

# LUPITA NYONG'O ECLIPSED

A NEW PLAY BY  
DANAI GURIRA



**STAGENOTES®**

A digital toolkit for integrating theater arts into standards-based curriculum, featuring:

- Historical Background
- Production Notes
- Artists' Insights
- Suggested Lessons
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PRESENT

THE PUBLIC THEATER  
OSKAR EUSTIS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR PATRICK WILLINGHAM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PRODUCTION OF

LUPITA NYONG'O

IN

ECLIPSED

BY DANAI GURIRA

PASCALE ARMAND AKOSUA BUSIA ZAINAB JAH SAYCON SENGBLOH  
JONIECE ABBOTT-PRATT AYESHA JORDAN ADEOLA ROLE

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LIGHTING DESIGN  
JEN SCHRIEVER

ORIGINAL MUSIC & SOUND DESIGN  
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DIRECTED BY  
LIESL TOMMY

This production of *ECLIPSED* was first presented in New York on October 14, 2015 by The Public Theater.  
The producers wish to express their appreciation to the Theatre Development Fund for its support of this production.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Interview with playwright and director . . .	3	A timeline and short history of Liberia . . .	6	Women and peacebuilding activities . . . . .	11
The creators . . . . .	5	Historical background activities . . . . .	8	Resources . . . . .	13
		Cultural studies activities . . . . .	9		

Cover photo by Joan Marcus



**FROM THE EDITOR** *Eclipsed* is making history. The first Broadway production where the playwright, director, and cast are all women, it tells the story of five African women who find themselves in extraordinary circumstances. As you'll read in Kathy Henderson's interview with playwright Danai Gurira and director Liesl Tommy, the play is not a history lesson; its focus is on telling the story. The goal of this education guide is to provide you with the tools you need to understand the events in the play and respond to it. From historical background to cultural context, we hope this companion to the show will enrich your experience and empower you to make a difference in your world. Experience your own eclipse and emerge with a new understanding of who you can be. —Amy Heathcott



***“The idea of calling it *Eclipsed* was about saying there is great light in these breathing, vivid characters who have personality and flavor. The idea is that their light has not been destroyed, it’s been blocked. But an eclipse is temporary. So, the hope in the title is that we will eventually start to see these women’s faces, to hear them and know them.”***

**— Danai Gurira, Playwright (from “War Stories” by Adam Rathe in *DuJour*)**

# INTERVIEW WITH DANAI GURIRA AND LIESL TOMMY

***Eclipsed represents a first on Broadway: The cast, director, and playwright are all female. How does it feel to be headed to the Golden Theatre?***

**Danai Gurira:** Deeply surreal, to be honest! It's an amazing opportunity that I don't take for granted.

**Liesl Tommy:** To say that it's a dream come true doesn't even begin to express how miraculous this feels, because it's a project we've poured our hearts and souls into for years. The fact that this will be my Broadway debut is a testament to our strong belief in the play.

***Danai, what was the impetus for telling this story? And Liesl, what was your reaction when you first read it?***

**Gurira:** I had seen a photograph of a woman in the rebel army in Liberia holding an AK-47 and found it fascinating. Then I started doing research and learned about the work of the "peace women" in Africa. My goal has always been to tell African female stories on stage, and this was something I hadn't seen — the story of what happens to women in wartime.

**Tommy:** From the moment I read it, I knew that Danai was a confident writer with a big imagination. She was able to find the nuances in the hearts and minds of these characters and weave a beautifully moving tale.

***It's rare to see historical events such as the Liberian Civil War portrayed through the personal experience of ordinary people. There's nothing preachy about this play.***

**Tommy:** I direct a lot of epic dramas, so that's something I'm aware of: You never want a play to feel didactic. Danai was so committed to these women, I never felt that the political world they're in prevents you from being gripped by their stories — which, frankly, could be happening anywhere in the world right now. They're survivors, and I find them incredibly inspiring.

**Gurira:** You can't enjoy something if you're being banged over the head with a history lesson. That's not only unfair to the audience, it's unfair to the people whose story is being told. You should enjoy being in the presence of these dynamic women even if there is pain involved. No one is going to come to my plays and feel they're being preached to about Africa.

