Twelve Angry Men

by Reginald Rose
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Credits page p.2
Who is Vertigo Theatre? p.3
About Going to the Theatre p.4
About the Play p.5
Plot Overview p.6
About the Characters p.8
About the Playwright p.10
Meet Actor David LeReaney, Juror #4 p.11
Pre-show Activities
  An Eye for an Eye p.13
  Do You See What I See p.13
  Know Your Decade p.14
  Can Prejudice Obscure the Truth? p.15
Post-show Activities
  Spoof p.17
  In the Criminal Justice System … p.18
  Telling Stories p.19
  Student Play Report p.21
Sponsor Information p.22
Teacher Evaluation p.23

Vertigo Theatre is committed to creating a welcoming atmosphere for schools and to assist teachers and parent chaperones with that process. It is our wish to foster and develop our relationship with our student audience members. It is our intention to create positive theatre experiences for young people by providing study guides and post-show “talk backs” with our actors and theatre personnel, in order to enrich students’ appreciation of theatre as an art form and enhance their enjoyment of our plays.
The Cast

RYAN LUHNING  Foreman
HAYSAM KADRI  Juror 2
ROBERT GRAHAM-KLEIN  Juror 3
DAVID LEREANEY  Juror 4
BRIAN JENSEN  Juror 5
PATRICK MACEACHERN  Juror 6
JOE-NORMAN SHAW  Juror 7
DUNCAN DILLERENSHAW  Juror 8
GREG SPIELMAN  Juror 9
PAUL COWLING  Juror 10
KEVIN ROTHERY  Juror 11
FRANK ZOTTER  Juror 12
DUSTIN MACDOUGALL  Guard

Creative Team

KATE NEWBY  Director
TERRY GUNVORDAHL  Set Designer
DAVID SMITH  Lighting Designer
MICHAEL GESY  Sound Designer
BRIAN CRAIK  Costume Designer
RUBY DAWN EUSTAQUIO  Stage Manager
ALEC MCCAULEY  Assistant Stage Manager
TERRI GILLIS  Production & Facility Manager
BECKY SOLLY  Technical Director
TYNE FOX  Production Associate
RILEY MILJAN  Head Scenic Carpenter
RUSSEL OZON  Scenic Carpenter
AMANDA FOX  Props Mistress
JANET MADER  Head Scenic Painter
KALYNA CONRAD  Scenic Painter
ROSEMARY STEGMAN  Playhouse Technician
KATE NEWBY  Director

Setting

The jury room of a New York Court of Law

Time

1957

Special Thanks

JV Theatre Productions, Kevin Corey, Jeremy Parker, Pat Pearson, Chief Justice Neil Wittmann

Vertigo Theatre is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatre and engages professional artists who are members of Canadian Actors’ Equity Association through the Canadian Agreement.

Vertigo Theatre gratefully acknowledges the support provided by our government funders.
Vertigo Theatre operates out of Vertigo Theatre Centre and is located in the heart of downtown at the Calgary Tower.

Housing two performing spaces, The Playhouse and The Studio, Vertigo Theatre produces a mystery series (Vertigo Mystery Theatre) and presents theatre-for-young-audience productions from across the country (Y Stage).

Vertigo Mystery Theatre is a unique opportunity for students to come together and engage in an entertaining theatrical experience that promotes problem solving. Appropriate for Junior and Senior High School students, Vertigo Mystery Theatre allows students to study the literature of authors such as Agatha Christie and J.B. Priestly while engaging in a shared cultural experience.

Y Stage provides young audiences and adults alike an opportunity to investigate and rediscover our world. Y Stage is ideal for educating young people on the vast scope of theatre as we feature a wide variety of performance styles including physical theatre, mask, dance and spoken word. With five productions and an additional show aimed specifically at teens, Y Stage truly has something for students of all ages.
ABOUT GOING TO THE THEATRE

Going to the theatre to see a play is a unique and wonderful experience. The sense of being “right there” in the characters’ lives, the exchange of energy between actors and audience, this cannot be found in front of television, films, computers, iPods or Blackberries. In the theatre, the audience shares what the actors on stage are doing by watching and listening. The actors on stage also respond to the audience and the way they are reacting to the performance. Some students may be coming to the theatre for the first time; others may need to be reminded of appropriate audience behavior. The following is offered in the hope that your students gain the most from their theatre experience.

