

# the acting company

ALL AMERICA'S | OUR STAGE

**Margot Harley**  
Producing Artistic Director

**Stephen Alemán**, Director of Education

## AMERICAN DREAMS: Lost and Found

Written by **Peter Frisch**  
Adapted from the book by **Studs Terkel**  
**Nana Simopoulos**, Composer  
**Lois Walden**, Lyricist

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Teacher Resource Guide  
by **Paul Michael Fontana**, Curriculum Specialist

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# Section 1: Introduction

Thanks for taking some of your classroom time to work on *American Dreams: Lost and Found*! Although your students will enjoy the play without preparation, the experience can be deepened by some pre- and post-performance classroom work.

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! They 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**, Actor-driven **Workshops and Master Classes**, post-performance **Question and Answer Sessions**, teacher training workshops called **Partners in Education** and a variety of specially-designed outreach programs for high school students, college students and adults. We also provide **The Bob Hope Student Workshop Series**, a series of performance-based workshops for young theatergoers meant to introduce them to Shakespeare. This year, the play in this series is *The Tempest*.

If you need more information on any of these programs, please call Stephen Alemán, Director of Education at 212-258-3111 or e-mail him at **[saleman@TheActingCompany.org](mailto:saleman@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 is Studs Terkel

- **Overall Objective:** The students will know the facts of the life and career of Studs Terkel and his work.

### Interviewing Studs Terkel

#### Objective:

- The students will learn about Terkel's life
- The students will write interview questions based on Terkel's life.

Studs Terkel is best known as America's greatest oral historian, having collected interviews of people, famous and not-so-famous, for over 40 years. He has published transcripts of the interviews in books on a variety of themes.

Studs Terkel, prize-winning author and radio broadcast personality, was born Louis Terkel in New York on May 16, 1912. His father, Samuel, was a tailor and his mother, Anna (Finkel), was a seamstress. He had three brothers. The family moved to Chicago in 1922 and opened a rooming house. Terkel credits his knowledge of the world to the tenants who gathered in the lobby of the hotel and the people who congregated in nearby Bughouse Square, a meeting place for workers, labor organizers, dissidents, the unemployed and religious fanatics of many persuasions. In 1939, he married Ida Goldberg and had one son.

Terkel attended University of Chicago and received a law degree in 1934. He chose not to pursue a career in law. After a brief stint with the civil service in Washington D.C., he returned to Chicago and worked with the WPA Writers Project in the radio division. One day he was asked to read a script and soon found himself in radio soap operas, in other stage performances and on a WAIT news show. After a year in the Air Force, he returned to writing radio shows and ads. He was on a sports show on WBBM and then, in 1944, he landed his own show on WENR. This was called "The Wax Museum Show" and allowed him to express his own personality and play recordings he liked from folk music, opera, jazz or blues. A year later, he had his own television show called "Stud's Place" and started asking people the kind of questions that marked his later work as an interviewer.

In 1952, Terkel began working for WFMT, first with "The Studs Terkel Almanac" and "The Studs Terkel Show," primarily to play music. The interviewing came along by accident. This later became the award-winning "The Studs Terkel Program." His first book, *Giants of Jazz*, was published in 1956.

Ten years later, his first book of oral history interviews, *Division Street : America*, came out. It was followed by a succession of oral history books on the 1930s Depression, World War II, race relations, working, the American Dream and aging. His latest book, *Will the Circle Be Unbroken : Reflections on Death, Rebirth, and Hunger for a Faith*, was published in 2001. Terkel continues to interview people, work on his books and make public appearances.

Biographical material from the Chicago Historical Society Website  
(where Studs Terkel is the first Distinguished Scholar-in-Residence)

**Exercise:** Provide each student a copy of the biography of Studs Terkel above (a copy is found in the Reproducibles Section at the end of this Resource Guide). After everyone has read it, discuss what aspects of his life the students think contributed to his ultimate career as an interviewer and oral historian.

Author Garry Wills in his introduction to Terkel's book on the Theater, *The Spectator*, wrote, "The most important part of an interview, so far as the questioner is concerned, takes place before the interview. Studs is the best prepared interviewer I have ever met." Ask each student to look, again, at the biography of Terkel. 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 Studs Terkel and, with the help of the class, answer some of the questions on the other student's lists.

