**Spanish Golden Age Theatre**

by Shawnda Moss

*Some of this unit’s instruction, activities, etc. originally designed by Kim McKechnie*

**Unit Objective:**

Students will demonstrate an understanding of Spanish Golden Age theatre by exploring Spanish life and conventions of the time and performing a scene from a Spanish Golden Age play.

\*This unit involves reading *Fuente Ovejuna* together as a class. Reading analysis, prompt discussion questions, etc. are NOT included, but may be desired. Feel free to use the reading guide here and create your own discussion and analysis points or perhaps only use scenes or such. The days the readings are incorporated may mean that the lesson takes longer than one class period; adjustments can easily be made by cutting some activities or simply letting the lessons run over one right after the other regardless of school days. This site has a good detailed summary and background to help students navigate the script: <http://www.spainthenandnow.com/spanish-literature/fuenteovejuna-summary/default_229.aspx>\*

\*This unit also incorporated a routine that the theatre teacher has established at his school: to watch a little bit of a filmed play or musical and answer writing prompts about the clip each day. When this unit was first taught the musical *Evita* was the film choice, but the curriculum was written without a specific film in mind.\*

**Learning Level:**

Advanced Drama

**Previous Experience:**

Experience in theatre performance skills and analytical script analysis, tableau work

**Class Length:**

80 minute class-periods

**National Standards:**

**Advanced TH:Cr2.1.HSIII** a. Develop and synthesize original ideas in a drama/theatre work utilizing critical analysis, historical and cultural context, research, and western or non-western theatre traditions.   
b. Collaborate as a creative team to discover artistic solutions and make interpretive choices in a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

**Advanced TH:Cr3.1.HSIII** a. Refine, transform, and re-imagine a devised or scripted drama/theatre work using the rehearsal process to invent or re-imagine style, genre, form, and conventions.   
b. Synthesize ideas from research, script analysis, and context to create a performance that is believable, authentic, and relevant in a drama/theatre work.  
**Proficient TH:Pr6.1.HSI** a. Perform a scripted drama/theatre work for a specific audience.

**Proficient TH:Re7.1.HSI** a. Respond to what is seen, felt, and heard in a drama/theatre work to develop criteria for artistic choices.

**Advanced TH:Re8.1.HSIII** a. Use detailed supporting evidence and appropriate criteria to revise personal work and interpret the work of others when participating in or observing a drama/ theatre work.

**Proficient TH:Cn10.1.HSI** a. Investigate how cultural perspectives, community ideas and personal beliefs impact a drama/theatre work.

**Accomplished TH:Cn11.1.HSII** a. Integrate conventions and knowledge from different art forms and other disciplInés to develop a cross-cultural drama/theatre work.

**Advanced TH:Cn11.2.HSIII** b. Present and support an opinion about the social, cultural, and historical understandings of a drama/theatre work, based on critical research.

**Big Idea:** Theatre can be an important part of society.

**Essential Questions:** How does the culture surrounding theatre affect how it is written?

**Enduring Understandings:** How to recognize and stage Spanish Golden Age theatre

**Lessons:** \*see above resource for help with play analysis points in lessons 2-4\*

**Lesson 1: Spanish Golden Age Introduction**

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate their understanding of Structuralism and Spanish Golden Age theatre and culture by completing work station assignments.

**Lesson 2: *Auto Sacramentales* (*Fuente Ovejuna* Act 1)**

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate their understanding of the style of *auto sacramentales* by creating a contemporary *loa* scene. Students will read Act I of *Fuente Ovejuna* together as a class.

**Lesson 3: *Loas* Performance (*Fuente Ovejuna* Act II)**

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate their ability to connect Spanish Golden Age *loas* to contemporary stories with a moral by performing an original *loa*. Students will read Act II of *Fuente Ovejuna* together as a class.

**Lesson 4: *Entreméses* (*Fuente Ovejuna* Act III)**

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate their understanding of *entremés* by taking notes and expressing how *entreméses* would have worked in *Fuente Ovejuna*. Students will read Act III of *Fuente Ovejuna* together as a class.

**Lesson 5: *Entreméses* Staged Reading & *Fuente Ovejuna* Act III Quiz**

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate their ability to perform in the style of *entremés* by conducting a staged reading of an *entremés* script. Students will demonstrate their understanding of Act III of *Fuente Ovejuna* by taking a quiz.

**Lesson 6: *Fuente Ovejuna* Review**

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate their understanding of the play *Fuente Ovejuna* by participating in Half-Life Review and class discussions.

**Lesson 7: *Fuente Ovejuna* Given Circumstances**

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate their ability to act according to given circumstances by analyzing and beginning rehearsals for their *Fuente Ovejuna* scenes.

**Lesson 8: Conflict, Action and *Machismo***

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate the ability use conflict and obstacles in their scene by exploring actions of the characters in their scene.

