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ARTISTIC SCIENCE: AN EXPLORATION OF DRAMATURGY THROUGH INQUIRY-  
BASED LEARNING FOR YOUTH ARTISTS

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts  
in the Department of Theatre  
in the College of Arts and Humanities  
at the University of Central Florida  
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## **ABSTRACT**

In the unique world of a play, dramaturgy provides the essential multi-dimensional foundation for comprehensive exploration. As the identity of dramaturgy is complex and continues to evolve, the artistic value discovered through practice positively contributes to the theatrical experience for both artists and audience members. This substantial element is mostly absent from theatrical experiences for youth, usually making a meaningful appearance in professional and collegiate theatre productions. To promote the importance of dramaturgy, I attempt to construct and explore a learning opportunity at Long Lake Camp for the Arts, a summer performing arts camp for youth artists and performers. This theoretical framework will provide the foundation for possibly implementing a dramaturgical experience to enrich the theatre program in the near future. I will consider the following questions: How do you introduce dramaturgy and make it accessible to young artists? What will serve as foundational theories in practice? What methodologies will prove most effective?

To build a fundamental pathway into the world of dramaturgy at Long Lake Camp for the Arts, I will investigate the history and emergence of dramaturgy through the works of Aristotle and Gotthold Ephraim Lessing and uncover its evolution and practice through the contributions of Elinor Fuchs and other contemporary artists and scholars. I look to utilize Inquiry-Based Learning methods to empower youth with agency to analyze the scope and practice of modern dramaturgy. As I engage with Inquiry-Based Learning methods, I will ask: What are the intersections of Inquiry-Based Learning and dramaturgy? What essential questions will prove most effective?

This thesis will generate explorative, dramaturgical, and educational framework through the lenses of scholar, artist, and educator. It is my intent that such substructure will provide a contemporary experience for educating young artists about dramaturgy, thus inspiring arts organizations, such as Long Lake Camp for the Arts, to expand their educational programming for youth.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In the world of theatre, there are numerous terms used to define the identity of the artist, the process of creating art, the tools and resources used to build art, the art itself, and finally, the artistic product. These terms are unique to theatre; many derived from the ancient Greek language, while other terms are the result of diverse contributing cultures. As time progresses, the plethora of terms become common language in the practice of applying the theatrical artform in educational theatre, professional theatre, community theatre and even in the theory discussed within secondary and higher education classrooms throughout the world. Perhaps one of the most ambiguous terms found inside the theatrical realm is that of *Dramaturgy*. Frankly, dramaturgy seems to suffer from an ongoing identity crisis. Dramaturgy can be perplexing; complex and layered in dramatic theory and practice, yet paramount to the legitimacy of theatre studies by the professionals and scholars tasked with safeguarding the ancient artform. To begin such a conversation focusing on the identity of dramaturgy, it should be noted the all-to-common hesitation displayed at the mere pronunciation of the word: is the consonant “g” pronounced with a hard or soft sound? The ambiguity that begins with the simple pronunciation of the word continues to grow as many artists (and audiences) struggle to fully comprehend the scope and depth of dramaturgy.

As a working theatre artist, I have found myself continuously mystified by dramaturgy: How exactly does it operate within, and outside of, the bounds of active and theoretical theatre? Throughout my career as performer, director, educator, and arts administrator, I have noticed a sort of reluctance amongst my peers to confidently define the term, use it in practice, whether



intentionally or not. I can admit that for the many companies and artistic teams I have had the opportunity to work with, and be a part of, dramaturgy was perplexing. Or was it? Perhaps it *was* there all along; existing within each process, propelling a story-telling production by means of a stealth-like auto pilot. My artistic relationship with dramaturgy has always been complex and perhaps shallow, lacking an initial meaningful introduction.

My experiences, both in higher education and professionally, have made me further explore and question my exposure to dramaturgical practice. As an English major with a Theatre and Speech minor at the University of Tampa, I was fortunate enough to enroll in classes such as Play Analysis, Voice and Diction, Directing for the Theatre, Career Audition Workshop, Acting 1, 2, and Advanced Acting Methods. Since the theatre program was quite small, I was able to have numerous performance opportunities in plays, musicals, cabarets, staged readings, and even in assistant directing. And yet, throughout the four years of active participation, both on-stage and in the classroom, I was never formally introduced to the practical ways and functions of dramaturgy. I recall the term being brought up in a directing class, only to be skirted around using the term “research” in its place. From 1999 to 2004, the term and practice were pretty much non-existent in my work. Where did dramaturgy fit into the complexities of creating theatre? In what ways was I experiencing dramaturgy without understanding its true identity and practice? Maybe dramaturgy would reveal itself beyond the confines of educational theatre.

While working for one of the largest entertainment entities, *The Walt Disney Company*, the presence of dramaturgy was yet again never identified as focus was primarily reserved for the near perfection of the final product, not the *process* of creating the art. As a Disney Cruise Line performer, my experience seemed to never intersect with the resources and exploration

dramaturgy had to offer. For almost three years of performing with Disney Cruise Line, the concept of dramaturgy hardly made an appearance. And then to be concise while moving forward, working regionally as a performer also provided no real relationship or personal partnership with dramaturgy. At this point, I would resort to exploring dramaturgy on my own to better understand how it can be practiced in the theatre making process.

As years passed, my experiences in theatre transitioned from performer to director, and at this point, I slowly began to unearth some of the mysteries of the loaded theatre term. Was I finally uncovering dramaturgy in the way theatre was produced commercially? As a director for numerous youth productions, and many professional productions throughout the United States, I began to initiate deeper discussions about the play in pre-production meetings, design meetings, table readings, and in the rehearsal room with performers. My directorial preparation, process and practice fully involved understanding the complexities of each story I was tasked with bringing to life. Collectively, discussions with actors, designers, music directors and choreographers became more fruitful and meaningful as each of us explored our ideas and interpretation of the works before us. Organically, we shared thoughts and ideas supported by our own experiences, research and accumulated knowledge. Dramaturgy was slowly revealing itself through our own exploration and practice. However, a dramaturg was never present in these productions. At this point, I began to understand how meaningful research allowed for the most successful and truthful storytelling. Instead, my work was guided by extensive personal research and collaborative sharing of ideas with practical application. Was this the beginning of understanding the complexities of dramaturgy? How does research intersect with dramaturgy? How do you practice dramaturgy without a dramaturg? Most of my experience in directing relied

upon me, as the director, to offer robust research surrounding the world of the play. Looking back, with limited production resources, especially monetarily, the role of a dramaturg was simply not within the budget. Furthermore, the role seemed almost unknown to producers who were tasked with making the major decisions concerning the hiring of the production team. This somewhat foreign role never seemed to hold much value, especially on paper.

My formal introduction to Dramaturgy finally came in the Master of Arts in Theatre program at the University of Central Florida. This graduate program shares and promotes the importance of this concept to the best of its ability. Though no graduate classes are offered in the subject matter, the university recognizes its significance in theatre education and allows students to participate in practical dramaturgical experiences both inside and outside the of classroom. For many university productions, a student is given the opportunity to assume the role of dramaturg. For example, an undergraduate theatre major served as dramaturg for the university production of *Urinetown: The Musical*. As I was a cast member of this production, I was able partake in the power point presentation of research for the entire cast and production team. The information they shared positively contributed to my understanding of the show and how such a complex musical was created, evolved, and existed in space, time and history. This presentation piqued my interest and inspired me to further explore the identity of dramaturgy.

Shortly thereafter, I was fortunate enough to serve as co-dramaturg for a virtual reading with a fellow classmate at the onset of the COVID 19 pandemic in the spring of 2020. The experience offered me a direct pathway into the realm of dramaturgy, with the safety net of another artistic mind. Together, we discussed and researched the many themes of the play, analyzed characters, and identified the world in which the play exists. Further guidance and

support in this exploration was readily available through our professor. The result was a thorough collection of research to support the world of the play. We were then tasked with facilitating a discussion directly following the virtual reading for all participants. As this was my first deep dive into dramaturgy, I was even more interested in understanding exactly how I could better understand it and, perhaps even more importantly, empower others to do the same.

It is these educational experiences at The University of Central Florida which inspired me to discover how dramaturgy can be explored by young artists, long before engaging in collegiate or professional theatre. For the past twelve years, I have been fortunate enough to spend my summers working with young artists at Long Lake Camp for the Arts in Long Lake, New York. In 2010, I was offered the job of theatre director and for four summers, explored theatre performance with young artists in a variety of productions. In addition to show production, the theatre directors and music directors also offer educational workshops for the campers when not in rehearsal. As Long Lake Camp is a summer sleep-a-way camp, the environment is unique as artists and staff live within a creative environment constantly coexisting with numerous artforms for the duration of the summer. In 2014, I was offered the position of Head of Performing Arts. This responsibility is a combination of creative art, education, and administration. In this role, I continue to director a small number of shows each summer as well as present workshops for campers, time permitting. I am also responsible for choosing the season of shows, which number in almost thirty plays and musicals each summer. In addition, I oversee the educational curriculum and implementation of learning experiences for the theatre department. Our team consists of six theatre directors, three music directors, a production manager, a props team of three, a costumes team of six and a technical theatre team of up to twenty in sound, lights,

carpentry, etc. As I am tasked with making sure all departments are successful in bringing a unique theatrical experience to all campers, especially through the day-to-day operations of the program, I am also in the position to make decisions to strengthen our program not only procedurally, but through educational experiences, creativity, and curriculum.

My unique relationship with theatre has brought me to this exact moment in my graduate education: I have been formally introduced to the idea and application of dramaturgy after many years of being somewhat blind to its power and scope within the world of theatre. The identity of this term is in clearer focus from experiences both within and outside of the classroom walls. Perhaps the most impressionable definition of dramaturgy, discovered in research for this thesis comes from *The Routledge Companion to Dramaturgy*. Editor Magda Romanska defines the term in the contemporary practice of theatre. “Modern dramaturgy sees itself as a field, profession, skill, and verb; as a tool of inquiry, a liberal art, and theatrical process” (Romanska 7). As a scholar and theatre practitioner, I am interested in continuing to cultivate a meaningful relationship with dramaturgy to not only for myself, but with the young artists at Long Lake camp for the Arts. My core as an artist consists of the desire to inspire and teach others how theatre is a meaningful art, and how it can be used to creatively tell unique stories that amplify the smallest voice within numerous landscapes. Therefore, my goal is to create an explorative educational experience to introduce the identity and practice of dramaturgy. By doing so, I hope to enhance the educational theatre curriculum at Long Lake Camp for the Arts. I look to explore dramaturgy through a historical lens, investigating its emergence, evolution, and application. More specifically, I look to discover dramaturgy with youth artists ages fourteen to seventeen, outside of formal educational institutions. This exploration will be used as the foundation and

research for possibly implementing a fully realized experience in dramaturgy, thus enriching the theatre arts program at Long Lake Camp for the Arts.

Many educational youth theatre arts programs, sponsored by theatres and arts organizations, focus heavily on performance skills: singing, acting, and dancing. Some programs offer after school involvement culminating in a performative opportunity for the public. And, if the arts organization or theatre is robust and well-funded, sometimes technical theatre classes, or even playwriting, are offered to those who do not identify as a performer and look to learn from opportunities offstage and behind the scenes. I seek to explore a dramaturgical learning experience to enrich and diversify the educational offerings available to young artists *passionate* about theatre. As I have begun to understand the benefits of incorporating dramaturgical analysis into my own practice, my goal is to instill a fundamental knowledge of dramaturgy in young artists *curious* about theatre. In *The Reconstructed Dramaturg*, William Casey Caldwell and Amy Kenny provide a puzzling contemporary definition of dramaturgy directly in dialogue with this experiment, supporting the need to explore a relationship between young artists and dramaturgy. “Dramaturgy in general is, of course, an abstract practice to define, as it is still provisional in many countries, and in many different theatres within a single country. The dramaturg resides somewhere between academia and theatre and is expected to have intimate knowledge of both” (Caldwell and Kenny 11).

The aforementioned definition raises some challenging questions that seem ripe for exploration. This theoretical framework will investigate answers to questions such as: What does a dramaturgical educational experience look like at Long Lake Camp for the Arts? How do you identify and practice dramaturgy if it is abstract? How do you connect dramaturgy in academia to

the youth theatrical experience? In what ways can you make dramaturgical experiences accessible and beneficial for youth?

This framework, anchored in the methodologies of Inquiry-Based Learning, seems more aligned with the explorative nature of theatre arts, as inspired by Romanska, who refers to modern dramaturgy as “a tool of inquiry.” This scientific method of learning will be imposed upon dramaturgy uncovering opportunities and tensions which will help to create a foundation of research for a possible dramaturgical program at Long Lake Camp for the Arts. In what ways does Inquiry-Based Learning and dramaturgy intersect? How does this intersection promote dramaturgical practice for young artists? This theoretical experiment will concentrate on identifying and actively exploring the many ways dramaturgy can be practiced in the contemporary theatrical world. Such a foundation will contribute a better understanding of how dramaturgy can be present in the ever-changing landscape of youth theatre.

