

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

André Bishop
Producing Artistic Director

Adam Siegel
Managing Director

Hattie K. Jutagir
Executive Director of
Development & Planning

presents

THE ROYALE

By Marco Ramirez

with (in alphabetical order)

McKinley Belcher III Khris Davis Montego Glover
John Lavelle Clarke Peters

Sets Nick Vaughan	Costumes Dede M. Ayite	Lighting Austin R. Smith
Sound Matt Hubbs	Stage Manager Karyn Meek	
Casting Daniel Swee	Director of Marketing Linda Mason Ross	General Press Agent Philip Rinaldi
General Manager Jessica Niebanck	Production Manager Paul Smithyman	

Directed by
Rachel Chavkin

Major support for THE ROYALE is provided by The Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation,
with additional support from the Henry Nias Foundation courtesy of Dr. Stanley Edelman.

Special thanks to The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust
for supporting new American plays at LCT.

The Mitzi E. Newhouse season is supported, in part, by public funds from
the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, in partnership with the City Council.

American Airlines is the Official Airline of Lincoln Center Theater.

Center Theatre Group / Kirk Douglas Theatre, Michael Ritchie, Artistic Director
produced the World Premiere of THE ROYALE in Los Angeles, CA in 2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
THE PLAY	3
The Story.....	3
The Characters.....	4
The Writer.....	4
THE BACKDROP: DISENFRANCHISEMENT AND SEGREGATION ..	5
Reconstructing History.....	5
Separate but Equal	6
The Rise of Jim Crow.....	7
THE INSPIRATION: SPORTS AND SOCIETY	10
Sports as a Lens	10
Struggles in the Ring	11
The Champion Emerges	12
EXPLORING THE ISSUES.....	14
Thematic Elements	14
CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES.....	17
Pre-visit Activities	17
Post-visit Activities.....	24
RESOURCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY	29

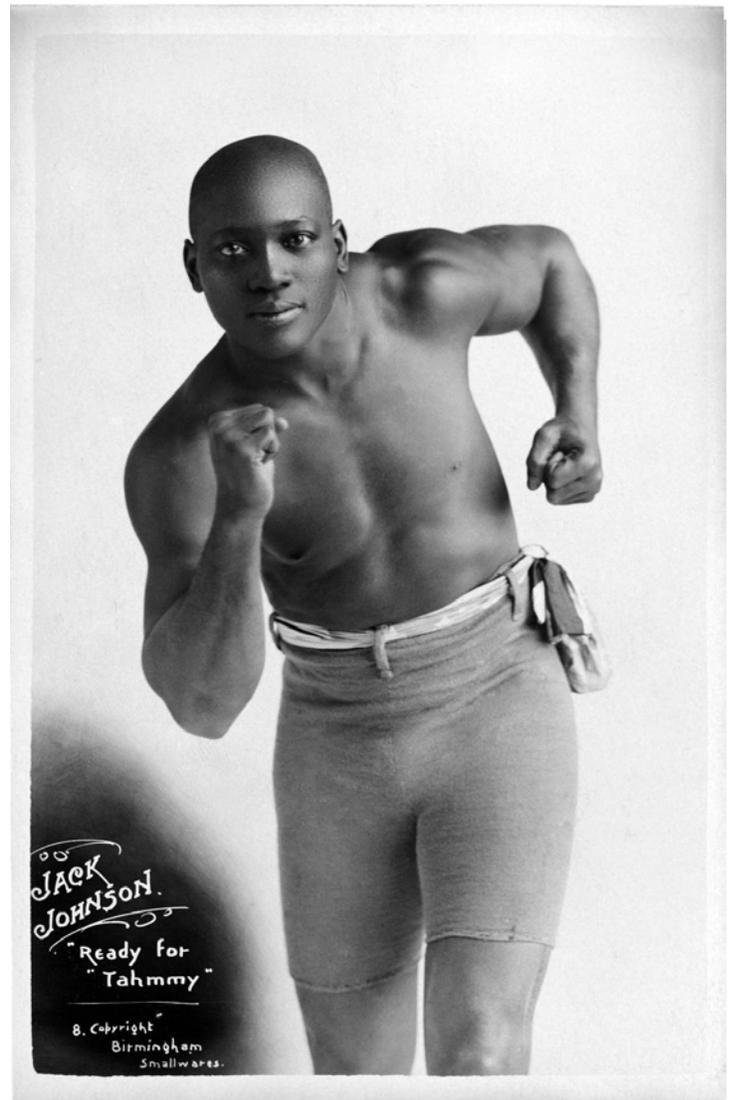
INTRODUCTION

“ Each boxing match is a story, a unique and highly condensed drama without words. Because a boxing match is a story without words, this doesn’t mean that it has no text or language, that it is somehow ‘brute,’ ‘primitive,’ ‘inarticulate,’ only that the text is improvised in action...Ringside announcers give to the wordless spectacle a narrative unity, yet boxing as performance is more clearly akin to dance or music than narrative.”

JOYCE CAROL OATES, NOVELIST (ON BOXING)

Welcome to the teacher resource guide for Lincoln Center Theater’s *The Royale*. Following acclaimed productions in London, Chicago, San Diego, and Los Angeles, award-winning director Rachel Chavkin brings Marco Ramirez’s explosive play to life at Lincoln Center Theater.

The Royale focuses on the internal and external struggles of Jay “The Sport” Jackson, an African-American boxer in the early 20th century who is fighting for freedom and recognition inside and outside the boxing ring. Using the sport of boxing to explore the landscape of race relations during the post-Reconstruction period, playwright Marco Ramirez dramatically reimagines the groundbreaking career of African-American boxer Jack Johnson, his pivotal 1910 victory over retired World Heavyweight Champion Jim Jeffries, and the racial unrest it provoked. At its core, *The Royale* raises complex questions about what it means to fight, win, and lose, both personally, and as a society.



Jack Johnson, 2008. National Archives of Australia NAAA1861

The Royale offers many learning opportunities for students in areas related to:

- The post-Reconstruction period in America and the rise of the Jim Crow system;
- the art of boxing;
- race and sports in America;
- and the process of reimagining and dramatizing history.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Arts experiences resonate most strongly for students when themes and ideas from the play can be aligned to your curriculum. This resource guide has been created to help prepare your students to see *The Royale*. We also hope to direct you to resources that can further your classroom exploration of the play. We encourage you to print and share pages of this guide with your students. Throughout the guide you will find resources, including links to materials and videos available online, as well as discussion questions and suggested classroom activities that you can use before or after seeing the production.

