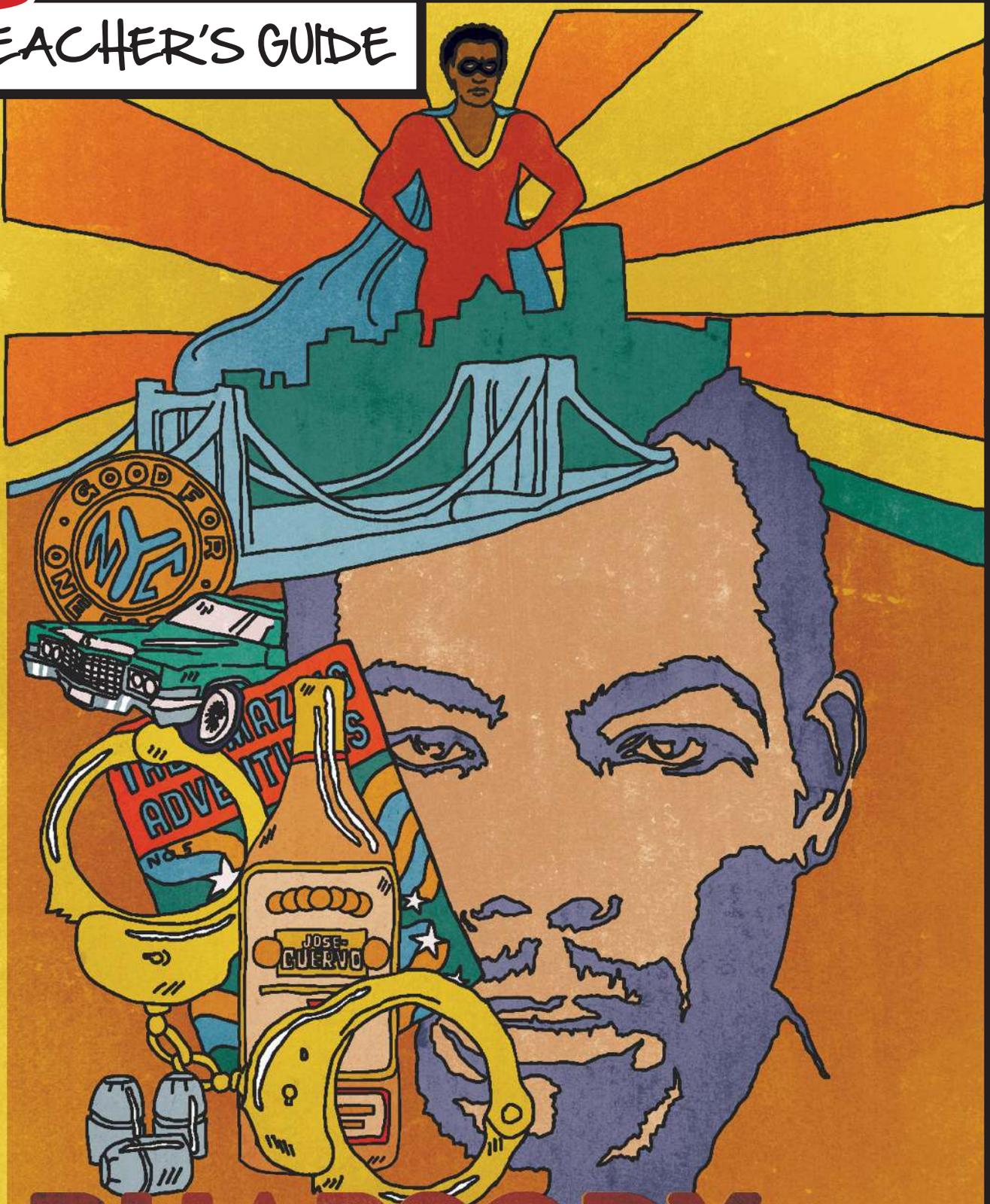


# TEACHER'S GUIDE



# RHAPSODY IN BLACK

DIRECTORIAL  
CONSULTANT  
ESTELLE PARSONS

WRITTEN AND  
PERFORMED  
BY LELAND GANTT

# TEACHER'S GUIDE

The suggested study guide activities address standards using the Common Core State Standards for Middle School and High School English Language Arts.

