Explore the History of Theater!

**WebQuest Description:** Students will explore costumes, make-up, and scenery from several different eras of theater: Primitive Theater, Greek Theater, Renaissance Theater, Kabuki, and Vaudeville

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Curriculum:** Art / Music

**Keywords:** Theater, History, Renaissance, Greek, Kabuki, The Globe

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**Introduction**

Critically acclaimed director of stage and film, Theo Tarr, is in town searching for a production team to assist him in staging a national tour of Jack and the Beanstalk. He is looking for a team with creativity, innovation, and a strong foundation in theater history to put a twist on this tired story. Keeping with the belief of “what’s old is new again,” Theo wants to pay homage to origins of theater by re-envisioning Jack and the Beanstalk through one of these different styles: Greek and Roman Theater, Renaissance Theater, or Asian (Kabuki) Theater.

**Tasks**

Your team will be creating a presentation and puppet box show to demonstrate to Theo Tarr how Jack and the Beanstalk would have been staged during a certain historical time period. Your puppet box performance should accurately reflect the stage and performance space, costumes and make-up, and acting techniques of the time. Your presentation will highlight the most important features of your era. The team that provides the most authentic and creative production will be chosen for Theo Tarr’s national touring company! Good luck....I mean...Break a leg!

**Process**

**STEP 1: Research All Three Historic Periods**

Print the Theater History I-chart to use for recording your research on theater history. (See Resource #1 below)

1. Click on the links below to research the following historical eras of theater: Greek Theater, Renaissance Theater, and Asian/Kabuki Theater.
2. How did each era impact society and contribute to the development of theater? What are the distinguishing characteristics of each era?
3. It will be important to note these distinctions in your presentation!

- [http://library.thinkquest.org/5291/history.html](http://library.thinkquest.org/5291/history.html)

**Checkpoint!** Show your teacher your completed I-chart.

**STEP 2: Research Your Chosen Time Period**

Now is the time to dig deeper into your own time period. Each group member should download the Collaborative Listening-Viewing Guide (see Resource #2 below). Click on the YouTube video(s) for your time period. As you watch the video, take notes in the left column of important ideas, characteristics, and vocabulary. In the right column, combine and elaborate your notes with the help of your group. At the bottom of the guide, organize and synthesize your notes in an Idea Web.

- [Greek Theater](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGJZlMlOBeo&feature=related)
- [Renaissance Theater](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ynYpzrmpscc&feature=related)
- [Kabuki Theater](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=67-bgSFJJKc)

**Checkpoint!** Show your teacher your Collaborative Listening-Viewing Guide.

**STEP 3: Research Performance Spaces**

1. Download and print the "Theater History Graphic Organizer" to record your findings.
2. Review the performance spaces of your era. (See Resource #3 below)

**Watch the You-tube Videos below of performances and performance spaces for your time period.**

- [Greek Theater](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VUUHe7yHrzQ&feature=related)
- [Renaissance Theater](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AE2cr-flvBA&feature=related)
- [Kabuki Theater](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=67-bgSFJJKc)

**Watch the You-tube Videos below of performances and performance spaces for your time period.**

**Resources**

- [Resource #1](http://library.thinkquest.org/5291/history.html)
- [Resource #2](http://www.knowitall.org/kidswork/theater/history/ancient/index.html)
- [Resource #3](http://library.thinkquest.org/5291/history.html)
3.) Click on the links below to explore pictures and diagrams of your performance space. You may want to print these for references while making your puppet box.

- Pictures of Greek Theater
- Greek Amphitheater
- Greek Theater Diagram
- Inside the Globe Theater
- Outside the Globe Theater
- Globe Diagram with Vocabulary
- First Kabuki Theater
- Inside Kabuki
- Pictures of Kabuki Theater
- Greek Theater
- Renaissance Theater
- Asian Theater
- Inside the Globe Theater
- Greek Stage
- Audience
- Globe Stage
- First Greek Theater
- Globe Diagram with Vocabulary
- First Greek Theater
- Inside the Globe Theater
- Greek Stage
- Audience
- Globe Stage
- First Greek Theater

4.) Click on the following websites to learn more about your performance spaces.


Checkpoint! Show your teacher your "Theater History Graphic Organizer"!

STEP 4: Construct Your Puppet Box
You may want to start constructing your puppet box now or save this step for later and research costumes and make up first. Your puppet box must do three things: provide a stage for your puppets, show how the audience would be arranged during a performance, and include several details that are authentic to your time period. You may want to use the resources below to get you started on building, or simply be creative!

