

Ira Aldridge

Subject: English Literature

Date: 4/26/24

Topic: Ira Aldridge and his Influence

Grade: 10th Grade

Lesson Focus and Goals:

The lesson will focus on the reading of the play "Red Velvet" by Lolita Chakrabarti. We will first learn a bit about the history of the early 1800's as it relates to theatre and racism. Then we will read the play together in class and analyze its themes and characters. After that, the students will lead discussion with one another by presenting short presentations on Ira's influence in groups as it relates to today's society.

Materials Needed:

Red Velvet by
Lolita Chakrabarti

Learning Objectives:

Students will learn about the life of Ira Aldridge and discuss and analyze his influence in the theatrical world today.

Structure / Activity:

Before reading the play, students will receive a lecture on the history of the 1800's as it relates to racism and theatrical history. The presentation will also include a brief overview of Ira Aldridge's life and career.

We will read the play in class using the popcorn reading method. After reading the play, students will be assigned to groups of three and work together on the "Trailblazer" project. Students will create a creative presentation on Ira Aldridge comparing and contrasting his work to someone they see in the entertainment industry today that they consider a "Trailblazer". They will present their presentations to each other in class. This will allow the students to recognize how one person can influence societal standards and reimagine the norm. Teaching this play and Ira Aldridge's life will help students improve their skills when analyzing and evaluating texts, making connections with text and real life, and produce clear and cohesive ideas in a presentation.