis, a patent attorney. Her parents divorced when she was 10. She and her sister were raised by their mother. Her early interest was dance. To Bette, dancers led a glamorous life, but then she discovered the stage, and gave up dancing for acting. To her, it presented much more of a challenge. Ruth Elizabeth "Bette" Davis was an American actress of film, television, and theater. With a career spanning 60 years, she is regarded as one of the greatest actresses in Hollywood history.</p>
	<p><b>Charles Dickens:</b> Charles John Huffam Dickens; born February 7, 1812, Portsmouth, Hampshire, England; died June 9, 1870, Gad's Hill, near Chatham, Kent; English novelist, generally considered the greatest of the Victorian era. His many volumes include such works as <i>A Christmas Carol</i>, <i>David Copperfield</i>, <i>Bleak House</i>, <i>A Tale of Two Cities</i>, <i>Great Expectations</i>, and <i>Our Mutual Friend</i>.</p>
	<p><b>Harriet Tubman:</b> Araminta Ross; born 1820, Dorchester county, Maryland; died March 10, 1913, Auburn, New York; American bondwoman who escaped from slavery in the South to become a leading abolitionist before the American Civil War. She led hundreds of bondmen to freedom in the North along the route of the Underground Railroad—an elaborate secret network of safe houses organized for that purpose. Born a slave, she later adopted her mother's first name, Harriet. From early childhood she worked variously as a maid, a nurse, a field hand, a cook, and a woodcutter.</p>
	<p><b>Langston Hughes:</b> James Mercer Langston Hughes; born February 1, 1902, in Joplin, Missouri. His parents divorced when he was a young child, and he was raised by his grandmother until he was thirteen, when he moved to Lincoln, Illinois, to live with his mother and her husband, before the family eventually settled in Cleveland, Ohio. After graduating from high school, he spent a year in Mexico followed by a year at Columbia University in New York City. During this time, he held odd jobs such as assistant cook, launderer, and busboy. He also travelled to Africa and Europe working as a seaman. In November 1924, he moved to Washington, DC. Hughes's first book of poetry, <i>The Weary Blues</i> was published in 1926. He finished his college education at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania three years later. In 1930 his first novel, <i>Not Without Laughter</i>, and won the Harmon gold medal for literature. Hughes is particularly known for his insightful, colorful portrayals of black life in America from the twenties through the sixties. He wrote novels, short stories and plays, as well as poetry, and is also known for his engagement with the world of jazz and the influence it had on his writing, as in his book-length poem <i>Montage of a Dream Deferred</i> (Holt, 1951). His life and work were enormously important in shaping the artistic contributions of the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s.</p>





**Margaret Mitchell:** Margaret Munnerlyn Mitchell Marsh; born November 8, 1900, Atlanta, Georgia; died August 16, 1949, Atlanta; American author of the enormously popular novel *Gone With the Wind* (1936). The novel earned Mitchell a National Book Award and a Pulitzer Prize, and it was the source of the classic film of the same name released in 1939. The film, starring Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable, premiered in Atlanta on December 15, 1939, after an unprecedented period of advance promotion, including the highly publicized search for an actress to play Scarlett. The movie was an immediate box-office smash and, at the 1940 Academy Awards ceremony, won 8 of the 13 Oscars for which it was nominated and two special awards.



**Rihanna:** Robyn Rihanna Fenty is a Barbadian singer-songwriter who gave us hits like *Pon de Replay*, *SOS*, *Umbrella*, and *Take a Bow*. A very successful artist still in the prime of her youth, she has already sold over 41 million albums worldwide, becoming one of the best-selling artists of all time. Born in Barbados, she grew up listening to reggae music and began singing when she was quite young. Disturbed by her chaotic family life and the constant arguments between her parents, she immersed herself in music and before long realized that she wanted to be a professional singer. She formed a musical group while still in high school and got an opportunity to an audition with music producer Evan Rodgers who was highly impressed by the teenager's talents. He asked the girl to move to New York to pursue a full-time career as a singer, which she gladly did. Her debut album was soon released, and Rihanna became a musical sensation.



**Stephen Collins Foster:** born July 4, 1826, Lawrenceville, PA; died January 13, 1864, New York, NY; American composer who wrote popular minstrel songs and sentimental ballads including: *Open Thy Lattice, Love* (1842), *Oh! Susanna* (1848), and *Old Folks at Home* (1851), also called *Swanee River*.













**Tennessee Williams:** playwright; born on March 26, 1911, in Columbus, Mississippi. After college, he moved to New Orleans, a city that would inspire much of his writing. On March 31, 1945, his play, *The Glass Menagerie*, opened on Broadway and two years later *A Streetcar Named Desire* earned Williams his first Pulitzer Prize. Many of Williams' plays have been adapted to film starring screen greats like Marlon Brando and Elizabeth Taylor. Williams died in 1983.