**Lesson 9: SGA Test & Preview**

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate their ability to act in a scene by previewing their Fuente Ovejuna scene. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the Spanish Golden Age by successfully completing a test.

**Lesson 10: *Fuente Ovejuna* Performances**

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate their understanding of Spanish Golden Age Theatre by performing a scene from *Fuente Ovejuna*.

**Lesson 1:**

**Spanish Golden Age Introduction**

**Objective:**

Students will demonstrate their understanding of Structuralism and Spanish Golden Age theatre and culture by completing work station assignments.

**Materials Needed:**

Structuralism PowerPoint

Film

PechaKucha PowerPoint – images and script

Workstation Worksheet for each student

Workstation items: directions for each station and…

1. Fuente Ovejuna handout, script for each student

2. Fan language handout, blank white paper, markers or colored pencils or crayons

3. Spanish Golden Age Information handout

4. Burial of Count Orgaz Information handout, El Greco painting on computer or printed out <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Burial_of_the_Count_of_Orgaz>

HOOK:

Introduce the film. Watch the first minutes of the film. Stop here and have a little instruction: What kind of overall subject to society at large can you see? (a city, a family, etc.) What are pieces that you see that show us more about that larger subject (individuals going to work on public transportation, sisters, specific behavior or language, etc.). Continue watching more of the film and have students respond in their journals what large subjects and what smaller pieces that contribute to the large subjects they find in the film. After completing the film viewing, call on some students to share their answers. If other students had a similar large subject have them contribute to the smaller pieces they discovered.

INSTRUCTION:

Introduce students to Structuralism – the lens by which we will study Spanish Golden Age theatre. Set up the PowerPoint to teach the main points of this critical theory. Students should be taking notes and pay special attention to the two French terms used in Structuralism.

Slides 1, 2 introduce the theory

Slide 3: Example of langue and parole (I remember them by using their first initial as a clue – ***parole*** is a ***piece*** of something and ***langue*** is the ***large*** picture that the piece fits into): The outfit I’m wearing today is an example of a parole. My entire wardrobe at home is the larger structure, the langue, which this one outfit fits into. You can understand more about my style and my wardrobe by looking at this separate outfit and you can understand more about this one outfit by looking at my entire closet and seeing where this outfit falls in the range of my different outfits.

Slide 4: Using the prompts on the PP slide, have students come up with ideas of *paroles* that fit within the *langue* given in the prompt.

Refer to the film viewing – the larger subjects (*langue*) and the smaller contributing parts (*paroles*).

GROUP PRACTICE: (Slide 5 - Connection)

Have students turn to a partner and together choose a *langue* that connects with medieval theatre and some *paroles* that fit into that langue. Have them share their thoughts with another partnership.

Come back together as a class and answer the last slide question together. In order to apply the ideas of Structuralism to Spanish Golden Age we need to learn about that time period, right?

INSTRUCTION:

Give the Spanish Golden Age Pecha Kucha. The slides in the PowerPoint should already be set up to change automatically every twenty seconds. The script is to be read with the paragraph breaks lining up as closely as possible to the slide changes. (Google *Pecha Kucha* for an idea of what this form of presentation/lecture is) At the end of the presentation ask students how we can use the theory of structuralism to help us in our study of Spanish Golden Age. Based on what you now know about SGA, what *parole* and *langue* do you see in that theatrical time period?

WORK STATION DIRECTIONS:

Using what they know about Structuralism and SGA, students will participate in four work stations. All four have to do with Spanish culture or Spanish Golden Age theatre. You will divide the class into four groups and have them rotate around to each station. They will have ten minutes at each station. Feel free to take as long as wanted and run over into another class period.

Explain the work stations to the students and describe how their worksheet will be completed at each work station:

**Station 1: *Fuente Ovejuna***

Students will read through the play background and synopsis on the provided handout. Students will then complete the worksheet questions on the play. They can start reading the play now if they have extra time before rotating.

**Station 2: Fan Language**

Students will read the handout on Fan Language and spend a few minutes decorating and folding their own fan. Then they need to partner up and practice using fan language with a partner by drawing three numbers from the container and utilizing the corresponding fan language communication in the scene. They will write their three numbers on the worksheet as well as a 1-2 sentence description of the scene created.

**Station 3: Spanish Society**

Students will examine the documents about Spanish society: social hierarchy/status, professions, rules of behavior, etc. at the station and follow the directions on the worksheet to complete the work.

**Station 4: El Greco Painting**

Have a computer or tablet set up or print out a color copy of El Greco’s painting of “The Burial of the Count of Orgaz”. Students will read the handout provided about the painting, look over the painting itself, and then answer the corresponding questions on the handout.

WORK STATION PRACTICE:

Have students pick up their worksheet and go with their group to their assigned starting work station. Give them a one-minute warning before each rotation. Float around the room to monitor their progress.

