

THEATRE REVIEW PACKET

2016-2017

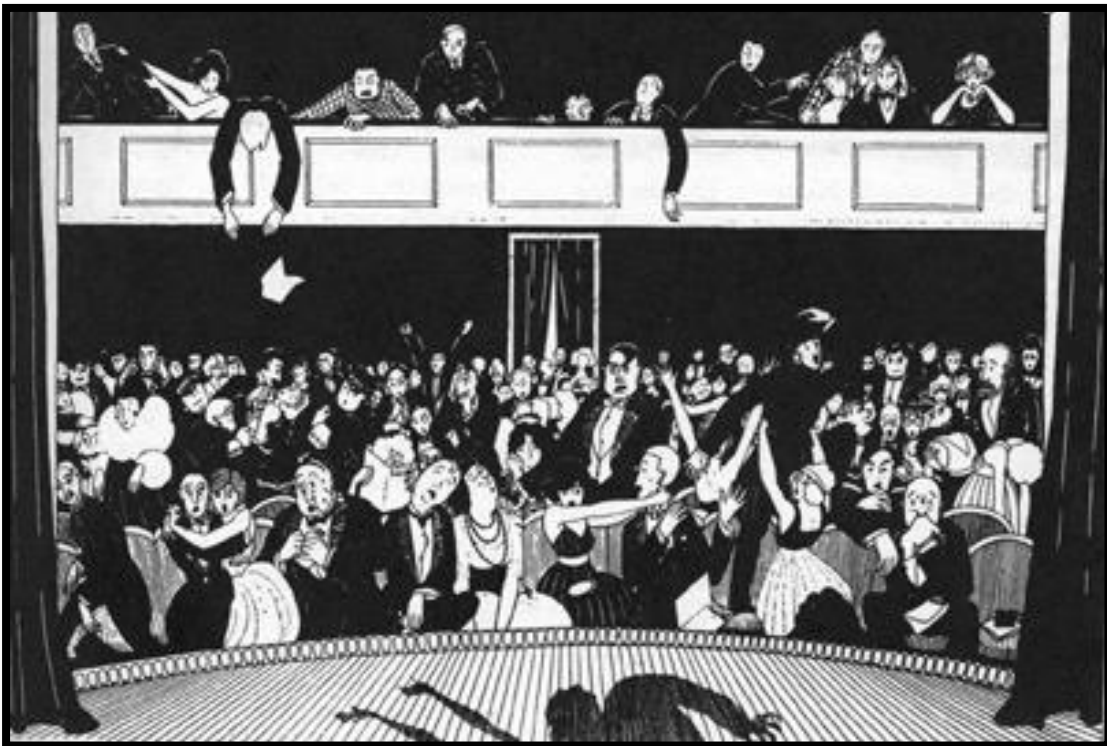
This packet contains the following:

- Introduction
- Essay Option
- Theatre Review Guide
- Theatre Review Rubric

INTRODUCTION

Every year the Theatre Department attends at least three plays together. This year the Theatre Department will attend one play at Long Wharf Theatre, and two at Yale Repertory Theatre. Students are required to see each of these plays and to write a Theatre Review or Essay by the following Monday. If a student is unable to attend one of these plays with the Department, s/he must attend a different performance, or find another play to attend. Each review counts as 10% of your grade for the Quarter in which it is written.

You used the form and content of the traditional Theatre Review Guide to discuss the first play we saw this year. For the upcoming second and third plays, you will be given the option to write an Essay in lieu of the traditional Theatre Review. This will provide you with the opportunity to try a different style of assessment and criticism so that you might make a better connection to the play. You may choose the Essay Option with either or both of the last two plays we see this year, or you may discuss one or both plays using the form and content of the traditional Theatre Review Guide.



“Did the audience seem to enjoy the play more/less than you did?”

ESSAY OPTION

You may choose the Essay Option to satisfy your Theatre Review requirement by answering one of the essay questions below. You may use the Essay Option twice this year. You must write a standard Theatre Review for at least one of the three plays.

FORMAT

- TYPED, DOUBLE-SPACED, 3-5 full pages in length, 12 inch font
- Composition, syntax, grammar, & correct spelling are important – and graded!
 - Helpful Hint: Proofread by reading your completed Essay aloud. This will help you catch many – even most – errors.
- Choose only ONE of the five Essay Questions from the list below.

Essay Questions:

- 1) Write 10 diary entries from the point of view of one of the characters in the play.
 - a. Demonstrate how the perspective of the character changes throughout the play
 - b. Describe the personality traits of the character
 - c. Describe his/her important relationships with other significant characters in the play
- 2) Discuss the theme of the play.
 - a. How is the theme expressed?
 - b. Give specific examples to support your ideas about the theme through production elements (lighting, sound, costume, set, props), and through the dialogue, imagery, movement, character, and music.
- 3) Explore:
 - a. How the Historical time period of the era affects the plot, characters, and theme of the play.
 - b. How the themes of the play are reflected in our contemporary culture
- 4) Write a new ending for the play using proper play formatting (6-10 pages, double-spaced, 12 point font).

