

Sister Rosa Parks, the Bus Stops Here

Jean Donatto

Grades: 3-12

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

Actress, storyteller Jean Donatto takes a balanced look at the turbulent Civil Rights Era in late 1950s Montgomery, Alabama. As Rosa Parks, Jean will describe the "incident" that aroused people of all races to begin the struggle for fair and equal treatment and inform your students about the social climate preceding, during, and following it.

TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills):

Grade	Theatre	Soc. Studies	Lang. Arts	The Students Will:
3	3.4, 3.5	3.1	3.17, 3.18, 3.20	
4	4.4, 4.5	4.5	4.15, 4.16, 4.18	* Respond to and evaluate theatre and theatrical performances.
5	5.4, 5.5	5.5, 5.20, 5.22	5.15, 5.16, 5.18	* Identify historical figures and their significance, accomplishments, and how they have changed communities past and present.
MS	1.4, 1.5	6.2, 6.14	6.14, 6.15, 6.17	* Explain relationships among rights, responsibilities, and duties in societies with representative governments.
	2.4, 2.5	7.7, 7.16, 7.17	7.14, 7.15, 7.17	
	3.4, 3.5	8.19, 8.21, 8.22	8.14, 8.15, 8.17	
HS	I.4, 1.5	WH.21	9.13, 9.14, 9.15	* Understand the Civil Rights Movement and its impact on history.
	II.4, II.5	USH.22	10.13, 10.14, 10.15	* Use the writing process to organize, write, and publish drafts.
	III.4, III.5	GOV.13, .16	11.13, 11.14, 11.15	* Write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events and ideas.
	IV.4, IV.5		12.13, 12.14, 12.15	* Write expository texts to communicate ideas and information.

STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness):

			The Students Will:
Writing	Grades 4 & 7	Reporting Category 1	* Compose a variety of written texts with a clear central idea, coherent organization, sufficient development, and effective use of language and conventions. * Demonstrate an understanding of issues and events in U.S. history.
	English I, II, III	Reporting Category 4	
Social Studies	Grade 8	Reporting Category 1	
	US History	Reporting Category 1	

Academic Vocabulary:

Freedom	Desegregation	Discrimination
Segregation	Courageous	Overcome

Background Terminology:

Boycott	The act of abstaining from using, buying, or dealing with someone or some organization as an expression of protest or as a means of coercion
Non-Violent Resistance	The practice of applying power to achieve socio-political goals through symbolic protests, economic or political non-cooperation, civil disobedience and other methods, without using violence
Bull Connor	A police official in Alabama during the American Civil Rights Movement and a staunch advocate of racial segregation
Mahatma Gandhi	A major political and spiritual leader of the Indian independence movement. He was the pioneer of resistance through mass civil disobedience, strongly founded upon non-violence
Walter Reuther	An American labor union leader, who made the United Automobile Workers (UAW) a major liberal force in the mid 20th century
Medal of Freedom	One of two highest civilian awards in the U.S.; recipients include Rosa Parks
Montgomery Improvement Association	Group led by Martin Luther King, Jr., successful in guiding the Montgomery Bus Boycott

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS:

Before the performance:

- Find out what students already know about African-American History, the Civil Rights Movement and Rosa Parks.

After the performance:

- Ask students what they learned about Civil Rights and Rosa Parks.
- Have students write, draw, dance, sing about, or act out their favorite part of the performance.

Language Arts:

- Write an essay about the importance of civil rights for all people.
- Think about what you would have done if you were Rosa Parks. Write an imagined account of the afternoon on that Montgomery bus, as well as the events that followed. Write a first-person essay from the perspective of Rosa Parks, the bus driver, or another passenger (black or white) who was on the bus that day. Include what you (the person whose persona you are adopting) felt as these historic events unfolded.
- Make believe that the year is 1955 and you just heard about the arrest of Rosa Parks. Become a newspaper reporter! In groups, cover a specific subject: Rosa Parks' childhood, the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Civil Rights Movement, how Parks devoted her life to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and life after the boycott. Use stand-out headlines and descriptive language. Also write newspaper editorials explaining your point of view about the segregation laws in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955. Assemble all of the articles and editorials to create one newspaper and display it on the bulletin board.
- Imagine yourself in Rosa's shoes. Think about being in a situation in which you are fighting to change the way things have always been. Imagine being the first to do something very hard — so hard most people wouldn't even try. Write about your feelings and ideas on this topic.