# RHAPSODY IN BLACK

*"I'm just trying to start  
a conversation."*



*Written & performed by*

**LELAND GANTT**

*Estelle Parsons,  
Directorial Consultant*

**Written and performed by LeLand Gantt & developed at  
NYC's Actors Studio - Estelle Parsons, Directorial Consultant**

*Study Guide created by Heidi M. Murphy*

Kay Churchill/Director of Education, Bardavon 1869 Opera House  
Kris Konyak/Art Director, Bardavon 1869 Opera House

# TEACHER'S GUIDE

*'This publication contains a set of twelve (12) pre-show/post-show classroom activities that include eighteen (18) specific student learning targets to use in their existing curriculum. The classroom activities are purposefully open ended and educators/youth service professionals are encouraged to make appropriate adaptations to specific learning targets in order to meet the individualized needs of their students.'*

## \*POWERFUL PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES\*

### *Build Background / Author Motivation*

## \*"RHAPSODY IN BLACK" HUFFINGTON POST REVIEW

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jaime-lubin/rhapsody-in-black\\_b\\_4209595.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jaime-lubin/rhapsody-in-black_b_4209595.html)

### *Student Learning Target:*

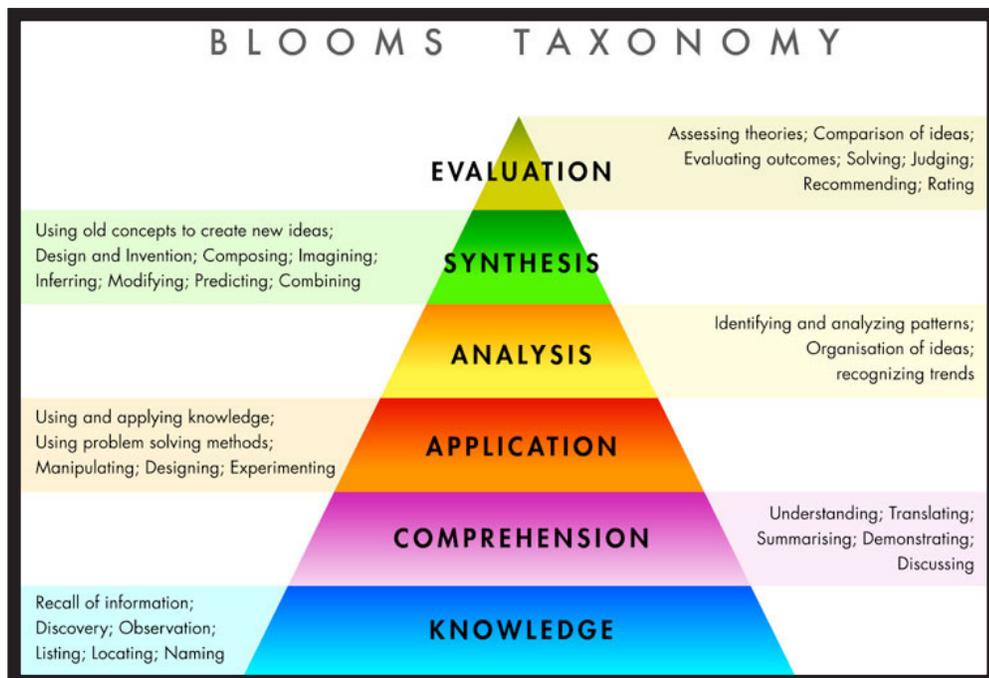
- I can be engaged and actively participate in a close read of the "Rhapsody in Black" review in the Huffington Post Arts & Culture article.

**CCLS: RL 6-12.6 Bloom's Taxonomy 1Knowledge 2Comprehension**

## \*"RHAPSODY IN BLACK" VIDEO TRAILER PREVIEW

Excerpt Sample 1

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vDzhpDtwrGk&feature=youtu.be>



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## *Student Learning Target:*

- I can compare and contrast the video version to the written transcript.

