World Premiere Play

BLUE RIDGE

By Abby Rosebrock
Directed by Taibi Magar

Performances starting Dec 12!

ATLANTIC THEATER COMPANY
(Artistic Director, Neil Pepe. Managing Director, Jeffory Lawson) present
BLUE RIDGE
written by
ABBY ROSEBROCK
with
KYLE BELTRAN, MARIN IRELAND, PETER MARK KENDALL, NICOLE LEWIS, KRISTOLYN LLOYD
and
CHRIS STACK.

scenic designer, Adam Rigg. costume designer, Sarah Laux. lighting designer, Amith Chandrashaker. sound designer & additional composition, Mikaal Sulaiman. dialects, Stephen Gabis. fight director, UnkleDave’s Fight House. casting, Telsey + Company: Adam Caldwell, CSA; William Cantler, CSA; Karyn Casl, CSA. press, Boneau/Bryan-Brown. production stage manager, David Lurie-Perret. production manager, S.M. Payson. associate artistic director, Annie MacRae. general manager, Pamela Adams. directed by TAIBI MAGAR.

Linda Gross Theater, 336 W 20th St, NYC 866-811-4111 | www.atlantictheater.org

Study Guide: Students & Educators

Heather Baird  Tyler Easter
Director of Education  Education Associate
Fran Tarr   Ariane van Buren
Education Coordinator  Education/Literary Intern
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SYNOPSIS
A progressive high-school teacher with a rage problem retaliates against her unscrupulous boss and is sentenced to six months at a church-sponsored halfway house, where she attends to everyone’s recovery but her own. Set in a Southern Appalachia, Blue Ridge is a pitch-dark comedy about heartbreak, hell-raising and healing.

SETTING
A mountain house in northern Georgia, in Southern Appalachia, after the 2016 Election.

THEMES
Redemption
Betrayal
Abuse of Power
Pastor and Flock
Addiction and Recovery
Church in Appalachia
Rage
The love & hate/the hurt & happiness/the desire & despair between men and women.
Section II: Creative Team
The Cast
The Playwright & Director
CAST

KYLE BELTRAN (Wade) Broadway: The Cherry Orchard (Roundabout), In The Heights (also, first national tour). Off-Broadway: Fire in Dreamland (Public), Tin Cat Shoes (Clubbed Thumb), The Amateurs (Vineyard), A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Public Delacorte), Head of Passes (Public), The Flick (Barrow Street), Gloria (Vineyard), The Fortress of Solitude (Public), Choir Boy (MTC), The Netflix Plays (Ars Nova), 10 Things to Do Before I Die (2ST). Regional: Goodman Theatre, Dallas Theater Center, Steppenwolf Theatre, Yale Rep, The Old Globe. Film/TV: Equity, “Horace and Pete,” “The Big C,” “Unforgettable” (recurring). BFA in Drama, Carnegie Mellon.

MARIN IRELAND (Alison) Theater credits include reasons to be pretty, for which she won a Theatre World Award and was nominated for a Tony. Her other New York credits include Summer and Smoke at Classic Stage, Ironbound at The Geffen, The Big Knife on Broadway (opposite Bobby Cannavale), Ironbound at Rattlestick, Kill Floor at Lincoln Center, Blasted and Marie Antoinette, both at Soho Rep., Three Sisters at Classic Stage, Cyclone at Studio Dante (Obie Award), and In the Wake at the Public Theatre. Some of her TV and film work includes “Girls,” “Homeland,” “Masters of Sex,” “The Divide,” “The Slap,” Glass Chin (Independent Spirit Nomination, 2016), Sparrows Dance, The Family Fang, 28 Hotel Rooms, In the Radiant City, Hell or High Water, The Empty Man, and FX’s upcoming “Y.” Most recently, she was seen in the Lifetime movie Flint, about the Flint water crisis, playing activist Melissa Mays. She currently appears on the Amazon series “Sneaky Pete.”


