

# TWO RIVER THEATER

## Curriculum Design Goals

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

### Pre Show:

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

### Pre- or Post-Show:

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

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

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

### Post-Show

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



# *The Lion in Winter*

## Activity: Imagining History

### Pre or Post-Show Activity

**Appropriate for:** Grades 8-12

**Appropriate for:** English, Humanities, History, Social Studies, Civics, Government, Creative Writing, Media Studies

**Time:** Over the course of a week or a month, depending on grade and complexity of research

**Assignment:** Tell the story of an average day in the life of a historical figure.

This is a piece of historical fiction. Many details of the story will come from research as a historian, both primary research from writings, photographs, and videos, as well as secondary source research on the person and time period.

With facts as your background, you must use your creative writing skills to portray a realistic, vibrant character.

You may choose the style in which you write – spoken word, song, poem, story, or monologue, but must be in the first person point of view and contain accurate historical details.

Students might choose historical figures from the time and place currently being studied, choose from any period in history, or be assigned specific historical figures.



## Conducting Research

*What can you find out about this figure?*

- What evidence of personality can you find?
  - Is there writing or video by or of this person? Is there a record of a contemporary speaking or writing about this person?
- How might this person's actions speak to their character?
- How do you imagine someone might feel in the position of this person?
- What was your figure's relationship with others, including family, friends, and other historically significant figures?

*Research the Time Period*

- What was happening in the world at that time?
- What was happening in the country of your figure? What was your figure's role in these events?
- What technologies existed?
- What did people wear?

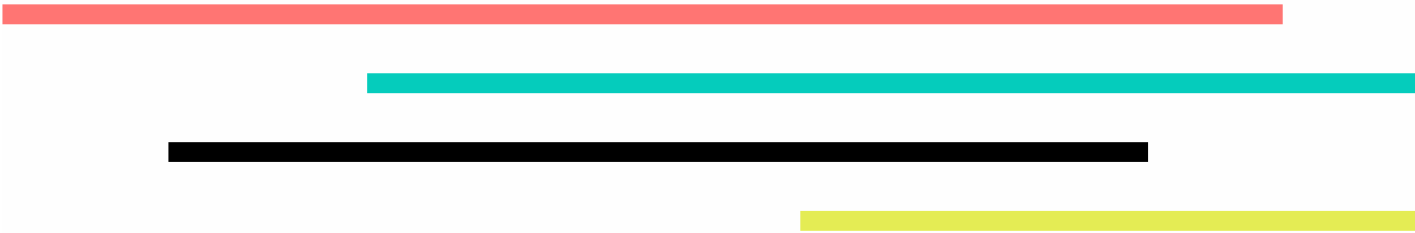
## Writing

Students write a first person narrative detailing a day of their chosen historical figure. The day might be an ordinary one, might detail a personal relationship, or might lead up or describe the aftermath of a major historical event.

## Presentation

In groups of four or five, students share their narratives and determine commonalities.

Each group decides how to present their pieces. They may each read in turn, deciding upon a logical order (by time period?) or they may break their pieces up, interspersing where they find connections. Groups rehearse and present to the class or to a larger school audience.



# *The Lion in Winter*

## Activity: Examining History

### Post-Show Activity

Appropriate for: Grades 8-12

Appropriate for: English, Humanities, Civics, History, Drama, Government

### Materials Needed:

Computer/Internet OR copies/printouts of articles

Optional: copies of *The Lion in Winter*

### Read

As a class, in partners, or in small groups, read the historical background provided on the various links.

This may be done as a jigsaw, with readings split between small groups or partners and presented to the whole class.

- [http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic\\_figures/eleanor\\_of\\_aquitaine.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/eleanor_of_aquitaine.shtml)
- <http://www.history.com/topics/british-history/eleanor-of-aquitaine>
- <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Eleanor-of-Aquitaine>
- <http://britishheritage.com/eleanor-of-aquitaine>
- [http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic\\_figures/henry\\_ii\\_king.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/henry_ii_king.shtml)
- [http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/middle\\_ages/henryii\\_character\\_01.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/middle_ages/henryii_character_01.shtml)
- <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Henry-II-king-of-England>
- [http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic\\_figures/richard\\_i\\_king.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/richard_i_king.shtml)
- [http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic\\_figures/john.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/john.shtml)
- <http://www.genealogy.com/ftm/o/g/i/Ian-Ogilvie-Lancashire/WEBSITE-0001/UHP-0485.html>

### Discuss

- What assumptions are made in these articles about character, personality, and motivation?
  - Post show: what assumptions did the playwright make? Are there crossovers?
- What assumptions might you make about these figures and this period of history, based on the evidence presented?
- What questions are you left with?
- Post show: evaluate the historical accuracy of the play. What is plausible? What is not?