## Create a Poem

### Objective:

- The students will read quotes from Studs Terkel's writing
- The students will create a poem using the quote as inspiration

**Exercise:** Provide each student with one of the quotes (a sheet with all the quotes is found in the Reproducibles Section on page 25 of this guide). 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 quote. Remind them of some of the literary devices they have studied (alliteration, repetition, metaphor, etc.) that you want them to use in their poem.

"It was one war that many who would have resisted 'your other wars' supported enthusiastically. It was a 'just war,' if there is any such animal. In a time of nuclear weaponry, it is the language of a lunatic." *The Good War*

"The war was fun for America. I'm not talking about the poor souls who lost sons and daughters. But for the rest of us, the war was a hell of a good time." *The Good War*

"The war changed our whole idea of how we wanted to live when we got back. We set our sights pretty high. All of us wanted better levels of living." *The Good War*

"Ours was the only country among the combatants in World War Two that was neither invaded nor bombed. Ours were the only cities not blasted to rubble." *The Good War*

"The nomadic, transient nature of contemporary life has made diffusion the order – or disorder – of the city....I guess I was seeking some balance in the wildlife of the city..." *Division Street*

"I went through a bad time,' recalls a fireman's wife. 'I felt like being white middle-class had a stigma to it. Everything was our fault. Every time I turned on the TV, it would be constant trying to send me on a guilt trip because I had a decent life'."

*Race*

"True there was a sharing among many of the dispossessed, but, at close quarters, frustration became, at times, violence, and violence turned inward."

*Hard Times*

"Sons and fathers fell away, one from the other. And the mother, seeking work, said nothing. Outside forces, except to the more articulate and political rebels, were in some vague way responsible, but not really. It was a personal guilt."

*Hard Times*

### **Recommended for Teachers**

Lesson Plans from The Chicago Historical Society Website are based on their collection of his audio archive, much of which is available there:

**<http://www.studsterkel.org/index.html>**

## Section 3: What to Look for in American Dreams

**Overall Objective:** The students will have an introduction to the world of Studs Terkel's play, *American Dreams: Lost and Found*.

### Brainstorm from the Title: Terkel's Play

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

**Objective:**

- The students will explore the title of Terkel's *American Dreams: Lost and Found*

**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 *American Dreams: Lost and Found*. 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 *American Dreams: Lost and Found* from looking at the words and images on the book's cover and the poster for The Acting Company production
- The students will discuss the choices made by publishers and executives to put the images and words on the cover

**Exercise:** Bring in a copy of Studs Terkel's book *American Dreams: Lost and Found*. Ask the students to look at the cover of the book.

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

What words did the publishers choose to put on the cover? In what font is the title of the play? What other words or phrases are on the cover? Do these words and phrases help sell this edition? Are you more likely to buy a book or magazine based on images or words? Are there images and words on the back cover?

Why did Terkel choose this title? Did he feel the title would help sell copies of the book?

Do the same exercise with the poster or handbill for The Acting Company production which you can get from the theater. You can also show them the image on our website: [www.TheActingCompany.org](http://www.TheActingCompany.org).

**Post Performance follow up:** Ask the students to create a poster or book cover for *American Dreams: Lost and Found*. They can cut images out of magazines and newspapers or draw them. What words will they include and why?

# Characters in American Dreams: Lost and Found

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

**Exercise:** Reproduce the following page for the class from the Reproducibles Section, page 25. Discuss what each of the names makes us feel about them. From what languages are the names derived? What nationalities seem to be represented in the list?

## *CHARACTERS in American Dreams: Lost and Found*

RAPHAEL ROSA\*  
TED TURNER  
ROMONA BENNETT\*  
FRANK WILLIS  
CAREY EDWARDS\*  
JODEAN CULBERT  
RAY KAEPLINGER\*  
ROSALIE SORRELLS  
BOB BROWN  
PANDARIK DAS  
EMMA KNIGHT  
KEN JACKSON  
BOB ZIAK  
MATT MATEJKOWSKI  
LEE KUNZMAN  
SHARON FOX  
JILL ROBINSON  
ANASTASIAS KOSTELIS\*  
RUTH CURRY  
HERSHEL LIGON  
VERNON JARRETT\*  
C.P. ELLIS\*  
ERMA "TINY" MOTTON\*

*\* denotes characters in one hour version*

Have each student choose one of the names on the list. Pondering that character from his or her name, the students can imagine what that person's American Dream might be and write it out as a speech in the voice of that character.