• Stay with your group at all times and pay attention to your teachers, chaperones and theatre personnel.
• Once seated, stay put, watch and enjoy the play. If you absolutely must use the washroom during the performance, please exit the theatre quickly and quietly. You will be readmitted to the theatre at the discretion of the House Manager.
• Please do not stand up, walk around or put your feet on the seat or stage in front of you.
• Remember, this is “live” theatre. If you even whisper to someone beside you during the performance or in a blackout between scenes, you could disturb the concentration of the actors doing their jobs, or other audience members’ enjoyment of the play.
• Eating, drinking or chewing gum is not permitted in the theatre.
• Feel free to talk quietly before the show. When the houselights go down at the beginning of the play, this lets you know that we’re starting. It is at this moment that the actors and technical staff do their final preparation for the opening moment, so please let them do their work by being quiet and respectful.
• Laugh if it’s funny, cry if it’s sad, think, watch, listen, feel, respond, and, above all, applaud at the end. Let the actors and everyone else involved in the production know in the curtain call that you had a good time and appreciated their work.
• If you have a cell phone, iPod, iPhone, Blackberry, or any other electronic device, please make sure it is turned off or leave it with the Front of House Manager until the performance is over. If you feel the urge to text during the performance, just don’t out of courtesy to your fellow audience members and the performers.
• The use of cameras and recording devices in the theatre is strictly prohibited.
• At the end of the performance and “talk back”, please wait for the ushers to escort your group out of the theatre.
• Above all else, have a good time!
ABOUT THE PLAY

TWELVE ANGRY MEN, by American playwright Reginald Rose, was originally written for television, and it was broadcast live on CBS’s show Studio One in 1954. Rose expanded the play for the stage and a new version was published in 1955. Two years later, in 1957, Rose wrote the screenplay for a film version, which he co-produced with actor, Henry Fonda, who also played the pivotal role of Juror #8. Sydney Lumet directed the film and it was nominated for Academy Awards for Best Picture, Best Director and Best Writing, Screenplay Based on Material from Another Medium, and an Edgar Allan Poe Award for Best Motion Picture Screenplay from Mystery Writers of America.

In 1997, the cable channel Showtime released the made-for-television movie of TWELVE ANGRY MEN, directed by William Friedkin, and starring Jack Lemmon as Juror #8, with George C. Scott, Hume Cronyn, James Gandolfini, and Tony Danza. Reginald Rose produced an updated screenplay for this version. The play has subsequently been updated and revived; for example, in a production by the Roundabout Theatre Company at the American Airlines Theatre in New York City in 2004.

TWELVE ANGRY MEN was inspired by Reginald Rose’s experience of jury duty on a case in New York City. At first he had been reluctant to serve on a jury, but he wrote, “The moment I walked into the courtroom and found myself facing a strange man, whose fate was suddenly more or less in my hands, my entire attitude changed.” The Internet Movie Database quotes Rose’s memories of this experience: “It was such an impressive, solemn setting in a great big wood-paneled courtroom, with a silver-haired judge, it knocked me out. I was overwhelmed. I was on a jury for a manslaughter case, and we got into this terrific, furious, eight-hour argument in the jury room. I was writing one-hour dramas for Studio One then, and I thought, wow, what a setting for a drama.” The result is a tense, engrossing drama in which eleven jurors believe the defendant in a capital murder trial is guilty, while one juror stands up courageously for what he believes is justice and tries to persuade the others to his way of thinking.
PLOT OVERVIEW

TWELVE ANGRY MEN is set in 1957 in the jury room of a New York City Court of Law. It is late afternoon on a hot, muggy summer’s day. As the play opens, the judge’s voice is heard offstage, giving instructions to the jury. “... And now, gentlemen of the jury, I come to my final instructions to you. Murder in the first degree – premeditated homicide – is the most serious charge tried in our criminal courts. You’ve listened to the testimony and you’ve had the law read to you and interpreted it as it applies to this case. It now becomes your duty to try and separate the facts from the fancy. One man is dead. The life of another is at stake. I urge you to deliberate honestly and thoughtfully. If there is a reasonable doubt – then you must bring me a verdict of ‘not guilty’. If, however, there is no reasonable doubt – then you must, in good conscience, find the accused guilty. However you decide, your verdict must be unanimous. In the event you find the accused guilty, the bench will not entertain a recommendation for mercy. The death sentence is mandatory in this case. I don't envy you your job. You are faced with a grave responsibility. Thank you, gentlemen.”

The accused is a sixteen year-old boy from the slums on trial for allegedly stabbing his father to death. He has admitted to buying a knife on the night in question but claims that he lost it. The jury room is unbearably hot with no air conditioning. Some of the jurors are irritable within minutes of entering the jury room. The results of the first vote are 11 guilty and 1 not guilty. Juror #8 defends his not guilty vote despite the criticisms of Jurors #3, #7 and #12, saying that he will not send a boy to his death without talking about it first. After some argument, they agree to discuss the facts of the case. Juror #3 reviews what they know. An old man who lives underneath the room where the murder took place heard loud noises just after midnight. He heard the son yell at the father that he was going to kill him. Then he heard a body falling and moments later, saw the boy running out. Juror #4 says the boy’s story of being at the movies at the time is flimsy because no one remembers seeing him there. Also, a woman living opposite looked out her window and saw the murder through the windows of a passing elevated train. Further facts emerged: the father regularly beat his son, and the son had been arrested for car theft, mugging and knife fighting. He had been sent to reform school.

Juror #8 insists that during the trial too many questions were not asked. Could have someone else have stabbed the boy’s father with a similar knife and could the boy be telling the truth? When the jurors insist the knife is too unusual, he produces the same one. A secret vote is called for during which Juror #8 abstains from voting. There are now 10 guilty votes and one not guilty.

Juror #3 is angry with Juror #5, assuming he is the one who changed his vote. In fact the not guilty vote was cast by Juror #9, who says he wants to hear more discussion of the case. Pressured by Juror #8, the jury agrees it would take about ten seconds for a noisy train to pass by the apartment so the old man
could not have heard the boy yell that he was going to kill his father, which he may not have even meant since people use those words all the time without really meaning them. Convinced by these arguments, Juror #5 changes his vote to not guilty, making the vote nine to three.

Juror #8 questions the testimony of the old man – how is it possible that it took him only fifteen seconds to get downstairs, open the front door and see the boy fleeing since he cannot walk very well. Using a diagram of the apartment, he acts out the old man’s steps and is timed at forty two seconds, concluding that the old man must have heard rather than seen someone running down the stairs and assumed it was the boy. Juror #3 insists the boy is guilty and deserves to be executed. When Juror #8 accuses him of being a sadist, Juror #3 lunges at him and threatens to kill him. Juror #8’s calm response is that perhaps Juror #3 does not really mean what he said.

The jurors take another vote, an open one, and the result is an even split – six to six. The possibility of a hung jury is brought up, meaning that a new trial would have to be held and their responsibilities would be over.

Juror #2 raises a question about the fatal wound being caused by a downward thrust of the knife, an awkward action because the son is six inches shorter than his father was. Juror #3 demonstrates on Juror #8 how it could be done, crouching down to approximate the boy’s height and then raising the knife and making a downward stabbing motion. Juror #5, who has witnessed knife fights, says that anyone using a switchblade would use it underhand, stabbing upward, making it unlikely that the boy, who was an experienced knife fighter, could have caused the fatal wound. Another vote is taken with the result being nine to three in favour of acquittal. Juror #10 goes off on a prejudiced rant about how all people from the slums are liars and have no respect for human life. Juror #8 reminds them all that it is hard to keep personal prejudice out of people’s opinions, and that prejudice obscures the truth.

Juror #4 still insists that the boy is guilty, reminding them of the most important testimony of the woman who was in bed unable to sleep when she looked out her window and saw the boy stab his father. It is determined that the woman wears glasses from several jury members’ observations of her in court, and, that since no one wears their glasses to bed, she would not have had time to put them on to clearly see what she had claimed to have seen. The votes are now eleven to one. Only Juror #3 insists on a guilty verdict, but when he sees that he stands alone and cannot change anyone else’s mind, he, too, votes “not guilty”. The jury has reached a unanimous decision. The boy is acquitted.
ABOUT THE CHARACTERS

Juror #1 is the Foreman of the jury. He is serious about his role and tries to run the proceedings in an orderly fashion, reminding the jurors "Just let's remember we've got a first degree murder charge here. If we vote guilty, we send the accused to the electric chair."

Juror #2 is timid, quiet and unsure of himself, finding it hard to maintain an independent opinion until he finds the courage to point out an important question about how the murder was actually committed.

Juror #3 is the antagonist. He is a forceful, intolerant bully who sees the case as simple and believes the accused is absolutely guilty. He is quick to lose his temper. His desire to convict and punish the defendant is directly related to his feelings of anger and betrayal in regard to his poor relationship with his own son.

Juror #4 is a stock broker, well-dressed, logical and well-spoken. He urges his fellow jurors to avoid emotional arguments in favour of rational discussion. He also believes strongly in the defendant's guilt until the one piece of evidence on which he bases his vote is discredited.

