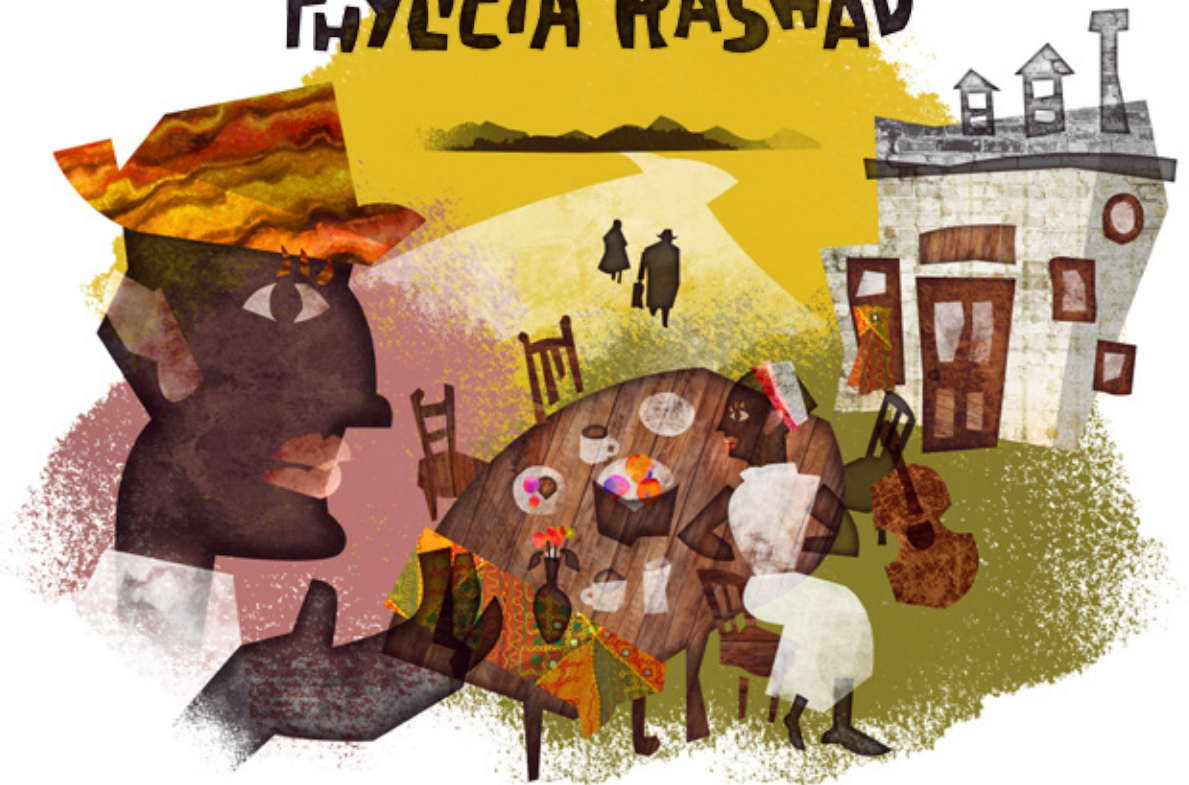


AUGUST WILSON'S JOE TURNER'S COME AND GONE

DIRECTED BY
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Mark Taper Forum

UCLA



Welcome

Theatre Educator Resources *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*

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Center Theatre Group is excited to have you and your students join us for *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* by August Wilson. A great play raises questions about the human condition, and a great educational experience allows students an opportunity to reflect upon those questions and begin to discover their own answers. To that end the material in Center Theatre Group's Student Discovery Guide and Educator Resources raise questions: questions about the past and the future, about finding your song, about freedom and about finding your starting place in the world. Our goal is to provide you with a variety of entry points into the play so that you can choose what works best for you and your students.

The Educator Resources and Student Discovery Guide are companion pieces that are designed to help you prepare your students to see the play and to follow-up the performance with options for discussion, reflection and creativity.

We have organized the Educator Resources into the following sections:

Student Discovery Guide

The Student Discovery Guide provides students with background information about the play and the subject matter, as well as questions for individual reflection. Written to be student-driven, the Discovery Guide helps prepare your students for the performance.

About This Play

This section includes a detailed synopsis of the play.

Comprehension

This section includes background information about the subject matter of the play. We have selected the information that most directly connects to or informs what happens in the play. This section furthers and deepens the background information provided in the Student Discovery Guide. This section can be shared before the play and/or discussed after the performance. It can also be used to provide research topics for your classroom.

Connection and Creativity

This section provides ways to explore connections between the ideas presented in the play, the students' lives, and the world we live in. In addition, it provides opportunities for your students to use theatre to explore and express. Theatre activities are included that examine both specific artistic aspects of the production, as well as delve deeper into the ideas and questions raised by *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*. The questions, activities and information in this section can be used both before and after the performance.

We know the hard work and dedication that it takes to bring students to see theatre. These materials are designed to support you in making the most of that experience. We applaud your passion for sharing theatre with your students, and thank you for sharing your students with all of us at Center Theatre Group. We look forward to seeing you at the theatre!

About *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*

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Scene By Scene Synopsis

“From the deep and near South the sons and daughters of newly freed African slaves wander into the city.... Foreigners in a strange land, they carry as part and parcel of their baggage a long line of separation and disbursement which informs their sensibilities and marks their conduct as they search for ways to reconnect, to reassemble, to give clear and luminous meaning to the song which is both a wail and a whelp of joy.”

—*Joe Turner's Come and Gone*

ACT I

SETTING

Pittsburgh, August 1911. Seth and Bertha Holly's boardinghouse.

SCENE 1

The residents of the boardinghouse are beginning their day. Bertha is busy preparing breakfast for the household. Long time resident Bynum Walker is in the backyard completing an ancient ritual involving prayer, dance, birds, roots and symbols scratched in the earth. Seth watches him from the back door, critical of “all that old mumbo jumbo nonsense.”