## The Structure of the Production

### Objective:

- The students will discuss their reactions to the storytelling in *American Dreams: Lost and Found*

**Facts:** Terkel's books, including *American Dreams: Lost and Found*, are written entirely based on interviews with actual people. Adaptor Peter Frisch took portions of the interviews in the book *American Dreams: Lost and Found* and made them into a piece of theater. Composer Nana Simopoulos and Lyricist Lois Walden took some of the selections in the book and turned them into songs. Director Rebecca Guy and The Acting Company members took the play and the songs and brought it to life on stage.

**Exercise:** Discuss whether the play had a plot or if it was made up of many short plots. Did the play tell a story through the multiple stories? Were the stories connected or linked? Were the students surprised by the non-linear storytelling? Was anyone confused by it?

## Themes of the Play

**Objective:**

- The students will look for an underlying theme in *American Dreams: Lost and Found*
- The students will discuss themes in literature

**Exercise:** When the students see *American Dreams: Lost and Found*, ask them to find some deeper meaning or message in the play, beyond just the story of each character. What are some of the themes that the students see in the play? Can a piece of art or literature have different meanings to different observers?

Some themes the students might watch out for in The Acting Company production include: Patriotism, Injustice, Class Distinction, Race and Racism, Ecology, Goal-setting, Government, Money, Immigration.

Does the play come off as pro- or anti-American?  
Does America live up to the hype?  
Does America live up to the Constitution?

## Research Paper Topics

If you are interested in having your students write research papers on topics related to *American Dreams: Lost and Found*, we can suggest the following: The Battle of Little Big Horn, The Watergate Scandal, American Folk Songs, Logging in the American Northwest, Immigration in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Ted Turner, The Hare Krishna Movement, "Soldier of Fortune" Magazine and Mayor Daley of Chicago.

## Section 4: Oral History

**Overall Objective:** The students will know the history and function of oral history

NOTE: This unit is made up of lead-up activities and exercises. You know your students and their experience in the area of oral history and interviewing and therefore you can best determine how much of the initial material must be covered.

### What is Oral History?

**Objective:**

- The students will know the meaning of the term “Oral History”
- The students will extract information from technical writing

“Oral history is defined for historians in as ‘interviewing participants or experts in a particular subject or issue and preserving their judgments and recollections. Oral history materials contain information that is not normally preserved in official documents.’ Oral history materials... supplement, but do not replace, official written records. Oral history preserves through interviews an individual's interpretation or recollection of events. The final product, whether it is an interview tape or transcript, reflects the combined effort of the interviewer and interviewee in the creation of a unique historical account. An interview is subject to the same scholarly analysis and standards that a historian applies to other sources. It is the responsibility of the historian to sift and weigh all evidence and to use sources wisely in the preparation of historical accounts. Like all historical sources, interviews contain personal biases, but these biases may themselves constitute important data for the historian's consideration. Interviewees may also be unwilling to honestly discuss mistakes or errors even years after the fact. A potentially greater problem is the inability of some interviewees to provide accurate accounts because of the limitations of human memory. This is a special concern when recounting traumatic events or actions that took place years before.”

from Oral History: Techniques and Procedures by Stephen E. Everett

**Exercise:** Give each student a copy of the definition above. Using the questions below, the students can identify important aspects of the science of oral history. (A worksheet with Mr. Everett’s definition and the follow-up questions is found on page 28 of the Reproducibles section of this guide).

#### Questions and Answers:

Q: If Oral History is meant to interview people to preserve their opinions and recollections, how do historians choose the people they interview?

A: They try to choose “participants or experts in a particular subject or issue.”

Q: Why, do you think, is each Oral History a “unique historical account”?

A: Students will provide opinions. However, answers should include the concept that each person interviewed brings his/her own point of view.

Q: What does Everett mean by the phrase “sift and weigh all evidence”?

A: Historians must match the biases, memories and points of view of the interviewees with historical facts.

Q: What three concerns does Everett express about the reliability of Oral History?

A: Personal biases, dishonesty and the limitations of human memory.

Q: In your opinion, is this a valid form of historical research or not? Why?

A: Students will provide opinions.

## Interview Questions

### Objective:

- The students will know the difference between open and closed questions
- The students will write possible interview questions

**Exercise:** Write the following three questions on the board:

Does school begin too early in the morning?

How many times have you been late to school this year?

How might starting school later in the day change school and home life?

Discuss possible answers to the questions. The first question is a “closed question” with only a “yes” or “no” answer possible. The second is answerable only with a number, “seven times,” “none,” or whatever, and is also a “closed question.” The third is an “open question,” with unlimited answers that solicits the opinions of the interviewee. Ask the students to suggest revisions of the first two questions to make them “open.”