NICOLE LEWIS (Grace) Broadway: Hair, Rent (Joanne), Lennon. Off-Broadway: Wilder Gone (Clubbed Thumb); Sense and Sensibility (Bedlam); Measure for Measure, Macbeth (Public Mobile Unit); Murder Ballad, Boy Gets Girl (MTC). Regional: Two Trains Running (Seattle Rep/Arena Stage); The Merry Wives of Windsor (Two River Theater); Disgraced (Arizona Theater Co); Good People (Geva/IRT); Race (Philadelphia Theater Co.); All My Sons (Intiman); A Civil War Christmas (Baltimore Center Stage); The Tempest (WTF, ACT I). Special Engagements: Far But Close by/with Daniel Beaty (DTH); Flowers are Sleeping by/with Eisa Davis (Symphony Space). TV: “The Blacklist,” “Mozart in the Jungle,” “Odd Mom Out,” “Law & Order SVU,” “Blue Bloods.” Film: The Comedian, London Betty, Across the Universe. Voiceover Artist, The Actors Center (Resident Company Member) theactorscenter.org BA, Yale; MFA, A.C.T. NicoleLewisNYC.com
KRISTOLYN LLOYD (Cherie) Stage credits include: Broadway: Dear Evan Hansen; Off-Broadway: Paradise Blue, The Liquid Plain (Signature Theatre); Dear Evan Hansen, Invisible Thread (Second Stage Theatre); Heathers The Musical (New World Stages); Cabin In The Sky (Encores City Center). Regional: Paradise Blue (Williamstown), Witness Uganda (A.R.T.), Heathers The Musical (The Hudson), Hairspray, Rent (Hollywood Bowl), Once on this Island (Reprise Theatre). TV includes: “Random Acts of Flyness” (HBO), “Elementary,” “Madam Secretary” (CBS), “ER” (NBC), and “Lie to Me.” (FOX). Graduate of Carnegie Mellon and Grammy and Emmy winner.

CHRIS STACK (Hern) NYC: Ugly Lies The Bone (Roundabout); Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, America, Kuwait (Rattlestick/Rising Phoenix Rep); Wayside Motor Inn (Signature Theater); Your Mother’s Copy Of The Kama Sutra (Playwrights Horizons); Marie Antoinette (Soho Rep.); Killers & Other Family (Rattlestick). Regional: What Happened When (Echo Theater L.A.), The Sign In Sidney Brustein’s Window (Goodman Theater), Love In The Wars (Bard Summerscape), Love & Communication (Passage Theater). Film and TV: “Law & Order: SVU,” “Blue Bloods,” “White Collar,” “One Life To Live,” “As The World Turns,” “Damages,” “Third Watch,” “Conviction,” “The Education of Max Bickford,” Evening, The Mini, School of Rock, Roger Dodger, Small Collection, and Juke.

PLAYWRIGHT & DIRECTOR

ABBY ROSEBROCK (Playwright) is a Brooklyn-based writer and performer from South Carolina, and author of the plays Dido of Idaho, Blue Ridge, Singles in Agriculture and Different Animals. Her work has been produced or developed at Cherry Lane, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Williamstown, Rattlestick, New York Stage and Film, Labyrinth Theater Company, Drama League, Dixon Place, INTAR, The Brick, IRT, Naked Angels, The Lark and more, as well as regionally in South Carolina, Georgia, Idaho and Montana. Abby has been a member of The Tank NYC’s TV and new media writers’ collective and the Obie Award-winning playwrights’ group EST/Youngblood. She is currently a member of the emerging writers’ group at Clubbed Thumb and the Orchard Project’s NYC Greenhouse, and is thrilled to be working on a Launch Commission for Atlantic.