CLOSURE:

Take the last few minutes of class to highlight some of the things the students learned in the work stations. Perhaps ask: “What was your favorite station – why?” or “What did you learn about Spanish culture or society that was a discovery?” or “What kind of ‘fan language’ do we use in today’s contemporary American society – could text be a unique kind of social language that we use?”

**Lesson 2:**

***Auto Sacramentales* (*Fuente Ovejuna* Act 1)**

**Objective:**

Students will demonstrate their understanding of the style of *auto sacramentales* by creating a contemporary *loa* scene. Students will read Act I of *Fuente Ovejuna* together as a class.

**Materials Needed:**

Film

*Fuente Ovejuna* scripts

*Loa to the Divine Narcissus* copies

HOOK:

Show ten minutes or so of the filmed play. Have the students look for a theme or message of the play so far. What is something that the audience needs to learn from the play? Ask some students to share in one phrase “the moral of the play is….”.

SCRIPT READING:

Be sure that every student has a script of *Fuente Ovejuna*. Assign students to read for each role (take note who are readers so that others will be used in the future to give everyone an opportunity to read from the play out loud.

Remind students to remember what they have learned about Structuralism and Spanish society to help them understand better the context and culture of the play. Students may want to jot notes down as the act is being read in order to better follow the storyline as well as make connections to Structuralism and Spanish society—these notes will come in handy in later lessons when they choose a scene to perform and they’ve already got a foundation of insights, observations, etc. for the text.

Once the play exposition is firmly in place, pause the reading and ask the students: What kind of message or theme have you picked out of Act One of *Fuente Ovejuna*? Discuss briefly some of their answers and then continue reading. You can ask this again at the end of the act reading, or perhaps you can ask students what notes they jotted down; what elements of structuralism came into play or what other insights did they note, etc.?

Tell students there will be a quiz next class period on act 1 of *Fuente Ovejuna*.

INSTRUCTION: *(depending on how long the reading takes you go into this instruction – natural “break” points would be after the instruction/lecture; after reading the loa; and after giving students some time to begin creating their own contemporary loa—where you end can pick up at the beginning of the next class period as a hook)*

Ask the students to review for you what a miracle or a morality play is. Help students understand that the miracle and morality plays of the Spanish Golden Age were called *autos sacramentales*.

An *auto* is a one-act theatrical piece that is performed during Corpus Christi. They were initially performed under the watchful eyes of ecclesiastical authorities in churches across the country, but by the start of the 16th Century they moved out of churches and into the public plazas. When they moved from churches civic authorities saw to the finances and directions of the performances and with more money came more professional authors and actors.

In larger cities contractors sent in bids annually to make the stage and the carts (*carros*) that would carry all the stage machinery and props for the performance. The carts were so elaborate that when the company would do their rehearsal outside the city a few days before Corpus Christi, people would travel to the spot and camp out overnight to be able to see the carts.

The elaborate set-up of the *autos* and the festival atmosphere created by the procession were two of the main factors that contributed to the longevity of the auto in Spain, but it eventually strayed from their original purpose of portraying the sacrament in a reverent and sacred manner. Authorities contended against the elaborate nature of *autos* as well as the use of professional actors whose lifestyles were considered to be immoral. Obviously the use of a prostitute playing the part of the Virgin Mary would have its opponents.

In 1765 a royal decree was issued prohibiting *autos sacramentales*.

Have students take notes on the following information – this will be a part of the final unit test. Highlight elements of *autos sacramentales*:

* Associated with Corpus Christi, a festival that emphasizes the power of the church’s sacraments
* Human and supernatural characters with allegorical figures (Sin, Grace, Pleasure, Grief, Beauty, Time, etc.)
* Stories could be drawn from anywhere as long as they illustrated the value of the sacrament and validity of church doctrine
* Plays were mounted on *carros*; wagons that served as entrances to the stage and dressing rooms for the actors
* Troupes were chosen during Lent and in addition to being paid a sizeable fee, these companies were awarded exclusive rights to give public performances in Madrid between Easter and Corpus Christi. After Corpus Christi, the actors toured the *autos* to neighboring towns and performed them in public theaters of Madrid as well.
* Eight-twenty days before Corpus Christi the actors were required to give a preview performance before the city council. The council would then specify where they could perform.
* *Autos* were finally forbidden in 1765 because of the carnival spirit and objectionable content of farces and dances that were undesirable in religious plays, as well as the questionable morality of the actors who were performing religious plays.

GROUP PRACTICE:

Together the class will explore an *auto sacramentales* text called a *loa*. This is a short theatrical piece, a prologue, written to introduce plays of the SGA. They can be for *comedias* (secular plays) and *autos sacramentales* (sacred/religious plays).

Hand out copies of the *Loa to the Divine Narcissus*. The FEMALE author, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, is from Mexico. She wrote this in 1687 to enter in a competition for new *autos* in Madrid. She uses this *loa* here to introduce the themes of the *auto*, which uses the Greek story of Echo and Narcissus to allegorize the theological doctrine of the Eucharist (sacrament).

Assign roles and read the *loa* together as a class. Have students look for elements of Spanish culture and history in the text as they read.

At the end of the *loa*, discuss what students discovered in the text.

SMALL GROUP WORK:

Split students into groups of 5-6 to create a short modern *loa*. They can use contemporary themes, original ideas, or base their *loa* on an existing event or story. Think of a story with a moral – how can you portray that moral lesson theatrically? Their *loa* should be just a couple minutes long and should incorporate every group member somehow.

Give groups time to rehearse and develop their *loa*.

CLOSURE:

Encourage students to write down their contemporary *loa* idea in enough detail to be able to pick it up next class period and continue working on it. If an assessment is needed, have students submit their contemporary loa brainstorming sheet for points and return next class period.

**Lesson 3:**

***Loas* Performance (*Fuente Ovejuna* Act II)**

**Objective:**

Students will demonstrate their ability to connect Spanish Golden Age *loas* to contemporary stories with a moral by performing an original *loa*. Students will read Act II of *Fuente Ovejuna* together as a class.

**Materials Needed:**

*Fuente Ovejuna* scripts

*Fuente Ovejuna* Act I Quiz copies

Film

HOOK:

Give students a few minutes to get back into their groups and finish developing their *loa* that they began working on in the previous class period.

Have the groups present their *loas* and discuss them as examples of the Spanish form of *loas*/*autos*. What elements did they see clearly? How does this unique form communicate their message? What did they do to “modernize” the original *autos* idea?

FILM:

Play the next several minutes of the film and have students look at the piece to discover any kind of theme or “moral” or even learning experience of any of the characters. Have them journal their ideas.

QUIZ:

Give students two minutes to pull out their *Fuente Ovejuna* scripts and review them. They can ask you or their classmates any question they want about Act I to help them review.

Have the students put their scripts away and get into pairs. Give each partnership a quiz. Together, quietly, they are to answer the questions on the quiz. Give them five-six minutes to complete the quiz. Have them switch their papers with another partnership and grade the quiz aloud as a class.

SCRIPT READING:

Assign students to read the roles in Act II of *Fuente Ovejuna*. Encourage students to continue jotting down notes and observations; focusing especially on moments that they can ‘see’ clearly in their imagination (that could be interested to see staged). As needed, stop and change readers or have a few students share some of their notes and visualized moments from the act.

CLOSURE:

Have the students highlight for you where they are seeing the themes of love, honor, and valor come out in the text. How do these themes connect to the Spanish Golden Age? This theme discussion/review can be as an entire class or in smaller groups or even pairs.

**Lesson 4:**

***Entreméses* (*Fuente Ovejuna* Act III)**

**Objective:**

Students will demonstrate their understanding of *entremés* by taking notes and expressing how *entreméses* would have worked in *Fuente Ovejuna*. Students will read Act III of *Fuente Ovejuna* together as a class.

**Materials Needed:**

*Fuente Ovejuna* scripts

*Fuente Ovejuna* Act II Quiz copies

Film

HOOK:

Put students into groups of 4-5. Give them a few minutes to discuss what moment they want to stage from *Fuente Ovejuna* Act II. They are to create three tableaux to show this moment. They need to create a title for their work (one title for the moment they chose).

Have the groups perform their works.

QUIZ:

Highlight the tableaux work just performed as a review for Act II. Why did the groups choose the moments they did? How can those portrayals serve as reminder for what happened in Act II?

Hand out the Act II reading quiz. At the end of the five-minute quiz time give the students 20 seconds to go to any ONE person in the room and ask them anything about the quiz. They can only talk to one person and at the end of the twenty seconds they must give their quiz to someone else to grade. Count down the time.

Grade the quiz together as a class.

INSTRUCTION;

Today will be focused on learning about *entremés*. This is a short play that was performed in the Spanish Golden Age during intermission of a longer play or *comedia*. Have students share why they think it would be useful to have a play performed during intermission.

Have students take notes on the following information about *entreméses*:

* They were short, social satires with lots of physical comedy, music, and dance.
* The characters were familiar to urban audiences—characters they could relate to and laugh at such as foolish or dishonest doctors, lawyers and officials.
* The plot was little more than a succession of characters who engage in verbal sparring until the tension is resolved in the ritual climax of song and dance.
* They became popular because they were a light relief from the main action of the play; they distracted the audience during necessary changes in costume/scenery; they may even have been counted on rescue a struggling performance from failure.
* It was a world of low-comedy. Everyday people who were dealing with everyday problems (jealousy, money, etc.) and overcoming them with an ease at the end that wasn’t realistic.

