

<b>Description</b>	The manifestation of an idea can take many different iterations during its evolution, depending on the interpretation of the text provided. Students will work in groups to develop set design, costume, dialogue, cast and music from Terry Gilliam's initial concept of the film, <i>Brazil</i> . Students will analyze Gilliam's letter to his writing companion to determine the film's original main idea and theme, then spend two days developing their interpretation of an opening scene based on their research.
<b>Objectives</b>	After reading the letter and discussing the lesson assignment as a class, students will work in groups to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify the film's major concept as presented in the text and develop a plan to create an opening scene including:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Set design, costumes, music, dialogue, and characters;</li></ul></li><li>• Present ideas in a clear, informal platform to their classmates;</li><li>• Reflect on their learning in a tri-fold activity.</li></ul>
<b>Enduring Understanding(s) &amp; Essential Questions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. Readers' and viewers' individual life experiences affect their interpretation of a text.</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is the definition of 'interpretation'?</li><li>• What are some different techniques that can be used to interpret text or media?</li><li>• Can a person's experience be universal, or is experience unique?</li><li>• Should personal connection to text be considered a valid interpretation, or is objectivity necessary for valid interpretation?</li><li>• What constitutes a "valid" interpretation of text?</li></ul></li><li><b>2. Creating dialogue for a screen- or stage play, requires understanding of setting, character, and theme/motif in order to fully express the overarching thematic message of a piece.</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is considered dramatic dialogue?</li><li>• What is the process of writing a play?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ What features or elements do prose stories and plays have in common?</li><li>○ What features or elements are unique to plays?</li></ul></li><li>• How is theme expressed in writing?</li><li>• Does theatre or dramatic production offer a unique, unfiltered, and more honest view of society than other mediums?</li></ul></li></ol>

**Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (Target standards)****English IV, grade 12:**

(2) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Theme and Genre. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. Students are expected to:

- (A) compare and contrast works of literature that express a universal theme;
- (B) compare and contrast the similarities and differences in classical plays with their modern day novel, play, or film versions;

(4) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Drama. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of drama and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to evaluate how the structure and elements of drama change in the works of British dramatists across literary periods.

(14) Writing/Literary Texts. Students write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas. Students are responsible for at least two forms of literary writing. Students are expected to:

- (A) write an engaging story with a well-developed conflict and resolution, a clear theme, complex and non-stereotypical characters, a range of literary strategies (e.g., dialogue, suspense), devices to enhance the plot, and sensory details that define the mood or tone;
- (C) write a script with an explicit or implicit theme, using a variety of literary techniques.

(15) Writing/Expository and Procedural Texts. Students write expository and procedural or work-related texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. Students are expected to:

- (D) produce a multimedia presentation (e.g., documentary, class newspaper, docudrama, infomercial, visual or textual parodies, theatrical production) with graphics, images, and sound that appeals to a specific audience and synthesizes information from multiple points of view.

(26) Listening and Speaking/Teamwork. Students work productively with others in teams. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to participate productively in teams, offering ideas or judgments that are purposeful in moving the team towards goals, asking relevant and insightful questions, tolerating a wide range of positions and ambiguity in decision-making, and evaluating the work of the group based on agreed-upon criteria.

**Prerequisite Knowledge and Skills**

- Basic editing and revision knowledge
- Ideally, prior knowledge of dystopian novels and existentialism, but general understanding of the human condition.

**Time Required**

Four, 90-minute lessons, and one 45-minute lesson. *Could be shortened or extended depending on scope and breadth of project.*

**Materials  
Required**

- Projector and computer with internet access
- “The Art of Perspective Resource,” including clip of the introduction of [Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead](#) and clip of the opening scene of [Brazil](#), and “The Art of Perspective Materials” documents.  
*Contact Lori Hahn at the UTeach-LA office to request an electronic copy of each of these PDFs.*
- Blank sheets of paper / butcher paper for groups
- Markers, coloring pencils, crayons
- Student access to
  - Laptops / campus computer lab
  - Several teacher-selected examples of scene breakdown, screenplay format, dialogue, set design, soundtrack in the classroom or online
- Copies of T.S. Eliot's [“The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”](#)

**Procedure**

This lesson plan will more than likely be best placed as a transition from one unit to the next – perhaps as an intro to a drama unit. Therefore, much of the EU's and EQ's will focus on craft as opposed to theme, although this lesson plan can easily be adapted to pull in themes of isolationism and existentialism using the same materials. In addition, this concept could be stretched out into a unit on drama in general with mini-lessons about set design, costuming, characterizations, and plays.

**LESSON 1****Engage**

~20 minutes

Quick-write: (5 minutes)

- Students will respond to this quote from Eliot's “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”—

“No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;  
Am an attendant lord, one that will do  
To swell a progress, start a scene or two,  
Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool,  
Deferential, glad to be of use,  
Politic, cautious, and meticulous;  
Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;  
At time, indeed, almost ridiculous –  
Almost, at times, the Fool.”

