

Expanding the Classroom

The Hundred Dresses Adapted by Bill Williams



Carl Cowden III

RUTH ECKERD HALL
RICHARD B. BAUMGARDNER CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS



Eckerd Theater Company

presents

The Hundred Dresses

Adapted by Bill Williams

Based on the Newbery Honor Book by Eleanor Estes

About the Show

The Hundred Dresses

Wearing the same faded blue dress to school every day, Wanda Petronski insists that she has many more at home—a hundred different dresses. Skepticism turns to surprise as Wanda’s classmates learn the real secret of the hundred dresses. Based on the Newbery Honor Book by Eleanor Estes, this endearing tale offers lessons on acceptance and the dangers of bullying.

Eckerd Theater Company

Eckerd Theater Company (ETC) is a touring company of professional artists, educators and administrators under the umbrella of The Marcia P. Hoffman Performing Arts Institute, the education center for Ruth Eckerd Hall at the Richard B. Baumgardner Center for the Performing Arts in Clearwater, FL. ETC seeks to provide the finest in performance and arts education experiences to family audiences of all ages. Since its inception in 1988, Eckerd Theater Company has performed for more than one million young people and their families throughout the state of Florida and in venues as far north as Canada and as far west as the Mississippi River.

From eight local performances of its first production in 1988 through 187 performances in the 2009-2010 season, ETC has been a proud ambassador of Ruth Eckerd Hall, creating professional productions of original works, adaptations of classic literature and the finest published scripts for the theater. ETC productions entertain while they explore such themes as diversity, multiculturalism, self-worth, loyalty and tolerance.

ETC began touring the state of Florida in 1991 and national touring began in 1993. Since 1996, the Company has been on the Florida Arts on Tour roster, a state program providing funds to allow productions to travel to remote and underserved parts of the state.

In 1998, Julia Flood took the reins as ETC Artistic Director. In 1999, a State of Florida Challenge Grant provided funds for The Florida Project, a collaborative process bringing national and Florida theater artists and educators together to develop a new theater-for-young-audiences piece about the South. ETC was invited to showcase at both the Southern Arts Exchange in 1999, and at the 2002 International Showcase of Performing Arts for Young People, performing alongside companies from Germany, Canada, the U.S. and the U.K.

Since February 2003, Eckerd Theater Company has made its home in the 182-seat Murray Studio Theater in The Marcia P. Hoffman Performing Arts Institute.

Based on *THE HUNDRED DRESSES* by Eleanor Estes, illustrated by Louis Slobodkin with a foreword by Helena Estes. Copyright ©1944 by Harcourt, Inc. Copyright renewed 1972 by Eleanor Estes and Louis Slobodkin. Foreword copyright ©2004 by Helena Estes. Adapted by arrangement with Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.

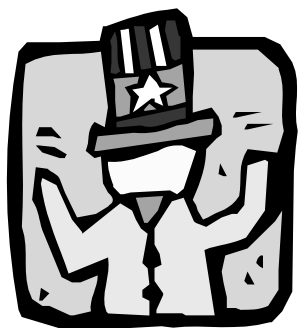
Background Information

What does it mean to be an American?

With our modern conveniences and technological advances, it's difficult to picture what people's lives must have been like even 100 years ago. Yet, imagine how this land appeared to its first **settlers** more than 20,000 years ago. The face of America has changed through history, thanks to the many inhabitants of our great country.

America is a country of **immigrants**, shaped by all of our rich histories and by many diverse cultures.

The earliest people who came here more than 20,000 years ago are believed to have been people we refer to as the Paleo-Indians. Today, we see the descendants of these ancient people in the Pueblo Native



Americans of Arizona and New Mexico. Many years after Native Americans began building settlements here, explorers and **conquistadors** came to our continent (Columbus' first voyage arrived in 1492). Soon thereafter, European colonists populated this country and established the United States of America. The earliest settlers were primarily Spanish, English and French. Our country has grown steadily since, with an influx of people who came to make America their home either by choice or against their wills as in the case of slavery. All of these people are immigrants (people who come to a country for permanent residence). Since the mid-1800s, immigration stations have been set up in the United States to accept people into our country. Immigrant history in the United States tells many stories, since immigrant life has not always been made easy for those who came to American shores. However, this "land of the free" has been defined and strengthened by each individual citizen who leaves an imprint on its soil. It has often been said that American innovation and success are in large part due to the determination and diversity of its immigrants who came here in hopes of building a better life for themselves and their families.