***Lupita Nyong'o, who plays a 15-year-old arrival at the camp, understudied her role at the Yale Repertory Theatre in 2009. What has it been like for the three of you to revisit the play six years later?***

**Gurira:** It's been an amazing journey. The fact that Lupita has been

in love with the play all these years and returned to it after the many beautiful things that have happened [in her career] is really poetic. Several other cast members were also there in 2009, so there's a profound friendship and connection. Lupita is willing to be part of an ensemble because she is a storyteller.

**Tommy:** During rehearsal, I was so deeply moved at the level of commitment of the ensemble to give no-holds-barred performances. Lupita is a serious actress, and all of her choices are about growing as an artist. When you have a cast with that kind of trust and passion, there's nothing you can't accomplish.

***Danai, do you feel like you're living a double life as the star of a huge hit TV show and as a playwright?***

**Gurira:** Yes and no. I feel very supported by the family of artists involved in *The Walking Dead*. A lot of them came to see *Eclipsed* after the [season 6] premiere at Madison Square Garden; they care about my work as a playwright and try to facilitate it. The crazy thing is that my new play [*Familiar*] will be running Off-Broadway at the same time *Eclipsed* is on Broadway. I need a cloning machine, but I'm thankful for the problem.

**Tommy:** Danai is a zombie killer by day, playwright by night! One day she was hiding in a closet on set, waiting to film a scene, and giving notes on a play between takes. You know how they say women can multitask more than men? That proves it!

***What do you wish ordinary people understood about Africa?***

**Tommy:** The simple answer is that I wish people knew that Africa is not a country — it's a continent with many diverse languages, cultures, and histories.

**Gurira:** Just the fact that there's no basic difference between people, regardless of geography or disparities in power and circumstances. I am American and African, and both places have common ground. At the end of the day, our humanity is linked.

***Finally, why is theater important to you?***

**Gurira:** How could it not be? It's where I'm from, so that's like asking why I keep going home again. There's nothing like sitting in a dark house and suspending disbelief to watch a story come to life in real time. It's an amazing, living art form, and a deeply important one.

**Tommy:** I love the energetic exchange and the communal feeling, those moments when you can feel the entire audience laughing or holding their breath. That's the reason we do what we do. And in *Eclipsed*, that connection is there at every performance. The audience is not just watching a play, they're seeing these women's lives unfold.



# THE CREATORS

## PASCALE ARMAND (WIFE #3)



Third production of *Eclipsed* under Liesl Tommy's direction, previously at the McCarter Theatre and Yale Repertory Theatre. Broadway: *The Trip to Bountiful* with Ms. Cicely Tyson. Off-Broadway: Dido in *An Octoroon* by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins (TFANA), Amina in *Belleville* by Amy Herzog (NYTW), Abigail in *Four* by Christopher Shinn (MTC) and Jupiter in *Breath, Boom* (Playwrights Horizons) by Kia Corthron. Regional: *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Blues for an Alabama Sky*, *The Piano Lesson*, *Jitney*, *Pericles*, *Hamlet*, *As You Like It*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *Doubt*, *Ruined*, amongst others. International: *For An End to the Judgment of God* with Peter Sellars in Vienna, London, Zurich, Brussels and Rome. Originated the lead role in Danai Gurira's *The Convert*. Television: "The Blacklist," "American Odyssey," "Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D." and "Law & Order: Criminal Intent." The 2012 LA Ovation Award winner for Lead Actress in *The Convert*, amidst other regional theatrical awards. Recurring role in upcoming web series "Heirloom." Alumna of NYU's Tisch Graduate Acting Program. Core member of Quick Silver Theater Company. [www.quicksilvertheater.com](http://www.quicksilvertheater.com). [www.pascalearmand.com](http://www.pascalearmand.com)