**Exercise:** Working in groups of two, ask the students to make up a list of 10 questions that they would ask Madonna (or choose for the class some other popular, well-known figure from the world or local arena – politics, sports, the arts – as long as the whole class is working on questions for the same person). Remind them that the better prepared an interviewer is, the better the interview will be. Remind them, too, that all 10 questions must be “open questions.” Compare questions in the whole group and come up with a list of 10-15 questions.

## Interviewing

### Objective:

- The students will execute an Oral History interview
- The students will learn about a moment in history from an older American

**Note:** Although many interviewers, like Studs Terkel, use sound or video recording equipment, students can use pens and paper to complete this exercise.

**Stage One:** The history of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy  
Give each student a copy of the article below (a page with multiple copies can be found on page 29 of the Reproducibles Section of this guide). Explain to them that many people in their 50's and older say they remember every detail about

the events of those emotional days, including where they were when they heard the news.

On November 22, 1963, President Kennedy was shot and killed while riding in a motorcade in Dallas, Tex. The Warren Commission, appointed by his successor Lyndon Johnson to investigate the murder, eventually concluded that it was the work of a single assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald. In October of 1963, Oswald had obtained a job at the Texas State School Book Depository. From that building apparently the shots were fired that took President Kennedy's life. Oswald fled the scene and was later arrested and charged with the assassination. On November 24, while in police hands, Oswald was murdered by a nightclub proprietor, Jack Ruby. President Kennedy's death shocked the nation. Many felt that he would have gone on to achieve greatness as a President. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

from The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition. 2001

### **Stage Two: Creating Interview Questions**

Based on this brief encyclopedia account, ask students each to write 7-10 questions that they might ask of someone who was alive during the time of the assassination of President Kennedy. Remind them, once again, that the better prepared an interviewer is, the better the interview will be. Remind them, too, that all 10 questions must be "open questions." Ask volunteers to share their questions with the class.

### **Stage Three: The Interviews**

Ask each student to choose an older adult (grandparent, neighbor, teacher, etc. – someone who is at least 50 years old) to interview on the subject of the Kennedy Assassination. Beginning with, but not limited to the questions written for Stage Two, each should interview their subjects, being careful to accurately record their words (not just the gist of their statements). If audio or video equipment is available, it may make the process easier, but it is not necessary.

### **Stage Four: The Essay**

Have the students write a one- to two-page essay based on the interview, trying, as Everett put it, "to sift and weigh all evidence" and watch out for the dreaded personal biases and memory gaps.

### **Stage Five: Debrief**

Discuss with the students the triumphs and challenges of this type of research. Where did they find the most success? Was it an emotional experience? How were the pre-written questions helpful? Did anyone go off the list of questions? Why?

### **Recommended for Teachers**

Lesson Plans from the Library of Congress website on Using Oral History:  
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/oralhist/ohfwp.html>

## Section 5: The Theater

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

### 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 *American Dreams: Lost and Found* 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 Acting Company**.

#### 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.

[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 wheelwright makes wheels. A playwright makes plays. Plays are of use to other artists - Actors, Directors, Designers - who use the script to make their own artistic statement. Studs Terkel the author of the book *American Dreams: Lost and Found* and Peter Frisch is the playwright who adapted his book for The Acting Company.

#### The Director

After reading the playwright's script, the director decides on an overall vision for the production. The director meets with the Creative Team to assemble a unified look for the sets, costumes, lighting and other elements. The director oversees the actors in rehearsal, often with the help of the Stage Manager. In the case of *American Dreams: Lost and Found*, director Rebecca Guy wanted to bring to life the words of the people Terkel interviewed and establish a communal way of telling their stories to the audience.

### **The Composer**

The Composer writes music. In this case, the music had to underscore emotions in the play, support the characters on stage and tell the audience about them. The music in *American Dreams: Lost and Found* is eclectic, covering many musical styles and periods.

### **The Lyricist**

A Lyricist is a poet who writes words for songs. The Lyricist for *American Dreams: Lost and Found* took the interviews presented by Studs Terkel in the book, and created poetry out of the words of the speakers. None of the lyrics in the play were made up, they all were adapted from the original texts in the book. Like the music, the lyrics cover a wide range of styles.

### **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) *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; maintains the artistic intentions of the Director and Producer after opening; keeps any records necessary to inform the Producer of attendance, time, welfare benefits, etc.; and maintains discipline.