## **CHAPTER TWO: EXPLORING DRAMATURGY THROUGH A HISTORICAL LENS**

To develop a meaningful educational opportunity for youth artists, exploring the intricate identity of dramaturgy is paramount. To prepare a diverse foundational understanding of the artform, the initial objective is to investigate a working definition, perhaps multi-dimensional, that is attainable for youth to comprehend while simultaneously promoting thought-provoking ideas and critical thinking. However, oversimplification would result in a hollow attempt, devoid of a solid understructure for continued exploration. Therefore, the sources used in this educational framework will be chosen strategically to represent the importance of historical and contemporary perspectives. Together, these multiple perspectives will inspire young artists as they continue to explore, comprehend and practice dramaturgy. A fundamental understanding of dramaturgy, paired with focused practice, is the desired outcome.

### The Poetics

The exploration of dramaturgical theory begins with a chronological approach. The creation of the groundwork for an introduction for youth artists may present itself through the classical writing of Aristotle. Written in 335 BC, *The Poetics* provides a robust commentary on poetry, initiating sharp attention on dramatic and literary theory of Ancient Greece. The Greek philosopher known for writing about such subjects as physics, psychology, and politics, focuses new efforts on the analyzation of dramatic form. “Our subject being Poetry, I propose to speak not only of the art in general but also of its species and their respective capacities; of the structure of the plot required for a good poem; of the number and nature of the constituent parts



of the poem, and the likewise of any other matters in the same line of inquiry” (Aristotle 45). From the ignition of his writing, Aristotle firmly communicates his intention and desire to dissect a number of pieces of the complex whole. More specifically, he shines light upon the “structure of plot” thus amplifying the importance of textual architecture necessary for constructing a “good poem.” This early exploration of text and storytelling provides the fundamental foundation for the evolving art of dramaturgy, hundreds of years before the term is even coined. As *Poetics* progresses, Aristotle highlights very specific requirements for drama and epic and lyric poetry. Major ideas are concentrated in plot development and construction, unity of time and the arrangement and length of a play. A sharp description and opinion are reserved for Tragedy. “There are six parts consequently of every tragedy, as a whole (that is) of such or such quality, viz., a Fable or Plot, Characters, Diction, Thought, Spectacle and Melody; two of them arising from the means, one from the manner, and three from the objects of the dramatic imitation; and there is nothing else beside the six” (Aristotle 50). Not only does Aristotle present a list of six parts, but he expresses his opinion of these parts as strong instructional guidance. More so, he very efficiently provides context as to how they function, how they interact, and how they are related to each other. This analysis of relational elements, the very raw and singular parts of a dramatic work, provide the spark for the inception and formation of dramaturgy. This critical thinking imposed upon poetry relies on specific separate parts opposed to the singular greater whole. Aristotle’s ideas and perspective infiltrate every part, providing a deeper meaning and understanding of composition. Such writing and ideas would become paramount amounting to an unparalleled benchmark of dramatic criticism for years to come.

Aristotle's robust writing would eventually inspire numerous, if not all, theatre practitioners and scholars for centuries to come. Even today, *Poetics* is universally studied and used as an educational tool showcasing the complex "origin story" of the analyzation of a play's infrastructure.

### The Hamburg Dramaturgy

The theatrical stagnation of the Dark and Middle Ages, followed by the compounded artistic growth of the Renaissance, paved the way for a stunning discovery in 18<sup>th</sup> century Germany. The Age of Enlightenment brought about the expansion of thought, especially in the realm of dramaturgy. The theatrical term still assembling an identity and establishing purpose emerged in form of a fragmented publication in 1767. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, perhaps a late blooming renaissance man, was well versed in roles such as philosopher, playwright, journalist, literary manager, and art critic whose most notable contribution to theatre was the *Hamburg Dramaturgy*. Capitalizing on his plethora of experience, Lessing assumed the post of dramaturg at the Hamburg National Theatre. It was this new experience that propelled him to publish criticism upon the produced plays. One hundred and one short essays were offered to the public, as well as performers, to encourage deeper meaning and understanding of the experience as "Lessing hoped to serve as an educator: improving the taste of the audience and raising the level of performance" (Gerould 237). Such published opinion and criticism were met with negative reactions, especially from artists directly involved in the productions. Frustration began to mount as Lessing struggled to connect with the philosophy of the theatre and opposed the artistic choices of the plays produced. "As the *Hamburg Dramaturgy* progressed, Lessing's discussions

became more abstract, literary, and theoretical, detached from the daily life of the theatre. The final sections, devoted to Aristotle's *Poetics*, are the playwright's reflections of the nature and function of drama" (Gerould 237).

The *Hamburg Dramaturgy* was a literary vessel of the complex critical thoughts and ideas, sometimes obscure. However, Lessing's criticism in this publication promoted the traditions and standards already set forth by Aristotle. In essay number nineteen, Lessing not only promotes the perspective of Aristotle, but also imposes further analyzation about truth.

Now, Aristotle has long ago decided how far the tragic poet regard historical accuracy: not farther than it resembles a well-constructed fable wherewith he can combine his intentions. He does not make use of an event because it really happened, but because it happened in such manner as he will scarcely be able to invent more fitly for his present purpose. If he finds this fitness in a true case, then the true case is welcome; but to search through history books does not reward his labor. And how many know what has happened? (Lessing 238)

This essay contributes to the further understanding of dramaturgy, especially for the purpose of this thesis. Two very impactful characteristics of dramaturgy are shared by Lessing. First, while invoking Aristotle, Lessing does not dwell upon the plot or structure of the play, providing tension in opinion and perspective. Instead, Lessing comments on the ongoing dialogue between factual history and action upon the stage.

It is assumed quite without reason, that it is one of the objects of the stage, to keep alive the memory of great men. For what we have history and not the stage. From the stage we are not to learn what such and such individual has done, but what every man of

a certain character would do under certain given circumstances. (Lessing 238)

Perhaps even more important today, the idea of truth is presented within the context of a theatrical event. Lessing seems to proclaim it is not literal “history” that is seen upon the stage, but the *truth* under the given circumstances. Therefore, if theatre is a reflection of life, dramaturgy is the truthful living shadow accompanying each element. The historical accuracy is important, yet since it cannot be absolutely recreated: it must promote truth *in* the moment.

Secondly, Lessing not only offers pointed and well thought out dramatic criticism, but he also thinks out loud by simply raising questions. Like Aristotle, Lessing writes decisive thoughts, however, he also proposes questions for further exploration about history. “What is the first thing that makes history probable? Is it not its ability to be confirmed by no witnesses or traditions, or by such as have never come within knowledge?” (Lessing 238). The contribution of Aristotle can be seen as static and almost harshly directive, concentrating on text and plot. Lessing, still somewhat directive, adds textured thought to dramaturgy with the presence of open-ended questions grounded in the spirit of exploration.

The purpose of including Lessing’s approach to dramaturgy in this thesis is twofold: to understand history and portray it truthfully under any circumstance surrounding a production and to ask questions to pursue greater truth. Applying such methods to producing plays will hopefully yield the strongest living piece of theatre for all involved, including the audience.

## Contemporary Dramaturgy

More than two centuries after the publication of the *Hamburg Dramaturgy*, a unique contemporary voice arose to further explore the complex understanding of the identity of dramaturgy. We look now to the powerful essay written by Elinor Fuchs who developed *EF's Visit to a Small Planet: Some Questions to Ask a Play*. The career of Fuchs as playwright, editor, educator, scholar and speaker culminated in her assuming the role of Professor Emerita of Dramaturgy and Dramatic Criticism of the Yale School of Drama. Originally designed as a teaching tool for dramatic structure in higher education classrooms beginning in the 1990s at the Yale School of Drama, Fuchs's work may present the most accessible pathway into understanding the current identity of dramaturgy. Unlike that of Aristotle, Fuchs's commentary is less directive and promotes a sense of the pure discovery and imagination, looking beyond the text and structure of poetry. "The play is not a flat work of literature, not a description in poetry of another world, but is in itself another world passing before you in time and space. Language is only one part of this world" (Fuchs 6). Instead of questioning truth under certain circumstance on the stage like Lessing, Fuchs stresses that the world of the play is much more complex. "The stage world never obeys the same rules as ours, because in its world, nothing else is possible besides what is there: no one else lives there; no other geography is available, no alternative actions can be taken" (Fuchs 6). Fuchs offers artists the idea that the world of the play is round, multi-dimensional and full of infinite questions to be asked and somehow answered.

Fuchs's journey of discovering the world of a play begins with asking the reader to visualize a physical action: "To see this entire world, do this literally: Mold the play into a medium sized ball, set it before you in the middle distance, and squint your eyes" (Fuchs 6). This

action initiates an epic journey of probing questions that strengthen the relationship with the play and all of its parts. The essay continues to ask questions concerning time, space, climate and even mood. More questions are asked about the people of this planet, their way of life, and their language. Never does Fuchs answer a question, but continuously pushes the reader to delve deeper into the world for truthful information. This unique world is constantly being constructed and subject to change. One of the most significant ideas Fuchs reminds the reader is to not forget their own relationship to the new world. “Seeking what changes, don’t forget to ask what changes in you, the imaginer of worlds. Ask, what has this world demanded of me?” (Fuchs 9).

The collection of well over one hundred questions provides an educational tool of cultivating a truthful relationship with a play. These questions challenge the reader to analyze numerous possibilities resulting in meaningful knowledge of such a world brought to life on stage. Is dramaturgy about asking meaningful questions in the pursuit of meaningful answers? Asking questions allows for a more informed truth. Fuchs ends with a lasting impression about how to ask questions. “Give an account of that world that attempts to consider the role of every element in that world – visual, aural, temporal, tonal, figural. *Be someone who is aroused to meaning*” (Fuchs 9).

As dramaturgy continues to expand and evolve, Romanska, editor of *The Routledge Companion to Dramaturgy* (2015), shares a modern definition of the term which puts the craft into context for theatre of today. “Modern dramaturgy sees itself as a field, profession, skill, and verb; as a tool of inquiry, a liberal art, and theatrical practice. The increasingly interdisciplinary nature of theatre-making demands new tools, which, in turn, affect dramaturgical practice” (Romanska 11). This full-bodied definition allows for the many lenses in which dramaturgy as

can viewed, investigated and experienced. As numerous current theatres explore the ways in which dramaturgy is applied, the inclusive nature of analysis engulfs an array of performative events. Within the pages of the written companion, through many informative essays, we see how dramaturgy can be initiated in “opera, dance, film and television, extending the profession into other disciplines” (Romanska 17).

To continue exploring the identity of dramaturg, a trio of contemporary voices investigate the role of a *dramaturg* - the profession. This multifaceted role is the intersection of theory and practice of dramaturgical analysis, making meaningful appearances in theatrical experiences throughout the world. Scott E. Irelan, Anne Fletcher and Julie Felise Dubner, authors, theatre educators and practitioners, create a useful educational tool which highlights and explores a chronological approach to the practice of production dramaturgy. “*The Process of Dramaturgy: A Handbook* reflects upon the lively, imaginative practice of production dramaturgy from an experimental perspective” (Irelan et al. ix). In essence, this resource chronicles the scope of skills and tasks a production dramaturg experiences within an active production. Such an approach assembles a more linear timeline for the production dramaturg while simultaneously noting the multi-dimensional applications of the craft. “Structurally, we divide *The Process of Dramaturgy* into three distinct parts – Pre-Production, Rehearsal, and In Production – so as to emulate the major phases common to the production process of directors, designers, education/outreach departments and the like” (Irelan et al. xv).

This three-phase approach comprehensively illustrates the complex and numerous functions that can be assigned to a production dramaturg. In the pre-production phase, the production dramaturg’s responsibilities include assembling a glossary of terms, research of

production history and background of the playwright. Such information will create the beginnings of a production resource packet, which will be shared with the production team as well as performers. This phase prepares the production with useful and meaningful research to support the overall vision of the show. Further identifying this essential role, the “hunting and gathering” of information is promoted as a major and ongoing feature. “Information gathering, of course, revolves around a variety of sources. The sources themselves appear in a range of forms” (Irelan et al. 15). The importance of diverse research from numerous sources allows for the most discovery of truth within overarching and focused ideas. In this phase, other important areas of robust research highlighted are conceptual frameworks suggesting “ways in which the production dramaturge might encourage “ways of seeing” the relationship between the written text and the eventual live performance event” (Irelan et al. 39). This is the densest information offered in identifying the role of the dramaturg however, it illustrates the power and importance of critical theory. The take-a-way from this research lies in the benefits of multiple possibilities for the production. Investigating a play through numerous lenses allows for more discovery and perspective, for both performer and audience. Through this process, the way in which the story is told is only strengthened.

