

TWO RIVER THEATER

Curriculum Design Goals

The curriculum for student matinees at Two River Theater is designed with the following intent: the material and activities should be a resource for any school faculty or staff to utilize with students in hopes of engaging them further in the process of attending a production at the theater.

Pre Show:

- Pre-show Questions
 - These are designed to be used by classroom teachers or visiting teaching artists in any capacity (journal writing, class discussion, etc.) and touch on the main themes of the production.
- Pre-show Activity (“If you only do one activity before seeing the show, do this”)
 - Activities in the pre-show section are appropriate for either a classroom teacher or a visiting teaching artist. These activities are intended to raise questions about and promote interest in a key element of the show.

Pre- or Post-Show:

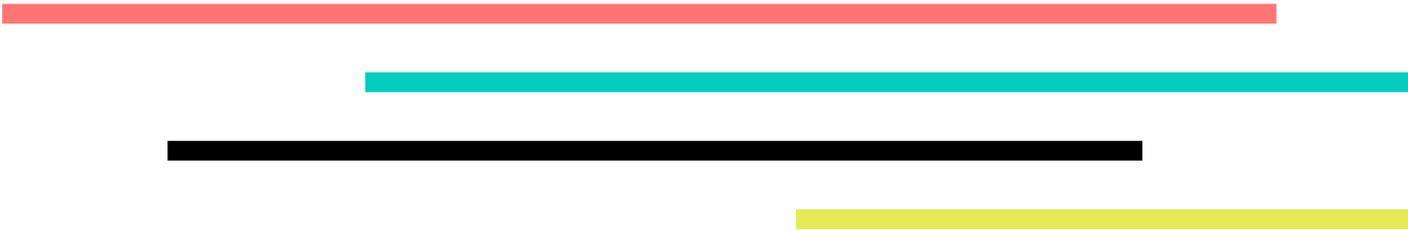
- This section includes a range of activities that touch on themes and elements of the production that can be done either before or after the performance. The **majority of these activities are appropriate for classes other than English and Drama**, including History, Government, Digital Design, and Media Studies. The activities are designed with the goal of providing access to the themes of the show to teachers in a variety of curricular areas.

(All Common Core standards met by each activity are listed in the Common Core Connections Guide)

- While the activities have specific indicated times, they are also designed to be adaptable to the needs and limits of the teachers who use them.

Post-Show

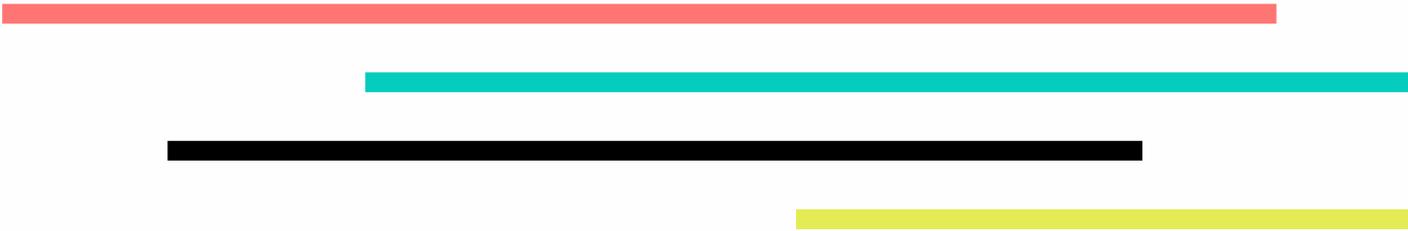
- Post-Show Questions
 - These are designed to be used after seeing the show for a reflection on the content, themes, and language of the play. These are pulled from the two discussion activities as a quick way to reflect on the show with limited time. (“If you only look at one thing after seeing the show, look at this”)
- Discussion
 - The discussion section is designed to be adaptable to teacher needs and preferences. There are two structured discussion protocols with discussion questions and prompts. The protocols can be used as written, or teachers could use the questions provided through their own methods.
- There are additional post-show activities available in the pre or post-show activity section for teachers who wish to spend more time reflecting on the play through active and engaging lessons.



El Coquí Espectacular and the Bottle of Doom

Post-Show Questions

1. What does Alex want from El Coqui? Does he get what he wants?
2. What is Alex's relationship with his culture? What is Joe's? How are their relationships with their heritage and identity similar? Different?
3. How are Alex and Joe fighting against Latino and Puerto Rican stereotypes? How do they play into them?
4. What parts of Alex does El Coqui represent?
5. What are Alex's insecurities and fears? How does El Chupacabra represent those?
6. Why does Joe want El Coqui on the parade float?
7. What does 'selling out' mean? Does Alex sell out?
8. What do Joe's reflections on Spanish grammar add to the story? What is the point of these moments?
9. How does the climactic fight scene play with superhero tropes and stereotypes?
10. Was the fight a heroic moment for Alex?
11. At the end of the play, where is Alex headed? What do you think he is going to do?
12. Is the ending hopeful?