### **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. They often do historical or sociological research to make the world of the play come to life. In this production of *American Dreams: Lost and Found*, the costumes are simple, from the twentieth century; however, they were all researched for accuracy and made to create a unified look for the play.

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

The theatre 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.

**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](http://www.theactingcompany.org). Feel free to have them correspond with the Company members through e-mail links.

## **Casting**

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

### **Objective:**

- The students will create a cast list for a movie of *American Dreams: Lost and Found*

**Exercise:** Ask the students, “If you were casting a movie of *American Dreams: Lost and Found*, what stars would you get to be in it?” Ask each to work independently and cast the shy Ray Kaepplinger\*, the heroic Frank Willis, the stoic Romona Bennett\*, the idealistic Pandarik Das, and the passionate Bob Ziak. While considering the film, where would each of the segments be filmed?

*\*denotes characters in one hour version*

## **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 theatres
- 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? In what type of theater was **The Acting Company’s** production of *American Dreams: Lost and Found* performed? What might be the benefits of each type of performance space? What might be the drawbacks of each?

### **Facts:**

Three 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.

**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 to the next theater and statistics about the theater (size, seating capacity, ticket prices).

## Still Images

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

### Objectives:

- The students will do a close reading of a song from *American Dreams: Lost and Found*
- The students will create tableaux based on images in the lyrics
- The students will create a movement piece based on the lyrics

**Exercise:** In the second act of *American Dreams: Lost and Found* is a song called “When We Were Young.” Provide each student with the following passage from the play (a page with the lyrics can be found on page 30 of the Reproducibles section of this guide). Ask seven students to each take one of the sections of the lyrics and divide the rest of the class among the sections. Introduce the idea of “tableau” to the class. Tableaux are living sculptures or frozen images made up of living actors’ bodies. Tell them that the poses they adopt in their tableau should be both easy to maintain for a few minutes (avoid one foot off the floor, for example) and easy to recreate.

Begin with each reader reciting his part in order so the class can get a sense of the whole lyric. Break the class into separate groups by section. The readers and the others should prepare a series of still images to illustrate the passage. Allow them about five minutes for this process. Give a warning to the group when they have a minute left and ask the groups to rehearse what they are going to present to the class. Reconvene the class as a whole and place them in a circle with a playing space in the center. Ask the readers to read the passages in order while the other members of each group present their tableaux. Follow the presentation with a discussion. You may wish to show the whole piece a second time before discussing.

IN AMERICA  
ALL MY LIFE  
ALL MY LIFE  
I AM THINKING  
COME TO THIS COUNTRY...COME TO THIS COUNTRY

FATHER WAS AN EAGLE SCOUT  
BROTHER WAS AN EAGLE SCOUT  
WHEN I WAS YOUNG I HAD TO BE AN EAGLE SCOUT

MOVIE STARS  
THEY ALL CAME TO THIS COUNTRY  
CAME TO THIS COUNTRY  
COME TO THIS COUNTRY

(spoken)

Liz Taylor, Clark Gable, Vivien Leigh

(spoken)

I did it!! More than did it!!

BADGES AND BADGES BEYOND EAGLE SCOUT  
CHURCH ACOLYTE  
CLUB PRESIDENT  
THAT 'S RIGHT THAT'S ME

IN MY MANSION  
I WILL HAVE A THOUSAND SERVANTS  
FIVE ROLLS ROYCES AT MY DOOR  
I WOULD HAVE THIS AND MORE

MOTHER SHE WAS PRESIDENT  
OF THE WIVES FACULTY  
THAT'S OUR FAMILY!  
FATHER MOTHER BROTHER AND ME

IN AMERICA  
IN AMERICA

*American Dreams: Lost and Found*  
Lyrics by Lois Walden

## Why Theater?

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

### Objective:

- The students will explore the importance of theater

**Exercise:** Give each student a copy of the following quote (found on page 31 of 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 post-September 11 America. 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 *American Dreams: Lost and Found* provide? Or does it do something else? Can theater provide different things for different people? Can it provide many things for an individual?

In these times of heightened national security and worldwide terror, we found the following 1918 quote to be relevant, moving and insightful 83 years later.

“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

# Theatre 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.
- ❖ Eat and drink only in the theater lobby.
- ❖ Turn off all cellular phones and pagers.
- ❖ 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 and 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 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 in NYC?) How has New York City survived the September 11<sup>th</sup> Tragedy? What is the best part of living in New York? What is the worst?