Immigration to the U.S. 1830–1920

In the period of history between 1830 and 1920, more than 23 million immigrants came to the United States. Although many Germans came to America in the 1830s, the "Era of Mass Immigration" from northern and western Europe is said to have begun in the 1840s. These Europeans came to America for many reasons. Crop failures in Germany and Ireland inspired many to leave their homelands in search of a better life, since America held promise of better employment opportunities and land for farms. Inheritance practices leaving farms to the oldest son encouraged younger siblings to seek their fortunes in America. Other Europeans came to the United States for refuge from religious and political **strife**. Many saw America as a land of opportunity, and they sought to attain the "**American Dream**." The **Gold Rush** in the 1850s brought a wave of Asian immigrants to California, which they called the "Gold Mountain." Other Asian immigrants soon poured into California. While some people sought to strike gold, others simply wished to flee political unrest. Immigrants have tended to come in waves from different countries and areas at varying times, triggered by economic and political crises. Each new group has had to struggle to make its way and become a part of the grand "melting pot" that contributes to the vibrant and diverse culture of the U.S.

Unfortunately, many immigrants faced obstacles in their new American life. **Federal immigration stations** such as **Ellis Island** in New York and **Angel Island** in California required a series of inspections before allowing passage into America. Employers took advantage of the new immigrants, offering lower wages to foreign employees. **Discrimination** arose in some areas of the country, and many immigrants found themselves victims of physical and verbal abuse. Additionally, legislation called the **Chinese Exclusion Act** was passed in 1882. This Act made Chinese immigration to the U.S. virtually impossible for 60 years, until the Act was repealed in 1943.

Information courtesy of: http://cybersleuth-kids.com/sleuth/History/US_History/Immigration/index.htm,
http://www.rapidimmigration.com/usa/1_eng_immigration_history.html,
http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/historyonline/immigration_chron.cfm

Background Information

Immigration to the U.S. 1960–Present

Through the years, the United States has received more immigrants than any other country in the world. In 1965, the Immigration and Nationality Act eliminated some former limitations on national **quotas**. Instead, the Act placed an emphasis on reuniting families, attracting skilled professionals in science, medicine and technology, and relief from persecution. As a result, people from Asia and the Caribbean entered the U.S. in increased numbers.

The most recent 35 years of United States history have seen a growing number of **refugees** coming to this country. In 1975, many Indochinese fled Cambodia and Vietnam. The reign of Fidel Castro in Cuba spurred many Cubans to relocate to the United States. Although some sought better economic opportunities, many Cubans fled their homeland because of fear of the political **regime**. Nearly 125,000 Cubans known as the Marielitos (sent from the Cuban port of Mariel) were deliberately sent to Miami by the Cuban government in 1980. Many more Cubans departed their country in small boats and on rafts as they sought refuge from poverty and political unrest in the 1990s. Today, many immigrants come from Mexico in search of work.

The issue of illegal immigration and how best to deal with it has become an important topic of consideration. Although immigration policy has changed, even today, the United States accepts approximately 900,000 legal immigrants every year. Nonetheless, immigration has once again ignited debate among lawmakers and citizens. For example, mass immigration has contributed to rapid population growth in the United States, and this population growth has elevated environmental issues in an age of diminished **natural resources** and increased **pollution**. Unfortunately, concerns over population growth and the American economy have sometimes increased discrimination against immigrants. Yet, united in our desire for freedom and democracy, with our similarities and our differences, we are all important names and faces of America.

Information courtesy of: http://cybersleuth-kids.com/sleuth/History/US_History/Immigration/index.htm,
http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/historyonline/immigration_chron.cfm

What Lady Liberty Represents

Situated in New York Harbor near Ellis Island, a famous immigration station in U.S. history, the Statue of Liberty has been a symbol of freedom for Americans since the late 1800s. Once a representation of the alliance between France and America during the **Revolutionary War**, the Statue of Liberty has come to represent freedom from persecution and hardship.