## AKOSUA BUSIA (RITA)



Akosua Busia was born into the Yefri Royal House of Wenchi in Ghana, West Africa. She is the youngest daughter of former First Lady, Mrs. Naa Morkor Busia, and the Honorable Dr. Kofi Abrefa Busia, former Prime Minister of Ghana. Akosua is perhaps best known for her portrayal of Nettie in *The Color Purple*, directed by Steven Spielberg. Broadway roles include Daisy in *Mule Bone* and Tanya in *The Talented Tenth*. Busia starred on London's West End as Edna in *Gloos Joo*, (winner of the Evening Standard Award); Veronica in Athol Fugard's *Valley Song* (La Jolla Playhouse); Annetta in *EDEN* (LA Theatre Center); Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet* (Klaxon Theater Oxford); Puppet in the French film *Saxo*; Patience in *Tears of the Sun*; Bessie in *Native Son* and Brenda in *Babies Having Babies* (Youth in Film Award). Busia penned the film adaptation of Toni Morrison's novel "BELOVED," directed by Jonathan Demme. As an author, Busia's novel, "The Seasons of Beento Blackbird" was a best-selling Book of The Month and Quality Paperback Book Club selection. As a lyricist, Busia penned "Moon Blue" sung by Stevie Wonder, and directed docufilm *The Prof: A Man Remembered*, which was screened at The Houses of Parliament in London. Raised on four continents, Busia received her BA (Hons) from The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, in London. Busia is a Recipient of the "Women in Film International Award."

## ZAINAB JAH (WIFE #2)



Recent credits include: title role of *Hamlet* (The Wilma Theater), *Antony & Cleopatra*, *Romeo N Juliet*, *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* (Atlantic Theater, NYC), Titania/Hippolyta in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Prudence in *The Convert*, Josephine in *Ruined*, *A Doll's House* (Williamstown Theatre Festival), *Eclipsed*, Helen of Troy in *Trojan Women* (Classical Theatre of Harlem), *In Darfur* (The Public Theater/NYSF), Peter Sellars' *Children Of Herakles* (European Tour). Film/TV credits: "Law & Order SVU," "Outliving Emily" (with Andre Braugher and Phylicia Rashad), *Along Came Love*. Awards: Los Angeles Stage Alliance Ovation Award, Best Featured Actress (*The Convert*), San Francisco Bay Area Critics' Circle, Outstanding Performance, Female Featured Role (*Ruined*) and Best Featured Actress, Philadelphia Critics Awards (*The Convert*).

The complete production notes of the Broadway production at the Golden Theatre can be found at [playbill.com](http://playbill.com).

## LUPITA NYONG'O (THE GIRL)



Alexi Lubomirski for Larcombe

Lupita Nyong'o can be seen in J.J. Abrams' *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, as Maz Kanata. She recently wrapped production on Mira Nair's *The Queen of Katwe*, and lends her voice to Jon Favreau's upcoming *Jungle Book* as Raksha. Her feature debut in Steve McQueen's *12 Years a Slave* earned her an Academy Award, SAG Award and Spirit Award. She graduated from the Yale School of Drama and her stage credits include *The Winter's Tale* (Yale Rep), *Uncle Vanya*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, Michael Mitnick's *Elijah*.

## SAYCON SENGBLOH (WIFE #1)



Saycon Sengbloh joins the Broadway run of *Eclipsed* after generating rave reviews during the off-Broadway production at The Public Theater. She recently filmed a lead role in the upcoming Ernest Dickerson feature film, *Double Play*. Earlier this year, she originated the role of Rita Marley in *Marley* at Center Stage Theater (Baltimore) and Staggerlee at the Dallas Theater Center. Her Broadway credits include *Holler if Ya Hear Me*, *Motown the Musical*, *Fela!*, and *Hair*. Off-Broadway: *Once On This Island* and *Hurt Village*. She has been seen in the films *Finding Fela*, *American Gangster*, *Across the Universe* and on television in "Funny Valentines," "The Good Wife," "Law & Order" and the upcoming HBO series, "Criminal Justice" (also known as Crime).