FILM:

Show the next 5-8 minutes of the film. Have students write in their journals any connections they make in the film to the notes they just took about *entreméses*: in character, plot, physical comedy, music, social satire, etc.

Have seven students share something from their journal.

READING SCRIPT:

Assign students to read the roles in Act III of *Fuente Ovejuna*. Have students continue to jot down ideas and observations of Spanish Golden Age connections, etc.

At the conclusion of the reading, have students write either in their journal or in their notes what entreméses would have done if performed in between the acts of *Fuente Ovejuna*. What themes could those intermission performances have focused on? What type of music could have been used? How could the lighter, physical play have relieved the tension and drama of the play?

CONCLUSION:

Remind students that we will be reviewing as a class *Fuente Ovejuna* in class next time. If they have missed any reading or want to review any of the play they need to do so before next class.

**Lesson 5:**

***Entreméses* Staged Reading & *Fuente Ovejuna* Act III Quiz**

**Objective:**

Students will demonstrate their ability to perform in the style of *entremés* by conducting a staged reading of an *entremés* script. Students will demonstrate their understanding of Act III of *Fuente Ovejuna* by taking a quiz.

**Materials Needed:**

*The Divorce Court Judge* copies

*Fuente Ovejuna* Act III Quiz copies

Film

HOOK:

Has anyone watched any court TV shows (Judges Court, Judge Judy, etc.). Have someone who has seen one of these shows describe the style of the show and any of the story/case they remember. Ask students why this kind of show is entertaining? What about it draws our attention to watch? There are so many of these kinds of shows on television today; why? What does it say about our modern culture that we find such a show so interesting and entertaining?

CLASS PRACTICE:

Together as a class we are going to do a staged reading of parts of an *entremés* called *The Divorce Court Judge* by Miguel Cervantes. Anyone remember or know anything about Cervantes? (SGA writer; contemporary of Shakespeare – even died on the same day as Will; best known for writing *Don Quixote*, etc.)

This short play is about different couples coming into the court to plead their cases and ask for a divorce. Assign roles and have students stage the scenes (a judge, husband, wife, notary, and attorney for each scene). Have ‘audience member’ students follow along with their own script.

DISCUSSION:

After watching and reading the scenes together as a class, discuss together what kind of paroles of Spanish Golden Age theatre and culture were demonstrated in the short play. What, if anything, translated well to our modern culture and tastes? What didn’t translate well?

QUIZ:

Have students pull out their journals and write down six plot points from the third act of the play.

Pass out the Act II quiz. Students will take the quiz entirely solo. Upon conclusion of the quiz have them hand their quiz to another student to grade. Grade the quiz together as a class.

FILM:

In *Fuente Ovejuna*, there is a stirring monologue that Laurencia gives in Act III to the men in the village. This monologue is a great example of working through a partner (albeit a group of partners in this play) to get what you want. What does Laurencia want? What are tactics she uses to get the men to do what she wants?

Show the next several minutes of the film and focus on the characters and what they want. Have students journal about what 2-3 of the characters want and how they go about trying to get what they want. Discuss students’ answers together as a class – this connection of wanting something and going through a partner to get it.

CLOSURE:

Have students think about *Fuente Ovejuna* and what all those characters want. Have them start thinking about which character they’d like to portray and what scenes in the play are most interesting and engaging. They will be choosing a scene next class period.

**Lesson 6:**

***Fuente Ovejuna* Review**

**Objective:**

Students will demonstrate their understanding of the play *Fuente Ovejuna* by participating in Half-Life Review and class discussions.

**Materials Needed:**

Film

Scene Assignment copies

Pre-class: have the students divided into five groups for the scene assignment groups

HOOK:

PLAY REVIEW: HALF-LIFE & DISCUSSION:

Divide the class up into three groups and assign each group one of the acts of the play. They need to create a performance that hits all the major points of action and characters of their act in one minute.

Give them time to prepare their minute-performances. Have each group perform their one-minute acts in order 1-3. After each act discuss the act together—not plot points—what did they learn that was most important, what did they like most, what characters were most active and/or changed and why, etc.?

Then have them perform it again in order but only give them 30 seconds to perform their act in. They must “Half-Life” their act and reduce their time but still keep the most important points in. Have them perform a third time but with a 15-second time limit. This will only allow the absolute essentials to be a part of their performance.

INSTRUCTION:

Give a little background on playwright Lope de Vega (students should take notes):

He lived from 1562-1635.

He claimed to have written 1,500 plays; over 300 are accounted for that are undoubtedly his (a number almost ten times more than Shakespeare!).

He was the first Spanish dramatist to make a living as a playwright. His plays were very popular; in fact, the phrase “es de Lope” was often used to refer to anything of really good quality.

He also wrote a lot of poetry, novels, and short plays. It is no wonder than Cervantes, with grudging respect, called him a “monster of nature” for his superhuman writing ability.