The Statue of Liberty was created in France as a gift to the American people. Construction of the Statue and the pedestal took slightly more than ten years, and on October 28, 1886, “Liberty Enlightening the World” was dedicated in New York Harbor. Made of copper, the Statue has weathered to a blue-green hue. The Statue’s design represents a woman as Liberty, with a broken chain (representing **oppression** and **tyranny**) at her feet. The seven spikes of the woman’s crown represent liberty reaching toward the seven continents and seven seas, while the torch shines as a beacon for those seeking freedom. Finally, inside the statue is a bronze plaque inscribed with the words of “The New Colossus,” a poem that has become one of America’s **anthems**.

The New Colossus

By Emma Lazarus

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
“Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!” cries she
With silent lips. “Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me.
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

Information courtesy of: <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/history/us/monuments/sol/>, <http://manhattan.about.com/od/historyandlandmarks/a/statueofliberty.htm>, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statue_of_Liberty

Vocabulary

Show Related

American Dream—an ideal that suggests any American can obtain wealth and prosperity

Anthem—a song or hymn of praise, devotion or patriotism

Conquistador—one who conquers; specifically a leader in the Spanish conquest of America in the 16th century

Discrimination—treatment in favor of or against people based on group, class, race, etc. rather than merit

Federal immigration station—centralized receiving centers for immigrants, established by the U.S. government to inspect and process new citizens

Gold Rush—a rush to newly discovered gold fields in search of riches

Immigrant—a person who migrates to another country, usually to take up permanent residence

Natural resources—natural wealth such as soil, timber, oil, minerals, water and other goods that can be taken from the earth and oceans

Oppression—unjust or cruel exercise of authority or power

Pollution—environmental contamination with man-made waste

Quota—the proportional part of a total that is required from, or is due to, a particular group, person, etc.

Refugee—a person who flees to a foreign country or another place to escape danger or persecution

Regime—mode of rule or management in government

Revolutionary War—conflict between Great Britain and the American colonies from 1775 to 1783 that ended British rule and established the U.S.A.

Settler—one who occupies a new region

Strife—bitter conflict

Tyranny—arbitrary or unrestrained exercise of power

Definitions courtesy of: <http://www.m-w.com>, <http://www.dictionary.com>

Art Form Related

What is adaptation?

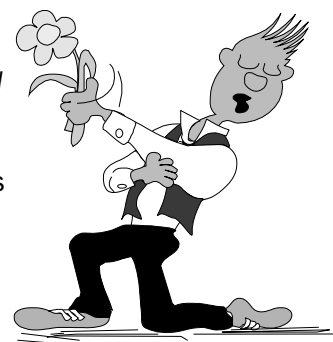
In theater and film, an **adaptation** is an adjustment or modification made of a pre-existing story or tale to fit a new time, audience or production style. Many times, adaptations occur when popular books become movies or plays, e.g., *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* (based on the book *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*). Another excellent example can be seen in the recent Harry Potter books and their companion films. *Lord of the Rings* and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (adapted from *The Chronicles of Narnia*) are other recent adaptations.

What are practical reasons for adaptation in film and theater?

Sometimes stories need editing or changing to come to life on stage or film. For instance, time limits on film and theater might necessitate shortening a story. Otherwise, more movies might be four or five hours long! Also, theaters may have more limitations with regard to special effects, multiple settings, and number of actors. Therefore, plays sometimes rely on more imaginative solutions to tell a story.

What are artistic reasons for adaptation in film and theater?

People such as directors, actors, scenic designers and script writers often bring a specific artistic vision to new film and theater projects. Sometimes, these artists adapt stories to update them for a modern audience or to communicate the story from a different point of view. For example, the story of Cinderella has been adapted in a variety of ways—through musical theater, opera, dance, and modernizations like the films *Ever After* and *A Cinderella Story*. *West Side Story* (adapted from *Romeo and Juliet*), *Alice* by Whoopi Goldberg (*Alice in Wonderland*) and *Wicked* (*The Wizard of Oz*) are other examples. Some adaptations are retellings that change the plot significantly, as in “fractured fairy tales” like *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales*. In this adaptation of *The Hundred Dresses*, Tommy is a new character who did not appear in the original story. An additional character can provide an extra dimension to a story.