## DANAI GURIRA (PLAYWRIGHT)



is an award-winning playwright and actress. As a playwright, her works include *In the Continuum* (OBIE Award, Outer Critics Award, Helen Hayes Award), *Eclipsed* (NAACP Award; Helen Hayes Award: Best New Play; Connecticut Critics Circle Award: Outstanding Production of a Play), and *The Convert* (six Ovation Awards, Los Angeles Outer Critics Award). Danai's newest play, *Familiar*, received its world premiere at Yale Rep in 2015 and will premiere in New York at Playwrights Horizons in February 2016. She is a recipient of the Whiting Award, a Hodder Fellow, and has been commissioned by Yale Rep, Center Theatre Group, Playwrights Horizons, and the Royal Court. She is currently developing a pilot for HBO. As an actor, she has appeared in the films *The Visitor*, *Mother of George*, and has also played Isabella in NYSF's "Measure for Measure." She currently plays Michonne on AMC's "The Walking Dead." She holds an MFA from Tisch, NYU. She is the co-founder of Almasi Arts, which works to give access and opportunity to the African Dramatic Artist. [almasiartsalliance.org](http://almasiartsalliance.org)

## LIESL TOMMY (DIRECTOR)



Liesl Tommy is an award-winning international theatre director. Broadway: *Eclipsed* (starring Lupita Nyong'o; February 2016). The Public: *Eclipsed*, *The Good Negro*, *The Urban Retreat*. Premieres: *Informed Consent*, *A Melancholy Play*, *Kid Victory*, *Appropriate*, *Party People*, *The White Man – A Complex Declaration of Love*, *Peggy Pickett Sees the Face of God*, *Eclipsed*, *A History of Light*, *Angela's Mixtape*, *Bus and Family Ties*. Additional credits: re-interpretations of *Les Misérables*, *Hamlet*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Piano Lesson*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, four-city tour of *Ruined*. Select regional: DTC, California Shakespeare Theater, CenterStage, Sundance East Africa, Berkeley Rep, OSF, La Jolla Playhouse. Associate Director at Berkeley Rep; Program Associate at Sundance Institute Theatre Program; and Artist Trustee with the Sundance Institute's Board of Trustees. Facilitated the inaugural Sundance East Africa Theatre Director's Lab in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Awards: Obie, Pioneer of the Arts Award, Lillian Hellman Award, Alan Schneider Award, Susan Stroman Award, and NEA/TCG Directors Grant. Alumna of Trinity Rep Conservatory; native of Cape Town, South Africa.

# TIMELINE OF CONTEMPORARY LIBERIAN HISTORY

**1980** Master Sergeant Samuel K. Doe overthrows President William Richard Tolbert, Jr. in a bloody military coup, becoming the country's first indigenous head of state and ending 133 years of democratically elected (and American supported) Liberian leadership.

Though Doe's presidency had some popular support, it was defined by corruption and political repression.

**1989** Charles Taylor, a former government official, leads an insurgency against Doe and attacks government posts in Nimba County. Beginning of Great War/First Civil War.

**1990** Following Doe's capture and death, Taylor usurps the presidency and establishes violent command over the country.

**1992-1996** Rebel factions opposing Taylor's claim form and clash with his forces across the Liberian countryside and the capital, Monrovia.

**1997** Elections are held. Taylor wins the presidency by 70%.

**1999** A large faction of rebels begins to militarize, eventually identifying themselves as the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), and launch attacks against Taylor's army.

**2000** International delegates meet in Monrovia and declare that if civil war does not cease, Liberia will be recognized as an international pariah.

**2001** Thousands of women march to the UN office in Monrovia requesting international intervention in the conflict.

**2002** The conflict escalates, displacing more than 50,000 Liberians and Sierra Leonean refugees. Taylor declares a state of emergency.

## ECLIPSED: 2003

**MAR** LURD systematically moves through the countryside, looting homes, enlisting child soldiers and kidnapping women. They decimate entire towns to establish makeshift military bases. Refugees flee to camps outside Monrovia. Taylor's government tries to drive them out, unsuccessfully.

**APR** Hundreds of women dressed in white gather in Monrovia chanting peace slogans. The women appeal directly to Taylor and the rebel leaders to lay down arms. Both parties agree to peace talks.

In the surrounding country, at least 600 women have joined LURD, some of whom become among the rebel army's highest ranking and most ruthless fighters.

**JUN** As more than 80% of Liberia falls under LURD control, leaders from both sides meet in Accra, Ghana for peace talks. They sign a ceasefire agreement, but fighting continues.

In the midst of negotiations, the Special Court for Sierra Leone indicts Taylor on crimes against humanity. Taylor flees back to Liberia, leaving his delegates to continue peace talks. Upon news of the indictment, war in Liberia escalates.

