



Study Guide 2021- 2022

Sweet Water Taste

By Gloria Bond Clunie

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

Racist and Adult Language, Alcohol, Violent References

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

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Sweet Water Taste

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



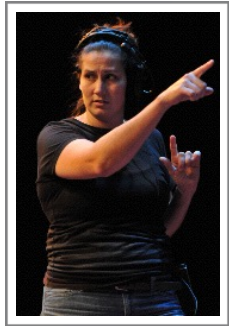
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Enjoying Live Theater

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.

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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!

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About the Play

Summary

All hell and a little bit of heaven breaks loose when Elijah Beckford, a prominent southern black undertaker and former civil rights activist, approaches his wealthy white cousin, Charlie Beckford, and demands to be buried in the “family cemetery.” When Charlie refuses to allow Elijah and his family a plot in the all white cemetery, the wives and children of each are dragged into the fray. The two families battle it out until Elijah suffers a fatal heart attack in the middle of Charlie’s living room. To force Charlie’s family to surrender the burial plot on short notice, Elijah’s son and daughter stage a “lay-in” and leave their father’s body on Charlie Beckford’s sofa.

Because of Elijah’s connections in the community, no funeral home, black or white, will touch the body.

Charlie’s poor heart is so upset, he suffers a massive stroke and dies. A terrible storm traps both families, overnight, in the house with the two dead bodies resting under a Confederate afghan. As the families struggle to decide where to bury the men, Charlie and Elijah are stuck in Limbo observing their loved ones quarrel.

As the two families fight and grieve, they discover blood is thicker than stupidity. Finally, justice is laced with humor and the two wives agree to bury Elijah and Charlie, together, in The Great Well on the Beckford Family Farm. In the end, the wives plan a trip to Hawaii, leaving Elijah and Charlie bound for Glory – with an eternity to work out their issues.

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Meet the Characters

Elijah Beckford - successful undertaker and businessman

Iola Beckford - wife and partner of Elijah

Nathan Beckford - son of Elijah and Iola, Bianca’s older

Bianca Beckford - daughter of Elijah and Iola, a lawyer

Carrie - spirit of the great, great, great grandmother of Elijah, an “angel from another world”

Charlie Beckford - owner of Beckford plantation farmer, businessman

Elizabeth Beckford - wife of Charlie

Charlieboy Beckford - Charlie Beckford, Jr., son of Charlie and Elizabeth

Setting - Gracious Carolina plantation home of Charlie & Elizabeth Beckford /Hospital Room

Summer ~ The Recent Past - In the “Age of Obama”

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Meet the Playwright



Gloria Bond Clunie is an award-winning playwright, director and educator.

Ms. Clunie is a founding member of the Playwriting Ensemble at Chicago's Regional Tony Award winning Victory Gardens Theater where her plays *North Star*, *Living Green* and *Shoes* premiered. She is also the founding Artistic Director of Evanston's Fleetwood-Jourdain Theatre where she directed scores of productions including *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Ceremonies in Dark Old Men*, *Home* and *Raisin*.

Other plays include *Sweet Water Taste*, *SMOKE*, *Sing*, *Malindy*, *Sing!*, *BLU*, *Buck Naked*, *DRIP*, *Patricia McKissack's Mirandy and Brother Wind*, *Bankruptcy*, *Merry Kwanzaa*, *Mercy Rising* and *QUARK*. She is published by Dramatic Publishing and in the anthologies *Seven Black Plays*, *Reimagining A Raisin In the Sun* and *The Bully Plays*. Her plays have been produced and workshopped in a variety of theaters including Victory Gardens Theatre,

Goodman Theatre, Fleetwood-Jourdain Theatre, ETA, Alliance Theatre, Triad Stage, Her Story Theatre, MPAACT, Chicago Children's Theatre, American Blues Theatre, Southern Appalachian Repertory Theatre, Penobscot Theatre and Orlando Shakespeare Theater.