- Write a song, poem or rap about Rosa Parks.

Math:

- Use dates from the Rosa Parks website resources and calculate Mrs. Parks' age at the different significant events in her life.
- Determine how much money the Montgomery buses lost during the boycott.
- Create a budget. In the 1950s, the average salary was about \$4000. A person making the minimum wage made \$.75//hour. Create budgets for a family with the average salary of \$4,000/ year, and then make a budget for for a family making the minimum wage of \$.75/hour. What do you discover? Use these prices as a guide:

home=\$17,500	coke=\$.10/bottle	gas=\$.23/gallon	bread=\$.18/gallon
steak=\$.95/person	potatoes=\$.50/10 lbs	car=\$1,800	jeans=\$2.99
dress=\$8.95	rent=\$87/month		

Social Studies:

- Discuss unfair conditions you see in the world. Discuss non-violent solutions to these problems. Write a "protest" song.
- Create a Rosa Parks "Medal of Honor", including words and pictures, for a person or group you admire at school or home. Make construction-paper circles and cut red ribbons to string through a hole on the medal. Tell or write about the person you will present the medal to. This can be mom, dad, or any person in your life who has proven worthy of a medal.
- Learn about the rules, for white people and for black people, on buses in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1955. Research the "Jim Crow" segregation laws and the history of the Civil Rights Movement. Make a poster to display your findings and present it to the class.
- Consider what it means to break the law. Think about the following question: *Are people ever justified in breaking the law? Explain.* Consider circumstances where you think it might be alright to break the law. Working in groups, discuss why Rosa Parks was justified in breaking the law. Write a brief paragraph explaining your reasons.
- Role play the scene on the bus on that December day in 1955 when Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of the bus. Act out the story from the bus ride to the part where Mrs. Parks goes to jail. Then make freedom signs on construction paper. Next, role-play Dr. King and others going to the jail and taking Mrs. Parks out. Use the signs to march around the room.
- Take time to discuss feelings: What was Mrs. Parks thinking and feeling as she went to jail? How did the other bus riders feel? Speak as if you were the bus driver, Dr. King, or Mrs. Parks. On the board, put a web of the feelings that might have been demonstrated during this time: fear, shame, anger, determination, doubt, etc. Share times when you have experienced these feelings.

Science:

- Research science and inventions in the 1950s. Make a poster to display your information and make a presentation to the class.

Resources:

Related Websites:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahatma_Gandhi_-_note-0#_note-0
<http://www.fiftiesweb.com/pop/inventions.htm>
<http://www.brainpop.com/educators/community/bp-jr-topic/rosa-parks/>
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/rosa/index.htm>
<http://achievement.org/autodoc/page/par0int-3>
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/timeline/game.htm> (interactive)
<http://www.hfmgv.org/exhibits/rosaparks/chronology.asp>
http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/TM/WS_lp297-02.shtml
http://www.softschools.com/timelines/rosa_parks/timeline_7/

Related SmartBoard Sites:

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/whiteboards/socialstudies.htm>
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/index.htm>

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Actress, storyteller, playwright, director, radio personality, teacher and mentor, Jean Donatto brings years of varied experience to each performance and workshop. As a seasoned professional actress, Jean appeared in such popular films as *Home Fries*, and was featured in the KHOU production of *Gumby's Playhouse*. Trained by the American Conservatory Theater, Jean also performs frequently with Houston's Ensemble Theater, Stages Repertory Theatre and The Presidio in San Francisco. Jean's commitment to children is evident in her numerous and influential roles in many educational organizations. She has worked with the Children's Prison Art Project, the Texas Institute for the Arts in Education, the Texas Trunk Theater, and Houston Grand Opera S.T.A.R.S. program. Currently she is doing outreach with Houston International Theatre.