

The Glass Menagerie Escapism Pre-Show Curriculum		
<i>Length</i>	<i>Grade Level</i>	<i>Content Area</i>
1-2 class periods (45 – 90 minutes)	Middle School & High School	ELA, Theatre
Objective		Materials Needed
Students will create a visual journal that reflects their exploration of escapism, analyzing both its potential benefits and drawbacks through their personal reflection, literary examples, and artistic expression.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art supplies (mixed media preferable) • Blank journals or sketchbooks • Access to digital tools (optional) • Screen for sharing visual examples (optional) • Guernica Handout (included)
Activity Overview		
<p><i>NOTE: This activity has been aligned with TEKS and Universal Design for Learning. TEKS can be found at the end of this document. Check out the “Notes” section for ideas on how to expand activities or provide additional scaffolding.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction What is Escapism? 2. Guided Practice In Spain, there was Guernica! 3. Independent Practice Visual Journals 4. Presentation Sharing and Feedback 5. Reflection What to Keep in Mind at the Show 		
1. Introduction What is Escapism?		10 minutes
<p><i>Activity Steps</i></p> <p>a) Using Alley Re-Sourced, begin with a brief overview of <i>The Glass Menagerie</i> (if needed), and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The characters in the play we are going to see all rely on escapism in different ways. What does escapism mean to you? - Can you share examples of escapism in media or in your life? <p>b) Introduce the idea that escapism can be seen as both a coping mechanism and a potential moral failing.</p>		<p><i>Notes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Glass Menagerie on Alley Re-Sourced

<p>2. Guided Practice In Spain, there was Guernica!</p>	<p>10 minutes</p>
<p><i>Activity Steps</i></p> <p>a) Tom sees the escapism around him as a moral failing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The narrator, Tom, repeats the phrase, "In Spain, there was Guernica!" Guernica was a Spanish city destroyed by bombing around the same time the play takes place. Tom is pointing out how he thought people were preoccupied with shallow things like music and movies and dancing while there was real tragedy and suffering in the world. <p>b) Show students the collection of photos in the handout example and ask for their opinion – which photo might best represent Tom’s point of view on escapism? Why?</p>	<p><i>Notes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This section can be guided as a whole-class discussion, a Think-Pair-Share, or small group work. • Consider defining with the students (or providing a visual glossary) terms such as "escapism," "coping mechanism," and "moral failing."
<p>3. Independent Practice Visual Journal</p>	<p>25-30+ minutes</p>
<p><i>Activity Steps</i></p> <p>a) Explain that students will create a visual journal exploring both the pros and cons of escapism.</p> <p>b) They can include words (quotes, reflections, or key ideas) and images (like drawings, collages, printed images). Encourage mixed media to showcase their understanding in ways that resonate with them.</p> <p>c) Encourage them to explore both sides as they create. They can even divide their journal in two sections: one for the helpful aspects and one for the moral concerns.</p>	<p><i>Notes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a visible timer while the students are creating and give them verbal warnings. • Circulate the room to offer assistance and feedback as needed. • Students can assemble their findings for display in print or as a multimedia presentation.

<p>4. Presentation Sharing and Feedback</p>	<p>15-20+ minutes</p>
<p><i>Activity Steps</i></p> <p>a) Designate a stage area and have each person or group present their work, explaining their reflections on escapism.</p> <p>b) During presentations, use “See / Think / Wonder” to encourage reflection from the rest of the class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What did you see in this visual? Objectively, without interpretation. Just visual details. - What do you think is happening in this visual? What do you see that makes you think that? - What do you wonder? What questions come up for you as you look at this stage picture? Use “I wonder” to start your answer. 	<p><i>Notes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If time allows, students can display their work in gallery walk format. • Multiple means of action and expression: Students can express their understanding through various formats – a written reflection, multimedia presentation, or one-on-one oral presentation can adequately display the skills associated with this activity. • “See / Think / Wonder” is an Artful Thinking routine. You can learn more about it and similar exercises here.
<p>5. Reflection What to Keep in Mind at the Show</p>	<p>5-10 minutes</p>
<p><i>Activity Steps</i></p> <p>a) In your own life, when does escapism become helpful, and when might it cross into neglect?</p> <p>b) Think about what you knew or thought of escapism at the start of this lesson.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fill in the blanks: “I used to think _____. Now I think _____.” 	<p><i>Notes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections can be written in journals or as exit tickets or shared in pairs or small groups before shared with the class. <p><u>BONUS – Reflections After the Show</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which character relied on escapism the most? • How do you think the playwright views escapism?

TEKS			
<i>TEKS – MS ELA</i>	<i>TEKS – HS ELA</i>	<i>TEKS – MS Theatre</i>	<i>TEKS – HS Theatre</i>
<p>Reading: 6.11(C): Analyze how authors use literary elements to convey meaning.</p> <p>Listening and Speaking: 6.12(A): Engage in a range of collaborative discussions.</p> <p>Writing: 6.13(A): Write about personal experiences and reflections.</p>	<p>Reading: 9.11(B): Analyze the impact of historical and cultural contexts on literary works.</p> <p>Reading: 10.11(C): Use a range of strategies to analyze text.</p> <p>Writing: 11.12(D): Create visual representations of ideas or concepts.</p>	<p>Theatre/Foundations: 117.6(b)(2)(A): Analyze the characteristics of theatrical performance elements.</p> <p>Theatre/Foundations: 117.6(b)(2)(B): Use appropriate terminology to discuss and critique theatrical elements.</p> <p>Theatre/Foundations: 117.6(b)(3)(A): Create and present original works that demonstrate understanding of theatre elements.</p>	<p>Theatre/Foundations: 117.6(b)(1)(A): Analyze the elements of theatre production, including acting, directing, and design.</p> <p>Theatre/Foundations: 117.6(b)(1)(B): Evaluate the effectiveness of performances and productions.</p> <p>Theatre/Foundations: 117.6(b)(2)(C): Demonstrate the ability to apply acting techniques and methods in performance.</p> <p>Theatre/Foundations: 117.6(b)(3)(B): Collaborate with others to create and present original works.</p>

In Spain, there was Guernica!

This refers to a bombing during the Spanish Civil War, showing how serious and tragic things were happening in the world. Tom is pointing out how, while big events like that were going on, people around him were more focused on “shallow” things like music, dancing, and having fun.

Reflections

Look at the images below. Which image or images do you think reflect how Tom feels about the escapism he sees around him?

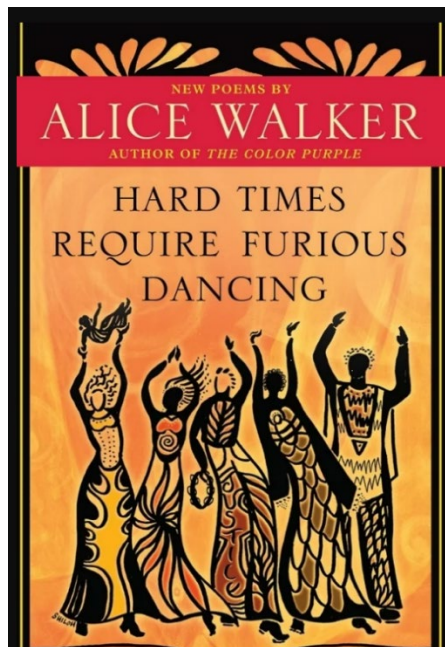


Photo from “[Dismaland](#)” installation by Banksy.

A staffer holds a bunch of black balloons printed with the phrase “I Am An Imbecile.”
Photo by Toby Melville/Reuters

Cover for a [book of poems by Alice Walker](#).



[Guernica](#), a painting by Pablo Picasso inspired by the bombing of Guernica, Spain (1937).