TAIBI MAGAR (Director) is an Egyptian-American director based in New York, and a graduate of the Brown/Trinity MFA program. Most recently she directed the critically acclaimed Is God Is at Soho Rep. (NYT Critics’ Pick). Upcoming productions this season include: Lauren Yee’s The Great Leap (Atlantic Theater Company), and Underground Railroad Game (Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Soho Theatre). Other recent credits: Master (Foundry Theatre, NYT Critics’ Pick), Underground Railroad Game (Ars Nova, NYT Critics’ Pick, Obie Award for Best New American Work, Hamburg Festival), Familiar (The Guthrie and Seattle Repertory Theatre), Dry Powder (The Alley), We Are Proud to Present (The Guthrie). She is currently developing Patrick and Daniel Lazour’s We Live in Cairo (2016 Richard Rodgers Award) with New York Theatre Workshop and American Repertory Theatre. In New York, Taibi has directed and developed work for The Foundry, New York Theater Workshop, Ars Nova, TFANA, WP Theater, Rising Phoenix Rep and INTAR Theatre. She is the recipient of a Stephen Sondheim Fellowship, an Oregon Shakespeare Festival Fellowship, a Public Theater Shakespeare Fellowship, the TFANA Actors and Director Project Fellowship, a Usual Suspect at New York Theater Workshop, and is an alumna of Lincoln Center Directors Lab. Most recently, she received the Kaplan Fellowship for young artists. Taibi has directed and taught at many academic institutions, including Juilliard, Fordham University, Brown University and New York University.
Section III:
Your Students
As Audience

Theater Vocabulary
Terms for Blue Ridge
Blue Ridge in Context: WHY
THE HALFWAY HOUSE?
TEACHER OBJECTIVE
To be able to discuss theater through a common, shared vocabulary.

STUDENT GOAL
To understand that the most effective way to discuss theater and new ideas is through a shared vocabulary.

**ACTION**: The events that move along the story of the play and which influence the characters within the play.

**CHARACTERS**: Individuals the audience learns about from their actions and reactions.

**ENSEMBLE**: A group of performers working together to create a complete production.

**DIALOGUE**: The exchange of speech between two characters which reveals the feelings of the character as well as the story of the play.

**MONOLOGUE**: A speech by one actor on stage which is intended to reveal the inner thoughts of the character the actor plays.

**CHARACTER ARC**: The change produced in a character by the events and other characters in the play.

**MUSICAL THEATER**: A twentieth century creation where writers and musicians collaborate to create a play which features song, dance and drama.

**MOOD**: The overall feeling the play evokes.

**COSTUME**: The clothes, boots, etc., worn by the actors based on their character.

**PROP**: Objects used by an actor to enhance their character. For example, wine glasses at a bar for drinks.

**SET**: The constructed environment of a play within which the action takes place.

**SOUND**: Noises and music used in the play.
**EAT CROW:** Be forced to admit to a humiliating mistake, to be shamed. The first origins of the term have been lost, but it is loosely related to a story from the War of 1812 in which a British officer made an American soldier eat part of a crow he had shot in British territory. Crow, allegedly, tastes awful.

**ELBOW PATCHES:** Leather patches sewn onto sweaters and tweed jackets to protect from wear and tear.

**HALFWAY HOUSE:** A residence for individuals after release from institutionalization (as for mental illness, drug addiction, or criminal activity) that is designed to facilitate their readjustment to private life.

**HOOPTY:** Colloquialism for an old broken down car.

**HYDROPLANE:** To skid on a wet surface (such as pavement) because a film of water on the surface causes the tires to lose contact with it.

**INTRACTABLE:** Hard to control or deal with, unmanageable, uncontrollable.

**MEGACHURCH:** Church with an unusually large membership, especially one preaching a conservative or evangelical form of Christianity and also offering a variety of educational and social activities.

**METASTASIZE:** The spread of a disease-producing agency (such as cancer cells) from the initial or primary site of disease to another part of the body.

**POPEMOBILE:** A vehicle used to transport the Pope (the Bishop of Rome/leader of the Roman Catholic Church). It is designed to allow the Pope to be seen by onlookers. Current iterations of the popemobile are designed not just for visibility, but for protection, sometimes utilizing a bulletproof glass enclosure.