**Viola Davis:** American actress; born in South Carolina; grew up in Rhode Island; attended the Juilliard School of Performing Arts. Davis made her Broadway debut in 1996 in *Seven Guitars*. She has won Tony Awards for her performances in *King Hedley II* (2001) and a revival of August Wilson's *Fences* (2010), which co-starred Denzel Washington. Her film work includes *Doubt* (2008), for which she received an Oscar nomination, *The Help* (2011), *Ender's Game* (2013) and *Get on Up* (2014). In 2015 she became the first African-American woman to win an Emmy for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Drama Series for her work on the television series *How to Get Away with Murder*. She reprised her role as Rose Maxson in the 2016 film adaptation of *Fences*, directed and co-starring Denzel Washington, for which she received an Oscar for Best Supporting Actress in 2017.

## Places & Events

Image	Description
	<p><b>Amsterdam:</b> Netherlands' capital; known for its artistic heritage, elaborate canal system and narrow houses with gabled facades, legacies of the city's 17th-century Golden Age. Its Museum District houses the Van Gogh Museum, works by Rembrandt and Vermeer at the Rijksmuseum, and modern art at the Stedelijk. Cycling is key to the city's character, and there are numerous bike paths.</p>
	<p><b>Atlanta:</b> the capital of the U.S. state of Georgia. It played an important part in both the Civil War and the 1960s Civil Rights Movement. Atlanta History Center chronicles the city's past, and the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site is dedicated to the African-American leader's life and times. Downtown, Centennial Olympic Park, built for the 1996 Olympics, encompasses the massive Georgia Aquarium.</p>
	<p><b>Center Stage:</b> a mid-sized concert complex comprising three separate venues located in Atlanta, Georgia. Originally known as Theatre Atlanta, the concert hall was built in memorial to a young theater enthusiast.</p>
	<p><b>Europe:</b> a continent located entirely in the Northern Hemisphere and mostly in the Eastern Hemisphere. It is bordered by the Arctic Ocean to the north, the Atlantic Ocean to the west and the Mediterranean Sea to the south. It comprises the westernmost part of Eurasia.</p>
	<p><b>Howard University:</b> a private, federally chartered historically black university in Washington, DC. It is categorized by the Carnegie Foundation as a research university with higher research activity and is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.</p>

	<p><b>Macon:</b> officially Macon-Bibb County; a consolidated city-county located in the state of Georgia, United States. Macon lies near the geographic center of the state, approximately 85 miles south of Atlanta, hence the city's nickname "The Heart of Georgia."</p>
	<p><b>Margaret Mitchell House:</b> an historic house museum located in Atlanta, Georgia. The structure was the home of author Margaret Mitchell. It is located in Midtown, at 979 Crescent Avenue. Constructed by Cornelius J. Sheehan as a single-family residence in a then-fashionable section of residential Peachtree Street, the building's original address was 806 Peachtree Street. The house was known as the Crescent Apartments when Mitchell and her husband lived in Apt. 1 on the ground floor from 1925 to 1932. While living there, Mitchell wrote the bulk of her Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, <i>Gone with the Wind</i>.</p>
	<p><b>Midtown:</b> a high-density commercial and residential neighborhood of Atlanta, Georgia. The commercial core of the area is anchored by a series of high-rise office buildings, condominiums, hotels, and high-end retail along Peachtree Street between North Avenue and 17th Street. In 2011, Midtown had a resident population of 41,681 and a business population of 81,418. The neighborhood has the highest density of art and cultural institutions in the Southeast, notably including the Fox Theatre, Woodruff Arts Center, Center for Puppetry Arts, and Museum of Design Atlanta. Midtown attracts over 6 million visitors annually, mostly in connection with large annual events such as Atlanta Pride, the Atlanta Dogwood Festival, and Music Midtown.</p>
	<p><b>Montego Bay:</b> capital of Saint James Parish on Jamaica's north coast; a major cruise ship port with numerous beach resorts and golf courses outside its commercial core. Popular beaches include Doctor's Cave Beach and Walter Fletcher Beach, home to an amusement park. There's also snorkeling and diving at coral reefs in the protected waters of Montego Bay Marine Park.</p>
	<p><b>National Black Theatre Festival:</b> founded in 1989 by Larry Leon Hamlin in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Serving as its executive director, Hamlin's goal in creating the Festival was "to unite black theatre companies in America to ensure the survival of the genre into the next millennium." Held biennially since 1989 for six days, the NBTF showcases the best in African-American theater.</p>

## A Brief History of Burlesque

**Burlesque (noun):** comic imitation, parody, or performance that is bombast and mock-serious; a variety show often including striptease.

