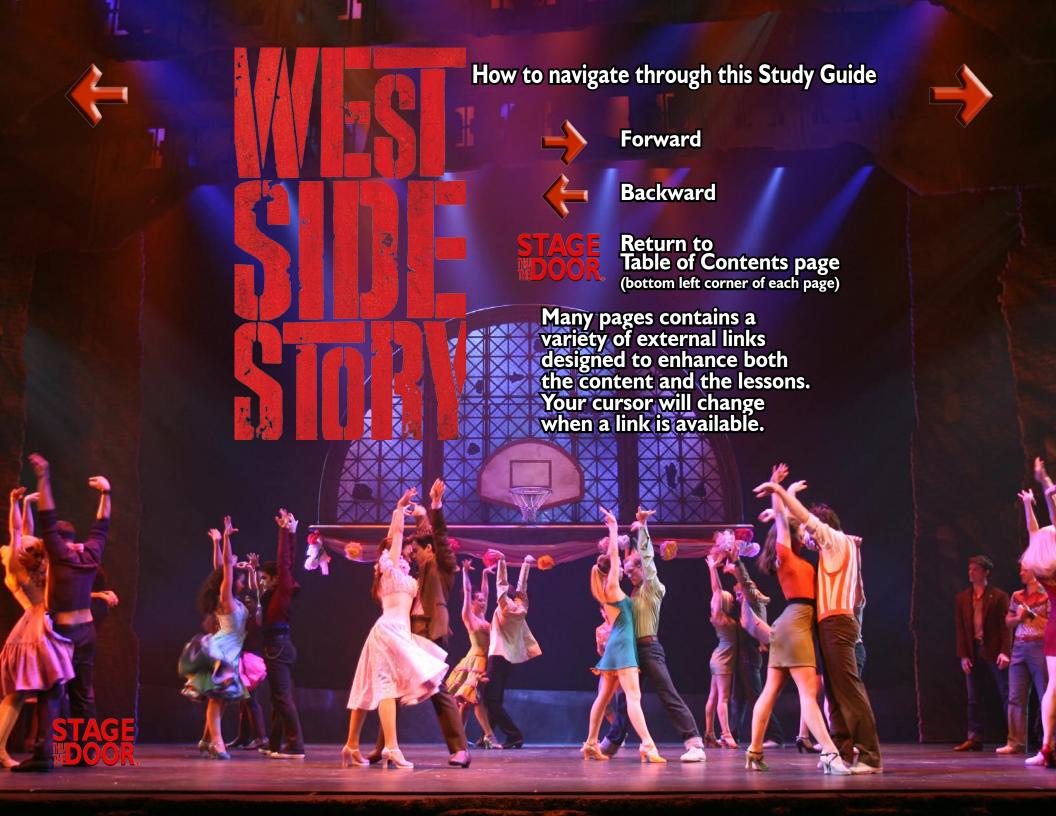
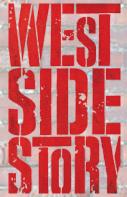


The contents of this study guide are based on the National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers.







Based on Conception of Jerome Robbins

Book by Arthur Laurents

Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

Music by Leonard Bernstein Based on Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet

The classic tale of "Romeo and Juliet" set in New York City in the 1950s. The two feuding families are replaced by brawling street gangs. The Montagues become the Anglo Jets, led by Riff, and the Capulets become the Puerto Rican Sharks, led by Bernardo. At a dance, Tony, former leader of the Jets and Riff's best friend, and Maria, Bernardo's little sister, see each other across the room and it's love at first sight. With opposition from both sides, they meet secretly and their love grows deeper. However, the gangs are plotting one last rumble, a fight that will finally end the battle for control of the streets. Will Tony and Maria's love carry through a battle that threatens to destroy the people they love around them?

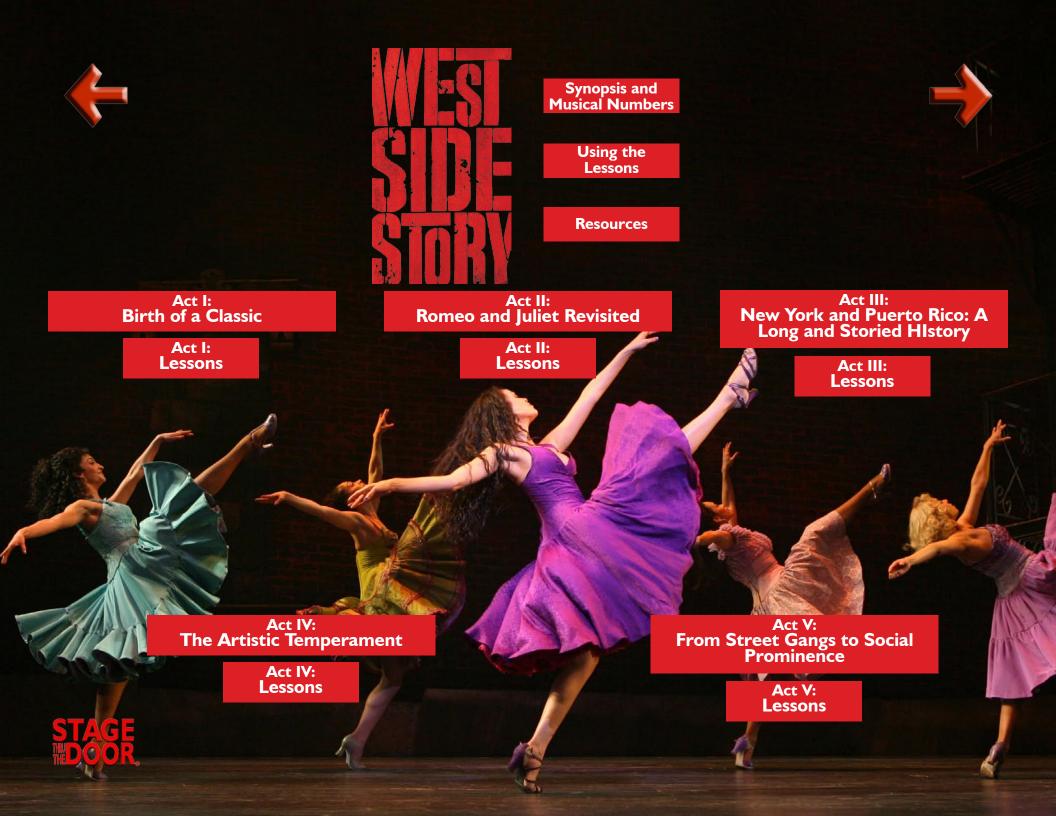
Characters

Maria - A young Puerto Rican
Tony - Her sweetheart
Anita - Bernardo's girl
Riff - Leader of the Jets
Bernado - Leader of the Sharks
Snowboy - A Jet gang member
Big Deal - A Jet gang member
Anybody's - A Jet gang member
Rosalia - A Shark girlfriend
Doc - A Grown-up
Chino - A Shark gang member
Doc - A weary old candy store owner
Detective Schrank
Officer Krupke - A cop
Glad Hand - A fidgety chaperone

Musical Numbers

Prologue
Jet Song - Riff, Baby John, A-Rab, Diesel and Jets
Something's Coming - Tony
The Dance At The Gym - Jets and Sharks
Maria - Tony
Tonight - Tony and Maria
America - Anita and Shark Girls
Cool - Riff and Jets
One Hand, One Heart - Tony and Maria
Tonight (Quintet and Chorus) - Company
The Rumble

Act 2
I Feel Pretty - Maria, Rosalia, Teresita and Francisca
Somewhere - Tony and Maria
Gee, Officer Krupke - Action, Snowboy and Jets
A Boy Like That - Anita and Maria
I Have Love - Anita and Maria
Taunting - Anita and Jets
Finale - Company





Guide To Using the Lessons inside this edition of Thru The Stage Door®



Each lesson contains three main guides for teachers:

A Curriculum Designation indicating which main areas of study are covered by the lessons. Basic areas of study including: History, Language Arts, Science, Mathematics, Behavior, Life Skills, The Arts (Music, Drama, Theatre, Dance, Visual Arts) Media Studies, Gender Studies.

Sub-Curriculum Areas are listed as such and help teachers to better focus on lessons they deem appropriate for their class's interests and that compliment particular areas of interest not included in the basic curriculum. The purpose of the lessons is to allow students to discover information and ideas that broaden the educational experience.

Many lessons can be used across the curriculum and are not relegated to specific subject areas. Teachers can extrapolate from much of the material and extend the lesson into other subject areas.

The purpose of Thru the Stage Door is twofold:

- to use elements of each show to encourage lesson plans as creative as the shows themselves
- to enhance student appreciation of the Broadway theater experience and encourage interest in the arts, particularly live theater
- to introduce students to topics within the culture they might normally not discuss within the standard curriculum. As such, the lessons, while specific to areas taught on particular grades levels, should also be considered **enrichment**. They are designed to **facilitate and inspire** student learning and creativity.

Educational Standards

Lessons are based on National Education Technology Standards for Teachers. Each is carefully crafted to adhere to these standards. Particular standards applying to the lessons are listed separately in individual Broadway Theatrical Study Guides. Online interactive use of the guides will be accompanied by specific instructions for teachers on how to use the technology incorporated in the lesson.

The purpose of the online guide is to transform the classroom learning environment and take students beyond the narrow confines of the classroom into a world of educational opportunities, thus broadening and enhancing the educational experience.



Instructional "Heads Up":

The text bolow is from the introduction to the concert held celebrating the 50th Anniversary of West 56e Scoy. In it the narrator clarifies the creative mind set of its choreographer, Jerome Robbins. In Robbins' mind the relationship between script, muit and disacce was irrefutable. In the end he got his way, He was, after all, the

"Tought won't be just any night." Toright's corear, celebrating the 50th Annersary of West See Story, is about with might have been, what almost was, of arforms, maked theses, and the process whereby a musical is creticed. Most of arforms, maked theses, and the process whereby a musical is creticed. Most of what we'll share with you compit comes from the Library is exentive Leonard Bentesen Collection, which provides this unique opportunity to explore the create of this classic massive.

The first song we're going to hear is a version of the opening number. Musically, it's very senilar to what you all look, but in its original incremation, what we now we're now that the property of the prop

Begin Teaching:

- Read the second paragraph of "Heads Up" to students
 Soudents click on the video clip of the first scene as described in the text
 Tell them to view the clip several times for full effect
 As they watch, have then take notes on the following:

- a, what feelings does the score conjure
 b is there a sense of importing doorn/violence! (explain)
 c does the score. "wow" for you as a harbager of things to come?
 c does the score." wow is a harbager of things to come?
 what do you think of Robbis's creative decision to present the first scene
 thin way?
 (1.8e is to ms, or a scale of one to ten, how would you rate Robbis's
 decision prives the style of the rest of the world."

