



Study Guide 2021- 2022

Intimate Apparel

By Lynn Nottage

Florida Standards

Language Arts

LAFS.910.RL.1: Key Ideas and Details
LAFS.910.W.1: Text Types and Purposes
LAFS.1112.RL.1: Key Ideas and Details
LAFS.1112.SL.1: Comprehension and Collaboration
LAFS.910.RL.3: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Theater

TH.912.F.2: Careers in and related to the arts
TH.68.S.1: The arts are inherently experiential.

PG-13

Sexual Situations, Alcohol, Prostitution

Most appropriate for Grade 8 and up. Children under 5 will not be admitted to the theater.

Intimate Apparel

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Intimate Apparel An Introduction

Educators:

Welcome back to what we hope will be a return to a more normal school year! The past year has been difficult for all who love arts education, and we are eager to meet your needs for the 2021-2022 school year in whatever format works best for you and your students.

We understand that Field Trips may not be possible this school year, due to social distancing and bus scheduling; however, for those of you able to come see a show, we intend to continue live Signature Series performances. We are also looking into streaming or recording options, for those of you unable to leave the school.

We hope to be able to return to your classrooms this year for live workshops, but we will continue to offer Virtual versions of our popular workshops, Shakespeare Alive and Books Alive, as well. Also, we have live, interactive performances of *Aesop's Fables* which can stream into your classroom using whatever platform works best for you and your school.

Our hope is that Orlando Shakes will continue to meet your needs and become an essential partner in bringing theatre arts to your students for years to come.

If you have an idea for a program or delivery system that would make our partnership easier, please let us know. We now know that anything is possible, and that we as arts educators inherently bring our talent and creativity to every challenge we face.

We look forward to working with you this year and learning how we can serve you and your students.

Thank you for your tremendous work in nurturing our audiences of tomorrow.

Anne Hering
Director of Education

Brandon Yagel
Education Coordinator



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Enjoying Live Theater

Theater is a Team Sport

The **Playwright** writes the script. Sometimes it is from an original idea and sometimes it is adapted from a book or story. The Playwright decides what the characters say, and gives the Designers guidelines on how the play should look.

The **Director** creates the vision for the production and works closely with the actors, costume, set and lighting designers to make sure everyone tells the same story.

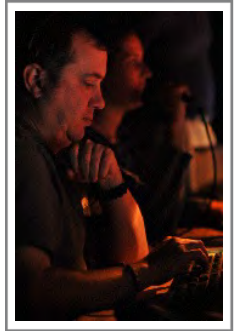


Stage Manager -
Stacey Renee
Norwood
Photo: Rob Jones

The **Actors** use their bodies and voices to bring the author's words and the director's ideas to life on the stage.

The **Designers** imagine and create the lights, scenery, props, costumes and sound that will compliment and complete the director's vision.

The **Stage Manager** assists the director during rehearsals by recording their instructions and making sure the actors and designers understand these ideas. The Stage Manager then runs the show during each performance by calling cues for lights and sound, as well as entrances and exits.



Sound Designer -
Britt Sanducky
Photo: Rob Jones



Costume Designer -
Denise Warner
Photo: Rob Jones

The **Shop** and **Stage Crew** builds the set, props and costumes according to the designer's plans. The Stage Crew sets the stage with props and furniture, assists the actors with costume changes and operates sound, lighting and stage machinery during each performance.



Creative Team of The Merry Wives of
Windsor
Photo: Rob Jones

The **Front of House Staff** welcomes you to the theater, takes your tickets, helps you find your seat and answers any question you may have on the day of performance.

The **Theater** is where it all takes place. Orlando Shakespeare Theater In Partnership with UCF is the only professional, classical theater company in Central Florida, reaching students and audiences in the surrounding eight counties.

Mission:

To enrich our community with engaging professional theater, inspiring educational experiences, and thought-provoking new plays.

Intimate Apparel *Enjoying Live Theater*

The Actor/Audience Relationship

The Audience is the reason Live Theater exists. At Orlando Shakes, we cherish the Actor/Audience relationship, the unique give and take that exists during a performance which makes the audience an ACTIVE participant in the event. The actors see the audience just as the audience sees the actors, and every, laugh, snuffle, chuckle and gasp the audience makes effects the way the actor plays his next moment. We want you to be engaged, and to live the story with us!



Photo: Rob Jones

There are certain Conventions of the Theatrical Event, like, when the lights go down you know that the show is about to start, and that the audience isn't encouraged to come and go during a performance. Here are some other tips to help you and your classmates be top notch audience members:

- Please make sure to turn off your cell phones. And NO TEXTING!
- Please stay in your seat. Use the restroom before you take your seat and stay in your seat unless there is an emergency.
- Please do not eat or drink in the theater.

Talkback

After the performance, the actors will stay on stage for about 10 minutes to hear your comments and answer any questions you have about the play, the production and what it means to be a professional actor. We'd love to hear what you felt about the play, what things were clear or unclear to you, and hear your opinions about what the play means. This last portion of the Actor/Audience Relationship is so important to help us better serve you!

Intimate Apparel *About the Play* Summary

The time is 1905, the place New York City, where Esther, a black seamstress, lives in a boarding house for women and sews intimate apparel for clients who range from wealthy white patrons to prostitutes. Her skills and discretion are much in demand, and she has managed to stuff a goodly sum of money into her quilt over the years. One by one, the other denizens of the boarding house marry and move away, but Esther remains, lonely and longing for a husband and a future. Her plan is to find the right man and use the money she's saved to open a beauty parlor where black women will be treated as royally as the white women she sews for. By way of a mutual acquaintance, she begins to receive beautiful letters from a lonesome Caribbean man named George who is working on the Panama Canal. Being illiterate, Esther has one of her patrons respond to the letters, and over time the correspondence becomes increasingly

intimate until George persuades her that they should marry, sight unseen. Meanwhile, Esther's heart seems to lie with the Hasidic shopkeeper from whom she buys cloth, and his heart with her, but the impossibility of the match is obvious to them both, and Esther consents to marry George. When George arrives in New York, however, he turns out not to be the man his letters painted him to be, and he absconds with Esther's savings, frittering it away on whores and liquor. Deeply wounded by the betrayal, but somehow unbroken, Esther returns to the boarding house determined to use her gifted hands and her sewing machine to refashion her dreams and make them anew from the whole cloth of her life's experiences. (from Dramatist Play Service).

Intimate Apparel Meet the Characters

ESTHER MILLS - An African American, skilled, hard-working, seamstress who creates women's intimate apparel.

MRS. DICKSON - An African-American landlady of a boarding house for women.

MRS. VAN BUREN - A wealthy white socialite who is one of Esther's regular customers.

MR. MARKS A Romanian Jewish immigrant fabric merchant.

MAYME - An African American prostitute and saloon singer, and another of Esther's regular customers.

GEORGE - An African-Caribbean manual laborer. who worked on the Panama Canal who woos Esther through his letters.

Intimate Apparel

Meet the Playwright

Lynn Nottage is a playwright and a screenwriter. She is the first, and remains the only, woman to have won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama twice. Her plays have been produced widely in the United States and throughout the world.

Nottage recently premiered *Floyd's* at the Guthrie Theater. She wrote the book for the world premiere musical adaptation of Sue Monk Kidd's novel *The Secret Life of Bees*, with music by Duncan Sheik and lyrics by Susan Birkenhead. It premiered at the Atlantic Theatre Company in May 2019, directed by Sam Gold. Upcoming work includes an opera adaptation of her play *Intimate Apparel* composed by Ricky Ian Gordon, commissioned by The Met/Lincoln Center Theater. It will premiere at Lincoln Center in spring 2020. She is also currently writing the book to the upcoming musical *MJ*, featuring the music of Michael Jackson, premiering on Broadway in summer 2020.

Other plays include *Mlima's Tale* (Public Theater), *By The Way, Meet Vera Stark* (Lilly Award, Drama Desk Nomination), *Ruined* (Pulitzer Prize, OBIE, Lucille Lortel, New York Drama Critics' Circle, Audelco, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Award); *Intimate Apparel* (American Theatre Critics and New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards for Best Play); *Fabulation*, or *The Re-Education of Undine* (OBIE Award); *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*; *Las Meninas*; *Mud, River, Stone*; *Por'knockers*; and *POOF!*



Her play *Sweat* (Pulitzer Prize, Evening Standard Award, Obie Award, Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, Tony Nomination, Drama Desk Nomination) moved to Broadway after a sold-out run at The Public Theater. It premiered and was commissioned by the Oregon Shakespeare Festival American Revolutions History Cycle/Arena Stage. Inspired by her research on *Sweat*, Nottage developed *This is Reading*, a performance installation based on two years of interviews, at the Franklin Street, Reading Railroad Station in Reading, PA in July 2017.

She is the co-founder of the production company, Market Road Films, whose most recent projects include *The Notorious Mr. Bout* directed by Tony Gerber and Maxim Pozdorovkin (Premiere/Sundance 2014), *First to Fall* directed by Rachel Beth Anderson (Premiere/ IDFA, 2013) and *Remote Control* (Premiere/Busan 2013- New Currents Award). Over the years, she has developed original projects for HBO, Sidney Kimmel Entertainment, Showtime, *This is That* and *Harpo*. She was a writer and producer on the Netflix series *She's Gotta Have It*, directed by Spike Lee.

Nottage is the recipient of a MacArthur "Genius Grant" Fellowship, Steinberg "Mimi" Distinguished Playwright Award, PEN/Laura Pels Master Playwright Award, Merit and Literature Award from The Academy of Arts and Letters, Columbia University Provost Grant, Doris Duke Artist Award, The Joyce Foundation Commission Project & Grant, Madge Evans-Sidney Kingsley Award, Nelson A. Rockefeller Award for Creativity, The Dramatists Guild Hull-Warriner Award, the inaugural Horton Foote Prize, Helen Hayes Award, the Lee Reynolds Award, and the Jewish World Watch iWitness Award. Her other honors include the National Black Theatre Fest's August Wilson Playwriting Award, a Guggenheim Grant, Lucille Lortel Fellowship and Visiting Research Fellowship at Princeton University. She is a graduate of Brown University and the Yale School of Drama. She is also an Associate Professor in the Theatre Department at Columbia School of the Arts.

Nottage is a board member for BRIC Arts Media Bklyn, Donor Direct Action, Dramatist Play Service, Second Stage and the Dramatists Guild. She recently completed a three-year term as an Artist Trustee on the Board of the Sundance Institute. She is member of the The Dramatists Guild, WGAE, and the American Academy of Arts and Letters. She is currently an artist-in-residence at the Park Avenue Armory. (www.lynnnottage.com)

Intimate Apparel

Vocabulary

Rooming House - a private house in which rooms are rented for living or staying temporarily.

Tenderloin - a district in lower Manhattan once known for prostitution.

Suffragettes - a woman seeking the right to vote through organized protest.

Trolley - a vehicle powered by electricity from an overhead cable by means of a trolley wheel.

Orchard Street - a street in the Lower East Side of Manhattan that was originally the home of poor immigrants in the early 20th century.

Orient - a term for the East, traditionally comprising anything that belongs to the Eastern world, in relation to Europe. It is the antonym of Occident, the Western World.

“Turn back sheets for fifty cents a day” - a description of a hotel maid.

Rabbinical Law - relating to rabbis or to Jewish law or teachings.

Cambric walking suit - A lightweight, plain weave cotton fabric suit

Heliotrope handkerchief - a light purple handkerchief

Madison Square Garden - Opened in 1890 at the cost of about \$500,000, it replaced the first Madison Square Garden, and hosted numerous events, including boxing matches, orchestral performances, light operas and romantic comedies.

Bohemian - a socially unconventional person, especially one who is involved in the arts.

Chattel - a person held in servitude by another or a child born to an enslaved person.

Cicadas - a large insect with long transparent wings, occurring chiefly in warm countries. The male cicada makes a loud shrill droning noise by vibrating two membranes on its abdomen.

Worsted - fabric made from worsted yarn, having a close-textured surface.

St. Lucy - The northern-most part of Barbados.

Busylickum - Barbados slang for “a nosy person.”

Steel girders - a beam made usually of steel; a main support in a structure. beam.

Tamarind Tree - A tree native to Africa, but transported to the Americas during the 1600s.

Duppy - a malevolent spirit or ghost. According to Jamaican folklore, duppies often manifest a dead person's soul by taking on a human or animal form.

Mulatto - an old-fashioned way to refer to someone with one black parent and one white parent. It was common to describe a mixed race person as a mulatto during the period of slavery in the United States.

Heifer - Derogatory name for a heavy, slow, unintelligent or useless person. This name is usually assigned to women, comparing her to a cow.

(www.oed.com)

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Historical Context

Panama Canal

On August 15, 1914, the Panama Canal officially opened, after 32 years of construction and an estimated 28,000 worker deaths. The 51-mile canal, an engineering and construction marvel, connects the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

More than 75,000 men and women worked on the canal in total. At the height of construction, there were 40,000 workers working there. One of the biggest challenges was cutting through the rocks of the Continental Divide. Six thousand men worked in the cut, drilling holes and putting in 60,000,000 pounds of dynamite to break up the rock.

The canal was originally a French project, and Panama was originally part of Colombia. Construction began on January 1, 1882. By 1888 the labor force numbered about 20,000, nine-tenths of them Afro-Caribbean workers from the West Indies. There were also French

engineers and others. The construction difficulties were enormous. But the most serious problem was tropical disease, particularly malaria and yellow fever. The death toll between 1881 and 1889 was estimated at over 22,000.

(www.pbs.org)



Jewish Immigration

In the century spanning the years 1820 through 1924, an increasingly steady flow of Jews made their way to America, culminating in a massive surge of immigrants towards the beginning of the twentieth century. Impelled by economic hardship, persecution, and the great social and political upheavals of the nineteenth century--industrialization, overpopulation, and urbanization--millions of Europe's Jews left their towns and villages and embarked on the arduous journey to the "Golden Land" of America. <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/haventohome/haven-century.html>

African Americans in New York City

During Reconstruction (1865–77), two migrations gradually changed not only the demographics of the city's African-American population but also the geographic center of black New York. Increasing numbers of southerners settled in, as did immigrants from the Caribbean; and black New Yorkers' movement north continued.

Manhattan's black population grew from 9,943 to 13,000 between 1865 and 1870, and to 19,500 in 1880. By then, more than four out of ten black New Yorkers were migrants and 36 percent of black New Yorkers were born in the South. The largest increase, 66 percent, came between 1890 and 1910.

As important as it was, the black migration was dwarfed by the immigration of Europeans, mostly from Ireland, Germany, and Italy. In New York, Irish and Italian immigrants displaced numerous African Americans as domestics, laborers and in skilled positions. Segregation and discrimination became more imbedded. Black New Yorkers found themselves living in a city that continued to bar them from most skilled jobs, segregated them in poor neighborhoods, and forbade them entry to many public places.

(www.inmotionaame.org)

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Lesson Plan: Status

Status Walk

This 10-20 minute activity may be used to explore status in the school environment or in a play or novel being studied. (Watch an example of this exercise at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OHw5Lrw7LJY>)

Part 1. Status in the School Environment

Assign each student the number 4 or the number 1. This can be done by walking around the room and assigning alternate numbers or having the class count off. Instruct 1s and 4s to form two lines facing each other. Tell students that two by two, one person from each line will cross to the other line, until the lines have changed places. Also, tell them that 4s and 1s behave differently. You will be giving them two sets of behaviors. Each time they cross, they are to follow your instructions of behavior.

The first time they cross, tell them that 4s always look 1s in the eyes, while 1s avoid making eye contact with 4s.

The second time they cross, tell them that 4s also take really big steps while 1s take really tiny steps.

As a class, describe people who are usually 4s? Describe people who are usually 1s? Discuss how it felt to be a 4 or a 1.

Part 2. Status in the Play

After completing Part 1, assign each student a character from the play. (You may assign multiple students the same character.) Tell each student to decide if their character is a 4 or a 1, and instruct them to stand on the appropriate line. Repeat the exercise, crossing lines with behaviors. Sit down. Follow with a discussion of status in the play. If there is disagreement, discuss how status changes with situation and plot/character development.



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Lesson Plan: Goals

Goal Setting

List three goals you have. Under each list two steps you must do to achieve that goal. Assign a deadline to each of those steps. Consider making one a career goal, one a personal goal and one a goal for a hobby or interest.

Goal #1: _____

Step #1: _____ Deadline: _____

Step #2: _____ Deadline: _____

Goal #2 _____

Step #1: _____ Deadline: _____

Step #2: _____ Deadline: _____

Goal #3 _____

Step #1: _____ Deadline: _____

Step #2: _____ Deadline: _____

Choose one goal and read it and the steps aloud to your class. How does reading it make you feel? Do you need to adjust your deadline? Can you think of any smaller steps that you should identify to get to the larger steps?

Intimate Apparel Activities

Spectrum of Difference

Answer each question by making a mark on the line between disagree and agree. The closer you are to either side, the more certain you are. Have friends and family also make marks.

Conforming to societal norms will lead to happiness.

Disagree _____ Unsure _____ Agree

Where you come from is more important than where you're going.

Disagree _____ Unsure _____ Agree

If you work hard enough, you can accomplish anything.

Disagree _____ Unsure _____ Agree

Higher social class = greater worth.

Disagree _____ Unsure _____ Agree

Add your own: _____

Disagree _____ Unsure _____ Agree

Add your own: _____

Disagree _____ Unsure _____ Agree

Analyze your results. Did your family and friends feel the same way as you or did they feel differently. What does that say about the statement being investigated?

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Discussion & Themes

Discuss the quotes from the play below. Do they relate to your life today? Who are they speaking to? What prompts each character to say the quote?

DREAMS

"I tore a hole in my quilt and give him my beauty parlor." Esther, Act 2, Scene 5



GENDER NORMS

"I ain't known a man to court pain for a woman's glance."

Esther, Act 1, Scene 2



RELIGION

"[Wearing black is] an act of faith ... one of the many ways that I show my devotion to God."

Mr. Marks, Act 1, Scene 5

RACE AND CLASS

"You know that white lady I talk about sometime, hold on...She keep asking me what they be wearing up in the Tenderloin. All that money and high breeding and she want what you wearing."

Esther, Act 1, Scene 4