The term burlesque was first applied in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century to a wide range of comic plays and non-musicals. In the 1840s these works began entertaining the lower and middle classes, usually in crowded music halls that offered drink and entertainment. Great Britain and the United States had these shows that would poke fun at the plays, operas, and upper class of the time.

Though that was the first use of the word, it is not the earliest record of burlesque. The first appearance that we are aware of was in 411 BC when the poet and playwright, Aristophanes wrote *Lystistrata*, in which Athenian wives decided to refuse their husbands and used sexual blackmail to convince them to end the Peloponnesian War. Teasing and taunting them with the promise of sex if they would do this one little thing for them.

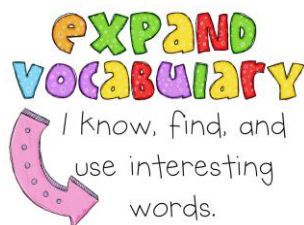
## Figurative Language

The characters in *Angry, Raucous and Shamelessly Gorgeous* often use figurative language to express themselves. Below are examples from the text, with literal meaning assigned to each figurative phrase.

Figurative Phrase	Literal Meaning
“What a dump”	A messy place, not a literal dump
“It’s bigger than the artist who birthed it”	Birthed being used as another word for “created” or “produced”
“It was more like prison to her”	Describing the place as somewhere that’s not very enjoyable or comforting
“I got spoiled with sunshine”	She wasn’t literally spoiled, she was just overwhelmed in a way
“To let you hammer the first nails into the coffin”	No, there’s no real coffin; this is used to describe how Anna feels about Kate recruiting Pete for the part in the act
“We stood for a solid hour”	An hour can’t be physically solid; solid is used here as a way to represent the wholeness of the hour
“Ask her to step aside so you can fly in the face of all reason and do it yourself”	“Fly in the face,” meaning take the challenge head-on
“Sometimes being on the map isn’t all it’s cracked up to be.”	This simply means that the “pop-star lifestyle” isn’t all that they say it is
“I think we got off on the wrong foot”	Translates to: “I think we began things on bad terms”
“...you get my drift?”	In other words, “Do you understand what I’m saying?”
“It’s been a blast”	Translates to: “it’s been fun”
“ Okay. Maybe that's our silver lining.”	This means that you should never feel hopeless because difficult times always lead to better days
“... good lord willing and the creek don’t rise.”	Meaning everything that can be done is being done and what’s left is hope
“It's always good to clear the air.”(	This means to resolve a problem or disagreement that might be present

## Vocabulary

Word or Phrase	Definition
Amateur (n)	someone who is new to the skills required to perform a task
Avant-Garde (adj)	New, unusual, or experimental ideas, especially in the arts
Blue Nose (n)	someone who advocates a rigorous moral code
Caftan (n)	a tunic
Consensus (n)	a general agreement
Critique (v)	to evaluate a theory or practice in a detailed and analytical way
Feminist (n)	an advocate of women's rights
Godspeed (int)	a wish for a prosperous journey or success
Impromptu (adj)	Unplanned; not rehearsed or organized
Extraneous (adj)	extra; irrelevant to the subject
Incantation (n)	a written or recited formula of words intended to provoke emotion or reaction
Indecency (n)	not conforming with generally accepted standards of behavior or propriety; obscene
Interrogation (n)	the process of questioning someone (e.g. a suspect or a prisoner) closely, aggressively, or formally
Intersectionality (n)	the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender
Madhouse (n)	scene of extreme confusion and uproar
Masseuse (n)	someone who gives massages professionally
Mauled (adj)	treated roughly or destructively
Menopause (n)	the ceasing of menstruation
Merci Beaucoup	French for <i>thank you so much</i>
Monologue (n)	a speech by a character in a play used to express thoughts aloud or address another character
Oblivious (adj)	Not aware or concerned about what is happening in one's surrounding
Pole Dancing (v)	erotic dancing which involves swinging around a fixed pole
Ponzi Scheme (n)	an investment fraud that pays existing investors with funds collected from new investors
Quintessential (adj)	the most perfect or typical representation of a trait, quality, or class
R&R (n)	abbreviation for "rest and relaxation"
Radical (adj)	representing or supporting an extreme or progressive section of a political party
Raison D'être (n)	French; referring to someone's most important existential purpose
Revolutionary (adj)	involving or causing a complete or dramatic change
Scrim (n)	material that is used as a screen or backdrop
Semantics (n)	meaning of a word, sentence, phrase, or text
Solitaire (n)	a card game that can be played by one person
Superstitious (adj)	showing belief in the supernatural or some force beyond explanation of scientific understanding
Traction (n)	application of a sustained pull on a limb or muscle, especially to maintain the position of a fractured bone or to correct a deformity
Vague (adj)	uncertain, indefinite, or unclear
Vindicated (adj)	proven to be right, reasonable, or justified





# Introduction to Monologues

The first step to becoming a great playwright is the ability to step inside a character and find his or her voice. Monologue writing is a great way to practice that skill. The interactive activities below will help you provide your students with the tools necessary to create a compelling monologue that rings true to their characters.