Part Two moves into the very chaotic rehearsal process as it “seeks both to illustrate and to explicate an array of responsibilities that a production dramaturg might have during a rehearsal process” (Irelan et al. 57). Noting that each rehearsal process is different, this part expertly explores analyzing the text from the perspective of what is only written without additional sources. “This type of analysis (at face value simplistic) prepares a production dramaturg for active participation in fruitful discussions of form, structure, genre, and style of a



production’ (Irelan et al. 65). Such information will not only generate thoughtful discussion with the production team, but the information will be compiled into Production Resource Packets for performers. Further aspects of dramaturgy in this phase include how to navigate read-throughs, table work, runs, dress-tech and tech.

Outreach and Education, and how it directly intersects with the dramaturg, is explored in the final part of the handbook. “This chapter emphasizes how the work of a production dramaturg both in preparation and in rehearsal can express itself through a variety of activities and publications that extend notions of continuity to engage spectators before they arrive at the live performance and even and often after the event itself” (Irelan et al. 95). A variety of examples are offered as to how a dramaturg can initiate a deeper understanding for and a stronger relationship with audience members. These insightful activities, whether in the form of lobby display, program note or post-show discussion, enrich the overall theatrical experience.

Dramaturgy is not an undefined phenomenon. Though mysterious and highly complex, sometimes puzzling, other times firmly understood, dramaturgy wears many hats in many different theatrical spaces. It is a craft, profession, a way of discovering connections, and perhaps most importantly, “a tool of inquiry” (Romanska). *Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas* uncover and share some ways in which dramaturgy can appear in the theatrical landscape by posing the question: What is Dramaturgy? The rich answers find footing in the areas of Research and Development, New Play Development, Production Dramaturgy, Arts in Education, and Advocacy (Imda.org). This list contributes to better understanding the possibilities and lenses in which dramaturgy can be viewed, explored and applied, thus creating a strong identity.

Both historical and contemporary voices substantially and confidently share useful analysis of the explorative nature of dramaturgical identity. Collectively, the theory and practice highlight the mechanics of structure and plot, circumstantial truth on stage, and an active curious pathway to discovering meaningful truth through questions. Furthermore, a specific role, a production dramaturg, is explored giving a realistic and somewhat tangible identity to an essential member of a production team. Together, these imaginative theories and opinions will be explored as the foundation to construct the educational framework in dramaturgy for young artists in today's theatrical landscape. These diverse theatre practitioners offer a starting point and inspiration into further investigation and practice of dramaturgical analysis.

### **CHAPTER THREE: EXPLORATION OF INQUIRY-BASED LEARNING METHODS**

To introduce and discover an identity and scope of dramaturgy with young performers, I have chosen to explore and activate Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) because the Science-based approach is flexible and allows students to personally uncover the complexities of dramaturgy through creative questioning, guided research, and meaningful discussion. Initially, this methodology seems to provide elasticity through the presence of non-linear infrastructure, allowing youth to discover the multiple layers dramaturgical analysis has to offer. How can the application of IBL establish a relationship between young artist and the identity of dramaturgy? Dramaturgy and Science share intersectional characteristics. Peter Flom, in *Five Characteristics of the Scientific Method (2018)*, states “The scientific method is the system used by scientists to explore data, generate and test hypotheses, develop new theories and confirm or reject earlier results.” Within the perimeter of theatre, dramaturgy investigates the extensive world of a play through comparable theory and practice which directly aligns with Science. “In the February 2013 episode of the hit TV series *Smash*, titled “The Dramaturg,” a dramaturg is referred to as “the book doctor” (Romanska 2). This connection between a doctor, or Science, and a dramaturg, the theatrical equivalent, may provide an accessible approach to dramaturgy for young artists. To better understand the creation, foundation and application of IBL methodology, it is worth charting its emergence in education through practical and historical lenses. In this approach, what are the intersections of IBL and dramaturgy in theory and practice?

### Scientific Inquiry

The foundation for IBL can be attributed to, and perhaps begin with, the railroad tracks which were laid at the height of the Industrial Revolution in America and the expansion westward. The latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century brought about exponential growth in American industries. “At the turn of the century, the strength of a nation's industrial capacity was measured by the number of tons of steel it produced. Henry Ford had built his first gasoline engine car in 1892 and the world's first auto race was held in Chicago in 1896. By 1900, telephones were in wide use. Cities were being electrified. Moving pictures were a curiosity” (Library of Congress). As American society and industry flourished, focus was given to education in this new and progressive world. Educational reform and a robust examination of learning was introduced in 1896 by John Dewey. As a philosopher, psychologist and educational reformer, Dewey implemented a methodological approach to learning in the creation of the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools. This experimental educational community, erected on the grounds of the University of Chicago, aimed to create a new learning environment rooted in science to test the boundaries of student learning. The curriculum provided the basis for “experiential learning” as students owned a larger part of their educational experience and were encouraged to explore their unique abilities. “To prepare him for the future life means to give him command of himself; it means so to train him that he will have the full and ready use of all his capacities; that his eye and ear and hand may be tools ready to command, that his judgment may be capable of grasping the conditions under which it has to work, and the executive forces be trained to act economically and efficiently (Dewey 78). Dewey and Aristotle are the examples of two pioneering philosophers who represent the expansion of ideas in their fields of study. Both

highly curious men experimented with the identity and application of their subject matter through new-fashioned lenses. As Aristotle recorded the earliest theoretical and philosophical commentary of literature, he sparked a rich dialogue surrounding the anatomy of theatrical practice for centuries to come. Dewey formulated a new forward moving methodology that provided the bedrock for unconventional and holistic learning. This innovative form would inspire others to further test the boundaries of how humans obtain knowledge.

Educational reform continued in experimental ways as rote learning and direct instruction were both actively present in classrooms throughout the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, once again, the progress of technology paired with social change impressed upon educational methodology and pedagogy. IBL officially came into focus and an identity began to form in conjunction with the great Space Race of the late 1950s. As the Cold War ensued, attention was aimed towards the skies and beyond into the science of space exploration. The USSR launched new satellite technology, *Sputnik 1*, into space in 1957 followed by the first human years later in 1961. The appetite for space technology and advancement consumed both the United States and the USSR in the form of competition, as the US answered by propelling an American into space a month later. As American society was focused on the mysteries and ambiguity of space, new calls for educational reform and learning echoed throughout the halls of academia.

Using science as broad infrastructure, the 1960s ushered in a progressive remedy for what was happening in the American classroom. In 1960, Joseph J. Schwab formally introduced a pedagogical method centered around scientific inquiry in *Inquiry, the Science Teacher, and the Educator*. Schwab, a University of Chicago professor, explores the ways in which Science curriculum is both taught and learned. He questions the current approach as it seemed to limit the

efficiency and quality of intended learning outcomes, especially concerning the approach to instructional design. “We tend to provide a structure which admits of no loose ends. We minimize doubts and qualifications. We strive for exposition characterized by an almost artistic beginning, middle and end” (Schwab 185). Perhaps referring to the rigid guidelines set forth by Aristotle, Schwab argues against the linear “unity of action” calling for a more divergent approach to primeval instruction. Encouraging students to explore “outside the lines” of Science, a discipline rooted in fact, Schwab highlights the importance of questioning and research. Furthermore, Schwab offers a stern warning against teaching “inalterable truths”, as Science can and will evolve through future discoveries. “To avoid these unintended meta-consequences of our teaching, we need to imbue our courses and our exposition with the color of science *as inquiry*. We need to give students an effective glimpse of the vicissitudes of research” (Schwab 186).

To accomplish the intended learning outcomes and mastery of Science, Schwab gives great importance to the *process*. In this method, the responsibility is shifted more to the student as the educator assumes the role of helper. “He [the student] needs to develop the competences and the habits required to read and learn for himself. This need will require us to test that most cherished fantasy of the teacher – that students truly learn only with our help. In our courses we will need to set off certain segments of subject matter for the student to master by himself (Schwab 186).

Schwab promotes the application of inquiry-based learning through laboratory curriculum. The laboratory experience allows for meaningful questions and new exploration driven by the student, not teacher. Schwab stresses the importance of moving beyond “technical

methods and devices such as live things, telescopes, electronic devices, dissection, collecting and construction” (Schwab 191). Though these tools and skills are useful, they do not offer a complete understanding of science. The idea of looking beyond the science and asking direct questions supports true learning. For Schwab, the experiential process of learning is a complex exercise of the mind. “...The potential scientist needs exposure to the most completely open and instructed versions of inquiring curriculum. Through the activities of invention, analysis, and critical evaluation these classroom and laboratories afford, he can participate in, and be conditioned to, the vicissitudes of inquiry” (Schwab 192).

One of the strongest intersections of IBL and dramaturgy is uncovered as Schwab explores significant attributes of commonality. This intersection of Science and Art highlights how the application of scientific inquiry is in direct dialogue with the active roles of a production dramaturg, previously highlighted in *The Process of Dramaturgy: A Handbook*. This investigative role, massive in scope, lends itself to Science, as the dramaturgical process is based upon raising and testing numerous questions to further explore the compounded world of a play. As the dramaturg explores this world through the unique dramaturgical lens, the innumerable pathways of investigation, supported by textual evidence, yield new ways of artistic interaction. Such research contributes to the formation of stronger perspectives allowing for effective and truthful storytelling. The dramaturg engages with language, structure and themes much like the educational scientist interacts with motivation, reinforcement and retention. The inquiry-based methodology is ever present, as both probe the tangible and intangible, looking beyond to gain new knowledge and understanding.

Against the backdrop of the Civil Rights Movement, the temperature of society was tested within educational institutions as The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination in public schools based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Already stressed by *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), establishing racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional, society was yearning and ready to accept some form of change. The transformation of education was in direct dialogue with civil rights as equality was brought to the forefront of American society. The idea of change and reform permeated through America and allowed for progressive ideas to make a lasting impression. Much like the civil right laws addressed racial inequality during a time of great change and growth in America, a new educational framework promoted IBL.

### Shared Inquiry

As IBL was born and continued to develop in the realm of science at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this progressive pedagogy, perhaps because of great flexibility, found another area of useful application. Interestingly, the inception of Shared Inquiry (SI), another form of IBL, formally began at the University of Chicago in 1947. Prior to 1947, educator Mortimer Adler introduced adults to a form of analyzing and discussing great works of American literature in the suburbs of Chicago, Illinois. As the project gained recognition through the years, Alder found partnership with another educator, Robert Maynard Hutchins, and together, created a continuing education program at the University of Chicago. The program's success brought workshops to many US cities and even partnership with the Chicago Public Library. "In 1947, Hutchins and Adler established the nonprofit Great Books Foundation to promote



lifelong education through the reading and discussion of outstanding literature. Their aim was to encourage all Americans to participate in a “Great Conversation” with the authors of significant works in the Western canon” (greatbooks.org).

Building upon the investigative foundation of previous scientific IBL methodologies, SI moves this idea forward by adding a layer of colorful discussion. As the written text of literature generates meaningful discussion, this methodology can be transferred to the world of play in the realm of theatre through exploring the text, dramatic structure, plot, setting, characters and setting. Dramaturgy identifies and explores the many separate and essential parts that exist in a play. Discussion and communication of ideas, perspectives, and themes provide a way of exploring the true essence of a piece of theatre, often uncovering tensions unique to each written play and theatrical production.

The simple structure of SI, the hallmark methodology of the Great Books program, soon found a new audience in young readers. Programs were sponsored in high schools and elementary schools allowing for a new way to explore meaningful works. As Junior Great Books programs multiplied across the country, numerous books were added to the curriculum expanding the catalogue. This allowed for many young readers to be exposed to many types of literature from classics to contemporary works. “From the beginning, Junior Great Books demonstrated that all children can benefit from the close reading and questioning strategies of Shared Inquiry” (greatbooks.org). Since its inception, and throughout the following decades, the Great Books program has reached millions of students and teachers, promoting reading and targeted discussion in the pursuit of

meaningful understanding of literature. As SI engaged with young readers of literature, perhaps it can provide an enriching educational experience in exploring dramaturgy.

The *Shared Inquiry Handbook*, published by The Great Books Foundation, efficiently provides expert framework for leading and participating in SI discussions. “Shared Inquiry promotes an intellectually stimulating interpretive discussion of a work – a group exploration of meaning that leads to engaging and insightful conversation. It helps participants ready actively, articulate probing questions about the ideas in a work, and listen and respond effectively to each other” (Shared Inquiry Handbook 1). Immediately providing a complete definition, the handbook then highlights the importance of the leader asking interpretive, factual and evaluative questions. Much like scientific IBL, shared inquiry is based upon the asking of questions in the pursuit of exploring colorful and textured answers. A comprehensive framework is provided with step-by-step guidelines for the leader. Easily understood, the five chronological steps create a pathway for exploring not only works of literature, but offer application for film and visual art. The most notable methodology the program offers is the attention to the creating of strong questions. “Shared Inquiry is driven by questions and distinguishes between three basic kinds of questions – interpretive, factual and evaluative” (Shared Inquiry Handbook 6). Prior to leading the shared inquiry, the construction of questions is vital to fully exploring the material at hand. Simply, thoughtful questions yield meaningful discussion, leading to expanded knowledge and ideas.