What about ***American Dreams: Lost and Found***, 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? Is it fun working on the characters in these pieces and knowing that they are real people? What do the actors think the themes of the play are? How is working on an original play different from a play by Shakespeare (which is a lot of what The Acting Company does)?

**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!

## **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 *American Dreams: Lost and Found*.
- Write a scene for two of the characters in the play that you think we should have seen but that was not in Terkel's play. For example, a prologue scene set at JFK airport where C.P. Ellis and Erma "Tiny" Motton discuss America.
- Write an epilogue. For example, what happens to Ray Kaepplinger and Romona Bennett after the story ends? How about Anastasis Kostelis and Vernon Jarrett?
- Write a review of our production.
- Write a theatrical adaptation of another piece of literature, perhaps a short story.

### **Draw**

- Draw the world of one or more of the characters.
- Draw images from the production.
- Draw a poster for our production of *American Dreams: Lost and Found*.
- Create a collage of images from magazines in response to the play.

## **Create a Performance of Sections from American Dreams: Lost and Found**

Get a copy of Studs Terkel's book *American Dreams: Lost and Found, Working, Race: How Blacks and Whites Feel about the American Obsession*, or one of the others. Select several interviews and distribute them to small groups of students. Have each group write a short play based on the interview. The plays can be an adaptation of the source material, a reflection on the themes in the interview or whatever the students devise. Ask them to present their work to the other groups. Send us copies of the plays if you wish.

# **We Want to Hear from YOU and your STUDENTS!**

## **By Mail**

The Acting Company  
PO Box 898  
New York NY 10108  
**Telephone:** 212-258-3111  
**Fax:** 212-258-3299

## **By E-Mail**

Paul Fontana, Curriculum Specialist  
Pfontana@ TheActingCompany.org  
Stephen Alemán, Director of Education  
Saleman@ TheActingCompany.org  
Education@TheActingCompany

## **On the Internet**

[www.TheActingCompany.org](http://www.TheActingCompany.org)

## **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 a Pre-Performance and a Post-Performance Questionnaire on pages 33 and 34 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 *American Dreams: Lost and Found*.

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: The Acting Company**

The Acting Company, America's only nationally-touring classical repertory theater, was founded in 1972 by current Producing Artistic Director Margot Harley and the late John Houseman 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 story-telling, 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 Juilliard School's Drama Division in 1972. Since then, it has traveled over 500,000 miles through 48 states and nine other countries, performing a repertoire of 100 plays for more than 2 million people.

### **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 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.

# Section 8: Cast List and Information

THE ACTING COMPANY  
In  
AMERICAN DREAMS: LOST AND FOUND  
By Studs Terkel  
Adapted by **Peter Frisch**

Directed by  
**Rebecca Guy**

*Lyricist* Lois Walden  
*Composer* Nana Simopoulos  
*Scenic Design* by Narelle J. Sissons  
*Costume Design* by Christianne Myers  
*Lighting Design* by Jeremy Kumin  
*Sound Design* by Jeffrey Yoshi Lee  
*Musical Direction* by Linda Twine  
*Dramaturg* Douglas Langworthy  
*Casting* by Liz Woodman, C.S.A.

*General Manager* Daryl Samuel  
*Production Manager* Bonnie J Baggesen  
*Production Stage Manager* Jennifer Cicelsky George  
*Stage Manager* Janice M. Brandine  
*Staff Repertory Director* Giovanna Sardelli

## CAST

(in order of appearance)

Rafael Rosa.....	Paul Cosentino
Ted Turner.....	Peter Zazzali
Romona Bennett.....	Siobhan Juanita Brown
Frank Willis.....	Lamont Stephens
Carey Edwards.....	Joe Osheroff
Jodean Culbert.....	Jaime St. Peter
Ray Kaepplinger.....	Michael Lluberres
Rosalie Sorrells.....	Jessica Bates
Bob Brown.....	Glenn Peters
Pandarik Das.....	Fletcher McTaggart
Emma Knight.....	Christen Simon
Ken Jackson.....	Peter Zazzali
Bob Ziak.....	Kevin Kraft
Matt Matejowski.....	Fletcher McTaggart
Lee Kunzman.....	Joe Osheroff
Sharon Fox.....	Siobhan Juanita Brown
Jill Robinson.....	Jessica Bates
Anastasis Kostelis.....	Evan Zes
Ruth Curry.....	Jaime St. Peter
Hershel Ligon.....	Michael Lluberres
Vernon Jarrett.....	Lamont Stephens
C.P. Ellis.....	Glenn Peters
Erma "Tiny" Motton.....	Christen Simon

This production has been greatly assisted by the support of The Eleanor Naylor Dana Charitable Trust, The John Golden Fund and The Snowdon Foundation.