- Students will pair up with a neighbor and share their responses. (3-4 minutes)
- Ask for volunteers to share/discuss their thoughts with the class. (4-5 minutes)

*\*Potential questions for prompting / class discussion after quick-write:*

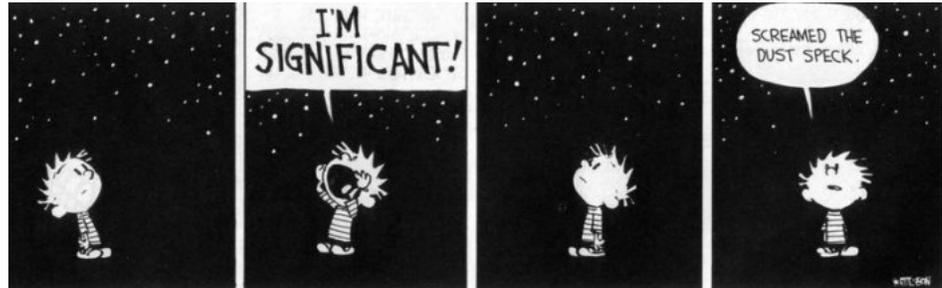
- *What things come to mind when you read the quote?*
- *When do you feel out of place?*
- *When do you feel not normal?*

- Pose the following question to students: “If you had to create a scene of

what an outsider feels – what would it look like? Describe a scene.”  
Students will think / pair / share. (8 minutes)

Example responses:

- 1) *A room full of people who seem engaged, happy, and seem to know their purpose and one person in the room who looks like everyone else: dressed the ‘right’ way, attractive, etc., but is not involved with anyone around them.”*



2)

### Introduce & Explore 50 minutes

#### **What does the process of creating a script from an idea look like?**

- Introduce the basic plot of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* to the students so they are aware of the idea of the play before their discussions. (5 minutes)
- Based on teacher assignment, students break off into small groups of three to four. Each group answers the following questions through discussion and informally record their answers on a scratch sheet of paper: (15 minutes)
  - How would you translate the idea of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* into a production?
  - Where is the play set? (Country / time).
  - What does the scene look like? (Note: think of camera angles: birds-eye view, close-up).
  - Think about what you want to capture in this opening scene. What is the thing you want your audience to know in that first scene – you have one shot – what do you need to include?
- Groups share their ideas. (15 minutes)
- Show the first draft of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* and then the second. Discuss in groups: (15 minutes)
  - What changed? Why?
  - How does that change effect the reaction of viewer?
- Show third draft. Begin discussing this new draft using the same questions, then deepen the discussion with the questions below:
  - What themes / ideas stay the same between all of these three drafts? How is the thread maintained throughout all three drafts?
- Show opening clip of [Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead](#) (time = 3:58)—also linked in “The Art of Perspective Resource” PDF. Discuss how

this process changed from first draft to final product. (15 minutes)

### Explain

~20 minutes

- For this assignment, students will work collaboratively to create a first draft or some sort of iteration of an idea for a film by Terry Gilliam, one of the original members of Monty Python.
  - In their groups, students will receive a copy of a letter sent to Tom Stoppard that serves as sketch or outline of Terry Gilliam's initial idea for the film, *Brazil*. From this they will create an opening scene for the film, complete with set design, costumes, music, and characters.
  - Project of go over the instructions to begin assignment:
    - Read through the letter and discuss as a group.
      - What is this letter about? Major themes, motifs?
      - Any connection to other texts read or movies watched? (If students are stuck while working, ask them to consider any connections they've made to other media / texts and how those pieces portrayed their themes).
      - Each group will have to present their introductory scenes.
- Field students' questions, then give them time to get started reading and discussing the letter.

## LESSON 2

### Explain

~30 minutes

- Review letter before start of Day 2, then pass out handout with guidelines.
  - Go through handout with students and answer any questions. (10 minutes)
- Assignment criteria:
- Set design:
    - Where does your screenplay take place? *Sunny California, or cold, dark Siberia*? These choices will affect how your screenplay is received.
    - What time period? *Present-day, parallel universe, the Wild West, Elizabethan England*?
    - How will these choices impact the meaning of your screenplay?
    - Does it take place in a room? If so, is there a minimalist set or overcrowded, stuffed, suffocating room? Low lighting or exposed lighting? (*Example provided on handout*)
  - Costumes:
    - How are these characters dressed?
    - How do our clothes reflect elements of our character? Consider this when deciding how you want to dress your characters. (*Example provided on handout*)
  - Music:
    - Music can have a profound effect on our connection to the piece and can influences our emotions.
    - If you were to have music, what kind of music would you choose? *Instrumental? Pop music? No music? Why?* (*Example provided on handout*)
  - Characters:
    - Who are the characters you would like to focus on? What do they look like? Maybe consider past and modern-day actors and

- actresses to help you inform your decision.
- Which characters will you introduce in the opening scene? All, or just a few? (*Example provided on handout*)
- Dialogue: The scene must include dialogue. (*Example of play dialogue and how it's written provided.*)
- **The goal** is to provide as much information in this introductory scene as you can to convey the overall production concept most fully. In order to accomplish this, your group must decide on an overarching theme of the letter. *What is the main concept you would like to convey?*
- Integrate mini-lessons regarding set design, costume, soundtrack, and dialogue into the discussion of the assignment criteria or immediately following said discussion. (20 minutes)
  - For example, use the resource [“Every Frame a Painting”](#) to discuss setting.