The foundations of SI are rooted in the colorful line of analytical questioning, much like Elinor Fuchs’s approach surveys the complex and always evolving world of a play in *EFs Visit to a Small Planet*. Fuchs’s approach can be discussed as scientific in design and structure; allowing one question to inspire numerous others for deeper investigation. Viewing dramaturgy

though the lens of SI, perhaps Fuchs plays the role of the group leader in discussion, willing and ready to unleash an arsenal of profound questioning with the intention of stimulating critical thoughts in, around and through the world of a play.

### Contemporary Inquiry

As Dewey shared the first ideas of experiential learning and Schwab offered the beginnings of scientific inquiry in the classroom, the Great Books program, led by Hutchins and Adler, translated such ideas to make them more accessible in other learning landscapes. Throughout the years, as educational reform became politically driven and widely accepted, new educational pedagogies and methodologies became widely utilized in classrooms. Exploring new ways to make learning (and teaching) exciting and fresh, educators of numerous subject areas have turned to IBL as it promotes “the big picture.” “Inquiry is the dynamic process of being open to wonder and puzzlements and coming to know and understand the world” (Focus on Inquiry 1). Inquiry framework allows for organic pathways of discovery as it constantly challenges students about the relationship between our minds, our existence, and the world around us. To highlight the idea that inquiry promotes a worldwide view of learning, with endless possibilities, we look to educational exploration in Alberta, Canada. *Focus on Inquiry: A Teacher’s Guide to Inquiry-Based Learning* states:

Inquiry-based learning is a process where students are involved in their learning, create essential questions, investigate widely, and then build new understandings, meanings, and knowledge. That knowledge is new to the students and may be used to answer their essential questions, to develop a solution, or to support a position or point of view. The knowledge is usually presented to others in some

sort of public manner and my result in some sort of action (Focus on Inquiry 1).

Much like the *Shared Inquiry Handbook, Focus on Inquiry*, sponsored by Alberta Learning, offers a comprehensive instructional model to establish IBL in Canadian classrooms of many subjects. The circular model shows that each inquiry is directly related to the next, and scaffolding inquiry skills yields the strongest results. Furthermore, the extensive guide provides research and references for thoroughly understanding exactly how to execute successful instruction. From the early beginnings of Dewey and Schwab, IBL models, such as this, are robust, detailed and supported by data and research. The content and processes are more accessible and better formulated for instructional implementation. This experimental approach to learning in Canada explores the ways SI can be applied to numerous subjects, taking this methodology deeper into the classroom and beyond literature and science. As young learners practice SI in more and more landscapes, including Mathematics and History, perhaps such an opportunity can be afforded to the arts, and specifically, dramaturgy and theatrical arts.

One of the most impressionable contemporary voices in IBL is Trevor MacKenzie, a Canadian author, teacher and inquiry practitioner. In his book, *Dive into Inquiry*, MacKenzie provides guidance, supported by practical application, to those teachers who wish to implement IBL in curriculum, with limited experience and/or prior knowledge. The approach offered is scaffolded “by laying the groundwork for a smooth transition for my students between other learning models they’ve experienced and inquiry-based learning” (MacKenzie 9). From the start, MacKenzie highlights the challenge IBL presents, as for many students, this may be their first experience with such a way of learning.

To better understand the distinct levels of inquiry, MacKenzie breaks them into four different types: 1) Structured Inquiry 2) Controlled Inquiry 3) Guided Inquiry 4) Free Inquiry. With Structed Inquiry consisting of the most direct and pre-determined instruction, each level gradually puts more responsibility on the student and allows them to be most inquisitive in the level of Free Inquiry. Very clearly, MacKenzie states that the first three levels, only once fully understood and practiced, allow for the implementation of Free Inquiry. The result of implementing IBL in his classroom, MacKenzie states in conclusion, is the following: “The inquiry student is curious, creative, shows initiative and multi-disciplinary thinking, is empathetic, and exhibits a growth mind-set, grit, and character” (MacKenzie 34). Inspired by MacKenzie’s effective approach to fostering student agency, I look to explore what types of contemporary inquiry can be used to explore dramaturgy? As dramaturgy encompasses the vast landscapes of the world of a play, can different levels of inquiry, consisting of dissimilar amounts of direct instruction, be utilized for investigating the identity of dramaturgy? Which levels best intersect with certain roles of a production dramaturg?

The evolution of IBL has made it accessible to more than just Science. The methodology is available to many disciplines because of the openness it provides in the pursuit of gaining knowledge, mostly in its most basic design element: *questioning*. Dewey, Schwab, and MacKenzie each offer a pathway to understanding the idea of inquiry, as each expand and build upon the research of another. The journey of inquiry is complex, and in no way is this research inclusive of all voices and models. However, the contributions of these practitioners provide the strongest foundation for my development of inquiry-based framework for exploring dramaturgy. Combining numerous voices and ideas from Science, Literature and Education will allow me to

design meaningful educational framework for the ambiguity and complexity of dramaturgy, supported by research and proven practice. Using IBL, emphasis will focus on the process of learning in the company of young artists passionate about theatre.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: INTRODUCTION TO THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

When preparing theoretical framework for exploring dramaturgy with young artists, it is important to select material that provides strong opportunities for engagement and discovery. Understanding the physical setting that will host this exploration is equally important, as it provides the necessary educational and artistic space for the envisioned framework. This chapter will explore the musical chosen for practical dramaturgical analysis as well as the existing youth theatre program for which the framework is designed. The material and setting are paramount to this experiment and were selected intentionally to provide the strongest substructure for the theoretical framework. This chapter will conclude with a discussion of how the framework is constructed and further clarify how IBL and dramaturgy are intended to intersect.

### RENT: A Rock Musical

The framework will explore a musical that reimaged the boundaries of contemporary musical theatre. *RENT* originally opened off-Broadway on January 26, 1996 and officially transferred to Broadway on April 29, 1996. Written by Jonathan Larson, the fledgling production first introduced itself to audience members at the New York Theatre Workshop in 1993. Tragedy confronted the production as Larson unexpectedly passed away prior to the off-Broadway opening. The show would soon become a worldwide success accumulating the Pulitzer Prize for Drama and Tony Award for Best Musical. After running for over a decade, *RENT* officially closed on September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2008, garnering a broad fan base resulting in commercial and artistic success.

*RENT* focuses on the lives of a community of friends in Manhattan's East Village during the mid 1990s. However, this community is complex, and prior to this production, these stories existed in the darkness of American life and were underrepresented in American musical theatre.

Call it the East Village, call it Alphabet City: it is a montage of performance artists, abandoned building, upwardly mobile landlords, film makers and rock-and-roll bands; homeless people, policemen, drug dealers and drug addicts; free-thinking, free-from multiculturalism, homo-, hetero-, and bisexuality, life-support groups and sex; privilege side by side with poverty and open-hearted exhilaration in the face of death and H.I.V. (Jefferson NYT)

Margo Jefferson, in a February 1996 review in *The New York Times*, shares almost every theme existing in the ground-breaking concept rock musical. The scope of themes and abundance of culture make *RENT* a strong choice to explore through the lens of dramaturgy. Perhaps it is most interesting and beneficial to investigate a world that directly precedes our own, yet still represents a type of foreign world (to youth) that is not "too" foreign. Therefore, instead of examining a current musical, *RENT* allows for a thorough analysis of issues relatable and accessible to teenage performers, set in a slightly different landscape. The participating high school students will have the opportunity to explore the identity of dramaturgy through actively questioning and researching the multi-dimensional landscape *RENT* has to offer.

Three main themes in *RENT* present themselves as immediate pathways into dramaturgy for young artists: mortality, art and community. The HIV/AIDS epidemic is weaved into the lives of all characters in some form, much like COVID 19 is present today. Perhaps the young artists will find this issue meaningful as our society is currently existing with, and working through, a biological obstacle and crisis. What are the differences between HIV/AIDS and



COVID 19? How has each disease been politicized by the respective governments? What is the impact on society?

In this world crippled by a disease, *RENT* offers insight into diverse artists learning to exist *with* their art. From filmmaker to an avant-garde performance artist, and even illuminating the artistry of computer science and law, the characters represent a scope of creative people living in New York City: a dirty artistic island of creativity. How is New York City a haven for artistry? What kind of art is present in New York City? This collection of artists forms a smaller, tight-knit community in a place infused with millions of people with millions of hopes, dreams, fears and ideas. However, the community *RENT* focuses on is a group of friends working together to understand themselves in an age of individualism vs. collectivism. How do the lives of these characters compare to your own?

Though some of the material is mature, *RENT School Edition* will be used as it makes appropriate changes for youth performers. Even with a modified script, the story and circumstances stay the same, creating a pathway into a landmark experience in musical theatre. The world of *RENT* is layered and infused with political, social, and socio-economical commentary. As the foundation for *RENT* is inspired by the Giacomo Puccini's opera *La Boheme* (1896), yet another opportunity presents itself as an artistic connection to another artform: opera.

### Long Lake Camp for the Arts

The setting for this exploration of dramaturgy will be a summer sleepaway performing arts camp in Long Lake, NY. This program is of personal interest, as I currently serve as Head of

Performing Arts, and have directed productions here each summer for the past twelve years. Located in the heart of The Adirondack Park, Long Lake Camp for the Arts provides an artistic oasis for young performers ages nine through seventeen. Long Lake Camp for the Arts was founded by David Katz and his wife, Jeannie, in 1969. Prior to the development of the camp, David created the Queens Symphony Orchestra (QSO) in 1953. As an accomplished musician and conductor, David implemented an educational youth music program sponsored by QSO which reached thousands of school aged children well into the 1970s. The program served as inspiration for a new music camp in rural upstate New York. Throughout the years, the camp continues to grow to include theatre, dance, visual art and circus. I believe this location provides a strong opportunity to explore and introduce dramaturgy to young artists.

The non-competitive philosophy of Long Lake Camp for the Arts, first initiated by founder Katz, is simple and extremely effective. Young artists are encouraged to freely explore Theatre, Dance, Music, Visual Art, and Circus without the pressure of competing with their peers. Campers choose which arts they want to explore without prerequisite experience. Each camper has a unique relationship with the arts and is empowered to carve out their personal path. Campers have the opportunity to participate in all arts regardless of skill level as the landscape promotes inclusion. Therefore, each experience involves not only learning about the art, but also learning alongside their peers. Interwoven into this experience is nature and the stunning outdoors, providing traditional camp activities such as watersports, horseback riding, camping, hiking and white-water rafting.

Each session is attended by no more than three hundred campers who are passionate about the arts. Growth in theatre department programming has mostly been in the area of

performance. In the last five years, in addition to producing traditional scripted shows, new performance opportunities have been in the form of a variety show, consisting of stand-up comedy and magic, as well as an improvisation showcase. The only non-performance-based program in theatre is S.W.A.T (super wicked awesome techies) which allows campers to shadow professionals and explore in the areas of costumes, hair and make-up, properties, sound, lights, and carpentry.

Educational theatre programming at Long Lake Camp for the Arts can benefit immensely from a dramaturgical program. Like many youth performing arts programs, focus is usually given to performance opportunities culminating in a live production, ultimately showcasing a final product. However, I believe enrichment can be found in offering young performers a non-performance opportunity to explore the realm of dramaturgy. Such a program would introduce young artists to a deeper understanding of theatre through an explorative journey of a play or musical. The goal of such a program is to initiate a relationship, or at the very least, an awareness, between young artists and dramaturgy. This experience will hopefully inspire further exploration in future theatrical endeavors. The artistic environment at Long Lake Camp for the Arts is nurturing, open and non-competitive thus creating a space highly conducive for young artists to delve into a new world of dramaturgy.

#### Preface to Theoretical Framework

The theoretical and educational framework will focus on the intersections of inquiry-based learning (IBL) methods and the complex identities of dramaturgy. The objective is to explore an educational experience that effectively introduces dramaturgy to young performers in

a creative way. This introduction of dramaturgy should be readily accessible yet challenge students to investigate ideas for deeper understanding. The scaffolded approach will challenge students to formulate and ask questions while simultaneously seeking out answers from both their peers and through independent research. Essentially, students will exercise critical thinking skills to assemble a unique understanding of dramaturgy.

As these young artists most likely experience a high teacher-centered approach to learning in school, this framework will explore dramaturgy while practicing a more student-centered approach to learning. Outside of the traditional high school classroom, IBL may present both opportunities as well as challenges, depending on the student's previous learning environments and experiences.

