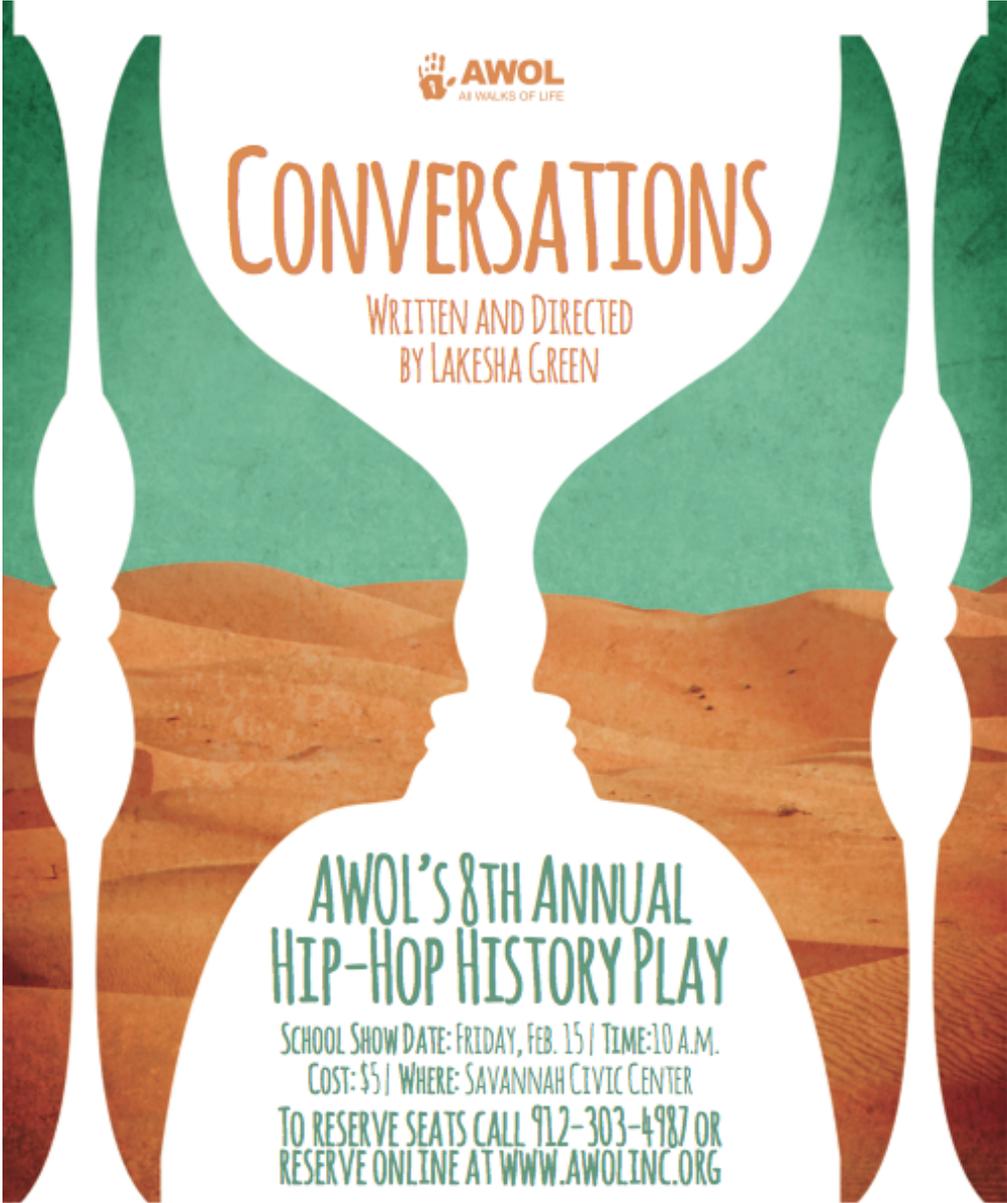


AWOL All Walks of Life, Inc. Learning in the Classroom



CONVERSATIONS

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED
BY LAKESHA GREEN



AWOL'S 8TH ANNUAL HIP-HOP HISTORY PLAY

SCHOOL SHOW DATE: FRIDAY, FEB. 15 / TIME: 10 A.M.
COST: \$5 | WHERE: SAVANNAH CIVIC CENTER
TO RESERVE SEATS CALL 912-303-4987 OR
RESERVE ONLINE AT WWW.AWOLINC.ORG