- http://www.papertoys.com/globe.htm
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p487IfI6URc
- http://www2.arts.ubc.ca/TheatreDesign/crslib/model2/premdls/premod2.htm

STEP 5: Research Costumes, Make-Up, and Masks
Research typical costumes, make-up, and masks from your time period. You will be making a sketchbook of the five main characters and how you will costume them. You may use printouts for this part of the assignment, but your performance costumes must be created on your own. Please include at least 3 new vocabulary words as labels in your costume sketchbook.

Greek Theater:
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ct2irS7ZRq8&feature=related
- http://www.slideshare.net/juliamaxey/greek-masks
- http://www.costumes.org/HISTORY/100pages/HEUZY.HTM

Kabuki Theater:
- http://library.thinkquest.org/05aug/00717/pages/costumes.html
- http://library.thinkquest.org/05aug/00717/pages/costumes.html

Checkpoint! Show your teacher your costume sketchbook!

STEP 6: Construct Puppets and Costumes
You may begin constructing your puppets and costumes. Remember, you are creating puppets that reflect how the actors in your time period would have interpreted these characters. Do not simply draw a cow and put it on a stick. Instead, create a human puppet decorated with a cow costume. Would the actor wear a mask? A full costume? Realistic or symbolic make-up? You decide!

STEP 7: Write Your Play!
1.) Watch a few performances below to get a sense of the actors’ style.
2.) Watch the 9 minute video of Jack and the Beanstalk to become familiar with the plot.
3.) Write a Reader's Theater script for your play. Make sure there is a clear beginning, middle, and end to your piece. And end to your play.
need to add to your stage and construct these. Again, think about how people from your time period would have realistically added these elements to their show. Checkpoint! Show your script to your teacher!

**STEP 8: Rehearse & Perform**

Your presentation will consist of two parts:

1.) A presentation about the characteristics of your time period
2.) Your presentation of Jack and the Beanstalk Include in your presentation:

- Distinguishing characteristics of theater in your time period
- Important contributions your time period made to theater history as a whole
- A detailed description of your performance space and seating arrangements, including:
- Precise vocabulary for the labeling of spaces and functions
- A detailed description with precise terminology of your costumes and make-up or masks, and how they enhance the performance.

**Bravo! Bravo! Good show! Encore! Encore!**

### Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category and Score</th>
<th>4 Stars</th>
<th>3 Stars</th>
<th>2 Stars</th>
<th>1 Star</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance Space</strong></td>
<td>Puppet box portrays accurate characteristics of the stage area AND audience seating of the time period. Puppet box is extremely creative, highly detailed, and well crafted.</td>
<td>Puppet box portrays some accurate characteristics of the stage AND audience seating of the time period. Puppet box is creative and shows effort.</td>
<td>Puppet box portrays only stage area OR audience seating with limited details. Puppet box shows some effort in creativity and craftsmanship.</td>
<td>Puppet box is not representative of the time period. Minimal creativity and effort used in crafting the stage.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Costumes, make-up, masks, props</strong></td>
<td>All paper or 3-D puppets are dressed in original well-crafted costumes authentic to the time period. All costumes enhance the character portrayed. Make-up and masks are used and accurately reflect the time period. All props necessary for the show are included and authentic to the time period.</td>
<td>All paper or 3-D puppets are dressed in original and authentic costumes. Costumes do little to enhance character. Make-up and masks are mostly used. Most essential props were included in the performance but may be lacking in authenticity.</td>
<td>Most character puppets had historically accurate costumes. Costumes were not originally created. Limited use of make-up and masks. Some props were included in performance.</td>
<td>Character puppets had no costumes or historically inaccurate costumes. No make-up or masks were used. Props were pantomimed.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation of time period</strong></td>
<td>Distinguishing characteristics of the time era are discussed in great detail. Important contributions to theater history are noted. Performance space characteristics and functions are labeled or described with precise vocabulary. Costumes, masks, and make-up are described with details and new vocabulary.</td>
<td>Distinguishing characteristics of the era are discussed with many details. Performance space characteristics and functions and labeled or described with adequate vocabulary. Costumes masks, and make-up are described in detail with adequate vocabulary.</td>
<td>Distinguishing characteristics of the era are discussed with few details. Performance space characteristics are described with limited vocabulary. Costumes, make-up, and masks are described with limited vocabulary.</td>
<td>Important historical characteristics of the era are not addressed. Details about the stage, costumes, or masks may be missing.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reader's Theater Performance of Jack and the Beanstalk</strong></td>
<td>Plot has a clear beginning, middle, and end. The performance style accurately reflects the time period. Character lines are read clearly, loudly, and with great character and enthusiasm. Play is well rehearsed.</td>
<td>Plot has a clear beginning, middle, and end. Some performance elements reflect the time period. Lines are read clearly, loudly, and with character. Play has been rehearsed despite a few glitches.</td>
<td>Plot has a clear beginning, middle, and end. The performance elements may not be authentic to the time period. Lines are read quietly with little character. Play has been inadequately rehearsed.</td>
<td>Plot elements may be lacking. Lines are read quietly with no character. There is no evidence of play rehearsal.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Score**