THEATRE REVIEW GUIDE

FORMAT

- TYPED, DOUBLE-SPACED, 3-5 full pages in length – no more than 5 pages!!
- Discuss the practical aspects of production. This is the overall “content” of your Review
- Composition, syntax, grammar, & correct spelling are important – and graded!
 - Helpful Hint: Proofread by reading your completed Review aloud. This will help you catch many – even most – errors.

OPENING PARAGRAPH

- Title of play (***ITALICIZE play titles***) and name of playwright
- Theatre where you saw the production
- The DATE you attended the play. Use commas correctly
- Identify the director
- Name 2 to 4 members of the artistic team who made a difference to you, whether positively or negatively. *These are artists you will mention later in your review.*
- Conclude this first paragraph with a THESIS STATEMENT – a one sentence summary of your opinion of the play/production. The rest of the review should support this statement.

PLOT SUMMARY, THEME, TECHNIQUES

1. Write ONE short paragraph about the basic plot. Just give us a hint about the storyline, not a scene by scene description – this is NOT a book report!
2. Describe the purpose of the play. What was the theme, moral, or message? What questions did it bring up for you, personally?
3. Did the production use Theatre techniques that were new or unfamiliar to you? Were they effective? If traditional techniques were used, were they effective?

DESIGN/TECHNICAL ELEMENTS

SET * PROPS * COSTUMES * LIGHTING * SOUND * MAKEUP * SPECIAL EFFECTS

1. How did each of the above practical elements of Theatre make the play more or less believable, exciting, boring, entertaining?
2. Did each support the message of the play? Why or why not? Give specific examples!
3. Did they call attention to themselves, rather than support the production as a whole?

ACTING

Important: When discussing **actors' performances**, use the **actors' names**, NOT the names of the **characters**! Use character names when discussing the plot.

1. How believable was the acting? Did the actors enchant you with any particular performance skills, beauty, expression, emotional power? Or was the acting mechanical and boring?
2. Which characters, if any, did you care about? Love? Admire? Hate? Why? Did the play increase your compassion for such people? Did you feel angry or sad? Why or why not?
3. Could you *understand* the actors (Objectives? Motivations? Could you *hear* them?)

DIRECTING: The Director is a 'Coordination Specialist" who establishes a 'production concept,' and coordinates all technical and artistic elements of production into one cohesive whole:

"The play director must train, coach, and labor on speech, voice, expression, body movement, and character portrayal of each actor, as well as the ensemble as a whole ...Actors themselves, without the help of scenery, lighting, sound or costumes should...convey the very style and mood qualities that the other factors of production contribute. The director, like the set, costume, lighting, sound designers, then becomes an artist. His materials are actors instead of paint & canvas. *He must shape and coordinate conception and form.*" - Alexander Dean, *The Fundamentals of Play Directing*

1. Did the play hold your interest? Don't confuse the subject matter, the playwriting itself, and this particular production. You might love the play, but hate the performance. You might hate the play itself, but love the director's, designers' and actors' work.
2. Was the play directed in a 'traditional' style, or did the Director present an unusual concept? Give specific examples!!
3. Were the actors well cast? Were they supported by motivated blocking and meaningful stage pictures? Did the ensemble work well together? Give specific examples!

AUDIENCE RESPONSE

1. Size: was it a 'full house,' or were there just a few people scattered in the theatre?
2. Was the applause spontaneous and enthusiastic, or merely polite?
3. Did the audience seem to enjoy the play more/less than you did? Give examples!

CONCLUDING PARAGRAPHS

1. Did the play get more or less interesting as it went along?
2. Did the play address questions that are pertinent to your life? Give specific examples!
3. Were there emotionally staggering moments in the play, or were you left cold?
4. Was the play too long, or did you want it to go on?
5. Wrap up the review. Who should see this play? Who should not (children, for example)? Why? Bring back your concluding sentence (THESIS STATEMENT) from the First Paragraph to summarize your feelings about the play & create a STRONG ending.

From Robert and Loren Cohen's booklet: "Enjoy the Play"

- Do not write, "In my opinion," or "I think." It is understood that this is YOUR review and YOUR opinion throughout. You are entitled to personal thoughts and feelings, without apology. However, you must support your opinions with **specific examples**.
- Do not say "His singing was amazing!" or "She was terrible!" without giving at least one specific example to support the statement!
- The name of the theatre, and the names of the people involved, should be spelled correctly (**use your program!**)



THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG RESPONSES TO ART!

Your opinion is valuable (and interesting)! But you must support your opinions with
SPECIFIC examples!!!!

THEATRE REVIEW RUBRIC

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

THEATRE REVIEW RUBRIC	A Excellent	B Good	C Average	D Poor	F Fail
CONTENT:					
Thesis/Central ideas are clear and developed with specific examples. Argument is strong and clear.					
Supporting statements should sufficiently develop the main ideas using specific examples, details, evidence, and arguments					
Covers main topic ideas suggested in Theatre Review Guide					
FORM:					
Paper follows a logical and organized structure					
Each paragraph has a clear purpose, is coherent and unified					
Transitions help the reader to move through main ideas, paragraphs, and specific details					
STYLE and MECHANICS:					
Sentence structure is clear and precise					
Word choice is appropriate					
Correct grammar, spelling and punctuation					

Paper is double-spaced, 3-5 pages					
GENERAL:					
Paper is turned in on time					
Paper is typewritten and collated, and STAPLED					
NOTES:					