The overall goals of this guide are to:

- connect to your curriculum with standards-based information and activities;
- reinforce and encourage your students to exercise critical and analytical thinking skills;
- and, to provide you with the tools to have an engaging and educational experience at the theater.

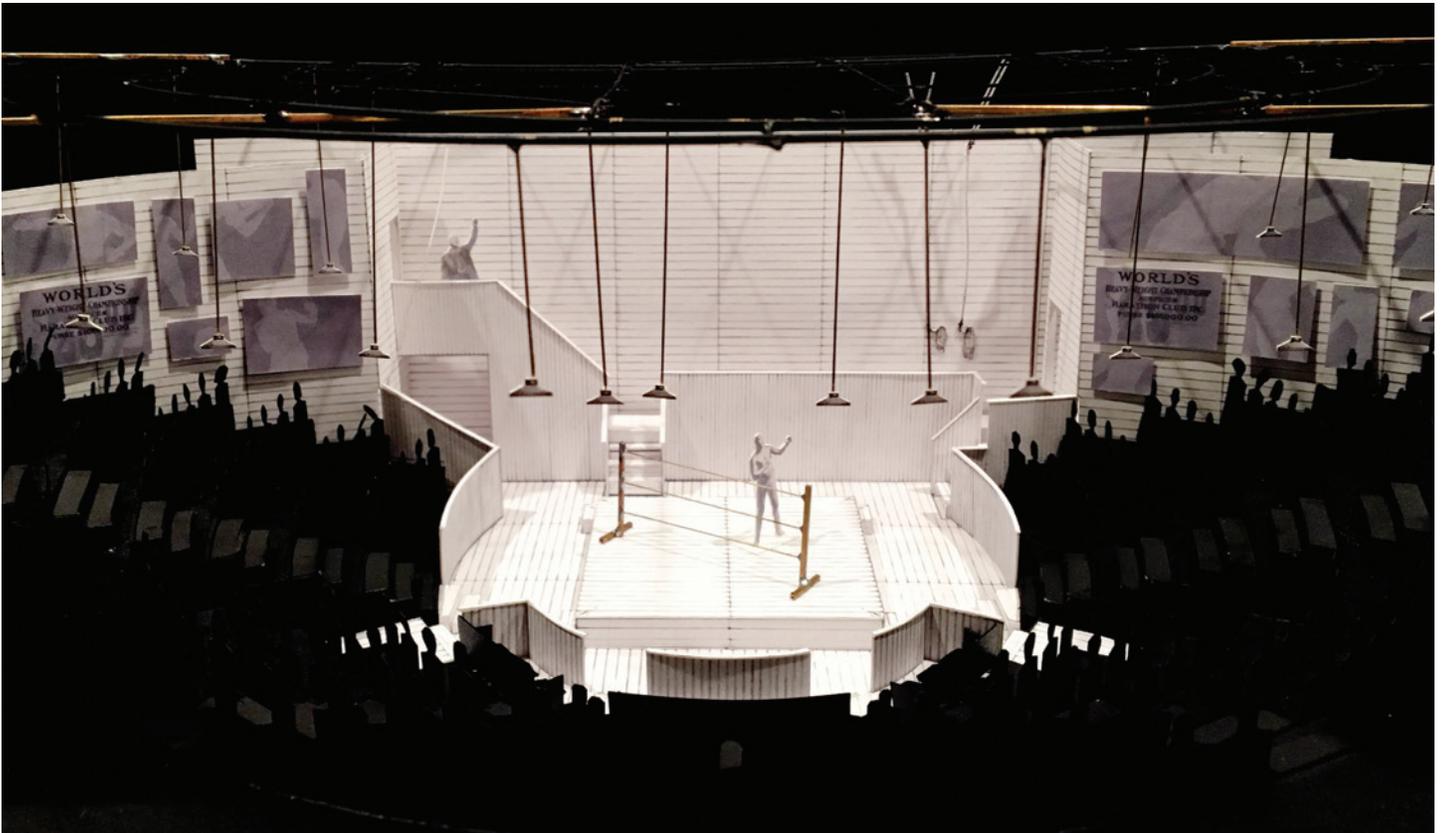
THE PLAY

THE STORY

It is the early 1900s and Jay “The Sport” Jackson, a black heavyweight champion, dreams of breaking the racial barriers of the segregated boxing world by becoming the first African-American to be crowned the undisputed Heavyweight Champion of the World. When Max, an enterprising boxing promoter, successfully orchestrates “The Fight of the Century” between Jay and the reigning (but retired) white heavyweight champion, Jay is ready to seize the title. But a visit from Jay’s sister Nina moments before the fight, forces him to confront the events that will arise if he wins and crosses this color line. Torn between an inner drive to gain the recognition he rightfully deserves and the painful awareness of what dangers may lie ahead for the African-American community if he is victorious, Jay realizes that this battle reverberates far beyond the boxing ring.

A detailed scene-by-scene synopsis can be found on pages 2 and 3 of the Center Theatre Group’s Educator Resources for *The Royale*.

http://www.centertheatregroup.org/Global/Production/2013/The%20Royale/Royale_EdRes_FINAL.pdf



Set design model by Nick Vaughan for Lincoln Center Theater's production of *The Royale*.

THE CHARACTERS

JAY “THE SPORT” JACKSON: an ambitious and outspoken African-American boxer who wants to become Heavy-weight Champion of the World

WYNTON: Jay’s trainer; an African-American man in his 50s

FISH: a young, up-and-coming African-American boxer who becomes Jay’s sparring partner

MAX: a Caucasian fight promoter and boxing referee who works closely with Jay

NINA: Jay’s fierce older sister



Costume design sketches by Dede M. Ayite for Lincoln Center Theater's production of *The Royale*.

THE WRITER

“There are so many boxer stories about whether the boxer can win the fight. In the world of theater, it is more of a moral and ethical question about whether he should win the fight.” **PLAYWRIGHT MARCO RAMIREZ**

Marco Ramirez is an award-winning American playwright. He has had plays produced at The Globe Theater, Center Theatre Group, The Bush Theater (London), The Kennedy Center, The Juilliard School, The Arsht Center, and Actors Theatre of Louisville's Humana Festival of New American Plays, where he's twice received the Heideman Award. As an Emmy-nominated television writer, he has written for numerous hit shows including FX's *Sons of Anarchy*, AMC's *Fear the Walking Dead*, and the Netflix shows, *Orange is the New Black* and *Daredevil*, based on the Marvel Comic. He trained at both New York University and The Juilliard School.

