



GAIL DESCHAMPS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

TRACY HELLRIEGEL, MANAGING DIRECTOR

Study Guide

AMERICA: THE DREAM

A unique program designed to promote understanding of and respect for cultural and physical differences.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

AMERICA: THE DREAM focuses on “the dream” binding us all as individuals, family, community and our country as a whole. Drama, music, dance and sign language are employed in a 50 minute performance of American writers’ works. *Walt Whitman, Abraham Lincoln, Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, Langston Hughes, Carl Sandburg*, and others are but a few whose voices ring out from diaries, poems, speeches, historical documents and songs. The performance is enriched by the use of *sign language*. A member of the company ‘shadows’ much of the drama! The songs are accompanied by live percussion. The program has been designed to foster a greater awareness of American history and the American ethic as expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights, and to celebrate America’s multi-cultural heritage and literary legacy.

How others have reacted to: AMERICA: THE DREAM

"I think your production was great! I am part Cuban and part Haitian. My mother is light skin and my dad is dark and I'm a sort of reddish color. Anyway I don't think people should be prejudiced because we're all the same color inside."

(Berkeley Desravines, 5th grade, Sabal Palm Elementary, FL)

" Our three hearing impaired classes were especially thrilled to be included"

(Susan Koenig, Hibiscus Elementary, Miami, FL)

"Exceptional! What a hit!"

(Joanne Ash, City of Ormond Beach, FL)

"One of the best programs we've ever seen."

(Virgil Morar, Naples, FL)

"The entire play was brilliant. Every skit was grand, the only thing it didn't have – a rock'n roll band!"

(Renée Pellicer, student at Tomoka Elementary, FL)

"A complete success, exceptionally well received..."

(Linda Thompson, Escambia County School Board, Pensacola, FL)

THEME FOR ENGLISH B

by Langston Hughes

The instructor said:

Go home and write a page tonight and let that page come out of you – then it will be true.

I wonder if it's that simple.

I am twenty-two, black, born in Winston-Salem

I went to school there, then Durham, then here
to this college on the hill above Harlem.

I am the only black student in my class.

It's not easy to know what is true for you or me

at twenty-two, my age. But I guess I'm what

I feel and see and hear. Harlem, I hear you:

hear you, hear me – we two – you, me, talk on this page.

(I hear New York, too.) Me – who?

Well, I like to eat, sleep, drink and be in love

I like to work, read, learn and understand life

I like a pipe for a Christmas present,

or records – Bessie, bop or Bach.

I guess being black doesn't make me not like

the same things as other folks who are other races.

So will my page be black that I write?

Being me, it will not be white.

But it will be

a part of you, instructor.

You are white –

yet a part of me, as I am a part of you.

That's American.

Sometimes perhaps you don't want to be a part of me.

Nor do I often want to be a part of you.

But we are, that's true!

As I learn from you,

I guess you learn from me –

although you're older – and white –

and somewhat more free.

This is my page for English B.

Questions for discussion (4-6)

- 1) In your opinion, what are some of the concepts that set Americans apart from the rest of the world?
- 2) Do Caucasian-Americans have more freedom than Americans of different ethnic backgrounds?

YOU HAVE TO BE DEAF TO UNDERSTAND

by William Madsen

What is it like to hear a hand?
You have to be deaf to understand.

What is it like to be a small child
in a school, in a room void of sound;
with a teacher who talks and talks and
and then when she comes around to you
She expects you to know what she's said?

What is it like to have to depend
upon one who can hear to phone a friend?
Or place a call to a business firm
and be forced to share what's personal, and,
then find your message wasn't clear?

What is it like to be deaf and alone
in the company of those who can hear?

What is it like to comprehend
some nimble fingers that paint the scene
and make you smile and feel serene
with the spoken word of the moving hand
that makes you a part of the world at large?

What is it like to hear a hand?
You have to be deaf to understand.

Questions for discussion (4-6)

- 1) Do you have a friend who is physically disabled? Do any of your classmates have a physical disability?
- 2) What do you know about the deaf?
- 3) Is your school accessible to the disabled? Imagine being in a wheelchair, and trying to get around the campus. Are water fountains low enough? Do bathrooms have hand-rails?

Activities (4-6)

- 1) Blindfold yourself, and, with a classmate, try to find your way around the classroom.
- 2) Sit in a wheel chair, and do the same.

FROM THE CHEROKEE PERSPECTIVE

by Carol Cucumber

Little is really known about the American Indian,
or what links our human soul with the earth.
We believed this land was created for us by the Great Spirit
and that it would be ours ...

forever.