He was known for fast-moving, suspenseful plots. Most dealt with love and honor—integral concepts in the lives of his audiences.

DISCUSSION:

What did students find the most interesting about the play *Fuente Ovejuna*? What were themes they saw in the play? Discuss in particular the themes of love and honor. What did they learn about the culture and history of Spain as they read (or what was reinforced in what they already knew)? Students can discuss *langue* and *parole*.

What connections can you make from this play to our modern culture – either society or other media?

FILM:

Show the next several minutes of the film. Students should respond in their journals how this film shows the theme of honor and love (or lack thereof). Discuss how the themes of love and honor are shown in our contemporary society and media – both in this film and in general?

ASSIGN:

You have divided the class into five groups and together each group will pick a scene from *Fuente Ovejuna* to perform. Explain the groups and have them sit together in their group. Give each group the Scene Assignment sheet and go over it together as a class. Share that groups can cut or combine lInés, make some changes as needed in order to have a scene that works for this assignment.

CLOSURE:

Give them the rest of the class period to discuss possible scenes to choose. Someone in the group will scribe their ideas and submit the paper with possible scene choices (or the final decision) with each group members’ name on it. The final choice must be made early next class period.

**Lesson 7:**

***Fuente Ovejuna* Given Circumstances**

**Objective:**

Students will demonstrate their ability to act according to given circumstances by analyzing and beginning rehearsals for their *Fuente Ovejuna* scenes.

**Materials Needed:**

Film

Given Circumstances PowerPoint

Suitcase with random items in it (clock, notebook, doll, etc. – raid the prop closet)

HOOK:

Play the next 10 minutes or so of the film. Have students write down the given circumstances they see from the film. Nothing is to be interpreted – only examine what is *actually there* based on the clip today and earlier class period viewings of the film. You could even jot down WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN somewhere to remind students of what to look for.

Have students pair up and one person in the pair will be WHO and WHERE and the other person will be WHAT, WHEN. Have them share their answers with each other.

As a class get a specific answer on each of the four points. How does looking at the given circumstances in the film serve as *paroles* for the larger *langue* of the film?

INSTRUCTION & PRACTICE:

Now take these ideas and go directly into the *Fuente Ovejuna* scene work. Go through the Given Circumstances PowerPoint:

* Slide 1: Title
* Slide 2: Suitcase Improvisation – have 4-6 students do this. Discuss with the class what they saw – literally (i.e. they stroked the blanket softly; they pushed the soda can away, etc.). Then they can talk through some interpretation they may have made in the improv (i.e. they like this item because they smiled and sighed when they hugged it; they are a writer since they grabbed a pen and wrote in the notebook, etc.).

Highlight for the students how this simple improv with an item from a suitcase use given circumstances; some were given directly to the actor (what and possibly who if they were just “themselves”) and the others were built by the actor (they in an attic perusing old family artifacts or flash forwarding back in time, etc.).

* Slide 3: Stanislavsky and given circumstances
* Slide 4: Review together as a class in detail the given circumstances. You may want to jot down a key word or two next to the “W’s” you already have listed on the board. Remind students that after they analyze the given circumstances and begin to work their pieces the HOW and WHY will come much more naturally to their characters and the scene.
* Slide 5: Stella Adler’s quote (an acting disciple of Stanislavsky) – let’s get to acting then!!
* Slide 6: Directions for their work in class. Go through this verbally and if possible leave shown for a while until students are into their working of the scene.

GROUP ANALYSIS & REHEARSAL:

Have students work in their groups as outlined in the last slide. Float around the room to encourage and help as needed. After about twenty-five minutes or so have the class pause what they are doing and have a quick “check-in” with them about where they are at. Have a member from each group share the point they are at in the rehearsal directions and use this information to gage how to structure the rest of the class period rehearsal time.

If students aren’t through all the directions yet, then send them back to dive in where they had paused and continue to work.

If students have gone through their scenes a few times and have some definite blocking set up, have them go through their scene focusing on one particular given circumstance at a time. So they may run the scene focusing deeply on WHO – crafting a character, pushing for an objective through the others in the scene, using their voice and body to show how they feel about the other characters, etc. Or they may run the scene focusing specifically on WHAT – using what happened previously to inform the top of the scene and then working on how they feel about it. etc.

If student are in need of something different to focus on, remind them to think about the Spanish Golden Age background, history, and culture. Have them work together in their group to pull out any instances in the scene that they can highlight SGA work.

CLOSURE:

Pull students back together and have each group share one thing that they discovered about their scene due to the given circumstances of the scene.

Remind students that memorization is due next class period – students should be working on that.

Collect their given circumstances scene work papers for grading.

**Lesson 8:**

**Conflict, Action and *Machismo***

**Objective:**

Students will demonstrate the ability use conflict and obstacles in their scene by exploring actions of the characters in their scene.

**Materials Needed:**

Film

Laurencia’s Monologue copies

HOOK:

Watch the next ten or so minutes of the film. Have students observe the clip (and remember what they’ve seen previously in the film) to determine the conflict of the play. Make sure students understand what CONFLICT is - conflict is a literary or storytelling element that involves a struggle between two opposing forces; conflict may manifest as external or internal. Though usually a protagonist and an antagonist: a bad guy who offers opposition to the main character's drive.

Have them write in their journals what the conflict is as well as any obstacles that come up to contribute/add to/inflame the conflict.

After the viewing discuss together what the conflict is and what obstacles are a part of that conflict. How do obstacles affect the characters involved? What action comes out of the conflict – what do characters actually DO? Why is it important to connect the conflict with action? Conflict is the essence of dramatic storytelling and actions show the storytelling to full effect.

INSTRUCTION:

Give each student a copy of Laurencia’s monologue from *Fuente Ovejuna*. Have someone in the class read the monologue out loud. At the conclusion of the reading, ask what effect this young lady’s monologue might have on the men of the village.

Remind the class that SGA Spain society is male-dominated – women were considered something to be valued, honored, and defended. Does anyone know what the term *machismo* means? It is the sense of being 'manly' and self-reliant, the concept associated with "a strong sense of masculine pride: an exaggerated masculinity; an attitude, quality, or way of behaving that agrees with traditional ideas about men being very strong and aggressive. Does understanding more about *machismo* change any ideas of how the men would feel about her monologue and how Laurencia speaking out like this goes against the idea of *machismo*?

Is there any element of *machismo* in the group scene that you’re working on? If students respond positively to this have them share where/how *machismo* manifests itself in the scene. If there isn’t much response perhaps students can look deeper at the text to see where *machismo* and the theme of honor might be implied.

GROUP PRACTICE:

With the monologue sheets and a writing utensil have students get together in their scene groups. Have them go through the monologue “beats” (delineated by a line on the paper) and examine each for conflict, obstacles, and potential action. Have them look at these questions to guide them in analyzing each beat: (perhaps write the key words on the board to guide the students: **conflict**, **obstacles**, **action**)

* **What is the conflict(s)?** (think of what came ‘before’ the scene and how that might create conflict that plays out in your scene)
* **What obstacle(s) are contributing to the conflict**? (either self-imposed or created by other things/people)
* **What actions can be explored?** (think of objectives here; and exploring how using and reacting to other characters could spur action)

Don’t give students too long to work on this – they can analyze and talk all day long; you want them to get into the text swiftly and efficiently, so keep a tight timeline for them to explore this. If they don’t finish it all completely it is okay; they will get the purpose of the practice in exploring conflict and action. However, if you plan to “perform” the monologue you may want to have one group start at each beat in order to ensure the entire monologue is examined.

Assign one of the five scene groups to each beat. They will have someone in their group perform that beat with all the analysis in mind to inform their interpretation and performance. The beats should stream seamlessly from one performer to another, so have them all come up to the performance space together to perform the monologue.

Ask students: how can exploring the conflict and obstacles in a text can lead to very specific, detailed actions? In this Spanish Golden Age drama how does this examination pull out the history, background, and culture of Spain?

SCENE REHEARSAL:

Have the students repeat this process in their own scenes and text. Together they should examine conflict, obstacles and action of their piece. But now they will take their analysis one step further by exploring actual actions to take in their scene in terms of reactions, blocking, gestures, facial expressions, busInéss, vocal choices, etc. Ask them: Which actions will you play? You can either have students simply explore these things as they rehearse, or you can have them write down “answers” to the questions and turn them in as a group.

Give students time to rehearse their scenes focusing on bringing up the conflict, exploring machismo opportunities, and sharing SGA information appropriately in their scenes.

You may want to have some kind of memorization check-in here; to ensure that students have memorized their work as required.

INSTRUCTION (if needed to focus students or add more time to their rehearsal structure):

Have students examine environmental factors and attitudes of their scene in the play. Sometimes thinking of these things specifically allows details about culture and history to be more real and alive for actors.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS:

1. Geographic Location: The specific area in which the play takes place. The exact place. This includes the climate.

2. Date, year, season, time of day. What about the date is significant?

3. Economic Environment: The character’s relationship to wealth or poverty, and the class of the character in relationship to the society in which they live.

4. Social Environment: The morals and social institutions under which the characters live; their values and societal beliefs.

5. Political Environment: The character’s relationship to the form of government under which they live.

6. Religious environment: The formal or informal psychological controls place upon a character because of their religious beliefs.

POLAR ATTITUDES:

Beliefs held by a character that are in direct opposition to the world in which the character lives. This opposition creates conflict. Conflict creates dramatic action. Hmm…sounds familiar, right?