Curriculum Guide 2013

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AWOL All Walks of Life, Inc. is Savannah's award winning non-profit youth arts and technology program. Our mission is to promote and provide self-awareness through the use of Poetry, Hip-Hop and Life. This mission is met by providing youth with high quality arts and humanities programs during the hours most relevant to them, after school and at night. AWOL programs are provided in an environment that encourages respect, creativity, education and most of all non-violence. Since 2003, AWOL has enrolled over 900 youth from Savannah and the Coastal Empire. The vision our organization is to provide youth with authentic and engaging arts education with a commitment to the holistic development of youth in concert with a focus on parental and community involvement.



Play Synopsis; Conversations: The play is set in a lounge called Conversations owned by a dancer named Billie Hughes who comes back from New York to start a new life. The play takes a poetic and musical journey through past, present, and future conversations. In life we have conversations everyday, rather they be good or bad, it is an important aspect of human communication and the life decisions we all make. Please have your students read and study the works of Langston Hughes' prior to the show. Be sure to assign your students work over the coming weeks that speaks to his historical and cultural contributions to our society.



About: James Mercer Langston Hughes (February 1,1902 – May 22,1967) was an American poet, social activist, novelist, playwright, and columnist. Hughes was one of the earliest innovators of the then-new literary art form Jazz Poetry. Hughes is best known for his work during the Harlem Renaissance; he famously wrote about the period when "the negro was in vogue", this was later paraphrased as "when Harlem was in vogue". During the mid-1950s and -1960s, Hughes' popularity among the younger generation of black writers varied even as his reputation increased worldwide. With the gradual advancement toward racial integration, many black writers considered his writings of black pride and its corresponding subject matter out of date. They considered him a racist chauvinist. He found some new writers, including James Baldwin, lacking in such pride, over intellectual in their work, and occasionally vulgar. Hughes wanted young black writers to be objective about their race, but not to scorn it or flee it. He understood the main points of the Black Power movement of the 1960s, but believed that some of the younger black writers who supported it were too angry in their work. Hughes's work *Panther and the Lash*, posthumously published in 1967, was intended to show solidarity with these writers, but with more skill and devoid of the most virulent anger and racial chauvinism some showed toward whites. Hughes continued to have admirers among the larger younger generation of black writers. He often helped writers by offering advice and introducing them to other influential persons in the literature and publishing communities. This latter group, including Alice Walker, whom Hughes discovered, looked upon Hughes as a hero and an example to be emulated within their own work.

Lesson Plan

Materials: pens, paper, journals, access to internet, whiteboard, arts supplies for group work (markers, crayons, glue, scissors, old magazines, ect.)

Time: 45-60 min classroom sessions

Summary

This language arts lesson offers a hands-on opportunity for students to understand characterization in poetry and to connect historical and contemporary culture. Through research and study of Langston Hughes, students will gain a deeper understanding of Hughes work and how his work is still very relevant to our everyday lives.

Hughes Poetry used in Conversations:

Below is a list of the Langston Hughes Poetry used in this year's AWOL production. Teachers can select one of the poems below to read as a class or assign several to groups of students to do special projects on over the coming weeks leading up to the show. Special projects suggestions would be developing short skits centered around the context of the poem, creation of art projects such as collages, or poster board murals that speak to the meaning and context of the work.

Pre-Show Classroom Activities

Have your students read each poem or you may select 1-2 for critical analysis. Have students identify and interpret meaning within the poems prior to coming to the show. Have the students examine the authors choice of words and look for meaning within the text as they study the poem. Have students apply their interpretations to modern day circumstances and events.

Post-Show Classroom Activities

Have students write a reflective essay on how each poem was portrayed in the production. How did the characters change based on student understanding of the poem prior to the show.

