

# the acting company

ALL AMERICA'S OUR STAGE

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Producing Artistic Director



Written by **Orson Welles**  
Adapted from the novel by **Herman Melville**  
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Teacher Resource Guide  
by **Justin Gallo**

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“But in this broad and boundless ocean  
can he hope to find one solitary  
and particular whale?”

**-Ishmael**

## Section 1: Introduction

### **“Call me Ishmael.”**

Thanks for taking some of your class time to work on *Moby Dick Rehearsed*! Only a fool – or perhaps a genius – would adapt one of the greatest American novels for the stage. Orson Welles was a bit of both. Orson Welles treated the audience as a partner in creating illusion in this hybrid of Herman Melville’s story adapted to draw a parallel between King Lear and Captain Ahab. Although your students will enjoy the play without preparation, the experience can be deepened by some of the classroom work outlined in this guide.

The exercises in this guide are intended to help you and your students get the most out of the production. Please do not feel that you need to do everything in this guide! We provide a wide variety of drama-based teaching techniques that you can use as they are presented or you can adapt for your class or for other pieces of literature. You can experiment with them and add the ones that work for you to your “bag of tricks.”

The education programs of The Acting Company are intended to mirror the mission of the company itself: to celebrate language, to deepen creative exploration, to go places where theater isn’t always available. We try to use the same skills in our outreach programs that actors use in the preparation of a role. Many of the exercises here are adaptations of rehearsal “games” and techniques.

In addition to the **Teacher Resource Guides** for our performances, the Education Department provides week-long artist-in-residence experiences called **Literacy Through Theater**, an introductory Shakespeare workshop for young theatergoers, Actor-driven **Workshops and Master Classes**, school-time **Student Matinee Performances**, post-performance **Question and Answer Sessions**, teacher training workshops called **Shakespeare for Teachers**, and a variety of specially-designed outreach programs for high school students, college students and adults.

If you need more information on any of these programs, please call the Education Department at (212) 258-3111 or e-mail us at [education@theactingcompany.org](mailto:education@theactingcompany.org).

We wish to be of service to you and your students. Please contact us if there is anything we can do for you.

Enjoy the Show!

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## Section 2: Who was Herman Melville?

**Overall Objective:** The students will know the facts of the life and career of Herman Melville and his work.

**“I have written a wicked book and feel as spotless as the lamb.”**

***Herman Melville - Written to Nathaniel Hawthorne***

### Interviewing Herman Melville (1819-1891)

**Objective:**

- ◆ The students will learn about Herman Melville’s life.
- ◆ The students will write interview questions based on Herman Melville’s life.

Herman Melville was born on August 1, 1819 in New York City into a socially connected merchant family. Herman was the third of eight children of Maria Gansevoort Melvill\* and Allan Melvill\*, an importer of French dry goods. In 1832, after becoming bankrupt and pushed into insanity, Allan Melvill died leaving his eldest son, Gansevoort, responsible for the family and in charge of the business. Now living in Albany (NY), through his mother’s influence, biblical stories became a part of Melville’s imagination from his early childhood. In 1835, Herman attended Albany Classical School. After leaving school he continued his education on his own, diving into Shakespeare as well as historical, anthropological, and technical works. From the age of 12, Melville worked as a clerk, teacher and farmhand in order to help support his family.

In 1837, Herman’s brother declared bankruptcy and arranged for him to serve as cabin boy on the *St. Lawrence*, a merchant ship sailing from New York to Liverpool, England. After this voyage he returned home, intent on finding the means to help support his family. After having little luck finding steady work, Melville again set out in search of adventure and in 1839 joined the crew of the whaler *Acushnet* on a voyage to the South Seas. The *Acushnet* anchored in the Marquesas Islands (present day French Polynesia). Not long after, Melville and a companion jumped ship and spent around four months as guests/captives of the native, cannibalistic people. Escaping on the Australian whaler *Lucy Ann*, Herman’s next stop was Tahiti. While there, Melville joined a mutiny led by dissatisfied crew members who had not been paid. This action landed Herman in a Tahitian jail, from which he escaped.

Not yet free of his penchant for the sea, Melville signed on as a harpooner on the whaler *Charles & Henry* out of Nantucket, Mass. Six months after he set out on this ship, he left the crew when they docked in Hawaii only to sign on as an ordinary seaman on the frigate *United States* which finally returned him to Boston (MA) in 1844.

\*Records indicate Herman’s parents did not spell Melvill with an “e” on the end. It is unclear why or when Herman added the “e”.

Between 1844 and 1847, Melville published his first two novels, both strongly influenced by his experiences while at sea. The first was *Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life* and the second was *Omoo: A Narrative of Adventures in the South Seas*. These two novels were very successful, both artistically and financially. Little did Melville realize, at this time, that this would be the peak of his success as a writer, at least during his lifetime.

In the summer of 1847, Herman married Elizabeth Shaw, daughter of the chief justice of Massachusetts. Finding writing to be his most successful means of supporting a family, Melville became a regular contributor of reviews and other pieces to a literary journal. This, however, did not stop him from writing novels and in 1847 he published his third work, *Mardi*. Over the next three years he would also publish *Redburn* (1849) and *White-Jacket* (1850) among other works.

Continuing to write, Melville promised his publishers a new novel for the autumn of 1850 called *The Whale*. Before completing this work, he moved his family to a farm in Massachusetts called “Arrowhead”, which happened to be near the home of Nathaniel Hawthorne in Pittsfield, MA. The two authors formed a friendship and, reinvigorated by the creative energy of Hawthorne, Melville changed the direction of this whale tale from a story full of details about whaling to an allegorical novel. In 1851, Melville finally presented his publishers with what was now called *Moby-Dick* which he dedicated to his new friend, Hawthorne.

*Moby-Dick* was released in both England and America to little acclaim and earned him absolutely no money. The brilliance of this American classic was never seen during Melville’s lifetime and *Moby-Dick* sold only around 3,000 before 1891. Facing what he viewed as immense failures as a writer, Melville was brought further pain in 1853 when a disastrous fire at his New York publisher destroyed nearly all of his books. This, however, did not stop him from writing and between 1852 and 1857 he wrote *Pierre* (1852), *Israel Potter* (1855), “Bartleby the Scrivener” (1853), and *The Confidence-Man* (1857) among other short stories and novels.

Three fairly unsuccessful American lecture tours followed and Melville began to dismiss prose in favor of poetry, though the prospects of publication were not favorable. When the Civil War broke out, Melville volunteered for the Navy, but was rejected. This allowed Herman to continue to write and in 1866 he published his first book of verse called, *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of War*. Four months after this book was published, Melville was appointed customs inspector on the New York docks. Finally he found a steady source of income and was able to support his family, which he was never able to do as a writer.

Melville did not write much during his 19 years in the customs house. In 1888, three years into his retirement, Melville published his second book of verse, *John Marr, and Other Sailors; With Some Sea-Pieces*. On September 28, 1891 Herman Melville died of heart failure and the man we view as perhaps the greatest American writer was all but forgotten; only one newspaper even bothered to print his obituary.

After his death, an unfinished manuscript was found in Melville’s personal desk. Posthumously published in 1924, the unedited manuscript has come to be known as *Billy Budd*, his final work.

**Exercise:** Provide each student with a copy of the biography of Herman Melville above (a copy is found in the Reproducibles section of this guide). After everyone has read it, discuss what aspects of his life the students think contributed to his ultimate career as a novelist.

Ask each student to look, again, at the biography of Herman Melville. Have them individually devise a list of 8-10 interview questions that they might ask him about his life.

As an extension, have a volunteer play Melville and, with the help of the class, answer some of the questions on the other student's lists.

## Section 3: Who was Orson Welles?

**Overall Objective:** The students will know the facts of the life and career of Orson Welles and his work.

### Interviewing Orson Welles (1915-1985)

**Objective:**

- ◆ The students will learn about Orson Welles' life.
- ◆ The students will write interview questions based on Orson Welles' life.

George Orson Welles was born on May 15, 1915 in Kenosha, Wisconsin to Beatrice Ives Welles, a concert pianist, and Richard Head Welles, a manufacturer of vehicle lamps. Proving to be a remarkable child, Orson soon began to excel in magic (thanks to the influence of his father and the vaudevillians he befriended), painting, piano and acting (thanks to the influence of his mother who introduced Orson to the piano, violin and Shakespeare). At a very early age, Welles was declared a child prodigy by Dr. Maurice Bernstein, a Chicago physician.

Now living in Chicago, one of the cultural hubs of America at the time, Orson's parents divorced in 1919. Only a few years after, in 1924, Beatrice Ives Welles died of jaundice in a Chicago hospital four days after Orson's birthday. Welles never seemed enthralled with formal education, however, shortly after the death of his mother, he enrolled in the Todd School for Boys in Woodstock, Illinois. He was educated there by Roger Hill, a teacher who later became headmaster of the school, who encouraged Orson to pursue the arts. While at Todd, Orson was able to write, direct and act in numerous plays, all under the tutelage of Hill (who became a bit of a surrogate father to Welles). Only a few months after Orson's graduation from Todd, somewhere around 1928, Richard Head Welles fell into alcoholism and passed away leaving Orson under the care of Maurice Bernstein. Needless to say, it did not take Orson long to strike out on his own.

Orson decided to take a walking and painting tour of Ireland shortly thereafter. While on this tour, Orson boldly went to The Gate Theatre in Dublin (a major theater at the time) claiming to be a Broadway Star. Though they did not really believe

him to be a Broadway actor, the people at the theater admired his brashness and gave him a small role in their 1931 production of *Jew Suss*. This would be Orson Welles' first professional acting job.

In 1932, Orson returned to the United States and toured, briefly, with Katharine Cornell's road company and made his true Broadway debut as Tybalt in the 1934 production of *Romeo and Juliet*. That same year he married Virginia Nicholson and had one child with her, a son named Christopher. Starting in 1935 Welles was able to supplement his career working as a New York radio actor. It was during this time that he would meet many of the actors and professionals that would play key roles in his career.

In 1936, John Houseman, who had first noticed Orson in *Romeo and Juliet*, called upon him to work for the Federal Theater Project (an organization set up to put unemployed theater performers to work). Houseman asked Welles to direct a project for Harlem's American Negro Theater. Welles chose to direct an all-African-American production of *Macbeth* which was incredibly well received and is considered a landmark of African-American theater.

Resigning from the Federal Theater in 1937, Welles and Houseman formed their own company, the Mercury Theatre. During this time Welles continued to act and direct both on stage and on the radio. In 1938 he (and the Mercury Theater) were given a radio hour by CBS to be based on classic literary works. The show was called *The Mercury Theatre on the Air* and would be responsible for a mass panic later that year. This mass panic was caused by a radio production of H.G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds* which many people believed to be an actual Martian invasion.

Orson's growing reputation led to his appointment by RKO Studios in Hollywood. He received a contract that was unheard of at that time; he was given complete artistic control. His first few films were never produced, it was not until 1941 that he made his most famous film, *Citizen Kane*. Loosely based on the life of William Randolph Hearst, *Citizen Kane* was very controversial and only played in a few theaters until it was re-released in 1956. Over time, *Citizen Kane* has become known as one of the greatest films ever made. It was, however, past its production deadlines and far over budget. This is the reputation that Welles carried through the rest of his career. He was considered an erratic movie maker, always over budget and off schedule, which led to him continually searching for funding for all of his projects over the years.

During this time, Welles adapted *Moby-Dick* for the stage in a play called *Moby Dick Rehearsed* which drew a comparison between Captain Ahab and King Lear. Spending most of his time after this in Europe, he continued to act in order to fund his own productions including *Othello* in 1952 and *Chimes at Midnight* in 1966. When he returned to American in the 1970s, he found that he was now being praised as one of the true geniuses of American films.

Even though he was now being regarded as a genius, it was difficult for him to escape his past and he had to resort to appearing in grade-B movies, television talk shows, and television commercials. Several times divorced, overweight, with a resume that included many failed projects, he would have seemed a failure at his death in 1985, had his rich life not produced so many original works.