The new world
this is what the white man called our land ...
but it was not new at all
we inhabited America for centuries ...

Where today is the Pequot?
Where are the Narragansetts?
The Mohawks? The Cherokees?
They have vanished ... as snow before a summer sun.

CHIEF SEATTLE SPEAKS

When the last red man shall have become a myth
among the white men. When your children's children
find themselves alone in the field,
upon the highway,
or in the pathless woods,
they will not be all alone.

In all the earth there is no place dedicated to
solitude.

At night when the streets of your cities
are silent and you think them deserted,
we will throng with the returning hosts that once filled
them and still fill this beloved land.

There is no death. Only a change of worlds.

Questions for discussion (4-6)

- 1) What do you know about Native American Indians?
- 2) Where are the major Native American Indians' Reservations?
- 3) If you and your family were forced out of your home by strangers, how would you feel?
- 4) What do you think about how settlers treated the Indians?
- 5) Do you think the American Indians are being treated fairly today? Explain.
- 6) If you were part of a space colonization team, and came upon a planet of technologically inferior but thinking beings, what – in the true spirit of America – would you do?

DIARIES OF SLAVES

by Anonymous

I'm so thankful we are free.

Free?

We would go to the woods at night where we sang and prayed
for freedom ...

I know some day we'll be free but if we die before that time
our children will live to see it ...

I remember just as good as if it was yesterday what Mammy Mary
said when she told us the first news of our freedom.

'You all is free now...you dont none of you belong to mister
Lord North nor mister Alec no more!'

What does I remember about de war?
Well.... it was fit to fetch our freedom...
That's what I remember about de war...

GRASS

by Carl Sandburg

Pile the bodies high at Austerlitz and Waterloo
shovel then under and let me work –
I am the grass; I cover all.

And pile them high at Gettysburg
and pile them high at Ypres and Verdun.
Shovel them under and let me work.

Two years, ten years, and passengers ask the conductor:
What place is this?
Where are we now?

I am the grass.
Let me work.

Questions for discussion (4-6)

- 1) What does freedom mean to you?
- 2) What freedoms are guaranteed by law to all Americans?

About Rome Shakespeare Festival

Rome Shakespeare Festival is a professional theatre company headquartered in Rome, Georgia, touring classical curriculum-based programming, musicals and workshops to schools, colleges and theatres to student and general audiences in Georgia, Alabama, Florida and other surrounding states. The company is committed to artistic integrity and excellence. Performances carry with them teaching artists who conduct curriculum-based, hands-on workshops on school sites. The company is a 501c3 non-profit, managed by Gail Deschamps (*Artistic Director*) and by Tracy Hellriegel (*Managing Director*).

VOCABULARY

| | |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Constitution | The basic written law of a politically organized body |
| Democracy | Government by the people, exercised either directly or through elected representatives. A political or social unit that has such a government. |
| Heritage | Something passed down from previous generations; tradition |
| Hibiscus | A tropical American shrub with large flowers in a variety of colors |
| Unalienable | Incapable of being given up, taken away or transferred to another |
| Responsibility | The condition or fact of being responsible; duty; accountability |
| Throng | A large group of people gathered together; to form a multitude. |
| Tooled Stones | Dense rocks which have been shaped to form hand axes, scrapers, weapons, and other tools. |
| Nimble | Quick, light, or agile in movement or action; deft. |
| Amendment | An alteration or change for the better; a revision or change made in a bill, motion or law |
| Ani-Yun-Wiya | Cherokee, The Real People |
| Mameys | Apricots in Haiti; mamey-apple in Trinidad |

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Declaration of Independence * Poor Richard's Almanacs * Georgia & Florida Student Poetry * Carol Cucumber * Benjamin Franklin * Norman Rockwell * Robert Conley * Robert Frost * Countee Cullen * Holt * Rinehart * Maya Angelou * Emily Dickinson * T.W. Higginson * Frederick Douglas * Willard Madsen * Gabriel Lopez * Dr. Martin Luther King * Lawrence Ferlinghetti * Abraham Lincoln * John F. Kennedy * Thomas Gunderson * Felix Morrisseau-Leroy * Susan Griffin * Adrienne Rich * Ogden Nash * Walt Whitman * America The Beautiful * This Land is Your Land * Look Out America * Charlie Brown Theme * Billie Holliday * Appalachian Themes * Aaron Copeland * Encarta 95 * Van K. Brock * Tom Whitecloud * Miller Williams * Chief Seattle * Dorothy Parker * Alice Walker * Peter Michelson * Roger Cooper, Bridge News/Knight/Ridder/Tribune.