Daybreak in Alabama

*When I get to be a composer,
I'm gonna write me some music about,
Daybreak in Alabama,
And I'm gonna put the purtiest songs in it,
Rising out of the ground like a swamp mist,
And falling out of heaven like soft dew.
I'm gonna put some tall tall trees in it,
And the scent of pine needles
And the smell of red clay after rain,
And long red necks,
And poppy colored faces,
And big brown arms,
And the field daisy eyes,
Of black and white black white black people,
And I'm gonna put white hands,
And black hands and brown and yellow hands,
And red clay earth hands in it
Touching everybody with kind fingers,
And touching each other natural as dew,
In that dawn of music when I,
Get to be a composer,
And write about daybreak,
In Alabama.*

Democracy

*Democracy will not come, Today, this year, Nor ever,
Through compromise and fear.
I have as much right,
As the other fellow has To stand
On my two feet
And own the land.*

*I tire so of hearing people say,
Let things take their course.
Tomorrow is another day.
I do not need my freedom when I'm dead.
I cannot live on tomorrow's bread.*

*Freedom
Is a strong seed
Planted
In a great need.*

*I live here, too.
I want freedom
Just as you.*

Dream Variations

*To fling my arms wide
In some place of the sun,
To whirl and to dance
Till the white day is done.
Then rest at cool evening
Beneath a tall tree
While night comes on gently,
Dark like me-
That is my dream!*

*To fling my arms wide
In the face of the sun,
Dance! Whirl! Whirl!
Till the quick day is done.
Rest at pale evening...
A tall, slim tree...
Night coming tenderly
Black like me.*

Dreams

*Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.
Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.*

Harlem [Dream Deferred]

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up

like a raisin in the sun?

Or fester like a sore—

And then run?

Does it stink like rotten meat?

Or crust and sugar over—

like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags

like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

Helen Keller

She,

In the dark,

Found light

Brighter than many ever see.

She,

Within herself,

Found loveliness,

Through the soul's own mastery.

And now the world receives

From her dower:

The message of the strength

Of inner power.

I Continue To Dream

I take my dreams and make of them a bronze vase

and a round fountain with a beautiful statue in its center.

And a song with a broken heart and I ask you:

Do you understand my dreams?

Sometimes you say you do,

*And sometimes you say you don't.
Either way it doesn't matter.
I continue to dream.*

I, Too

*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.

Peace

*We passed their graves:
The dead men there,
Winners or losers,
Did not care.
In the dark
They could not see
Who had gained
The victory.*

National Standards:

- 1 Students will read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.
- 2 Students will read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.
- 3 Students will apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
- 4 Students will adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes

Georgia Performance Standards: Theater Arts

1. Analyzing and constructing meaning from theatrical experiences, dramatic literature, and electronic media

- a. Examines various theories of dramatic structure from Aristotle to present*
- b. Uses standards of literary dramatic analysis to study theatrical production*
- c. Constructs arguments that relate the theme/s of a theatre production to the enhancement of the human experience*

2. Developing scripts through improvisation and other theatrical methods.

- a. Produces scripts based on personal experiences, heritage, imagination, literature, and history
- b. Connects appropriate form and structure to script creation
- c. Applies standard theatrical conventions to producing scripts

3. Acting by developing, communicating, and sustaining roles within a variety of situations and environments.

- a. Examines the skills and tasks associated with acting on stage*
- b. Explores the development of an actor's skills and resources*
- c. Creates characters using the tools and resources of acting to a variety of formal and informal performances*
- d. Analyzes and applies observation skills for character creation*

Georgia Performance Standards: English Literature

1. The student identifies, analyzes, and applies knowledge of theme in literary works from various genres and provides evidence from the works to support understanding. The student:

- a) Applies knowledge of the concept that the theme or meaning of a selection represents a universal view or comment on life or society and provides support from the text for the identified theme.*
- b) Evaluates how an author's choice of words advances the theme or purpose of a work.*
- c) Applies knowledge of the concept that a text can contain more than one theme.*
- d) Compares and contrasts the presentation of a theme or topic across genres and explains how the selection of genre affects the delivery of universal ideas about life and society.*