Bertha convinces Seth to leave Bynum alone. (“Seth, leave that man alone,” is one of Bertha's most repeated refrains.) Seth and Bertha discuss Seth's work prospects. In addition to owning the boardinghouse, Seth is a skilled ironworker and would like to open up his own shop. The endeavor has stalled, since the investor he'd been counting on wants Seth to sign over the boardinghouse, something he would never do. But he is not discouraged. He knows his business model is sound, and he has other prospects.

As Seth and Bertha begin to discuss their other lodger, young Jeremy Furlow, Bynum enters the kitchen and joins the conversation. Jeremy had been arrested and spent the night in jail, and Seth won't have it, saying, “I don't go for all that carrying on and such. This is a respectable house.” (Seth's refrain is constantly asserting the respectability of his boardinghouse.) Bynum reminds Seth that Jeremy has only been away from country life in the South for two weeks and hasn't adjusted to the ways of the North yet. Seth is not sympathetic.

Rutherford Selig enters. A white man, he peddles home goods up and down the Monongahela River. He's brought Seth the sheet metal necessary for making pots, pans and dustpans, which are in particularly high demand. Seth's business acumen is evident as he and Selig haggle over prices. Once prices are agreed upon, Selig settles in for a hot cup of coffee and one of Bertha's freshly baked biscuits.

Selig and Bynum discuss Selig's other job, that of People Finder. As Selig travels from town to town, knocking on doors to sell his wares, he makes notes of who is living in each of the homes. The Great Migration has split up families across the United States and left countless people looking for loved ones, but without the means to do so on their own. Pay Selig one dollar and give him the person's name, he'll keep an eye out for them.

Bynum has been seeking someone for a long time, but as of yet Selig hasn't had any luck locating him. Bynum is looking for the Shiny Man: the man who led Bynum to discover his unique song as a Binder of what clings; the man who showed him the Secret of Life; the man who will let Bynum know that he has fulfilled the responsibilities of his song.

Selig gets back on the road, and Jeremy returns from his evening in jail. Seth reprimands him for getting in trouble. Jeremy explains that he and a friend bought a half pint and were planning to split it when the local police approached them, and demanded two dollars. Because they didn't pay, they were thrown in jail.

Bertha sets Jeremy at the kitchen table with a big bowl of grits and biscuits. There is a knock at the front door. Herald Loomis and his 11-year-old daughter enter, looking for a place to stay. Seth takes a dislike to Loomis, but rents a room to him anyway. Loomis reveals that he and Zonia have been on the road for years, looking for his wife. Bynum suggests Loomis talk to Selig when he next comes around.

Seth takes Loomis and Zonia to their room while Bynum encourages Jeremy to take his guitar to a local hotspot where he could make some money. Jeremy's wary, but Bynum knows a place where he will be paid and treated fairly. Jeremy is finally sold on the idea when Bynum also mentions that there will be a lot of women there.

Seth returns without Loomis and Zonia. His suspicions have increased in the few minutes they spent alone together. Seth is pretty sure he knows who Loomis's wife is and where she lives but has no intention of telling him. Seth says, "The way that fellow look I wasn't gonna tell him nothing. I don't know what he looking for her for."

A knock at the door reveals another traveler, Mattie Campbell. She has heard that Bynum can bind people together and she needs his help. She wants the man who abandoned her with nothing – no resources, no explanation, totally alone—to come back. Bynum tells her that binding people who are not supposed to be together is dangerous, and could ruin her life. She is devastated.

As she starts to leave Jeremy tells Mattie that he knows how she feels. His girl left him in the middle of the night while he was still asleep. Jeremy comforts her and asks her out.

Outside, Zonia and a neighborhood boy, Reuben, play in the front yard. Zonia explains to him, "My daddy say some man named Joe Turner did something bad to him once and

that made [her mother] run away.” She and Loomis don’t stay anywhere for very long, but Reuben is still happy to have someone to play with. His best friend raised pigeons, but recently passed away. He had asked Reuben to set them free as soon as he died. But Reuben kept them to remember him by. He has also kept up his friend’s business—selling the pigeons to Bynum, despite the fact that he is afraid “the conjure man” might put a curse on him.

SCENE 2

In their kitchen a week later, Seth and Bertha discuss Loomis’s odd behavior—the way he silently stares at everyone, comes and goes all day without any explanation, and stands outside the local church without ever going in. Seth is now confident that he knows who Loomis’s wife is. She had been a lodger at the boardinghouse years before. Bynum joins the conversation, echoing Bertha’s opinion that Loomis isn’t dangerous.

Selig returns to pick up the dustpans Seth made during the previous week. As they negotiate prices, Loomis enters. He’s been waiting for Selig. Loomis gives Selig his wife’s name—Martha Loomis, her description and the one dollar fee.

Selig offers no guarantees. People finding is a complicated business. But he’s good at it—he comes from a long line of Bringers and Finders. His great-grandfather worked on slave ships. His father found runaway slaves for plantation owners. After Emancipation, Selig had taken the skills he inherited and applied them to finding African Americans for each other. As he leaves, Selig tells Loomis that he’ll be back next Saturday, hopefully with information about Martha.

SCENE 3

The next day, Sunday, Seth is supposed to be getting ready for church. Instead he is venting his frustration to Bynum about other people’s inability to see the great potential in his metal works shop. Basic math proves it would be profitable for everyone involved. He’s also frustrated that Jeremy refuses to learn his trade—a trade that’s stable and is always in demand. But Jeremy wants to be a musician, and has no interest in anything that could tie him down.

Jeremy returns home after an all-night gig, having won a dollar in a guitar playing contest. He asks Seth if it’s okay for Mattie to move in with him. It makes no difference to Seth as long as she pays her share. Bynum cautions Jeremy. Moving in together, especially when Mattie is so vulnerable, is not to be taken lightly. Her love and attention should not be taken for granted. Jeremy agrees, but completely misunderstands the point.

Their conversation is interrupted by a knock on the door. Molly Cunningham enters, looking for a room. Jeremy is immediately attracted to her.

SCENE 4

Later that evening, all of the lodgers except Loomis sit around the kitchen table. They've just finished a delicious chicken dinner, prepared lovingly by Bertha. They are full and content, in the mood to celebrate. They spontaneously begin to Juba—a call-and-response dance with percussion provided by clapping, stamping, and shuffling, that is largely based on African traditions but also infused with Christian references.

Loomis enters in a rage, demanding they stop. He doesn't want to hear anything about the Holy Ghost, who never caused him anything but pain. He works himself into a frenzy, then collapses on the floor in a trance.

He describes his vision: the ocean, with countless bones rising up from the sea floor and marching on the water's surface. All at once, the skeletons drop back into the water, creating a huge wave that washes them up onto the shore. But this time they aren't bones, they are people, motionless on the shore. Loomis wants to stand but he can't. Bynum never leaves his side.

ACT II

SCENE 1

At the Monday morning breakfast table, Loomis's outburst the night before dominates the conversation. Seth is ready to throw him out. Bertha defends Loomis, and reminds Seth that throwing him out means throwing out Zonia, too. Molly is not at all fazed by the ruckus. Bynum thinks Loomis's behavior isn't anything to worry about. Seth is not convinced.

When Loomis enters, Seth tells him straight away that his outburst will not be tolerated. He'll have to leave the boardinghouse. Loomis reminds Seth that he's paid through Saturday and won't leave before then. Seth grudgingly backs down.

Molly and Mattie are left alone. Molly reveals her worldview: She will never do housework for someone else, paid or not. She doesn't trust men. She isn't going to be tied down by children. Mattie, believing the opposite of everything Molly has just said, rushes off to work.

Seth comes back in just as Jeremy gets home. He was fired because he wouldn't pay a supervisor 50¢ cents from his paycheck in order to keep his job. Jeremy only makes eight dollars a week doing hard labor; he isn't willing to hand it over to someone who does nothing to earn it. Seth lectures him about being responsible—what does 50¢ cents matter when you're left with \$7.50, enough to keep a roof over your head and food on the table? Jeremy doesn't care about that. He's got his guitar; his music is all he needs to get along. Frustrated, Seth exits.

Jeremy notices Molly and flirts shamelessly. When Jeremy asks her to run away with him, she reminds him about his commitment to Mattie but doesn't push him away. She tells him that she doesn't work, and the \$1 dollar a day he's made playing guitar is not nearly enough to take care of her. Jeremy assures her they'll be fine because he's a really good gambler.

SCENE 2

Later that day, Seth and Bynum are playing dominoes in the parlor. Bynum sings the song, "Joe Turner's Come and Gone" as they play. Loomis listens from the door. Seth reminds Loomis that it's Monday, only five days before he'll have to leave. Loomis remains silent for a moment, then interrupts Bynum, demanding he stop singing that song. Bynum tells Loomis that he can tell what's troubling him: Loomis has forgotten his song, and forgotten who he is.

Bynum goes back to singing "Joe Turner's Come and Gone," and Loomis finally opens up about his history. Ten years ago, when he was a deacon of his church, he had stopped on the street to preach to a group of men who were gambling. He was preaching to them, hoping they'd stop, when Joe Turner and his men grabbed them all. Loomis was forced into hard labor for seven years, without being able to tell his wife what happened. She was left alone to survive and raise their baby girl. As soon as he was released, he went back to where they had been sharecroppers. Martha and Zonia were gone. He found Zonia at his mother-in-law's house, but no one knew where Martha had gone. Loomis and Zonia had been on the road for the past three years looking for Martha.

SCENE 3

Tuesday morning. Bertha busies herself making breakfast while Mattie sits at the kitchen table. Loomis enters as Bertha is giving Mattie a pep talk: Jeremy is not worth getting upset over. He's not good enough for Mattie. And Molly is just using him.

Seth enters and reminds Loomis that he only has three days left. Bertha tells him to leave Loomis alone, as Bertha and Seth exit. Loomis and Mattie are alone together and they connect. Loomis tells her he's been drawn to her from the first time he saw her. And he can tell that she feels the same way about him. He tries to touch her, but he can't.

SCENE 4

Wednesday morning. Zonia and Reuben play in the front yard. Reuben describes seeing Bynum talking to the wind in the middle of the night. After being spooked by that, he saw Miss Mabel—Seth's mother who had passed away long ago. Miss Mabel rebuked him for not letting Eugene's pigeons go as promised. Reuben wonders if Eugene sent her.

Already suffering the loss of his best friend Eugene, Reuben is upset that Zonia has to leave in a few days. He's disappointed, but is fairly sure he's going to be Zonia's husband when he grows up. They share their first, and second, kiss.

SCENE 5

Saturday morning in the kitchen. Bynum, Loomis and Zonia sit around the table while Bertha prepares breakfast. Loomis anxiously awaits Selig's return. Mattie enters and is clearly sad that Loomis and Zonia are leaving. As they leave, Mattie gives Zonia a ribbon for her hair. Father and daughter return to the road.

Seth enters just as Selig knocks on the door. With him is Martha Pentecost (formerly Loomis). They all greet her warmly, not having seen her since she left their boardinghouse. Just as Martha asks where Zonia is, Loomis and Zonia return. He questions Martha. He can't understand why she didn't wait for him when he needed her so much. Why did she leave their daughter and disappear?

Martha explains that her life was shattered when she found out he was taken by Joe Turner. She couldn't work the land alone, so she couldn't make enough money for rent and was kicked off the land just two months after Loomis was taken. For the next five years she waited for him at her mother's house. One morning she woke up and knew she needed to get back to living. She decided to go North with her church, but the trip could be dangerous. Martha left Zonia with her mother, intending to come back for the little girl once she was settled. But when Martha was finally able to return, Loomis and Zonia were already on the road.

Loomis says he had been consumed by the need to see her face and say good-bye; that unresolved good-bye had kept him trapped. But now he's seen her and his journey with Zonia is over. He gently hands the girl over to her mother. Ecstatic, Martha thanks Bynum for this reunion. Loomis turns on him, realizing that Bynum is the one who'd bound him to this arduous journey. Despite Bynum's explanation that he'd bound Martha to Zonia, Loomis is suddenly reminded of all the people who have attempted to bind him against his will. He vows to never let that happen again, taking out a large knife.

Martha begs him to put down the knife and find guidance in the words of the Bible. She recites, "Though I walk through the shadow of the valley of death..." Loomis is inconsolable – what has religion, prayer, or God ever done for him? Jesus bled for him in order to make him clean? Well, Loomis doesn't want or need anyone to bleed for him.

Loomis slashes himself across the chest with the knife. He is bleeding, but he is free from his burdens. He leaves the boardinghouse, Mattie running after him. Bynum is joyous—Loomis is shining! Bynum has found the shiny man.

Comprehension

Comprehension | Connections & Creativity

This section includes background information about the subject matter of the play. We have selected the information that most directly connects to or informs what happens in the play. This section furthers and deepens the background information provided in the Student Discovery Guide. This section can be shared before the play and/or discussed after the performance. It can also be used to provide research topics for your classroom.

August Wilson

“Before I am anything, a man or a playwright, I am an African American.”

—August Wilson

August Wilson is widely regarded as one of America’s greatest playwrights. He has received countless awards, including a Tony Award and two Pulitzer Prizes. His popularity among audiences of all races paved the way for black artists who might otherwise have been relegated to “black” theatres. But his journey was not easy, and it did not happen overnight.

Wilson was born on April 27, 1945 and named after his father, Frederick August Kittel, a German immigrant who was largely absent from his family’s life. His mother, Daisy Wilson Kittel, was left to raise six children on her own in the Hill District of Pittsburgh—then also called Little Harlem. His parents divorced and Daisy married David Bedford, a black man who quickly filled the hole his father had left. Wilson was biracial, but his cultural identity was firmly African American.

Daisy eventually moved her family to Hazelwood, a white working class neighborhood. Between 1959 and 1960, Wilson attended three different high schools. The first was Catholic Central High School, where he was the only black student and subjected to persistent and aggressive racism. He then transferred to Connolly Trade School, which was far too easy for him academically. Ultimately, he enrolled in the neighborhood high school, Gladstone Public, but as with the previous two, it was obvious that traditional learning environments were not for him. The final straw: his history teacher, a black man he admired, accused him of plagiarizing an essay and gave him a failing grade. Fed up, Wilson dropped out and spent the next four years educating himself at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh.

1965 was a significant year for Wilson. He turned 20. His father passed away and Wilson dropped the first and last name he had been given in favor of his mother’s maiden name. He discovered the blues, moved out of the family home into a boardinghouse, bought a used typewriter, and began his writing career as a poet. Working various odd jobs to make ends meet, Wilson could be found writing poems on tablets or napkins in diners, pool halls, and cigar stores all over town. He explains, “I found out later people thought I was a bum. The thing that sustained me was that my idea of myself was different from the idea that society, my mother, and even some of my friends had of me.”

Wilson co-founded the Black Horizons Theater, where he directed and acted without any previous theatre experience. Taking a lesson from his teenage self, Wilson learned everything he needed to know about the theatre arts from a book he checked out of the library.

Comprehension | Connections & Creativity

His transition from poet to playwright came in 1978 when a good friend encouraged him to come to St. Paul, Minnesota and rewrite a series of his poems into a play, *Black Bart and the Sacred Hills*. In doing so, he found his voice and his calling. Committed now to playwriting, he began to submit his work to theatres for production. At first, all of his submissions were rejected, but he didn't give up. His persistence paid off. In 1982 the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Playwrights Conference, which had rejected his plays multiple times, accepted *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*.

Continuously, in every year after that until his passing in 2005, August Wilson had a play either in development or in production at the most prestigious theatres and conferences in the country.

Artists Influencing Artists—Wilson's "Four Bs"

Although August Wilson didn't start writing seriously until he was 20 years old, or writing plays until his late-20s, he spent his whole life accumulating experiences and observations that shaped his own identity and would later become cornerstones of his theatrical legacy. For example, nine of the 10 plays making up the Century Cycle take place in his childhood neighborhood, Pittsburgh's Hill District, despite the fact that he wrote his plays much later when living in St. Paul, Minnesota and Seattle, Washington. He was also greatly influenced by art and other artists, what he would later call the "four Bs."

THE BLUES

In 1965, Wilson first heard the blues. Bessie Smith's recording of "Nobody in Town Can Bake a Sweet Jelly Roll Like Mine" resonated deeply. He said it "spoke to something in myself. It said, this is yours." The blues showed him that he, too, had a song worth singing, that his life and his community "were worthy of the highest celebration and occasion of art."

Wilson also recognized the blues as something bigger: a connection to the oral traditions of the past, and a way of passing information within communities and from generation to generation.

ROMARE BEARDEN

Late in 1977, a friend showed Wilson the work of visual artist Romare Bearden. Bearden portrayed African American life in a way Wilson had never seen before. Describing his first reaction to Bearden's work he stated, "What I saw was black life presented on its own terms, on a grand and epic scale, with all its richness and fullness.... I was looking at myself in ways I hadn't thought of before and have never ceased to think of since."

Comprehension | Connections & Creativity

AMIRI BARAKA

Author Amiri Baraka introduced him to black power and Black Nationalism in the 60-s, ideas he found “very beautiful.”

JORGE LUIS BORGES

The work of author Jorge Luis Borges showed him the possibilities of story structure. Borges also integrated magic, ritual, and the supernatural into the everyday lives of his characters, a technique employed in virtually all of Wilson’s plays.

Joe Turner/Joe Turney

Joe Turner’s Come and Gone gets its title from a blues song about Joe Turney, the brother of Tennessee governor Pete Turney. His job was to force African Americans into convict lease programs. Turney and his men would “arrest” them off the streets, hold an immediate “trial” and sentence them to seven years hard labor. On farms, plantations, mines and in cities they were subjected to horrible conditions, including whippings for failure to meet quotas or disobedience.

Joe Turney was not the only “hunter.” It was a lucrative field. The Jim Crow South was still reeling from the loss of their free labor force. Slavery had been abolished, but Southern white supremacists simply chose to ignore the law: many thousands of men were still in bondage.

Wilson felt that slavery was “the most crucial and central thing to our presence here in America.... I find it criminal that after hundreds of years in bondage we do not celebrate our Emancipation Proclamation... Where we sit down and remind ourselves that we are African people, that we were slaves.” That so many black Americans—then and now—felt no connection to their African history, was to him a great loss and destructive to their future.

Connections and Creativity

This section provides ways to explore connections between the ideas presented in the play, the students' lives, and the world we live in. In addition, it provides opportunities for your students to use theatre to explore and express. Theatre activities are included that examine both specific artistic aspects of the production, as well as delve deeper into the ideas and questions raised by *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*. The questions, activities and information in this section can be used both before and after the performance.

Cultural Mapping

Objectives:

- Students will gain knowledge of similarities and differences in their classmates.
- Students will be introduced to *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* and begin to reflect on the play.

Exercise:

Ask the students to move the desks to the side and stand in a circle.

Describe the room as a map of the world. Identify Los Angeles in the space.

Have students who were born in Los Angeles gather in that place. Have the other students group themselves according to their birthplace (north, east, south, or west of Los Angeles). Each group must determine two additional things that they have in common. Report back to the whole class. (Example: The members of the “north” group all like pizza and are the oldest in their families.)

Repeat activity using other divisions such as:

- Oldest, middle, youngest, only child.
- Speak one language, two languages, etc.
- Quotes from the production:
(Ask each student to stand by the quote that most intrigues them. Discuss in the group why they chose that quote. What intrigues them about it?)
- Quotes from *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*:
“I done seen bones rise up out the water. Rise up and walk across the water. Bones walking on top of the water... “
“They arrive carrying Bibles and guitars, their pockets lined with dust and fresh hope...”
“I can look at you, Mr. Loomis, and see you a man who done forgot his song... Fellow forget that and he forget who he is.”
“To just stand and laugh and let life flow right through you. Just laugh to let yourself know you’re alive.”

Artist and Sculpture

Objectives:

- Students will practice using their bodies to communicate an idea or theme.
- Students will reflect on the varied interpretations of the theme.
- Students will reflect on *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* through a physical exploration of its themes.

Comprehension | Connections & Creativity

Exercise:

Divide students into pairs. Student A is the artist. Student B is the statue. Have student A create a statue out of B on the theme of “the future.”

Examples: Flying cars, world peace, destroying the environment, graduating from college. Statues can be realistic or symbolic, personal or global. Have each student title their statue and present to the class. Repeat this exercise with B as the artist and A as the statue.

Repeat with the themes of Song, Journey, Freedom, Starting Place, Past and Future. Have each student sculpt an image that represents one of these themes. Discuss what these ideas mean to your students and what these ideas meant to the characters in *Joe Turner’s Come and Gone*. Are they similar or very different?

JUBA JAM

Many characters in *Joe Turner’s Come and Gone* either play an instrument or sing. Music is an important part of the story. In this activity, students get to experiment with rhythms and text to create their own “Juba.”

Materials:

Music CD’s from school/public library or iTunes access, a CD/MP3 player, portable speaker, small drums, bongos, egg shakers, maracas, pots, pans, claves, spoons, and wooden sticks.

Introduction:

In Scene 4, the characters join in on a “Juba” in Seth’s boardinghouse. Ask a student to read the stage direction aloud which says:

“The Juba is reminiscent of the ring shouts of the African slaves. It is a call and response dance. BYNUM sits at the table and drums. He calls the dance as other clap hands, shuffle, and stomp around the table. It should be as African as possible, with the performers working themselves up into a near frenzy. The words can be improvised, but should include some mention of the Holy Ghost.”

Here is an example of a Ring Shout with lyrics and a simple history that can be played as an example:

<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5759/>

And then here is an example of a Juba dance class:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=Rj4fz4Jbjk#!

Comprehension | Connections & Creativity

Main Activity:

Students form groups of 5-7 people. Each group must write a simple Juba song and create a rhythm using pots, pans, sticks, maracas, and other assorted instruments provided.

Each student in the group, must contribute one sentence or lyric to the song.

The pattern for the sentence or lyric must follow this pattern: SUBJECT-VERB-OBJECT.

The only words to be used are the following (these can be written on the board or projected):

SUBJECTS:

I, we, you, they, all

VERBS:

Run, jump, sing, dance, play, shout, clap, love

OBJECTS:

the sun, the moon, the song, the world, my heart, your heart, our music, our voice, my voice, your voice

Once each student creates one lyric, the group works together to put the 5-7 lyrics in order to form a simple song.

EXAMPLE JUBA SONG:

I jump the sun.

We sing the world.

They clap our music.

You dance the world.

All love our voice.

After the song has been written, the group works together to learn the song and to create a rhythm to be played while moving in a circle with the instruments provided.

Each group shares its simple Juba song and rhythm.

***ADVANCED VARIATION**

The entire class comes together and moves in a circle, each student has an instrument to play or can simply clap their hands. The groups shout out lines from their Juba song as call and response to the other groups. Overlapping, answering and calling/responding.

In music, call and response is usually two distinct phrases, either played by an instrument or spoken. The second phrase usually is an answer, or response, to the first. A modern example would be:

Comprehension | Connections & Creativity

CALL: "If I say hip, you say..."