**Apply &  
Elaborate**  
~60 minutes

Student groups will spend rest of the class period working on their projects.

- Have examples of various screenplays, costume designs, set designs and scores/soundtracks on hand for students to refer to for inspiration or clarification.
- As groups reach decisions about their main concept for the film and various aspects of their opening scene, they may need access to laptops or a computer lab, the library, or other educators on campus (*drama teacher, for example*) to get started with their projects.

**LESSON 3**  
**Apply &  
Elaborate**  
~60 minutes

Student groups will have the entire class period to continue with their projects.

- As before, make available examples of various screenplays, costume designs, set designs and scores/soundtracks in the classroom for groups' inspiration or clarification.
- Provide access to computers / computer lab, library, teacher(s), and any other resource to help them finish their projects.

**LESSON 4**  
**Apply**  
~15 minutes

Student groups will finalize any remaining aspects of their scene before presentations.

**Apply &  
Evaluate**  
~75 minutes

- Groups will present their opening scenes to the class. Each group will have ~5-7 minutes for their presentation. (60 minutes)
- After the presentations, discuss the similarities and differences between scenes as a class. (15 minutes)
  - Was there a commonality between all scenes?
  - Any major differences, if so, what?

**LESSON 4**  
**Evaluate**  
 ~30 minutes

- Show the first scene of [Brazil](#) (time = 3:06)—also linked in “The Art of Perspective Resource” PDF.
- Discuss together: (~25 minutes)
  - Having gone through the process of developing a world around this idea, how much do you think your perspective on what it means to be an outsider affected the way you presented your film?
  - Is this an important consideration when analyzing film and literature?

**Closure**  
 ~10 minutes

Exit ticket: tri-fold activity.

- Fold a sheet of paper into three, horizontally.
- On the furthest left side, write down initial expectations of what the student envisioned the scene to be from the letter to be (outside of their own product).
- In the middle, write down the result (what actually happened in *Brazil*).
- In the last section, students comment about the differences between the two and why.

**Future Lessons**

- This lesson can easily be adapted to focus more closely on or serve as a platform for additional lessons on reader/writer craft concepts included in the group assignment. For example, students could focus more closely on setting or characterization – how the setting of a novel, play, or film affects its theme or recognizing, analyzing, and then applying the elements that shape a character in a text. This lesson could also serve as an introduction to dialogue and screen- or stage play writing.
- To expand students’ understanding of the themes shared by *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* and *Brazil*, additional lessons might be developed on the concepts of existentialism, isolation, or marginalization and how these concepts appear in multiple works, including poetry and prose fiction.
- Moreover, for an upper-level class in particular, lessons can be developed regarding various perspective lenses: gender, race, socio-economic levels, etc. and how that affects interpretation.

**Resources:**

Eliot, T. S.. "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock." Poetry Foundation. 2016. 21 Jul 2016. <<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/browse?contentId=44212>>.

"Every Frame A Painting." YouTube. 21 Jul. 2016. <<https://www.youtube.com/user/everyframeapainting>>.

Gilliam, Terry. "Brazil (1/10) Movie CLIP -- A Receipt for Your Husband (1985) HD." YouTube. 21 Jul 2016. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nSQ5EsbT4cE>>.

Gilliam, Terry. Letter to Tom Stoppard with *Brazil* plot outline, n.d. Box 2.5, Tom Stoppard Papers, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin. Cover letter, pages 1-2.

Gilliam, Terry, director. *Brazil*. Universal Pictures, 1985.

Stoppard, Tom. *Brazil* Screenplay early typescript draft, n.d. Box 2.6. Tom Stoppard Papers, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin. Pages 4-9.

Stoppard, Tom. Educational packet for *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* stage play, 1982. Box 108.8, sleeve 2, Tom Stoppard Papers, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.

Stoppard, Tom . "Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead (Heads)." YouTube. 21 Jul. 2016. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RjOqaD5tWB0>>.

Stoppard, Tom. *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* screenplay first draft, carbon typescript with holograph revisions, 1968. Box 68.3, Tom Stoppard Papers 1939 – 2000 (bulk 1970-2000), Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin. Pages 1-3.

Stoppard, Tom. *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* screenplay "working draft," composite original and photocopy typescript draft, 1987. Box 110.1, Tom Stoppard Papers 1939 – 2000 (bulk 1970-2000), Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin. Pages 1-2.

Stoppard, Tom, director. *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*. Cinecom Pictures, 1990.