100
Congratulations! You are now a theater history expert. &nbsp;You have seen how different historical eras and cultures have contributed to the theater practices we know and enjoy today. &nbsp;If you have finished with your project, feel free to play the games below or watch clips from some of my favorite performances.GamesClick here for games and activities to learn more about the Greeks!Rebuild the Epidaurus theater with this math puzzle gameClick here a Shakespearean Romeo and Juliet gamePractice hair and make-up skills with this gameWatch Other Theatrical PerformancesWickedThe Lion KingWest Side StoryAmericaSinging in the Rain-Vaudeville ActGLEE! Season Finale-JourneyImprovisation-Whose Line is it Anyway?Teacher PageTopic:&nbsp;Theater HistoryGrade Level:&nbsp;6-8, 9-12Time: Approximately 2 weeksGLEE's and StandardsTheater StandardsART.III.T.M.1 Explain the functions and interrelated nature of scenery, properties, lighting, sound, costumes, and makeup in creating an environment appropriate for drama.ART.IV.T.M.1 Describe and compare universal characters and situations in dramas from and about various cultures and historical periods, illustrate in improvised and scripted scenes, and discuss how theater reflects a culture.Language Language includes appropriate vocabulary such as a memoir, drama, legend, myth, epic, or epic that includes appropriate conventions to the genre employing literary and plot devices. Technology Standard: METS 6-8 RI.1 &nbsp;By the end of grade 9 students will use a variety of digital resources to locate information. Grouping Suggestions: This WebQuest is meant to be explored in groups. &nbsp;Each group could have 4-6 people and would study only one of the three historical eras (Greek, Renaissance, or Kabuki) after step one. &nbsp;After step one, groups should only focus on those websites related to their particular era. Because each time period emphasizes different aspects of theater and has different sources, some groups may take longer on some steps than others. &nbsp;For example, the Renaissance group may take longer researching the performance space and the intricacies of the Globe Theater, while the Greek group may focus longer on masks, and the Kabuki group may focus longer on make-up. When it is time to synthesize researched information by making the puppet stage, puppets, presentation, and play, it may be wise to assign different group members to the task to help with time. Source: Choice.&nbsp; This WebQuest was inspired by the information found on this webpage:&nbsp;http://library.thinkquest.org/5291/history.html &nbsp;I had been using the information on this page for quick lessons on theater history, but then I thought that it would be fun if students created familiar plays in each of the historical styles. &nbsp;To do this, students would have to dig deeper into each historical period. &nbsp;In this WebQuest, I have given supplementary sources for three of the given time periods on this webpage, but you could explore other eras as well. &nbsp;I chose several you-tube videos to use as sources. Although it is difficult to find theatrical performances from times without video cameras, I was able to find some authentic re-enactments of performances from these eras. &nbsp;I felt it was necessary to see theater being performed in these styles to truly understand it. My favorite clip is the Romeo and Juliet scene from Shakespeare in Love.&nbsp;http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3li5PLxNpK). &nbsp;This is a great clip to show the Elizabethan costumes and language, authentic &nbsp;Shakespearean performances, the stage areas of the Globe Theater, and realistic audience seating and reactions. The clip I have chosen is appropriate for children, but the entire movie is rated R. &nbsp;As with any You-Tube viewing, it is necessary to carefully monitor students' exploration on &nbsp;You-Tube after they have viewed the selected clips.&nbsp;I chose the following websites because they were rich in vocabulary and technical terminology of the performance spaces and costumes of each period.&nbsp;http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theatre_of_ancient_Greece http://www.william-shakespeare.info/william-shakespeare-love-theatre-structure.html http://library.thinkquest.org/5291/history.html The websites on designing puppet boxes are to serve as inspiration only. &nbsp;Students may disregard these websites if they choose to work creatively on their own. Inquiry ProcessImmerse:&nbsp;There are several images given on the WebQuest to help build background knowledge and invite curiosity. &nbsp;Step three contains several images and videos of &nbsp;performance and spaces to help students visualize the performances may read about in other sources. &nbsp;Step five has very interesting images of masks and costumes throughout the ages that will peak students' interest and curiosity. &nbsp;Investigate:&nbsp;There are a variety of resources for students to explore as they investigate their time period. &nbsp;Also, many of the text sources have links to other sources within the page if &nbsp;students &nbsp;would like to continue to investigate a particular topic. &nbsp;The three downloadable worksheets are tools to help students with their