



TEACHER'S GUIDE

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TOPICS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

1. Learning about Liberia
2. Tensions between indigenous peoples and colonizers
3. Women in Wartime

This Teacher's Guide is designed to be used in the classroom along with Milwaukee Rep's PlayGuide for *Eclipsed*. These are some suggested activities for your classroom. The PlayGuide is available online at <https://www.milwaukee rep.com/shows/show/eclipsed/>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In what ways have divisions by race, ethnicity, religion, etc. impacted your life or your community? Our country?
2. Whom do you turn to for support? Why? How do they demonstrate their support and care?
3. What dreams and goals do you have for yourself and your future? What obstacles must you overcome to achieve them?
4. Are there particular stories, popular culture, films, or television that connect you with others? How so? Why do you think these common bits of cultural knowledge bring people together?
5. What lengths would you go to in order to be safe from harm? To keep your family safe from harm?

LEARNING ABOUT LIBERIA

Utilize the articles in the PlayGuide to help students familiarize themselves with Liberia and the Civil Wars during which the play takes place. The following activities will help students to learn more about Liberia's founding and its people:

THE FOUNDING OF A NATION

Liberia was colonized by freed American slaves in the 1800s. Have students do some research on the real people who were a part of these early groups of Americans to settle in Liberia, as well as the members of the American Colonization Society (ACS). Also work with students to research the story of the founding of Liberia. Then have students select a character to portray in role, based upon a real person or an amalgamation of people involved in the colonization process. In class, have students create a role play of an ACS meeting or an initial planning meeting for the colonization of a colony for freed slaves. At the end of the role play, lead students in a discussion of the moral implications of the colonization plan and whether they believe it was the right choice.

THE PEOPLE OF LIBERIA

While there are many wonderful resources available about Liberia and its people, two with powerful visuals and the stories of Liberian citizens are *Long Story Bit by Bit* by Tim Hetherington and *Women are Heroes* by JR (this book also has profiles about women around the world). Share with students some of the profiles from these books and have them reflect on the people and images they discover, either in writing or in small groups. The Hetherington book also has some excellent images of the country of Liberia and images from the wars.

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TENSIONS BETWEEN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND COLONIZERS

Throughout Liberia's history, there have been tensions between the Americo-Liberian settlers and their descendants and the indigenous tribes. This tension is not unique to Liberia. Have students research a country, state, or even a city where tensions between indigenous people and colonizers led to war, disease, or a number of other tragedies. Students can share their findings through an oral presentation to the entire class, through a poster display somewhere in the school, or through a digital form available to outside audiences.

CIVIL WARS AROUND THE WORLD

American students are often familiar with the American Civil War and perhaps the French Revolution, but many do not know much about civil wars in other parts of the world. Break students into small groups and assign each group a civil war to research. What were the causes? Who were the main combatants? How did it impact the country's people, economy, land, etc.? Did outsiders intervene? How was it resolved? Students should create some infographics illustrating important facts about the war they have researched to be shared with classmates.

WOMEN IN WARTIME

The play focuses on women in wartime and the impact that the war plays on their lives and their country. Have students research a notable woman during wartime, either in Liberia (perhaps Leymah Gwobee, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, or Black Diamond) or another country. Students should then write a monologue based on what they have learned about this woman. Who would their audience be? What are they talking about? Have students perform their monologues for the class or share them as personal narratives with images of the woman they researched if they are uncomfortable with performing.

PROMOTING PEACE

Liberia was able to find peace because of the actions of its citizens who stood up and raised their voices for change. Share with students the article in the PlayGuide about the women's peace movement in Liberia. You may also want to show students one of the documentaries listed in the PlayGuide. After students have learned about the peace movement in Liberia and the power of social engagement and action, have them create their own social action plans. How can they bring more peace, love, kindness, and safety to our community and our country? If time allows, have students work towards implementing elements of their plans (this is a great activity to do in small groups throughout the semester).

THE POWER OF ART

In the book *Women are Heroes*, photographer JR highlights women throughout the world (including Liberia) by creating large scale portraits and then pasting copies of them throughout the communities in which these women live. In *Eclipsed*, Danaï Gurira gives voices to thousands of women who had no voices during the war. Encourage students to think about how they can use the arts to bring to the forefront stories of everyday people in their lives. Once students have an idea, have them either create a model/prototype on a smaller scale to present their vision. If possible, have students implement their visions through writing, visual art, or media and share them with the community!

If you utilize any of the activities above, please share them with us at Milwaukee Rep! We would love to see your students' work. Email Auburn Matson at amatson@milwaukee.com with any work samples you would love for us to see.



Liberian women protest for peace. Image credits: CNN and Face2FaceAfrica.

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STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.8 Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1 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.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.5 Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

WI TP.Cr.16.h: Characterization: Create vivid, complex and well-rounded characters that authentically represent the text with defined action.

WI TP.Cr.18.h: Text/Script: Devise an original or adapt an existing work that incorporates dramatic structure.

WI TP.P.16.h: Oral Communication: Create truthful, authentic vocal choices based on an internal, emotional interpretation of text

WI TP.P.17.h: Nonverbal Communication: Demonstrate a character's inner life by utilizing techniques of physical expression and movement to convey subtext.

WI TP.R.12.h: View Performance: Demonstrate developmentally appropriate audience etiquette at a professional performance.

WI TP.Cn.14.h: Research: Explain performance choices based on the "given circumstances," environmental and situational conditions of a theatrical work.

WI SEL 5.11-12. Social Awareness: Learners will be able to demonstrate connectedness, through empathy and engagement to their communities.

WI SEL 10.11-12. Self-Management: Learners will be able to set short- and long-term group goals, and create a plan to execute those goals. They will be able to analyze progress and collaborate to adjust goals when needed.

WI SEL 14.11-12. Social Awareness: Learners will be able to develop ethical arguments from a variety of ethical positions to evaluate societal norms.

WI SEL 24. 11-12. Decision Making, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills: Learners will be able to analyze opportunities to improve their community and engage in civic activities to influence issues impacting various communities.



MILWAUKEE REP EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The Education Department offers backstage tours, pre- and post-show workshops and classroom residencies.

CONTACT US:

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For questions or to schedule a workshop, please contact:

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