**CCLS: RL6-12.7 Bloom's Taxonomy 2Comprehension 4Analysis**

## **\*"RHAPSODY IN BLACK" JOURNAL CREATION**

## *Student Learning Target:*

- I can create and develop a "Rhapsody in Black" Response Journal.

**CCLS: W6-12.3 Bloom's Taxonomy  
2Comprehension 4Analysis**

## **\*"CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT"**

[http://www.brainpop.com/search/search.weml?  
keyword=civil+rights+movement](http://www.brainpop.com/search/search.weml?keyword=civil+rights+movement)

## *Student Learning Target:*

- I can activate my prior knowledge about the Civil Rights Movement and its purpose.

**CCLS: RI6-12.2 Bloom's Taxonomy 1Knowledge 2Comprehension**

## **\*"LETTERS FROM A BIRMINGHAM JAIL" BY MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

*(Common Core Recommended Text for Grade 7)*

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/letter-from-birmingham-city-jail-excerpts/>



## *Student Learning Target:*

- I can examine Dr. King's concepts of peace and brotherhood.

**CCLS: RI6-12.6/RI6-12.8/RI6-12.10  
Bloom's Taxonomy 4Analysis 6Evaluation**

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## \*THEATER VOCABULARY/ CONTENT VOCABULARY\*

Create a 'Performance Vocabulary Booklet'

### Student Learning Target:

- I can define, construct contextual sentences, and illustrate performance vocabulary.

CCLS: L6-12.4 Bloom's Taxonomy 1 Knowledge 2 Comprehension 3 Application

### Suggested Theater Vocabulary

**Blocking** - the instructions that actors use to know exactly where they are supposed to be on stage at all times

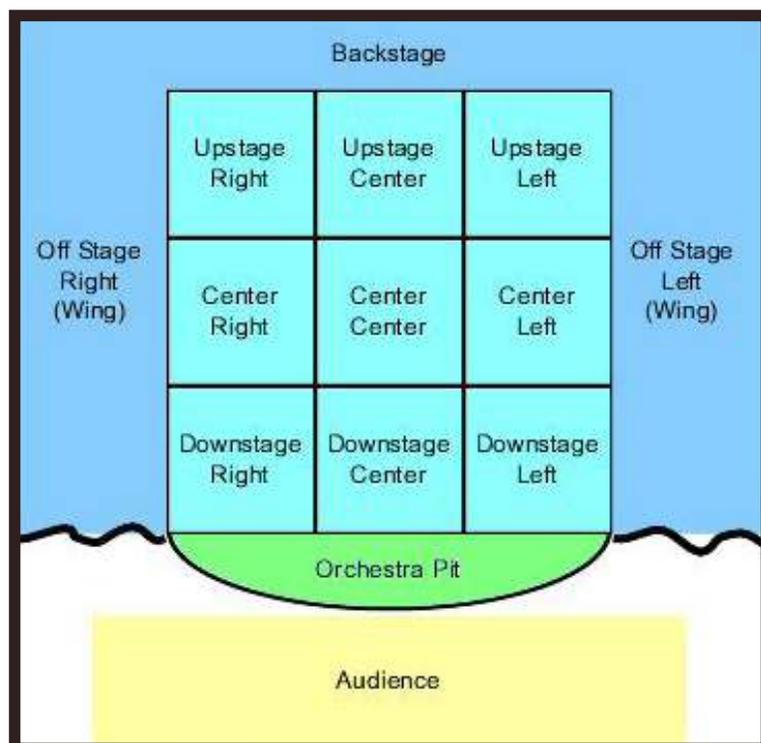
**Cast** - the people who perform in a show

**Company** - the cast and crew of a show and any other staff who work on the show

**Downstage** - the part of the stage which is closest to the audience

**Dialogue** - the words which are spoken in a play

**Director** - the person who provides the vision of how a show should be presented, who works with the actors on their roles, develops the blocking, and is in charge of the rehearsals



**Monologue** - a speech given by one actor

**Set** - the setting of the stage for each act and all the physical things that are used to change the stage for the performance

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**Stage Left** - (these left/right directions are seen from the ACTORS point of view on the stage) this is when the actor standing in the center of the stage moves to his left (This even stumps some pros so it is best to learn it now)

**Stage Right** - this is when the actor standing in the center of the stage moves to his right

**Upstage** - (1) the area of the stage that is the farthest away from the audience (2) when one actor moves to the back of the stage and causes another actor to turn away from the audience...This is called "Upstaging" (3) when an actor draws attention to himself and away from the main action of a play

## "RHAPSODY IN BLACK" CONTENT VOCABULARY

### *Student Learning Target:*

- I can create a word study guide to help me understand the shows dialogue, thoughts and themes.

**CCLS: L6-12.4 Bloom's Taxonomy 1Knowledge 2Comprehension 3Application**

The following word list is a compilation of academic vocabulary that is explored throughout the performance through dialogue, thoughts or themes. Please be encouraged to add and/or delete items at your discretion.

## Content Vocabulary

adversary - bigotry - conversation - discrimination - diversity - hypocrisy  
racism - rhapsody - resonance - prejudice - racial identity - transcending  
adamantine - rapier - minotaur - ubiquitous - subterranean - largess  
indoctrinate - fraudulent - vitriol - amalgamation - aberrations

### *Student Learning Target:*

- I can create a word study guide to help me to understand the shows' dialogue, thoughts and themes.

**CCLS: L6-12.6 Bloom's Taxonomy 3Application 4Analysis**

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## \*DISCUSSION OPPORTUNITIES\*

### *Comfortable vs. Challenging Conversations*

#### *Student Learning Targets:*

- I can participate in provocative conversations based upon both facts and feelings.

#### **CCLS: SL6-12.1/SL6-12.4 Bloom's Taxonomy 4Analysis 6Evaluation**

1. What are some ways we can make ourselves and our classmates feel comfortable when we are talking about challenging or confusing topics?
2. Have you experienced prejudice? (in regards to any nationality, sex, religion, sexual orientation)?
3. Have you been prejudice?
4. Do you think our country has made acceptable progress in race relations since the Civil Rights Movement?
5. Based on what you know, how would you explain the fact that racism is still prevalent in many parts of American society today?

### ***"I, TOO, SING AMERICA"* by Langston Hughes, 1902 - 1967**

I, too, sing America.  
I am the darker brother.  
They send me to eat in the kitchen  
When company comes,  
But I laugh,  
And eat well,  
And grow strong.  
Tomorrow,  
I'll be at the table  
When company comes.  
Nobody'll dare  
Say to me,  
"Eat in the kitchen,"  
Then.  
Besides,  
They'll see how beautiful I am  
And be ashamed—  
I, too, am America.



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## *Student Learning Targets:*

- I can read and interpret the poem “I, Too, Sing America.”
- I can participate in provocative conversations based upon both facts and feelings.

## **CCLS: RL 6-12. SL6-12.1/SL6-12.4 Bloom’s Taxonomy 4Analysis 6Evaluation**

Patriotism’s a pretty complicated concept. It can mean standing up for your country or criticizing it. If you want to sum up patriotism, you can simply call it “love for one’s country.” But how does one love a country? Unconditionally?

Langston Hughes certainly doesn’t think so. And “**I, Too, Sing America**” is, in fact, a patriotic poem. Just in some very unexpected ways.

Freedom and equality. Now those are two concepts that we can get behind, right? Those are two concepts that good citizens of the United States should champion, right? Right. So in very few words, and with some startling imagery, Hughes is really teaching us how to assert ourselves, and how to be true Americans – Americans who aren’t afraid to try and improve their country, and who aren’t afraid to claim its citizenship, no matter what.

## **\*POTENT POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES\***

### ***Build Background / Author Motivation***

#### **“Rhapsody in Black” Huffington Post Review**

## *Student Learning Targets:*

- I can reread “Rhapsody in Black” review in the Huffington Post Arts & Culture article and formulate an opinion on the statements made in the review.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jaime-lubin/rhapsody-in-black\\_b\\_4209595.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jaime-lubin/rhapsody-in-black_b_4209595.html)

- I can write my own ‘official’ review of the “Rhapsody in Black” performance.
- I can present my review to my peers (and even mail a copy to Mr. LeLand Gantt).

*Email all copies to [kchurchill@bardavon.org](mailto:kchurchill@bardavon.org)*

## **CCLS: RI 6-12.6/W6-12.1/SL6-12.3/SL6-12.4 Bloom’s Taxonomy 6Evaluation**

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## PERSPECTIVE IN POETRY

### *Student Learning Targets:*

- I can read and interpret the perspective of author in the poem “**You Don’t Know, Or Do You?**” by Shari M., East Chapel Hill School
- I can create my own poem based on my interpretation/reaction to the performance.
- I can present my poem orally to the class/group.

**CCLS: W6-12.3/W6-12.4/SL6-12.3/SL6-12.4**    **Bloom’s Taxonomy 4Analysis 5Synthesis**

### *Example piece of poetry to review perspective*

**“YOU DON’T KNOW, OR DO YOU?”** Written by Shari M., East Chapel Hill High School

*You don’t know, or do you?*

Who are you to tell me who I am?

Who are you to tell me who I will be?

Although you think you do, you don’t know jack about me.

You don’t know the pain, the hate, or the sorrow inside.

You don’t know how it feels to have to compete and to constantly have to prove yourself.

You don’t know how it feels to battle the stereotypes and the prejudice.

*You don’t know, or do you?*

Who are you to tell me how to act?

And who are you to tell me how to dress?

How dare you deny me the right to be me?

It is killing me softly, can’t you see?

You want me to assimilate, yet you still want to put me on a leash.

You smile in my face and yet you stab me in my back.

You only want me to be a reflection of you and not me, Shari.

*You don’t know, or do you?*

*continued on next page.*

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Who are you to judge me?

And who gave you the right?

If you can't accept me, my brain, my love, my hate, my heart, my soul,  
my ghetto-fabulousness and all the rest.

Then your best bet is just to step.

Because before you can judge me, tell me who I am, who I'm gonna be, how to act and dress,  
You'd better take the time to look at yourself.

Do you know what I've been through?

You haven't experienced what I have.

You haven't been judged based solely on your looks.

You haven't been discriminated against.

You haven't walked into an honors class and gotten the dirty looks.

Ignorance, pride, strength, have you experienced them?

*You don't know, or do you?*

## \*CLOZE & CONTEXT CLUE ACTIVITY\*

Cloze refers to the 'reading closure' practice required when readers must fill blanks left in text, using whatever knowledge and experience they have (Teach On by David Hornsby.)

The teacher uses the cloze procedure to model a variety of problem-solving reading strategies.

In a cloze activity words or letters are omitted from text in ways that require the readers to use specific reading strategies, or to focus upon specific cues in the text. The teacher guides students through the text, helping them to focus on one of the following:



- phonics/visual cues
- sight and/or speaking vocabulary
- predication skills
- cross-check cues

Lessons using the cloze procedure can also expand student's use of language structure cues, meaning cues, and background knowledge to predict unknown words.

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## *Student Learning Targets:*

- I can utilize my preshow vocabulary definitions to create a Cloze summary of the performance.
- I can create Civil Rights Movement context clue sentences with performance vocabulary.

**CCLS: L6-12.4/L6-12.6/W6-12.2 Bloom's Taxonomy 4Analysis 5Synthesis**

## **\*DISCUSSION OPPORTUNITIES\***

### *Dive Deeper*

## *Student Learning Targets:*

- I can participate in individual and group discussions about the performance themes and vocabulary.

**CCLS: RL 6-12.5/SL6-12.3/SL6-12.4 Bloom's Taxonomy 6Evaluation**

1. Examine how the author/actor confronts his own hypocrisy when including the observation that "objective truth strikes a chord."
2. Can we rise above our prejudices with honest conversation?

**\*Recommended Download: [Building Community and Combating Hate: Lessons for the Middle School Classroom](#) (PDF) for Additional Activities & Lesson Plans**

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/Abstract.aspx?id=261788>

## Works Cited

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[www.tolerance.org](http://www.tolerance.org)

*"Rhapsody in Black" Study Guide created by Heidi M. Murphy*