The framework will be created for a small group of young artists, perhaps no more than ten, with at least one instructor. The participants will explore the musical *RENT School Edition* in which their peers are cast. The group will become an extension of the production and attend certain production meetings, select rehearsals and two performances (one for peers and one for the public). In addition, participants will also attend a daily class for one hour lead by an instructor. The total length of the program will be three weeks to coincide with the length of each session.

To better organize the experience with the theater production schedule at Long Lake Camp for the Arts, I propose a four-part program. This format will chronologically subdivide the experience of "putting up" a show by making each step smaller and more understandable for young artists. Such an approach will allow for gradual discovery and practice-based investigation

as to how dramaturgy is ever-present before, through, within, around and even after a theatrical production. Each of the four phases will utilize IBL in both practice and theory, allowing participants to actively experience dramaturgy in real time.

In each of the four parts, different forms of IBL will be utilized in application. Most importantly, IBL offers students a method of learning valuable skills useful well beyond the classroom. “The types of student inquiry allow me to touch on many soft skills students need to navigate their constantly changing world – curiosity, creativity, initiative, multi-disciplinary thinking and empathy. These skills are vastly different from certain hallmarks of the traditional classroom, such as memorization of facts and performance of routine tasks, which are becoming less and less important” (MacKenzie 34). Each inquiry will focus on essential questions, representing the main topic of exploration. Tools and resources, such as notebooks technology, and staff will also be accessible to all students. Finally, each IBL experience will culminate in a performance task for practice resulting in a product of their learning.

Each participant will be given an exploration notebook. This notebook will serve as a space to express thoughts, formulate questions, take notes, and even record research for each class session. Students will be encouraged to channel all thoughts and information into this notebook throughout the experience, from class sessions, to production meetings, to rehearsals, etc. Once the three-week experience has ended, the idea is that the student will have written documentation and history of their exploration of dramaturgy.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: FOUR PHASES OF DRAMATURGICAL FRAMEWORK**

This experimental framework will investigate numerous elements of dramaturgical analysis, how they may intersect with methodologies of IBL, and how *RENT* can be explored with young artists. While examining historical and contemporary ideas and practice of dramaturgy, I look to find productive ways in which IBL can be applied to create a meaningful experience for young artists. Such an approach is chronological and scaffolded in form, and rooted in science, encompassing Shared Inquiry, Structured Inquiry, Controlled Inquiry, Guided Inquiry and Free Inquiry. Each of the four phases may expose tensions and opportunities uncovering the unique relationship between IBL and dramaturgy. The scaffolded structure activates the exploration of dramaturgy prior to the introduction and engagement with the chosen production, *RENT*. The intention is to first create a learning environment of inquiry and curiosity through Shared Inquiry, paving a way forward for the practice of other forms and levels of IBL methodologies.

### Phase One: What is Dramaturgy?

To initiate the introduction of dramaturgy to young artists, Phase One will focus on exploring a short essay through Shared Inquiry. The selected material is *EF's Visit to a Small Planet: Some Questions to Ask a Play* by Elinor Fuchs. Fuchs, in the introduction, shares how her essay is used as a teaching tool in the MFA Dramaturgy Program at Yale School of Drama. The essay offers an in-depth and robust line of questioning designed for application upon any play or performative piece of theatre. Though it was designed for a graduate program in

dramaturgy, I am inspired to use it as a teaching tool for young artists. "...the approach offered here is not a "system" intended to replace other approaches to play analysis...Rather, it could be thought of as a template for the critical imagination" (Fuchs 50). The way in which Fuchs challenges readers to use their eyes and imagination to discover the multi-layered details within a play seems very accessible for young learners passionate about theatre.

An overview of the Shared Inquiry guidelines (from the Shared Inquiry Handbook) will be discussed with the students for a better understanding of the learning method. Students will be encouraged to construct meaningful questions in the pursuit of gaining new knowledge and formulate unique thoughts and ideas about the material to share with their peers. This same approach will later be used in Phase Two as a pathway into the world of *RENT*

To begin the exploration of dramaturgy, students will read *EF's Visit to A Small Planet*. During this time of individual reading in class, students will be asked to utilize their notebooks by taking note of words they do not understand and jotting down initial thoughts or questions. "To prepare for Shared Inquiry discussion, read the text at least twice, taking notes and forming questions as you read. Read a text first just to comprehend its overall scope" (Shared Inquiry 5). Once the group has finished reading, they will be given a few moments to finish writing questions or note taking. Then, collectively, the class will read the essay out loud alternating the reader. Students will be encouraged to actively listen, as hearing the text may inspire new questions or ideas. Throughout the reading, students will continue to take notes and formulate their own questions inspired by the text.

Once the active reading is complete, the instructor will propose an interpretive question to the group such as “What is the world of a play?” As this question is broad and extremely generalized, the goal is to challenge the students to critically think within and around the text. “The Shared Inquiry leader prepares interpretive questions to initiate the discussion, then moderates its course by challenging responses, following responses with more questions, asking for evidence from the text and inviting further response” (Shared Inquiry 12). Fuchs offers a plethora of pathways into the world of the play and provides ideas for many, many questions. To best prepare for discussion, the instructor should prepare a list of interpretive questions that can be used to stimulate further thought and discussion. I propose creating at least one question for each section of the essay. As there are eleven sections, a question for each would make certain every section is discussed. However, the instructor’s questions should be used as a last resort once the student’s questions have been exhausted or when redirection and inspiration are needed. The next step in identifying dramaturgy will commence once the Shared Inquiry discussion is complete. In reality, the discussion will most likely take more than one session. Students will not only offer their own questions for discussion, but they will be also be actively discussing numerous ideas from their peers. The goal is to create meaningful and rich discussion propelled by student inquiry. In the event the discussion continues, students will be encouraged to further explore the text outside of class. A new setting, away from the group, may inspire different questions, perspectives and discussions.

The second step will challenge students to identify and define dramaturgy. As Long Lake Camp for the Arts is a closed campus, students will be encouraged to use the resources readily available. Using *EF’s Visit to A Small Planet* as a foundation, students will be challenged to



research dramaturgy without direct instruction. The essential question posed to the students will be “What is dramaturgy?” Resources will consist of technology and the entire performing arts staff. Students will have the opportunity to research articles and information online as well as interview staff members in all realms of theatre including costumes, properties, technical theatre, directors, choreographers and stage managers. Each staff member, if asked, will be able to share their perspective and knowledge of dramaturgy with the students and/or assist them in their research. As Long Lake Camp for the Arts employs almost forty professionals in the theatre department, the students will be able to seek out unique identities and definitions of dramaturgy.

Once students accumulate their own research, each will share their findings in a class discussion. Students will not only present and learn from their own findings, but they will also learn from the findings of their peers. After a group discussion, students will then be tasked to create their own statement of dramaturgy beginning with the prompt “Dramaturgy is...” which reflects their own discovery and understanding of the ambiguous term.

Elinor Fuchs and Shared Inquiry share a theory and practice based upon the importance of questions. Fuchs offers hundreds of questions, many follow up questions, interpretive questions, and even polar questions, all designed for investigation. Each question challenges the reader to delve deeper into the complex world of a play for further discovery and understanding. Through the process of asking questions, Fuchs inspires the reader to use their imagination to find meaning and truth within the world of a play. The imaginative nature of her essay makes an introduction to dramaturgy more fascinating, interesting and exciting. By activating critical thinking *with* imagination, students will begin to assemble the world of the play, and then start to understand all the individual parts. Each part is unique and important in the creation of a live

production. Young artists, in many theatre programs, experience the rehearsal process and performance, hardly being exposed to the multiple non-linear layers of a play. Fuchs, in a short essay, provides useful questions to impose upon any work of theatre beyond the performance. What is most interesting is how Fuchs's essay can be converted to list form and used as Shared Inquiry discussion questions for any play. As Part One serves as an introduction to dramaturgy, there is more to uncover. Hopefully, students will be inspired to continue to discover and identify the meanings and applications of dramaturgy. "Of course you can construct meaning in this world in many different ways. Construct it in the most inclusive way you can. There will still be more to see" (Fuchs 9).

One of the first signs of tension may be uncovered in the very beginning of the theoretical framework, at the onset of Phase One. The application of Shared Inquiry is suggested through reading, and eventually discussing, *EF's Visit to A Small Planet*. This short but mighty essay provides a literature-based entrance into the realm of dramaturgy. As the theoretical framework is designed to interact with high school aged artists, a slew of questions surface: How will these young artists engage and comprehend graduate reading material? Which of Fuchs questions and ideas will be perplexing and which will be more easily understood? In what ways does *EF's Visit to a Small Planet* lend itself to Shared Inquiry?

The answers to these questions should be explored. I believe some young artists, depending upon their reading and comprehension skills, may struggle with the written text. Fuchs presents an overwhelming number of questions, almost leaving not a single rock unturned in the world of a play. However, I remind myself that these same young artists, maybe in their school classrooms, read and analyze rich works of literature such as *Moby Dick* by Herman

Melville. This dense novel is a staple in American high school classrooms as it allows students to explore many layers of a story and discover numerous lenses through which it can be interpreted.

With an inquisitive nature, the essay is flexible enough to propose questions to explore plot, character, theme, language, and music. These important elements provide the earliest foundation for dramaturgy. “Dramaturgy requires the analytical skill of discerning and deconstructing all elements of dramatic structure” (Romanska 13). The subject matter in Fuchs’s essay ranges from questions about the social world of the play to the physical world of the play, and everything in between and beyond. “‘Tone’ also contributes to mood. What is the tone of this planet? How are moods created on this planet? Through music? Lights, sound, color, shape? What shapes, Curves? Angles?” (Fuchs 6). Concerning the abstract approach to assigning shape and angle to the world, I wonder how students will explore such ideas in the context of dramaturgical analysis. Will it inspire new perspectives in which to view a play? Or will it be glanced over? What does such a discussion look like? *EFs Visit to a Small Planet* overflows with ideas and questions which will hopefully lead to fruitful discussions through Shared Inquiry. Even if a fraction of the questions are explored, it will initiate a level of critical thinking. Critical thinking can be seen as one of the strongest skills necessary in dramaturgical practice: the ability to think through, around and within all elements connected to the world of a play.

As Shared Inquiry is the first IBL methodology explored in the dramaturgical framework, it also serves the purpose of acting as a template for the forthcoming scientific inquiry approach in the experiment. *EFs Visit to a Small Planet* can be viewed (and hopefully used) as a robust line of questioning for exploring the essential questions prompted in Structured, Controlled,

Guided and Free Inquiry. In practice, the young learners can always refer back to the questions formulated by Fuchs to expand their research and inspire critical thinking.

How do you define dramaturgy (as an educator) in an Inquiry-Based Learning environment? According to IBL methodology, you do not. This creates great tension, especially when direct instruction is all too common in practice and easy to fall back upon. “A leader should not pose questions that are really statements in disguise and should resist the temptation to guide the group on a fixed course throughout the text. Also, a leader should refrain from readily offering personal opinions” (Shared Inquiry 12). Examining this important directive, textbook examples cannot be used to supplement the inquiry and discoveries of the young learners. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the learners to provide evidence of their opinions through textual examples and research. As the educator, providing historical examples such as Aristotle or Lessing are not allowed, and influential voices in dramaturgy will only be explored through the findings and research of participants.

The most challenging aspect is resisting the urge to apply teacher-centered pedagogies. The role and function of the educator is rooted in only offering essential questions, not correct answers. “The Shared Inquiry leader prepares interpretive questions to initiate the discussion, then moderates its course by challenging responses, following responses with more questions, asking for evidence from the text, and inviting further response” (Shared Inquiry 12).

The depth and scope of identifying (and defining) dramaturgy in this framework lies within the information gathered from the young artists. The second part of this phase introduces another form of inquiry: Structured Inquiry. “During Structured Inquiry, all students embark in

deepening their understanding of the same essential questioning using the same resource or resources” (MacKenzie 29). When proposing the essential question, “What is dramaturgy?”, will they offer research from the early writing of Aristotle? Will they share research of Lessing and the emergence of the role of a dramaturg? What contemporary definitions will be shared through their research? As dramaturgy can be defined in many ways, how do you share and promote insightful examples? “Modern dramaturgy sees itself as a field, profession, skill, and verb, as a tool of inquiry, a liberal art, and theatrical practice. The increasingly interdisciplinary nature of theatre-making demands new tools, which, in turn, affect dramaturgical practice” (Romanska 11).

One way to include historical and contemporary voices, thus discovering dramaturgy’s origin and current application, is to follow up with the essential questions such as “Which historical figures in theatre are significant to dramaturgy? What are the ideas surrounding modern theatre practitioners in dramaturgy? What is a dramaturg?” However, such an approach may be considered “guiding” the inquiry process, thus nullifying the unique IBL methodology of exploring dramaturgical analysis. The initial essential question “What is Dramaturgy?” allows many ways for the term to be investigated and should remain to fully commit to IBL. Regardless of the outcome, the forthcoming phases are designed to help the young learners uncover significant elements and practices of dramaturgy.

### Phase Two: What is Pre-Production?

The second phase will explore the numerous areas of pre-production with the intention of building the earliest foundations of dramaturgical practice. These initial readings of the play, at

least two in total, will serve as the inception of a unique relationship between the student and the world of the play. Building upon the inquiry methodologies of Phase One, students will read the entire script of the play. The first reading will allow students to read at their own pace within their preferred personal space, outside of the classroom. To create a meaningful first reading, students will also be asked to create a glossary of terms which will be compiled to create a master glossary for the production. “To begin the construction of the glossary, a production dramaturg often highlights words in the play text, compiles a full list, and cross-references two or three sources before assigning meaning(s)” (Ireland et al. 6). The purpose of this active task while reading is twofold. First, students will be instructed to include words in which they are not familiar and will be challenged to research the word for further understanding. Second, students will be asked to also include words that hold significance in the world of the play, such as dates, locations, people, etc. Students will also research these terms and share their knowledge during the next part of the exploration. This simple form of inquiry challenges students to answer the question “What is the meaning and significance of this word?”

The next reading of the script will be collaborative effort, in class, once again applying the methodology of Shared Inquiry Learning. However, the application of this practice creates a challenge as *RENT* is an opera; a play almost completely set to music. As the text is directly, and almost always, partnered *with* music, the second reading will take a hybrid approach to exploring the text and music. While following the written text (libretto) as a group, the original Broadway cast recording will be played for a deeper understanding of the story. The opportunity to actively listen to the music will propel students further into the unique world of the play. The text not set to music will be read aloud. This experience will help students formulate insightful ideas about

the world of *RENT* and introduce them to the relationship between text and music as the two are in constant partnership throughout the entire show.

Upon completing the “listen/read through” an open discussion will explore the many words that each student flagged for further clarification. The shared inquiry can begin with “What words need to be defined for understanding?” However, the most logical starting point should be the definitions and meanings of the title of the show. “It is also wise to carefully parse the play’s title. Sometimes a name is just a name and sometimes it is the key to innovation” (Ireland 7). So, “What are the meaning and significance of the title *RENT*?” Analyzing the title of the show, accompanied by thoughtful discussion, can provide a pathway into the world that is about to be explored. Moving forward, a robust glossary of terms will be constructed as a starting point into the world of *RENT*. For instance, one of the most complex songs in the show, *La Vie Boheme* offers a list of significant words central to the world of *RENT*. From pop culture references to terms of sexual identity, the song provides many examples of individualism, a way of existing in an ever-growing global and capitalistic community. This compilation will be used as a reference guide for further exploration and understanding.

At first, *RENT* may seem out of place, or even out of the realm of plays (or musicals) first thought of to introduce dramaturgy to young artists. I whole-heartedly disagree. As I have previously directed three youth productions of this show, I find the world of this play mesmerizing to young artists, both in the cast and in the audience. Perhaps not as current or popular as the musicals *Hamilton* or *Dear Evan Hanson* (which are not even available for licensing), *RENT Highschool Edition* presents an engaging story, grounded in reality, paired with a high energy musical score. Young artists, especially at Long Lake, can regularly be found

singing *Seasons of Love* or loudly displaying their skills of memorizing the verbose lyrics of *La Vie Boheme*. And to be honest, the lyrics that make up *La Vie Boheme* contain words ripe for dramaturgical analysis. Though they may know how to sing, do they really know *what* they are singing?

MAUREEN/COLLINS: Compassion, to fashion, to passion when it's new

COLLINS: To Sontag

ANGEL: To Sondheim

FOUR PEOPLE: To anything taboo

COLLINS/ROGER: Ginsberg, Dylan, Cunningham and Cage

COLLINS: Lenny Bruce

ROGER: Langston Hughes

MAUREEN: To the stage (Larson 105)

This example, consisting of an array of theatrical figures, proves there is an opportunity and need for dramaturgical analysis in *RENT*. Through such practice, young artists are empowered to answer questions that arise from the text. *RENT* also introduces a diverse group of complex characters. These characters differ in race, sexuality, profession and present a range of socioeconomical differences. Most importantly, these characters, under such circumstances, create many themes for further exploration and discovery. The song also offers perspective and commentary of how artists struggle with their artistry. Referencing dance, film and music, the lyrics find a sort of resolve in anarchy, further illustrating the complex life of an artist.



ALL: To dance!

A GIRL: No way to make a living, masochism, pain, perfection, muscle spasms, chiropractors, short careers, eating disorders

ALL: Film

MARK: Adventure, tedium, no family, boring locations, Darkrooms, perfect faces, egos, money, Hollywood and sleaze

ALL: Music

ANGEL: Food of love, emotion, mathematics, isolation, rhythm, power, feeling, harmony, and heavy competition

ALL: Anarchy

COLLINS and MAUREEN: Revolution, justice, screaming for solutions, forcing changes, risk and danger, making noise and making pleas (Larson 107)

In addition to characters and historical figures, the lyrics of *RENT* also allow for an analyzation of themes which create the atmosphere for the world of the play. *Seasons of Love*, one of the most well-known songs in the show, explores the importance of time and how it can be measured during one's life in the presence of the disease and the death of a loved one. Embedded within the song is a powerful question: "How do you measure a year in the life?"

ALL: Five hundred twenty-five thousand, six hundred minutes

Five hundred twenty-five thousand moments so dear

Five hundred twenty-five thousand, six hundred minutes

How do you measure, measure a year?

In daylights, in sunsets

In midnights, in cups of coffee

In inches, in miles

In laughter, in strife

In five hundred twenty-five thousand, six hundred minutes

How do you measure a year in the life?

How about love?

How about love?

How about love?

Measure in love

Seasons of love

Seasons of love (Larson 109)

With so many opportunities for rich discussion, *RENT* can be viewed through many lenses, creating a “dramaturgical sandbox” open to the investigation of pop culture, history, New York City, artists, and even inquiry into music theory and composition.

### *Exploring the External World*

Discovering a new world is exciting, yet it does not happen miraculously and without cause. There are significant experiences, ideas, and historical happenings that contribute to the creation and existence of a play. Before delving into the internal world, students will be challenged to investigate, research and provide evidence of the important information that exists just outside the world. The interconnected external space is vital to establishing a relationship between the student and the play. This focus is the beginning of “hunting and gathering” information outside of the classroom also implementing Structured IBL. Exploring the external spaces will provide connections for the latter exploration of the internal spaces. To assemble the world of a play, the external spaces create the landscape for a show to exist, grow, thrive and evolve. The essential questions presented for the inquiry and discussion of this external space, inspired by *The Process of Dramaturgy: A Handbook*, include:

1) *What is the world of the playwright?*

The life of playwright Jonathan Larson, though extremely tragic, helps uncover the stories being told in *RENT*. Larson’s life is the sum of his experiences, relationships, influences, and dreams. The world he lived in contributed to his ideas, artistry, and unique point of view.

What was his taste in music? Which artists inspired him? What kind of friends did he have?

Where did he grow up?

2) *What is the production history of RENT?*

The world of *RENT* has entertained audience members and challenged musical theatre artists and musicians for almost three decades. Students can plot the show’s evolution in readings, workshops, Off-Broadway, Broadway, and in regional, community and educational

productions. Each production is unique with a different production team, cast and interpretation. Researching past productions helps to explore how theatre is subject to different points of view under extremely different circumstances including location and budget. This inquiry will also help uncover how the world of *RENT* interacts with the current world. In what ways is *RENT* relevant for today's audience? What is the target audience for *RENT*?

3) *What historical events/movements are present during the creation of RENT?*

*RENT* was created during a specific time (1990s) in American history under specific circumstances. This unique time, unlike any other time in history, leaves a distinct impression on each work of theatre crafted and produced. Students will be empowered to discover the play through the lenses of the political, social, cultural, and artistic themes of the 1990s. What were some newspaper headlines during the time period? What was American life like during this time?

Three important areas of dramaturgical research are explored in this framework: The Playwright, Production History and Sociocultural Information. These areas reside outside the world of the play yet provide insight into the construction and existence of the play itself. "Being acquainted with what a playwright embraces, or rejects can lead a production dramaturg to keys to unlocking metaphors, themes, and motifs within a given text" (Irelan et al. 13). As students research the life of the playwright, including family, education, race, other produced works, etc., important connections can be made to characters and ideas within the world of the play. Production history can provide numerous ways and lenses in which the play is produced and received by audiences. Students can gain an understanding of how different production teams

and theatres interpret the world of the play, from Broadway to local productions. Sociocultural Information provides ways to explore the landscapes in which a play was conceived and created. “...it is important for a production dramaturg to get a quick sense of what was happening within the global society and popular culture at the time the show opened” (Irelan et al. 12). This historical approach can once again provide connections to the world of the text through the world in which it was created. Researching popular culture, politics of the time, and major historical events can provide pathways into further understanding the interior workings of the play. Together, these elements of “groundwork” create a strong foundation for exploring the complex world of the play and exemplify four significant research responsibilities of an active dramaturg.

#### *Design Inspiration: Exploration of the Physical World*

*EF's Visit to A Small Planet* will provide the theoretical framework, more specifically, the questions that will be raised to explore the physical world. As this inquiry will be the first venture into the physical landscapes of the musical, only two design elements will be investigated and discussed: costumes and scenography. The idea is for students to seek out inspirational images of clothing, accessories, places, buildings, and living spaces. This inquiry methodology will differ from the previous Structured methodology as Controlled Inquiry will be applied. “In Controlled Inquiry, the teacher provides several essential questions for students to unpack. Agency over learning shifts more to the student as they are given more choice over the essential question and resources they will explore” (MacKenzie 29). This next level of IBL allows the student to choose which of the two elements they will research. The essential question will precede the investigative questions offered by Fuchs:

1) *What does clothing look like in the world of RENT?*

“How to figures dress on this planet? In rags, in gowns, in cardboard cutouts? Like us? (Are you sure?)” (Fuchs 7).

2) *What are the physical settings in the world of RENT?*

“What is space like on this planet? Interior or exterior, built or natural? Is space here confined or wide open? What changes in the landscape of this world? Does it move from inside to outside?” (Fuchs 7-8).

As this inquiry is hardly inclusive of all design elements, the intention is to encourage students to explore elements of pre-production, especially within the design process. Using the text as a roadmap, students will have agency to choose which element to research. During this investigation, students will be guided by the essential question, yet further by Fuchs’s questions to generate a deeper array of research and exploration. The performance task of creating a visual presentation of their work and findings (collages, photos, artwork) will be shared by each member and discussed. Furthermore, students will be asked for supportive evidence from the text. As each student has a different point of view, the result will be a meaningful discussion of the physical attributes of the world. This inquiry intentionally lacks boundaries and guidelines for selecting inspirational materials. The only guidance is that it must come from *within* the written text. The idea is to empower students to critically think around the subject and explore the element of design in their own unique way. These new discoveries of the interior physical world of the play create another pathway for further dramaturgical exploration.

Though a production dramaturg is not tasked with this creative element and responsibility, I feel the design process can be explored to further engage with dramaturgical

analysis and artistic collaboration. The idea is to encourage the students to research these design elements as if they were providing accurate inspirational images for designers. Within the pre-production process, dramaturgs are often in design meetings, providing a perspective based on truth and historical accuracy. "...the difference between being a production dramaturg and being just a researcher is the time spent in creative-collaboration with directors, designers, producers and the rest of the artistic team" (Irelan et al. 20). Therefore, the intention of this experience is not to design costumes or set pieces, but to explore and gather research on clothing, architecture, and structural settings to better understand the specific settings of the play. With guidance coming completely from the text, students will compile images, specific to the historical time period of the show, to gain a better understanding of how physical elements are represented in the world of a play.

### Phase Three: What is the Interior World of a Play?

The focus of this exploration will delve deeper into the internal dramaturgical components of the play, continuing to highlight the tasks of a dramaturg. Having already investigated the outside forces, events and experiences that contributed to the conception of the play, students start to construct an outer shell (perhaps a larger idea) of the world. The next thought-provoking exploration is to move forward within the interconnected fibers, which collectively assemble a unique theatrical story. This world is complex and deeply layered, however, the intent is to give students the opportunity to explore an area of interest while concurrently engaging in the exploration of their peers. Phase Three will adapt the same methodology of Controlled IBL as several essential questions will be proposed. Again, Fuchs's questions will be referenced for

further investigation. The findings of each student will be shared to initiate thoughtful and meaningful discussion. Initial essential questioning to provide an introduction include “What is the interior of a play?” and “How are the interior and exterior of a play in constant dialogue?”