## 1. Students Speak as Themselves

*Have students pair up for this activity. One student is "A" and the other is "B." Each student has one minute to speak on a given topic. Their mission is to stay on topic to the best of their ability and to talk for the entire sixty seconds without stopping. If A goes first, B's job is to listen and keep track of A's speech habits. Does A pause a lot? Use "ums" and "ahs" repeatedly? Are there words she/he/they repeat more than others? Once the minute is up, it is now B's turn to speak on a different topic and A's turn to listen and pay attention to B's habits. After the second minute is up and both partners have spoken, open a discussion up on what students noticed about their experience when speaking to and observing their partner. Was this a hard/easy activity? Why? Were they able to stay on topic?*

## 2. Students Speak in Character

Engage in the exercise described above once more, but this time students will speak in the voice of a given character. Be sure to provide the first part of their first sentence. This time B will start and the character they must voice is either a king or a queen. Write on the board the beginning of their first line and give them one minute to speak.

Discuss the experience as a class. Was it harder speaking as a character as opposed to speaking as themselves? Easier? Why? Did their use of language change when speaking as royalty or a slow-witted giant? How? How could this activity help us when writing for our characters?

## 3. Introduction to Monologues



**Step 1:** Review the following theater vocabulary:

- Dialogue: a conversation between two people or more
- Monologue: a speech made by one actor

**Step 2:** Discuss a character's intended audience for a monologue:

- Inner Monologue: the character speaks his/her thoughts out loud either to the audience or to him/herself
- Outer Monologue: the character speaks directly to somebody, and that other person is aware of being spoken to

**Step 3:** Discuss a character's motivation for delivering a monologue:

- a heightened or impassioned moment
- a need to speak from the heart
- as a poetic mechanism to reveal something about him/herself

## Student Work Samples Practice Monologues

*Based on a fairy tale or other classic story*

### **Bad Rap** **By Kayla**

Hi. My name is Goldilocks and I've been the victim of a bad rap all these years. Mothers always tell their children: "Don't be like Goldilocks. Don't be like Goldilocks." Well, I'd like you to hear my side of the story. I did walk into the Bears' house when they weren't home. I admit that, but they had this fancy schmancy sign on the door that said "Welcome". I'm not stupid. I know what that word means. Bears speak with forked tongues and then make a big fuss when somebody doesn't believe their sign. And about that porridge. Porridge? (Shakes head) Wallpaper paste with a few raisins in it. Can you say AW-FUL! And notice they didn't like it either. They went off walking in the woods and left that sign as bait to help them get rid of it. I did break a chair. One chair. One cheap little chair that wouldn't even make it in a yard sale! Besides, they could always glue it back together with some of the leftover porridge. And then there were the beds. Beds are what they call them. Waterbeds with no water. No wonder the bears are always walking off in the woods, they were looking for a soft place to lay their heads and take a nap. Sue me, but get off my back! Well, anyway, thanks for listening. I just wanted to set the record straight. When you grow up and read to your children, be kind to Goldilocks. Tell them I wasn't such a bad kid. It's all the media's fault.

### **A Letter to Belle** **By Jonny**

Dear Belle,

What in the world have you been doing with your time? We used to be best friends but now you spend all your time exploring the castle and spending time with that Beast. Your schedule is booked and you are way too tired to turn my pages at night. I used to take you to the land of make-believe and now you are living and seeing it first hand. Why are you so impressed with leaping lamps and talking teapots? I was showing you magical stories since you were nine years old! Reading was the best thing that ever happened to you; after all, reading is a novel idea! The dinosaurs didn't read and now they're extinct. All I am trying to say is that I miss you and want you to read me and enter the land of make-believe through me again. Stay true to your shelf.

Sincerely,  
Your Favorite Book

**Which monologue do you recall from *Angry, Raucous and Shamelessly Gorgeous*?**  
***What made it memorable to you?***  
***Who was the intended audience?***  
***What motivated the character to deliver this speech?***



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