**SNAKE-HANDLER:** Members of the Pentecostal Holiness Church and other rural spiritual movements in the US, most widespread in Appalachia that handle snakes and drink their venom as a part of a spiritual ritual and rite. They believe in a literal interpretation of the Biblical text, specifically Mark 16:17-18:

> And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.
Why are these characters in *Blue Ridge* in a halfway recovery house? Different reasons. Alison is there as an alternative to house arrest for axing her boss’ car. Wade is recovering from opioid addiction. For Cole, it is a transition from the psychiatric hospital treatment for PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) in army combat. The halfway house in Blue Ridge relies on a 12-Step approach, derived from Alcoholics Anonymous.

**OPIOID ADDICTION AND RECOVERY**

Opioids are drugs based on opium, such as Hydrocodone, OxyContin, Vicodin, and Percocet. They are produced and marketed as painkillers for all kinds of pain, whether from injury, surgery, or illness. In recent years, their heavy use has led to a crisis or epidemic in the United States, with roots in Appalachia. The opioid epidemic appeared in Appalachia first because opioids were first introduced there as treatment for pain resulting from heavy manual labor in coal mining and lumbering, the main industries in that region.

Opioids were aggressively pushed by their manufacturers. Most aggressive was Purdue Pharma, which got approval by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to manufacture the opioid OxyContin and spent $207 million on “unprecedented promotion”. Opioid prescriptions more than doubled from 1997 to 2002. Fentanyl prescriptions tripled, and OxyContin quintupled, raising its sales from $48 million to $1.1 billion. In the heart of Appalachia, drug wholesalers “showered” West Virginia with 780 million pills. Its newspaper, The Gazette-Mail, investigated and found that one town of only 392 people was “flooded” with 9 million hydrocodone pills by out-of-state drug companies. The town, Kermit, is located in Mingo County (the state’s poorest county), home of the fourth-highest opioid death rate in the country. Attempts to restrict prescriptions and the availability of opioids caused their street value to rise and users switched to cheaper substitutes, heroin and fentanyl.

In the country as a whole, in 2012 over 250 million prescriptions were written for opioids, more than enough to give every American adult their own bottle of pills. Four in five new heroin users started out misusing prescription painkillers. 94% of respondents in a 2014 survey of people in treatment for opioid addiction said they chose to use heroin because prescription opioids were “far more expensive and harder to obtain.”

In Appalachia, fracking to produce natural gas boomed and precipitated a decline in the prices and production of coal. Job loss caused poverty to worsen. The deteriorating economy led to hopelessness and more drug use. Addiction was met with drug treatment programs using other medication, such as methadone and Naloxone. Recovery relied on abstinence programs based on the 12-Step approach of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). Halfway houses are key to recovery, as have been churches and megachurches.

**PTSD (POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER)**

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition triggered by a terrifying event, either experiencing it or witnessing it. Symptoms may include flashbacks, nightmares and severe anxiety, as well as uncontrollable thoughts about the event.
Once PTSD symptoms develop, getting effective treatment is critical to reducing them and improving function.

The most common events leading to the development of PTSD include:

- Combat exposure
- Childhood physical abuse
- Sexual violence
- Physical assault
- Being threatened with a weapon
- An accident

Many other traumatic events also can lead to PTSD, such as fire, natural disaster, mugging, robbery, plane crash, torture, kidnapping, life-threatening medical diagnosis, terrorist attack, and other extreme or life-threatening events.

PTSD from military combat gets a lot of attention. Veterans of combat can develop PTSD symptoms in the hours or days following a traumatic event, sometimes months afterward, and occasionally even years after returning from deployment. Veterans of the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are returning with PTSD and traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by blast waves from explosions. A New England Journal of Medicine survey has established a link between traumatic brain injury and PTSD, showing that people who experienced a traumatic brain injury in combat were more than twice as likely to suffer from PTSD, generally 3-4 months after returning from deployment. A significant number of veterans are diagnosed with PTSD symptoms. Estimates range from 20-33%. Of those, only 40% of those seek help. One in five active-duty soldiers attempt suicide every day. While PTSD develops differently from veteran to veteran, there are four types of symptoms:

1. Recurrent, intrusive reminders of the traumatic event, including distressing thoughts, nightmares, and flashbacks where one feels like the event is happening again. Experiencing extreme emotional and physical reactions to reminders of the trauma such as panic attacks, uncontrollable shaking, and heart palpitations.

2. Extreme avoidance of things that remind one of the traumatic event, including people, places, thoughts, or situations one associate with the bad memories. Withdrawing from friends and family and losing interest in everyday activities.

3. Negative changes in thoughts and mood, such as exaggerated negative beliefs about oneself or the world and persistent feelings of fear, guilt, or shame. Diminished ability to experience positive emotions.

4. Being on guard all the time, jumpy, and emotionally reactive, as indicated by irritability, anger, reckless behavior, difficulty sleeping, trouble concentrating, and hypervigilance.

THE 12-STEP PROGRAM

The 12-Step philosophy pioneered by Alcoholics Anonymous is used by about 74 percent of treatment centers. The basic premise of this model is that people can help one another achieve and maintain abstinence from substances of abuse, but that healing cannot come about unless people with addictions surrender to a higher power. The 12-Step movement can be a force for good for many people, but some struggle with what they interpret as a strong religious element of the program. Many addiction treatment programs offer alternatives to 12-Step methodology for those who prefer a more secular foundation for treatment.
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) originated the idea for the 12-Step model in 1938, when founder Bill Wilson wrote out the ideas that had been developing through his experience with and vision of alcoholism. He wrote about the positive effects experienced when people struggling with alcoholism shared their stories with one another.

In their original form, the 12 Steps came from a spiritual, Christian inspiration that sought help from a greater power as well as from peers suffering from the same addiction struggles.

The Big Book was originally written as a guide for people who couldn’t attend AA fellowship meetings, but it soon became a model for the program in general. It has since been adopted as a model for a wide range of addiction peer-support and self-help programs designed to help drive behavioral change. In addition to the original Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) group, various offshoots now exist, such as Narcotics Anonymous (NA), Heroin Anonymous (HA), and Gamblers Anonymous (GA).

The basic premise of the 12-Step model is that people can help one another achieve and maintain abstinence from the substances or behaviors to which they are addicted. They can do this through meetings in which they share their experiences with one another and support each other in the ongoing effort of maintaining abstinence. In research, as seen in a recent article from the journal Addiction Research and Theory, abstinence practices (as supported by 12-Step programs) can account for high levels of what experts call flourishing, which is positive mental health and can contribute to longer-term recovery. In the study, those who maintained abstinence were more likely to flourish in the long-term, with 40.7 percent flourishing after three months (as compared to 9.3 percent languishing) and nearly 40 percent flourishing after 12 months (compared to 12.4 percent languishing).

Based on this study, those who abstain altogether from substances – as advised in the 12-Step model – have better mental health outcomes than those who don’t abstain. The 12-Step model gives people a framework from which to surrender their addiction, process their experience, and move forward into new patterns.

The 12 Steps, as outlined in the original Big Book and presented by AA are:

1. Admitting powerlessness over the addiction
2. Believing that a higher power (in whatever form) can help
3. Deciding to turn control over to the higher power
4. Taking a personal inventory
5. Admitting to the higher power, oneself, and another person the wrongs done
6. Being ready to have the higher power correct any shortcomings in one’s character
7. Asking the higher power to remove those shortcomings
8. Making a list of wrongs done to others and being willing to make amends for those wrongs
9. Contacting those who have been hurt, unless doing so would harm the person
10. Continuing to take personal inventory and admitting when one is wrong
11. Seeking enlightenment and connection with the higher power via prayer and meditation
12. Carrying the message of the 12 Steps to others in need
Cultural references: Allusions to ideas that relate to a specific culture. In the United States, language is full of cultural references that are particular to American popular culture. The cultural references in Blue Ridge are mostly from American music, plays, and TV.

In Blue Ridge, Alison speaks often through song lyrics: Specifically, Carrie Underwood’s “Jesus Take the Wheel” and “Before He Cheats.” Other characters in the play reference other songs. These shared experiences of the characters' culture allow music to punctuate moments and interactions in the play.

Alison makes many references to characters from pop culture, especially Blanche DuBoise, essential character in A Streetcar Named Desire and Captain von Trapp, the patriarch in the musical and film The Sound of Music.

**BLANCHE DUBOISE** is a central character in A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams. The role was written for an actor named Tallulah Bankhead and has been played by many other celebrated actors from Vivien Leigh to Cate Blanchett. In the play, Blanche is a faded Southern Belle in denial. Her brother-in-law sees through her, eventually rapes her and commits her to an insane asylum. In Blue Ridge, Alison likens herself to Blanche because both are “carted off”, Blanche to the asylum and Alison to house-arrest or the halfway house. Interestingly, Blanche, like Alison, had also been a schoolteacher.

**ALISON:**
“I did NOT achieve, a nine-year streak’uh the highest AP English test scores in North Carolina, in a program I started myself, to be juss, carted off, like Blanche DuBois in A Streetcar Named Desire—“

**CAPTAIN VON TRAPP** was the father of a musical family of singers, who takes his family to safety from the Nazis in The Sound of Music. Hern in Blue Ridge is likened to “Captain Von” as if the father of the residents in the halfway house, like a pastor with his flock. Hern and Alison sing one of the songs from the musical, after Wade plays it on the guitar.
Section IV: Your Students As Actors

Reading a Scene for Understanding
Practical Aesthetics Exercise
Mini-lesson vocabulary
Scene Analysis Worksheet
READING A SCENE FOR UNDERSTANDING

TEACHER OBJECTIVE
To introduce the Practical Aesthetics “tools” for breaking down a scene. To understand the character and the story of the scene by relating the character’s actions to the student’s own life.

STUDENT GOAL
To understand that an important part of creating a simple, honest character involves knowing what that character wants.

MATERIALS
Pens, pencils, copies of the following scene from Blue Ridge, and copies of the Literal, Want, Action, As-If worksheet and/or Mini-Lesson.

PRACTICAL AESTHETICS EXERCISE

STEP ONE
Divide the students in pairs. Ask the students to select which character they want to portray.

STEP TWO
Allow the students time to read the scene silently to themselves.

STEP THREE
Ask the students to read the Introduction to the Practical Aesthetic Introduction (Page 18) sheet and have the students answer the four questions on the Scene Analysis Worksheet (Page 19).

NOTE: The four questions and the students’ answers to them form the basis for the Practical Aesthetics scene analysis; and enables the actor to create a simple, honest character. They’re simply being honest to their own experiences!

STEP FOUR
After the students have completed the question worksheet, ask each pair of actors to read the scene in the front of the class room for an audience. The class should incorporate the ideas from the Scene Analysis Worksheet and the Mini-Lesson Vocabulary (Page 20) worksheet as they read the scene.
A SCENE FROM BLUE RIDGE

WADE
You’ll get out early / though--

ALISON
You think--?

WADE
S’my hunch--

ALISON
So thass not, unheard / of--?

WADE
Not at all, no--I mean iss not go' happen fer me, / but--

ALISON
What er you in for?
...Sorry, that / was--

WADE
Oh! No--

ALISON
I’m, / a monster--

WADE
Nah iss fine, um. Possession--

ALISON
/ Ah--

WADE
Juss, painkillers--

ALISON
Oh, man thass like... An epidemic I hear...

WADE
...Fell off a roof, on the job they prescribed / em--

ALISON
Course, sure, thass, how it happens, I heard a thing on uh, NPR... Hand out those things... willy-nilly...
...Next thing ya know... brain's all, rewired...
**PRACTICAL AESTHETICS INTRODUCTION**

**ANALYSIS**
Script analysis is the process of breaking down a beat within a scene. We ask four questions in order to do this.

1. What is the character literally doing?
2. What does the character want?
3. What is the essential ACTION?
4. What is that action like to me? It is AS-IF...

**LITERAL**: In this step, the actor determines what the character he or she is playing is literally doing according to the text.

**PURPOSE**: An actor has to travel far—think of this preparation as the road map.

**WANT**: In this step, the actor identifies the goal of the character in the scene, specifically what the character wants from the other character/s in the scene. The given circumstances of the story inform the WANT.

**PURPOSE**: To focus the actor on the characters' interaction.

**ACTION**: Playing an ACTION is the physical pursuit of a goal. Defining the ACTION of the scene allows the actor to determine what result or CAP he or she is looking for from the other actor/s in the scene.

**EXAMPLES**:
- Put someone in their place
- Beg someone for forgiveness.
- Get someone to let me off the hook.
- Force someone to face the facts.
- Inspire someone to greatness.
- Get someone to see the light.

**PURPOSE**: Using an action gives the actor a task and a specific point of view. The Atlantic Theater Company teaches that the Action creates character.

**AS-IF**: In this step, the actor personalizes the action by finding a real-life situation in which they would behave according to the action they have chosen for the scene.

**EXAMPLE**: Get a favor.

It’s AS-IF I forgot to do my science homework and I'm asking my teacher for an extra day to hand it in.

**PURPOSE**: To gain personal insight and urgency to the scene or beat.

**TACTICS & TOOLS**: Different ways an actor goes about getting his action.

**EXAMPLE**: Plead, flirt, demand, inspire, challenge, level, threaten.

**LIVING IN THE MOMENT**: Reacting impulsively to what the other actor in the scene is doing, from the point of view of the chosen action.
Here are your “tools” for understanding your character:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCENE ANALYSIS WORKSHEET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>IF YOU’RE PLAYING WADE...</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is my character literally doing?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What does my character want?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is the action I’m going to play?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The As-If...</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MINI-LESSON VOCABULARY

LITERAL: The process of accessing the basic story-line of the characters in a particular scene or beat.

WANT: The process of identifying the goal of the character in a scene or beat.

ACTION: The actor’s physical pursuit of a specific goal.

AS-IF: A way to determine what this action means to me.

HANDY TOOL KIT FOR THE ACTOR
Acting Tactics & Tools To Use in The As-If Step
• Laughing to get what you want
• Teasing to get what you want
• Testing to get what you want
• Threatening to get what you want
• Pleading to get what you want
• Flirting to get what you want
• Bartering to get what you want
• Bribing to get what you want
• Begging to get what you want
• Crying to get what you want
• Demanding to get what you want
• Leveling to get what you want
Section V: Your Students As Artists

Post Theater Creative Response Activities
Common Core & DOE Theater Blueprint
“LOVE & HATE...HURT & HAPPINESS... DESIRE & DESPAIR”

TEACHER OBJECTIVE
To develop critical thinking skills through examining a theme in *Blue Ridge* and relating that theme to an individual creative response.

STUDENT GOAL
To understand that an important theme from *Blue Ridge* portrays the truths and messages of the play.

MATERIALS
Pencils, pens, writing paper, chalkboard, and the attached worksheet.

STEP ONE
Introduce the Writing Trigger below: “The love & hate . . . hurt & happiness . . . desire & despair between men & women . . .”

STEP TWO
Ask the students to write a narrative, poem or spoken word response. Allow 7-minutes for this free write.

STEP THREE
Ask the students to share their responses, offering positive feedback after each share.
“ALISON...”

TEACHER OBJECTIVE
To develop critical thinking skills through examining how the final scene a playwright selects effects the impact of their story.

STUDENT GOAL
To understand the importance Alison's final revelation plays in Blue Ridge's portrayal of the truths, messages, and impact of the play.

MATERIALS
Pencils, pens, writing paper, chalkboard, and the attached scene between Alison and Wade.

STEP ONE
Discuss the meaning and subtext of the closing scene in Blue Ridge.

STEP TWO
Ask the students to write a scene that happens after Wade leaves in which Alison writes a letter to the individual who made “stuff happen” that has clouded every relationship since. Allow 7-minutes for this free write.

STEP THREE
Ask the students to select one sentence from their writing that best describes their feelings.

STEP FOUR
In groups of six, ask the students to create one, fluid poem from the individual sentences.

STEP FIVE
Ask the students to share their group poems, offering positive feedback after each share.
A SCENE FROM BLUE RIDGE

ALISON
I'm the most honest person I know--

WADE
So why you in a math classroom--

ALISON
Cause iss issu group, okay? Iss, support-type, meet--... People who've um. Been through... S' kinda dumb, honestly--my anger group, nothin got accomplished, this one seems... seems like that too, I don't, you know... Grace mentioned it, when I left, I figured, nothin else to do--

WADE
Sure--

ALISON
Iss juss fer um, people dillin with... You know, childhood... Childhood... Childhood, stuff... Stuff that... that... happened, stuff... Stuff, happened... Alison has broken down. Wade sits with her in silence for a while. Gets up to leave.

ALISON
Everyone in that house, showed me so much goodness... An' I'm... ...I'm the one...

WADE
...But you came here.

ALISON
I can't, forgive... I can't feel goodness, in me anymore.

WADE
...Thass go' take a while. As he leaves:

ALISON
Spend some time out on that mountain for me. Wish I'd done more'uh that.

Wade nods. Exits.

Alison looks at the doorway.

Sits in her shame and anxiety.

The lights fade around a spotlight on her face as she leans her head back, looking up in a motion of surrender.

She takes a deep breath, slowly exhales, and for the first time since childhood lets go of her body.

END OF PLAY.
ENDURING UNDERSTANDING STRAND BENCHMARKS
Theater conveys the significance individuals place on their life choices. For example: Playing God, Innocence, Morality, Culpability, Good vs. Bad, and Mistrust.
Theater conveys the meaning behind an individual’s struggle to have his or her life choices validated by family, friends and community.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS
Do the direction and staging reinforce the theme of “bleak morality” which is prevalent in Blue Ridge?
Do you accept the concept put forward in Blue Ridge that “struggle between right and wrong” can be both empowering and destructive?

SOURCES:
https://americanaddictioncenters.org
https://www.mayoclinic.org
http://www.nytimes.com

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH AND ORIGINAL CONTENT BY ARIANE VAN BUREN

STRAND BENCHMARKS
THEATER MAKING: ACTING
Benchmark: Students increase their ability as imaginative actors while continuing to participate as collaborative ensemble members. Students demonstrate the ability to reflect on and think critically about their own work.

THEATER MAKING: PLAYWRITING/PLAY MAKING
Benchmark: Students refine their ability as playwrights to express point of view and personal vision.

DEVELOPING THEATER LITERACY
Benchmark: Students develop skills as critics by analyzing the critical writings of others.

MAKING CONNECTIONS THROUGH THEATER
Benchmark: Students demonstrate a capacity for deep personal connection to theater and a realization of the meaning and messages of theater.

WORKING WITH COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL RESOURCES
Benchmark: Students invigorate and broaden their understanding of theater through collaborative partnerships with theater professionals.
Inspired by the Group Theater, Stanislavsky, and a passion for ensemble acting, David Mamet and William H. Macy formed the Atlantic Theater Company with a select group of New York University Undergraduate drama students. Since its inception in 1985, Atlantic has produced more than 100 plays and garnered numerous awards, including: 12 Tony Awards, 15 Lucille Lortel Awards, 16 OBIE Awards, six Outer Critics Circle Awards, seven Drama Desk Awards, three Drama League Awards, three New York Drama Critics Circle Awards and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Noted productions include: Spring Awakening, Port Authority, The Lieutenant of Inishmore, The Beauty Queen of Leenane, Boy’s Life, and American Buffalo. The Atlantic Theater Company’s mission is to produce plays simply and truthfully, utilizing an artistic ensemble. Atlantic believes that the story of the play and the intent of its playwright are at the core of a successful theatrical production.

The Atlantic Acting School fosters new generations of actors by passing on the tools learned from Mamet and Macy and by preparing students for all aspects of a career in film, television and theater. The Atlantic offers studies through New York University, a full-time conservatory program, part-time programs and summer workshops. Atlantic for Kids offers acting

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Atlantic Stage 2
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