Quote Discussion (with Two Options)

Option One – Graffiti Discussion

Post-Show Activity

Appropriate for: Grades 7-12

Appropriate for: Advisory, English, Humanities, Drama, Visiting Teaching Artist

Time: Flexible

Materials Needed:

Chart or other large sheets of paper

Markers

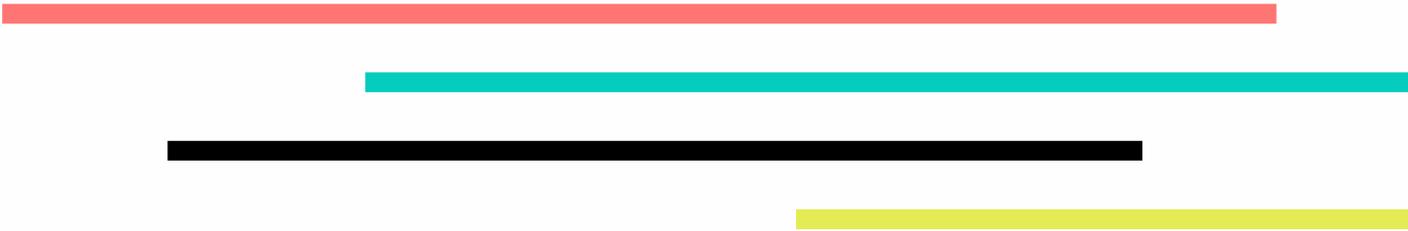
Quotes

Preparation

- Post chart or other large paper around the room, with as much space between as possible. Affix one quote at the top of each.
- *Note: Teachers might pick and choose which quotes to use, in order to limit the number, based on class size or time constraints.*

Graffiti

- Each student gets a marker. Depending on the size of the class, assign individuals, pairs, or small groups to each paper.
- The class will circle the quotes twice.
- The first time, each student should write their initial reaction to the quote:
- *Possible ways in which to react:*
 - What does this quote make you think about?
 - What questions does this quote make you ask?
 - What was this quote's importance in the context of the play?
- Students should write as long as they are at the paper, until the teacher calls 'switch', at which point they will move one paper to the right.
- The second time the group circles, students should read what has been written already and respond to what is there.
- *Possible ways in which to respond:*
 - Answer a question.
 - Follow up a comment with a question.
 - Agree with additional information.
 - Disagree with additional information.
- Students should write as long as they are at the paper, until the teacher calls 'switch', at which point they will move one paper to the right. The teacher should give groups enough time to read responses and respond to several.



Debrief

- What quote did you have a strong reaction to? Why? Was there agreement or disagreement around this quote?
- What quote did you not understand? What do you think it means?
- What did you read of someone else's that gave you something new to think about?

Option Two - Small Group Discussion

Post-Show Activity

Appropriate for: Grades 7-12

Appropriate for: Advisory, English, Humanities, Drama, Visiting Teaching Artist

Time: Flexible

Materials Needed:

Quotes, copied large

Small group discussion prompts

Note: Limit the number of quotes posted to between 4 and 6, depending on the size of the group. Teachers should choose the quotes they feel would provoke the most discussion.

Choosing

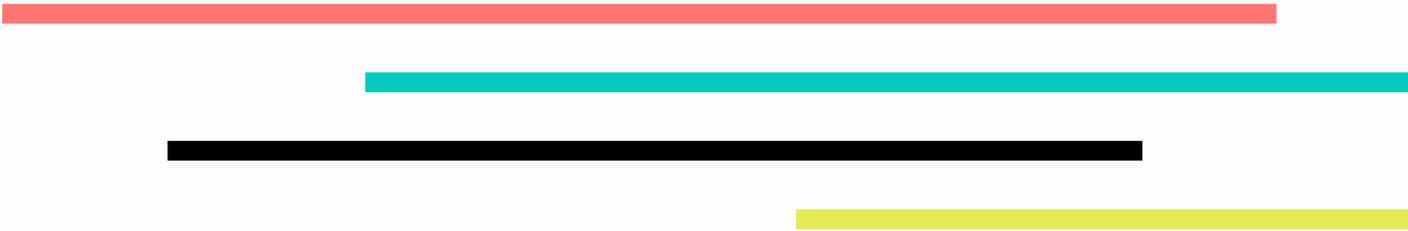
- Students circle the room, reading the posted quotes.
- Students stand beneath the quote they are most interested in discussing.
- Note: if there is a quote only one student selects, ask that student to move to their second choice for now.
- Note: Depending on the class, teachers may choose the groups, rather than leaving students to self-select.

