

Understanding By Design Unit Template

The Glass Menagerie and the plays of Tennessee Williams	Grade Level	High School
Theatre	Time Frame	50 minutes
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Identify Desired Results (Stage 1)		
Content Standards		
Theatre, Grades 9-12: Reading and Writing Scripts		
2.11: Students will...read plays from a variety of genres and styles; compare and contrast the structure of plays to the structures of other forms of literature.		
Understandings	Essential Questions	
Students will understand that any individual story is shaped by factors such as point of view, tone, structure, and narrative voice. These conventions affect our understanding of the events depicted in the text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might one’s memory of a life event change over time? • How reliable is a first person narrator? • How do narrators shape our view of other characters (within a play or novel)? • What is a theme? Does every story have a theme? • Is “theme” inherent in a text, or do themes emerge based on our individual interpretations? • What does this play have in common with the modern realism plays we studied in our last unit? What about the play’s style could be considered a departure from realism? • What do you use as an escape in your life? 	
Knowledge Students will know...	Skills Students will be able to...	

- Tennessee Williams was one of the most influential American playwrights of the 20
- The Glass Menagerie is a “memory play,” and the main events of the play are presented as flashbacks existing in the narrator’s memories.
- Tom functions as both the narrator of the play and a character within the story, a common literary device in drama and fiction.

- Identify various structural and stylistic conventions used by playwrights.
- Discuss the role of memory in affecting our understanding of past events.
- Analyze a monologue from the text and infer what the character’s actions might be and how the story might unfold.
- Understand what a playwright’s reasons might be for choosing a particular narrative structure.

Assessment Evidence (Stage 2)

Performance Task Description

Students will perform scenes from The Glass Menagerie in groups of two or three. They will demonstrate an understanding of character, relationships and objectives, as well as scene dynamic and structure. Students’ understanding and growth will be assessed based on the scene that they present in class, discussions with the teacher and fellow students about the events of the individual scene, and journal entries and character analyses that each student will submit for review.

Other Evidence

We will assess students’ day-to-day understanding through discussions, journals, and in-class exercises and activities.

Learning Plan (Stage 3)

Learning Activities:

1. Improv Activity: Students are divided into two groups. Group B leaves the room. Group A circles up to play "One Word Story." One volunteer from Group B enters, and a volunteer from Group A summarizes the story. The rest of Group B enters, and they must act out the story while the original volunteer from Group B narrates. (10 minutes)
2. Students circle up and discuss the activity. What about the story changed over time? What does this tell us about memory, how memories change over time, and how individual narrators can shape a story in different ways? Introduce The Glass Menagerie and the concept of a memory play. (5 minutes)
3. Pass out copies of Tom's opening monologue. Students read the monologue aloud as a group, one sentence at a time. (5 minutes)
4. Students make a list in their journals, imagining that they are an audience member who has just watched the opening monologue. What do they already know about the play, just from hearing this monologue? What do they guess? What questions do they have about the play, the story, the structure, or the characters? (3 minutes)
5. Students choose one item from each list to write on a piece of butcher paper. (2 minutes)
6. Discussion: Why might Tennessee Williams have structured the play this way? What does having Tom as both narrator and character do for the story? Do you have any questions about the text we just read? How reliable is a "memory play"? (5 minutes)
7. Students divide up into groups of three and read Scene 1 aloud within their groups. (20 minutes)

Where are your students headed? Where have they been? How will you make sure the students know where they are going?

Students have been studying an overview of dramatic literature, including Greek drama, Shakespeare, and modern realism. This lesson will introduce the text of Glass Menagerie to students and get them thinking about concepts such as dramatic structure and the role of the narrator. While analyzing the style of The Glass Menagerie, students will explore aspects of the play that are realistic and aspects that are a departure from realism. Students will then be able to compare the structure of a memory play to the more linear structure of Ibsen's Doll's House.

How will you hook students at the beginning of the unit?

We will play a fun, silly improv game that will engage the students and also introduce the style of The Glass Menagerie as 'memory play'.

What events will help students experience and explore the big idea and questions in the unit? How will you equip them with needed skills and knowledge?

Students will explore major ideas through journaling, improv games, and text exploration. We will discuss as a group after each activity to reinforce the key ideas in the unit. We will also assign each student a scene from the play to rehearse and perform for the class, thereby giving them the opportunity to analyze the text in-depth and to develop their acting skills.

How will you cause students to reflect and rethink? How will you guide them in rehearsing, revising, and refining their work?

Students will journal after reading aloud the opening monologue. They will reflect on what they now know about the play and what they can surmise only from the opening. We will follow the journaling with a teacher-led discussion on the structure of the play and how we can infer things from text.

<p>How will you help students to exhibit and self-evaluate their growing skills, knowledge, and understanding throughout the unit?</p>	<p>Use the Liz Lerman’s Critical Response Process to have the students give feedback on the scenes they present in class. This would allow students to evaluate their peers in a nonjudgemental way and guide their own evaluations by asking questions of their peers.</p>
<p>How will you tailor and otherwise personalize the learning plan to optimize the engagement and effectiveness of ALL students, without compromising the goals of the unit?</p>	<p>Each student will be assigned a scene from the play to work on over the course of the unit. Scenes and characters will be chosen based on each student’s skill set and the areas in which they can improve as performers and text analysts. The learning plan will be tailored to include every type of learner by utilizing performance, journaling, discussion, improvisation, and image work.</p>
<p>How will you organize and sequence the learning activities to optimize the engagement and achievement of ALL students?</p>	<p>We will alternate discussions with hands-on activities to accommodate all types of learners.</p>

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