# Appendix: Reproducibles

For use with **Interviewing Studs Terkel**, p. 4

## The Life of Studs Terkel

Studs Terkel, prize-winning author and radio broadcast personality was born Louis Terkel in New York on May 16, 1912. His father, Samuel, was a tailor and his mother, Anna (Finkel), was a seamstress. He had three brothers. The family moved to Chicago in 1922 and opened a rooming house. Terkel credits his knowledge of the world to the tenants who gathered in the lobby of the hotel and the people who congregated in nearby Bughouse Square, a meeting place for workers, labor organizers, dissidents, the unemployed and religious fanatics of many persuasions. In 1939, he married Ida Goldberg and had one son.

Terkel attended University of Chicago and received a law degree in 1934. He chose not to pursue a career in law. After a brief stint with the civil service in Washington D.C., he returned to Chicago and worked with the WPA Writers Project in the radio division. One day he was asked to read a script and soon found himself in radio soap operas, in other stage performances, and on a WAIT news show. After a year in the Air Force, he returned to writing radio shows and ads. He was on a sports show on WBBM and then, in 1944, he landed his own show on WENR. This was called "The Wax Museum Show" and allowed him to express his own personality and play recordings he liked from folk music, opera, jazz or blues. A year later, he had his own television show called "Stud's Place" and started asking people the kind of questions that marked his later work as an interviewer.

In 1952, Terkel began working for WFMT, first with "The Studs Terkel Almanac" and "The Studs Terkel Show," primarily to play music. The interviewing came along by accident. This later became the award-winning, "The Studs Terkel Program." His first book, *Giants of Jazz*, was published in 1956. Ten years later, his first book of oral history interviews, *Division Street : America*, came out. It was followed by a succession of oral history books on the 1930s Depression, World War II, race relations, working, the American Dream and aging. His latest book, *Will the Circle Be Unbroken : Reflections on Death, Rebirth, and Hunger for a Faith*, was published in 2001. Terkel continues to interview people, work on his books, and make public appearances.

Biographical material from the Chicago Historical Society Website

For use with **Create a Poem**, p. 5

Copy and cut quotes into strips. Give one to each student

"It was one war that many who would have resisted 'your other wars' supported enthusiastically. It was a 'just war,' if there is any such animal. In a time of nuclear weaponry, it is the language of a lunatic." *The Good War*

"The war was fun for America. I'm not talking about the poor souls who lost sons and daughters. But for the rest of us, the war was a hell of a good time." *The Good War*

"The war changed our whole idea of how we wanted to live when we got back. We set our sights pretty high. All of us wanted better levels of living." *The Good War*

"Ours was the only country among the combatants in World War Two that was neither invaded nor bombed. Ours were the only cities not blasted to rubble." *The Good War*

"The nomadic, transient nature of contemporary life has made diffusion the order – or disorder – of the city....I guess I was seeking some balance in the wildlife of the city..." *Division Street*

"I went through a bad time,' recalls a fireman's wife. 'I felt like being white middle-class had a stigma to it. Everything was our fault. Every time I turned on the TV, it would be constant trying to send me on a guilt trip because I had a decent life'." *Race*

"True there was a sharing among many of the dispossessed, but, at close quarters, frustration became, at times, violence, and violence turned inward." *Hard Times*

"Sons and fathers fell away, one from the other. And the mother, seeking work, said nothing. Outside forces, except to the more articulate and political rebels, were in some vague way responsible, but not really. It was a personal guilt." *Hard Times*

*CHARACTERS in American Dreams: Lost and Found*

RAPHAEL ROSA\*  
TED TURNER  
ROMONA BENNETT\*  
FRANK WILLIS  
CAREY EDWARDS\*  
JODEAN CULBERT  
RAY KAEPPINGER\*  
ROSALIE SORRELLS  
BOB BROWN  
PANDARIK DAS  
EMMA KNIGHT  
KEN JACKSON  
BOB ZIAK  
MATT MATEJKOWSKI  
LEE KUNZMAN  
SHARON FOX  
JILL ROBINSON  
ANASTASIAS KOSTELIS\*  
RUTH CURRY  
HERSHEL LIGON  
VERNON JARRETT\*  
C.P. ELLIS\*  
ERMA "TINY" MOTTON\*