Expanding the Classroom through Discussion

Pre-Performance Discussion Questions

1. What do you know about your own family history and the origin of your last name? Have you ever talked to your parents or grandparents about how your family came to live in this country? What have you discovered?
2. Have you ever seen people teased because of their name or the way they look? If so, how did that make you feel? Did any of your relatives “Americanize” the spelling of their names?
3. What reasons other than name or appearance can you think of that might cause someone to be teased or bullied (e.g., a foreign accent, clumsiness, lack of athletic, academic or musical ability, location or condition of home, etc.)?

Post-Performance Discussion Questions

1. After seeing *The Hundred Dresses*, how do you feel about bullying? Imagine this next scenario and answer the question honestly.
Randy is the only child partially of Native American descent in his school. His ancestors were members of the Cherokee tribe, and he is proud of his heritage. Brent, a troublemaker, makes jokes about Randy and calls him “Big Chief Randy.” You are tired of hearing Brent make fun of Randy, and you decide to do something. Would you talk with your teacher about the situation, try to talk with Brent yourself, or say something to Randy? Explain your answer.
2. Which character appears in the play but not in the book? Do you think he adds something important to the story? If so, what does he contribute?
3. Why do you think Wanda was singled out for teasing? Were there reasons other than the way she dressed?
4. Have you ever been bullied? What do you think is the best way to respond to bullying?
5. Have you ever bullied someone? If so, why? How did it make you feel?

Teacher Guided Activities

Very Important People

As a class, institute the **Very Important Person** (or **VIP**) program. Make a schedule, and assign each person in your class to his or her own week. When it is your week, decorate a tri-fold board (the heavy cardboard “science project” board) with your name and the following components:



- 1. My family history:** Research your heritage (with help from parent/guardian) and find out where your ancestors came from and when they came to this country. If you are a first- or second-generation American, write about why your family wanted to come here. If your family has been in this country for a long time, write about what some of your ancestors did for a living and where they lived. Did they stay in one place or did some move to a different part of the country? Why?
- 2. My favorite things:** Make a list of your favorite things and people. For instance, you can include your favorite friend, movie, television program, video game, website, food, sport, book, song, vacation place, color or animal. For each favorite thing you list, explain why it’s your favorite. If you have a treasured toy, book or photograph that makes you feel special, bring that item to class to place in front of your display.
- 3. Who I want to be:** Imagine that you are looking at yourself 30 years into the future. What would you like to be doing (examples: first woman President, famous for a medical breakthrough, inventor of artificial intelligence robot)? How would you like your friends to describe you (examples: honorable, compassionate, funny)? If there could be only one thing for which you could be known or remembered, what would you want it to be?
- 4. Awards:** If you ever won a spelling bee, competed in a piano recital, or won a sports trophy, bring in the certificates or trophies to put on the table in front of your tri-fold board.
- 5. Famous relatives:** If you can trace your ancestry back to any famous people, who were they and why were they famous? If you can find pictures of them among your family photos, in a book or online, add those pictures to your board. If you can’t find photos, list their names and what you know about them.



All About You

On the Monday of your VIP week, bring in your tri-fold board, awards, and treasured items that you wish to display for the class. Leave the display so your classmates can admire it throughout the week. On Friday, present and explain your board to the class, and share with them something that is special to you. For example, if you have a special skill, like cooking, dancing, singing, acting or drawing, present something to the class. If you have a special song or story that represents you, share it with the class. **Most importantly, enjoy learning about each other and celebrating how unique each of us is!** Most likely, there are things about you that even your good friends don’t know.

Language Arts: Communication; Social Studies: History and Biography

Teacher Guided Activities

Population Growth: How does it affect the environment?

Did you know that 100 years ago, 1 1/2 billion people lived on our planet? By 2007, that population number had increased to more than 6 1/2 billion inhabitants. That's more than four times as many people as 100 years ago! The world's population growth continues to damage our environment by wasting natural resources, polluting the air, soil and water, and destroying wildlife and wildlife habitat for industrial and agricultural expansion. Unfortunately, Americans have many wasteful habits that impact our environment. For which wasteful habits can you propose a solution? In a group of three to four students, choose one of the following five topics and put together a presentation based on your research. Don't forget to follow the scientific process* to arrive at your conclusion!

Topic 1—We waste a lot of energy in every room of our homes. What are some effective ways to conserve energy in the kitchen?