**JUL** Fighting is at its deadliest as Taylor's government loses control of much of Monrovia. Refugees fill the Samuel K. Doe stadium as food, water, and shelter become scarce. Women gathered in Ghana, led by Leymah Gbowee, stage a sit-in, linking arms to prevent negotiators from leaving the peace talks.

A peace agreement is reached in Accra: Taylor will be exiled to Nigeria and a UN Peacekeeping force will enter Liberia and start a transitional government (which, against the wishes of the women peacekeepers, will include members of LURD).

**AUG** The UN Security Council authorizes the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to launch a peacekeeping mission in Liberia.

Charles Taylor resigns as President of Liberia and leaves for exile in Nigeria. Major fighting abruptly ceases.

The Accra Accord, a comprehensive peace agreement is reached, paving the way for democratic elections in 2005. Liberian women in Accra set forth The Golden Tulip Declaration, calling for the inclusion of women in all areas of the new government.



UNMIL/UN Mission

**UN forces enter Liberia for DDRR (disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and repatriation).**

**NOV 8, 2005** Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is elected President of Liberia and becomes the first elected female head of state in Africa.

**OCT 7, 2011** Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Leymah Gbowee receive the Nobel Peace Prize.



The modern nation-state of Liberia is located along the West African coast. Once known as the “Pepper Coast,” the area was first populated in the 1500s by migrations southward from the savanna into the largely unoccupied rain forests. By the late 18th century, these peoples had established organized societies and confederations. From the early to mid-19th century, freed slaves and free-born blacks migrated to the region from North America. West Indians migrated to Liberia in the late 19th century and African American immigrants continued to arrive from the United States well into the mid-20th century.

The peoples of Liberia currently consist of three major groups. The largest group is the indigenous people, whose ancestors migrated into the area in the 1500s. The second group is the black immigrants from the United States and the West Indies. A third group is made up of the “recaptives” or “Congos,” slaves who were freed from captured slave ships by British and American naval forces patrolling the Atlantic after slave trade was abolished in the early 1800s.



Refugees awaiting transportation to Liberia at Mt. Olivet Baptist Church, New York City

Supported by United Nations peacekeeping troops, this government helped facilitate the democratic election of a new administration in 2005. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was elected President, becoming the first elected woman head of an African state. She was sworn in as the president of Liberia on 16 January 2006. Known in Liberia as the “Iron Lady,” President Johnson Sirleaf faces many challenges in rebuilding the country, including the fostering of reconciliation and reintegrating ex-combatants of the recent conflict into the Liberian society.



**Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was elected President, becoming the first elected woman head of an African state. She was sworn in as the president of Liberia on 16 January 2006.**

## LESSON INTRODUCTION

*Eclipsed* takes place during the Second Liberian Civil War that began in 1999. The timeline on the previous pages describes the milestones in that conflict. Explore the timeline and read the short history to become familiar with how and why Liberia was founded and with the events that are taking place during the play.

In the play, we meet women who are captives of rebel fighters, women who are fighting in the conflict, and women who are working to restore peace. While these women all played a different role in the events of the Second Liberian Civil War, they all emerged into a very different world after the peace. The play ends when peace is reached, but that was the beginning of a new period in Liberia.

## OBJECTIVES

- You will describe the different roles of women in the conflict in Liberia.
- You will identify the effects of women's participation in the conflict on their role in society.
- You will express your ideas and opinions in a group discussion or through journal writing.

## ACTIVITY

Watch this [video](#) that explores the role of women during the conflict and after it ended.

Use the following questions as discussion starters with a group or on your own as you think about what you have seen. If you are not discussing with a group, write your answers in journal form.

- How did the fact that women participated in the conflict as both fighters and peacebuilders change life for women in Liberia when the peace was reached?
- How could the disarmament have been handled differently to help women fighters?
- What do you think makes Liberian women so strong?
- What do you think it was like for women who were forced into becoming fighters? What effects do you think it had on them?



Women fighters in Liberia

## STANDARDS ADDRESSED

### Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.



Joan Marcus

### National Council for the Social Studies Curriculum Standards

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions, so that the learner can give examples of and explain group and institutional influences such as religious beliefs, laws, and peer pressure, on people, events, and elements of culture; and identify and describe examples of tensions between and among individuals, groups, or institutions, and how belonging to more than one group can cause internal conflicts.



## LESSON INTRODUCTION

The lives of the characters in *Eclipsed* are enriched by the cultural traditions that are a part of their heritage. In this lesson, we will explore some of those traditions by learning about their origins, significance, and modern expression.

## OBJECTIVES

- You will design a fabric pattern appropriate for a Liberian lapa.
- You will use computer programming to create an image of African cornrow braids.
- You will compare cassava with similar foods eaten in the United States.



Joan Marcus

## LAPA AND HEAD WRAPS IN LIBERIA

Women in most West African countries often wear some kind of head wrap. Different countries have different names for this garment, but in Liberia it is called a **lapa**. The word lapa has many meanings. Most generally, it is the name of a piece of wax printed fabric that is two meters long. The word refers to both the fabric itself and the garment that is created from the fabric.

The lapa can be worn as a garment on the body or as a head wrap. Head wraps can be tied in many different ways. Visit [The Wrap Life](#) to view video tutorials on tying a head wrap.

The lapa is ubiquitous in Liberia and is a traditional garment, but modern influences are beginning to make a mark. Archel Bernard, a fashion designer living in Liberia merges modern fashion concepts with traditional fabrics. She has recently opened [The Bombchel Factory](#) that employs Ebola survivors and other disadvantaged people.

Unlike most printed fabric in the United States, the colors of this fabric are as deep and brilliant on the back as they are on the front. The patterns can be used as a means of communication with different patterns having different significance.

## ACTIVITY

Take a look at the image of different lapa above. What do the different patterns have in common? In what ways are they different?



Emily Stanger Steile

Colorful lapa at a store in Monrovia

What colors are you most drawn to? Using a piece of white paper and whatever art supplies you have available (colored pencils, crayons, paints), design your own lapa pattern. You might want to begin by doodling some ideas on scrap paper and then sketch your pattern onto your paper in pencil before adding color.

What thoughts or feelings does your design evoke for you? Does it have a specific meaning for you? Share your design with friends and family and ask them the same questions. Are they similar to your ideas or does the design mean something unique to each person?

## AFRICAN HAIR BRAIDING

The braiding of hair by African women has a long history. Many tribes have their own specific way of braiding hair that identifies members of the tribe. For many women, hair braiding has become a fashion statement.

Lupita Nyong'o, one of the stars of *Eclipsed* learned to braid hair from her aunt in Kenya. Watch this [video](#) to learn more about her experience with hair braiding. Many cultures have some tradition of hair braiding. What experience do you have with hair braiding? Does it have a special significance to you or your family?

### ACTIVITY

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute has created a unique computer program that allows you to use programming language to create an image of a hair braid. Visit the link below to learn more about the history and practice of cornrow braiding. You can then complete a tutorial on the computer program to learn how to create a braid image. Once you have entered the program and created your image,



Unicef/Liberia/2015/Gile

Liberian girls with braided hair

right click on the image and choose "pic." Then right click on that image and save the image so that you can share it with your friends and family. Visit this [link](#) to learn more.



Cassava roots

## CASSAVA: A VERSATILE FOOD

Have you ever eaten cassava? If you have had tapioca pudding or yuca, then you have eaten cassava. Cassava is one of the most common and versatile foods in Liberia and it is found in most parts of the world. It is a large, leafy plant that slowly develops large tubers (enlarged roots). In *Eclipsed*, the characters talk about preparing the cassava. Because of toxins contained in the tuber, it must be prepared very carefully or it can cause cyanide poisoning. Cassava can be prepared fresh similar to a potato or it can be processed into flour, tapioca pearls, flakes, and chips.

### ACTIVITY

Create a chart that compares cassava, potatoes, and yams on the following criteria: requirements to grow, nutrition, and culinary uses. How are they alike? How are they different?

## STANDARDS ADDRESSED

### Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.11-12.3

Follow precisely a complex multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks; analyze the specific results based on explanations in the text.

### National Core Arts Standards

VA:Cr2.1.HSI

Engage in making a work of art or design without having a preconceived plan

### National Council for the Social Studies Curriculum Standards

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity, so that the learner can describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, music, and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture and influence behavior of people living in a particular culture.

### Computer Science Teachers Association K-12 Computer Science Standards

2-5. Implement problem solutions using a programming language including: looping behavior, conditional statements, logic, expressions, variables, and functions.



## LESSON INTRODUCTION

**Note:** This section should be explored after you have seen the play. While some of the women in Liberia became fighters, others joined the peace process. Today, many conflicts are resolved through diplomatic means and others by military action, but in both of those cases, the political and military leaders are usually the catalysts to the process. In the case of the Second Liberian Civil War, it was the Liberian women whose tireless efforts eventually brought about the peace.

The Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace was a movement started by women in Liberia to end the violence in their country. The women wore only white clothing to symbolize peace. Through non-violent protests, they forced the leaders of both sides to come to an agreement, bringing about peace.

## OBJECTIVE

You will engage in a peacebuilding activity on your own or with a group.

***“The problems that fuel the world’s conflicts will only be solved through creative thinking and committed action, including—especially—by the young people whose own futures are at stake.” -Ann-Louise Colgan, Director of the Global Peacebuilding Center***



## ACTIVITY

When the women of Liberia saw the need for peace, they did something about it. You can work for peace by yourself or in a group.

The United States Institute of Peace Global Peacebuilding Center has a list of peacebuilding ideas that you can use for inspiration:



Things you can do as an individual in your daily life to build peace:

- Help tone down an argument at home or at school
- Say hi to people you wouldn't usually talk to
- Put litter in the trash; recycle when you can!
- Share with your siblings and with your friends
- Help people in the neighborhood with yardwork or grocery shopping, if they need help
- Watch or read the news to stay up to date on important issues
- Talk to your family and to your classmates about global issues that matter to you
- Write a letter of thanks/encouragement to our troops
- Write a letter of thanks/encouragement to other peacebuilders, for example Peace Corps volunteers, leaders at the U.S. Institute of Peace, leaders in our government, etc.
- Share your culture and learn about different cultures
- Practice cooperating by participating in team-building sports or projects
- Challenge your own perceptions! Talk to someone with a different point of view
- Tutor or mentor younger children
- Attend a summer camp that focuses on peace and conflict management, like the [Seeds of Peace camp](#)

- Watch documentaries and other films to learn more about important global issues

Things a class/club can do together to build peace (special projects):

- Plant or tend a community garden



Joan Marcus

- Hold a bake sale, carnival, walk-a-thon, Olympic Peace Games, or other event to raise money for a charity that works on issues that are important to you
- Raise awareness about an important global issue through a movie screening or a play or a display of art work at your school
- Find volunteer opportunities in the local community, or projects that can have a global reach, like preparing care packages for troops overseas, collecting books for needy schools, etc.
- **Link up with Kids for Peace, iEarn, or other organizations** that are also working with young peacebuilders around the U.S. and around the world
- Connect with a school in another country to learn more about that culture and to help provide support if there's a need
- Set a peacebuilding world record; be creative!
- Take part in a Model UN initiative, and learn about global issues

***“Young people can be important players in peacebuilding, and with knowledge, skills and opportunities to engage, they can be an unstoppable force for positive change in today's world.” -Ann-Louise Colgan, Director of the Global Peacebuilding Center***

and about negotiation skills that are important in peacebuilding

- Host a series of guest speakers at the school and then write a short book (or a speech) about what you learned, and share it with others
- Make a poster about peacebuilding and share it throughout the community
- Do a project to research a range of peacebuilders from the present and the past, and have a “social” where each person dresses and acts like their selected peacebuilder, to learn about each other
- Practice resolving conflict peacefully through role plays
- **Sponsor a Mine Detection Dog** through the Marshall Legacy Institute

Choose one or more of these activities and become a peacebuilder!

## STANDARDS ADDRESSED

### National Council for the Social Studies Curriculum Standards

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people create and change structures of power, authority, and governance, so that the learner can recognize and give examples of the tensions between the wants and needs of individuals and groups, and concepts such as fairness, equity, and justice.



On October 31, 2000, the United Nations adopted Resolution 1325 to “reaffirm the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peace-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.” The road to Resolution 1325 began on International Women's Day earlier that year with a statement by Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury who was the president of the UN Security Council at the time recognizing women's contributions to peace.

The UN has celebrated International Women's Day every year on March 8 since 1975. Learn more about International Women's Day and this year's theme, “Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step it Up for Gender Equality” on the [UN website](#).



UN Women/Ryan Brown

Sources: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/>, <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2010/Women-Security/Women-resolution-1325/EN/index.htm>



**W**ith the forced departure of Charles Taylor into Nigerian exile in 2003, Liberia began its long road to recovery after a decade and a half of civil war. The negotiated peace settlement essentially placed Liberia under the authority of the United Nations, which mounted what at the time was the largest peace-keeping operation ever attempted. Fifteen thousand international troops and over 1000 police and civilian administrators oversaw the Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DDRR) of more than sixty thousand combatants, including the remnants of the national army. National elections in the fall of 2005 brought to the presidency Africa's first elected female head of state, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who had already had a long career in Liberian government and in international organizations like the U.N. During her first term, President Sirleaf was successful in eliminating most of Liberia's unsustainable foreign debt and opened the country to foreign investment in palm oil production, iron ore mining, and forestry. In spite of these efforts, unemployment continues to be high and the struggling educational system will need at least another generation to produce the skilled workers the country needs for future development.

A second post-conflict election was held in 2011 and President Sirleaf won re-election, although not without controversy. At the same time, she was recognized by the international community as one of three recipients of the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize (along with Liberian peace activist Leymah Gbowee). In the summer and fall of 2014, many of the hard won gains of the post-war period were threatened by the outbreak of Ebola virus disease, to which over 4000 Liberians ultimately lost their lives. More ominously, many of those killed by the disease were health care workers, whose expertise will be difficult to replace quickly. Although new cases of Ebola are likely to occur in the future, people are now familiar enough with the symptoms and precautions that they will be better able to protect themselves. Although the events of 2014-15 are still being analyzed, it is clear that it was the actions of ordinary Liberians, rather than intervention by global health organizations, that accounted for ultimately reducing the incidence of new cases.

Although United Nations troops remain in Liberia and continue to provide security and training along with the new national military, they are expected to be phased out by the end of 2016. The next



Liberian Legislature

**Liberian Capitol Building**

presidential election is scheduled for 2017 and President Sirleaf, who is limited by the constitution to two terms, will be handing over the government to a successor. New road construction is connecting more and more formerly remote areas of the country and the capital, Monrovia, is experiencing a building boom. Although Ebola certainly raised doubts in the minds of some foreign investors, the economy continues to grow, although the benefits are not evenly distributed. For many Liberians, the war years represent one or more lost generations of opportunity for education, family upward mobility, and building strong communities. Many who left during the war years, for the United States among other places, were able to establish businesses, educate themselves and their children, and achieve success, but at the cost of contributing to their own country of origin. Although diaspora Liberians remain connected to their families back home and their remittances help support the economy, the war left many with a "trans-national" lifestyle; with some family members abroad and others at home. Much of the real estate boom in Monrovia and its suburbs is fueled by Liberians living abroad, building homes they hope to retire to someday. In the meantime, Liberians contribute much to the vitality and economic productivity of their host communities, in the US and elsewhere.

— Mary H. Moran, Colgate University

## RESOURCES

### BRAIDING

- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Culturally Situated Design Tools
- *Daily Mail*: UK article on Lupita Nyong'o in "Braids"
- Cultural Significance of Braiding in African Tribes

### CASSAVA

- Nutrition Information
- Economics of Cassavac

### ECLIPSED

- *Eclipsed* on Broadway
- *Eclipsed* Script
- 10,000 Girls Campaign

### LAPA

- The Wrap Life
- Archel Bernard
- Archel in *NY Times*
- Dupsie's

### PEACEBUILDING

- Ideas for Students
- Ideas for Educators

### SECOND LIBERIAN CIVIL WAR

- General Information
- CIA Factbook
- Indiana University Liberian Collections

### WOMEN OF LIBERIA MASS ACTION FOR PEACE

- Liberian Reconstruction
- General Information

Share your experience! Post your photos, thoughts, and ideas to our [Facebook](#) page or to Instagram using the hashtag #IHaveEclipsed.