Discussion

- Each small group discussed their quote, using the prompts, for five minutes.
 - Give the groups a two minute, one minute, and "finish your sentence" warnings.
- Students choose a new quote.
- New groups discuss, using the prompts, for five minutes.
- Repeat as desired.
 - It is not necessary that all students discuss all the prompts. Teachers may choose to have small groups discuss only one or two, depending on class and time available.

Debrief

- Back in full group.
- "What came up in your group? Why were you interested in this quote? What does this quote make you think about? What questions does this quote make you ask? What was this quote's importance in the context of the p



Quotes

“A homemade costume does not a superhero make.” – El Chupacabra

“The villains in your head will never punch as hard as the villains out here.” – El Chupacabra

“Why do ethnic superheroes always have ethnic superpowers?” – Joe

“Even comic book heroes have day jobs.” – Joe

“I made him. So ... I wanted to see hm. And since he didn’t exist ... I had to be him.” – Alex

“[El Chupacabra] convinces youth to fear their potential, that achievement is betrayal, that uniqueness is betrayal, that the measure of their worth is minimal, and that they should join the ever growing army rather than risk ‘Acting White.’” – Alex

“How come all his powers come from Puerto Rico? What does he get from New York?” - Yesica

“Stripped of his culture and his costume, he is left with no way to battle crime or his own crippling insecurities.” – El Chupacabra

“So you have to give up who you are to grow up?” – Yesica

“I called a presentation racist. It was racist. But, like, you’re not supposed to call it racist.” – Joe

“The paradox is that the more brands seek to seem ‘authentic’ or ‘culturally specific,’ the more craven and manipulative they seem.”

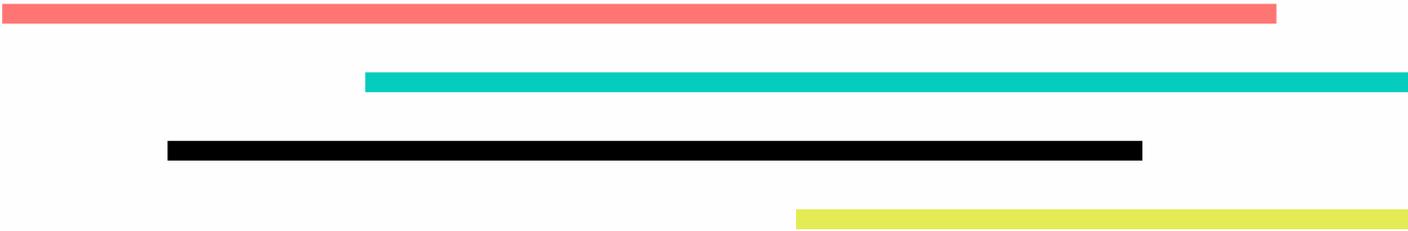
Joe: “When you put on the costume, did you feel more ...”

Alex: “No.”

“None of the heroes in the comics looked like my Dad.” – Alex

“You got this from your father. I hoped you hadn’t.” – Patricia

“We were part of something.” - Joe



Agree/Disagree

Post-Show Activity

Appropriate for: Grades 7-12

Appropriate for: Advisory, English, Humanities, Drama, Visiting Teaching Artist

Time: Flexible

Agree/Disagree

- Establish one wall of the room as “completely agree” and the opposite wall as “completely disagree.”
- Read the agree/disagree statements.
- For each statement, students place themselves in the room according to their stance.
- Once students are placed, ask someone to explain their placement.
 - Take note of statements that are polarizing, and ask students from each side to explain their thinking.
 - Take note of statements where students place themselves halfway between agree and disagree. Ask students to explain their conflict.

Debrief

- “Which statements were easy for you to find where you stood?”
- “Which statement did you feel most strongly about?”
- “Which statement was difficult for you?”
- Return to statements that caused polarization and continue conversation

Agree or Disagree

Alex’s former editors were right when they said that El Coqui was risky and political.

El Chupacabra is more like Alex than El Coqui.

Social media is an accurate reflection of reality.

Joe is more in touch with his heritage than Alex is.

Joe should not have spoken up about the presentation.

Alex and Yesica will eventually become friends.

Alex should not have taken the job from Voltage Cola.

El Chupacabra is the story’s villain.

El Chupacabra and El Coqui are the same person.