**Exercise:** Provide each student with a copy of the biography of Orson Welles above (a copy is found in the Reproducibles section of this guide). After everyone has read it, discuss what aspects of his life the students think contributed to his ultimate career as a novelist.

Ask each student to look, again, at the biography of Orson Welles. Have them individually devise a list of 8-10 interview questions that they might ask him about his life.

As an extension, have a volunteer play Welles and, with the help of the class, answer some of the questions on the other student's lists.

**Exercise:** Have your students compare and contrast the lives of these two men. Do they see any similarities? What are the major differences? Why do your students think that both of these men were inspired by a story about a man and a whale?

## Section 4: What to Look for in *Moby Dick Rehearsed*

**Overall Objective:** The students will have an introduction to the world of *Moby Dick Rehearsed* by Orson Welles, adapted from the novel by Herman Melville.

**It is recommended that the students read or are at least familiar with the story of *Moby Dick* before seeing the play.**

### Brainstorm from the Title: Orson Welles' Play

**This exercise is designed to be used BEFORE seeing the play!**

**Objective:**

- ◆ The students will explore the title of Welles' *Moby Dick Rehearsed*.

**Exercise:** Have the students brainstorm a list of the types of characters, situations, emotions, themes, locations, and images they think might be included in a play called *Moby Dick Rehearsed*. Write the list on newsprint. Post it before seeing the play.

### Discussion: Judging a Book by its Cover

**This exercise is designed to be used BEFORE seeing the play!**

**Objective:**

- ◆ The students will discuss their expectations of *Moby Dick Rehearsed* from looking at the words and images on the poster for the play.
- ◆ The students will discuss the choices made by publicists and executives to put the images and words on the poster.

**Exercise:** Bring in a copy of the poster for *Moby Dick Rehearsed*. Ask the students to look at the poster.

Is there a picture or image? What function do those images have? Note too the colors on the poster. What do the colors mean and why were they chosen? Do these images help sell this production?

What words did the executives choose to put on the poster? In what font is the title of the play? What other words or phrases are on the poster? Do these words and phrases help sell this play? Are you more likely to buy a ticket to this show based on images or words?

Why did Orson Welles choose this title? Did he feel the title would help sell tickets to the play?

Do the same exercises with different editions of the novel, *Moby-Dick*. Which edition is more likely to sell copies? Which cover better illustrates what will take place in the novel? Is the cover of the novel or the poster for the play more likely to sell you on the show?

**Post Performance Follow up:** Ask the students to create a poster for *Moby Dick Rehearsed*. They can cut images out of magazines and newspapers or draw them. What words will they include and why?

## A Landlubber's Glossary

**This exercise is designed to be used BEFORE seeing the play.**

### Objective:

- ◆ The students will learn nautical terminology and classical allusions used in the play *Moby Dick Rehearsed*.
- ◆ The students will use dictionaries and the internet to research these terms.

**Exercise:** The following is a list of nautical terms and classic allusions which are found in *Moby Dick Rehearsed*. Though a complete understanding of all things whaling is not required to enjoy the show, having an idea of what each term means may give the students a deeper understanding of some passages as well as the ability to picture more vividly what is being discussed.

Put the students into small groups (or have them work as individuals) and have them research the list of terms found below (this list can also be found in the reproducibles sections of this guide as well as the list complete with definitions). If the students are working in groups you may like to assign each group a different set of terms. Once the students have completed their research, ask them to share their findings with the class.

**Follow-up Exercise:** After the students have attended the performance of *Moby Dick Rehearsed*, bring them back to the list of terms. Did the knowledge of these terms add to their enjoyment of the show? If they were not familiar with these terms, would it have affected their ability to enjoy the show? Where the students able to more clearly picture the whale, ships and ocean with this knowledge? It may also be interesting for the students to research the names of the characters in *Moby Dick Rehearsed*. Did this research give the students any notions as to why Melville chose each name?

|                    |                         |                  |
|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Aft</b>         | <b>Antilles</b>         | <b>Royals</b>    |
| <b>Ball of Tow</b> | <b>Buttress</b>         | <b>Sternward</b> |
| <b>Calabash</b>    | <b>Fates, The</b>       | <b>Stunsail</b>  |
| <b>Flukes</b>      | <b>Gallants</b>         |                  |
| <b>Helm</b>        | <b>Iron</b>             |                  |
| <b>Jonah</b>       | <b>Kings of Cologne</b> |                  |
| <b>Leeward</b>     | <b>Leviathan</b>        |                  |
| <b>Maelstrom</b>   | <b>Narcissus</b>        |                  |
| <b>Parmacetty</b>  | <b>Quarterdeck</b>      |                  |

## Characters in *Moby Dick Rehearsed*

This exercise is designed to be used **BEFORE** seeing the play!

### Objective:

- ◆ The students will be familiar with the characters in the play.
- ◆ The students will make assumptions about characters based on their names.
- ◆ The students will become aware of the importance of names in *Moby Dick Rehearsed*.

**Exercise:** Write the following list for the class on the board with each type of actor and the roles they play in the story. Discuss what each of the names makes us feel about them. Predict which characters might have the most important roles in the play. Why do you think that Welles' pairs each type of actor with these different characters?

### Characters in *Moby Dick Rehearsed* [Dramatis Personae]

|  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| YOUNG ACTOR.....                       | ISHMAEL                   |
| AN ACTOR <i>with a newspaper</i> ..... | VOICE OF RACHEL           |
| A MEMBER OF THE COMPANY.....           | FLASK                     |
| A SERIOUS ACTOR.....                   | STARBUCK/ KENT            |
| A CYNICAL ACTOR.....                   | QUEEQUEG                  |
| A MEMBER OF THE COMPANY.....           | TASHTEGO                  |
| A MEMBER OF THE COMPANY.....           | CARPENTER                 |
| A MIDDLE-AGED ACTOR.....               | STUBB                     |
| AN OLD "PRO".....                      | PELEG                     |
| YOUNG ACTRESS.....                     | PIP/ CORDELIA             |
| STAGE MANAGER.....                     | ELIJAH                    |
| THE ACTOR MANAGER.....                 | AHAB/ FATHER MAPPLE/ LEAR |

Where might all of these different people come from based on their names? Do these names appear anywhere else in history? Why do you feel that the same actor is playing both Captain Ahab and Father Maple and King Lear? Why is an actor playing both Starbuck and Kent? How are these characters connected to each other?

**Note:** In *Moby Dick Rehearsed*, Orson Welles' employs a technique which is called doubling. In the theater world, doubling is having the same actor/actress play multiple roles in the same production. This is often the case with Shakespeare's works as there are many, many small roles in his plays that can easily be performed by one person in order to save money or keep the size of the cast down. In this case, the director, Casey Biggs, also had the job of doubling roles as Welles' only did the work with the major characters. This means that depending on who directed the version of the play, you will see different characters playing different roles.

## Choral Reading: The Key to it All

### Objective:

- ◆ The students will read an excerpt from *Moby Dick Rehearsed*.
- ◆ The students will create a Poem using the excerpt as inspiration.

**Exercises:** Provide each student with the passage from *Moby Dick Rehearsed* (both excerpts are found in the Reproducibles section of this guide). Ask one of the students to read the entire passage aloud.

### YOUNG ACTOR

“Call me Ishmael...  
Some years ago – never mind how long –  
I thought that I would sail about a little  
and see the watery part of the world.  
Whenever I grow grim about the mouth,  
and hazy in eyes; whenever  
it's a damp November in my soul;  
I count it time to get to sea.  
Almost all men, sometime or other,  
cherish these same feelings toward the ocean....  
Why did the old Persians hold the ocean  
holy? - and the still deeper meaning  
of that story of Narcissus, who, because  
he could not grasp the mild, tormenting image  
in the fountain, plunged into it, and drowned.  
That same image we ourselves see in all rivers,  
in oceans and in lakes and wells. The image  
of the un-graspable – the phantom of life;  
and this is the key to it all...”

Discuss the passage's meaning, use of literary devices, words that might be interesting to say aloud (like "plunged," "un-graspable," and "tormenting"), and rich descriptive words and phrases (like "damp November in my soul," and "grim about the mouth"). How many different ways is the ocean or water described? What is the emotional state of Ishmael as he speaks these words?

Divide the class into three groups (they can remain in their seats for this exercise) and ask volunteers to be Solo 1, 2, 3 and 4. Then read it using the soloist-group divisions as indicated. Remind them that they have to listen to one another and create a common value for the punctuation.

**All (but soloists):** Call me Ishmael...

**Solo 1:** Some years ago –

**Group 1:** Never mind how long –

**Solo 4:** I thought that I would sail about a little

**Solo 2:** and see the watery part of the world.

**Solo 3:** Whenever I grow grim about the mouth,

**Group 2:** and hazy in eyes;

**Solo 1:** whenever it's a damp

**Group 3:** November in my soul;

**Solo 2:** I count it time to get to sea.

**Solo 4:** Almost all men,

**Group 1:** sometime or other,

**Solo 3:** cherish these same feelings

**Group 2:** toward the ocean...

**Group 3 (softer):** the ocean...

**All (but soloists):** Why did the old Persians hold the ocean holy?

**Group 1:** and the still deeper meaning

**Group 3:** of that story of Narcissus,

**Group 2:** who,

**Solo 2:** because he could not grasp the mild,

**Solo 4:** tormenting image in the fountain,

**Solo 1:** plunged into it,

**All (but soloists):** and drowned.

**Solo 3:** That same image we ourselves see in all

**Group 3:** rivers...

**Group 1:** in oceans...

**Group 2:** and in lakes...

**Group 3:** and wells...

**Solo 1:** The image of the un-graspable –

**All:** the phantom of life;

**Solo 4:** and this is the key to it all...

**Inspired by *Moby Dick* Rehearsed by Orson Welles**

**Exercise:** Using the quote as a base, the students will write a short Poem in free verse. Each Poem must contain words or phrases from the original passage. Remind them of some of the literary devices they have studied (alliteration, repetition, metaphor, etc.) that you want them to use in their Poem.

## The Blank Verse of *Moby Dick Rehearsed*

**This exercise is designed to be used BEFORE seeing the play!**

**Objective:**

- ◆ The students will be introduced to the blank verse utilized by Welles in *Moby Dick Rehearsed*.
- ◆ The students will creatively write in both blank verse and prose.

**Exercise:** Blank Verse is a type of poetry, distinguished by having a regular meter, but no rhyme. Perhaps most closely associated with William Shakespeare, blank verse makes up a bulk of the dialogue spoken in *Moby Dick Rehearsed*. Ask your students to read each of the passages below (also found in the Reproducibles section of this guide). The first passage is written in Blank Verse, the other in Prose. After closely reading each passage, ask the students why they believe Welles chose to write the first passage in verse and the second in prose. Could the speaker have an effect on this choice? Would either passage be more powerful if they were written in the opposite form?

**AHAB.**

Starbuck – of late I’m strangely moved  
to thee; aye, ever since we both saw-  
thou know’st what – in one another’s eyes.  
But in this matter of the whale; Starbuck,  
be thy face’s front to me as in the palm  
of this my hand – a lipless and unfeatured  
blank. Ahab is forever Ahab, man!  
I am the fate’s lieutenant; under orders.  
Ye see an old man cut down to the stump,  
leaning on a shivered lance; propped  
on a lonely foot; ‘tis Ahab...Ahab’s  
body’s part. But Ahab’s soul’s a centipede  
that moves upon a hundred legs. You see  
me strained, half-stranded as ropes that tow  
dismasted frigates in a gale. But ere I’ll break,  
ye’ll hear me crack! Till ye hear *that*, -  
know Ahab’s hawser tows his purpose yet!

**FATHER MAPPLE.**

But oh, shipmates! Delight is to him – who, against the proud gods and commodores of this earth, stands forth, his own inexorable self!- who gives no quarter in the truth, and who destroys all sin though he pluck it out from under the robes of Senators and Judges! Delight- Top-gallant delight is to him who acknowledges no law or lord, but the Lord his God, and is only a patriot to Heaven. And eternal delight and deliciousness will be his, who, coming to lay him down can say – O Father! – mortal or immortal – here I die. I have striven to be Thine more than to be this world’s, or mine own. Yet this is nothing; I leave eternity to Thee; for what is man that he should live out the lifetime of his God?

## Casting

**This exercise is designed to be used AFTER seeing the play!**

**Objective:**

- ◆ The students will create a cast list for a movie of *Moby Dick Rehearsed*.

**Exercise:** Ask the students, “If you were casting a movie of *Moby Dick Rehearsed*, what stars would you get to be in it?” Would Ahab be played by a mega-star? Ishmael a heartthrob? Why?

## Psychology of *Moby Dick Rehearsed*: Hubris

**Objective:**

- ◆ The students will understand one aspect of Orson Welles’ approach to *Moby Dick Rehearsed*.

**Note:** Many critics have compared Captain Ahab to some of Shakespeare’s tragic heroes, just like Welles compares Ahab to King Lear. All tragic heroes share a tragic flaw. The flaw itself varies from hero to hero, but they all have one, all-encompassing flaw. For example, Othello’s tragic flaw is jealousy. It is the major fatal flaw of the hero that will, eventually, cause their downfall. Welles clearly believes that Ahab and Lear share the same tragic flaw, **Hubris**.

**Exercise:** What is Hubris? Have your students research the meaning of the term Hubris and report their findings to the class. Have the students find modern examples of Hubris from today’s theater, television or films. Does Hubris seem to be a fairly common fatal flaw? Citing specific examples from the text, have your students explain the reasons Ahab is too full of Hubris and how it compares to the Hubris present in Lear.

**Further Discussion:** With the knowledge of Hubris and it’s effect on the tragic hero, do your students still feel that Welles’ comparison of Ahab with Lear is effective or even correct? Who do they think would draw a stronger parallel with Ahab? Have them give specific examples and make sure they are able to support their answers.

**Aristotle defined hubris as follows:**

to cause shame to the victim, not in order that anything may happen to you, nor because anything has happened to you, but merely for your own gratification. Hubris is not the requital of past injuries; this is revenge. As for the pleasure in hubris, its cause is this: men think that by ill-treating others they make their own superiority the greater.

## Who is Ahab?

**Objective:**

- ◆ The students will explore the character of Ahab in *Moby Dick Rehearsed*.
- ◆ The students will explore excerpts from *Moby Dick Rehearsed* for context clues to Ahab's character.

**Exercise:** Have your students read the excerpts below from *Moby Dick Rehearsed*. Each is a different character's descriptions of Captain Ahab. Based on how different characters describe Ahab, ask your students to come to some conclusions about what this character may be like. What might his voice sound like? How does he walk? What might his overall demeanor be? Record this list of traits on newsprint and post before attending *Moby Dick Rehearsed*. Ask the students to pay attention to the performance with this list in mind.

“He keeps close inside the house, -a sort o’ sick;  
but not sick, either; -come aboard last night.  
O, he’s a queer man, Cap’n Ahab,  
but a good one, too. A grand,  
ungodly, god-like man – above the common.  
Aye, Ahab’s been in colleges,  
as well as ‘mongst the cannibals;  
he’s fixed his fiery lance in deadlier foes  
n’whales. He’s Ahab, man! –“

“I know what he is: - a good man.  
Not a pious good man, mebbe-  
But a swearing good one.”

“ever since he lost that leg  
last voyage by that cursed whale  
he’s been – well, been a kind o’ moody –  
savage sometimes.”

**-MR. PELEG (owner of the Pequod)**

“Ye haven’t seen Old Thunder, have ye?”

“jump quick to his orders!  
Step and growl, -growl and go’s the word with Ahab.”

**-ELIJAH (old sailor whom Ishmael encounters)**

“Cut away from the stake, he looked;  
Wasted by fire; but not yet consumed.  
Moody and stricken he stood before us,  
With a crucifixion in his face...”

“With charts of all four of the oceans,  
Ahab threads a maze of currents,  
eddies and the sets of tides.  
He calculates the drifting  
of the sperm-whale’s food, not only  
at substantiated times, upon the well-known  
feeding-grounds does Ahab look  
to find his prey, but also, by his art...”

**-ISHMAEL**

“Ahab has that that’s bloody on his mind...”

“The Bible Ahab,-  
when that wicked king was slain,  
the dogs, -did they not lick his blood?”

“But I signed articles to hunt whales,  
Not my commander’s vengeance!”

“Horrible old man!  
Whose thinking thus makes him Prometheus;  
a vulture feeds upon that heart forever:-“

“I disobey my God, obeying him!”

**-STARBUCK (First Mate)**

**Follow-up Exercise:** Now that your students have seen The Acting Company’s production of *Moby Dick Rehearsed* revisit the list of traits made before attending the performance. How many of the traits listed did Ahab really possess? How many traits did the students not see in Ahab in this production? How many of those traits may still be up for debate? Also ask the students what type of relationships Ahab had with each of the characters above and how those relationships may have affected what the characters said about him.

**Follow-up Exercise:** After viewing *Moby Dick Rehearsed*, ask your students to take a moment and think about the character of Captain Ahab. How do they feel about him? Is he a good man? A bad man? A misguided man? Do they view Ahab as a hero? What about an anti-hero? Who is the true villain of *Moby Dick Rehearsed*, Ahab or Moby Dick? How do they feel about the way Ahab views the world?

## The Great White Whale in the Room

**Objective:**

♦ **The students will explore stagecraft and the challenges of putting a whale on stage.**

In adapting *Moby-Dick* for the stage, Herman Melville had to find a method of putting one of the story's central characters, Moby Dick, on stage. As a character very early in the play points out, it would be impossible to put a whale on stage (though another character suggests getting a stuffed whale from Barnum's Museum). How did Welles avoid placing a huge, stuffed whale on stage?

**YOUNG ACTOR.**

The white whale is like the storm in "Lear"- it's real, but it's more than real;- it's an idea in the mind.

**Exercise:** Modern stagecraft has proven that almost anything, from flying monkeys to shipwrecks to burning houses, can be put on stage. However, Welles did not have this technology available at the time of the first production of *Moby Dick Rehearsed* in 1955. Welles was able to overcome the challenge of putting a whale on stage by asking the audience to use their imaginations. We never actually see the whale on stage, just like we never actually see the storm in *King Lear*. It is how the characters react to what we do not see that makes it believable. Because the characters really believe they see the whale, the audience follows suit. If your students were directing this show today, how would they put Moby Dick on stage? Would they also ask the audience to use their imagination? Or rather, would they put an actual whale on stage? What other methods of portraying the whale can they come up with? Is it better to never actually see the whale? Would actually seeing the whale take away from the mystery of the leviathan?

**"Blow on, and split your spout, old whale,  
The crazy fiend himself is after ye!  
Blow! Blow! Blister yer lungs-  
Ahab'll dam off yer blood."**

**STUBB, *Moby Dick Rehearsed***

# The Whiteness of the Whale

## Objective:

- ◆ The students will read an excerpt from *Moby Dick Rehearsed*.
- ◆ The students will critically discuss one of the themes of the play and novel.

**Exercise:** Have your students read the excerpt from *Moby Dick Rehearsed*, below, entitled “The Whiteness of the Whale” (Found in the Reproducibles section of this Guide). Ask the students to think about the ideas of white vs. black, good vs. evil and the things we most closely associate with these ideas. Why is it that we so often associate white with good and black with bad? Remind the students that in old Western movies it is very common-place for the hero to wear all white and the villain to be dressed in black. For a more modern example, look at the *Star Wars* trilogy, why is Darth Vader dressed in black and Luke Skywalker dressed in white? After discussing the ideas of whiteness and blackness, ask the students to discuss why they think Melville chose to make the “villain” of this piece a white whale? Perhaps, this may lead to a discussion about who the true “villain” of *Moby Dick* is. Is the white whale the “villain”? Shouldn’t he be a black whale? Is Ahab really the “villain”, as he is pursuing and attempting to kill the white whale? Is that a point that Melville is trying to make? Do we, as a culture, put too much emphasis on symbolic coloring, or not enough?

*“The Whiteness of the Whale”*

**AHAB**

Dost thou know aught, lad, of the whiteness of the whale?

**PIP**

The white whale...Moby Dick’s the name...

**AHAB**

Aye, but the *whiteness* of him-  
Whiteness, lad, enhances many things:  
marble and japonica and pearls;  
the innocence of brides; the ermine  
majesty of justice. Yet something lurks  
in whiteness strikes panic to the soul!

**PIP**

The waves was foaming white  
when I was drowning, master;  
I was terrible afraid...

**AHAB**

Whiteness, terror...  
Even the King of Terror  
rides his pallid horses; and think thee  
of the albatross, whence come those clouds  
of dread in which the snowy phantom sails  
in all imaginations. And what is it  
in the Albino man so strangely shocks  
the eye, that he is loathed by his own kin?  
It is the whiteness which invests him!

**PIP**

Whiteness...and ghosts...

And ghosts are white...

**AHAB**

Ghosts, riding in a milk-white fog...  
the muffled rollings of the milky sea;  
bleak rustlings of the festooned frosts  
of mountains; and the desolate shiftings  
of the windrowed snows of prairies...

Pondering all this, the palsied universe  
lies white before us like a leper.

And of whiteness – all of whiteness-  
the Albino whale has been my symbol!

D’ye wonder at my fiery hunt?

**PIP**

Death to whiteness!

**Post Performance Follow-up:** The character of Pip in the novel is a small African-American child from Alabama. In both The Acting Company’s production and the original production of *Moby Dick Rehearsed*, the role of Pip is played by a young, white woman. This is covered in a line from the play where the Governor says, “Miss Jenkins, failing a small negro child we’re going to ask you to read ‘Pip’ the cabin-boy for us, just for today..” However, does this change of meaning of the scene at all for your students? Would this scene have been more effective if Pip was played by a young African-American actor? Or is it more effective the way it was written by Welles? Do they feel any different about “The Whiteness of the Whale” and the ideas presented after seeing the play than before?

## Mapping: A Whaling Voyage

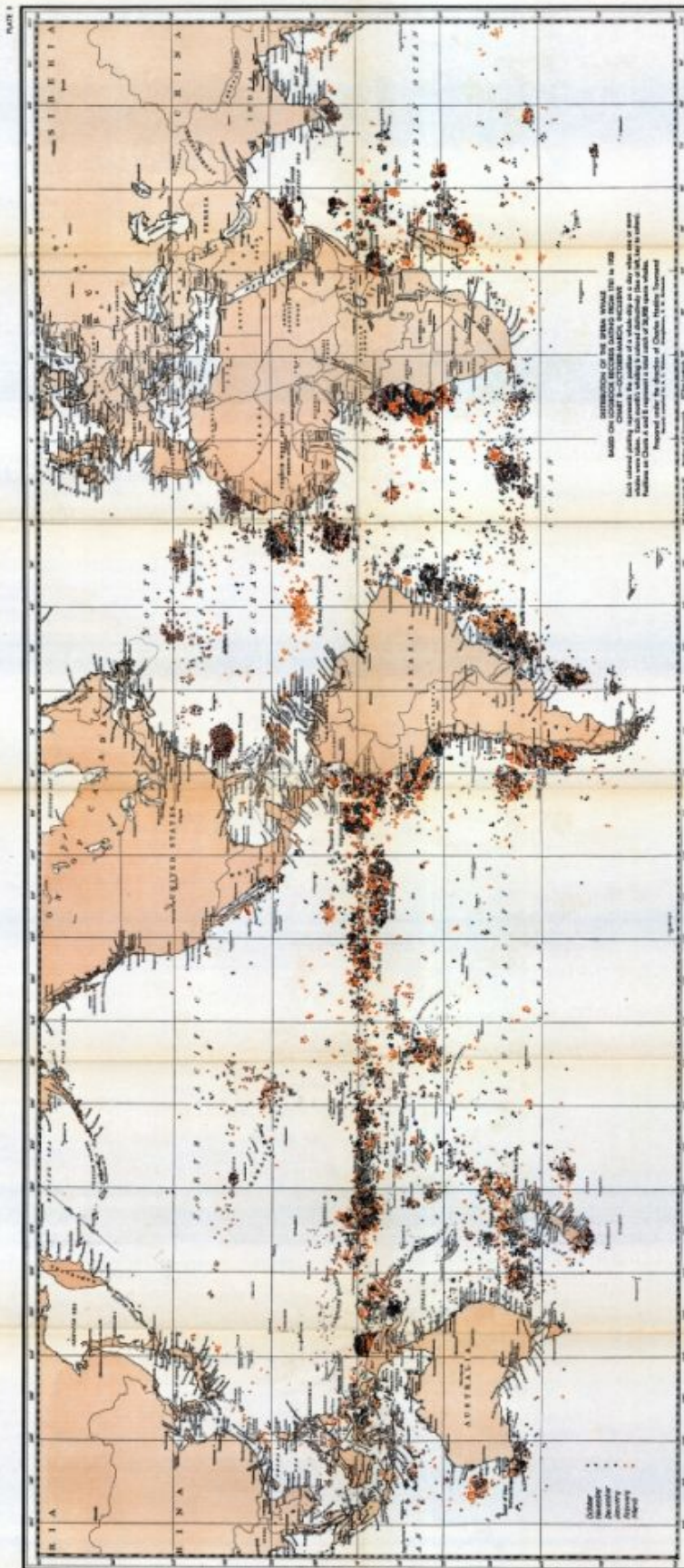
**This exercise is designed to be used BEFORE seeing the play!**

### Objectives

- ◆ The students will examine a map of the world indicating the appearance of whales.
- ◆ The students will explore choices made by an author

**Exercise:** Are the South Seas a real place or a fictional one? How about Cape Horn or the Cape of Good Hope? Help the students to locate these places on the map of the world (also found in the reproducibles section of this Guide). Show the students where Massachusetts falls on the map – and the general vicinity of New Bedford from which “The Pequod” sails. Remind them that dots on the map indicated sightings of sperm whales, the same type of whale as Moby Dick. How did Melville learn enough about the South Seas to write this novel? Did he make some details up?

Ask your students to chart on the map where they think a whale boat might sail around the world? If your goal was to catch whales, would you not choose to sail directly through the paths the sperm-whales take?



## Adapting a Whale of a Novel

### Objective:

- ◆ The students will analyze the methods employed by Orson Welles in adapting *Moby-Dick* for the stage.

**Exercise:** Give each student the passage from *Moby-Dick* and the excerpt from *Moby Dick Rehearsed* below (also found in the Reproducibles section of this guide). Have them compare and contrast the passage from the novel with how Welles put it on the stage. There is information left out of the play (we most certainly could not put everything on stage unless we wanted the show to last 18 hours) but is the most crucial information given by Melville in the novel still present in the adaptation? Keep in mind that the voice of the narrator is Ishmael. How else might you adapt this passage for the stage? What about for the screen? Is there any difference in how things are adapted for the stage as opposed to the screen? After this discussion, choose another passage from the novel and have your students adapt it for the stage. You can find a recommended passage in the Appendix, however, feel free to use any passage or chapter from *Moby-Dick* you feel works best for your class.

At last the anchor was up, the sails were set, and off we glided. **It was a short, cold Christmas;** and as the short northern day merged into night, we found ourselves almost broad upon the wintry ocean, whose freezing spray cased us in ice, as in polished armor...

As for Peleg himself, he took it more like a philosopher; but for all his philosophy, there was a tear twinkling in his eye, when the lantern came too near...

But, at last, he turned to his comrade, with a final sort of look about him, - "Captain Bildad- come, old shipmate, we must go. Back the mainyard there! Boat ahoy! Stand by to come close alongside, now! Careful, careful!- come, Bildad, boy- say your last. Luck to ye, Starbuck- luck to ye, Mr. Stubb- luck to ye, Mr. Flask- good-bye and good luck to ye all- **and this day three years I'll have a hot supper smoking for ye in old Nantucket.** Hurrah and away!"

"God bless ye, and have ye in His holy keeping, men," murmured old Bildad, almost incoherently. **"I hope ye'll have fine weather now, so that Captain Ahab may soon be moving among ye-** a pleasant sun is all he needs, and ye'll have plenty of them in the tropic voyage ye go. Be careful in the hunt, ye mates. **Don't stave the boats needlessly, ye harpooners; good white cedar plank is raised full three per cent within the year. Don't forget your prayers, either.** Mr. Starbuck, mind that cooper don't waste the spare staves. Oh! The sail-needles are in the green locker. **Don't whale it too much a' Lord's days, men; but don't miss a fair chance either, that's rejecting Heaven's good gifts. Have an eye to the molasses tierce, Mr. Stubb; it was a little leaky, I thought. If ye touch at the islands, Mr. Flask, beware of fornication. Good-bye, good-bye! Don't keep that cheese too long down in the hold, Mr. Starbuck; it'll spoil. Be careful with the butter- twenty cents the pound it was, and mind ye, if -"**

Chapter 22, "Merry Christmas"

**STUBB.**

All hands are mustered, sir.

**PELEG.**

Thankee, Mr. Stubb. Now, then- ye misbegotten whale-butchers! It'll be a short, cold Christmas for ye; but I hope ye'll have fine weather soon, so Cap'n Ahab can be moving out amongst ye- Ye harpooners, don't stove the boats in needlessly- white cedar plank is raised full three per cent this year!- Don't forget your prayers, either.- Mr. Starbuck, mind ye don't keep the cheese too long down in the hold, 'twill spoil, and cautious does it with the butter- Butter's gone to twenty cents the pound. Men- don't whale it too much o'Lord's days;- but don't miss a fair chance either, that's rejecting Heaven's own good gifts. Have an eye to the molasses, Mr. Stubb,- it's a might leaky.- If ye touch at the islands, for God's sake, Mr. Flask- beware of fornication!- Good luck to ye all! And this day, three years from now, I'll have a good hot smoking supper waitin' for ye all in old Nantucket!- God bless ye, and have ye in His holy keeping, men!

*Act I, Moby Dick Rehearsed*

Once your students have read each of the passages above, have them take notice of the way in which Welles rearranges the text in order to fit his vision of the story on stage. Note the highlighted areas of the first passage. Also have your students take note of what information was left in and what was left out. Why do you think Welles chose to include the exact passages he did? How does this information move the story along?

**Post Performance Follow up:** It is clear that Orson Welles was a fan of *Moby-Dick*. Why else, then, would he choose to adapt it to the stage? For a fun exercise for the class, have them listen to Orson Welles' reading of selected passages from *Moby-Dick* (which can be found on our *Moby Dick Rehearsed* website @ [www.myspace.com/mobydickrehearsed](http://www.myspace.com/mobydickrehearsed)).

How does Welles' interpretation of the text differ from the voice of Ishmael that your students have in their heads? Is it the same? How could it be different? If your students were casting an Audio Book recording of *Moby-Dick*, would they have Orson Welles read the text? Have your students brainstorm other people they would like to hear read the text keeping in mind that they must justify their answers.

**“What is it that so draws me now  
to put down for a whaling voyage?-  
The nameless undeliverable perils  
of the great beast itself?”**

**ISHMAEL, *Moby Dick Rehearsed***

## Section 5: The Theater

**Overall Objective:** The students will have a stronger understanding of the art of the Theater.

### Brainstorm: Creating a Theatrical Production

**This exercise is designed to be used BEFORE seeing the play!**

**Objective:**

- ◆ The students will identify careers in the theater.
- ◆ The students will use The Acting Company website as a resource.
- ◆ The students will know the collaborative nature of theater.

**Exercise:** Ask the students to name some of the people who work to put a theatrical production like *Moby Dick Rehearsed* on stage. Write their answers on the board. As the brainstorm continues, present information about the various professions. When you attend the performance, see if your students can talk to some of the professionals associated with the production.

**Producer or Producing Organization**

The producers raise the money needed to produce the play – the money allows the Creative Team to build its vision of the play. Producers oversee all aspects of the production and make sure that the play sticks to their artistic standards. They often put together the package of Script, Director, Designers, and Cast. The Acting Company is a not-for-profit organization, which means that money to produce the plays comes from fund-raising through grants and donations rather than from investors.

[NOTE: a “Not-for-Profit” organization uses money raised from donors, foundations, and grants to do its work. A “Profit Making” or “For-Profit” organization gets money from investors. The investors receive a percentage of the profit made by the work.]

**The Playwright**

A “wright” is a type of artisan who makes things that people can use. A shipwright builds ships. A playwright builds plays. Plays are of use to other artists – Actors, Directors, Designers – who use the script to make their own artistic statement. It is always important to the Creative Team to keep in mind the original intention of the playwright, and playwrights (when they can) are often involved with the first productions of their plays.

**The Director**

After reading the playwright’s script, the director decides on an overall vision for the production. A director meets with the Creative Team to assemble a unified feel for the choreography, costumes, music, and other elements. The director oversees the actors in rehearsal, often with the help of the Stage Manager.

**The Actor**

The Cast is the group of men, women and children who perform the play. Many people call all the performers “actors” (instead of “actors” and “actresses”), since this is the professional term that applies to people of both genders. The members of the cast may be seasoned actors or new to the stage. They may have trained at different theater schools that teach acting in various ways. They draw on their own experiences and understanding of life to create believable characters. Actors usually audition for the parts they play. This means that they had to work on the part and read, sing, or dance for the director and producers before they were given the role. All of the actors had to memorize their lines and attend many rehearsals, including some with costumes and props, before opening night.

**The Stage Manager**

According to Carissa Dollar’s stage management website, “there is no single definition or job description for the tasks performed by the person who accepts the title of Stage Manager for any theatrical production.” However, according to Actor’s Equity Association (AEA) they have at least the following duties: organizes all rehearsals, before or after opening; assembles and maintains the Prompt Book; works with the Director and the Creative Team to schedule rehearsal and outside calls; assumes active responsibility for the form and discipline of rehearsal and performance and is the executive instrument in the technical running of each performance; keeps any records necessary to inform the Producer of attendance, time, welfare benefits, etc.; and maintains discipline. The Stage Manager is like the Home Room Teacher for the cast and crew.

**The Voice and Dialect Coach**

The blank verse of *Moby Dick Rehearsed* is fairly complex. Often a Voice Coach acts as an advisor to the actors and director of the play. She is an expert on the text, the meanings and nuances of the words, and their pronunciation. She can assist the actors with the verse. She is an expert in the period language of the script and helps the actors approach the text from a unified angle.

**The Costume Designer**

Costumes in a play must help the actors as they create the characters. The costumes should not restrict the movement of the performers. The costume designer and her staff work within the vision of the director for each character. They choose colors and styles to help the audience better understand the characters.

**The Set Designer, the Sound Designer and Lighting Designer**

The play needs an environment in which to take place. The set can be a literal world, with many objects (‘props’) and lots of furniture. It can be a suggestion of reality with minimal actual components. Music and sound effects can make the theatrical experience more real (or more fantastical). The lights add to the environment of the play and enhance the mood that the other designers, the actors, the playwright, the composer, and the director have created. For The Acting Company’s productions, the set must be easy to assemble and disassemble and must be portable. The sound and lighting design must be able to be recreated in each venue.

### **The Staff and The Crew**

The theater staff – house manager, ushers, box office people, and others – assist the audience in many ways and support each performance. In a large-scale performance, backstage the Stage Managers and the running crew run the lighting equipment, move the scenery, and make sure the technical aspects of the performance are perfect. In the office, Marketing people work to make sure people know about the performances and the Development staff makes sure the producers have money to put on the play. Education people...write Teacher Resource Guides ☺. If you're seeing *Moby Dick Rehearsed* in a theater building, look and see how many people are around who are not on stage.

**Exercise:** Ask the students to see how many of the members of the cast, crew and staff they can find at The Acting Company website:

**www.theactingcompany.org.** Feel free to have them correspond with the Company members through e-mail links.

## Types of Theater Buildings

**This exercise is designed to be used AFTER seeing the play!**

### **Objective:**

- ◆ The students will be able to identify different types of theaters.
- ◆ The students will weigh the benefits of each type of performance space.
- ◆ The students will use The Acting Company website as a resource.
- ◆ The students will write a report about a Theater.

**Discussion:** In which types of theaters have the students seen plays, concerts, or other live performances? What type(s) of theater or auditorium is there in the school building? Is the Gym ever used for assemblies or performances? Are performances ever done in a classroom or Library? In what type of theater space was the production of *Moby Dick Rehearsed* performed? What might be the benefits of each type of performance space? What might be the drawbacks of each?

### **Facts:**

Four different types of performance space are most common in the theater:

- ◆ **The Proscenium Stage** is the most common. The play is performed within a frame. The frame is called a proscenium arch; the audience looks through this frame as if the performance was a picture.
- ◆ **The Thrust Stage** extends into the audience. Spectators sit on three sides.
- ◆ **Theater-in-the-Round** has the audience sitting all around the stage. The action takes place on a platform in the center of the room. Another name for a Theater-in-the-Round is an Arena Stage because it is similar to a sports arena.
- ◆ **Environmental Staging** consists of the actors and audience sharing the same space. With environmental staging, there is no set playing area, the entire building is the stage with the audience literally becoming a part of the play.

**Exercise:** At The Acting Company website, [www.theactingcompany.org](http://www.theactingcompany.org), have the students find the “Itinerary” page. Many of the theaters that the Company is playing this year are linked to this page. The students can learn about different types of theaters in different parts of the country from these links. Students can write a report about one of the theaters where The Acting Company is performing this year. Their report might include a map of the location, distance from the last theater and to the next theater, and statistics about the theater (size, seating capacity, ticket prices).

## Why Theater?

**This exercise is designed to be used BEFORE seeing the play with a follow-up session AFTER the performance.**

**Objective:**

- ◆ The students will explore the importance of theater.

**Exercise:** Give each student a copy of the following quote (found in the Reproducibles section of this Guide) from George Cram Cook (1873-1924), founder of New York’s Provincetown Playhouse (artistic home of Eugene O’Neill). Ask each student to identify the two reasons Cook gives for the importance of theater, especially in time of crisis. Are they important and relevant today? Are there other reasons?

Ask the students to write a paragraph or two, based on the passage, in which they explore the importance of Theater (or the Arts in general) in our time. Have volunteers share them with the class.

After seeing the performance, ask the students which reason (as a means of escape or as a gateway for imagination) does *Moby Dick Rehearsed* provide? Or does it do something else? Can theater provide different things for different people? Can it provide many things for an individual?

“Seven of the Provincetown Players are in the army or working for it in France and more are going. Not lightheartedly now, when civilization itself is threatened with destruction, we who remain have determined to go on next season with the work of our little theatre.

It is often said that theatrical entertainment in general is socially justified in this dark time as a means of relaxing the strain of reality, and thus helping to keep us sane. This may be true, but if more were not true – if we felt no deeper value in dramatic art than entertainment, we would hardly have the heart for it now.

One faculty, we know, is going to be of vast importance to the half-destroyed world – indispensable for its rebuilding – the faculty of creative imagination. That spark of it, which has given this group of ours such life and meaning as we have, is not so insignificant that we should now let it die. The social justification, which we feel to be valid now for makers and players of plays, is that they shall help keep alive in the world the light of imagination. Without it, the wreck of the world that was cannot be cleared away and the new world shaped.”

**Discussion:** How is seeing theater different from watching TV or seeing a movie (either at home or in the theater)? Which is more “real”?

## Theater Etiquette

**This exercise is designed to be used BEFORE seeing the play!**

**Objective:**

- ◆ The students will know standard rules of behavior in the theater.

To make the theater-going experience more enjoyable for everyone, a code of behavior has been established. When attending theatrical performances, remember these simple rules of conduct:

- ◆ Be on time for the performance (which really means be there early!).
- ◆ Eat and drink only in the theater lobby.
- ◆ Turn off all cellular phones and pagers, anything that makes noise.
- ◆ Talk before and after the performance or during the intermissions only.
- ◆ Remember that the people near you and on stage can hear you.
- ◆ Appropriate responses to the performances, such as laughing and applauding, are appreciated.
- ◆ Act with maturity during romantic, violent or other challenging scenes.
- ◆ Keep your feet off chairs around you.
- ◆ Read your program before or after, not during, the play.
- ◆ Personal hygiene (e.g. combing hair, applying make-up, etc.) should be attended to in the restrooms.
- ◆ Once you are seated and the play has begun, stay in your seat. If you see empty seats ahead of you, ask the usher during the intermission if you can move to them.
- ◆ Always stay until after the curtain call. After the final curtain, relax and take your time leaving.
- ◆ Open your eyes, ears, and mind to the entire theatrical experience!

## Prepare for Q & A Session

This exercise is designed to be used **BEFORE** seeing the play!

### Objective:

- ◆ The students will create questions for the post-performance Q & A session.

**Exercise:** To make the post-performance Question and Answer session more beneficial to everyone, the students might create a few questions before the performance. Ask the students to think what questions they might want to ask the actors in the play? Here are some starter questions:

Are there questions about the **theater** as an art form? Does it require training? Where did the actors train? Can a person make a living in the theater? What careers are there in the theater? Are any of the students aspiring actors? Are they seeking advice?

Are there any questions about **traveling** the country? Have the actors seen a lot of the United States? What is the bus like? How many hours do they spend on the bus? Does everybody get along?

What about life in New York City? How long have the actors lived there? And where are they from originally? (Have any of the students ever been to NYC?) How has New York City survived the September 11<sup>th</sup> Tragedy and the recent terror alerts? What is the best part of living in New York? What is the worst?

What about *Moby Dick Rehearsed*, the play? How has it been received in places across the country? What is the best part about working on this play? What have been its drawbacks? What do the actors think the themes of the play are? How is working on a play which has been adapted from a novel?

**NOTE:** If there are questions that your students have after the company departs, feel free to contact the Education Department of The Acting Company, and we will get an answer for you!

**“I’ll ten times girdle the unmeasured globe, and dive straight through it, but I’ll slay him yet!”**

**AHAB, *Moby Dick Rehearsed***

## Section 6: What to Do After You See This Play

Please encourage your students to reflect on the play in some of the following ways. We would love to have copies of some of the writings or artwork your students create:

**The Acting Company**

**Box 898**

**New York, NY 10108**

**Or fax (212) 258-3299**

We have also included in the appendix short pre- and post- performance questionnaires, and would be interested in gathering data about the play.

### Write

- ◆ Write a play or scene in response to the play.
- ◆ Improvise a scene with a partner and then write it down.
- ◆ Write a monologue for one of the characters in *Moby Dick Rehearsed*.
- ◆ Write a review of the production.
- ◆ Write a theatrical adaptation of another piece of literature, perhaps a piece of Melville's verse.

### Draw

- ◆ Draw the world of one or more of the characters.
- ◆ Draw images from the production.
- ◆ Draw a poster for the production of *Moby Dick Rehearsed*.
- ◆ Create a collage of images from magazines in response to the play.

## Create a Performance of Sections of *Moby Dick Rehearsed*

Get a few copies of *Moby Dick Rehearsed* and distribute them to small groups of students. Have each group write a short play (perhaps a modern scene) based on a scene in the play. The plays can be an adaptation of the source material, a reflection on the themes in the plot, or whatever the students devise. Ask them to present their work to the other groups. Send us copies of the plays if you wish.

*Moby-Dick*, as well as other novels of Herman Melville, is public domain and available for free download at sites such as:

**<http://www.americanliterature.com/MD/MDINDEX.HTML>**

We Want to Hear from YOU and your STUDENTS!

## By Mail

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New York, NY 10108  
**Telephone:** 212-258-3111  
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## By E-Mail

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## On the Internet

**www.TheActingCompany.org**

or

**www.myspace.com/theactingcompany**

**www.myspace.com/mobydickrehearsed**

## Internships

Please submit a letter of interest and your resume along with two references to the Intern Coordinator at the address above. You can call or check the website for more information.

## Questionnaires and FREE Posters!

You will find Pre-Performance and Post-Performance Questionnaires on the last pages of this Guide. Please have your students fill out the Pre-Performance Survey **before** you begin working on exercises from this Guide. Ask them to fill out the Post-Performance Survey **after** seeing *Moby Dick Rehearsed*.

Send them to us at the above address and we will send you a POSTER from one of The Acting Company's productions as a "Thank You."

# Section 7: Cast List and Information

## *MOBY DICK REHEARSED*

By **Orson Welles**

Based on the novel by **Herman Melville**

*Set Design by* **Neil Patel**

*Costume Design by* **Jared Aswegan**

*Lighting Design by* **Michael Chybowski**

*Music and Sound Design by* **Fitz Patton**

*Properties Master* **Scott Brodsky**

*Voice Coach* **Deborah Hecht**

*Movement by* **Felix Ivanov**

*Casting by* **Liz Woodman, C.S.A.**

*Production Manager* **Steve Lorick**

*Production Stage Manager* **Janice M. Brandine**

*Assistant Stage Manager* **Marissa Levy**

*Staff Repertory Director* **Jessi Hill**

Directed by

**Casey Biggs**

### CAST

*(in order of appearance)*

Young Actor.....Timothy Sekk  
 Young Actress.....Kelley Curran  
 Stage Manager.....Luis Moreno  
 Middle-Aged Actor.....David Foubert  
 Serious Actor.....Michael Stewart Allen  
 Old Pro.....Christopher Oden  
 Cynical Actor.....Victoire Charles  
 Actor with a Newspaper.....Robb Martinez  
 Governor.....Seth Duerr  
 Actor.....Peter Macklin  
 Actor.....Jay Leibowitz  
 Ishmael.....Timothy Sekk  
 Peleg.....Christopher Oden  
 Father Mapple.....Seth Duerr  
 Elijah.....David Foubert  
 Starbuck.....Michael Stewart Allen  
 Stubb.....Robb Martinez  
 Flask.....David Foubert  
 Pip.....Kelley Curran  
 Ahab.....Seth Duerr  
 Masthead.....Jay Leibowitz  
 Daggoo.....Victoire Charles  
 Tashtego.....Luis Moreno  
 Queequeg.....Peter Macklin  
 Carpenter.....Victoire Charles

## Section 8: The Acting Company

The Acting Company is incredibly proud to this year present Orson Welles' adaptation of the great American novel, *Moby Dick*, in *Moby Dick Rehearsed*. In 1936, John Houseman hired Orson Welles to direct for The Federal Theater Project. The next year the two men founded The Mercury Theater. A year after that, they were on the radio with Mercury Theater on the Air and causing a mass panic with their broadcast of *War of the Worlds*. Almost 35 years later, in 1972, The Acting Company was founded by current Producing Artistic Director, Margot Harley, and the late John Houseman. The man who contributed to starting the career of Welles and Ms. Harley founded this company of actors with a unique mission:

- ◆ By touring smaller cities, towns and rural communities of America, the Company reaches thousands of people who have few opportunities to experience live professional theater.
- ◆ By presenting superior productions of classic and contemporary plays, the Company builds a discerning national audience for theater, helping preserve and extend our cultural heritage.
- ◆ By providing continuing opportunities for gifted and highly-trained young actors to practice their craft in a rich repertoire for diverse audiences, the Company nurtures the growth and development of generations of theater artists.
- ◆ By commissioning and premiering important new works by America's foremost playwrights, the Company fosters a theater tradition in which storytelling, language and the presence of the actor are primary.
- ◆ By making the language of the theater accessible in performance, special classes and other educational outreach activities, the Company inspires students of all ages and helps them excel in every field of study.

The Acting Company has been fulfilling this singular mission since it was formed out of the first graduating class of the Julliard School's Drama Division in 1972. Since then, it has traveled over 500,000 miles through 48 states and ten other countries, performing a repertoire of 77 plays for more than 2 million people.

## 2003 TONY Honor for Excellence in the Theater

In the professional theater, the highest honor one can achieve is to be recognized by the American Theatre Wing with an Antoinette Perry Award, called the "Tony"®. In 2003, The Acting Company was presented with a special Tony Honor celebrating our 30 years touring America with classical plays and newly commissioned works.

To learn more about the Tony Awards, go the to Tony website: [www.tonys.org](http://www.tonys.org).

## Trace Our Tour

If the students want to follow the tour as it progresses across the United States, they can read the Tour Journal (on our website [www.theactingcompany.org](http://www.theactingcompany.org) and our Myspace page [www.myspace.com/theactingcompany](http://www.myspace.com/theactingcompany)) and see pictures of the places we visit. You can check in with us every day, check the itinerary, and see where we are on the map.

## Appendix: Reproducibles

For use with **Interviewing Herman Melville (1819-1891)**, p. 4

Herman Melville was born on August 1, 1819 in New York City into a socially connected merchant family. Herman was the third of eight children of Maria Gansevoort Melvill and Allan Melvill, an importer of French dry goods. In 1832, after becoming bankrupt and pushed into insanity, Allan Melvill died leaving his eldest son, Gansevoort, responsible for the family and in charge of the business. Now living in Albany (NY), through his mother's influence, biblical stories became a part of Melville's imagination from his early childhood. In 1835, Herman attended Albany Classical School. After leaving school he continued his education on his own, diving into Shakespeare as well as historical, anthropological, and technical works. From the age of 12, Melville worked as a clerk, teacher and farmhand in order to help support his family.

In 1837, Herman's brother declared bankruptcy and arranged for him to serve as cabin boy on the *St. Lawrence*, a merchant ship sailing from New York to Liverpool, England. After this voyage he returned home, intent on finding the means to help support his family. After having little luck finding steady work, Melville again set out in search of adventure and in 1839 joined the crew of the whaler *Acushnet* on a voyage to the South Seas. The *Acushnet* anchored in the Marquesas Islands (present day French Polynesia). Not long after, Melville and a companion jumped ship and spent around four months as guests/captives of the native, cannibalistic people. Escaping on the Australian whaler *Lucy Ann*, Herman's next stop was Tahiti. While there, Melville joined a mutiny led by dissatisfied crew members who had not been paid. This action landed Herman in a Tahitian jail, from which he escaped.

Not yet free of his penchant for the sea, Melville signed on as a harpooner on the whaler *Charles & Henry* out of Nantucket, Mass. Six months after he set out on this ship, he left the crew when they docked in Hawaii only to sign on as an ordinary seaman on the frigate *United States* which finally returned him to Boston (MA) in 1844.

Between 1844 and 1847, Melville published his first two novels, both strongly influenced by his experiences while at sea. The first was *Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life* and the second was *Omoo: A Narrative of Adventures in the South Seas*. These two novels were very successful, both artistically and financially. Little did Melville realize, at this time, that this would be the peak of his success as a writer, at least during his lifetime.

## Interviewing Herman Melville (1819-1891), continued...

In the summer of 1847, Herman married Elizabeth Shaw, daughter of the chief justice of Massachusetts. Finding writing to be his most successful means of supporting a family, Melville became a regular contributor of reviews and other pieces to a literary journal. This, however, did not stop him from writing novels and in 1847 he published his third work, *Mardi*. Over the next three years he would also publish *Redburn* (1849) and *White-Jacket* (1850) among other works.

Continuing to write, Melville promised his publishers a new novel for the autumn of 1850 called *The Whale*. Before completing this work, he moved his family to a farm in Massachusetts called “Arrowhead”, which happened to be near the home of Nathaniel Hawthorne in Pittsfield, MA. The two authors formed a friendship and, reinvigorated by the creative energy of Hawthorne, Melville changed the direction of this whale tale from a story full of details about whaling to an allegorical novel. In 1851, Melville finally presented his publishers with what was now called *Moby-Dick* which he dedicated to his new friend, Hawthorne.

*Moby-Dick* was released in both England and America to little acclaim and earned him absolutely no money. The brilliance of this American classic was never seen during Melville’s lifetime and *Moby-Dick* sold only around 3,000 before 1891. Facing what he viewed as immense failures as a writer, Melville was brought further pain in 1853 when a disastrous fire at his New York publisher destroyed nearly all of his books. This, however, did not stop him from writing and between 1852 and 1857 he wrote *Pierre* (1852), *Israel Potter* (1855), “Bartleby the Scrivener” (1853), and *The Confidence-Man* (1857) among other short stories and novels.

Three fairly unsuccessful American lecture tours followed and Melville began to dismiss prose in favor of poetry, though the prospects of publication were not favorable. When the Civil War broke out, Melville volunteered for the Navy, but was rejected. This allowed Herman to continue to write and in 1866 he published his first book of verse called, *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of War*. Four months after this book was published, Melville was appointed customs inspector on the New York docks. Finally he found a steady source of income and was able to support his family, which he was never able to do as a writer.

Melville did not write much during his 19 years in the customs house. In 1888, three years into his retirement, Melville published his second book of verse, *John Marr, and Other Sailors; With Some Sea-Pieces*. On September 28, 1891 Herman Melville died of heart failure and the man we view as perhaps the greatest American writer was all but forgotten; only one newspaper even bothered to print his obituary.

After his death, an unfinished manuscript was found in Melville’s personal desk. Posthumously published in 1924, the unedited manuscript has come to be known as *Billy Budd*, his final work.

George Orson Welles was born on May 15, 1915 in Kenosha, Wisconsin to Beatrice Ives Welles, a concert pianist, and Richard Head Welles, a manufacturer of vehicle lamps. Proving to be a remarkable child, Orson soon began to excel in magic (thanks to the influence of his father and the vaudevillians he befriended), painting, piano and acting (thanks to the influence of his mother who introduced Orson to the piano, violin and Shakespeare). At a very early age, Welles was declared a child prodigy by Dr. Maurice Bernstein, a Chicago physician.

Now living in Chicago, one of the cultural hubs of America at the time, Orson's parents divorced in 1919. Only a few years after, in 1924, Beatrice Ives Welles died of jaundice in a Chicago hospital four days after Orson's birthday. Welles never seemed enthralled with formal education, however, shortly after the death of his mother, he enrolled in the Todd School for Boys in Woodstock, Illinois. He was educated there by Roger Hill, a teacher who later became headmaster of the school, who encouraged Orson to pursue the arts. While at Todd, Orson was able to write, direct and act in numerous plays, all under the tutelage of Hill (who became a bit of a surrogate father to Welles). Only a few months after Orson's graduation from Todd, somewhere around 1928, Richard Head Welles fell into alcoholism and passed away leaving Orson under the care of Maurice Bernstein. Needless to say, it did not take Orson long to strike out on his own.

Orson decided to take a walking and painting tour of Ireland shortly thereafter. While on this tour, Orson boldly went to The Gate Theatre in Dublin (a major theater at the time) claiming to be a Broadway Star. Though they did not really believe him to be a Broadway actor, the people at the theater admired his brashness and gave him a small role in their 1931 production of *Jew Suss*. This would be Orson Welles' first professional acting job.

In 1932, Orson returned to the United States and toured, briefly, with Katharine Cornell's road company and made his true Broadway debut as Tybalt in the 1934 production of *Romeo and Juliet*. That same year he married Virginia Nicholson and had one child with her, a son named Christopher. Starting in 1935 Welles was able to supplement his career working as a New York radio actor. It was during this time that he would meet many of the actors and professionals that would play key roles in his career.

In 1936, John Houseman, who had first noticed Orson in *Romeo and Juliet*, called upon him to work for the Federal Theater Project (an organization set up to put unemployed theater performers to work). Houseman asked Welles to direct a project for Harlem's American Negro Theater. Welles chose to direct an all-African-American production of *Macbeth* which was incredibly well received and is considered a landmark of African-American theater.

Interviewing Orson Welles (1915-1985), continued...

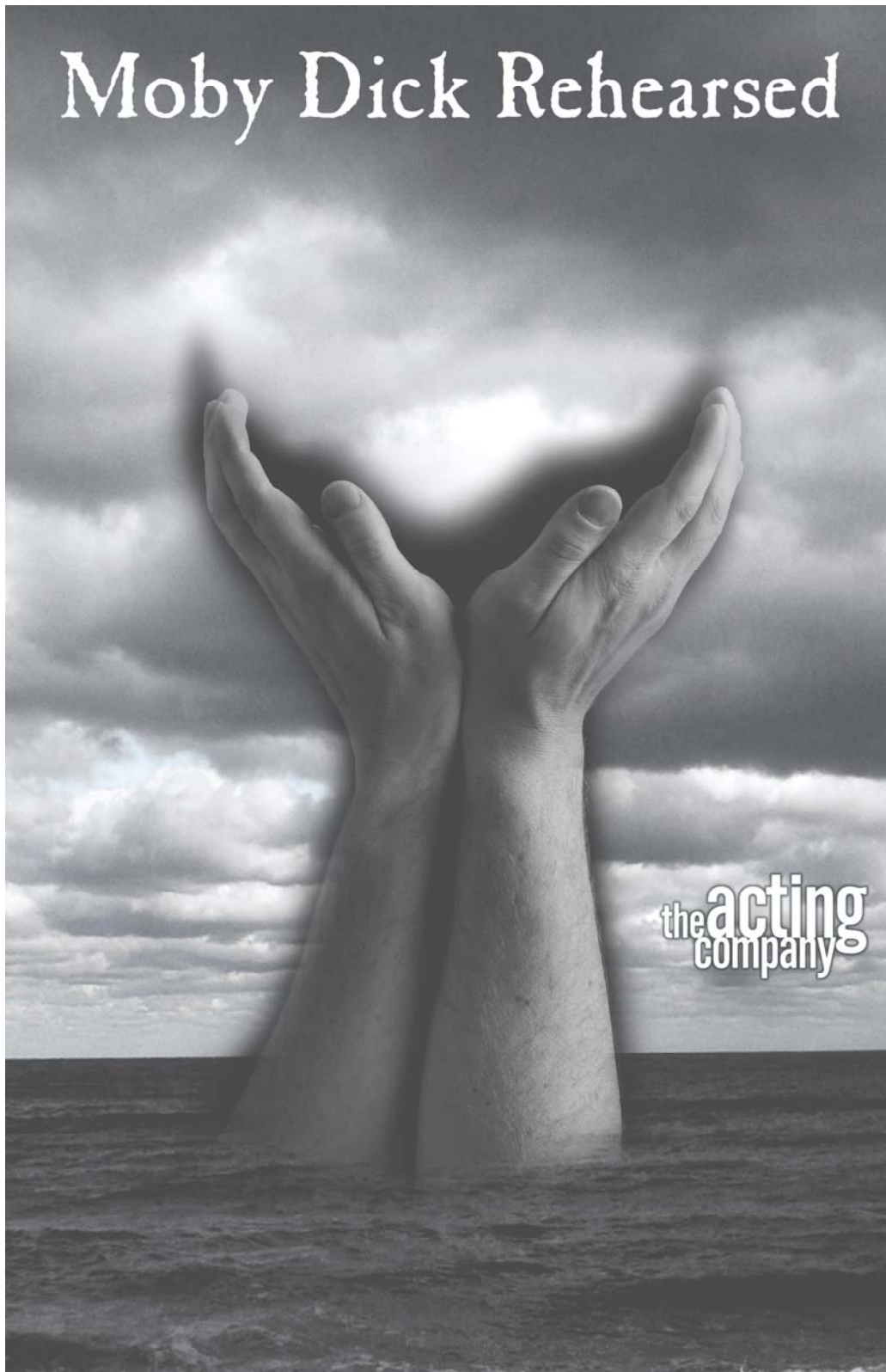
Resigning from the Federal Theater in 1937, Welles and Houseman formed their own company, the Mercury Theatre. During this time Welles continued to act and direct both on stage and on the radio. In 1938 he (and the Mercury Theater) were given a radio hour by CBS to be based on classic literary works. The show was called *The Mercury Theatre on the Air* and would be responsible for a mass panic later that year. This mass panic was caused by a radio production of H.G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds* which many people believed to be an actual Martian invasion.

Orson's growing reputation led to his appointment by RKO Studios in Hollywood. He received a contract that was unheard of at that time; he was given complete artistic control. His first few films were never produced, it was not until 1941 that he made his most famous film, *Citizen Kane*. Loosely based on the life of William Randolph Hearst, *Citizen Kane* was very controversial and only played in a few theaters until it was re-released in 1956. Over time, *Citizen Kane* has become known as one of the greatest films ever made. It was, however, past its production deadlines and far over budget. This is the reputation that Welles carried through the rest of his career. He was considered an erratic movie maker, always over budget and off schedule, which led to him continually searching for funding for all of his projects over the years.

During this time, Welles adapted *Moby-Dick* for the stage in a play called *Moby Dick Rehearsed* which drew a comparison between Captain Ahab and King Lear. Spending most of his time after this in Europe, he continued to act in order to fund his own productions including *Othello* in 1952 and *Chimes at Midnight* in 1966. When he returned to American in the 1970s, he found that he was now being praised as one of the true geniuses of American films.

Even though he was now being regarded as a genius, it was difficult for him to escape his past and he had to resort to appearing in grade-B movies, television talk shows, and television commercials. Several times divorced, overweight, with a resume that included many failed projects, he would have seemed a failure at his death in 1985, had his rich life not produced so many original works.

For use with **Discussion: Judging a Book by its Cover**, p. 8



For use with **A Landlubber's Glossary**, p. 9

|                    |                         |                  |
|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Aft</b>         | <b>Antilles</b>         | <b>Royals</b>    |
| <b>Ball of Tow</b> | <b>Buttress</b>         | <b>Sternward</b> |
| <b>Calabash</b>    | <b>Fates, The</b>       | <b>Stunsail</b>  |
| <b>Flukes</b>      | <b>Gallants</b>         |                  |
| <b>Helm</b>        | <b>Iron</b>             |                  |
| <b>Jonah</b>       | <b>Kings of Cologne</b> |                  |
| <b>Leeward</b>     | <b>Leviathan</b>        |                  |
| <b>Maelstrom</b>   | <b>Narcissus</b>        |                  |
| <b>Parmacetty</b>  | <b>Quarterdeck</b>      |                  |

For use with **A Landlubber's Glossary**, continued...

**Aft** - Towards the stern or rear of the vessel.

**Antilles** – A chain of islands in the West Indies, divided into two parts, the one including Cuba, Hispaniola, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico (Greater Antilles), the other including a large arch of smaller islands to the SE and S (Lesser Antilles or Caribees).

**Ball of Tow** – A wad of paper or hay which is used in firing a cannon. The ball of tow acts as a buffer between the gun-powder and the cannonball itself.

**Buttress** - An architectural structure built against (a counterfort) or projecting from a wall which serves to support or reinforce the wall. Used in both ancient architecture and on vessels.

**Calabash** – A tropical American tree bearing hard-shelled, gourd-like fruits on the trunk and main branches. Also a utensil or container made from the dried, hollowed-out shell of any of these fruits.

**Fates, The** – In Greek mythology, The Fates (or Moerae – the “apportioners”) were the personifications of destiny. They controlled the metaphorical thread of life of every mortal and immortal from birth to death (and beyond).

**Flukes** – Either of the two horizontally flattened divisions of the tail of a whale.

**Gallants** - The square-rigged sail or sails immediately above the topsail or topsails.

**Helm** - The wheel or tiller controlling the rudder, steering the vessel.

**Iron** – In this case, slang for a harpoon or lance.

**Jonah** – Jonah was a prophet in the Hebrew Bible and Qur'an who was swallowed by a great fish. God orders Jonah to prophesy to the city of Nineveh. Jonah does not want to, and tries to avoid God's command by going to Joppa and sailing to Tarshish. A huge storm arises. The sailors, realizing this is no ordinary storm, cast lots, and learn that Jonah is to blame. Jonah admits this, and states that if he is thrown overboard, the storm will cease. The sailors throw him overboard, and the seas calm. Jonah is miraculously saved by being swallowed by a large fish. While in the great fish, Jonah prays to God and asks forgiveness and thanks God for being so forgiving, and, as a result, God commands the fish to vomit Jonah out.

**Kings of Cologne** - The Three Wise Men, also known as the Three Kings or the Magi.

**Leeward** – Downwind, on the sheltered side.

**Leviathan** – Any huge marine animal, as the whale.

**Maelstrom** - A very powerful whirlpool; a large, swirling body of water.

**Narcissus** – In Greek mythology, Narcissus was a hero who was renowned for his beauty. When Narcissus rejected the desperate advances of the nymph, Echo, his punishment was to fall in love with his own reflection in a pool of water. Unable to consummate his love, Narcissus pined away and changed into the flower that bears his name, the narcissus.

**Parmacetty** – Whalers slang referring to the Sperm Whale (ie: Moby-Dick).

**Quarterdeck** - The part of the upper deck abaft the mainmast, including the poop deck when there is one. Usually reserved for ship's officers, guests, and passengers.

**Royals** - Small sails flown immediately above the topgallant on square rigged sailing ships. It was originally called the "topgallant royal" and was used in light and favorable winds.

**Sternward** – Toward the rear part of a ship, technically defined as the area built up over the sternpost, extending upwards from the counter to the taffrail.

For use with **Choral Reading: The Key to it All**, p. 11

## **YOUNG ACTOR**

“Call me Ishmael...

Some years ago – never mind how long –  
I thought that I would sail about a little  
and see the watery part of the world.

Whenever I grow grim about the mouth,  
and hazy in eyes; whenever  
it’s a damp November in my soul;  
I count it time to get to sea.

Almost all men, sometime or other,  
cherish these same feelings toward the ocean....

Why did the old Persians hold the ocean  
holy? - and the still deeper meaning  
of that story of Narcissus, who, because  
he could not grasp the mild, tormenting image  
in the fountain, plunged into it, and drowned.

That same image we ourselves see in all rivers,  
in oceans and in lakes and wells. The image  
of the un-graspable – the phantom of life;  
and this is the key to it all...”

**Choral Reading: The Key to it All, continued...**

All (but soloists): Call me Ishmael...

Solo 1: Some years ago –

Group 1: Never mind how long –

Solo 4: I thought that I would sail about a little

Solo 2: and see the watery part of the world.

Solo 3: Whenever I grow grim about the mouth,

Group 2: and hazy in eyes;

Solo 1: whenever it's a damp

Group 3: November in my soul;

Solo 2: I count it time to get to sea

Solo 4: Almost all men,

Group 1: sometime or other,

Solo 3: cherish these same feelings

Group 2: toward the ocean...

Group 3 (softer): the ocean...

All (but soloists): Why did the old Persians hold the ocean holy?

Group 1: and the still deeper meaning

Group 3: of that story of Narcissus,

Group 2: who,

Solo 2: because he could not grasp the mild,

Solo 4: tormenting image in the fountain,

Solo 1: plunged into it,

All (but soloists): and drowned.

Solo 3: That same image we ourselves see in all

Group 3: rivers...

Group 1: in oceans...

Group 2: and in lakes...

Group 3: and wells...

Solo 1: The image of the un-graspable –

All: the phantom of life;

Solo 4: and this is the key to it all...

**Inspired by *Moby Dick Rehearsed* by Orson Welles**

For use with **The Blank Verse of *Moby Dick Rehearsed***, p. 13

**AHAB.**

Starbuck – of late I’m strangely moved  
to thee; aye, ever since we both saw-  
thou know’st what – in one another’s eyes.  
But in this matter of the whale; Starbuck,  
be thy face’s front to me as in the palm  
of this my hand – a lipless and unfeatured  
blank. Ahab is forever Ahab, man!  
I am the fate’s lieutenant; under orders.  
Ye see an old man cut down to the stump,  
leaning on a shivered lance; propped  
on a lonely foot; ‘tis Ahab...Ahab’s  
body’s part. But Ahab’s soul’s a centipede  
that moves upon a hundred legs. You see  
me strained, half-stranded as ropes that tow  
dismasted frigates in a gale. But ere I’ll break,  
ye’ll hear me crack! Till ye hear *that*, -  
know Ahab’s hawser tows his purpose yet!

**FATHER MAPPLE.**

But oh, shipmates! Delight is to him – who, against the proud  
gods and commodores of this earth, stands forth, his own  
inexorable self!- who gives no quarter in the truth, and who  
destroys all sin though he pluck it out from under the robes of  
Senators and Judges! Delight- Top-gallant delight is to him who  
acknowledges no law or lord, but the Lord his God, and is only a  
patriot to Heaven. And eternal delight and deliciousness will be  
his, who, coming to lay him down can say – O Father! – mortal  
or immortal – here I die. I have striven to be Thine more than to  
be this world’s, or mine own. Yet this is nothing; I leave  
eternity to Thee; for what is man that he should live out the  
lifetime of his God?

For use with **Who is Ahab?**, p. 15

“He keeps close inside the house, -a sort o’ sick;  
but not sick, either; -come aboard last night.  
O, he’s a queer man, Cap’n Ahab,  
but a good one, too. A grand,  
ungodly, god-like man – above the common.  
Aye, Ahab’s been in colleges,  
as well as ‘mongst the cannibals;  
he’s fixed his fiery lance in deadlier foes  
n’ whales. He’s Ahab, man! –“

“I know what he is: - a good man.  
Not a pious good man, mebbe-  
But a swearing good one.”

“ever since he lost that leg  
last voyage by that cursed whale  
he’s been – well, been a kind o’ moody –  
savage sometimes.”

**-MR. PELEG (owner of the Pequod)**

“Ye haven’t seen Old Thunder, have ye?”

“jump quick to his orders!  
Step and growl, -growl and go’s the word with Ahab.”

**-ELIJAH (old sailor whom Ishmael encounters)**

For use with **Who is Ahab?**, p. 16 continued...

“Cut away from the stake, he looked;  
Wasted by fire; but not yet consumed.  
Moody and stricken he stood before us,  
With a crucifixion in his face...”

“With charts of all four of the oceans,  
Ahab threads a maze of currents,  
eddies and the sets of tides.  
He calculates the drifting  
of the sperm-whale’s food, not only  
at substantiated times, upon the well-known  
feeding-grounds does Ahab look  
to find his prey, but also, by his art...”

**-ISHMAEL**

“Ahab has that that’s bloody on his mind...”

“The Bible Ahab,-  
when that wicked king was slain,  
the dogs, -did they not lick his blood?”

“But I signed articles to hunt whales,  
Not my commander’s vengeance!”

“Horrible old man!  
Whose thinking thus makes him Prometheus;  
a vulture feeds upon that heart forever:-“

“I disobey my God, obeying him!”

**-STARBUCK (First Mate)**

For use with **The Whiteness of the Whale**, p. 18

*“The Whiteness of the Whale”*

**AHAB**

Dost thou know aught, lad, of the whiteness of the whale?

**PIP**

The white whale...Moby Dick’s the name...

**AHAB**

Aye, but the *whiteness* of him-

Whiteness, lad, enhances many things:

marble and japonica and pearls;

the innocence of brides; the ermine

majesty of justice. Yet something lurks

in whiteness strikes panic to the soul!

**PIP**

The waves was foaming white

when I was drowning, master;

I was terrible afraid...

**AHAB**

Whiteness, terror...

Even the King of Terror

rides his pallid horses; and think thee

of the albatross, whence come those clouds

of dread in which the snowy phantom sails

in all imaginations. And what is it

in the Albino man so strangely shocks

the eye, that he is loathed by his own kin?

It is the whiteness which invests him!

**PIP**

Whiteness...and ghosts...

And ghosts are white...

**AHAB**

Ghosts, riding in a milk-white fog...

the muffled rollings of the milky sea;

bleak rustlings of the festooned frosts

of mountains; and the desolate shiftings

of the windrowed snows of prairies...

Pondering all this, the palsied universe

lies white before us like a leper.

And of whiteness – all of whiteness-

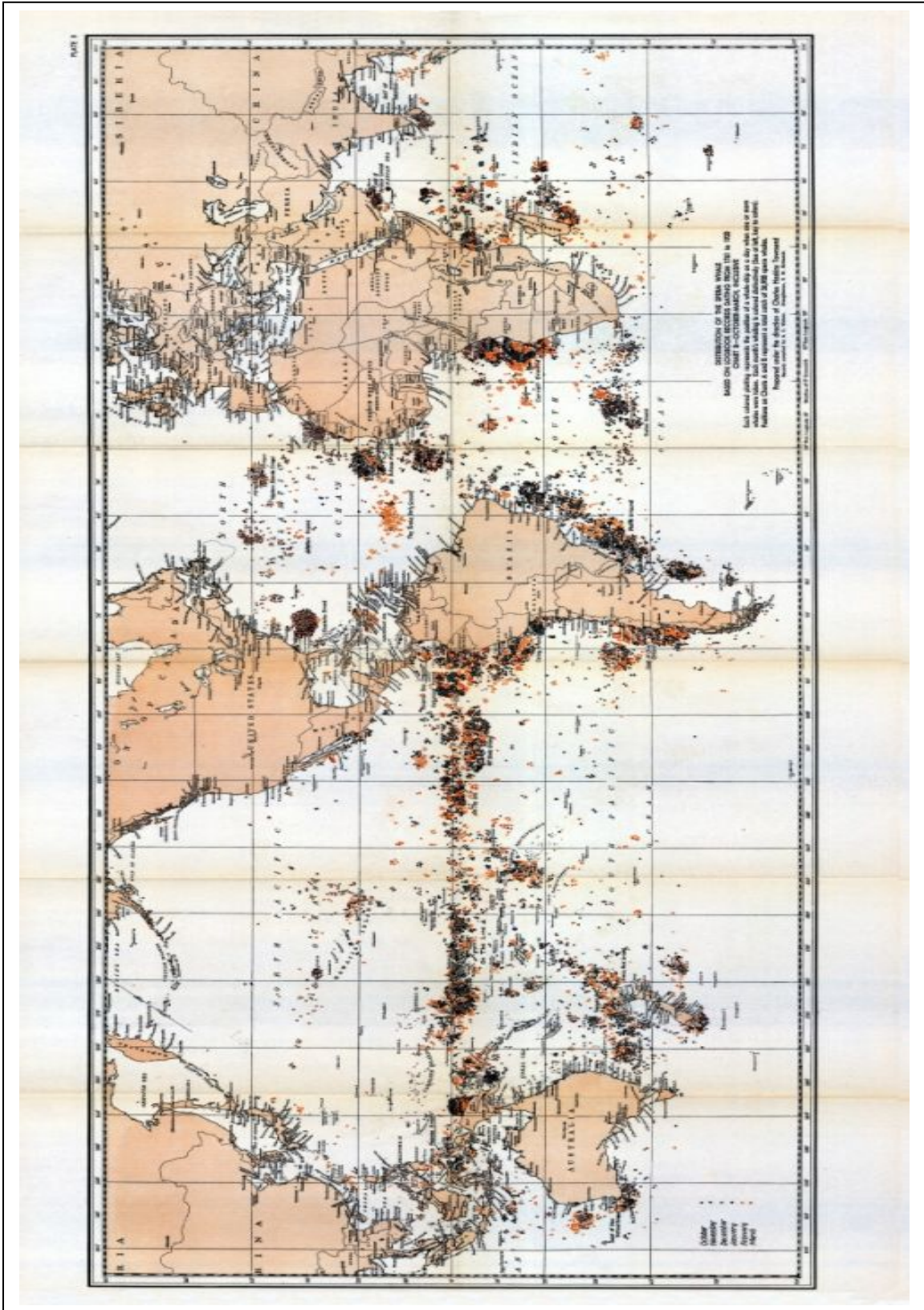
the Albino whale has been my symbol!

D’ye wonder at my fiery hunt?

**PIP**

Death to whiteness!

For use with **Mapping: A Whaling Voyage**, p. 19



For use with **Adapting a Whale of a Novel**, p. 21

At last the anchor was up, the sails were set, and off we glided. It was a short, cold Christmas; and as the short northern day merged into night, we found ourselves almost broad upon the wintry ocean, whose freezing spray cased us in ice, as in polished armor...

As for Peleg himself, he took it more like a philosopher; but for all his philosophy, there was a tear twinkling in his eye, when the lantern came too near...

But, at last, he turned to his comrade, with a final sort of look about him,-  
“Captain Bildad- come, old shipmate, we must go. Back the mainyard there! Boat ahoy! Stand by to come close alongside, now! Careful, careful!- come, Bildad, boy- say your last. Luck to ye, Starbuck- luck to ye, Mr. Stubb- luck to ye, Mr. Flask- good-bye and good luck to ye all- and this day three years I’ll have a hot supper smoking for ye in old Nantucket. Hurrah and away!”

“God bless ye, and have ye in His holy keeping, men,” murmured old Bildad, almost incoherently. “I hope ye’ll have fine weather now, so that Captain Ahab may soon be moving among ye- a pleasant sun is all he needs, and ye’ll have plenty of them in the tropic voyage ye go. Be careful in the hunt, ye mates. Don’t stave the boats needlessly, ye harpooners; good white cedar plank is raised full three per cent within the year. Don’t forget your prayers, either. Mr. Starbuck, mind that cooper don’t waste the spare staves. Oh! The sail-needles are in the green locker. Don’t whale it too much a’ Lord’s days, men; but don’t miss a fair chance either, that’s rejecting Heaven’s good gifts. Have an eye to the molasses tierce, Mr. Stubb; it was a little leaky, I thought. If ye touch at the islands, Mr. Flask, beware of fornication. Good-bye, good-bye! Don’t keep that cheese too long down in the hold, Mr. Starbuck; it’ll spoil. Be careful with the butter- twenty cents the pound it was, and mind ye, if –“

*Chapter 22, “Merry Christmas”*

Adapting a Whale of a Novel, continued...

**STUBB.**

All hands are mustered, sir.

**PELEG.**

Thankee, Mr. Stubb. Now, then- ye misbegotten whale-butchers! It'll be a short, cold Christmas for ye; but I hope ye'll have fine weather soon, so Cap'n Ahab can be moving out amongst ye- Ye harpooners, don't stove the boats in needlessly- white cedar plank is raised full three per cent this year!- Don't forget your prayers, either.- Mr. Starbuck, mind ye don't keep the cheese too long down in the hold, 'twill spoil, and cautious does it with the butter- Butter's gone to twenty cents the pound. Men- don't whale it too much o'Lord's days;- but don't miss a fair chance either, that's rejecting Heaven's own good gifts. Have an eye to the molasses, Mr. Stubb,- it's a might leaky.- If ye touch at the islands, for God's sake, Mr. Flask- beware of fornication!- Good luck to ye all! And this day, three years from now, I'll have a good hot smoking supper waitin' for ye all in old Nantucket!- God bless ye, and have ye in His holy keeping, men!

*Act I, Moby Dick Rehearsed*

For use with **Adapting a Whale of a Novel**, additional passage

“Landlord! said I, “what sort of a chap is he- does he always keep such late hours?” It was now hard upon twelve o’clock.

The landlord chuckled again with his lean chuckle, and seemed to be mightily tickled at something beyond my comprehension. “No,” he answered, “generally he’s an early bird- airley to bed and airly to rise- yea, he’s the bird what catches the worm. But to-night he went out a peddling, you see, and I don’t see what on airth keeps him so late, unless, may be, he can’t sell his head.”

“Can’t sell his head?- What sort of a bamboozingly story is this you are telling me?” getting into a towering rage. “Do you pretend to say, landlord, that this harpooner is actually engaged this blessed Saturday night, or rather Sunday morning, in peddling his head around this town?”

“That’s precisely it,” said the landlord, “and I told him he couldn’t sell it here, the market’s overstocked.”

“With what?” shouted I.

“With heads to be sure; ain’t there too many heads in the world?”

“I tell you what it is, landlord,” said I quite calmly, “you’d better stop spinning that yarn to me- I’m not green.”

“May be not,” taking out a stick and whittling a toothpick, “but I rayther guess you’ll be done brown if that ere harpooner hears you a slanderin’ his head.”

“I’ll break it for him,” said I, now flying into a passion again at this unaccountable farrago of the landlord’s.

“It’s broke a’ready,” said he.

“Broke,” said I- “broke, do you mean?”

“Sartain, and that’s the very reason he can’t sell it, I guess.”

*Moby-Dick, Chapter 3 “The Spouter Inn”*

For use with **Why Theater?**, p. 26

“Seven of the Provincetown Players are in the army or working for it in France and more are going. Not lightheartedly now, when civilization itself is threatened with destruction, we who remain have determined to go on next season with the work of our little theatre.

It is often said that theatrical entertainment in general is socially justified in this dark time as a means of relaxing the strain of reality, and thus helping to keep us sane. This may be true, but if more were not true – if we felt no deeper value in dramatic art than entertainment, we would hardly have the heart for it now.

One faculty, we know, is going to be of vast importance to the half-destroyed world – indispensable for its rebuilding – the faculty of creative imagination. That spark of it, which has given this group of ours such life and meaning as we have, is not so insignificant that we should now let it die. The social justification, which we feel to be valid now for makers and players of plays, is that they shall help keep alive in the world the light of imagination. Without it, the wreck of the world that was cannot be cleared away and the new world shaped.”

*George Cram Cook,  
Founder of New York’s Provincetown Playhouse, 1918.*

## Pre-Performance Questionnaire

Please rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 7. "1" represents something with which you strongly disagree "7" represents something with which you strongly agree. Circle the number that best matches your feelings.

I feel excited about seeing *Moby Dick Rehearsed*.

**Disagree**

**Agree**

1          2          3          4          5          6          7

I want to learn more about Theater.

**Disagree**

**Agree**

1          2          3          4          5          6          7

I have been to see plays before.

**None**

**Some**

**Many**

1          2          3          4          5          6          7

Name some plays you have seen?

Theater is fun!

**Disagree**

**Agree**

1          2          3          4          5          6          7

Seeing a play can teach me about life.

**Disagree**

**Agree**

1          2          3          4          5          6          7

Theater is more real than television and movies.

**Disagree**

**Agree**

1          2          3          4          5          6          7

Comments:

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| Student Initials: |
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Please continue on the back of this sheet.

## Post-Performance Questionnaire

After seeing *Moby Dick Rehearsed*, please rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 7. "1" represents something with which you strongly disagree "7" represents something with which you strongly agree. Circle the number that best matches your feelings.

I enjoyed seeing *Moby Dick Rehearsed*.

**Disagree**

**Agree**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

I want to learn more about Theater.

**Disagree**

**Agree**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

*Moby Dick Rehearsed* was better than other plays I have seen before.

**Disagree**

**Agree**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

I have  
never  
seen a  
play.

I want to see more theater.

**Disagree**

**Agree**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Seeing *Moby Dick Rehearsed* taught me something.

**Disagree**

**Agree**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

One thing I learned from *Moby Dick Rehearsed* is:

Theater is more real than television and movies.

**Disagree**

**Agree**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Melville's writing is important to know.

**Disagree**

**Agree**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**Comments: Please use the back of this sheet for additional comments.**

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