Read an insightful interview with the playwright on page 4 of the Center Theatre Group's Student Discovery Guide for *The Royale*.

http://www.centertheatregroup.org/Global/Production/2013/The%20Royale/ROYALE_DG.pdf

THE BACKDROP: DISENFRANCHISEMENT AND SEGREGATION

RECONSTRUCTING HISTORY

On January 1, 1863, as the nation approached its third year of bloody battles, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation declaring that all slaves "are, and henceforward shall be free." Two years later, the Civil War would end with the North defeating the South. Despite gaining their freedom, African-Americans would spend the next hundred years struggling to receive the rights they were promised at the end of the war.

The Royale provides a compelling entry-point into the troubled period between the end of Reconstruction and the beginning of the Jim Crow era, and allows for a classroom exploration of how this conflicted past shapes our present.



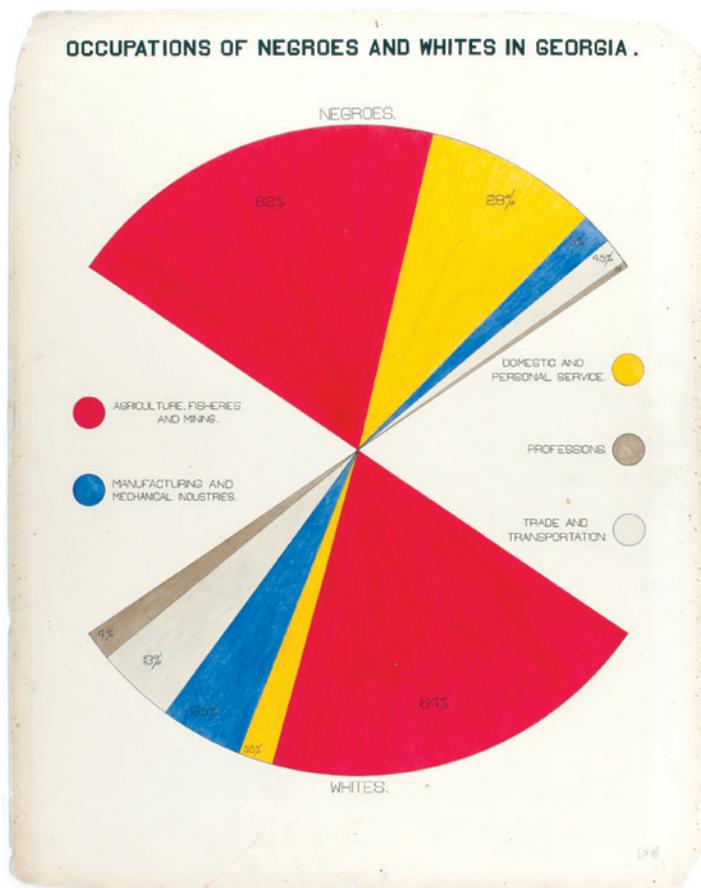
F.B. Carpenter, A.H. Ritchie. The first reading of the Emancipation Proclamation before the cabinet. c1866. Painting. Library of Congress. (LC-DIG-pga-02502)

RECONSTRUCTION

Reconstruction, the period following the Civil War (approximately 1865-1877), was a time of great strife and confusion. The United States was faced with the challenge of rebuilding the South, reuniting the nation, and setting the conditions for the legal, political, and social changes that would support freedom and equality for the newly freed African-American slaves. Three constitutional amendments directly addressed African-American rights:

- The Thirteenth Amendment formally abolished slavery in all states and territories.
- The Fourteenth Amendment prohibited states from depriving any male citizen of equal protection under the law, regardless of race.
- The Fifteenth Amendment granted African-Americans the right to vote.

Southern states were required to abide by these amendments in order to be readmitted into the Union. While some African-Americans briefly reaped the benefits of these amendments in the decade that followed, by 1877 Southern white resistance and the withdrawal of federal supervision resulted in a violent backlash that restored white hegemony in the South.



Watch a short video on History.com about Reconstruction here. <http://www.history.com/topics/american-civil-war/reconstruction>

Read more about Reconstruction at *PBS.org*. http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_events_reconstruct.html

As the 19th century neared a close, conditions for African-Americans continued to spiral downward in two significant ways: by the legalized separation of the races and the rise of the Jim Crow system.

SEPARATE BUT EQUAL

As Reconstruction began to wind down, the white South reinstated a deeply embedded hierarchical order that kept whites in power, and kept the races separate. During this time, a group of Northerners in Congress managed to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1875; an act that granted freedom of access, regardless of race, to the "full and equal enjoyment" of many public facilities. While this act was rarely enforced in the South, it was at least an attempt to legally uphold the constitutional amendments that had been passed to provide African-Americans with equal rights. However, in 1883, the Supreme Court overturned it, ruling it unconstitutional. This opened the door to what would become legalized segregation.

Read the two key clauses from the Civil Rights Act at *PBS.org*.

http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_events_civil.html



Top: The Georgia Negro: Occupations of Negroes and whites in Georgia, c1900, Created by W.E.B. Du Bois. Library of Congress. (LC-DIG-ppmsca-33889)

Bottom: Lee Russell, Sign above moving picture theater, Waco, Texas. c1939. Library of Congress. (LC-DIG-ppmsc-00225)

Less than ten years later, in 1892, 30-year-old Homer Plessy was jailed for breaking the state of Louisiana's Separate Car Act when he sat in the "white" car of the East Louisiana Railroad. In 1896, his case went all the way to the Supreme Court where his lawyer argued that the Separate Car Act violated the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments. With only one dissenting vote, the Supreme Court ruled that the Separate Car Act was constitutional, provided there were equal accommodations available for blacks. This "separate but equal" doctrine was quickly extended to cover many areas of public life, such as restaurants, theaters, restrooms, and public schools.

Read Justice John Harlan's dissenting response to the Supreme Court's decision, here.

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/courses/nclc375/harlan.html>

THE RISE OF JIM CROW

Jim Crow

During the 1830s and 40s, a white entertainer named Thomas Dartmouth Rice toured throughout the United States and England performing a popular song-and-dance act in which he played a character he called "Jim Crow." As Jim Crow, Rice darkened his face and portrayed African-Americans in a foolish and derogatory manner. By the 1890s the expression "Jim Crow" was used to describe laws and customs aimed at segregating African-Americans and relegating them to second-class citizenship.

Explore PBS.org's extensive resources about the Jim Crow era here.

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/index.html>

Explore the history and ramifications of the Jim Crow system at the Jim Crow Museum here.