Analyze and Write

Tell students: You are a theatre reviewer for the New York Times.

- Go on the New York Times website and read some theatre reviews (at least five)
 Take any notes you think will help you write your own review
 Using your notes from Part One, write a review, cloude in your review your opinion as to whether and to what degree the scene works as artistic expression.

The Instructional "Heads Up"

This section is meant to prepare you and the students for teaching/lessons. Each instructional section, on its own, can be repeated to students before lessons begin as an introduction to the lessons they will complete. Lessons will also be available as PDF file handouts.

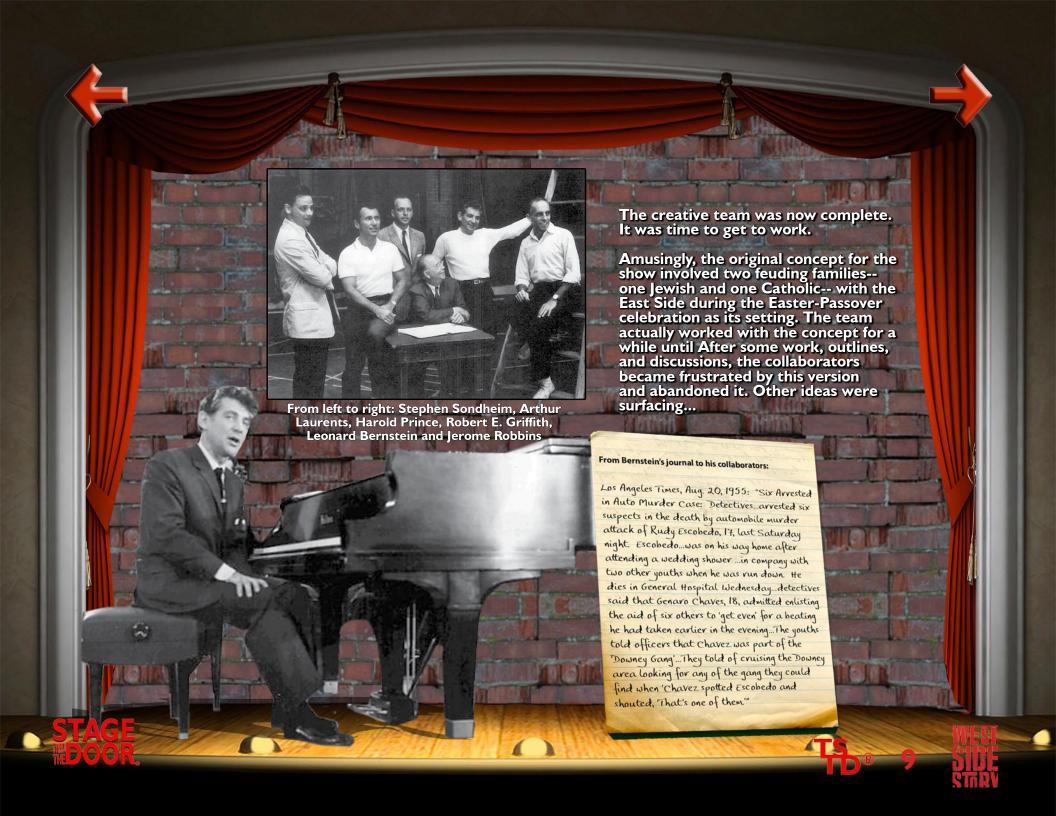
Begin Teaching

Lesson instructions are bulleted for ease of teaching. Each lesson has been carefully calculated by educational professionals to create a definitive and focused learning experience for students.









Bernstein was formulating a new plotline. Gangs. For a while the show was titled Gangways. Bernstein thought West Side Story did not fit the location and sounded "too documentary." He didn't much like Gangways either, saying he didn't like the naval connotations. In the end, rationale heads prevailed and they eventually settled on West Side Story as the title. Laurents' creative premise for the script also prevailed. He writes to a producer with whom he has creative differences...



Arthur Lauren

"...I have been receiving four different conceptions from as many directions—which is difficult enough....Let we say, first, how I see the show. I think it is, or should be a strong love story against a heightened, theatricalized, romanticized background based on Juvenile delinquency."

Laurents was right. The show began developing along these creative lines. Robbins insisted on such choreographic nuances as that the opening number be danced not sung. Sondheim agreed...



Stephen Sondheim

"The opening of West Side Story is wonderfully effective because you see siv Juvenile delinquents standing around and then they start to dance, and you say: "Oh! see, it's about ballet delinquents!" which perfectly sets up the style of the show."

Speaking of all of the final decisions, Bernstein says, "...This has tremendous potential." If it comes off Broadway musicals will never be the same again...If it doesn't, they will."

Bernstein writes to his wife:



"The work grinds on, relentlessly, and sleep is a rare blessing. Jerry Robbins? continues to be - well, Jerry: moody, denanding, hurting. But vastly talented."

Leonard Bernstein

From (Stephen) Sondheim's letter to Lennie (Bernstein) on opening night



Stephen Sondheim

Sept 26, 1957: You know - only too well - how hard it is for me to show gratitude and affection, much less to conmit them to writing. But tonight I feel I must. West Side Story means much more to me than a first show, more even than the privilege of collaborating with you and Arthur and Jerry. It marks the beginning of what I hope will be a long and enduring friendship....! don't think I've ever said to you how fine I think the score is, since I prefer kidding you about the few moments I don't like to praising you for the many I do. West Side Story is as big a step forward for you as it is for Jerry or Arthur or even me and, in an odd way. I feel proud of you.... my best wishes for good luck to our little divertissement. May West Side Story mean as much to the theater and to people who see it as it has to us.

It did, it does, and it will.





Theatre Arts / Language Arts

Lesson Focus: Dance as Artistic Expression

Lesson Level: High School



The opening is musical: half danced, half mimed with occasional phrases of dialogue

-- From the Prologue

Instructional "Heads Up":

The text below is from the introduction to the concert held celebrating the 50th Anniversary of West Side Story. In it the narrator clarifies the creative mind set of its choreographer, Jerome Robbins. In Robbins' mind the relationship between script, music and dance was irrefutable. In the end he got his way. He was, after all, the director and choreographer.

NARRATOR

"Tonight won't be just any night." Tonight's concert, celebrating the 50th Anniversary of West Side Story, is about what might have been, what almost was, what thankfully wasn't, and what blessedly is. It's about that most collaborative of artforms, musical theater, and the process whereby a musical is crafted. Most of what we'll share with you tonight comes from the Library's extensive Leonard Bernstein Collection, which provides this unique opportunity to explore the creation of this classic musical.

"The first song we're going to hear is a version of the opening number. Musically, it's very similar to what you all know, but in its original incarnation, what we now think of as purely a danced number—albeit with some whistles and snaps—had lyrics. It was Robbins who suggested that the lyrics should be cut and the number be danced, not sung. The show's lyricist, Stephen Sondheim, agrees; as he has said: "The opening of West Side Story is wonderfully effective because you see six juvenile delinquents standing around and then they start to dance, and you say: Oh, I see, it's about ballet delinquents!"—which perfectly sets up the style of the show."

Begin Teaching:

Part One

- Read the second paragraph of "Heads Up" to students
- Students click on the video clip of the first scene as described in the text
- Tell them to view the clip several times for full effect
- As they watch, have them take notes on the following:
 - a. what feelings does the scene conjure
 - b. is there a sense of impending doom/violence? (explain)
 - c. does the scene "work" for you as a harbinger of things to come?
 - d. how do you feel about "dancing delinquents?"
 - e. what do you think of Robbin's creative decision to present the first scene this way?
 - f. like it or not, on a scale of one to ten, how would you rate Robbins' decision given the style of the rest of the work?

Part Two

Analyze and Write

Tell students: You are a theatre reviewer for the New York Times.

- Go on the New York Times website and read some theatre reviews (at least five)
- Take any notes you think will help you write your own review
- Using your notes from Part One, write a review. Include in your review your opinion as to whether and to what degree the scene works as artistic expression.













Theatre Arts / Behavior / Life Skills

Lesson Focus: Paddy Chayevsky / The Actor's Studio



Lesson Level: High School

Instructional "Heads Up":

...I have been receiving four different conceptions from as many directions — which is difficult enough....Let me say, first, how I see the show. It think it is or should be a strong love story against a heightened, theatricalized, romanticized background based on juvenile delinquency. I think the reality should be an emotional, not a factual one. Names, addresses, financial statements, parental situations are clichés and don't help an audience. They never characterized anybody and I am bored to death with them. I cheerfully leave them to Paddy Chayevsky and the whole dreary old-fashioned garbage school. That goes for naturalistic acting, too.

.Arthur Laurents

Clearly the writer (apparently opinionated) of the book (script) for West Side Story had very definite ideas about how he wanted the story conveyed. The "Method Acting" taught by the prestigious Actor's Studio was out, along with the deep, heavily acted style of playwrights such as Chayevsky.

Founded in 1947 by Elia Kazan, Cheryl Crawford and Robert Lewis, the school is best known for its work in refining and teaching method acting. In the above quote he was actually responding to Crawford who later dropped out of the West Side Story project because of creative differences.

Chayefsky, an acclaimed dramatist who later transitioned from the golden age of live television in the 1950s to a successful career as playwright and screenwriter, wrote such award winning dramas as *Marty*. The teledrama was later made into an Academy Award-winning film starring actor Ernest Borgnine. Chayefsky's naturalistic dialogue received much critical acclaim and introduced a new approach to live television drama. Critic Martin Gottfried once wrote, "He was a successful writer, the most successful graduate of television's "slice of life" school of naturalism—a style abhorred by Laurents.

Instructional "Heads Up":

The seed for West Side Story was planted in 1949 when a friend of Jerome Robbins was cast as Romeo and asked Robbins' help to make sense of the character. I have been told the friend was Montgomery Clift.

The Consummate Method Actor

Actor Kevin McCarthy was rehearsing Romeo for CBS' "Omnibus" and having trouble with the death scene. "I asked Monty to help me... His Romeo was impetuous, romantic, fumbling with words as he expressed his love for Juliet. He also brought a physicality, an athleticism to the role. His entire body seemed part of the work. And then there was this power - this originality behind the concept. He played young love so intensely, so truthfully."

Begin Teaching:

Part One

- Students research the principles of method acting.
- As they research they take concise notes on its principles.
- As a class watch the film, Marty.
- Pause the film at intervals and discuss what concepts of method acting are being employed.

Part Two

- As a class watch the film West Side Story, or utilize video clips of scenes provided.
- Stop the film at intervals, or after viewing each clip discuss how the acting style in West Side Story differs from the method acting used in Marty.

Begin Teaching:

 Rent a film starring Montgomery Clift and acquaint the class with this remarkable talent.