investigation of sources. &nbsp;The I-chart, performance space graphic organizer, and the collaborative listening-viewing guide encourage students to pull out the most important information in their investigation. Coalesce: The collaborative listening-viewing guide allows for small group collaboration and synthesizing of information. &nbsp;Also, when students begin constructing their puppet boxes and writing their presentations, they must collectively decide what features and characteristics of &nbsp;their &nbsp;era are the most important to demonstrate. &nbsp;They then have to further synthesize that information by applying those features to the costumes and the creative performance of Jack and the Beanstalk. Go Public:&nbsp;Students will demonstrate their knowledge as they teach the class about their historical era through their presentations and performances. &nbsp;This will require written preparation, collaborative work, and public speaking for informational, persuasive, and entertainment purposes. ConclusionsPresented Students will at minimum share their creative projects, presentations, and plays with their classmates. They can choose whether to give the informative pitch before the creative play, or vice versa. &nbsp;You could also have every group perform their play first and then do all of the informative presentations, or vice versa. &nbsp;It would be fun to invite parents to the classroom or show these projects at a special after school showcase. &nbsp;It might also be meaningful for secondary &nbsp;students &nbsp;to take their performances to the elementary school and share with younger students. Audience's Role: Audience's Role would suggest that the audience focus on three questions throughout the other presentations. 1.) What have I learned? 2.) What did the group do really well? 3.) What questions do I have about the presentation? Students could write their responses on post-it notes and organize them on a white board or in a comments book for the group presenting. &nbsp;Or teachers could print a three column response sheet (see resource #1 below) to give to the group. Differentiation This project is differentiated in many ways. &nbsp;One way is in how you can group students. &nbsp;You can form groups by interest (students can choose their historical era) or by ability. &nbsp;The Renaissance and Greek periods of theater history have more visual and video resources than Kabuki theater, which may make the Kabuki theater harder to research. This WebQuest is also &nbsp;differentiated &nbsp;in content. &nbsp;There are several ways students can find &nbsp;information. &nbsp;There are images, diagrams, timelines, informational videos, entertaining videos, slideshows, charts, and text-rich webpages. &nbsp;The final product offers many opportunities for differentiation. &nbsp;Students may synthesize their knowledge by creatively designing or constructing the performance space, costumes, or masks. &nbsp;They can show their knowledge by writing the informational presentation or the creative reader's theater script. &nbsp;The extended &nbsp;students &nbsp;could share their knowledge through persuasive speaking in the presentation or entertaining acting in the play. &nbsp;Students could add music to enhance their performance as well. &nbsp;There are many ways for students to shine in the final product. Assessments Formative: There are several checkpoints throughout the WebQuest process page. &nbsp;Most of these involve turning in one of the downloaded worksheets or the costume book. &nbsp;With these check points, teachers can establish if the students are gathering enough information and highlighting the most important features of.
their time period. Summative: The rubric on the evaluation page shows the criteria for the summative assessment. Students will be graded on the authenticity and creativity of their puppet stage and costumes, the accuracy and quality of their presentation, and their efforts in the reader's theater play. Assessment of Benchmarks ART.III.T.M.I Students learn about the interrelated qualities of scenery, properties, sound, costumes, and makeup in creating an appropriate environment as they watch videos of performances in action and read texts regarding these topics in the WebQuest. They demonstrate their knowledge when they apply these same elements to their own puppet box performances during their final presentation. ART.IV.T.M.I Students compare and contrast the three different historical periods during STEP 1 when they fill out their i-chart with information about those eras. In other steps, they will identify the particular cultural influences of their specific time period. During the presentation they will discuss the cultural distinctions of their era and show us these distinctions through the scripted play. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of drama writing with their reader's theater script and play presentation. METS 6-8 RI.1 Students use a variety of digital resources (webpages, images, YouTube videos) throughout the WebQuest. The teacher checkpoints throughout the process page can be used as formative assessments to see if students are effectively locating the appropriate information for their time period. Standards Credits Other