*\*denotes characters in one hour version*

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS \_\_\_\_\_

## ORAL HISTORY WORKSHEET

“Oral history is defined for historians in as ‘interviewing participants or experts in a particular subject or issue and preserving their judgments and recollections. Oral history materials contain information that is not normally preserved in official documents.’ Oral history materials... supplement, but do not replace, official written records. Oral history preserves, through interviews, an individual’s interpretation or recollection of events. The final product, whether it is an interview tape or transcript, reflects the combined effort of the interviewer and interviewee in the creation of a unique historical account. An interview is subject to the same scholarly analysis and standards that a historian applies to other sources. It is the responsibility of the historian to sift and weigh all evidence and to use sources wisely in the preparation of historical accounts. Like all historical sources, interviews contain personal biases, but these biases may themselves constitute important data for the historian’s consideration. Interviewees may also be unwilling to honestly discuss mistakes or errors even years after the fact. A potentially greater problem is the inability of some interviewees to provide accurate accounts because of the limitations of human memory. This is a special concern when recounting traumatic events or actions that took place years before.”

from Oral History: Techniques and Procedures by Stephen E. Everett

1. If Oral History is meant to interview people to preserve their opinions and recollections, how do historians choose the people they interview?
2. Why, do you think, is each Oral History a “unique historical account”?
3. What does Everett mean by the phrase “sift and weigh all evidence”?
4. What three concerns does Everett express about the reliability of Oral History?
5. In your opinion, is this a valid form of historical research or not? Why?

On November 22, 1963, President Kennedy was shot and killed while riding in a motorcade in Dallas, Tex. The Warren Commission, appointed by his successor Lyndon Johnson to investigate the murder, eventually concluded that it was the work of a single assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald. In October of 1963, Oswald had obtained a job at the Texas State School Book Depository. From that building apparently the shots were fired that took President Kennedy's life. Oswald fled the scene and was later arrested and charged with the assassination. On November 24, while in police hands, Oswald was murdered by a nightclub proprietor, Jack Ruby. President Kennedy's death shocked the nation. Many felt that he would have gone on to achieve greatness as a President. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

from The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition. 2001

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from The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition. 2001

IN AMERICA  
ALL MY LIFE  
ALL MY LIFE  
I AM THINKING  
COME TO THIS COUNTRY...COME TO THIS COUNTRY

FATHER WAS AN EAGLE SCOUT  
BROTHER WAS AN EAGLE SCOUT  
WHEN I WAS YOUNG I HAD TO BE AN EAGLE SCOUT

MOVIE STARS  
THEY ALL CAME TO THIS COUNTRY  
CAME TO THIS COUNTRY  
COME TO THIS COUNTRY  
(spoken)  
Liz Taylor, Clark Gable, Vivien Leigh

(spoken)  
I did it!! More than did it!!  
BADGES AND BADGES BEYOND EAGLE SCOUT  
CHURCH ACOLYTE  
CLUB PRESIDENT  
THAT 'S RIGHT THAT'S ME

IN MY MANSION  
I WILL HAVE A THOUSAND SERVANTS  
FIVE ROLLS ROYCES AT MY DOOR  
I WOULD HAVE THIS AND MORE

MOTHER SHE WAS PRESIDENT  
OF THE WIVES FACULTY  
THAT'S OUR FAMILY!  
FATHER MOTHER BROTHER AND ME

IN AMERICA  
IN AMERICA

American Dreams: Lost and Found  
Lyrics by Lois Walden

In these times of heightened national security and worldwide terror, we found the following 1918 quote to be relevant, moving and insightful 84 years later.

“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.

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George Cram Cook, founder of New York's Provincetown Playhouse, 1918

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- ❖ 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

# 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 *American Dreams: Lost and Found*.

**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:

Student Initials:

# Post-Performance Questionnaire

After seeing *American Dreams: Lost and Found*, 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 *American Dreams: Lost and Found*.

**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

*American Dreams: Lost and Found* was better than other plays I have seen before.

**Disagree**

**Agree**

**I have never seen a play.**

1                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6

I want to see more theater.

**Disagree**

**Agree**

1                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7

Seeing *American Dreams: Lost and Found* taught me something about life.

**Disagree**

**Agree**

1                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7

**Some Lessons in American Dreams are:**

Theater is more real than television and movies.

**Disagree**

**Agree**

1                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7

**Comments:**

Student Initials: