

ENRICHED
CLASSICS

**Simon & Schuster Classroom Activities
for the Enriched Classic edition of
Four Great Plays by Henrik Ibsen
1-4165-0038-3 • \$6.95 / \$8.99 Can.**

Activities created by Katie Gideon

Each of the three activities includes:

- NCTE standards covered
- An estimate of the time needed
- A complete list of materials needed
- Step-by-step instructions
- Questions to help you evaluate the results

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Lesson Plan #1

“I must try and educate myself”
(A Lesson in Historical Context)

In order to connect with *A Doll’s House*, it helps to have some understanding of the social conditions that form the play’s backdrop. In this lesson, student groups will create a ladies’ journal that explores the role of women in Victorian society. In addition to preparing them for their reading, this research activity demands that students critically read their information sources. It also gives them valuable rehearsal in creating correctly formatted bibliographies.

This activity takes two or three fifty-minute class periods and also includes homework. It should be completed before students begin reading *A Doll’s House*.

NCTE Standards Covered:

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
7. Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.
8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.

What To Do:

1. Have each student read the book’s introductory materials (pgs. vii-xviii) for homework. As they read, they should track unfamiliar words and concepts. The goal is to come to class with questions regarding this transitional time in world history.
2. The next day in class, have students share any questions raised by the timeline. Discuss their initial observations: how is the Victorian Era similar to today’s society? How is it

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different? What seems “modern,” and what seems “old-fashioned”? How will this knowledge affect their reading of the play?

3. Explain to students that this truly was a transitional time in world history. During Queen Victoria’s lengthy rein, the world grew increasingly industrialized and “modernized.” Remind them that, even though we might think of people during this era as “old-fashioned,” they often thought of themselves as quite modern. There was great concern about how industrialization might affect traditional social roles and mores. Many popular publications of the day reinforced proper behavior and attitudes, for both men and women.
4. Given the themes of *A Doll’s House*, this project will focus on proper feminine behavior and attitudes. Ask students what kind of information they might expect a Victorian ladies’ journal to contain. Consult several contemporary women’s magazines and draw a comparison. Ask students to note how text, font size, layout, and white space are used in each of the magazines. Draw their attention to pictures and captions. Answer any questions they have about how to create a compelling front page.
5. Pass out Rubric #1. Explain that each student will use at least one print resource and one online resource to create an article explaining whatever topic they investigate. Then, groups will assemble their individual articles to create a journal (complete with a cover and at least one advertisement). Go over your expectations for the assignment. Review with your students what web sources will be acceptable and unacceptable for this assignment. (e.g., do they need to restrict their research to university websites only?) Their findings will create the historical context necessary for building understanding of this play.
6. Review the citation system at your school. Provide students with examples of correctly formatted bibliographies and in-line citations. Inform them that they’ll have to redo any work that comes in without proper citations.
7. Assign students to their groups. Assist them as they divide up the front cover, advertisement, and six articles.
8. Assist your students as they complete their research in the library. Encourage them to take accurate notes, complete with citations. Students will take their research home to create a draft of their magazine article, which should be brought to class the next day.
9. Students will have the class period to work in groups, putting their journal articles together. Depending on the criteria for their final product, you should meet either in your classroom or a computer lab. The journals are due the next day at the beginning of class.
10. Choose the best journals and create a Xeroxed packet for students to use as reference over the course of the unit. After you give out the packets, guide the students’ reading of the reference materials. If so desired, create a pop quiz based on the information students have gathered.

What You Need:

A copy of the Enriched Classic edition of *Four Great Plays* (1416500384) for each student

Copies of some contemporary women's magazines for comparison

One copy of Rubric #1 per student

Access to a library with both print resources and Internet

Art supplies and/or computer access to create the home journal

How Did It Go?

Based on the criteria you chose for them, were the students able to distinguish between reputable and non-reputable web sources? Could they successfully locate and use print sources? During presentations, could they successfully share information with one another? Were their journals attractive and accurate? Did they correctly format their bibliographies? Finally, a question to revisit as you read the play: did this historical research project build sufficient background knowledge to aid textual understanding?

Lesson Plan #2

“All the contrivances are my own invention”
(A Lesson in Set Design)

This activity is a great way to introduce theatrical design to students unfamiliar with dramatic productions. In this lesson, students will construct a set model and diagram for *The Wild Duck*. In doing so, they shall have to consider the challenges of building a working set for this play. The visual nature of this assignment may be especially powerful for students developing English language proficiency.

This activity may work as a final assessment, and assumes that students have finished reading the play. It will take several class days to complete. Alternatively, you could spend two days setting up the project, and then require students to finish on their own time.

NCTE Standards Covered:

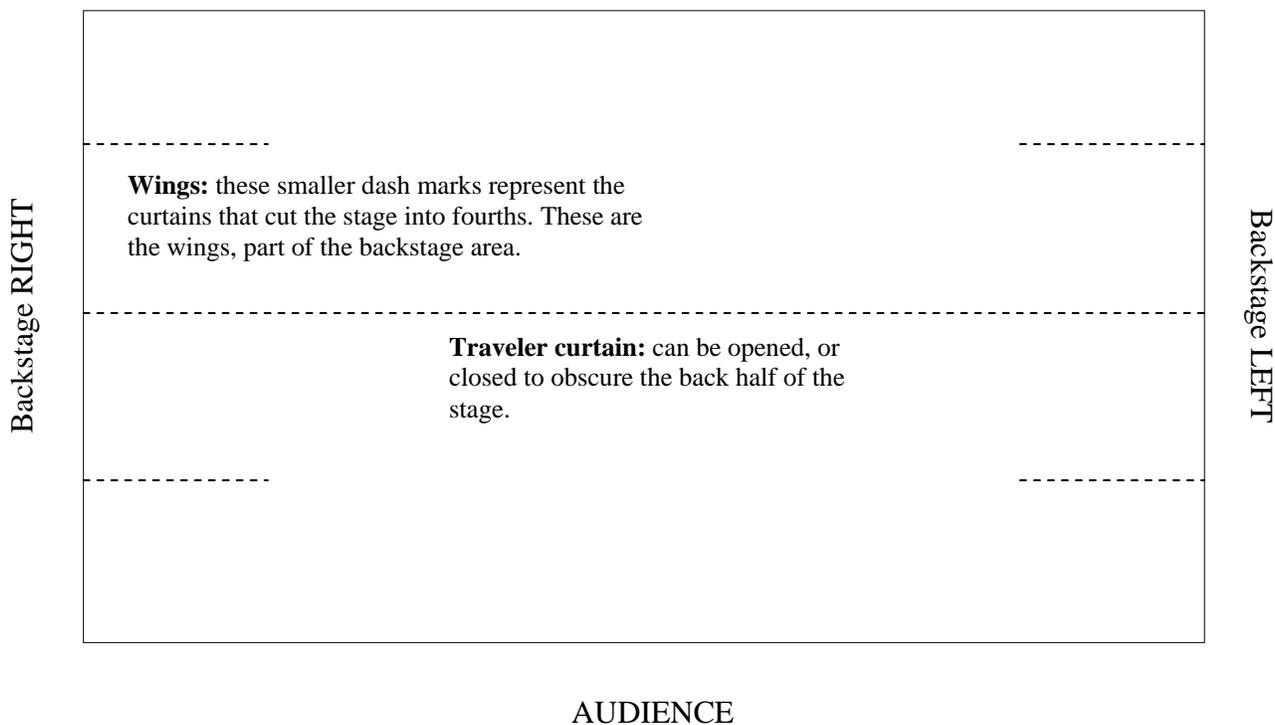
3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
9. Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.
11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.

What To Do:

1. Explain that theatrical directors, actors, and technicians use a variety of techniques to convey the theme of a production. How a production looks is a key component of whether or not the staging will be successful. A play like *The Wild Duck* presents its own unique challenges. Ask students: what are some of those challenges? (Remember, a play is very different from a movie!) How would they meet the challenges of staging a live production of this play?
2. Inform students that they will be creating a set model (diorama) for a production of *The Wild Duck*. They will be placed in design teams and create a concept for the whole show (they should pretend that they will design full costumes, the set, direction, etc). Though they'll only be creating the set model, they need to see this as a component of a larger artistic vision.

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3. If students are confused as to what constitutes an “artistic vision,” ask them to think about the important themes for the show. Ask, “How is truth telling portrayed in *The Wild Duck*? How are imagination and illusion portrayed?” The thoughtful answer to this question is a theme statement. For instance, students might say that “In *The Wild Duck*, imagination obscures much unpleasantness—and though it hides the truth, it makes life bearable.” Once they’ve arrived at a conclusion such as this, ask students how the set might be a vehicle for expressing that theme. The garret is a place of imagination; how could the scenery here obscure unpleasantness?
4. Pass out Rubric #2. Go over your expectations with students and explain what successful completion of each criterion looks like, including the expository paragraph summarizing their project. Be sure to stress that, while their final product is important, you’re placing equal weight on their ability to work effectively in groups. If necessary, model for your students the kind of cooperative learning skills you’re looking for. (In terms of the diorama: after you’ve done this project once, it’s a good idea to keep some of the best models as exemplars.)
5. Finally, give the students a brief diagram of the kind of stage they’re dressing for this production. You may wish to project the following diagram as the template:



6. For the remainder of the project, you’ll be working in support capacity and answering students’ individual questions. On the due date that you’ve assigned, have students set up their dioramas with the expository paragraph in front of the model. Break students up into new groups (one member of each original group in each new group). Then, have the students tour your set model museum. When a student gets to the model that s/he worked on, s/he can explain to her new group the rationale behind the group’s artistic decisions.

What You Need:

A copy of the Enriched Classic edition of *Four Great Plays* (1416500384) for each student

One copy of Rubric #2 per student

Diorama construction materials (cardboard, construction paper, fabric scraps, glue, etc)

How Did It Go?

Do the students understand how theatrical design tools can help convey the meaning of a play? Did their set design cover both Werle's house and the Ekdals' living quarters? Could they figure out how to store the different pieces of the set when those pieces weren't on stage? Could they articulate an artistic vision for their production of the play? Did their exposition meet all of the listed requirements?

Lesson Plan #3

“Doesn’t She Look Flourishing?”
(A Lesson in Visual Characterization)

This activity is another great way to introduce theatrical design to students unfamiliar with dramatic productions. In this lesson, students will literally illustrate the differences in temperament for the major female characters in *Hedda Gabler*. The visual elements of the activity may be especially powerful for students developing English language proficiency.

This activity will initially take one full fifty-minute class period, plus part of the next day. Students will need to complete a homework assignment as well.

NCTE Standards Covered:

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
9. Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.
11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.

What To Do:

1. This lesson assumes that students have already completed reading at least through Act Three. Students should have familiarity with the characteristics of the three female leads, enough to be able to compare and contrast the characters.
2. Explain that theatrical directors, actors, and technicians use a variety of techniques to convey the theme of a production. Costumes, hair, and makeup are key to conveying character; tell the students to find and read the stage directions describing the initial appearance of Aunt Juliana (pg. 212), Hedda (pg. 220), and Mrs. Elvsted (pg. 225). How do these visual descriptions of the characters help you understand their motivation?
3. Now remind students that an artistic team can choose a variety of different concepts for their production. A director might follow the original set directions to the letter, or s/he might choose to experiment. What if *Hedda Gabler* were set in today’s society? How would the costumes, hair, and makeup of these three female parts reflect that change?

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4. Pass out Handout #1. Students will consult the stage descriptions to create faithful representations of Ibsen's protagonists. Their drawings in the left-hand column will show what these characters would look like in a tradition production of *Hedda Gabler*.

5. In the right-hand column, students will imagine what the characters might look like in a non-traditional production set in current times. Students will draw a picture for the three characters they might appear in an experimental, contemporary production of the play.

6. In addition to their drawings, students will write a paragraph explaining the rationale behind their updates—for instance, why they chose to put Hedda Gabler in red lipstick, or why they gave Mrs. Elvsted highlighted hair. They must explain in a following paragraph:

- How their update reflects the original spirit of the character (e.g., Aunt Juliana need not wear a “gray walking costume” suitable to 1889, but she should still be “nicely but simply dressed”).
- Whether an experimental or traditional production of the play is more suitable (and why)
- Which famous actresses they would cast to play the characters in a staged production, and why.

7. Students will turn in drawings at the beginning of their next class day. Their artwork should be posted around the room, with the paragraphs underneath. Allow enough time for students to walk around, viewing and processing one another's work. Ask students to analyze similarities between the traditional and updated costume depictions; have them identify and explain why they found certain updates compelling. What commentary do the updated versions of *Hedda Gabler* offer on contemporary society? How do the costumes they've designed enhance that commentary? Do they think it is more or less likely that a woman would behave like Hedda, Mrs. Elvsted, or Aunt Juliana today than when Ibsen wrote the play? Why or why not? How well do the characters translate time periods?

What You Need:

A copy of the Enriched Classic edition of *Four Great Plays* (1416500384) for each student

Three copies of Handout #1 per student

Drawing and coloring materials (pencils, pens, crayons, markers, colored pencils, etc.)

How Did It Go?

Do the students understand how theatrical design tools can help convey the meaning of a play? Did their costumes depict the differences between Hedda, Aunt Julia, and Mrs. Elvsted? Could they articulate valid reasons for their casting of contemporary actresses in each of the roles? Could they articulate why they chose the traditional design over the experimental design, or vice versa?

Rubric #1

Historical Background Ladies' Journal: Rubric

- **The journal contains an eye-catching cover that:**
 - Prominently displays a creative title for the journal
 - Includes all group members' names
 - Captures the mood of the Victorian era
 - Relates to the social status of women
 - Effectively uses shades of black, gray, and white only—no color. (This needs to be easy and inexpensive to copy!)
 - Demonstrates pride in work

- **The journal contains at least one mock advertisement that:**
 - Captures the mood of the Victorian era
 - Relates to the social status of women
 - Effectively uses shades of black, gray, and white only—no color. (This needs to be easy and inexpensive to copy!)
 - Demonstrates pride in work

- **The journal contains at least six informational articles in the categories described below, each one including the necessary information, while also being:**
 - Written clearly, with effective word choice and sentence structure.
 - Free of grammar/spelling errors.
 - Researched and documented appropriately, with:
 - Credible sources used
 - Correctly formatted parenthetical citations
 - Correctly formatted bibliography at the end of the article.

House and Home: Your well-written article should describe the housekeeping responsibilities OR decorating sensibilities of a middle-class woman in the 1880s/1890s. What “modern technologies” might she have at her disposal? Would she have servants? What cleaning techniques and/or products might be available to her? Alternatively, you could describe home fashion of the 1880s/1890s. What was considered trendy décor?

Style and Beauty: Your well-written article should describe at least three of the fashion trends or beauty rituals of the 1880s/1890s. Consider hair styles, cosmetics, hygiene practices, and clothing (including underclothes!)

Family Life: Your well-written article should describe the domestic expectations of a middle-class woman in the 1880s/1890s. What would be her relationship with her husband? What behaviors or attitudes would he expect from her? How would she relate to her children? What duties did she have towards them? What attitudes should she hold about motherhood?

Entertaining: Your well-written article should describe the social interactions of a middle-class woman in the 1880s/1890s. Who was she allowed to be friends with? Who was considered outside her sphere? What kinds of events and entertainments could she enjoy? What was considered decent public behavior?

Careers for Women: Your well-written article should contain information about what educational programs were open to middle-class women in the 1880s/1890s., and what professions—if any—might be considered respectable for them to pursue.

Amazing Woman Biography: Your well-written article should include 7 pertinent facts about this woman, woven together in journalistic story format. You need to find a photo or painting of your subject (and make sure you cite the image source correctly!) Finally, your biography needs to include a statement as to why this woman should be considered “amazing” by people in the Victorian era. See your teacher for a list of possible biography subjects.

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Rubric #2

The Wild Duck Set Rubric One: Cooperative Learning Skills

CATEGORY	Criterion:	Grade:
Task Oriented	Consistently stayed focused on the task and what needed to be done. Very self-directed, and helped with any problem solving that emerged.	A B C D F
Communication Skills	Treated other group members professionally during the set creation process. Avoided yelling, putdowns, and gossip.	A B C D F
Time Management	Routinely used time well throughout the project to ensure things got done on time. Did not procrastinate. Met <u>all</u> deadlines set by group and seemed prepared with the proper materials—actually did what s/he said s/he was going to do (when s/he said s/he was going to do it)	A B C D F
Quality of Work	Student’s contributions to the set diorama show much time and effort was spent. Student’s contributions will enable the whole group to get a high score on the Set Design Rubric in each of the categories (feasibility, workmanship, thematic relevance, exposition).	A B C D F

Average the grades from above and write down the group member’s letter grade for this portion of the assignment: _____

The Wild Duck Set Rubric Two: Final Product

CATEGORY	Criterion:	Grade:
Feasibility	Designers took structure of the whole play into account. Set pieces can be moved and stored easily as required. Floor model shows where set pieces will be stored when not in use on stage. There will be room backstage for actors to move around—the set isn’t obstructing exits and entrances, and doesn’t require a 20-minute set change!	A B C D F
Workmanship	The set diorama shows thoughtful construction—there are no rough edges, and the model isn’t rickety. Interesting colors and materials are used (e.g., real fabric as opposed to construction paper). This group clearly put great effort into creating their model!	A B C D F
Thematic Relevance	The set model uses materials, color, and scale to enhance the themes of the show. Designers have made some sort of decision that sets their model apart and indicates that the production matching the show will be creatively unique.	A B C D F
Exposition	Exposition clearly explains how this particular design addresses the challenges created by the setting needs for the play. Additionally, it describes how the set fits in to an overall production concept. Also, it explains what materials would be used if building the set full-scale on an actual stage, and how many crew members will be need to complete set changes during the show. Finally, the exposition analyzes how the materials, color, and scale of the set will enhance the themes of the show—themes must be stated clearly, as well as production goals for the design time. Grammar and spelling checked meticulously throughout.	A B C D F

Average the grades from above and write down the group’s shared letter grade for this portion of the assignment: _____

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Handout #1

Costume Design for: _____

Directions: In the left-hand column, draw the character in her costume as Ibsen’s stage directions initially describe her. Then, consider how the character would change if you staged an experimental version of *Hedda Gabler*. In the right-hand column, draw the same character in a contemporary costume.

Traditional	Contemporary