



Education activities

BASED ON A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE
BY ARTHUR MILLER

WRITTEN RESPONSE

Write a review of this production of *A View from the Bridge*, taking into account direction, acting, design elements and audience response.

For guidelines on how to write a review, see our review writing resource linked in the drop-down menu for *A View from the Bridge* at statetheatrecompany.com.au/education-program.

DISCUSSION

In his essay "Tragedy and the Common Man", Arthur Miller says: "I think the tragic feeling evoked in us when we are in the presence of a character who is ready to lay down his life, if need be, to secure one thing - his sense of personal dignity."

In pairs or a small group, discuss how this statement relates to Eddie Carbone, the protagonist of *A View from the Bridge*. Do you think Eddie's "sense of personal dignity" is the most important thing to him? Why or why not? Discuss with others and think of specific quotes and actions to support your argument.

ACTIVITY

Design a front of house experience or poster for this production of *A View from the Bridge*. Think about the audience, themes and messages of the production. How might you emphasise these in your design? Come up with colours and concepts, list your ideas and sketch them out. Create a final product (a poster, model or final design sketch). Ensure everything that is included is there for a reason.

WRITTEN RESPONSE

What are the central themes of *A View from the Bridge*? Identify one or two themes (e.g. desire, duty, immigration, etc.) and explain how and where they were used in the play. Use specific examples and quotes.

ACTIVITY

In a group, choose a scene from *A View from the Bridge*. Discuss how you would want this to be represented on stage. Make sure you consider all design elements – set, props, sound, lighting, etc. Write down your ideas or create a mood board. Next, think about the characters involved in the scene. Discuss what they might be feeling in that moment, how their feelings might change as the scene progresses, what they are trying to achieve in the scene and what might have changed in the character's life after the action or conversation involved in the scene. Think about the expressions and physicality that might accompany the emotions and actions of the characters. If possible, create a minimal version of your chosen design and act out the scene.

WRITTEN RESPONSE

Research elements of classic Greek tragedy, such as the chorus, the hero with a tragic flaw, the concept of hamartia. Choose an element and examine how it relates to or is used in *A View from the Bridge*. Use specific examples and quotes to demonstrate the relationship between the play and your chosen concept.

DISCUSSION OR WRITTEN RESPONSE

In a small group or a written response, explore the following questions about the character of Alfieri. What is his function within the play? How does he change the way the audience understands the characters and the action taking place? Why do you think Director Kate Champion has Alfieri sit or stand on stage during parts of the play he is not acting in? How does this staging of the play emphasise or change the role of Alfieri?

ACTIVITY & WRITTEN RESPONSE

Think about the themes in *A View from the Bridge*. Browse through a newspaper or have a look on a news website. Can you see any of the themes of the show reflected in current world events? Themes and issues like immigration, respect and reputation, masculinity and others are still being discussed by people today, both nationally and internationally.

Choose a theme or issue presented in the play and a news article from the past 12 months that shows how that theme or issue is still relevant. Research how your chosen topic was viewed and talked about in the 1950s when Arthur Miller wrote the play; compare this to current discourse on the topic. How has the way we see this concept or idea changed from the 1950s to the present day? How is it similar? Write down your responses using quotes from the play and a news source or sources.



WRITTEN RESPONSE

The concept of a bridge is used symbolically throughout *A View from the Bridge*, particularly by Alfieri. Bill Allert, who plays Alfieri in this production, speaks about how the character himself functions as a kind of bridge between the audience and the other characters (see page 17 of the study guide available at statetheatrecompany.com.au/education-program). Many of the characters are also crossing a kind of metaphorical bridge – from childhood to adulthood, from Italy to America, from safety to uncertainty.

Choose a character and think about what boundaries they may cross or start crossing during the course of the play. Think about how the design and acting in this particular production might have emphasised the boundaries the character is crosses. Use examples and quotes to illustrate your point.

DISCUSSION

The characters of Marco and Rodolpho are often compared to one another by other characters. In a group discussion or using dot points, list the differences in physical appearance, temper, interests and situation between the two brothers. Do they have any similarities? What function does it serve to have such significant differences between Marco and Rodolpho? Discuss or write down dot points.

FURTHER ACTIVITIES

Other activities related to this production are available in the study guide available under the drop-down menu for *A View from the Bridge* at statetheatrecompany.com.au/education-program.