Ms. Clunie has been recognized for her work in theater and education by the NAACP, AKA and DST Sororities, American Alliance for Theatre and Education and the Vision Keepers. Awards include a Chicago Jeff, a Children's Theater Foundation of America Orlin Corey Medallion, a Scott McPherson, a Dramatists Guild Fellowship, Theodore Ward African-American Playwriting Prizes, New York's New Professional Theater Award, Chicago Black Theatre Alliance Awards, NEA and Illinois Arts Council Fellowships, the Evanston Mayor's Award for the Arts and most recently the 2018 YWCA YWomen Leadership Award.

This Northwestern graduate (B.A. Theater, MFA-Directing) is honored her drama *Shoes* was included in the 2015 Women Playwrights International Conference in Cape Town, South Africa; that *SMOKE* was featured in Chicago's Her Story Theater Writers Series, Dayton Playhouse's 2015 FutureFest, 2015 New Works at Playhouse On The Square in Memphis, 2016 Barter Theatre's Appalachian Festival of Playwrights in Virginia, and a part of 2017 New Play Lab at Florida Rep. In July 2016, with the goal to explore violence in America, Fleetwood-Jourdain Theatre commissioned and premiered *A Shot-#Love Stories* inspired by Black Lives Matter.

In 2014, Ms. Clunie was an Artist-In-Residence at Byrdcliffe Arts Colony in Woodstock New York and at 360 Xochi Quetzal Arts Residency, Chapala, Jalisco, Mexico where she completed *BLU*- as both a two act drama and a new musical exploring bullying. *BLU* was read at The Growing Stage Children's Theater of New Jersey New Play Festival, was the featured play in the AATE Utah Playwrights In Our Schools Program and workshopped in Arizona at 2017 *WRITE NOW*, a TYA collaboration between Childsplay Theatre and Indiana Rep. Thanks to a grant from the Children's Theatre Foundation of America, *BLU The Musical* was workshopped in September 2017. Her comedy *Buck Naked* was featured in the inaugural 2017 Women Playwrights Initiative at Ivoryton Playhouse in Connecticut.

In January 2018, she served as both playwright and director for *My Wonderful Birthday Suit* commissioned by Chicago Children's Theatre, while her adaptation of *The Last Stop on Market Street* (2016 Caldecott/ 2016 Newbery/ 2016 Coretta Scott King Book Awards) premiered in November at Children's Theatre of Charlotte and will be part of the upcoming 2019-20 seasons at both Dallas Children's Theatre and Bay Area Children's Theatre. She is excited her comedy *Sweet Water Taste* enjoyed nightly standing ovations this summer at Atlanta's Horizon Theatre Company. Currently, she is working on the musical *SKY*, begun at California's Djerassi Resident Artists Program and inspired by her love of Chicago architecture, and *Tall Enough*, a 2019-20 DePaul University Cunningham Commission.

Originally from Henderson, North Carolina, she and her husband Basil live in Evanston, Illinois and are the proud parents of daughter Aurelia.

Sweet Water Taste

Historical Context

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

W. E. B. Dubois declared that the most difficult question of the twentieth century is the color line! Even as we slip into the twenty-first century, this question still begs to be addressed. Though integration in some arenas is evident, the vestiges of racism still lurk under the trappings of a legally desegregated society.

As cities explode over which monuments should stand or fall, we wonder when the next “Charlottesville” will erupt. We ask ourselves, “Are both sides really to blame?” In this “PostObama Era,” why are some outraged when NFL players drop a knee with Kaepernick? What are the unspoken thoughts when two African-American sisters compete at Wimbledon? Are there times when integration is inappropriate? Should all doors swing wide? Should some remain closed? In 2019, why do descendants of Thomas Jefferson still refuse burial to descendants of Sally Hemings’ in the ‘family graveyard’ at Monticello?

Are we truly brothers and sisters under the skin?

As we become a more homogenous, yet diverse society, these are subtle issues we must continue to reexamine as new generations view icons like Dubois and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as historical figures instead of living leaders. When addressing such serious issues, perhaps if we sometimes open our mouths to laugh, we might open our hearts to a wider understanding of humanity and hopefully discover unique solutions to the challenges we face in our future.

Peace! Joy! Power! Blessings!

Gloria Bond Clunie

"WHITE ONLY" LUNCH COUNTER



On Feb. 1, 1960, four students from all-black North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College walked into a Woolworth five-and-dime with the intention of ordering lunch.

