**Task:** Theater History Exploration

**Drama**

**Due Date: 3/4/14**

**Goal:** The goal is to demonstrate to your fellow classmates a style of theater from the past through a presentation of your research and a performance.

**Role:** You are a performer & teacher, and a resident expert on the type of theater you choose.

**Audience**: Your target audience is your peers in class.

**Situation:** You need to give us a snapshot of what theater used to be like or is like in different parts of the world.

**Product, Performance, and Purpose:** You need to research a type of theater from a list I will present to you. You will creatively present your research to the class, and give us an example of what that type of theater looks like. Your presentation will provide the background knowledge we need to fully appreciate your performance of that theater type.

**Standards and Criteria for Success:**

* **You will be evaluated in 3 distinct parts: a Weebly Website, a presentation of your research, and a Performed Scene.**
* You will also be peer-evaluating other groups’ websites as well as completing a self and group-evaluation at the very end.
* Part of your project will be completed on a Weebly website. These are the pages you will create on your website:
	+ **HOME PAGE:** You must give us the “big picture” of the era in three written paragraphs.
		- Answer: What are the defining characteristics of your era/type of theater? What is happening in the world that makes these elements important to make theater about?
		- Answer: What was the theater community’s relationship with the larger culture?
		- Answer: What is this era/type’s legacy on theater in the future? How does the contemporary theater relate to your era/type?
		- You may answer other “big picture” questions that you think are important.
	+ **ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY**: When you start your research, you will complete an annotated bibliography, writing about the credibility of the sources you chose and why you chose them.
	+ **HISTORICAL FIGURES:** You must present pictures and original paragraphs about as many historical figures (actors, directors, producers, designers, etc.) from your period as you have group members (4 “profiles” for 4 group members; 5 for 5; etc.)
		- Must include a few paragraphs of biography
		- Must answer the questions: Why is this figure important to the era? What was their influence on the discipline of theater?
	+ **VOCABULARY**: You must define at least 5 terms related to your era of theater for your site visitors who have never heard of your genre before. These terms must be integral to understanding the period you are studying.
	+ **VISUAL TIMELINE:** You must create a timeline that places your era with at least
		- 4 events pertaining to your era in theater (for example, “Shakespeare’s lifespan” or “The First Musical Premieres on Broadway”
		- 4 other events of history happening at the same time. (For example, “The reign of Queen Elizabeth I” or “The Bubonic Plague” or “The Great Depression” in your timeline.)
		- An image for each piece of your timeline to give us a “visual timeline”
	+ **VIDEO:** Your site must contain at least 2 videos that give us a context of the period. The types of videos you may include are:
		- Videos of scenes from movies or professional plays of that era
		- Documentary video clips with experts talking about that era
		- Videos explaining the types of theater that were presented and their different parts
		- Any other relevant videos you find; check with Ms. Dunnavant if you are unsure
		- Include a sentence below the video explaining why you chose it.
* You will **present your research** to the class with your Weebly on the projection screen.
	+ You should use conversational tone to relay important information in a different way than you do on the website; you should not just read what you wrote. You should elaborate and explain as much as possible.
	+ You must create a quiz with 3 questions based on Bloom’s Taxonomy for the class to complete after your presentation.
		- 1 question must measure Comprehension
		- 1 question must measure Analysis
		- 1 question must measure Evaluation
			* The following is a website that shows you exactly how to form such questions:
			* <http://www.meade.k12.sd.us/PASS/Pass%20Adobe%20Files/March%202007/BloomsTaxonomyQuestionStems.pdf>
		- There will be an open question-and-answer session with your peers afterward; be ready for anything!
* Your presentation will also include a short **performance** of a scene from that era or a style of theater from that era.
	+ Your scene should be 3-5 minutes in length
	+ Your scene should involve each member somehow
	+ Your scene should be taken from the list of plays you will be provided with
	+ Your scene may be filmed and put onto your website if you would rather do that.
* Your scene will be evaluated based on 4 criteria:
	+ **CONTEXT:** before your scene, you must give a short explanation of the context of your scene and support your scene choice with 2 themes/elements of your research that are present in your scene. (For example, if one of my Shakespeare terms was “iambic pentameter,” in giving the context, I might say, “We chose this scene because it has a lot of iambic pentameter in it, an important feature of Shakespearean speech.”)
	+ **CHARACTERIZATION:** You must demonstrate highly flexible and creative ways of creating a character, using your body, voice, and demeanor. You must show full commitment to your character, which means you do not break your character the whole time.
	+ **PROJECTION/STAGE POSITION:** The audience must be able to see and hear you during the entire performance, and you must alter your body and voice to show us who your character is.
	+ **OBJECTIVE:** You must have more than one objective (a VERB describing what you want; for example, to beg, to seduce, to pity, etc.) during your scene, and it must be clear and obvious to the audience.

**Possible Eras to choose from:**

* Greek theater (Sophocles, Euripides)
* Traditional Japanese theater (Noh, Kabuki)
* Russian Naturalism (Ibsen (though not Russian), Chekhov, Stanislavsky)
* Commedia Dell'arte
* Theater of the Absurd (Beckett)
* Shakespeare & Renaissance theater
* American Musical Theater
* American Realism (Williams, Miller, O'Neill)
* Harlem Renaissance theater & Beyond (Wilson, Hansberry)
* Theater of the Oppressed (Augusto Boal)
* Epic Theater (Bertolt Brecht)
* French Comedy (Moliere)
* Chicago Theater (famous Chicago playwrights, actors, theaters, and directors)

**HELPFUL LINKS**

* <http://www.glencoe.com/theatre/Timeline/timeline_content.html> (interactive timeline)
* <http://www.theatredatabase.com/> (Articles on all eras)
* More links are on the sample Weebly

**Schedule:**

Day 1 (Tues, 2/11) – Research day in Library. Introduction of Theater History Project. Pick your era, divide research among group members, start research.

Day 2 (Fri, 2/14) – In Library. Focus Lesson on writing an annotated bibliography (DUE TUES, 2/25), and how to make a Weebly. Continue research and begin assembling your Weebly.

Day 3 (Tues, 2/18) – In Drama classroom. Pick a scene from a play from your era, begin rehearsal process.

Day 4 (Wed, 2/19) – LAST LIBRARY DAY for research (D day)

Day 5 (Tues, 2/25) – In Library. Peer review of other groups’ Weeblys. **ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE** on Weebly page.

Fri, 2/28: In library for Black History Month – Drama Day

Day 6 (Tues, 3/4): Final presentations/scenes in class

Day 7 (Wed, 3/5): Final presentations/scenes in class (D day)

Day 8 (Fri, 3/7): Finish final presentations in class