1) *Who are the characters in the world of the play?*

“How do figures appear on this planet? Are they inward or two-dimensional? Subtle? Exaggerated? Are figures matched off in conflicting pairs? How do figures interact? By fighting? Reasoned discussion?” (Fuchs 7).

2) *What is the plot and structure of the play?*

“In what kinds of patterns do the figures on this planet arrange themselves? What changes in action? Have we moved from confusion to wedding...from threat to disaster...from suffering to rebirth? Is the world of the play at the end of the play a transformed world?” (Fuchs 7-8).

3) *What is the landscape of time, climate, and mood in the world of this play?*

“How does time behave on this planet? One day? A lifetime? Is the environment on this planet lush and abundant, serene and life-denying, airless and suffocating? What is the mood on this planet? Jolly? Serious? Sad?” (Fuchs 6).

4) *What is the textual and musical language in the world of the play?*

“What are the language habits on this planet? Verse or prose, dialogue or monologue, certainly. Is language colorful or flat, clipped or flowing, metaphorical or logical? Exuberant or deliberate? And what about the silences? Every dramatic work will have, or suggest, characteristic sounds – of mourning, celebration, children’s patter, incantation” (Fuchs 7).



5) *What themes, tensions and ideas are present in the world of the play?*

“Is this a public world, or private? What are its class rules? Aristocratic? Popular? Mixed? Who has the power on this planet? How is it achieved? Over whom is it exercised? To what ends is it exercised?” (Fuchs 7).

These five essential questions represent highlighted areas of dramaturgical points of interest. With inspiration from Aristotle and investigative questioning from Fuchs, the exploration focuses on specific elements of dramaturgy. Collectively, these questions align with Aristotle’s ideas, thus allowing students to explore the innerworkings of the world of the play through his perspective. Each inquiry strives to resemble a component deemed essential by Aristotle, beginning with the importance of plot. “Trying to find the optimal recipe for a successful piece of dramatic work, Aristotle deconstructed all its components, including plot, character, theme, language, rhythm, and spectacle. In *The Poetics*, he considers plot (μῦθος = mythos) as the most important element of drama, defining it as “the arrangement of the incidents.” A plot must have all the necessary elements: unified and logical beginning, middle, and end” (Romanska 19).

This inquiry exercise begins to assemble the interior world represented by different parts that form the foundation for the entire world of a play. Though not a comprehensive list, each present a lens in which to view the play. Each essential question represents an entry point allowing for individual exploration. Perhaps the most robust inquiry yet, students will explore more complex ideas while being challenged to critically think around the many ideas each essential question provokes. This practical exercise will result in a performance task to share and communicate the student’s findings.

Students can construct a visual character map that introduces each character and how they relate to others and their environment. When exploring climate and mood, a student can combine inspirational images to represent the feeling and emotion of each scene and setting in the play. As the music and text (lyrics) are constantly united and actively fluid within the world of *RENT*, a student can compose an additional song that represents the musical styling of the score. *RENT* is full of political, socioeconomical, and cultural themes and ideas. It would be interesting if a student creates a hierarchical collage of class and how they intersect and coexist and which tensions result. As there is no wrong way of presenting the information, this creative inquiry combines dramaturgical practice and imagination, and as always, support from the text.

#### Phase Four: What is Dramaturgical Outreach and Education?

The final, and most significant phase creates one last performance task, intentionally scaffolded in design. This task encompasses the scope of dramaturgical exploration throughout the experience, consisting of multiple inquiries, numerous questions, play analysis, discussion and imaginative exploration. Using both external and internal elements of the world of the play, as well as numerous IBL methodologies, students are challenged to develop and implement a creative project. To further explore how dramaturgy and IBL methodologies can be paired together in practice, a Guided Inquiry approach will be applied in this final investigation. “In Guided Inquiry, the teacher further empowers student agency by providing a single essential question (perhaps several) for students to study, whilst the students select the resources, they will use to research their answers and choose how they will demonstrate understanding” (MacKenzie 30). Guided Inquiry takes student-centered learning one step closer to Free Inquiry, however, it

still provides the slightest impression and appearance of teacher-centered pedagogy. Students, working as a collective group, will be tasked with creating an educational and informative experience (or experiences) for spectators at performances. This product will invite audience members into the world of *RENT* and initiate a new relationship between the show and the spectator. The inquiry will pose the essential questions: *How do you introduce the world of the play to the audience during performance? What are the ways in which dramaturgy is shared with audience members?* Students will be encouraged to engage the skills obtained from previous inquiries in dramaturgy and explore numerous ways in which dramaturgy can intersect with audience members. The capstone dramaturgical experience will be displayed at all performances.

As an educator and theater practitioner, I employ two ideas that emerge as a way for students to approach this inquiry in Educational Outreach: *What is a dramaturgical program note? What is a lobby display?* First, by the creation of a dramaturgical program insert, students can create an efficient, robust, and meaningful collaborative written communication to the audience. “As a rule of thumb, the program note contains information directly related to the production and is present in a form that can be digested in five minutes, which is the average time a spectator has between their arrival and start of the performance” (Irelan et al. 99). The informative note will encapsulate the enrichment gained through the dramaturgical process, and neatly communicate highlighted dramaturgical information. Secondly, the creation of a lobby display can communicate a visual *and* written exploration prior to experiencing the world of the play on stage. “The spectatorial experience begins as soon as the individuals enter the theatre facility, and, as such, they should be actively engaged as soon as possible” (Irelan 109). This

method quickly connects with the audience member in a specific space outside of the theatre. Or does it?

These two methods are traditionally presented to audiences at theatrical experiences and will (hopefully) be discovered and applied. As there are many ways to educate the audience through dramaturgy, the most significant idea is that it *is* being applied. By promoting the realm of dramaturgy to audience members, perhaps for the first time, it provides a more enriching and meaningful total experience. Highlighting the significant elements of the play, consisting of themes, ideas, tensions, and history, the audience member forms a connection to and personal understanding of the unique world of the play. “Dramaturgs are curators and should increasingly view themselves as such. One of our basic functions is curating information. By selecting salient information to present, for instance, in actor’s packets and program notes, we are influencing the opinions and artistic growth of both artists and the theatre-going public” (Romanska 21). Most importantly, this creative project is a significant way for students to share the countless answers acquired through numerous inquiries in dramaturgy. This final dramaturgical showcase ultimately answers the initial question: *What is the world of a play?*

## **CHAPTER SIX: FURTHER DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

Attempting to explore the identity of dramaturgy within this theoretical framework, created for an audience of young artists, unfurls many thoughts and ideas ripe for further discussion. This experiment uncovers how essential questions, the hallmark of IBL, lead to discovering not just one answer, but numerous possibilities, dependent upon resources and the chosen material. I now look to discuss and reflect upon individual elements which, in tandem, create the substructure of the explorative framework.

### Defining Dramaturgy

I discovered, through assembling this thesis, the identity of dramaturgy is in no way singular as it is comprised of many, many parts. Deconstructing these individual parts prove to be challenging, especially when it comes to choosing which elements should be offered up to the scrutiny of inquiry. The central essential question of “What is dramaturgy?” is extremely broad as it can yield numerous responses, mostly dictated by the resources that are utilized. In *Dramaturgy and Performance*, written in 2016, Cathy Turner and Synne Behrndt comment on how information of easy accessibility may not include all elements of dramaturgy. “Although dictionaries and encyclopedias offer apparently clear explanations, these are insufficient to address the multiple and complex uses of the word, which has, in contemporary theory and practice, become an altogether flexible, fluid, encompassing and expanded term” (Turner and Behrndt 21). I surmise that attempting to define dramaturgy through a historical lens by obtaining accessible research on Aristotle and Lessing, especially through the eyes and minds of

young artists, only begins to uncover the compounded complexity. A simple ‘google search’ brings up information which mostly begins with *The Poetics* and *The Hamburg Dramaturgy*. As these two historical figures represent the foundations upon which dramaturgy has evolved, they offer theory and the infantile beginnings of the term. “Aristotle’s outline of compositional principles places particular emphasis on the ways in which dramatic structure can shape audience experience. For example, Aristotle advises that the structure of a drama should revolve around one principal action, since the audience must not lose a sense of unity and wholeness” (Turner and Behrndt 25). As experienced in the theoretical framework, dramatic structure is the focus of one inquiry, representing only one pillar of the identity of dramaturgy. “With his *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, Lessing attempts to develop a more rigorous, objective, and analytical theatre discourse and practice, identifying some principles for theatrical renewal. He had little respect for the contemporary theatre...the theatre culture had to be addressed in its entirety, including writing, staging, acting style, management and repertoire” (Turner and Behrndt 23). Building upon the ideas of Aristotle, Lessing expands the elements of dramaturgy through published criticism. Though important in all discussions of *dramaturgical analysis*, these two men fail to focus on how contemporary *dramaturgical practice* is present in theatrical experiences of today’s youth artists.

The most accessible definitions of dramaturgy come from unique contemporary voices. Romanska offers the most understandable definition: “Modern dramaturgy sees itself as a field, profession, skill, and verb; as a tool of inquiry, a liberal art, and theatrical practice. The increasingly interdisciplinary nature of theatre-making demands new tools, which, in turn, affect dramaturgical practice” (Romanska 12). This definition gives context to the multi-faceted term

and illuminates how it applies in practice. This “big picture” definition provides the most inspiration in assembling the essential questions of the framework. Throughout my discussion, I first highlight how dramaturgical “skill” is applied. *EF’s Visit to A Small Planet* explores dramaturgy “as a tool of inquiry.” Dramaturgy and Shared Inquiry, when paired together, introduce the earliest exploration into understanding the term. Moving forward, the specific “profession” and “theatrical practice” of a dramaturg investigate dramaturgy in the remaining framework. *The Process of Dramaturgy* chronologically accounts the production dramaturg’s tasks and provides the most accessible way for youth artists to investigate the world of a play.

Defining dramaturgy is most challenging in this experiment as the aforementioned definitions are hardly accessible through the inquiry of the young performers, especially with the resources available. One way to navigate this obstacle is to provide a small collection of excerpts from numerous scholarly sources. Through the Shared Inquiry of these sources, more meaningful connections will present themselves. Or, once the entire experiment is complete, and after the skills and tasks of a dramaturg are activated, the young artists can revisit the prime essential question: “What is dramaturgy?” The outcome may be different with these newly obtained dramaturgical skills

#### Accessibility of Research and Resources

I would also like to briefly discuss the accessibility of dramaturgical research and how it significantly impacts this exploration. This assemblage of the framework, more specifically through research, uncovers the tension dramaturgy presents between scholarship and youth education in theatre. The information readily accessible is complex, verbose, and written with the

intention of published scholarship. However, though rich in information and insight, the bulk of published research cannot be deciphered by young artists. In addition, gaining access to reputable sources online requires membership and paid subscriptions to scholarly journals and other publications, hardly attainable to youth artists. *The Reconstructed Dramaturg* by William Casey Caldwell and Amy Kenny explore the role of dramaturgs at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London, UK, and American Shakespeare Center's Blackfriars Playhouse in Staunton, Virginia. "Dramaturgy in general is, of course, an abstract practice to define, as it is still provisional in many countries, and in many different theatres within a single country. The dramaturg resides somewhere between academia and theatre and is expected to have intimate knowledge of both" (Caldwell and Kenny 11). As dramaturgy is ever present at the aforementioned theatres as well as numerous theatres throughout the world, each theatre interacts with dramaturgy through the role of the dramaturg differently. These dissimilar practices are evident even within the same countries by the theatrical artists associated with numerous domestic organizations. Yet the most important discussions concerning the evolution and accessibility of dramaturgy need to be more inclusive with the world of theatre outside of academia. As this thesis attempts to connect the world of educational theatre for youth with scholarly material and practice of dramaturgy, more opportunities need to be available to bridge such a gap. How do we, as artist scholars, provide more meaningful dramaturgical experiences outside of institutions of higher education? We must probe current practices of dramaturgy, deconstruct its parts and explore creative and intentional opportunities to reassemble them with IBL, through the lens of a young artist. Then, we focus on sharing our experiences to initiate an



open dialogue signaling the need for dramaturgical analysis in youth theatre education. Finally, we create and implement.

### Dramaturgy and Scientific Methodology

I find the exploration and practice of dramaturgy naturally lends itself to the scientific methodology of Inquiry-Based Learning. Lessing, in the world of theatre, and Charles Schwab in the world of science, represent the earliest connection. “Early investigations in a field use guiding concepts of the subject matter which are necessarily simple. As the concepts are used, knowledge of the subject unfolds and leads to refinement and invention of techniques. The new knowledge lets us envisage new and more complex conceptions. The growth of technique enables us to put these new concepts into practice as guides of new research” (Schwab 179). As Schwab refers to the methodology of scientific inquiry, he expresses the presence of evolution in the process. Knowledge is expanded through inquiry, resulting in new outcomes or findings beyond what was already know. Also, through inquiry, other techniques are constructed, creating a new way of practice. Lessing expanded the groundwork of Aristotle through new ways of explorative practice, yielding newly formed techniques. The result was advanced accumulated knowledge broadening the scope of dramaturgical analysis.