Topic 2—Much air pollution is caused by smog. What are some effective ways to reduce the amount of smog released into the environment?

Topic 3—Many wildlife areas are destroyed by population growth. How can we preserve our wilderness?

Topic 4—Many areas already suffer from insufficient water resources. What can be done to preserve precious water or provide additional water resources for human use?

Topic 5—Chemicals from industrial plants, herbicides and pesticides from agriculture and yards, and other poisons and pollutants disposed of carelessly can poison our soil and seep into groundwater. Runoff from roads and yards into storm drains eventually enters drinking water sources such as aquifers. What can be done to protect our soil and water resources from pollutants?

*The Scientific Process

- A. **Question**—What are you trying to answer or solve in this project?
- B. **Hypothesis**—What solution do you think you'll find/prove in your research?
- C. **Procedure**—List steps you've taken/research you've done to narrow your focus.
- D. **Results**—What did you find from your research?
- E. **Conclusion**—What did you learn about your topic, and how did you answer your initial question?

For further information on the effects of population growth, visit www.pbs.org/journeystoplanetearth/education/urbanexplosion.html



Eckerd Theater Company

The Marcia P. Hoffman Performing Arts Institute
1111 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater, FL 33759-3219

www.eckerdtheatercompany.com

Additional Resources

Ask your school or local librarian for help in locating these books for you and your students!

Blubber

by Judy Blume

The Thanksgiving Visitor

by Truman Capote

Daphne's Book

by Mary Downing Hahn

Secret Friends

by Elizabeth Laird

Bullies are a Pain in the Brain

by Trevor Romain

Maniac Magee

by Jerry Spinelli

Who Belongs Here? An American Story

by Margy Burns Knight

Check out these Internet sites for additional information!

www.rapidimmigration.com/usa/1_eng_immigration_history.html

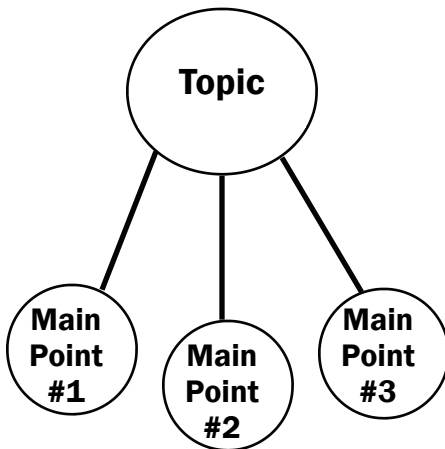
www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/historyonline/immigration_chron.cfm

http://cybersleuth-kids.com/sleuth/History/US_History/Immigration/index.htm

Writing Connections

In *The Hundred Dresses*, the characters discover that there are consequences to their actions. After seeing the show (or reading the book), with which young character did you identify the most? Write a brief essay describing a time in your life when you felt like Maddie, Wanda, Tommy or Peggy. Was the outcome of your experience similar to that of *The Hundred Dresses* characters? Explain what lessons you did or did not learn from your own experience.

Helpful Hints



Paragraph #1–Introduction: In the first sentence, introduce your topic. In the next three sentences, state what your three major points are (one in each sentence). Finally, write a concluding sentence.

Paragraph #2–In the first sentence, tell what your first major point is. Then, in the body of this paragraph, give lots of good details about your first major point. Finally, write a concluding sentence.

Paragraph #3–In the first sentence, tell what your second major point is. Then, in the body of this paragraph, give lots of good details about your second major point. Finally, write a concluding sentence.

Paragraph #4–In the first sentence, tell what your third major point is. Then, in the body of this paragraph, give lots of good details about your third major point. Finally, write a concluding sentence.

Paragraph #5–Conclusion: Restate what you wrote in your first paragraph.

Character Counts; Language Arts: Writing; Health Education: Responsible Behavior

We want to hear from YOU! Write to us at The Marcia P. Hoffman Performing Arts Institute at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 1111 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater, FL 33759

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Student Guide: National Standards Concepts

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Page 3 – Mathematics: Numbers, Measurement; Social Studies: Geography

Page 4 – Language Arts: Communication; Visual Arts: Skills and Techniques, Creation and Communication, Cultural and Historical Connections