Juror #5 is a young man who is nervous about expressing his views, particularly in front of the older members of the jury. When two jurors talk disparagingly of kids from slum backgrounds, he finally speaks up, saying he has lived in a slum all his life. He has witnessed knife fights, an experience that will later help other jurors change their opinions about the guilt of the accused.

Juror #6 is a housepainter, a man who is used to working with his hands rather than analyzing with his brain. He is more of a listener than a talker. He does, however, stand up to the bully, Juror #3 when he speaks rudely to Juror #9, an old man, threatening to hit Juror #3 if he ever speaks to the old man like that again.

Juror #7 is a slick, obnoxious salesman whose only concern is to get the deliberations over quickly so he can get to that evening's baseball game. He assumes that the defendant is guilty and has no interest in discussing it. At one point he makes some prejudiced remarks about immigrants in reference to Juror #11.

Juror #8 is a quiet, thoughtful man whose main concern is that justice be done. An architect by profession, he is the first juror to vote "not guilty" on the very first ballot. He is a natural leader who does not argue that the accused is innocent, only that he cannot condemn someone to death without discussing the case first. As he probes the evidence, he manages to cast reasonable doubt on many aspects of the evidence given during the trial. Although the evidence may
suggest guilt, it is possible that there are other explanations for what happened on the night of the murder.

**Juror #9** is a mild, gentle old man. He is the first to agree with Juror #8 and change his vote to not guilty, saying that he wants a fuller discussion of the case since he is convinced there is not enough evidence to sentence the accused boy to death for allegedly murdering his father.

**Juror #10**, who runs three garages, is a bitter racist. He is prejudiced against anyone who comes from a slum. He believes strongly that the defendant is guilty because he insists that people from slums are all drunks and liars who fight all the time.

**Juror #11** is a watchmaker, an immigrant from Europe. Having witnessed great injustices in his home country, he feels fortunate to be living in a country known for its democracy and he has great respect for the American judicial system. He takes his responsibility as a juror very seriously.

**Juror #12** works for an advertising agency. He is arrogant and impatient, anxious for the trial to be over so he can return to his career and social life. He is clever, but sees people as statistics rather than human beings.
ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Reginald Rose was born on December 10, 1920 in New York City. He attended City College from 1937 to 1938 but did not graduate. During World War II and shortly after, he served in the U.S. Army, from 1942 to 1946, ending his army career as a first lieutenant. In 1943, Rose married Barbara Langbart and they had four children.

After the war and continuing into the early 1950’s, Rose worked as a clerk, publicity writer for Warner Brothers Pictures, and advertising copywriter. He also wrote short stories and novels but he never had any luck selling his work until he turned to writing plays for television and sold his first teleplay, Bus to Nowhere to the live CBS dramatic anthology, Studio One, which aired in 1951. Three years later, Reginald Rose became the head writer for that series and created the work that would become his masterpiece. Overwhelmed by the intense drama of the jury system while serving as a juror on a manslaughter case, Rose successfully translated the heated debate that takes place behind courtroom doors into the Emmy-winning drama Twelve Angry Men. The teleplay was first broadcast in September, 1954 and went on to much success in lengthened and revised versions as a stage play, film and made-for-television movie.

Reginald Rose continued to write television scripts into the 1960’s and beyond. One of his best-known shows was the series, The Defenders (1961-1965) about a father and son team of defense lawyers. This weekly courtroom drama would go on to win two Emmy awards for dramatic writing. He also wrote stage plays, including Black Monday, This Agony, This Triumph and several rewrites of Twelve Angry Men. Other screenplays, besides Twelve Angry Men included Somebody Killed her Husband, The Wild Geese (based on a novel by Daniel Carney), and Whose Life is it Anyway? starring Richard Dreyfus. Rose’s first marriage ended in divorce. He married his second wife, Ellen McLaughlin in 1963; they had two children.

Reginald Rose died in 2002 in Norwalk, Connecticut from complications of heart failure.
MEET ACTOR DAVID LEREANEY, JUROR #4

What is your educational background and what brought you to your choice of acting as a career?

I have a Bachelor of Fine Arts in acting from the University of Alberta in Edmonton (1979). I discovered my passion for acting in high school where I had an extraordinary drama teacher. After two years of waffling in general arts at University of British Columbia, I decided to try to follow my dream to be a professional actor even though there wasn’t a lot of opportunity out there for actors in Canada at that time. I simply said to myself “Give it a shot. If it doesn’t work out at least I’ll be able to say I tried.” Thirty years later it still seems to be working out.

Briefly describe your process as an actor before rehearsals begin, during rehearsals, and during the run of the play you are in.

I usually begin by reading the play several times to understand the story, the themes, the characters and my character’s journey and purpose in the telling of the story. Then I begin to break my character’s scenes into “units.” The units are defined by what my character want or needs. When that want or need is fulfilled or changes – that’s a new “unit.” I continually ask myself and the director “Why does my character say these particular words, do the things he does, react to the other characters the way he does?”

I look for actions and activities the character uses to get what he wants. I will do research on the world of the play so I have a clear sense of where and when the story is set and the particular issues the story may deal with. I love finding small details to fill out the character’s life and support the story. I create a personal history for the person I am playing – back story that may not even appear in the text – events and circumstances that may have shaped the personality of the character (family members, religion, schooling, past relationships, etc). In rehearsal and performance I try to keep all these things going and most importantly STAY OPEN to and LISTEN to what the other actors/characters are saying and doing to me – and REACT accordingly, because what you originally read on the page may be quite different from what another actor may bring to it.

You have also done a lot of voice, film and television work. If you had to choose between that and working in live theatre, which would you prefer?

Very difficult question to answer. I love the daily “workout” of performing in the theatre and the immediacy of the audience response. Performing before the camera has its own brand of excitement and it pays very well when you are working but it is too sporadic.
You’re always waiting and hoping for that next audition or gig. And even when you are working there is so much waiting around for the technical elements to be ready – it’s frustrating even quite maddening at times.
I love the camaraderie of working in the theatre – the cast and crew often become a big family during the rehearsals and run of a show but in film and TV (unless you’re a regular in a series) you don’t get a chance to build that rapport. So I guess if I HAD to pick I would go with the theatre.

Of all the roles you have played, would you say you have a favourite?

Sure. Billy Bishop in BILLY BISHOP GOES TO WAR or Agatha Christie’s fussy Belgian detective, Hercule Poirot.

What challenges do you think you will face when preparing for your role as Juror #4 in TWELVE ANGRY MEN?

Maintaining the level of intensity and engagement in solving the problem because everyone is on stage all the time and there are stretches when many of the characters don’t say anything but they must stay intensely involved in the development of the story’s events. It will be a real challenge to the actors’ listening skills. And it will be emotionally challenging. The stakes are very high for these characters from start to finish. Even though my character is probably one of the coolest heads in the room, I will still have to keep emotionally engaged but appear to be cool and collected for the most part.

What advice can you offer to students who are considering an acting career?

Get SOME kind of formal training and remember that it is a business. You must learn to market and promote yourself. The person who gets hired is not necessarily the one who can do the job best but the one who knows the most about getting hired.
An Eye for an Eye

Capital punishment is and has always been a hot-button topic. The play, TWELVE ANGRY MEN, takes place in a jury room in the late afternoon on a hot summer’s day in New York City in 1957. The judge instructs the jury that the defendant is being tried for first degree murder, which carries a mandatory death penalty. The judge adds that if the jury has reasonable doubt about the guilt of the accused, they must acquit him. The verdict must be unanimous.

Almost all democracies in the world, including Canada, have abandoned the death penalty. Two minutes after midnight on December 11th, 1962, Arthur Lucas and Ronald Turpin became the last people to be executed in Canada. Turpin, 29, had been convicted of killing an officer after he was pulled over for a broken tail light while fleeing a robbery; Lucas, 54, killed an undercover narcotics agent from Detroit in Toronto. On the night they were executed, protesters gathered near their cell, speaking out against what they called public murder.

In 1967 a moratorium was placed on the death penalty; however, it was not until 1976 that Canada formally abolished it from the Criminal Code when the House of Commons narrowly passed Bill C-84. By then Canada had hanged 710 people since capital punishment had been enacted in 1859.

It is probably safe to say that most people have very definite opinions on the subject of capital punishment. Is execution by the state as immoral as murder by private citizens? Does capital punishment really deter anyone or is it only to punish those who have committed a crime?

Brainstorm with students on the pros and cons of capital punishment. Begin by compiling a list of statements and/or arguments for it and then compile a second list of statements and/or arguments against it.

Divide students into small groups and assign each group one statement from the master list. As a challenge, whether each group agrees with their assigned statement/argument or not, have them come up with a presentation defending their assigned position, with the goal in mind of convincing all the other groups that their opinions are right.

Do You See What I See?

In Reginald Rose’s play, TWELVE ANGRY MEN, a jury must decide whether or not to reach a guilty verdict and sentence a sixteen year-old young man to death for murdering his father. As the play opens, we hear the voice of the judge instructing the jurors:
“...And now, gentlemen of the jury, I come to my final instruction to you. Murder in the first degree – premeditated homicide – is the most serious charge tried in our criminal courts. You’ve listened to the testimony and you’ve had the law read to you and interpreted as it applies to this case. It now becomes your duty to try and separate the facts from the fancy. One man is dead. The life of another is at stake. I urge you to deliberate honestly and thoughtfully. If there is a reasonable doubt – then you must bring me a verdict of ‘not guilty’. If, however, there is no reasonable doubt – then you must, in good conscience, find the accused guilty. However you decide, your verdict must be unanimous. In the event you find the accused guilty, the bench will not entertain a recommendation for mercy. The death sentence is mandatory in this case.”

Some of the compelling evidence of the trial involves a 45 year-old woman who claims she saw the boy stab his father through her window, and an old man living downstairs who allegedly heard the defendant yell, “I’ll kill you” followed by a thump on the floor above. He then witnessed a young man, supposedly the defendant, running away.

How reliable is eyewitness testimony and what mental skills, such as thinking, perception, memory, awareness, reasoning and judgment might show up any flaws in the criminal justice system? Would two or more people witnessing the same event see and describe it exactly the same way? Would each person’s bias and/or personality have any impact?

As an exercise in exploring this topic, stage an event in your classroom and then have the witnesses prepare reports outlining exactly what they heard and observed. Compare the reports to see whether the recollections are identical or different. If there are differences, what factors might have come into play to make them so?

You may wish to select two or three reliable students and explain the purpose of the exercise. In consultation with you, have them come up with a staged altercation or incident that will occur in front of the other students while you briefly step out of the classroom. Upon your return, instruct students to write down all their observations, without consulting with each other. Read them aloud and then compare and contrast.

**Know Your Decade**

Just as the 1950’s was a decade of great change, so, too, has been the past decade, 2000 – 2010.

In order to get a sense of the 1950’s in the United States, the time and place in which the play, TWELVE ANGRY MEN, is set, look into the topics listed below. Once that research is done, ask students to come up with their own list of topics to describe our most recent decade, 2000 – 2010. What are the biggest
changes? Has anything not changed? Are there any current topics which may parallel or reflect earlier ones, or have developed directly from the earlier ones? Some examples of this might be:

- Live television dramas of the ‘50’s and reality television of today
- The ‘50’s Cold War and the current war on terror
- American Bandstand of the ‘50’s and today’s American/Canadian Idol

1950 – 60 topics to explore:

- President Harry Truman
- President Dwight Eisenhower
- The Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union
- The Korean War
- The death penalty
- The Golden Era of Television
- Fear of Communism
- U. S. Senator Joseph McCarthy
- The House UN-American Activities (HUAC)
- The Hollywood Ten
- Post World War 11 optimism
- The birth of Rock and Roll
- Elvis Presley
- “The Big Three” General Motors, Ford Motor Company, Chrysler Corporation
- Sputnik
- American Bandstand
- Hula Hoops
- Crew cuts and Ducktails
- The Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1952
- Julius and Ethel Rosenberg
- Racial segregation in schools
- Rosa Parks
- Dr. Jonas Salk
- Explorer 1

Can Prejudice Obscure Truth?

In the play, TWELVE ANGRY MEN, the 16 year-old boy on trial stands accused of murdering his father. First-degree murder carried a mandatory death penalty. Juror #8 described the defendant: “… this boy’s been kicked around all his life … living in a slum, his mother dead since he was nine. He spent a year and a half in an orphanage while his father served a jail term for forgery. That’s not a very good head start. He’s had a pretty terrible sixteen years.”

Juror # 10, an angry, bitter bigot, is prejudiced against anyone coming from a slum: “The kids who crawl outa those places are real trash … These people are
born to lie … They get drunk on wine or something cheap like that … and then
they’re drunk and all of a sudden – bang – someone’s lying dead in the gutter …
Human life don’t mean as much to them as it does to us … these people are
boozing it up, and fighting all the time, and if someone gets killed, so somebody
gets killed. They don’t care. Family don’t mean anything to them. They breed like
animals. Fathers, mothers, that don’t mean anything.”

Can justice be served? As Juror #8 will say near the end of the play: “It’s very
hard to keep personal prejudice out of a thing like this. And no matter where you
run into it, prejudice obscures the truth.”

TWELVE ANGRY MEN is set in New York City in the 1950’s. Back in the day,
Juror #10 could be considered a classic example of a bigot, demonstrating
narrow-minded intolerance of any creed, belief or opinion that differs from his
own.

Does this kind of bigotry exist today? Have we come very far at all in combating
stereotyping, intolerance, racism, racial profiling and lack of acceptance of
individual differences? Or is it still an issue that rears its ugly head in our world?
Can your students make a difference? Individually or in groups, ask them to
prepare PSAs (Public Service Announcements) in the form of posters, short radio
spots to be broadcast on your school’s PA system, short drama scenes to be
presented throughout the school, or brief infomercials. These PSAs should
encourage student commitment to the ethical values they wish to foster in their
own community, such as respect, responsibility, fairness, justice, tolerance,
kindness, loyalty and honesty.
POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES

Spoof

Dictionary.com defines spoof, the noun as “a mocking imitation of someone or something, usually light and good-humoured; lampoon or parody.”

After your students have seen Vertigo Theatre’s production of TWELVE ANGRY MEN, it might be fun to examine Wade Bradford’s ten minute play, 12 ANGRY PIGS, which he wrote after reading a children’s play about the three little pigs and then watching a film version of Twelve Angry Men. The complete script can be found at http://plays.about.com/od/oneactplaysandscenes/a/12angrypigs.htm. The play may be used free of charge for educational purposes and amateur theatre productions.

Read the following excerpt from the beginning of the play.

Setting: A table and twelve chairs are all that is needed to establish the jury room. The pigs walk to the table. They walk around, shy and uncomfortable at first.

PIG #1: (Fanning himself.) Boy, I tell you, it’s hot.

PIG #2: I thought it was hot in the courtroom, but this room is like an oven.

PIG #3: Do I smell bacon? Oh wait – that’s just me.

PIG #4: So what are we supposed to do?

PIG #5: Weren’t you listening to the judge? We vote.

PIG #4: Vote?

PIG #5: We decide whether or not that Wolf is guilty or not guilty.

PIG #6: He looks guilty to me.

PIG #7: Me too.

PIG #8: What do you mean he looks guilty?

PIG #9: Did you see those teeth?

PIG #10: Those wolves have sharp teeth.

PIG #11: The better to gobble you up! Right? Am I right?
PIG #12: But the wolf isn’t on trial for biting someone. The trial is about him blowing down those two houses.

PIG #4: I thought there were three houses.

PIG #6: Only two houses got knocked down.

PIG #5 (To #4) Don’t you listen?

PIG #3: He huffed and puffed and blew down the houses of those innocent little pigs.

PIG #11: Those poor swine.

PIG #6: Why those two little pigs are lucky to be alive.

PIG #10: I tell you, those wolves are dangerous!

Discuss any similarities and/or differences between the structure, characters and storyline of 12 ANGRY PIGS and TWELVE ANGRY MEN. Find 12 ANGRY PIGS on line and read the entire ten minute play to see what a clever spoof Wade Bradford wrote.

Ask students to brainstorm to come up with a list of films that could be classified as spoofs, for example, Shaun of the Dead, Robin Hood – Men in Tights, and The Naked Gun. What were they spoofing and did it work?

Another way to examine the idea of spoof is to have students work in groups to create their own short scenes parodying a section of a book, play, film or TV show they are familiar with. Use 12 ANGRY PIGS as a template for the structure so that it stays as true as possible to they original from which they are creating their own spoof.

In the Criminal Justice System …

After students have seen TWELVE ANGRY MEN, have a follow-up class discussion using some or all of the following questions.
1/ Did you know anything about the criminal justice system before you saw the play?
2/ In a criminal trial, what are the roles and responsibilities of the judge, the jury, the prosecuting attorney, the defense attorney, the defendant, and the witnesses? What challenges might each of them face in a court of law?
3/ How do you feel about a sixteen year-old being sentenced to the death penalty if found guilty of murder? Would that occur in the criminal justice system in any circumstances today?
4/ If you had been on the jury in this trial, how would you have voted?
5/ Do you think your beliefs and view of the world would have impacted the way you would vote?
6/ Which juror did you relate to the most and why?
7/ Were there any jurors you thought unfit for jury duty in this trial? Why/why not?
8/ Which characters based their decisions on prejudice?
9/ Did Juror #8 or any other character base his decision on “reverse discrimination”?
10/ Should this trial have been a hung jury? Why/why not?
11/ What were the most persuasive pieces of evidence in favour of the defense or the prosecution?
12/ How reliable is eye witness testimony?
13/ Is a jury of ordinary people the best way to reach a correct verdict in a trial? Would a panel of judges or other legal experts be a better way?
14/ Do you think the dynamics of group behaviour of a jury truly work the way it was depicted in the play?
15/ Are you aware of any famous trials in which a defendant was wrongfully found guilty or not guilty?

**Telling Stories**

Inspiration for stories often can come directly from experiences that have a profound effect on people’s lives.

Reginald Rose, who wrote TWELVE ANGRY MEN, was deeply moved by his own experience of jury duty in a manslaughter case in New York City. At first, he had been reluctant to serve on a jury, but he wrote, “The moment I walked into the courtroom … and found myself facing a strange man whose fate was suddenly more or less in my hands, my entire attitude changed.” Rose was greatly impressed by the seriousness of the situation, the somber activity of the court and the “absolute finality” of the decision that he and his fellow jurors would have to make. He also thought that since no one other than a jury had any idea of what went on in a jury room, “a play taking place entirely within a jury room might be an exciting and possibly moving experience for an audience.” In *Cold Blood*, the book written by Truman Capote, details the slaying of Herbert Clutter, a wealthy farmer from Holcomb, Kansas, his wife and two children. When Capote learned of the quadruple murder before the killers, Richard Hickock and Perry Smith, were captured, he decided to travel to Kansas with friend and fellow author, Harper Lee (*To Kill a Mockingbird*). Together they interviewed local residents and investigators, taking thousands of pages of notes. Truman Capote spent six years working on the book.

The film, The Runaways, is a 2010 American biography about the 1970’s all girl hard rock band of the same name. The film was written and directed by Floria Sigismondi, who based her screenplay on the book *Neon Angel: A Memoir of a Runaway* by the band’s original vocalist, Cherie Currie. The film depicts the
formation of the band in 1975 and focuses on the relationship between Cheryl Currie and rhythm guitarist/vocalist Joan Jett until Currie’s departure from the band.

Everyone has a story to tell from his or her own personal experiences. Encourage students to write their own stories based on an event that made a strong impression and impacted their lives. For this assignment, there are no wrong ideas, only possibilities. Personal stories should be written in the first person, or they may be inspired from a personal occurrence and adapted accordingly. If students are comfortable with sharing their work, this may be done in small groups or as a reading to the entire class.
**Student Play Review**

We would love to know what your students thought of our production of TWELVE ANGRY MEN. Please encourage them to write and send us copies of their play reviews. If they wish to be entered into a draw to receive 2 tickets to one of our upcoming productions, they must include the following:

- First name
- Last name initial only
- Grade
- School name
- Teacher contact name
- School phone number
- Date of the performance attended

**Please fax 403-263-1611 or email play reports to nathan.pronyshyn@vertigotheatre.com**

Once the draw is done, we will contact you and the school to let the student know. The winning student may then get in touch with us regarding how and when to pick up the tickets.

Before students write their reviews of TWELVE ANGRY MEN, talk about the role of a critic. Is the point of a review to merely describe the play and tell the story, or offer opinions on the production? You may wish to offer the following as a guideline for student play reviews.

Some play and film reviews offer a rating in the form of a number of stars (*), with one star representing a weak rating and five stars representing a perfect one. Assign your review of TWELVE ANGRY MEN the number of stars you think it merits.

Write a headline for your review that sums up your thoughts and feelings about the production.

In your opening statement, state your expectations before you attended the performance and whether or not they were met.

Follow with comments on some or all of the following play elements:

- story and themes of the play
- conflicts in the play
- direction
- acting
- scenic design
- costume design
- make-up design (if applicable)
- lighting and sound

In your closing statement, include any final thoughts on the production and whether you would recommend it.
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Vertigo Mystery Theatre’s TWELVE ANGRY MEN
Evaluation Form

Your Feedback is very important to us! Our series are growing rapidly and the information you provide will help us to determine future programming, booking procedures and educational content. Return by fax to 403-263-1611

SHOW: SCHOOL:
TEACHER NAME: GRADE:

Please rate the following from 1-10 (1=Poor, 5=Good, 10=Excellent)

1) Booking Procedure
(poor) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (excellent)
Comments:

2) Affordability & Accessibility (Price, Bussing, etc)
Comments:

4) Show Start Times & Performance Duration
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Comments:

5) Study Guide Material
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Comments:

6) Production Value (Set, Costume, Props etc.)
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Comments:

7) Educational Value: (Was the production successful as a learning experience for your students?)
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Comments:

8) Entertainment Value (Did the production engage your Students?)
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Comments:

9) Overall Experience
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Comments:

General Feedback and suggestions:

Thank you for helping us continue improving our series!