CLOSURE:

Remind students that they will be previewing their scenes in class next time. Their memorization must be totally solid, props should be utilized, and it is expected that they have grounded, driven performances informed by given circumstances and conflict/action.

Also make sure students know that the Spanish Golden Age test will be next class period. The test will be on Spanish Golden age background, history, culture, and theatre that have been studied in the unit.

**Lesson 9:**

**SGA Test & Preview**

**Objective:**

Students will demonstrate their ability to act in a scene by previewing their Fuente Ovejuna scene. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the Spanish Golden Age by successfully completing a test.

**Materials Needed:**

Spanish Golden Age Test copies

Pre-Hook: Have the following written on the board before students come into class:

“You have five minutes to review for the test!”

HOOK:

When class begins verbally reinforce the five-minute review. Encourage students to look at notes/worksheets, talk to their classmates, ask you any questions, etc.

TEST:

Have students put away everything except a writing utensil; pass out the tests and have students take the tests and turn them in when complete.

FILM:

Watch only five minutes of the film. Have students watch the acting performances specifically. Have them write in their journal two things that they liked about the performance(s) and one item that they have constructive criticism/questions about. Make sure everyone is clear what is meant by “constructive criticism” – something that can be improved, a kindly worded suggestion, an “I wonder” statement, etc.

Have them turn to a neighbor and share what they wrote down in their journals about the performance. Back together as a class, encourage students to use this same procedure in previewing each other’s scenes – except they will comment on one thing they liked/that worked in the scene and two items of constructive criticism.

GROUP REHEARSAL:

Give students ten minutes to warm up and run through their scene.

PREVIEWS:

Pre-select one group to perform their preview for the entire class. Choose what you feel is the best prepared, most ready performance to serve as a model for the other scenes. Have the “audience” students pull out paper and a writing utensil to respond to the preview. They will need ¼ sheet of paper for each of the four scenes they will watch. Remind them that they will be writing down one thing they liked and two items of constructive criticism for each scene.

After the preview conduct a very brief verbal feedback session calling on a few students to share one thing they wrote down. Include your own thoughts. Keep it short and sweet.

Now, instead of having every group preview for everyone, divide the class in half and have them perform their previews for only half the class (put two of the four remaining scenes in each half and divide the group that just performed and send those students to each half). If possible have two preview performance places so minimize distractions from performing in the same space. If possible have one teacher/supervisor with each half to give notes, time the scene, etc. Repeat the process: preview performance, written feedback, 2-3 minutes verbal feedback for each scene.

PREVIEW REHEARSAL:

Have each group collect the sheets that were written about them. Have them read them together and determine their plan of action for the rehearsal time they now have until the end of class. How can they take the notes from feedback to improvement? What will they work on?

Give the groups the remainder of the class period to rehearse their scenes.

CLOSURE:

Remind students that final performances are next class period. It is expected that the performances will be polished with appropriate props, hints of costume, drawing out of the theme of honor and love as appropriate and solid acting performances.

**Lesson 10:**

***Fuente Ovejuna* Performances**

**Objective:**

Students will demonstrate their understanding of Spanish Golden Age Theatre by performing a scene from *Fuente Ovejuna*.

**Materials Needed:**

*Fuente Ovejuna* Ballet Film Teaser from the Teatro Real de Madrid: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQ0blk4oGjM>

Scene Peer Evaluation copies – one page for each student at four to a page

*Fuente Ovejuna* Scene Evaluation copies

Student Self-evaluation and Reflection copies – one for each student

HOOK:

Instead of the regular film today, students will be watching the teaser of the *Fuente Ovejuna* ballet produced at the world-famous Teatro Real de Madrid. This stunning ballet tells de Vega’s story in movement and music form – incredible. Have students simply write their response to this ballet story (told in teaser format here).

As a class, share the responses to the story. What stood out to students? What connections did they find to what they know about Spanish Golden Age theatre, culture, and history?

REHEARSAL:

Give students ten minutes or so to warm up, change in costume, prepare props, run through their scene, etc. to get ready for the final performances.

PERFORMANCES:

Have students perform their scenes from *Fuente Ovejuna*. They should introduce their piece by giving it the “name” or “title” that they created a few days ago (the word or phrase that summed up their scene). Each student will complete a peer evaluation sheet on each scene. You will give notes on your own evaluation sheet.

Students will complete a self-evaluation and unit reflection at the end of the performances.

Conduct a short discussion with the students using the following prompts: What did you like most about the scenes? What didn’t work as well? What reflections of the Spanish Golden Age did you see? What did the actors do to develop their characters? Etc.

At the end of the performance collect the evaluations from all the students in piles of each scene and one for the self-evaluations.

CLOSURE:

If time remains, watch some of the *Fuente Ovejuna* ballet. You can either watch from the start or start anywhere random or watch a little bit in one place, then skip randomly through the film to see different moments throughout the story. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1LKevfCnwQ>