Through a contemporary lens, an intersection can also be discovered between Schwab and a production dramaturg. For instance, as the dramaturg gathers research of the life of a playwright, such “knowledge of the subject unfolds and leads to refinement and invention of techniques” (Schwab 179). In this example, replacing the word “techniques” with “play-making” uncovers the power of dramaturgical research. Such research allows for new perspectives in the

process of show production. Furthermore, it empowers the production team to explore deeper connections between all other elements. The same can be said as a dramaturg investigates historical events and sociocultural themes present in the world of the play. This knowledge leads to more knowledge, again, strengthening the overall vision for the production team, actors, and audience. Dramaturgical analysis, which is strongly based in inquiry, constantly asks questions, and seeks colorful answers for further exploration into the world of a play.

### Levels of Inquiry and the Dramaturg

Another area of discussion revolves around the practice of scaffolded inquiry within this framework. Moving beyond the scientific practice of Schwab, I chose to explore IBL through a contemporary lens in practice, inspired by *Dive into Inquiry (2016)*. MacKenzie explores IBL through a progressive approach and his methodology measures the amount of inquiry from most engaging to least engaging in Structured, Controlled, Guided and Free Inquiry. The structure of each inquiry begins with an essential question (and follow up questions for further exploration) and ends with some form of performance task; a way of showing how the knowledge gained is applied through practice. To connect these types of inquiry to the role of the dramaturg, my framework proposes each level of inquiry is practiced within the dramaturgical cycle of a production. “Structurally, we divide The Process of Dramaturgy into three distinct parts – Pre-Production, Rehearsal, and In Production – so as to emulate the major phases common to the production process of directors, designers, education/outreach departments and the like” (Irelan et al. xv). My interest is to explore how different levels of inquiry offered by MacKenzie

intersect with the phases of dramaturgical practice in a theatrical process offered by Irelan, Fletcher and Dubiner.

In the pre-production phase of my framework, Structured Inquiry (SI) is applied to the essential questions: “What is the world of the playwright? What is the production history of *RENT*? What historical events/movements are present during the creation of *RENT*? Similar in engagement to Shared Inquiry, SI is identified by a group inquiry of the same question, or questions, together. This allows for each student to answer the same questions however, each will in theory produce different information through research. As a group, these dramaturgical research areas will be explored together while also allowing students to be a “dramaturg” in practice.

Moving to the next part of my framework, Controlled Inquiry (CI) is explored through the essential questions: What does clothing look like in the world of *RENT*? What are the physical settings in the world of *RENT*? CI differs from SI as it allows the students more agency over their learning. Students can choose which essential question they want to research, creating a “show and tell” performance task (creative by design) to share their findings. To strengthen the connection to dramaturgy and scientific inquiry, explorative questions are also included from *EF’s Visit to a Small Planet*.

The most extensive inquiry of my framework aligns and overlaps with Pre-Production and the Rehearsal process, the second part explored through the lens of a dramaturg by *The Process of Dramaturgy*. “The production dramaturg needs to engage in a formal analysis of the text at hand, beginning with the written text as opposed to outside sources of interest. This type

of analysis (at face value simplistic) prepares a production dramaturg for active participation in fruitful discussions of form, structure, genre, and style of the production with members of the artistic staff' (Ireland et al. 65). The third level, Guided Inquiry (GI), allows students to again choose which essential question they want to explore and allows the student to create their own performance task of presenting their findings. The essential questions I propose in this phase are more complex, in some cases more abstract, and represent a deeper dive into dramaturgical research. This inquiry looks to engage directly with the text for supported evidence. The five essential questions, covering a wide range of interior elements of the world of the play, ask: Who are the characters in the world of the play? What is the plot and structure of the play? What is the landscape of time, climate, and mood in the world of the play? What is the textual and musical language in the world of the play? What themes, tensions and ideas are present in the world of play? To enrich this inquiry, supplemental questions are again offered from *EF's Visit to a Small Planet* for a deeper exploration into the role and analysis of a production dramaturg.

The final inquiry of my framework also implements GI however, previous levels are also used for further exploration, thus promoting a scaffolded approach. This may be the most challenging intersection of inquiry and dramaturgy as two essential questions are raised: How do you introduce the world of the play to the audience during performance? What the ways in which dramaturgy is shared with audience members? "This third section...points to ways in which the information gathered in Section One and the tasks outlined in Section Two converge as a production makes its way towards its opening night and scheduled run" (Ireland 93). Students are challenged to investigate the ways in which all the compiled dramaturgical research can be

synthesized and shared with the audience. Will the answers to the essential questions lead to a lobby display, or a program note? A Post-Show discussion?

### The Absence of Free Inquiry

After discussing how my contemporary and science-based inquiries engage with the role of the dramaturg, only three levels are applied in this framework. The fourth level, Free Inquiry (FI), is not used for a few reasons. “In the deep end of the Types of Student Inquiry pool, Free Inquiry allows students, with the support and facilitation of their teacher, to construct their own essential question, research a wide array of resources, customize their learning evidence, and design their own performance task to demonstrate their learning” (MacKenzie 30). I struggle to find a way to utilize this level of inquiry in this experimental framework as I feel constructing the essential questions, in a way, highlight the necessary elements of dramaturgy while allowing for some form of control over the content explored. FI can be applied in a more advanced exploration of dramaturgy, once this initial introduction is made and a better understanding is obtained by the young artists.

### EF’s Visit to A Small Planet

Briefly, I would like to comment on the effectiveness of using *EF’s Visit to a Small Planet* as an ongoing learning tool in this framework. Though this is a theoretical experiment, I feel Fuchs’s essay creates the strongest connection between dramaturgy and scientific inquiry. By design, it raises evaluative, interpretive, and factual questions, the absolute foundation of Shared Inquiry. Fuchs’s questions are scientific in nature and strive to explore the tiniest places found in the world of the play. Not only is the essay used as a starting point in identifying

dramaturgy, but it also promotes connections between those tiny places and abstract places found in the atmosphere of the world of a play. “Elinor Fuchs’s useful article...encourages us to view the performance work as a whole, as an organic world with its own rules, systems and coherence. It provides an evocative model for a dramaturgical approach. The dramaturg’s ‘toolkit’ for discussing dramaturgy often produces suggestions for ways of summarizing and encapsulating over-all structures” (Turner and Behrndt 7). *EF’s Visit to a Small Planet* is a necessary tool for an active dramaturg.

### Dramaturgy and Musical Theatre

The topic of musical theatre dramaturgy is also included in the framework in the section exploring the interior world of the play. My essential question asks: What is the textual and musical language in the world of *RENT*? *RENT* is a musical with lyrics and music creating a unique and codependent relationship. This language, multilayered in form, verse, and complicated by music theory, presents yet another landscape to be explored through dramaturgical analysis. *A method for musical theatre dramaturgy*, by Brian D. Valencia, included in the *Routledge Companion to Dramaturgy*, explores the complexities of analyzing the music in conjunction to the theatre. “The role of a dramaturge on a musical project – one in development, in production, or in scholarly analysis - is a perennial problem. If a dramaturg is not a trained musician, the musical components of “musical theatre” can seem arcane or intimidating, prompting the dramaturg to skirt them altogether” (Valencia 341). A significant question is raised asking: How can a dramaturg, if essentially inexperienced in music theory, analyze a piece of musical theatre? Valencia’s methodology, concerning musical numbers,

promotes asking “a series of open-ended, exploratory questions about the intent, execution, and effect of each musical number. This method allows for each musical moment to be engaged on its own terms and, furthermore, generates a treasury of possible artistic choices, from which the most exciting can be selected and tested as part of the creative or analytic process” (Valencia 34). Once again, a scientific approach is utilized for song and music as it is for text. Drawing from Valencia, essential questions to propose consist of: What is the intent of this song? How is the song executed? What effect does this song have in this moment of the play? Much like Fuchs, Valencia offers an explorative line of questioning to ask each song to find meaningful answers. In addition, he also included a long list of possible answers. “Re-examination of *why* a song occurs may very well lead to re-examination of *how* it occurs” (Valencia 346). Valencia’s methodology is in direct dialogue with Fuchs and can also be used as an effective learning tool for a song and plays with music. Providing Valencia’s questions as reference and support allows non-musicians to explore the music of *RENT* through a dramaturgical lens. Actually, it is useful for even those with music theory training, as it encompasses both music and text.

### The Dramaturgical Cycle

Another point of tension arises when breaking down the active dramaturg’s process, set forth by Irelan, Fletcher and Dubiner, of Pre-Production, Rehearsal and In Production in my framework. The Pre-Production inquiries provide a hefty experience highlighting the important elements of dramaturgical research paired with an exploration into costumes and set design. I complete the framework with exploring Education and Outreach, in an inquiry leading to an informative lobby display or program note, which serves as final task of a production dramaturg

in practice. However, I chose not to explore the Rehearsal portion. The function of the dramaturg at this stage is complex as it takes on many different tasks. “As a member of the artistic team primarily concerned with overall continuity, the production dramaturg must focus time and energy both in early planning meetings and in production meetings to listening to and taking note of terms and concepts being bandied about, with special attention to the production concept as it evolves” (Ireland et al. 63). Students are invited to a production meeting to experience how collaboration works between all members of the production team though will not be active in discussing continuity of concept and themes. As initial production meetings take place prior to the camper’s arrival, students will experience a follow up production meeting during the rehearsal process. Students will also be welcome in the rehearsal room to experience the construction and exploration of each scene and song as it is blocked or choreographed. Because of the limited rehearsal, the students in the dramaturgical experience will explore the rehearsal process in a passive way, analyzing how the actors interact with the text and how the story is being told. This rehearsal experience can provide supplemental discussions as we chart the course for chronological dramaturgical practice in class sessions.

The Rehearsal section of *The Process of Dramaturgy: A Handbook* (Ireland et al.) also delves into how a dramaturg interacts with table work, advocates for continuity, and prepares and edits written text, especially in the realm of new play development. In addition, the handbook also shares information on how the dramaturg interacts with run throughs, dress rehearsals, and communicates with the director. I find these tasks assigned to the role of dramaturg present an obstacle in the environment of Long Lake Camp for the Arts. The rehearsal process exploration may be looked into in the future, as a next step in further discovering dramaturgy. Questions that



arise include: What is the relationship between the dramaturgical students and the director? How do the dramaturgical students connect and interact with their peer performers? The production team?

### Conclusion

For this experimental framework, Long Lake Camp for the Arts is not chosen at random or without firm consideration. For the past twelve summers I have engaged with youth performers both on stage in the process of theatre making and in explorative educational experiences in the classroom. This chosen artistic landscape, though extremely fruitful in the area of expressive performance, has become somewhat stagnant, suffering from the mechanical formula of producing commercial theatrical experiences for youth. My well over a decade long experience inspired me to begin the process of expanding opportunities for growth within the theatre, preferably off-stage. In researching dramaturgical programs for youth, the results yielded no real discoveries from comparable organizations. This is an opportunity to continue to investigate and bring to fruition.

Introducing youth artists to dramaturgy first involves defining dramaturgy. As my experimental framework and discussions have shown, dramaturgy can be identified through many lenses, both historical and contemporary. The most meaningful ways to define this theatrical term for youth artists, especially in the context of this thesis, begin with Romanska. “Modern dramaturgy sees itself as a field, profession, skill, and verb; as a tool of inquiry, a liberal art, and theatrical practice” (Romanska 7).

Engaging in Shared Inquiry, my proposed framework asks the initial essential question: What is the world of a play? Then, through experiential scientific inquiry, students are tasked to critically think and explore the interconnected elements that assemble a play. “Dramaturgy requires the analytical skill of discerning and deconstructing all elements of dramatic structure” (Romanska 1). The role and journey of the dramaturg provides the intersection of Inquiry-Based Learning and dramaturgical analysis through exploring the three parts of the production process. As students are able to engage with a production dramaturg’s tasks through explorative practice, a significant and meaningful relationship is established. Investigating the proposed elements of dramaturgical analysis, the young artists gradually progress through numerous methodologies of Inquiry-Based Learning, empowering them with agency over their expansion of knowledge, in the spirit of John Dewey and Charles Schwab, and other contemporary artists and scholars. There are no formal learning outcomes intended for this theoretical framework, simply because the intention is that the *process* of discovering dramaturgy is most important for young artists. I choose to offer and promote “learning opportunities” for young artists as they become newly acquainted with dramaturgy. As an educator and artist scholar, this is how I will create a meaningful learning opportunity for young artists to explore the complexities and ever evolving identities of dramaturgy in practice at Long Lake Camp for the Arts. And, in the spirit of Elinor Fuchs, there is still more to explore.

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