Life Skills / Behavior

Lesson Focus: How to Handle Rejection





"If I said to most of the people who auditioned, 'Good job, awesome, well done,' it would have made me actually look and feel ridiculous."

- Simon Cowell, American Idol

Begin Teaching:

The internet is overflowing with sites on how to deal with rejection. Listed below is just one of them.

http://www.wikihow.com/Handle-Rejection

- Have students visit at least three sites that feature tips on rejection and how to handle it.
- Tell them to amass as many suggestions as they can.
- They separate the advice into categories: Love, Jobs, Personal etc....
- Dividing a ring binder into category areas using subject tabs, students should create a booklet titled, Rejection Is Not the End of the World.
- Tell them they will use the booklet for a period of a month as a help reference when they feel rejected.
- At the end of the month ask how many times they used the booklet.
- Did it help?

. . .and now for Mr. Cowell

What kind of personality is Simon Cowell? Visit various sites that describe different types of personalities and put Mr. Cowell in one that you think suits him. Justify your choice with details that equate the traits he exhibits on "American Idol".

Simon Cowell, alias Mr. Nasty or Judge Dread, is known to television audiences as the ultimate audition curmudgeon on "American Idol"—a mean sort who seems to take pleasure in hurting people's feelings and "telling it like it is" when it comes to their limited talent.

Auditions, as anyone who's ever been on one will tell you, can be murder—a crushing blow to your ego and self esteem. Reading the excerpts below from West Side Story documents, life for the many hopefuls who auditioned for the show could not have been much better. Even though they were not being publicly rejected in front of millions of viewers, it was rejection none the less.

The audition process for West Side Story is somewhat legendary. We have dozens of pages of Bernstein's notes. Among them are these excerpts.

5/7/1957 Tue 1:00 Casting (till 5)
[Lee Becker (Anybodys) Terrif., Larry Kert (Bernardo) Gotten older, Great singer +
performer, But looks? Read Riff better., Anita Ellis (Anita) Jewish quality, Jimmy Gavin (Riff
– Bernardo), Carole Lawrence (Maria) Lovely soprano. Not quite Maria. Much realer with
accent, Artie Johnson (Baby John) Good singer, Tony Mordenti (Baby John – Action) Good
Arab little Plug ugly, Micky Calin (Riff) Wrong for R. No actor. Tappish dancer, clean, good
looking]

5/16/1957 Thu 2-4:30 (auditions)/5:00 St. James Theatre [Lary Kert (Tony) Too soft for Riff, Carol Lawrence (Maria), Susanne Plechette hoarse, Warren Beatty (Riff) Good voice — can't open jaw — charming as hell — cleancut, Jerry Orbach (Chino) Good read. Good loud bar. At end of the day came up with this list: Tonys: Don McKay, Larry Kert, Bill Hayes, Poretta. Maria: Carole Lawrence. Riffs: Warren Beatty, Larry Kert, Hank Brunjes, Jimmy Gavin. Etc.

Life is full of rejection. The best we can do is find ways to deal with it.











Life Skills / Basic Math / Economics

Lesson Focus: Managing Money

Lesson Level: Middle/High School



One of the best life skills that we can pass along to teens is how to budget. A budget can teach students how to live within their means, and it can show them how to handle the money that they have. Students can grow into financially responsible adults with your help and guidance.

Begin Teaching:

- The original production budget for West Side Story (then titled, Gangway) along
 with definitions of words used in the budget appear on the following pages.
 Print both and hand them out to students.
- Go over the budget in class, discussing the definitions as you go. Be sure to relate the concepts to everyday life.

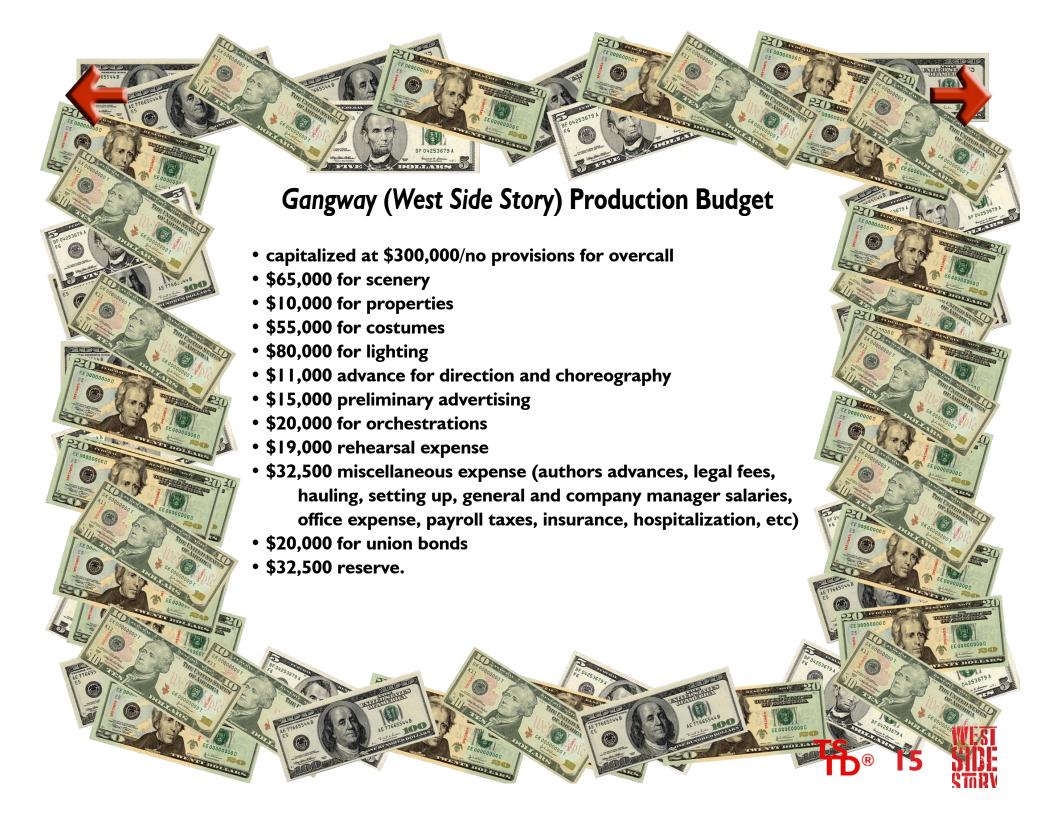
Student Weekly Budget

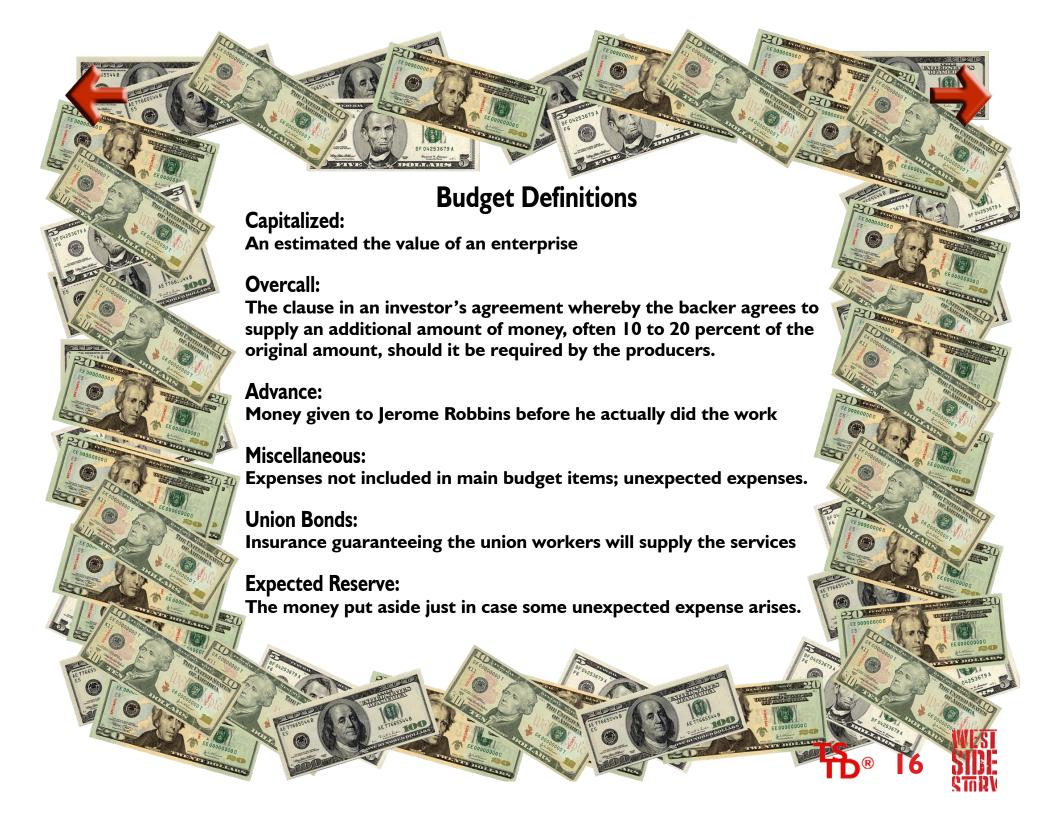
Different students have different spending needs. Some may work; some may receive an allowance. Some may simply receive money from their parents as they need it. No matter what their funding source, all of them need to get a clear picture of what it costs to live.

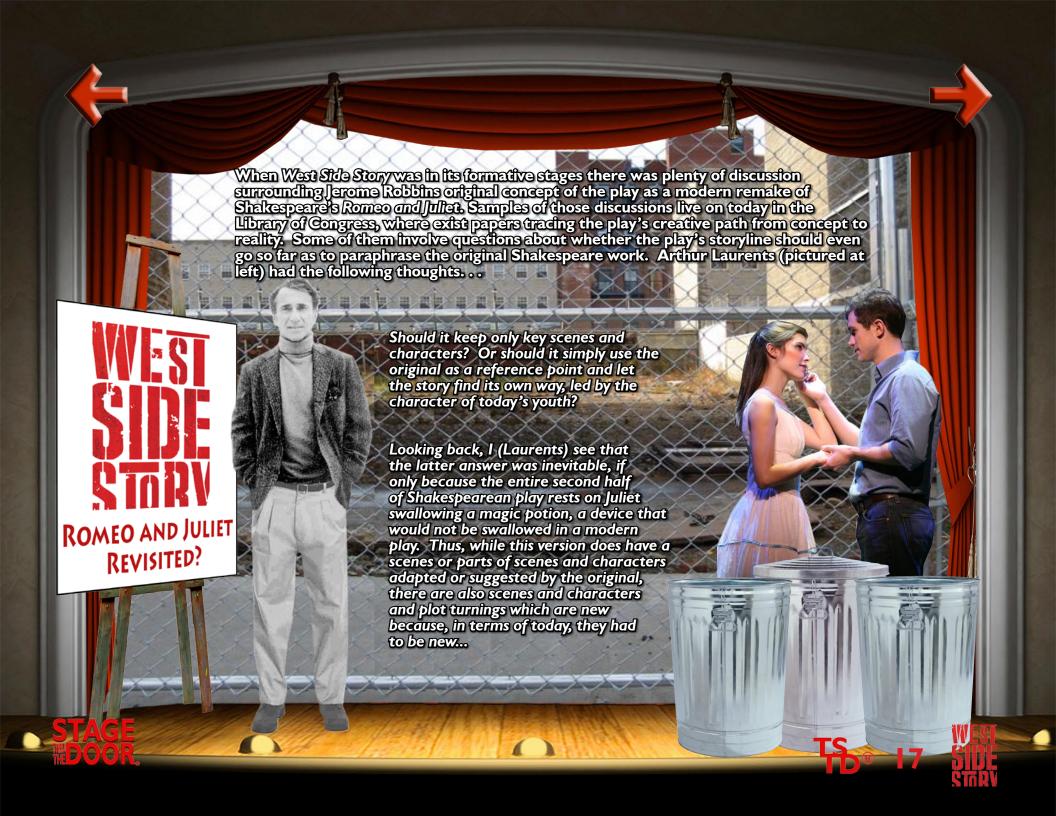
- Ask students to suggest every budget item they can think of that might be included as an expense on a personal weekly budget.
- Write the items on the board
- All items will not be appropriate for all students
- Students do an Excel Spread Sheet of their budget items and add up expenses
- How much money would they need to earn if they were supporting themselves?
- If they had a job, how many hours would they need to work and how much money would they need to make per hour in order to live?
- What items might they eliminate to bring their cost of living down?

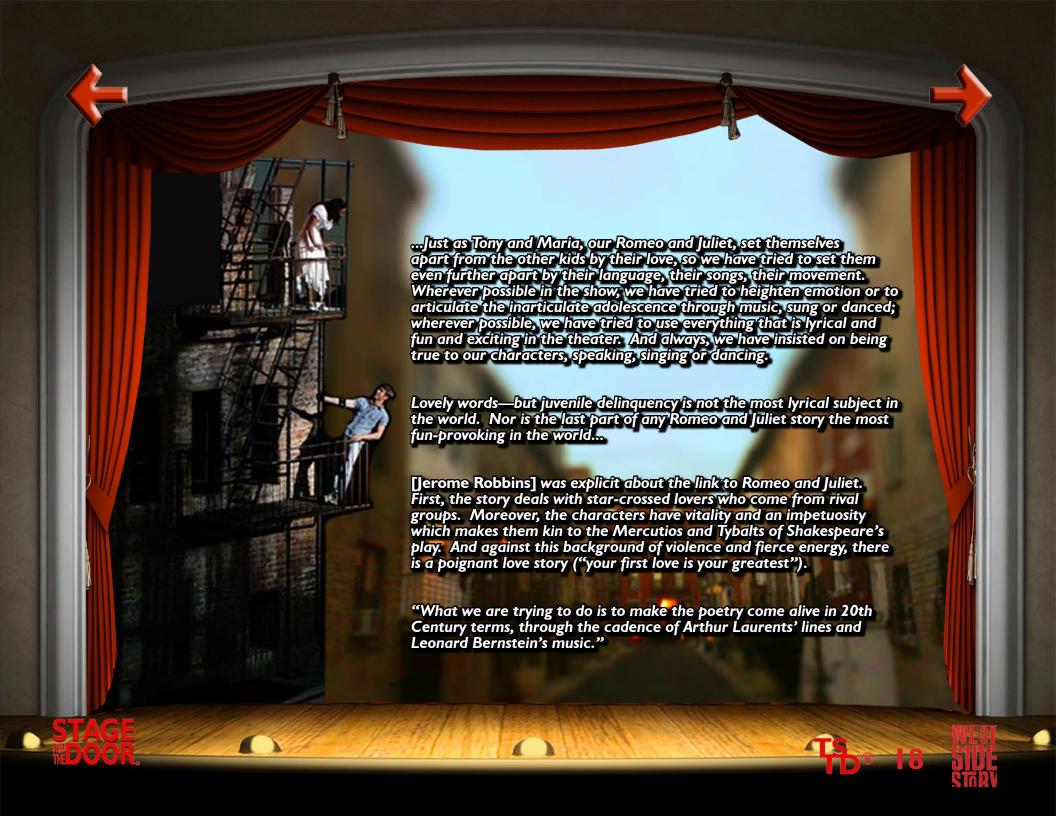


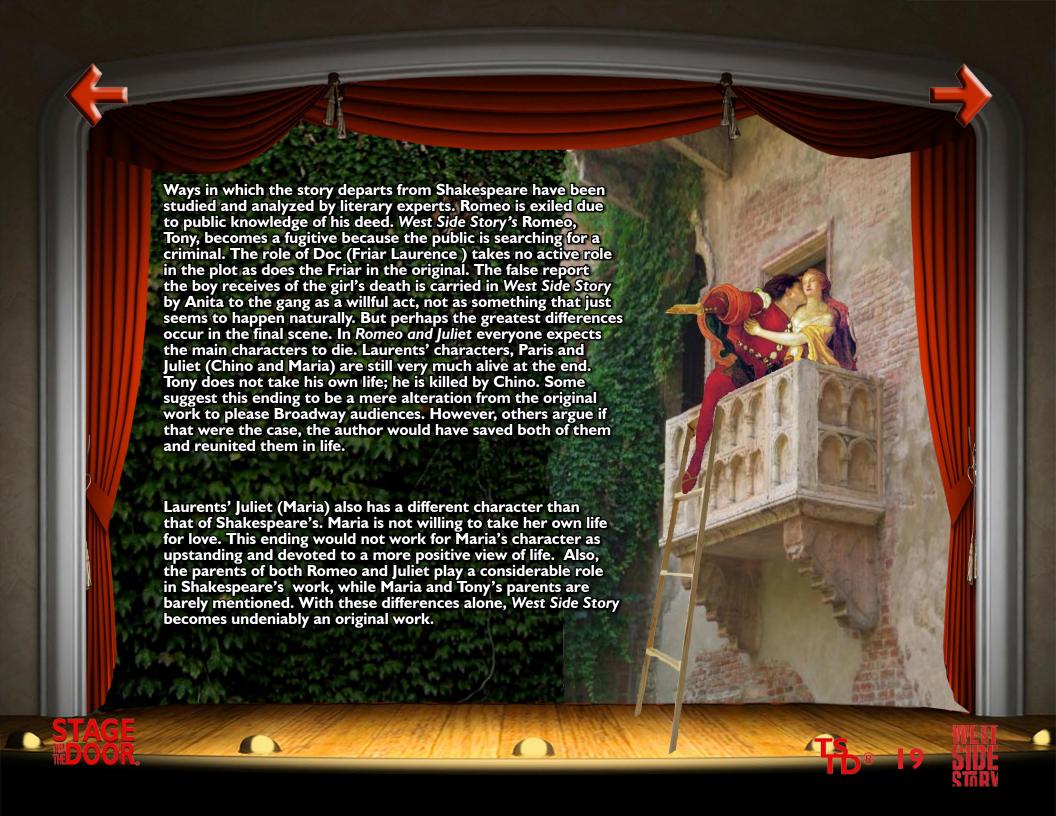


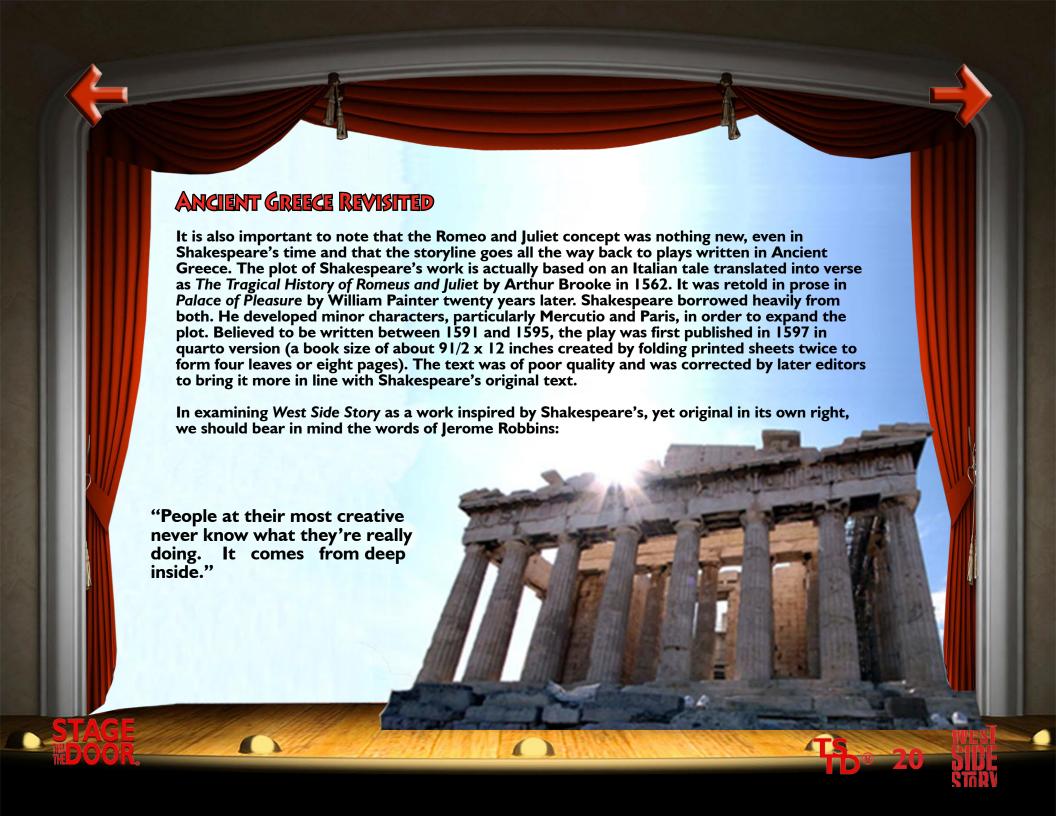














Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet.

It may shock students to learn that Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, for all its prominence in English literature, was not exactly an original idea. However, the fact

will help them to understand and accept that in art there is little that does not draw to some extent upon something that came before it—as West Side Story draws from

the original Shakespeare play. While the storyline of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet appears lifted directly from Arthur Brooke's poem written in 1562, it's important

to recognize that even Brooke borrowed his idea from material that came before

The following website provides a reprint of Brooke's work, *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet*. It includes the Introduction (To the Reader) and The Argument,

worth a read through, especially for students who are now or in future will study

The discussions suggested in the lesson are informal. They are meant strictly to get

students thinking and comfortable with analyzing literature--an invaluable tool as

they progress in their studies in language arts and literature

the latter written in sonnet form. The language is intriguing and the work is certainly

purpose, however, we will focus on Brooke and his work as the source.

as far back as the ancient Greeks—who we all know loved tragedy! For this lesson's



Language Arts / Literature

Lesson Focus: Study Source Works in Literature



Lesson Level: High School

Begin Teaching:

(a)

Visit the website

http://www.clicknotes.com/romeo/brooke/index.html

- Read The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet aloud in class
- Watch the film West Side Story.
- Discuss how the story has evolved over time .

(b)

- Students read "To The Reader".
- What do Brooke's statements tell you about the kind of person he was and what he was thinking in writing the poem.
- Hint: Brookes once went to France to help Protestants there challenge Catholic domination of the country.

(c)

- Students read "The Argument," presented in sonnet form
- Remind them that sonnet is a 14-line verse form usually having one of several conventional rhyme schemes.
- Students pick a theme of their choice and write their own sonnet.

Shakespeare and Other Borrowers

The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet by Brooke, said to have been Shakespeare's inspiration for Romeo and Juliet, was retold in prose in Palace of Pleasure by William Painter twenty years later. Painter also borrowed story ideas from Herodotus, Boccaccio, Plutarch and others. His works are credited with being the inspiration for so many Italian settings in later Elizabethian dramas. Among the better-known Shakespeare plays derived from Painter's books include Timon of Athens, Edward III and All's Well That End's Well.











Language Arts

Lesson Focus: Watch Your Tone

Lesson Level: Middle/High School



Instructional "Heads Up":

Maria! Say it loud and there's music playing, Say it soft and it's almost like praying.

In the lines from Maria," from West Side Story, Tony sings about how the tonal inflection of the word, Maria, conjures different images.

In writing as in speaking, inflections and other factors can drastically change not only the meaning of what we're saying but the listener's perception. We often hear parents cautioning their children to "watch their tone." "It's not what you say but how you say it" also comes to mind. People can easily misinterpret things we say depending upon our **voice inflections** and tones, of which the speaker may not even be aware. Inflections in singing are always intended.

Teacher Note: The exercise on the left is challenging. Students may have to make calls to universities to find someone expert in Chinese who can give them this information. Suggest to them that they may have to go this far to get the information.



Begin Teaching:

- Students borrow recording equipment from the school library or from another source. (Perhaps your computers are set up to record or a student might have a simple recording device)
- Write the following list of emotions on the board:

Happiness

Sadness

Anger

Confusion

Frustration

Fear

Distress

Surprise

Submission

- Tell students to think of some more to add to the list
- Write this sentence on the board:
 - "I have been studying for two days now, and I still don't understand the material."
- Have different students record the sentence using voice inflections that convey each emotion. (They may not add or delete any words.)

Part Two

Have students write the same statement to reflect different emotions. Tell them
they can add a word here or there for emphasis but are not allowed to
make significant changes. (Give this example using Fear: Oh God help me,
l've been studying for two days now...)

Begin Teaching:

Tonal language is one in which pitch is used as a part of speech, changing the meaning of a word. An example of how tone can change the meaning of a word in English can be found in the word, present, which can be used as a verb or noun, depending upon which syllable is emphasized. In tonal languages, the way in which you say a word is very important, as it radically changes the meaning. Tonal languages are found primarily in Asia, Africa, and South America. The most famous tonal language is Chinese, in which the meaning of words are completely changed depending upon high/low pitches

- Students use their research skills to find a word in Chinese whose meaning changes with tonal pitch.
- They pronounce the word in class in both tones and give its meaning.







Language Arts

Lesson Focus: Finding Your Writer's Voice





"What we did want was to aim at a lyrical and theatrically sharpened illusion of reality. In the story, I have emphasized character and emotion rather than place-name specifics and sociological statistics. The dialogue is my translation of adolescent street talk into theater: it might sound real, but it isn't."

- Arthur Laurents

Instructional "Heads Up":

In the above statement Arthur Laurents explains what he was trying to achieve when putting words into the mouths of his characters. Each character, as he saw it, must not only have his or her own voice, but all of the voices combined had to reflect what the collaborators on the show agreed to achieve. For that very reason writing can be a tricky business.

Many writers struggle with finding their writing voice. "A writer's voice" is a literary term used to describe the individual writing style of an author. It's how you not only put words together, but the way you do it--the punctuation you use, how you construct sentences, the way you write dialogue; how you develop characters. In short, voice is like a fingerprint. No two writers have the same one.

In creative writing students are encouraged to experiment with different literary styles and techniques in order to help them better develop their "voice." In American culture, having a strong voice is considered positive and beneficial to both the writer and his or her audience. When we say we like one author better than another it often has to do with liking or not liking their voice. Just because a reader does not like a particular voice does not mean the author is not a good writer; it simply means the reader, for whatever reason, finds how the writer expresses themself more pleasing or interesting than another writer.

Many new writers try to copy the voice of another whom they admire. This usually does not work. One can not mimic someone else's voice. You must develop your own.

Begin Teaching:

- Students find three websites that discuss writer's voice.
- In reading the text they take notes on what goes into making up a writer's voice.
- Teachers collect the notes.
- In class, students discuss the various points.
- As the discussion moves forward, teachers list the points on the board.
- Students copy the list for reference.

Find Your Voice

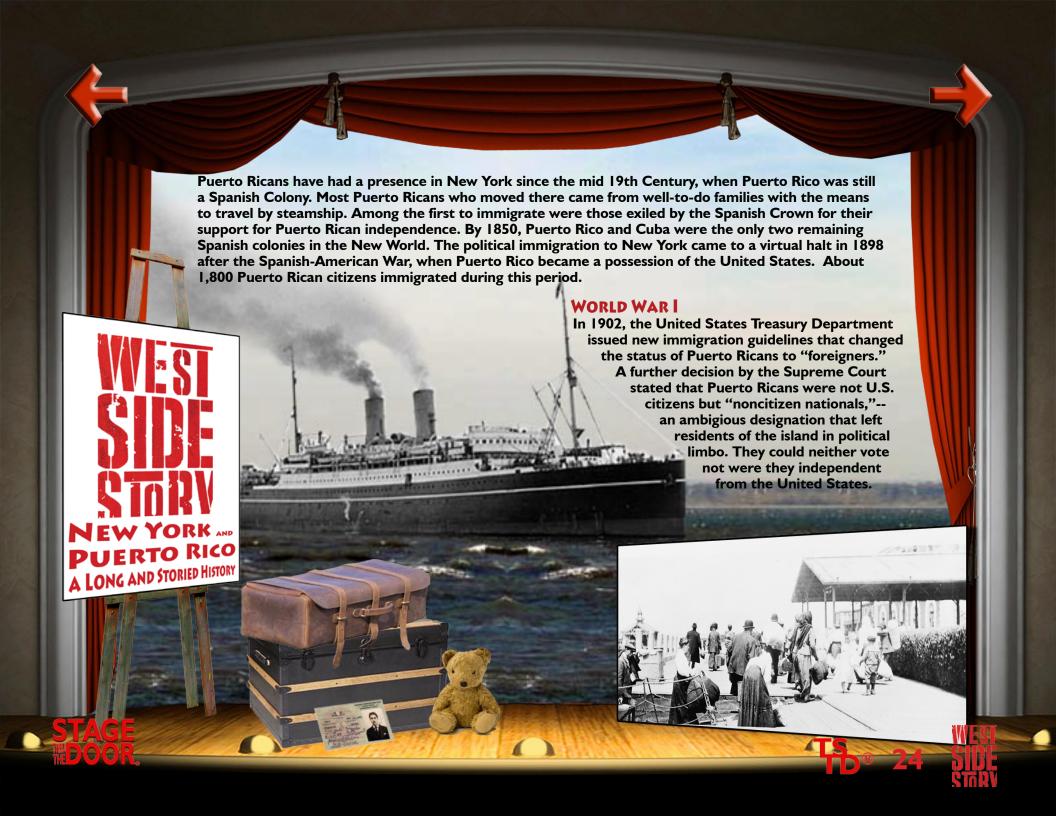
- Tell students they have a week to come with a short story idea they would like to write
- Remind them that a story idea does not necessarily mean a title, but a short description (no more than one paragraph) of the story they plan to write.
- Have them outline the basic events of the story.
- Add the outline to the description they presented.
- Students write their story.
- Remind them that this is a creative project and that they should feel unrestricted by any set format as they work.
- Stress originality both in story content and writing style; the writing will not be judged by grammatical rules such as punctuation, correct English or grammar or any of the other rules that generally apply.
- At the end, each student refers to the elements of writer's voice they created earlier and lists the ones that apply to their writing.

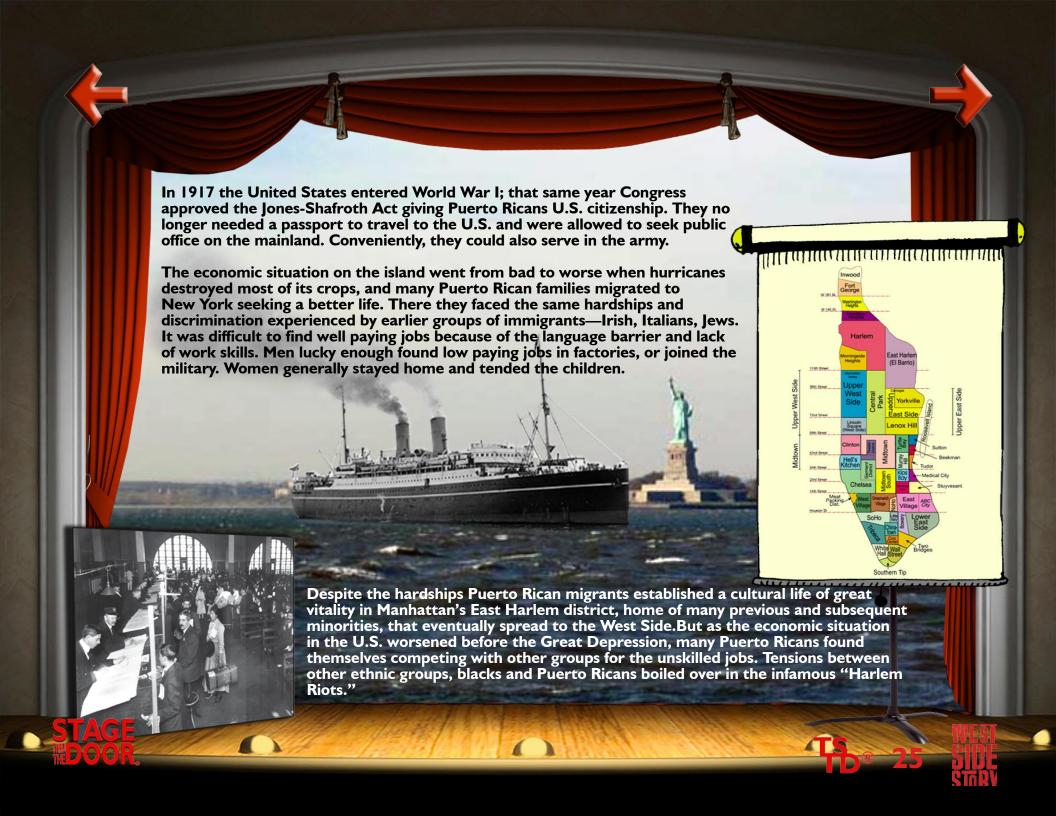


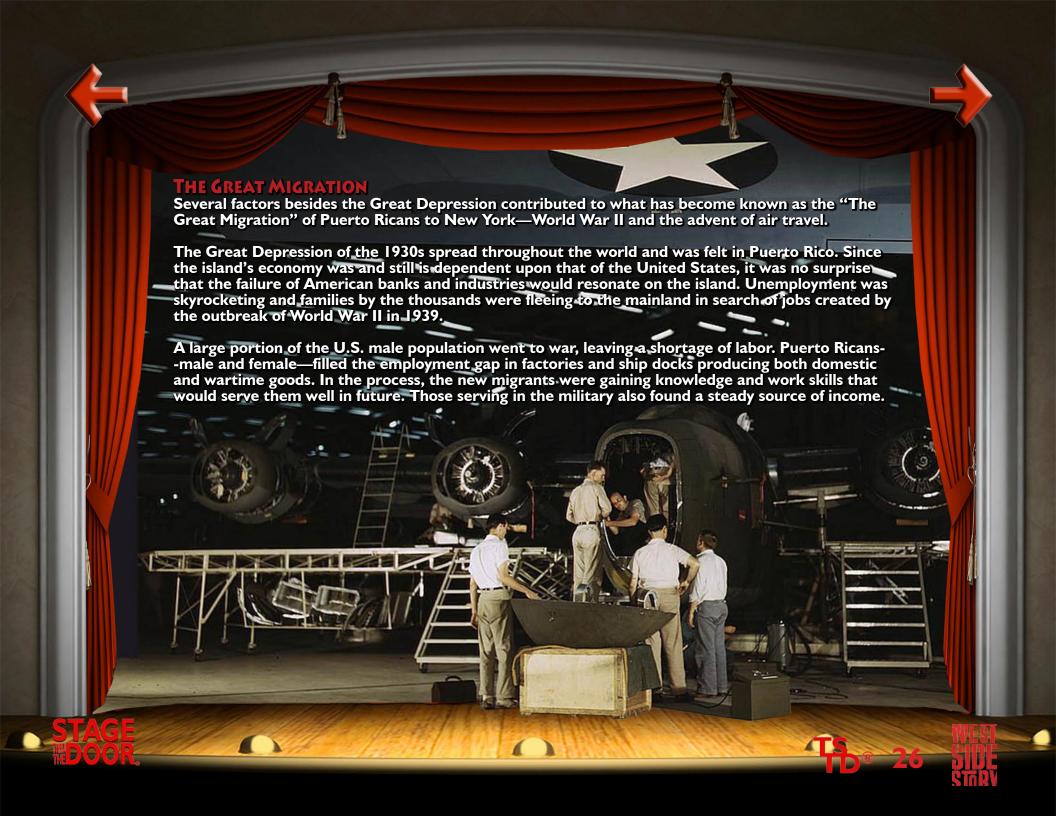
Teacher Note: The above lesson can be simplified for Middle school students by presenting them with a story idea or topic and having each student write the story in their own way. Tell them just this once to forget about all the rules they've learned and write whatever comes into their heads.











"America" from West Side Story ROSALIA

Puerto Rico,
You lovely island . . .
Island of tropical breezes.
Always the pineapples growing,
Always the coffee blossoms blowing . . .

ANITA

Puerto Rico . . .
You ugly island . . .
Island of tropic diseases.
Always the hurricanes blowing,
Always the population growing . . .
And the money owing,
And the babies crying,
And the bullets flying.
I like the island Manhattan.
Smoke on your pipe and put that in!

OTHERS
I like to be in America!
O.K. by me in America!
Ev'rything free in America
For a small fee in America!

The 1960 census showed well over 600,000 New Yorkers of Puerto Rican birth or parentage. By that time a total of more than a million Puerto Ricans had migrated to the U.S. Over the years the Puerto Rican community has grown and prospered as an accepted ethnic group contributing much to the cultural life of the city.

19505

Migration reached its peak in the 1950s. With 40,000 settled by 1946; 58,500 settled between 1952-53 alone. Puerto Rican soldiers returning from war took advantage of the GI Bill and went to college. Puerto Rican women, despite facing economic exploitation, discrimination, racism, and the insecurities inherent in the migration process, faired better than their male counterparts. Discrimination was rampant in The United States at the time, and it was no different in New York. Signs in some restaurants read, "No dogs or Puerto Ricans allowed. Nevertheless, women left their homes for the factories in record numbers. By 1953, Puerto Rican migration to New York reached its peak when 75,000 people left the island. In April 1958 the first New York Puerto Rican Day Parade was held in the "Barrio" in Manhattan.





History/Social Studies/Language Arts/Law Electives

Lesson Focus: Indepenence - Myth or Reality?

Lesson Level: High School



Instructional "Heads Up":

In May 1916 Luis Muñoz Rivera, poet and first democratically elected governor of Puerto Rico, argued in favor of the Jones-Shafroth Act which would give Puerto Ricans U.S. citizenship: "Give us now the field of experiment which we ask of you. . . . It is easy for us to set up a stable republican government with all possible guarantees for all possible interests. And afterwards, when you . . . give us our independence . . . you will stand before humanity as a great creator of new nationalities and a great liberator of oppressed people."

To some it looked as if the U.S. was willing to leave sleeping dogs lie as far as citizenship for Puerto Rico until the onset of World War I. In 1917, Congress passed the Jones-Shafroth Act which many Puerto Ricans believe was a ploy to allow military conscription (the draft) to be extended to the island. Over 20,000 Puerto Rican soldiers fought in the war. Defenders of the bill say the Act was under consideration long before the United States entered the War, arguing further that male residents of the United States (including Puerto Rico) were eligible for the draft whether or not they were U.S. citizens or nationals. We will never know what foresight went into the passage of this bill. Since then many thousands of Puerto Ricans have served in the military. The "independence," however, of which Rivera spoke in his speech has not yet been achieved.

Begin Teaching:

Read to students the text in: New York and Puerto Rico--A Long and Storied History. Then read the two paragraphs on the left. Remind students to remember that West Side Story is about the very people who came to this country from Puerto Rico under the same circumstances described in what you've read.

Students choose one of the following three projects. All of them require a bit of research and should be rewarded with extra credit.

- (a) Create a chronological chart of historical events from the Spanish American War to the present tracing America's political relationship Puerto Rico
- (b) Study the three political parties of Puerto Rico and write a paper comparing their stances on independence for the island
- (c) Research the Jones-Shafroth Act, its supporters and detractors. Write a paper in dialogue style presenting arguments for and against the bill.









History

Lesson Focus: Historical Research /

Drawing Conclusions from History



Lesson Level: High School

Instructional "Heads Up":

In 1936, Puerto Ricans were already fighting on European soil in the **Spanish Civil War**, years before the United States entered World War II. The war was a bloody affair, ending with victory by **Generalissimo Franco** and over 50 years of harsh dictatorial rule for Spain.

In the late 1930s not all Puerto Ricans were migrating to New York. They were fighting in Spain in the Spanish Civil War. Puerto Ricans fought on behalf of both sides involved, the "Nationalists" as members of the Spanish Army and the "Loyalists" (Republicans) as members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.

Begin Teaching:

This is not a full blown academic discussion of the Spanish Civil War. It is meant to give students an idea about the event and more importantly, information about the Abraham Lincoln Brigade of which they are probably not aware.

- Students research the background of the Spanish Civil War and the issues that prompted it. Many excellent websites provide this information.
- In their research tell them to find information about the Abraham Lincoln Brigade
- Discuss the Brigade in class
- What side did they fight on?
- Why did they choose that side?
- Name some famous Americans who fought in the brigade
- If they can, have them find information on some Puerto Ricans who fought in the war.
- The class views the film documentary, Brother Against Brother.

Begin Teaching:

Another famous brigade made up of U.S. immigrants fought on the side of Mexico in the Mexican American War.

- Name the brigade
- What nationality were the soldiers
- Why did they choose to fight for the Mexicans?









History/Language Arts/Cartography/Technology

Lesson Focus: Violence in Ethnic Neighborhoods

Lesson Level: High School



The Sharks are Puerto Ricans; The Jets an anthology of what is called "American"

- From the prologue of West Side Story

Instructional "Heads Up":

The symbolism of the Sharks and Jets is obvious. The Sharks are a small group of new arrivals (Puerto Ricans); the Jets a larger more established group who see themselves as the legitimate owners of the West Side territory where the story takes place. (It is generally conceded that the setting of West Side Story is somewhere between 34th Street (Hell's Kitchen and Harlem.) The Jets feel the Sharks, the newcomers, are trying to take over; the Sharks are trying to claim their piece of the neighborhood. It is the traditional interplay between established populations and new arrivals.

Even the authorities tend to favor the established group, seeing the newcomers as trouble. Patrolman Schrank says in the first act, "Boy what you Puerto Ricans have done to this neighborhood."

How the Jets feel about the Sharks is clear from the beginning. Jets members Action, Baby John, and A-rab challenge the Sharks...

Action

You hoodlums don't own the streets...Keep off the grass

Baby JohnGet outta the house

Action Keep off the block

A-rab Get outta here

Action

Keep off the world. A gang that don't own a street is nothin'

Some students may have seen the award-winning Martin Scorsese film, *The Gangs of New York*, set in the infamous area known as "The Five Points". Many may not have. The film was rated R due to the violence and some parents may have considered it inappropriate. Historical information about that area is plentiful. Known as one of the most crime-ridden, violent sections settled by Irish, German, Jewish immigrants and newly free and newly freed African-American slaves in the early 1800s, "The Five Points" was notorious for violence far beyond that portrayed in West Side Story.

Begin Teaching:

- Students become cartographers and as a class draw a basic map of Manhattan as it
 was in the early to mid-1800s. Tell them to include as much detail as
 possible. They shade in the small area known then as The Five Points. The
 map should include a color legend indicating a different color for each
 ethnic group living there.
- Students read Charles Dickens account of his visit to The Five Points in 1842
- Students research the wealth of information available on the area and its history.
 Divide the class into groups and have each group focus on the following:
 - a. ethnic violence among groups
 - b. perspective on the area by outsiders
 - c. the role of law enforcement in dealing with crime and violence
 - d. later movement of the various ethnic groups to other parts of the city
- Groups a-c prepare reports and read them to the class
- Based on information gathered by group d, students use the color legend to shade in areas of the city where ethnic groups later relocated

Teacher Note: Development of maps may be done electronically using design software. Teachers/and or students familiar with such software can instruct the group in its use and lead the students in preparing and coloring in the map. Suggestion: you may want to get an art teacher familiar with such software involved in the project.









Temperament as defined is a combination of mental, physical and emotional traits of a person; natural predisposition—an unusual personal attitude or nature as manifested by peculiarities of feeling, temper, action—often associated with a disinclination to submit to conventional rules or restraints.

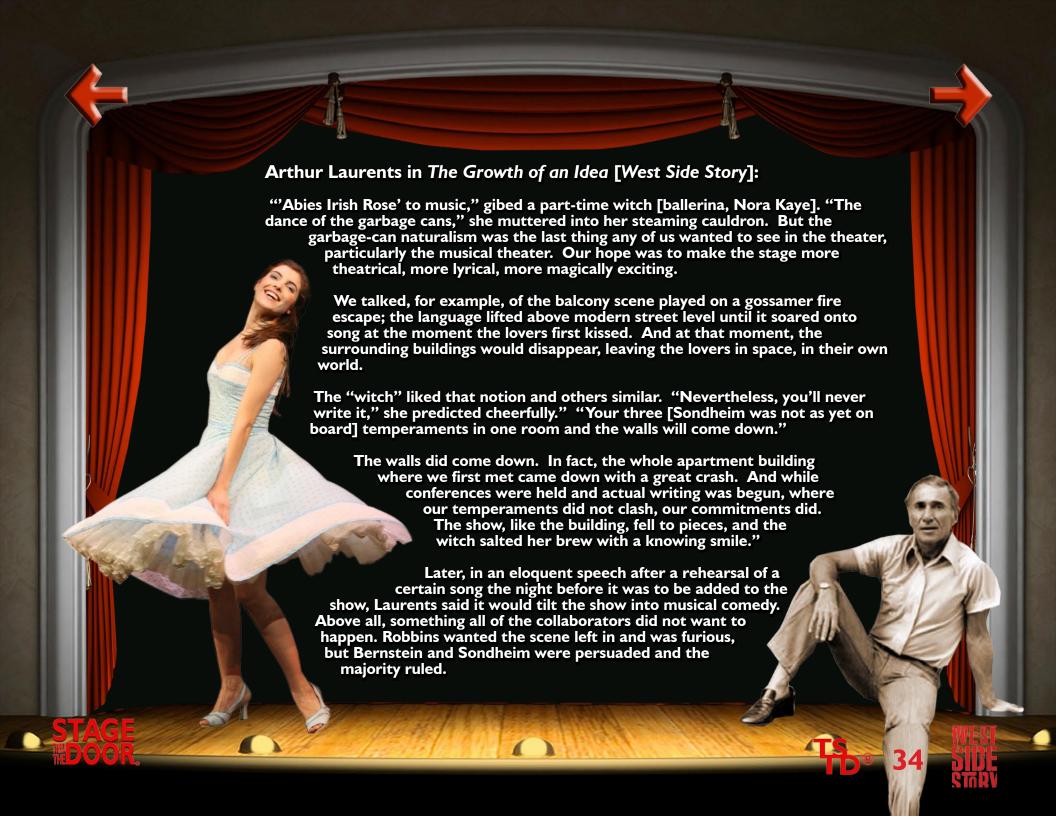


Artistic temperament fits neatly into that description, with a few nuances related to creativity. Highly artistic people show dramatic swings in emotion. While not only artists show this trait, it is prevalent among most of them--painters, sculptors, musicians, writers. Artists also have passionate views on subjects important to them along with an extreme dedication to their artistic goals. Sometimes they seem hyper-aware of the people around them, at other times quite oblivious. They show the full range of emotions to the extreme.

If an artist gets angry or behaves somewhat irrationally, we chalk it up to "artistic temperament". Down through art history examples of such











Behavior / Music

Lesson Focus: Artistic Expression

Lesson Level: Middle/High School



Instructional "Heads Up":

Every artist has his own way of expressing his artistic emotions. Whether through music, painting, writing, each draws from within themselves to create the art they make. How often have we watched a great conductor stand before his musicians—eyes closed, seemingly in another world. We see this behavior not only in classical conductors. Rock guitarists exhibit the similar behavior as wildly jump, and crouch and spin across the stage. As we say in the piece The Artistic Temperament in describing outward signs of that trait, "sometimes they (artists) seem hyper-aware of the people around them, at other times quite oblivious. They show the full range of emotions to the extreme."

Conductor's behavior is not just for show. Each movement has meaning for the musicians they are conducting. But what do these movements mean?

Begin Teaching:

A Visual Assessment

- Rent several DVDs—one of Leonard Bernstein conducting; the others can be rock musicians and groups the class chooses
- Tell them to observe their behavior when conducting or playing
- How does it contribute to their effectiveness as performers?
- Does it distract your attention from the music they are making?
- How much of this behavior do you think is "showmanship," and how much is genuine reaction to an inner artistic drive?

Begin Teaching:

A Method To The Madness

Go to the website below

http://scienceblogs.com/cognitivedaily/2008/08/what_conductors_are_doing_when.php

- Have students read through the article and watch the Warner Bros.
 Cartoon of Bugs Bunny conducting.
- Do you still think conductors are just putting on a show?











Behavior / Life Skills

Lesson Focus: Cooperation

Lesson Level: Middle/High School



Instructional "Heads Up":

There is no more important skill a person can learn than working together with other people. The collaborators of West Side Story, Bernstein, Laurents, Sondheim and Robbins are a good example of people with strong personalities who nevertheless found a way to work together toward a common goal.

Stretching the point, we might say the Jets work together to achieve goals of their own. While those goals might not seem very productive to the outsider, to them each of their group members together provide security and they believe, at least, that they are achieving the goal of controlling and dominating their neighborhood. While there are certainly more worthy goals, the Jets do have a sense of group achievement. Read/Listen to these words from The Jet Song...

Riff

When you're a Jet you're a Jet all the way
From your first cigarette
To your last dying day
When you're a Jet let them do what they can
You've got brothers around
You're a family man
You're never alone
You're never disconnected
You're home with your own
When company's expected
You're well-protected
Then you are set with a Capital J
Which you'll never forget 'till they cart you away
When you're a Jet you stay a Jet....

ΑII

The Jets are in gear Our cylinders are clickin' The sharks'll steer clear 'Cause every Puerto Rican's A lousy chicken! Here come the Jets like a bat outta hell Someone gets in our way, someone don't feel so well! Here come the Jets! Little world, step aside! Better go underground! Better run, Better hide! We're drawing the line, So keep your nose's hidden We're hangin' a sign Says visitors forbidden Ánd we ain't kiddin' Here come the Jets! Yeah!

And we're gonna beat every last buggin' gang on the whole buggin' street.
on the whole buggin', ever lovin' street!
Yeah!

Begin Teaching:

Part One

- Go over the lyrics to the song line by line
- Students analyze the elements of group cooperation
- What goals do they aspire to achieve?

Part Two

Let's Cooperate

- Students discuss a goal they would like to achieve as a class
- Give them time in class to discuss how they plan to achieve the goal, and which students will responsible for what
- Provide a reasonable time frame to achieve the goal (an entire school year is not out of the question)
- At the end of the time period, students reveal the success or failure of their cooperative effort
- They discuss why the project succeeded, or why it failed within the context of how well the group members cooperated









Behavior / Language Arts

Lesson Focus: Sportsmanship and Civility





Instructional "Heads Up":

When the rumble is about to start Jets urge Bernardo to shake hands with his opponent before the fight begins. He responds...

More gracious living? Look: I don't go for that pretend crap you all go for in this country. Every one of you hates every one of us and we hate you right back. I don't drink with nobody I hate, I don't shake hands with nobody I hate. Let's get at it.

Begin Teaching:

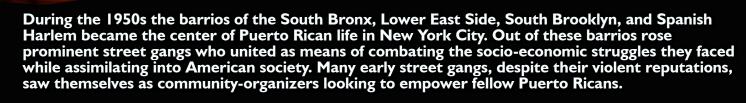
- Explain the scene above to students and ask what they think of Bernardo's response
- Is there a degree of honesty in it?
- What is the purpose of handshaking between sports opponents?
- Is it a show of sportsmanship, or a fake empty gesture?
- Is it possible to like anyone who is competing with you for anything?
- If not, then why bother with the handshake?
- Discuss civility as a hypocritical concept...
 as an important gesture in recognizing that competition is, by nature,
 antagonistic, and that, while not happily, the looser will accept his or her
 fate.

Write A Happy Ending

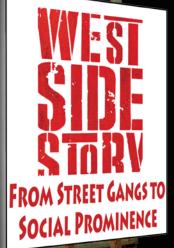
Consider the definition of civility. Write a new ending for West Side Story based on the premise that The Jets and Sharks decided to be civil to each other.





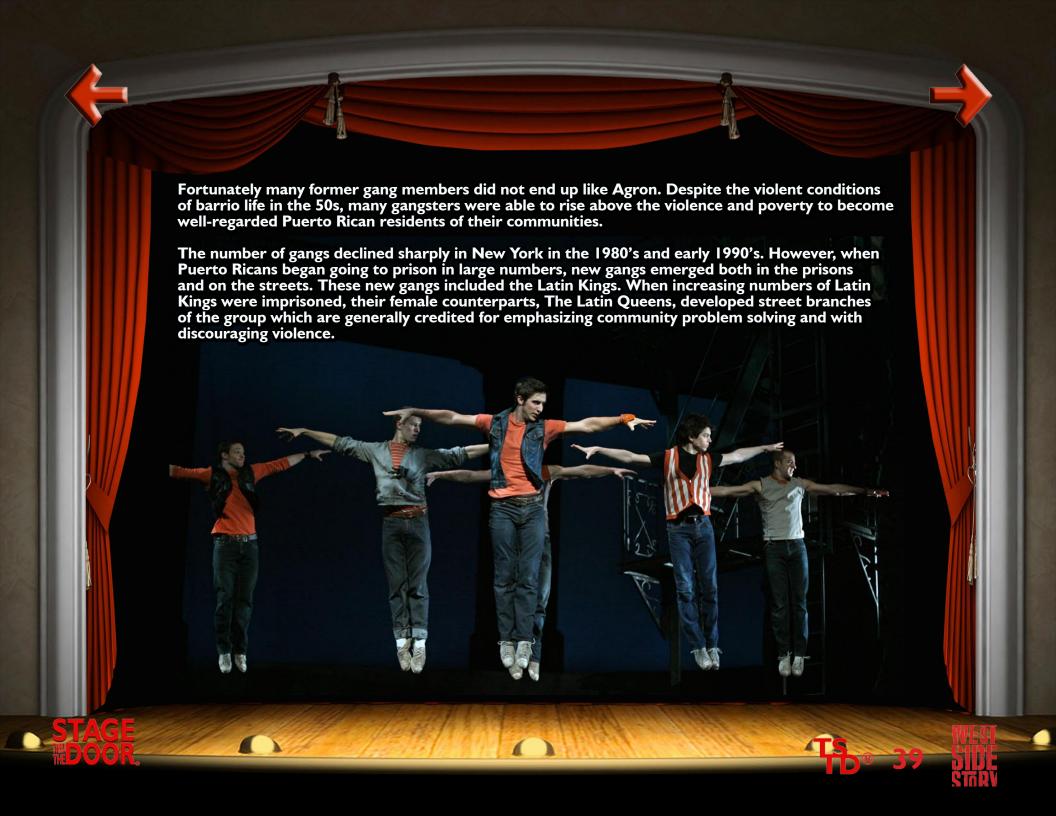


One of the first Puerto Rican gangs in New York City, the Mau Maus, originated in 1950s Brooklyn. Feared by both the police and other gangs because of their exceptionally brutal tactics, even fellow members were not immune. Violent initiations included standing against a wall while a knife was thrown, just missing them.



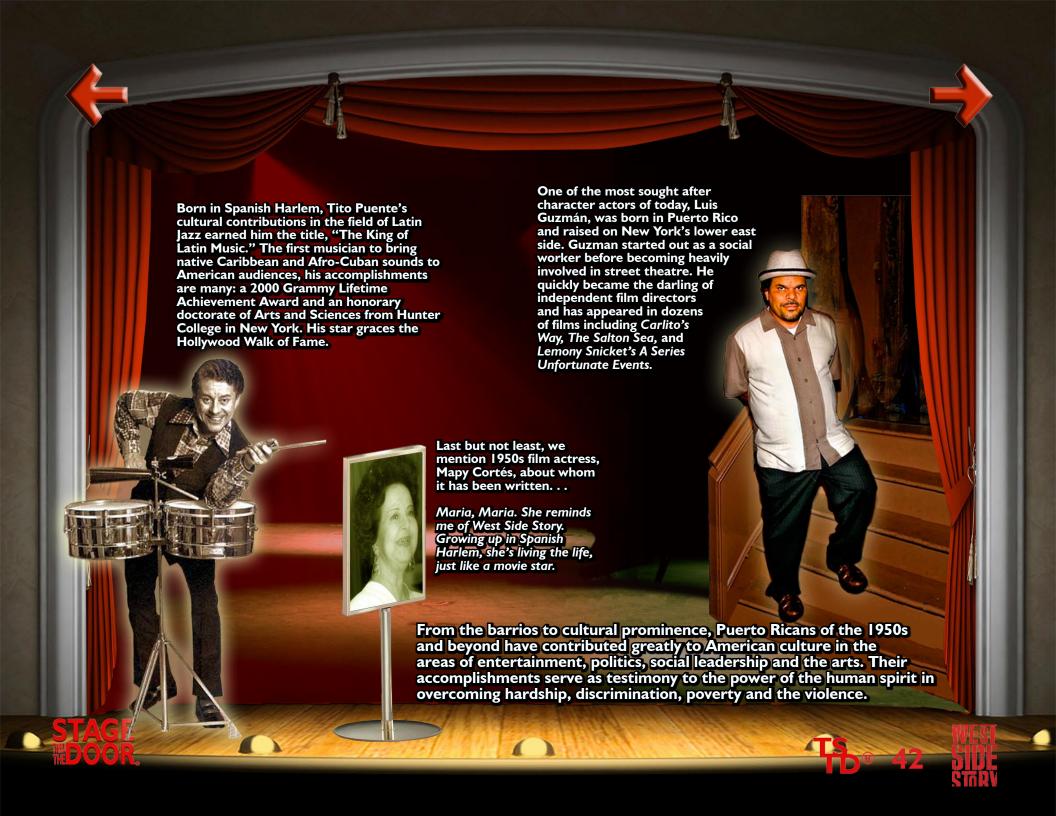


A prominent member of the Mau Maus, Salvador Agron, is best known for an incident that occurred in 1959, when he and other members of a gang called The Vampires attacked six teenagers in a park with lead pipes and a knife concealed under Agron's cape. The incident became known as the Capeman Murders and was the inspiration for a Broadway musical written by Paul Simon called *The Capeman*.













Social Studies / Behavior

Lesson Focus: Gangs as Social Groups

Lesson Level: High School



"...they have a fantastic sense of security when they are together," he went on. "That's the function of a gang. They don't talk to you like a younger person talking to an adult. They talk with assurance. 'This is our world, you keep out of it. We have our answers; we don't need yours.' For them, right is right; there are no gray tones. Everything is passionate." "...they have a fantastic sense of security when they are together." he went on. "That's the function of a gang. They don't talk to you like a younger person talking to an adult. They talk with assurance. 'This is our world, you keep out of it. We have our answers; we don't need yours.' For them, right is right; there are no gray tones. Everything is passionate."

- Jerome Robbins discusses gangs

Instructional "Heads Up":

Watching West Side Story it's hard to think of the Jets and Sharks as anything but two groups that use violence as a means of getting what they want. Yet studies and other evidence indicate that gangs are often more than antagonistic groups at war with each other. Many often help those within their communities, providing positive support in the areas of education, day care services, soup kitchens for the poor and other needed services largely unmet by the "outside" world. It is an interesting social phenomenon. One excellent example of this type of group are the Gaylords.

Begin Teaching:

• Students visit the website below

http://www.gaylords712.com/racism.html

• Divide the class into three research groups:

The Historical Society

The Crime Investigators

The Social Scientists

- Each group will research and write up a report on their respective areas of study on the Gaylords. Tell them there is more information than that appearing on
- The first will gather a history of the gang; the second a report on their criminal activities; the third on their positive community projects.
- Each group presents its findings to the class.
- The activity is followed by a group discussion of gangs as social groups: Does the good outweigh the bad?









Social Studies / Behavior / Art

Lesson Focus: Graffiti as Emotional Statement



Middle/High School Lesson Level:

Instructional "Heads Up":

Tony is trapped between two worlds. He is in love with Maria, sister of the Shark's leader, Bernardo, but feels he owes his allegiance to Riff, leader of his gang. It is an impossible situation for Tony. It is indicative of the trap in which most of the characters in West Side Story find themselves. They are trapped by their poverty, lack of good education, violence of their neighborhoods and poor living conditions. Living in this "pressure cooker," as Jerome Robbins once described it, Tony must feel anger, frustration, futility.

The set of West Side Story shows the graffiti that has come to be associated with such neighborhoods and the people who live there. While many see graffiti as a defacing of property, many, even artists, have come to accept it as legitimate art—a creative expression of the harsh reality of life in the barrio.

Begin Teaching:

• Students visit the following website and view the graffiti gallery

www.toddcam.com

- Tell them to study each image carefully
- What emotions do they see?
- Ask students to put themselves in Tony's place. What emotions must be feeling—love, anger, frustration, a sense of hopelessness living in the barrio.
- Using the graffiti they've viewed as example, have them create with colored markers on very large sketch paper some graffiti as Tony might draw it. Tell them to think about all of the emotions that might contribute to the drawing.
- As a starting point, all students will first draw the names MARIA and TONY in graffiti-style letters, then expand on the graffiti from there.
- "Wallpaper" a section of the classroom with the graffiti









Social Studies

Lesson Focus: Clothing as Group Identification



Lesson Level: Middle/High School

Instructional "Heads Up":

"Clothes make the man?" Well maybe, but not in California, at least. The following was posted by officials of the Santa Cruz County Fair:

POLICY: The wearing or displaying of clothing, clothing accessories with gang insignias, monikers, or identification, including a specific combination of colors or symbols commonly associated with an "outlaw motorcycle gang," a "criminal street gang," or associated clubs or gangs, as those terms are defined by the California Department of Justice, is strictly prohibited.

Most street gangs have special clothing and insignias that identify them as members. These trappings may be perfectly acceptable in some places, but in places like California with its share of street gang violence, wearing such regalia to public events is seriously discouraged. The reasons are obvious. One group antagonistic towards another spots a member by special colors or an insignia or certain clothing and the "rumble" is on. Not a good situation.

Yet these gang "uniforms" and their significance is nonetheless an interesting social phenomena. Every group has its "look."

Begin Teaching:

- Each student researches the colors, insignias and other defining clothing characteristics of five street gangs.
- They print the photos they find online
- As a class they create a book titled, "Gang Fashion on Parade"
- Each gang gets a page in the book
- · Leave one page blank after each gang
- Student volunteers research the symbolism of each insignia, color etc of each gang and write a paragraph on what they've learned on the blank page (extra credit, of course).

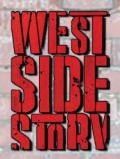
Class Colors and Insignia

- Students put their heads together and come up with class colors and an insignia.
- They draw the insignia and color it
- One student explains the symbolism involved in the choices.









Resources

www.broadwaywestsidestory.com

The official website for West Side Story on Broadway

Websites

The Library of Congress, West Side Story Online Exhibition www.loc.gov/exhibits/westsidestory/introduction/

www.actors-studio.com/

/www.ehow.com/how_5466_handle-romantic-rejection.html?ref=fuel&utm_source=yahoo&utm_medium=ssp&utm_campaign=yssp_art

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tragical_History_of_Romeus_and_Juliet

www.wisegeek.com/what-is-a-tonal-language.htm

www.trincoll.edu/prog/ctpeople/PuertoRicans/history.htm

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puerto_Ricans_in_the_United_States

www.alba-valb.org/

www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_ss_gw?url=search-alias%3Damazontv&field-key words=spanish+civil+war&x=13&y=18--(Video: Hemingway in Spain)

http://imagejournal.org/page/blog/on-artistic-temperament-other-paradoxes

www.foundationsmag.com/civility.html

www.hi-ho.ne.jp/taku77/refer/gang.htm

Books/Articles

Finding Your Writer's Voice: A Guide to Creative Fiction by Thiasa Frank and Dorothy Wall, 1997

Video/Audio

www.youtube.com www.searchforvideo.com www.biography.com Production Photography by Joan Marcus





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