<http://www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/>



Jim Crow, Library of Congress. (LC-DIG-ds-00886)

Fear and Oppression

An increase in violence against African-Americans, especially lynchings, accompanied the rise of the Jim Crow system. Lynchings, the hanging of blacks accused of "violating" the local laws and customs, sustained the Jim Crow system by igniting terror in the black community, thereby allowing whites to maintain the political status quo. By the turn of the century, as many as three lynchings occurred a week. In 1892, the year

of the Plessy v. Ferguson decision, 162 blacks were lynched in the South. In addition, an epidemic of race riots swept the nation. Successful black businesses were burnt to the ground, homes were targeted, and the Ku Klux Klan, a violent organization founded in 1865 on the principles of white supremacy, reemerged with a vengeance. Blacks began looking for a way out of the South. The Great Migration, the largest exodus of people in American history began in 1890 as African-Americans headed north and west, to areas where the Jim Crow system wasn't as embedded, to rebuild their lives.

Two pivotal black leaders grew out of this time of adversity with two very different views on how to respond to the Jim Crow system: Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois.



Booker T. Washington, Library of Congress. (LC-USZ62-119898)

Booker T. Washington

Booker T. Washington, an African-American born into slavery, worked his way through agricultural school and college after emancipation and became one of the dominant leaders in the African-American community during post-Reconstruction. He believed in black progress through entrepreneurship and education and deemphasized challenging the Jim Crow system. He encouraged African-Americans to learn a trade, and founded the Tuskegee Institute in 1881; an institute focused on training African-Americans in vocational and technological skills. Holding up the self-made black businessman as a model for the struggling masses, he established the National Negro Business League in 1900.

Learn more about Booker T. Washington on the Tuskegee Institute website.

http://www.tuskegee.edu/about_us/legacy_of_leadership/booker_t_washington.aspx



Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois, Library of Congress. (LC-B2- 1369-16)

W.E.B. Du Bois

Conversely, W.E.B. Du Bois, an intellectual born in the North who earned a doctorate from Harvard, advocated for the full integration of African-Americans into white society and did not believe in postponing the fight against racial injustice. In contrast to Washington, he believed that the “talented tenth,” an elite group of educated blacks, would lead the way forward for African-Americans. Whereas Washington stressed the importance of learning a trade, Du Bois stressed intellectual development and academic scholarship. In 1905 he founded the Niagara Movement, a group whose declaration of rights became the basis for the Civil Rights Movement, and in 1909, he founded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the oldest and largest Civil Rights organization in the country.

Learn more about W.E.B. Du Bois at the NAACP website here. <http://www.naacp.org/pages/naacp-history-w.e.b.-dubois>

Explore a classroom activity comparing the philosophies of Washington and Du Bois in the Classroom Activities section of this guide.

THE INSPIRATION: SPORTS AND SOCIETY

SPORTS AS A LENS

“The end of slavery did not provide blacks with unblemished opportunities to succeed, even in sports and entertainment, fields of work where individual skill, talent, and character would seem the essential quality for success. Only a relatively few black Americans were able to become visible in these activities dominated by the prevailing majority of whites. But sports opportunities offered the talented blacks more opportunities for stardom than most other channels of work. Despite exclusion and unbridled hostility, blacks gradually enlarged their toehold and earned prominence strictly—and mainly quietly—by perfecting their talents and pursuing their goals with unrelenting determination.” SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE, HISTORYWIRED.COM

Prejudice, recognition, struggle, and achievement are themes that characterize the history of the black athlete in American sports, and that mirror the personal, social, and political struggles of African-Americans throughout our nation's history. *The Royale* uses the art, history, and language of boxing to explore those themes dramatically.

THE ART OF BOXING

The professional sport of boxing was created in 18th-century England. Upper-class men with a passion for the sport sponsored working-class men who fought it out in the ring. Boxing's link to the world of gambling, and its enticing opportunities for spectators to bet on the outcome of the fight, made the sport rise to popularity quickly. At this time, boxers fought without gloves, there were only a few punches thrown, rounds continued until a fighter was knocked down, and the sport was closer to wrestling than what we know as boxing today.

African-Americans had an early presence in the sport: two ex-slaves from America, Bill Richmond and Tom Molyneaux, were both high-profile boxers in England in the late 18th and early 19th century.

View a timeline of boxing history on page four of the Center Theatre Group Student Discovery Guide.

http://www.centertheatregroup.org/Global/Production/2013/The%20Royale/ROYALE_DG.pdf

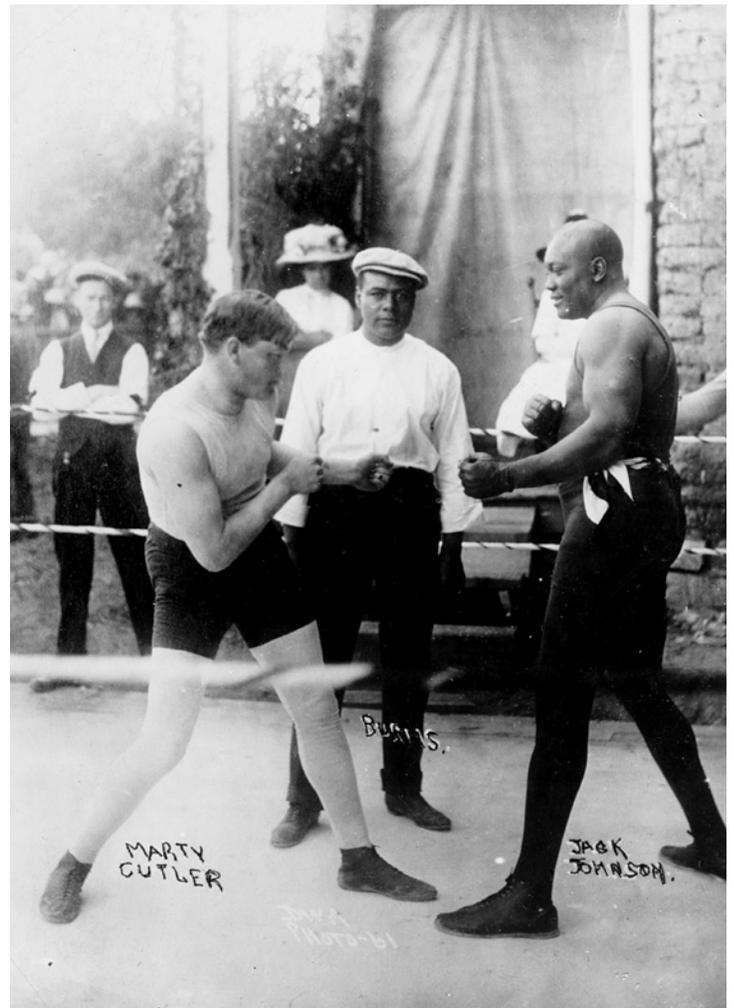
View a glossary of boxing vocabulary in the Center Theatre Group's Educational Resources on pages 5-8.

http://www.centertheatregroup.org/Global/Production/2013/The%20Royale/Royale_EdRes_FINAL.pdf

THE BATTLE ROYAL

Back in the United States, slave owners oversaw their own perverse versions of boxing matches through a form of “entertainment” called the Battle Royal in which three or more fighters battled it out, bare-knuckled, until only one was left standing. The practice continued into the early 20th century, and the majority of the fighters were black and poor. One of those fighters was Jack Johnson, the inspiration for *The Royale*:

"Jack Johnson would tell a thousand stories of how he got started: in a fight with a neighborhood bully; in a run-in with a brutal railroad detective; and by taking part in one of the most humiliating creations of the Jim Crow era, the Battle Royal. A backroom spectacle in which six or eight or ten black boys often blindfolded, were set to punching one another while drunken white men jeered them on. The last one standing got the prize, usually, a fist full of tossed coins. Jack Johnson was often the last one standing." (PBS film; *Unforgivable Blackness: Rise and Fall of Jack Johnson*)



Boxers Marty Cutler and Jack Johnson in the Ring, c1914. Library of Congress. (LC-USZ6-1824)

STRUGGLES IN THE RING

Jack Johnson, a major figure in the world of sports at the turn of the 20th century, emerged as the Jim Crow system was being anchored in the South, lynchings and race riots were rampant, and the separation of the races was legally sanctioned.

Johnson was born in 1878 in Galveston, Texas, the son of former slaves. Boxing was a relatively new

sport in America at that time, and it was banned in many states, but African-Americans were permitted to participate and compete for most titles. Some of the first black American boxers included Joe Walcott, Joe Gans, and George Dixon.

Johnson spent his teenage years doing a number of odd jobs while developing his extraordinary skills as a fighter. By this time boxing had transformed into the sport it is today: boxers used gloves, and matches had a predetermined number of rounds, each timed at three minutes, with regular one-minute rest periods between them. If both fighters were still standing at the end of a match, the fight was awarded to the boxer who showed the best display of skills.

As the sport grew in popularity in America, blacks continued to distinguish themselves as boxers; but discrimination and segregation often limited their athletic and professional prospects. Black heavyweights were fighting, but mostly with each other. And if they fought whites, it was expected that they lose or else the fight would end with no declared winner. And there was one title that African-Americans were not permitted to fight for; a title that earned great admiration from both the fans and the public and that whites held as their own: Heavyweight Champion of the World.



Jack Johnson and wife Etta Terry Duryea, 1910. © Niday Picture Library/
Alamy Stock Photo

THE CHAMPION EMERGES

Between 1899 and 1903, Johnson rose to prominence as a professional boxer, fighting and defeating both black and white opponents with ease. In 1903, he defeated "Denver" Ed Martin to win the unofficial "Negro Heavyweight Championship." Soon after, he defeated Sam McVey, Joe Jeannette, and Sam Langford, the three other best black heavyweights of the day. Outside the boxing ring, Johnson drew a different kind of attention—criticism—for his controversial personal life, which included romantic relationships with white women, and his unapologetically audacious, loud, and flashy lifestyle, during a time when black men had to conform to a very narrow stereotype in public life.

After years in the boxing ring, Johnson had achieved unprecedented fame and wealth for a black athlete, but the title of Heavyweight Champion of the World remained out of reach. He persisted in challenging James J. Jeffries, the reigning heavyweight champion. Jeffries refused to fight a black boxer and chose to retire undefeated.

Read a comprehensive biography of Jack Johnson on the PBS *Unforgivable Blackness* website. <http://www.pbs.org/unforgivableblackness/sparring/>

In 1908, the new heavyweight champion Tommy Burns, agreed to fight Johnson in Australia for the sum of \$30,000. Johnson won and was the first African-American to claim the title Heavyweight Champion of the World after defeating Burns in the 14th round. As Johnson biographer Randy Roberts observes in the documentary *Unforgivable Blackness*, “the press reacted as if Armageddon was here. This may be the moment when it all starts to fall apart for white society.”

Learn more about the Johnson/Burns fight and view artifacts from it on the Sydney Living Museum's website.

<http://sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/stories/boxing-day-1908-burns-v-johnson>

THE BATTLE OF THE CENTURY

Johnson's victory provoked animosity and outrage among many whites. It spurred a collective search for a “great white hope;” a white boxer who could defeat Johnson and reclaim the title. This “white hope” was found when Jeffries agreed to come out of retirement to fight Johnson. The “Battle of the Century” took place on July 4, 1910, in Reno, Nevada in front of a crowd of more than 12,000 people. Again, Johnson was victorious, knocking out Jeffries in the 15th round.

His victory was followed by a nationwide wave of race riots in which numerous African-Americans died.

Explore an interactive feature about the fight and the aftermath on the PBS *Unforgivable Blackness* website here. <http://www.pbs.org/unforgivableblackness/fight/>



Top: Jack Johnson, 2008. National Archives of Australia NAA A1861

Bottom: Crowd Waiting for Jack Johnson, New York City, Library of Congress. (LC-USZ62-71758)

EXPLORING THE ISSUES

“I have no difficulty justifying boxing as a sport, because I have never thought of it as a sport. There is nothing fundamentally playful about it; nothing that seems to belong to daylight, to pleasure. At its moments of greatest intensity it seems to contain so complete and powerful an image of life—life’s beauty, vulnerability, despair, incalculable and often self-destructive courage—that boxing is life, and hardly a mere game.”

JOYCE CAROL OATES, NOVELIST (*ON BOXING*)

THEMATIC ELEMENTS

Below you will find excerpts from the text, thematic elements, and discussion questions that can be used to launch a classroom exploration of *The Royale* and prompt discussion about how this play resonates with students’ lives. In addition, many of these questions can be used in debate activities or writing assignments.

The Pace of Change

You gotta be patient with this stuff,
It’s a matter of precedent,
Of history,
Simple as that,
Bixby’s never fought a Negro,
No Heavyweight Champ ever has.
I don’t like it either,
But that’s the spread.
—Max, Round Two

John Lavelle as Max in Lincoln Center
Theater’s production of *The Royale*.
Photo by T. Charles Erickson.



- What do you think is the best way to achieve social change, justice, and equality? Through slow and steady progress, or sweeping and dramatic acts? What are the risks and consequences of each?
- What are some examples of historical and current events that represent each of these approaches?
- Who were some leaders in history who represented each of these approaches?
- What position does each of *The Royale* characters take on how best to achieve change?