RESPONSE: "HOP!"

CALL: "HIP!"

RESPONSE: "HOP!"

CALL: "If I say Dodgers, you say win!"

CALL: "Dodgers!"

RESPONSE: "Win!"

Closure:

A group conversation to identify the challenges and triumphs of creating a simple song as a group, in the Juba tradition. Why do you think that August Wilson included the element of Juba music in *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*?

Migration and Journey

- What is the Great Migration?
- What does it mean to arrive from a journey?
- What is an expectation at the end of a journey?

Begin with a stretching/breathing warm up with everyone in a circle.

Cultural Mapping:

Have students reflect on their journey to school here today. What are some of the traveling rituals that they do in the morning before arrival? Have them move to designated spaces in the room according to the prompts:

- Brush teeth first thing/last thing;
- Put on pants first/put on shirt first;
- Have school materials in one place/have to gather school materials from all around.
- Travel to school by bus-by car-by walking.

Travel, Communication, Entertainment Timeline:

To introduce the time period of the play, do a reverse timeline by making a list of things we use for travel, things we use for communication, things we use for entertainment in 2013.

Brainstorm as many of them as possible. Go backwards by decade and start to eliminate the innovations and inventions until you get to 100 years ago. From there, introduce the Great Migration and the exodus of African Americans from the Deep South to the industrialized North. Using the Discovery Guide, read the prelude to the play to set the stage.

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Journal activity:

Have students recall a trip that they either had to take or were forced to take. Explore the reasons for that trip, the high points and low points along the way. Explore arriving at the door of your destination.

Share in small groups the journey experience. Select one to activate.

Journey Activation:

Create an obstacle course of the journey, either with objects or people, paying attention to the high points, the low points and the destination. Make the destination the door to the classroom. Using yarn, have the students create the physical travel of these selected journeys, ending at the door. Take a picture of the journey artwork and discuss what they see.

Look at a map of the Great Migration and the many places that people are traveling to the various cities to a door in this new environment.

End by having a student read Langston Hughes' poem "One Way Ticket."

Share additional quotes from the play: "Seem like everybody looking for something." "I'm looking for my shiny man." "The world gotta start somewhere." Have students reflect on the characters' journeys through the front door.

Starting Place and Journey

- How is the theme of journey realized in this production?
- How can the end of a journey become a "starting place?"

Start with a discussion of seeing the production of *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*. As much as you can, steer students from just saying they liked or didn't like it. Use the model of first identifying highlight moments, then exploring questions pertaining to artistic choices and finally images that still stand out.

Have several character quotes on hand from various characters, or use the quotes given in the preshow lesson.

Arrival:

Have arrival destinations on index cards (grandma's house, Disneyland, a funeral home for, other destinations) and have students practice arriving at that destination and coming into the room. What kind of physical choices did they have to make before they entered the door? Compare this to the actor choices of Loomis, Zonia, Mattie, Molly and Martha entering the front door.

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Pictures to Life:

Share Romare Bearden's collage "Mill Hand Lunch Bucket." Explain that this collage was August Wilson's chief inspiration for writing *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*. Explore the collage and begin to create a living tableau of the image, having people go in and out. Have various quotes from the play that the characters say on the board, and have the students speak the characters' words while in the tableau. What discoveries can be found in this exercise?

Reflection: Have students select a character from the production. Have them imagine what their lives will be like once they have left the boarding house (or in the case of Seth, Bertha, Bynum and Selig, what their lives will be like within the boarding house). If time, share.

WELCOME/NOT WELCOME

Seth Holly's boardinghouse is place where people are welcome to stay awhile or just overnight. Some folks are on their way to someplace past Pittsburg, or perhaps they've arrived to stay in town for good. Either way, they must be welcomed by a new community and then try to adapt to the group. In this activity, students play a theater game based on Anne Bogart's *Viewpoints* in which they can experience what it is like to participate in and break away from newly formed communities.

Materials:

A large playing space like a gym or grassy area. Students should be dressed for movement.

Introduction:

Start with a guided conversation that briefly explores the following questions:

- What is a community?
- What does it mean to belong?
- Who gets to decide who belongs and who doesn't in a community?

Community Movement:

Form a large standing circle with the class to create a central playing space. Ask four to five students to volunteer to come to the center to begin the activity.

Start by asking the volunteers to work together to:

- Form a clump without talking
- Form a line without talking,
- Form a circle without talking.

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Repeat these three instructions a few times to encourage urgency in the group and to build confidence. Then, tell the group that the director (the teacher) will stop providing instructions.

Now, the group must work together to continue forming the 3 shapes (circle, line, clump) without talking, but rather paying attention to each other and listening.

No one in the group should “take charge” or direct the entire group. The goal is rather for this small community to find a single mind which allows them to organically move and make choices that allows them to form the shapes at their own pace. As they work, side-coach the students to encourage physical listening, group agreement, and to balance personal desires vs. group desires.

After a few short rounds, the whole class applauds the small group for its bravery. A new small group of volunteers comes to the center.

This time, the 3 instructions from the teacher are:

- Scatter to the four corners of the room/space
- Jump up and land as a group at exactly the same time
- Choosing a level everyone in the group agrees to (crouching, squatting, tippy toes)

After a few short rounds, the whole class applauds the small group for its bravery. A new small group of volunteers comes to the center.

This time, the 3 instructions from the teacher are:

- Form a circle with a dot in the middle
- Hop on one foot
- Do the wave (like fans in a stadium at a sports event)

After a few short rounds, the whole class applauds the small group for its bravery. With the remaining students, create as many extra groups of 4-5 students as necessary, so everyone belongs to a group. Do a quick rehearsal for each group in the center, creating any combination of 3 movements/shapes listed above (or invent your own).

Once each group has a done a quick run-through in the center, then the teacher allows all the groups to start working at the same time all around the room, gym or playing space. They continue to create their 3 assigned shapes, non-verbally, as a group.

After the students get used to working with their group at the same time that other groups are working around them, start to offer new options (always working non-verbally):

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- Encourage students to defect from their group of origin
- Form a new group.
- Return to your original group.

*It's important to remind students to really think about where they belong and only moving to another group if it feels right.

OPTIONAL: Play background music to offer new information to the students.

Closure:

A quick group conversation to identify how communities formed, what it felt like to belong and when did it feel like it was time to leave the group.

Walking the Road

“...told me to come and go along the road a little ways with him, that he had something he wanted to show me....He say he had a voice inside him telling him which way to go and if I come and go along with him he was gonna show me the Secret of Life. Quite naturally, I followed him.”—Bynum, a root worker, early 60's in *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*

Once the Emancipation Proclamation was issued and slaves in the Confederate territory were free, a migration to the North began. How did they migrate to the North?

Most slaves traveled on foot and playwright August Wilson offers us an important opportunity to step into the shoes of slaves who were walking the road to a new life.

Were those men, women and children scared walking the roads? Just because the Emancipation Proclamation was issued, could the newly freed trust other people? What questions ran through their minds as they made the journey? What unexpected experiences and people did they encounter along the way to their new life?

Writing Activity

Objective:

To open up the imagination, build empathy, and manifest their creativity from the page to the stage through tableau.

Through journal writing, small group work, and discussions the students have the opportunity to develop their leadership and collaborative skills while bringing their writing and vision to life.

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You know your students best and how the classroom time can be utilized. Components of this activity can be broken up into different class meetings or completed all at once.

Materials:

Paper or journals, and a pen or pencil

Invite the students to close their eyes if they like, while sitting in their chairs or while lying on the floor if your space allows. If students need to see you to take part in the activity this is also great. Invite the students to relax and take a couple of deep breaths together.

Sample text for the guided journey:

(Take your time and allow time for the students to conjure images, thoughts, sensations, and colors as you offer each step of the journey.)

I invite you to join me on the road, on this walking journey in our imaginations, as we explore this theme from *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*.

Put your journal/paper and pen or pencil near you. You will be writing about this guided meditation when we're finished.

I encourage you to notice images, thoughts, feelings, and even sensations, like feeling hot or cold or maybe even a tingling feeling. As you take this journey, notice that first thoughts are great to notice and if the way things are worded doesn't quite connect, feel free to reword, rethink what I say so it works for you.

Now, notice your breathing and as you focus on it, see if you can also notice the sounds of the room. Feel your own focus on this moment by noticing your feet if you are sitting or where your back is making contact with the floor if you're lying down. Breathe in and exhale. Can you relax behind your eyes?

Now, in your imagination, see yourself getting up.

Begin walking.

There are no cars and only some have horses in this world. It's a dirt road. Are there trees, bushes, other paths, twists and turns that cross this road?

You have just found out that you are free at last!

Recently, you were captured and made to work for an abusive boss. There have been no legal protections for you to make an abusive boss treat you more humanely. You have had no control over your own life; when and where to sleep, to eat, to have time for yourself.

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But now, you are free to walk wherever you want and no one can legally capture you or hold you to make you work for them.

What does this mean to you?

You are walking towards a place you've never been.
You are moving towards a new phase of your life.

Take a moment to notice all that you've left behind.
Is there any part of you that you can leave behind?
If so, say goodbye.

Now notice the parts of you that you are bringing with you.

As you continue traveling this road, what kind of weather is it?
What are you wearing? Notice your shoes.

What are you carrying with you?
Imagine you've been walking for a while. How do your feet and legs feel? Your breath?

Since you have a distance to go, you have a lot of time to think about life.
What questions come to mind?
Now that I am free, who am I and what do I want?
Where am I going?

You encounter another person on the road. What do they look like? What can you tell about them?

This person says "hello." You say hello back.
He/she says something interesting to you. A secret for you only. You take it in.
What he/she says inspires you to keep walking with him/her.

This person pauses in the road and asks you to hold out your hands and close your eyes. You do.

He/she puts something in your hands.
You take a deep breath. And another one.
You open your eyes. What is it?

It is something that will help you along your journey.
You're surprised and see that this will help you to know yourself better and it will support you to know you belong in the world. This surprise has the ability to help you to be successful in life as well.

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This surprise can be an idea, an item, and new wisdom or knowledge.
The surprise is very intriguing and it captivates you and when you look up—
This person is gone. You look in every direction and they are nowhere to be seen.

What will you do with this surprise gift?
How will it change your life and how do you envision your future because of this surprise?
Do you keep walking, change directions, or make a turn? Or will this gift open a new door? A new opportunity? If so, what is this new opportunity? Again, first thoughts are good to notice—

Come back into the room. If your eyes were closed, open them and begin to write about your experience on the road.

Journey Tableaus:

Once the students have written about their experience on the road, divide them into small groups of 4-5 (depending on the size of your class.)

Give the students a few minutes to share their journey writing.
Next, the students will create tableaus of the different journeys. Each student's tableau should include three or four living pictures that move from one to the next:

- Meeting the person along the way (What did this look like? What was the stranger like?)
- What did the stranger say to you? What was the secret? (Optional)
- Receiving the surprise (How did you receive the surprise? What was it, if you care to share with the class what your gift was?)
- In the future, how has this surprise changed their life?

Share their tableaus with the rest of the class.
Ask the students who are the audience to share images and impressions.

Discuss: the guided meditation, writing and bringing their visions to life.

Make connections between the freed men, women, and children after the Proclamation and their own sense of freedom and independence today as teenagers. How do the students feel about a new stage of life as they move through high school and set goals for post high school?

What is your story?

Ensemble Introduction:

Have the students walk around the room and freeze on cue. The physical activity increases blood flow and enhances their ability to take in information. Using the word freeze instills cues, structure and focus. From here have the students make eye contact with each person they pass (no talking). Next step is some sort of physical contact (usually we see high fives abound). Ask them to take away hands and make physical contact. Finally ask them to go back to just eye contact. This simple ensemble warm up increases awareness of others in the room and can take their focus off of themselves.

Central Questions:

Have the students freeze back to back with a partner. Ask them a leading question. Before they turn around have them be thoughtful about their answers. Tell them when you count to three they will turn around and share their answers with each other. It is important that one tell and the other listens, then they switch.

- What is your story? How would you explain who you are?
- How does our past affect our future?

Cultural Mapping Activity:

Cultural mapping is a set of exercises offering an active way to find out who's in the room while allowing students to identify with each other according to various categories. Ultimately this exercise demonstrates how limited identity categories can be.

Designate four areas in the room as NORTH / SOUTH / EAST / WEST. You can tape pieces of paper to the wall or tag furniture, but set clear landmarks. As you offer up identity categories, ask students to move across the room to the landmark that represents their answer.

Begin by imagining a map on the floor and having them place themselves where they live, where their parents are from, and finally where their oldest known ancestor is from.

Create new categories that draw out the diversity of your group and encourage dialogue.

AGE:	feel it/feel younger/don't believe in age/feel older
SIBLINGS:	one/more than one/more than two/only child
PETS:	dog/cat/bird/fish
READING:	books/don't read/magazines/internet surfer
RACE:	Black/Latino/White/Asian

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If you want this exercise to spark more discussion, drop two of your landmarks and work on a binary spectrum. Ask students to arrange themselves along a spectrum according to how they feel about these statements:

People see me for who I am. / Nobody really sees me.

If you agree with the statement, “People see me for who I am”, head NORTH. If you agree with, “Nobody really sees me”, head SOUTH. Arrange yourselves along the spectrum.

Once everyone has made a choice, ask people to speak about why they put themselves where they did. As they speak, others may rearrange themselves as spoken opinions influence them.

Other categories:

IDENTITY: You are where you come from. / You are what you make of yourself.

CHANGE: People can change throughout their life. / People stay the same.

Moment Before/Moment After Tableaus:

Brainstorm images from the time period of the play. Have the students select an image they respond to and make a frozen picture of the image with their bodies.

Using three beats encourage the students to move back in time to the moment before their image.

Use three beat to restore original image.

Use three beats to create the image they think would happen next.

Tap the actors’ shoulders and ask them what their characters are thinking in that moment.

Simple Song: Uncover your Story

Have the students write down their favorite song lyric, nice and big on a piece of paper. Then have them tape it to their shirt. Then they walk around the room and read each other’s lyrics.

When you say “Freeze” they freeze back to back with the person they are closest to.

When you say “Go” they turn around and tell the person why their lyric is important to them.

Circle up. Connect thoughts from the day to *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*. Have them recall what they heard about each other's lyrics. Have each person say one word or sentence for what they are taking out of the workshop and into the play/world.

Finding Your Song for Freedom

“Seem like everybody looking for something....Say when you look at a fellow, if you taught yourself to look for it, you can see his song written on him...Now, I can look at you, Mr. Loomis, and see you a man who done forgot his song. Forgot how to sing it. A fellow forget that and he forget who he is.”—Bynum, *Joe Turner's Come And Gone*

“You got to be something, Herald. You just can't be alive. Life don't mean nothing unless it got a meaning.”—Martha Loomis Pentecost, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*

Find Your Song; Find Freedom!

Objective:

To create a safe environment for the students to express themselves and create art from their writing.

Self expression through journal writing and transforming the entries into creative writing (poetry, rap, song lyrics, etc.)

Materials:

Paper, pen, art supplies

Play music during the creative session: (Optional)

Song list that Bynum sings is on Pandora:

- Joe Turner Blues
- I Belong To the Band
- Don't Leave Me Here
- Keep Your Lamp Trimmed and Burning

In their journals, have the students answer these questions:

- Your full name and any nicknames
- List 2 gifts/strengths that you have
- What is unique about how you see the world? Is there a way that you see the world that your friends or family don't?
- What change do you want to see in the world now?
- What will you give or do to help make this change?
- How can you create hope to inspire others to help make this change?

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Invite the students to sing their name by creating a theme song, rap, or poem that expresses who they are and what they want as they gain their independence in life.

Have the students look through their journal answers to find phrases, ideas, images, feelings that they can incorporate into the piece they are creating.

The songs, raps or poems can also explore what it would be like to live during slavery in contrast to their freedoms now.

Once the students have created their “song,” create a circle, where everyone can see each other—utilize chairs or sit on the floor together.

Invite each student to read, sing, or rap their piece. Playing music in the background can be a wonderful support as underscoring to the students’ pieces. Or in the tradition of Juba, the students can support each others’ performances/sharings with “Pattin’ Juba,” which could involve:

- Counter-clockwise turning, often with one leg raised
- Stomping and slapping to keep time

Close with a single word and/or gesture of what they are taking away from the process.

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Center Theatre Group's mission is to serve the diverse audiences of Los Angeles by producing and presenting theatre of the highest caliber, by nurturing new artists, by attracting new audiences, and by developing youth outreach and education programs. This mission is based on the belief that the art of theatre is a cultural force with the capacity to transform the lives of individuals and society at large.

Education and Community Partnerships Theatre is an enduring and powerful tool for communicating ideas, stories, emotions and beliefs that fuel the intellect, imagination and creative spirit. Center Theatre Group believes that stimulating awareness, creativity, dialogue and an inquisitive mind is integral to the growth and well-being of the individual and the community; and that nurturing a life-long appreciation of the arts leads inextricably to an engaged and enlightened society.

Center Theatre Group's education and community partnership programs advance the organization's mission in three key ways:

Audiences: Inspiring current and future audiences to discover theatre and its connection to their lives;

Artists: Investing in the training, support and development of emerging young artists and young arts professionals who are the future of our field; and

Arts Education Leadership: Contributing to the community-wide efforts to improve the quality and scope of arts education in Los Angeles.

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