But the manager of the Greensboro Woolworth had intentions of his own — to maintain the lunch counter's strict whites-only policy.

Franklin McCain was one of the four young men who shoved history forward by refusing to budge.

McCain remembers the anxiety he felt when he went to the store that Monday afternoon, the plan he and his

friends had devised to launch their protest and how he felt when he sat down on that stool.

"Fifteen seconds after ... I had the most wonderful feeling. I had a feeling of liberation, restored manhood. I had a natural high. And I truly felt almost invincible. Mind you, [I was] just sitting on a dumb stool and not having asked for service yet," McCain says.

"It's a feeling that I don't think that I'll ever be able to have again. It's the kind of thing that people pray for ... and wish for all their lives and never experience it. And I felt as though I wouldn't have been cheated out of life had that been the end of my life at that second or that moment." (More at <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=18615556>)

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Historical Context

W.E.B. Dubois and the NAACP



In 1905, Du Bois was a founder and general secretary of the Niagara Movement, an African American protest group of scholars and professionals. Du Bois founded and edited the *Moon* (1906) and the *Horizon* (1907-1910) as organs for the Niagara Movement.

In 1909, Du Bois was among the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and from 1910 to 1934 served it as director of publicity and research, a member of the board of directors, and founder and editor of *The Crisis*, its monthly magazine.

In *The Crisis*, Du Bois directed a constant stream of agitation—often bitter and sarcastic—at white Americans while serving as a source of information and pride to African Americans. The magazine always published

young African American writers. Racial protest during the decade following World War I focused on securing anti-lynching legislation. During this period the NAACP was the leading protest organization and Du Bois its leading figure.

In 1934, Du Bois resigned from the NAACP board and from *The Crisis* because of his new advocacy of an African American nationalist strategy that ran in opposition to the NAACP's commitment to integration. However, he returned to the NAACP as director of special research from 1944 to 1948. During this period, he was active in placing the grievances of African Americans before the United Nations, serving as a consultant to the UN founding convention (1945) and writing the famous "An Appeal to the World" (1947).

Du Bois identified as a socialist and belonged to the Socialist Party from 1910 to 1912. (More at naacp.org)

Booker T. Washington

Booker T. Washington (1856-1915) was born into slavery and rose to become a leading African American intellectual of the 19 century, founding Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute (Now Tuskegee University) in 1881 and the National Negro Business League two decades later. Washington advised Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft. His infamous conflicts with Black leaders like W. E. B. Du Bois over segregation caused a stir, but today, he is remembered as the most influential African American speaker of his time. (More at history.com)

Thurgood Marshall

Thurgood Marshall was an influential leader of the civil rights movement. He also had a profound contribution to the NAACP and his legacy lives on in the pursuit of racial justice.



Thurgood Marshall founded LDF in 1940 and served as its first Director-Counsel. He was the architect of the legal strategy that ended the country's official policy of segregation. Marshall was the first African American to serve on the Supreme Court on which he served as Associate Justice from

1967-1991 after he was successfully nominated by President Johnson.

He retired from the bench in 1991 and passed away on January 24, 1993, in Washington DC at the age of 84. Civil rights and social change came about through meticulous and persistent litigation efforts, at the forefront of which stood Thurgood Marshall and the Legal Defense Fund. Through the courts, he ensured that Blacks enjoyed the rights and responsibilities of full citizenship. (More at naacpldp.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.



Sweet Water Taste Activities

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.

Challenging societal norms will lead to happiness.

Agree

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

Agree

If you work hard enough, you can accomplish anything.

Agree

Higher social class = greater worth.

Agree

Add your own: _____

Agree

Add your own: _____

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?

HISTORY

(looking at tree chart) *"Takes both sides to make the whole story."*

Elijah, Act 1 Scene 3



EQUALITY

"Though integration in some arenas is evident, the vestiges of racism still lurk under the trappings of a legally desegregated society."

Playwright Gloria Bond Clunie



RACE

"Are we truly brothers and sisters under the skin?"

Playwright Gloria Bond Clunie