To win or not to win

I know you're ready to win.

You were ready to take over the world the day you were born.

I just don't think the rest of us *are*.

—Nina, Round Five

- What is Jay fighting for? What is Jay fighting against both internally and externally?
- Why does Nina appear in the ring for the final fight rather than Bixby?
- If you were Jay, what would you have done in the final fight?
- What do each of the following characters or groups win and lose at the end of *The Royale*: Jay, Nina, Max, Fish, Wynton, the South, whites, and blacks?
- Why do you think the playwright chooses to represent the fights theatrically rather than realistically?

To be seen and recognized

Cause she was tryin' to make herself look like *them*, Nina—

Tried so hard she made this mess of herself—

'Cause she ain't seen no posters that looked like *her*.

—Jay, Round Six

- How would you define “swagger?” How would you define “audacity?” In what ways does Jay exhibit swagger and audacity: in the ring, with the reporters, with his colleagues, and in his personal life?
- Do you think the public response to Jay would be different if he were less audacious?
- Do you think Jay's dream to be Heavyweight Champion of the World is justified? What does the title symbolize to him? To the world?
- How does Jay's fight for recognition as a boxer mirror the struggles of African-Americans during the Jim Crow era?
- How does Jay react when Nina forces him to confront his role in the violence that will ultimately follow his win?



Khris Davis and Montego Glover perform a scene from Lincoln Center Theater's production of *The Royale*. Photo by T. Charles Erickson.

SEPARATE BUT EQUAL

All I've ever done is *protect* you—

From them—

From *worrying*—

'Cause you don't worry 'bout train tickets,

You don't worry 'bout bookings for Jim Crow,

You know how many palms I have to grease on a regular basis?

To keep you moving?

To keep you sleepin' in *white-only* hotels?

And you got expensive taste, Jay—

You know how hard I work to keep this pipe dream of yours from gettin' us all killed?

—Max, Round Four

- Why do you think Max chooses to represent Jay? What does he have to gain? What does he have to lose?
- Why do you think whites felt it was necessary to keep professional sports segregated? What do you think influenced the decision to integrate professional sports?
- How has the role of African-Americans in American sports changed over history? Who were some of the “game-changers?”
- Jack Johnson, the African-American boxer who was the inspiration for the character of Jay, said the following: “I have found no better way of avoiding racial prejudice than to act with people of other races as if prejudice did not exist.” Do you think Jay would agree with this sentiment? How might Nina react to a statement like this?



Khris Davis, McKinley Belcher III and Clarke Peters perform a scene from Lincoln Center Theater's production of *The Royale*. Photo by T. Charles Erickson.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

THE WORLD OF *THE ROYALE*: INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY

Overview: A comprehensive series of activities used to introduce students to *The Royale* and get them thinking about the characters, setting, action, and themes in the play prior to their visit.

Materials: Copies of, or a projected version of this image. Various sizes of the image can be found in the .pdf publication *Bellows: The Boxing Pictures* found here: <http://www.nga.gov/content/dam/ngaweb/research/publications/pdfs/bellows-the-boxing-pictures.pdf>



George Bellows, *Both Members of This Club*, Painting. C1909. National Gallery of Art. (1944.13.1)

Procedure:

Part A: Image Investigation

Before identifying the painting or providing any details about it, have students work on their own to answer the following questions. While many of their answers will be inferences, students should support them with evidence from the painting:

- Who are the main characters in the painting? Describe them. What are they doing?
- Describe the other people in the painting. What are they doing? How does the artist depict them? Realistically or abstractly?
- What is the setting or environment like? What sounds would you hear there? What would you smell? Who might you meet?
- What is happening? What happened moments before? What happens moments later?
- When do you think this event took place? Why?
- What is the conflict?
- If this image were to run in the newspaper, what caption or description would you give it?

Part B: Making Connections

1. Have students share their answers with the class, and write them on the board or on large paper.
2. Have them make predictions about how this image might relate to *The Royale*.
3. Review the play synopsis and the contextual information provided in the Backdrop and Inspiration sections of this guide with the class.
4. Have students identify connections between the play and the image, and create a large visual *Connection Web*, such as this one <http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/printouts/ConnectionWeb.pdf>, as a class.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Extension Activities

Analyze

Have students answer the following in a short essay:

- What inferences can we make about the painter? When do you think he painted this?
- What do you think the relationship is of the painter to the subjects?
- Why might a painter choose this as his subject matter?
- What is the theme or message of the painting?

Research

The painting is by 20th century artist George Bellows, who was known for his politically and socially charged art, as well as his definitive boxing paintings. Comprehensive information about Bellows, this painting, and samples of Bellows' full boxing collection can be found here <http://www.nga.gov/content/dam/ngaweb/research/publications/pdfs/bellows-the-boxing-pictures.pdf> . Have students follow up the analytical essay with online research about the painter and this painting.

Write

Provide students with copies of the image and let them create “thought bubbles” attached to various characters that can be filled in with what the characters might be saying or thinking. Students can then use the content of their “thought bubbles” as a starting point for writing dramatic scenes.

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

THE POST-RECONSTRUCTION ERA: GLOSSARY ACTIVITY

Overview: A student investigation of significant people and events from the post-Reconstruction era that will lead to the creation of a classroom glossary.

Materials: The *Post-Reconstruction Era Vocabulary Handout* contained in this guide.

Procedure:

1. Have students work with a partner on this activity and assign each pair one term from each of the three categories in the handout on page 20, making sure that all the terms have been assigned.
2. Students must use traditional and online research methods to identify the person, organization, and event/idea, specifying how they relate to the post-Reconstruction era.
3. Collect all the definitions and compile a master post-Reconstruction era glossary that can be used in class before and after the play for further investigation into the era.

Extension Activities

Use this list to assign students specific research, multi-media, oral presentation, and dramatic writing projects (see Post-Visit Activities) that they can work on independently or in groups.

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.8

Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.4

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Post-Reconstruction Era Vocabulary

People	Organizations	Events / Ideas
Booker T. Washington	NAACP	The Great Migration
W.E.B. Du Bois	People's Populist Party	D.W. Griffiths' <i>Birth of a Nation</i>
Ida B. Wells-Barnett	Colored Farmers' Alliance & Cooperative Union	The Battle of the Century
Joe Gans	National Association of Colored Women	"The Great White Hope"
Florence Spearing Randolph	NJ State Federation of Women's Clubs	"White Man's Burden"
Mary Church Terrell	The Talented Tenth	Thomas Dixon's <i>The Clansman</i>
Madame C.J. Walker	National Negro Business League	Social Darwinism
Marcus Garvey	Tuskegee Institute	Plessy v. Ferguson
Jack Johnson	Universal Negro Improvement Association	Jim Crow
Jim Jeffries	Ku Klux Klan	Harlem Renaissance
Tommy Burns	Niagara Movement	Exhibit of American Negroes

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

THEMATIC INVESTIGATION: CRITICAL ANALYSIS ACTIVITY

Overview: An active-viewing activity that will engage students in the thematic elements of *The Royale* while they are watching the performance.

Materials: *The Issues Investigation Handout* on page 23 of this guide.

Procedure:

1. Before the performance, provide students with a copy of the handout on page 23 and have them choose one item from each of the following lists:

Characters	Issues
Jay	The pace of change
Max	To win or not to win
Fish	To be seen and recognized
Wynton	Separate but equal
Nina	



Clarke Peters and Khristian Davis perform a scene from Lincoln Center Theater's production of *The Royale*. Photo by T. Charles Erickson.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

2. Briefly review each issue on the handout with the class, defining what they mean.
3. As they watch the performance, students should look for the different ways their character engages, struggles, and interacts with the issue they are focusing on. They can write notes on their handout directly after the performance. Students will be looking and listening for:
 - What their character *says* about the issue.
 - What their characters *thinks and feels* about the issue.
 - What their character *does* about the issue; the actions they take.
 - What the *other characters* say about their chosen character in relation to this issue.
4. Following the performance, have students share their observations with the class.
5. As an extension, ask students to write a reflective essay addressing the following:
 - How did you feel about your issue prior to the performance?
 - How do you feel about it now?
 - Do you agree or disagree with your character's perspective? Why or why not?
 - What do you think the playwright's perspective is regarding your issue? Why?

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.5

Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Character's Name: _____

THE ISSUES	What does the character say about this issue?	What does the character think or feel about this issue?	What are the characters actions in relation to this issue?	What do the others say about the character and this issue?
The Pace of Change				
To Win or Not to Win				
To Be Seen and Recognized				

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES: PRIMARY SOURCE ACTIVITY

Overview: A close-reading activity in which students examine primary sources from the early 20th century and compare the perspectives of each speaker.

Materials: A printout of an excerpt from Booker T. Washington's address at the Atlanta Cotton Exposition of 1895 (http://www.njstatelib.org/research_library/new_jersey_resources/digital_collection/booker_t_washington_exceprts/), and a printout of W.E.B. Du Bois' "The Talented Tenth" (http://www.njstatelib.org/research_library/new_jersey_resources/digital_collection/talented_tenth/).

Procedure:

1. Review the contextual information provided in the Backdrop and Inspiration sections of this guide.
2. Divide the class in two, and give one-half Washington's speech and the other half Du Bois' speech.
3. Independently, have students read their assigned speeches and circle and define any unfamiliar words.
4. Ask students to pair up with someone who has the same speech and answer the following questions, using details from the text to support their ideas:
 - Who do you think your speaker is addressing?
 - What is the tone of his speech?
 - How does he suggest combating the racial injustice of the time?
 - What type of education does he advocate for African-Americans?
 - What types of jobs does he advocate for African-Americans?
5. Have the groups switch and repeat the process with the other speech.
6. As a class, make a list comparing the two leader's perspectives, and the merits of each.
7. Finally, ask the class to decide where they stand.
8. As an extension, have students choose either the character Jay or Nina from *The Royale* and write a first-person response to the speeches from the perspective of the character.

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.10

Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.9

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

EXPLORING THE COLOR LINE: REFLECTION ACTIVITY

Adapted from the PBS *Unforgivable Blackness* lesson plan “Crossing the Color Line.”

http://www.pbs.org/unforgivableblackness/teachers/lesson_crossing.html

Overview: A reflective activity that places the social, political, and cultural issues explored in *The Royale* in a historical and sociopolitical context.

Materials: Large paper

Procedure:

Part A: Exploring the concept

1. Share the following quote with students and ask them to try and define what the term *color line* means: “The problem of the twentieth century is the color line.” (W.E.B. Du Bois)
2. As a class, explore the following questions through research, discussion, using the resources provided in this guide, and using online resources:
 - What was the basis for the color line? How was the color line justified by whites? Why were whites so invested in upholding it?
 - What were some of the laws that reinforced the idea of a color line in the Jim Crow-era South? What types of public facilities and establishments were segregated?
 - What did it mean to cross the color line? What behavior was disapproved of by whites because it crossed the color line?
 - What were some of the penalties, both formal and informal, for crossing the color line?

Part B: Applying the concept to *The Royale*

1. Create a master list on the board or on large paper with the following two columns: *The Rules of the Color Line* and *How Jay Jackson Crosses the Color Line*.
2. Complete the list, encouraging students to provide specific examples from the play to support their answers.
3. As a class, discuss why Jay’s victory provoked violence and outrage from whites, integrating what they have learned about the color line.
4. Divide the class in half and ask them to pretend they are newspaper reporters reporting on Jay Jackson’s win. Assign each half to create newspaper headlines from the following perspectives:
 - A white-owned newspaper catering to a white audience.
 - A black-owned newspaper catering to a black audience.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Part C: Applying the concept to current events

Have students choose a current event that is tied to racial injustice and discrimination in America, and ask them to write a reflective essay that addresses the theme: the color line, then and now.

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.3

Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.



Lee Russell, "Colored" water cooler in Oklahoma City, c1939. Library of Congress. (LC-DIG-ppmsc-00225)

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

THEATRICAL FIGHTS: DRAMATIC PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY

Overview: A dramatic writing and performance activity that explores the stylistic choices made by *The Royale* creative team.

Materials: Slips of paper with the following words on them: silent, rhythmic, poetic.

Procedure:

1. Ask the class to reflect on the choice the playwright and director made to present a play about boxing without any “real” fighting or stage combat. Then share the following two quotes with them:

“It’s complicated. The musicality of it tells the story of each fight. It’s a play about boxing where nobody throws a punch.” *THE ROYALE PLAYWRIGHT, MARCO RAMIREZ*

“I’m interested in the performers’ having a real experience and a (real) fight, whatever that ‘fight’ is. And most often, because in the theater you can’t actually punch someone, the most authentic way to get at that is by giving a different series of physical constraints...And in this play’s case, Marco has given this insane and beautiful constraint just of the text.”

THE ROYALE DIRECTOR, RACHEL CHAVKIN

2. As a class, brainstorm the different ways the fighting was presented in the performance, such as: step dance (clapping, stomping, and body percussion), movement, and the rhythmic recitation of words and dialogue. If they need a refresher, watch a YouTube video clip from the Center Theatre Group production here. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OB4essha_Dc
3. Have students work with a partner to create a simple, one-page dialogue in which two people are arguing opposing views on a specific subject, such as: a favored sports team or musician, a political issue, a school policy, etc. Tell the class that they will be presenting their scene to the class, but not with the traditional written dialogue they have created. Rather, they will pick a slip of paper and have to present their scene in the style dictated by the paper: silent (no words, only movement and physicality), rhythmic (only using step techniques such as clapping, stomping, vocalizations, and body percussion), or poetic (adapting their scene into the style of a spoken work piece).
4. Have students present their pieces to the class.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.3

Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

For additional arts and theater-based activities, explore the “Connections and Creativity” section of the Center Theatre Group’s Educator Resources for *The Royale*. http://www.centertheatregroup.org/Global/Production/2013/The%20Royale/Royale_EdRes_FINAL.pdf



McKinley Belcher III, John Lavelle, Clarke Peters and Khristian Davis perform a scene from Lincoln Center Theater’s production of *The Royale*.
Photo by T. Charles Erickson.

RESOURCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY

FILMS

The African-Americans: Many Rivers to Cross (Episode 4); PBS, 2013

Unforgivable Blackness; PBS, 2005

ONLINE

The Royale

http://www.centertheatregroup.org/Global/Production/2013/The%20Royale/Royale_EdRes_FINAL.pdf

http://www.centertheatregroup.org/Global/Production/2013/The%20Royale/ROYALE_DG.pdf

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/theater/reviews/ct-royale-review-20150224-column.html>

<http://splash.suntimes.com/2015/02/25/playwright-marco-ramirez-builds-a-bout-of-ambition-hope-and-fear-in-the-royale>

<http://thisstage.la/2013/05/ramirez-reaches-for-a-rhythmic-rush-in-royale/>

<http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/2014/oct/03/old-globe-theatre-the-royale-preview/>

Reconstruction/Post-Reconstruction/Jim Crow

<http://www.history.com/topics/american-civil-war/reconstruction>

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/index.html>

http://www.tuskegee.edu/about_us/legacy_of_leadership/booker_t_washington.aspx

<http://www.naacp.org/pages/naacp-history-w.e.b.-dubois>

<http://www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/>

http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/primarysourcesets/civil-rights/pdf/teacher_guide.pdf

http://www.njstatelib.org/research_library/new_jersey_resources/digital_collection/unit_8_rise_of_jim_crow/

Sports in America/Boxing/Jack Johnson

<http://thinkprogress.org/sports/2013/08/28/2544061/50-years-mlks-dream-professional-sports-stand-race/>

<http://historywired.si.edu/detail.cfm?ID=77>

<http://www.pbs.org/unforgivableblackness/>

<http://sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/stories/boxing-day-1908-burns-v-johnson>

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, THE VIVIAN BEAUMONT THEATER, INC.

J. Tomilson Hill <i>Chairman</i>	Annette Tapert Allen Jessica M. Bibliowicz	Linda LeRoy Janklow, <i>Chairman Emeritus</i>	Stephanie Shuman Josh Silverman	John B. Beinecke, <i>Chairman Emeritus</i>
Eric M. Mindich <i>President</i>	Allison M. Blinken James-Keith Brown	Jane Lisman Katz Betsy Kenny Lack	David F. Solomon Tracey Travis	Mrs. Leonard Block John S. Chalsty Constance L. Clapp Ellen Katz
Marlene Hess, Brooke Garber Neidich, and Leonard Tow <i>Vice Chairmen</i>	R. Jeep Bryant H. Rodgin Cohen	Kewsong Lee Memrie M. Lewis	David Warren Robert G. Wilmers	Robert E. Linton Victor H. Palmieri Elihu Rose Daryl Roth
Augustus K. Oliver, <i>Chairman,</i> <i>Executive Committee</i>	Jonathan Z. Cohen Ida Cole	Ninah Lynne Phyllis Mailman	William D. Zabel	Lowell M. Schulman <i>Honorary Trustees</i>
John W. Rowe <i>Treasurer</i>	David DiDomenico Curtland E. Fields	Ellen R. Marram John Morning		Hon. John V. Lindsay <i>Founding Chairman</i>
Elizabeth Peters <i>Secretary</i>	Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Judith Hiltz	Elyse Newhouse Robert Pohly		
André Bishop <i>Producing Artistic Director</i>				

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

John Morning, <i>Chairman</i>	Judith Hiltz
John B. Beinecke	Jane Lisman Katz
André Bishop	Eric M. Mindich
Allison M. Blinken	Elyse Newhouse
R. Jeep Bryant	Augustus K. Oliver
Jonathan Z. Cohen	Stephanie Shuman
Joan D. Corey	Josh Silverman
Curtland E. Fields	Grace Lyu-Volckhausen
Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.	Dee Winokur
J. Tomilson Hill	Mollie Zweig

OPEN STAGES EDUCATION PROGRAM STAFF

Kati Koerner, *Hiltz Family Director of Education*
 Alexandra López, *Associate Director of Education*
 Andrea Dishy, *Education Projects Manager*

Teaching Artists:

LaTonya Borsay	Creighton Irons	Jamie Roach
Charles Anthony Burks	Albert Iturregui Elias	Matthew Sherwin
Sara Cooper	Anna Jacobs	Jen Shirley
Heleya de Barros	Rebecca Lopkin	Charlie Sohne
David DelGrosso	Yusef Miller	Laurine Towler
Mariana Elder	Liz Parker	Emerald Trinket Walker
Shana Gold	Mike Pettry	Samuel Willmott
Benton Greene	Kevin Ray	Todd Woodard
Marcus Harvey	Gwenyth Reitz	

EDUCATION FUNDERS

Anonymous

Rose M. Badgeley Charitable Trust

John Beinecke/Prospect Hill Foundation

The Broadway League

Capital One Bank

Jonathan Z. Cohen & Julia Pershan

Joseph and Joan Cullman Foundation for the Arts

The Dana Foundation

The Endeavor Foundation

Curtland E. Fields/Turrell Fund

Herman Goldman Foundation

William Randolph Hearst Foundation

Judith & Will Hiltz

The JPB Foundation

Kinder Morgan Foundation

John Morning

Stephanie Shuman

SHS Foundation

Tiger Baron Foundation

Michael Tuch Foundation

The Winokur Family Foundation

Mollie Zweig

LCT's Open Stages education program also receives public funding from the New York State Council on the Arts, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York City Council Member Helen Rosenthal, and Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer.