

**ain't
too
proud**
THE LIFE AND TIMES OF
THE TEMPTATIONS

STUDY GUIDE



welcome

Teachers are encouraged to use this guide to elicit student discussion before the show, guide them through aspects of the production, and engage them in activities once they return to the classroom. Our goal is to help teachers utilize the production as a catalyst for student education, collaboration, and inspiration, incorporating these essential concepts:

- Collaborating with others to follow dreams
- Balancing individual talents and group dynamics in order to create harmony
- Understanding the struggle and passionate determination to achieve equality
- Utilizing performance and production techniques for storytelling
- Understanding characters' situations, actions, words, and points of view
- Contemplating characters' journeys in concert with personal experience

ain't too proud chronicles the rise of The Temptations, their unique talents, and personal struggles in their journey from the streets of Detroit to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. We hope that your students, inspired by the production, can learn from you and from each other through these activities.

Please feel free to copy the materials in this guide to aid you in energizing classroom interest and discussion before and after the performance. These activities may be used separately or together as part of a cross-curricular exploration of the production.

Enjoy the show!

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the production

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pre show considerations

Use the information in this guide and the web resources as a starting point to get to know **ain't too proud**. The production celebrates the incredible personal, professional, and musical journeys of The Temptations.

- Learn what you can about theater. How does musical theater tell a story? How do the scenes work together? How do the songs tell the story? How do the technical aspects help?
- Take a peek at the discussion questions in the guide. Give yourself an idea of what issues, ideas, and situations the show deals with. Get a jump start for the class discussion after the show!
- Think about what your expectations of the production are: What will you see on stage? What will the story be like? How will the characters interact with each other? How will it begin and end?



pre show considerations

Going to see a Broadway show is an incredibly exciting and entertaining experience. In order to enhance that experience, here are some things to keep in mind:

Take your seat. Be sure to get to your seat in time to ready yourself for the journey you'll take with this production.

Turn off your cell phone. The messages and texts can wait until later - get into the world of the show completely!

Get ready to watch carefully. The great thing about live theater is that it's happening right in front of you! Be sure to soak it all in.

Let the actors do the talking. Feel free to laugh at the jokes and be moved by the drama, but save your commentary for the conversation with the class after the show.

Show your appreciation. When the show is over, applaud for the actors and wait for the curtain call to be over before leaving your seat. To show them your highest praise, give them a standing ovation.



characters

Otis Williams

Founding member and guiding force of The Temptations whose inspiration and organization kept the group going through challenging times.

Melvin Franklin

Original member with a deep bass voice who sustained a long friendship with Otis Williams and long standing tenure with the group.

Eddie Kendricks

Original member known for his falsetto singing style on songs like "Get Ready" and "Just My Imagination (Running Away From Me)." Kendricks later went solo.

Paul Williams

Original member who contributed both lead vocals and smooth dance moves on The Temptations' early songs. Williams started his singing career with Kendricks.

David Ruffin

Childhood friend of Otis Williams' whose husky tenor voice and singing style inspired several Smokey Robinson hits for the group including "My Girl."

Al Bryant

Early member of the group whose violent altercations with group members led to his expulsion and replacement.

Tammi Terrell

Popular Motown singing artist famous for her duets with Marvin Gaye. She later developed a romance on tour with David Ruffin.

Dennis Edwards

Singer brought in to replace David Ruffin whose lead vocals supported The Temptations' later stylistic changes.

Berry Gordy

Influential head of the highly successful Motown Records, whose gift in finding and supporting talent elevated The Temptations to great success.

Smokey Robinson

Highly regarded Motown recording artist and writer responsible for many of The Temptations' hits including "The Way You Do The Things You Do" and "My Girl."

Norman Whitfield

Competing writer for many of The Temptations' hits. His style of introducing elements of funk and political protest led The Temptations in a new musical direction.

characters

Josephine

Otis' first love and mother of his son who struggles to maintain a family while Otis is constantly on tour.

Shelly Berger

High-profile manager who helped The Temptations achieve broader national success.

Johnnie Mae

Powerful and influential Detroit manager for Otis Williams' original groups.

Richard Street

Singer brought in to assist with Paul Williams' vocals, later added to full roster.

Lamont

Otis and Josephine's son who kept a long distance relationship with his father.



synopsis

act one

As the show opens, we see the classic five Temptations in their glory, singing one of their classic hits ("The Way You Do The Things You Do"). When the song finishes, Otis Williams begins telling the story of how The Temptations began as five "youngbloods from Detroit" with Southern roots. Otis explains his background raised by his strict grandmothers in Texarkana and how his later lack of obedience got him into trouble ("Runaway Child, Running Wild"). After a short 6 month stint in juvenile detention, Otis figures there needs to be another way and finds his salvation in music ("Gloria").

Otis imagines himself singing on stage ("In The Still of the Night"), settles into his first doo wop group with Al Bryant and searches out a good bass with Melvin Franklin. After enticing Melvin and convincing his mother Mama Rose to allow him to join, Otis invites Eddie Kendricks and Paul Williams from The Primes ("Speedo") to join his group. By assuring them that credit and compensation will be equal, Otis sways Paul and Eddie to join and the group is finalized ("Shout"). As they begin their tours around Detroit however, Otis has a dispute with their manager Johnnie Mae over contracts and payments so they part ways.

Now called "The Elgins," they get a big break when Berry Gordy agrees to give them a chance but with a new name. The band mates discuss options and announce to Mr. Gordy that they'll be known as "The Temptations." Berry Gordy introduces them to Smokey Robinson who will write their tunes and shape their sound ("I Want a Love I Can See"). Paul develops some smooth dance moves and teaches it to the guys to complete their act. While backstage at a gig, tensions flare when Al insists on more encores and gets physical with Paul. Al is forced out of the group and Otis starts the search for a new lead singer.

David Ruffin appears singing the classic

Temptations' tune ("My Girl") as Otis explains their experiences growing up in the same neighborhood. While Otis and David recollect backstage, Otis asks David to be their new lead and David enthusiastically agrees. Thus, the five classic Temptations are formed. Otis explains their new brotherhood, group chemistry and nicknames. Berry Gordy excitedly announces that "My Girl" is number one and the boys celebrate. The Temptations' career takes off ("Get Ready"). Otis appeals to Berry Gordy about writing songs, but he's instructed to focus on the group and let Motown handle the rest. Otis agrees to put that dream aside to help The Temptations achieve fame. Flush with success, The Temptations train their eyes on the top spot at Motown occupied by the Supremes ("You Can't Hurry Love," "Come See About Me," "Baby Love"). Otis explains that with their rapidly changing musical lives came romantic difficulties and entanglements on the road ("Since I Lost My Baby"). Otis details his relationship with Josephine, their rush to marry once she's pregnant, and their altercations about his life on the road.

Berry Gordy introduces The Temptations to their new manager, Shelly Berger, who will be able to get them more mainstream exposure and crossover success. After initial hesitation, the group agrees to take this next step. With their developing fame, complications with drug use and ego start affecting the group, especially David Ruffin. Gordy transitions them to songwriter Norman Whitfield who takes the group in new directions with his songs ("Ain't Too Proud to Beg"). Even with their increasing success, the group faces discrimination and violence when they play gigs down South ("Don't Look Back") which angers the group, but they push on ("You're My Everything").

The romantic relationship that David and Tammi Terrell establish ("If I Could Build My Whole World Around You") becomes abusive as David struggles with his inner demons. Josephine confronts Otis about his family responsibilities and their fractured relationship ("If You Don't Know Me By Now").

synopsis

David Ruffin's excessive lateness and egocentrism start growing out of control ("I'm Losing You"). While struggling with personal dynamics, the group also clashes over how to confront, as musicians, the growing civil unrest in the country and in their beloved Detroit.

The group is further stunned by news of Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination and, later, the premature death of Tammi Terrell ("I Wish It Would Rain"). When David Ruffin misses a major gig, Otis rallies the group to decide his fate and the group reluctantly decides to terminate his contract with The Temptations. An outraged David rails at Otis and protests the group's decision, believing that they couldn't possibly go on without him ("I Could Never Love Another After Loving You").

act two

Having replaced David Ruffin with Dennis Edwards, The Temptations are back to their tremendous success ("I Can't Get Next to You") with less ego and shenanigans, yet Ruffin appears from time to time at concerts and sneaks his way onstage. Despite Eddie's suggestion that Ruffin be allowed back in the group, Shelly announces he'll prevent Ruffin's further interruptions. Otis focuses on moving forward with The Temptations sharing the spotlight with The Supremes on Motown's first television special ("I'm Gonna Make You Love Me").

The group struggles to balance their soaring popularity and record material confronting the issues of the day as the song ("War") intended for them is passed on to another artist who scores a hit. The Temptations record their own song of protest ("Ball of Confusion (That's What The World is Today)"). As they protest the times, Eddie suggests they protest their current Motown contract with a strike, which Otis diffuses.

The Temptations continue their personal struggles; Paul with his drinking and Otis with his strained relationship with Josephine and Lamont.

Paul's health declines to the point where he needs to be assisted and later replaced by Richard Street. Eddie confronts Otis about Paul's departure and Otis' seemingly singular management of the group and later leaves the group for good ("Just My Imagination (Running Away with Me)").

As The Temptations add Damon Harris to replace Eddie, Ruffin and Hendricks break out on their solo careers ("Superstar (Remember How You Got Where You Are)"). Otis conducts a strained conversation with his son Lamont as he tries to revive their relationship.

Paul pleads with Otis to return to the group, but Otis is reluctant to break the doctors' orders and cause Paul harm, ("For Once in My Life). Later, a bereft Paul takes his own life. At the funeral, Melvin and Otis affirm their deep friendship. Melvin tells Otis about his issues with arthritis yet assures him the cortisone shots will keep him going on the road.

Conflict continues to arise as Dennis gets temperamental and songwriter Norman Whitfield belittles the Temps in an interview while continuing to take new musical risks with them. The group records a new Whitfield composition under duress that becomes a hit ("Papa Was a Rollin' Stone").

Kendricks and Ruffin create a rival Temptations group which angers Otis at first until they decide to create a reunion tour ("Cloud Nine"). While initially rekindling old friendships and feelings, the tour's progression revives old problems and personality conflicts, culminating in Otis' confrontation with the group upon discovering them huddled together free-basing cocaine.

Reflecting on his experiences on tour, Otis reminisces about the many great men he knew and lost while leading The Temptations: David Ruffin, Eddie Kendricks, and Melvin Franklin. Otis then drifts into the memory of losing his son Lamont to a construction accident.

As he looks back on the long and storied history of The Temptations ("What Becomes of the Brokenhearted") Otis ponders their lasting impact and their legacy of music that will live forever.

detroit : the motor city



Named after the French settlement in the area in 1701, Detroit is the largest and most populous city in the state of Michigan. Due to its location in the Great Lakes region, it became a major industrial center in the 1800s and grew into a central location for the auto industry when Henry Ford established his company in 1910, followed by a major presence by General Motors and Chrysler. The city experienced a population boom as a result of industry growth until the 1950s and 60s. Detroit was an important location for the Civil Rights movement and experienced racial conflict culminating in the 1967 riots. Detroit is known for its diversity and its important impact on American music. The "Motor City" nickname became Berry Gordy's inspiration for the Motown Records name. Source: [Wikipedia](#)

1967 detroit riots

What began with a police raid on an unlicensed bar in the Virginia Park section of the city during the hot summer of 1967 exploded into a riot that lasted five days and resulted in forty-three deaths, hundreds of injuries, almost seventeen hundred fires, and over seven thousand arrests. Also known as the "Detroit Rebellion of 1967" and the "12th Street Riot," the uprising was the result of simmering tensions between the black residents of the Detroit neighborhood and the predominantly white local government and police force. These tensions, combined with the economic decline in the area, fueled the rebellion that eventually required local police and fire departments, National guardsmen, and federal forces to quell one of the largest uprisings in the country in fifty years. Some now see the riots as a turning point in the city as efforts to engage in activism and community have changed the social landscape coupled with demographic shifts.

Sources: [Wikipedia](#), [History.com](#), [Time.com](#), [Detroit Historical Society](#)



Image:
[Vice Sports](#)

the motown sound

hitsville u.s.a.

Started by Berry Gordy in a small Detroit house he purchased in 1959, Motown Records would become one of the most prolific record companies, launching the careers of artists such as The Temptations, Diana Ross and the Supremes, Smokey Robinson and the Miracles, The Four Tops and others. During its storied history, Motown would produce more than 180 No. 1 hits and have a tremendous impact on the style and substance of the popular music and culture of the nation in the process. Combining the influences of gospel, rhythm and blues, jazz, and funk, its songwriters, artists and producers would create a sound so singular and iconic it would be defined as the "Motown Sound."



Image: wellesenterprises

musical assembly line

In the production, when Otis and The Temptations are signed by Motown Records, Berry Gordy introduces them to the concept of "Quality Control" —where producers and songwriters shared songs, critiqued each one, and picked the ones most likely to be hits. Gordy was inspired by his time working on the automotive production line and wanted a similar process for his record company:

"I wanted to have a kid off the street walk in one door unknown and come out another door a star, like an assembly line; that was my dream. My family said, that's stupid. Those are cars. You can't do that with human beings. I said, well it's the same thing – the artists come in and you have one group writing the songs and producing them, then somebody else works on their stage performance and so on. People would say, well, that's never been done before. Well, maybe that's the reason we should do it!"

- ["Berry Gordy: The man who built Motown" by Mick Brown - Daily Telegraph](#)

crossover act

As the Civil Rights movement grew in the 1960's, Motown acts were instrumental in changing racial attitudes with the power and popularity of their music. Berry Gordy hoped his music would appeal to a wide variety of audiences and worked with producers and promoters in order to achieve "crossover" success.

As Otis Williams remembers, *"..there were times where there would be ropes hanging down from the center of the auditorium that we would be performing in. Blacks would be on one side of the aisle and whites on the other. We came back to that same auditorium a year later and blacks and whites were sitting side by side enjoying the music. If it wasn't for the sweat coming down our faces, you would've seen the tears. To be a part of something that broke down the barriers for artists of today to enjoy and not have to go through that, I'm very glad we were forebearers to break down those walls."*

- ["Otis Williams: The Temptations' Soul Survivor" by Chris Williams - Ebony Magazine](#)



Image: Wikimedia

the temps & the times

May 17, 1954 • Brown v. Board of Education

December 1, 1955 • Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery

September 4, 1957 • "Little Rock Nine," are blocked from integrating into Central High School in Little Rock

August 28, 1963 •
The March on Washington

March 20, 1964 • *Meet The Temptations* released

February 21, 1965 • Malcolm X is assassinated

March 7, 1965 • Selma to Montgomery March

March 22, 1965 • *The Temptations Sing Smokey* released

August 11, 1965 • Watts Riots

November 1, 1965 • *The Temptin' Temptations* released

June 15, 1966 • *Gettin' Ready* released

July 17, 1967 • *The Temptations with a Lot o' Soul* released

July 23, 1967 • Detroit Riots

November 27, 1967 • *The Temptations in a Mellow Mood* released

April 4, 1968 • Martin Luther King, Jr. is assassinated in Memphis

April 11, 1968 • President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1968

April 29, 1968 • *The Temptations Wish It Would Rain* released



Image: [Wikimedia](#)



Image: [Wikimedia](#)

the temps & the times

the great migration

Between 1916 and 1970, more than 6 million African Americans migrated from the rural areas of the South to urban areas in the North, fleeing from harsh segregationist laws and seeking better economic opportunities as the need for industrial workers increased. While settling into their new environments, African Americans often confronted racial, social and economic challenges while being inspired to create new art, music, and culture that would have a profound influence across the nation. The Great Migration led to the Harlem Renaissance movement and brought the Blues from its southern roots to northern cities where it greatly impacted the musical landscape, including Motown.

Sources: [Wikipedia](#), [History.com](#), [NPR.org](#)



Artwork by Jacob Lawrence, 1917-2000 • Collection H: Harmon Foundation Collection, 1922 - 1967 • [National Archives](#)

protest songs



Image:
[Wikimedia](#)

In the production, The Temptations are eager to use their position as popular artists to address issues they're concerned about.

Songs of protest have a long history in the United States stretching back to the colonial period. The 1960s were a particularly tumultuous time in history and thus inspired artists to create songs in support of the Civil Rights Movement, promoting peace, highlighting injustice and criticizing the Vietnam War.

The Temptations were frustrated over the missed opportunity to record the hit song "War" written for them but first recorded by Edwin Starr. The Temptations later recorded "Ball of Confusion '(That's What the World Is Today)'" and eventually recorded their version of "War."

See the extended activity on this topic on page 22

creating the production

an interview with original Temptation Otis Williams

How did your story make its way to Broadway?

Creating the stage production of my life story has been an 18-year journey. Shelly Berger, my manager, and I have been planning to present this story for a long time. The inspiration for the current production is based on my autobiography, which came together after Marilyn Ducksworth from Putnam Publishing, who had seen the Temps and the Tops perform Off-Broadway, thought my experiences would make a good story. The book, published in 1988, became an Emmy Award-Winning television mini-series a decade later, and has now metamorphosed into a Broadway musical with Tony Award-Winning choreography and Grammy-Winning music. The Musical premiered in California at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre in August 2017 and opened on Broadway in March of 2019. From our original ideas to the Broadway stage has been a quantum leap. I had no idea my life story would be so well received on Broadway, and I'm so touched by the tremendous response from everyone.

What is it like watching your life presented on stage?

It is very moving. When I first saw the Musical in its early stages I could not believe it. After the production team showed me the first half they paused and said, "Otis, we'll stop it here. We just wanted you to see a little bit of it." When I got up from my seat, the whole cast surrounded me. I told them, "You all just made me cry." An actor playing one of the



photo credit: Chyna Photography

creating the production

Tempts said, "Well Mr. Williams, if you're crying that means that we must be doing something right." I told them they had really touched my heart. When I saw the completed work in Berkeley and then in New York, I was moved to tears just like everybody else in the audience. My career in music began in 1960, and I never imagined after all this time, my life story would have such an impact on fans everywhere. I'm so surprised, you could knock me over with a feather.

What kept The Temptations going then and what keeps you going now?

It was, and still is our love of the music. I love being able to do what I do, bringing happiness to so many people worldwide. I'm very dedicated to that and have been since the beginning. I'll never forget seeing groups like the Cadillacs, performing at the Fox Theater in front of five thousand people at a time, when I was 15 or 16 years old. The impact they had on the audience left a definite impression on me. I knew that's what I wanted to do. Then I was lucky enough to bring together a unique group of guys who formed The Temptations, and who also became a part of Motown under the legendary founder, Berry Gordy at a memorable time in music history. I never had any idea that we would become such a phenomenon, especially, in the way The Temptations have been received for nearly sixty years. Through it all, it comes down to hard work, dedication and perseverance. Even though the group has been through a couple dozen different members, I'm still at it and the world is still loving and embracing our music. I feel so thankful and blessed for this.

Do you still feel that it's the power you have to reach people that keeps you going?

Absolutely! Audiences are very sophisticated, and very in tune with what's happening on the stage.

You can tell right away whether they're enjoying the performance or whether they think you're just phoning it in. You can't fool them. That's what's so wonderful about what we do. When we go out there and perform, we can read their expressions. We can see they still love The Temptations. That makes it even more special because we know the audience is there not only for our music but to see us do what we're known for, our choreography, things like our famous Temptations' Walk. It's a wonderful thing.

Do you think artists have a responsibility to speak out on issues through their music?

Absolutely. That's what we did with some of our music. Songs like "Ball of Confusion," "Message from a Black Man," and "Papa Was a Rolling Stone," reflected the issues of the day. Sometimes people will listen to music more than they'll listen to a politician because music has a unique ability to soothe the soul and get people's attention. Music is definitely one of the best ways to express your ideas and get your message across. Music is very, very powerful.

What would you like students to come away with from *Ain't Too Proud*?

I'd like them to understand achieving anything of purpose, value, or meaning doesn't come easy. It takes dedication and hard work. If things are just given to you, they can be taken for granted. But when you put blood, sweat and tears into something, you can look back and say, "It was rough, we went through this and that, but we were still able to continue on." Anything you really want to achieve will involve struggle, and after being put to the test, you'll find out if you really want it badly enough.

creating the production

an interview with Projection Designer Peter Nigrini

Peter Nigrini has designed projection for concerts, opera, dance and Broadway, including: Beetlejuice, The SpongeBob Musical, Dear Evan Hansen and A Dolls House, Part 2.

How do you see the projection as part of the storytelling for *Ain't Too Proud*?

The best experience I can have is on a production like *Ain't Too Proud* for which the projection is essential to the telling of the story. I think one of the challenges of this piece is that it's a historical story; so there is a world where it could live entirely in the past. What we are trying to do is both tell a story about history and really capture the feeling of that time, but also have the end result ultimately feel modern. We didn't want to make a story about the past told in a way that you told stories in the past. We wanted it to be a story about the sixties and seventies told in a purely modern way.

One of the aspects of the production that lets us do this is that we're really building a piece of theater that works more like a film in its language and in the way it moves. When we want to talk about the death of Martin Luther King, for example, it really does boil down to that old cliché "a picture is worth a thousand words" –that moment where we catch a glimpse of the motel balcony where he was assassinated. People know that image, that place, down to the detail on the railing at that motel. They may not consciously know it, but subconsciously everyone knows what that is. It has a power to evoke an emotional response to time and place that we're accustomed to in film but not nearly as much in the theater.

Bringing those cinematic tools to the theater to tell this story is what excites me on this project and, in general, is why I'm passionate about projection design; how to capture history but not be historical. There's a fine line between those two things. How to make a piece for young people? That's ultimately what we wanted to do. I'm only barely too young to really remember *The Temptations*. It was really important for us to make a story for a younger generation. We wanted to move beyond nostalgia

to make something compelling to an audience who maybe doesn't have any memory of going on a first date and hearing those songs or an audience who grew up with them on the radio.

What is your creative process?

The first and probably most important step of the whole process is research. It's essential that I know what I'm talking about. Getting to the story is the easy part of the research and the obvious part, but the other part is to visually know what I'm talking about: What did Detroit look like at that time? Where did these people live? When the script talks about Euclid Avenue, what does it mean visually? What are those places like?

In addition to specifics of that kind, I put a lot of effort into researching style. I did a lot of research for this project on what period concert posters looked like. I researched the graphic design around these bands and how it progressed –how they were advertising *The Temptations* in the sixties versus how they were advertising them in the seventies. I looked at the visual language that grew up around that band and music in general across that time period. I look to become literate about what the world looked like and what design looked like in the specific time and place of the production.

My second step is trying to figure out what my job is to help tell this story. That might be strictly where the book or script writer clearly states that there's some information that's going to be provided by projection. Other times I look for ways in which I can supplant the need for something mentioned in the script –is there a part of the story that's better told visually? I then bring these ideas to the director and writers and introduce into the process another way to tell our story that relies on a more visual language. Before I decide specifically what anything looks like, I try to rewrite the script as a visual storyboard for

creating the production



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Selected images from the projection designs for Ain't Too Proud - courtesy of Peter Nigrini

how we might move from place to place and how visual information might be the companion to music and text and every other aspect of the production.

After that it's time to get our hands dirty to interface with the set; work with how the set is controlling the space, what the surfaces are and how the scenery and projection integrate on a moment to moment basis. That, certainly on a show like *Ain't Too Proud*, becomes a very close collaboration with the set designer. Robert Brill designed a wonderful container for the show that is more like a magic box that keeps on evolving as the production moves through it. The details of how it's moving and when it's moving and what those visual compositions are is really the product of both of our designs. The sum of those decisions creates the composition

from moment to moment on the stage and leads to hundreds of pages of how the set and projections are going to look. That coordination is endless, but of course the technology goes a long way to help us with it. If you look at the way we make theater now, as opposed to the way we used to, there's so much more technology involved. It makes our lives easier and harder all at the same time.

What are the tools for projection design?

At the center of it all are the tools that allow us to understand the space in three dimensions so that, when we're designing a show like this, the

continued on next page

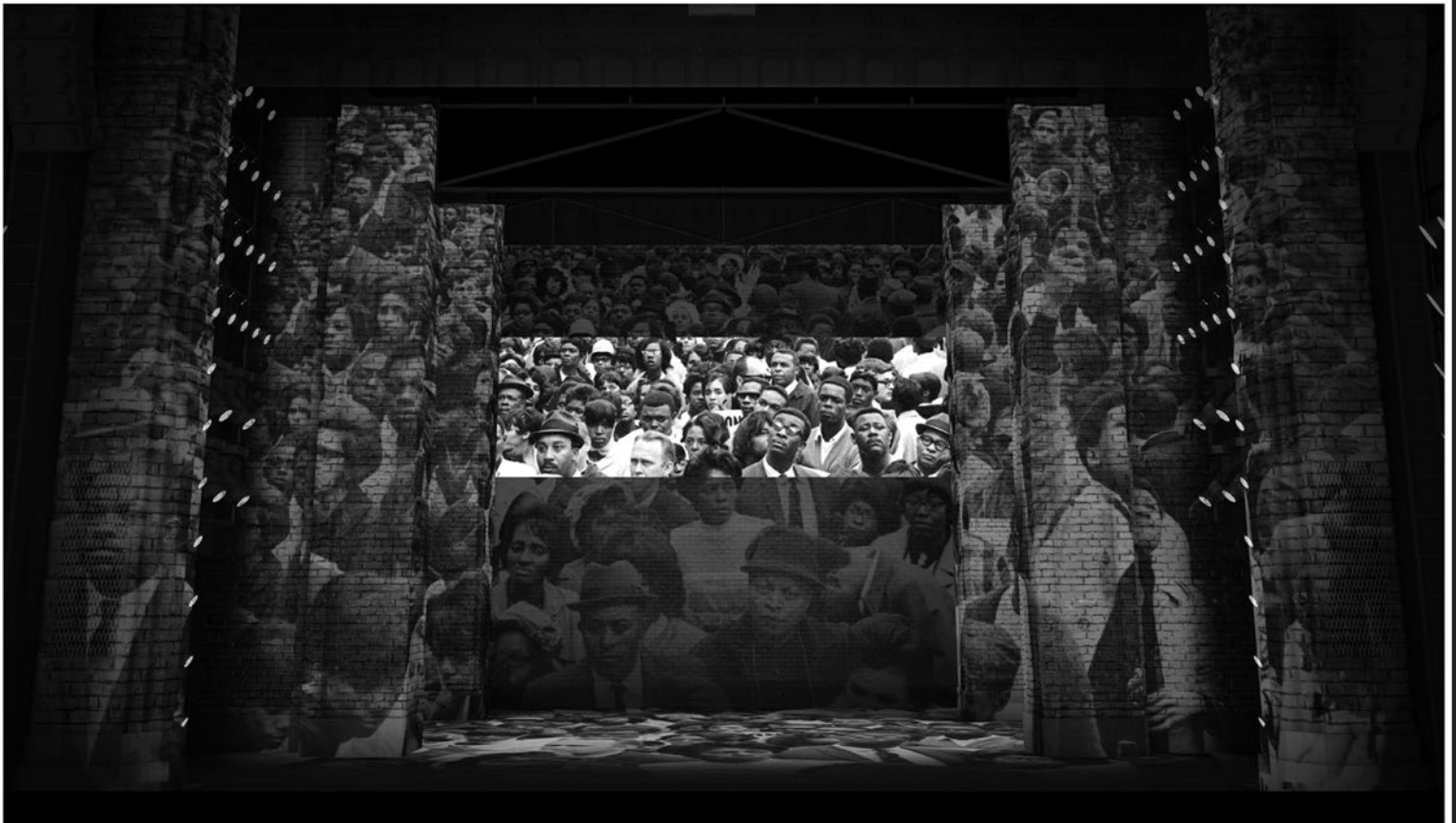
creating the production

system that delivers the video to the stage has a complete 3-dimensional model of the entire stage space and theater. That 3-dimensional model is constantly being modified as the actual scenery is being moved around the stage. What that lets us do is fluidly move projection and scenery in concert with one another. There are a few pieces of technology that do that, but the primary one is a computer software package called, "Disguise," which was originally developed for rock and roll. It was written for U2 maybe fifteen years ago, but has since grown into much more. It is really the center of how we deliver images to the stage. The other major component is obviously video editing software. Most of what we do is built in Adobe "After Effects."

There are a million other things, but from a tools perspective those are the real major ones for making a projection design happen.

How did you get involved in projection design?

I was always interested in theater. Early on I realized that I was not a performer. I briefly thought I was but... Then I studied film making and theater design, mostly scenery and lighting. When I was studying, projection design didn't really exist the way it does now. It was still an analog art form with 35mm slides and motion picture projectors. People did great things, but it could not be as tightly integrated



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Selected images from the projection designs for Ain't Too Proud - courtesy of Peter Nigrini

creating the production

as it is now, and I think because of that, it was much more limited in its scope and ambition.

At the right moment, when I was choosing to turn left or turn right in my career, the transformation to digital technology began to really take hold. The most compelling factor was the way projection design married my interests in film and live performance. That is perhaps a good way to describe my life's project, figuring out how to make live theater that uses the language of the motion picture. I think that is key to making theater contemporary. The movies are what everyone sees. I've seen more movies, television, and all manner of moving pictures than theater and I've spent my whole life in the theater. My first language is the movies. That's also the language our audience speaks.

The great gift of the theater is that, across its over 2000-year-old history, it is constantly adapting. I think that's what's happening now. The motion picture showed up, Lumière made his movie in the train station, and we're still responding to that. I was lucky enough to find myself at this great moment in history where that adaptation became possible. It feeds my interest in the really basic question of storytelling; projection is not about decoration, it's about how do we tell a story. That's what drew me to projection design as a sum of all my interests.

What advice would you offer to students interested in projection design?

I think the most important thing I would say is, whether it's projection design, or lighting, or being a director or set designer, we're all theater makers. That is the most essential thing. I learned to become a projection designer by being a good set designer and being a good lighting designer,



Selected images from the projection designs for Ain't Too Proud

and most importantly, a good theater maker. One of the specific challenges of projection design is the technical barrier to entry: it's expensive, it's complicated, there are a lot of tools. What is most important for a young, possible projection designer is to make sure first and foremost that you're making theater.

Don't specialize. You can make theater with a light bulb and a chair. That's fine. And you can make theater with a projector – that's fine too. Make theater with whatever you have in front of you. If you want to be a projection designer and you don't have the tools in front of you, then make theater with whatever you've got. You will still learn to be a theater maker. Then you can apply those skills to anything. What is fundamental is how you make theater, how you tell a story.

Don't get bogged down in the technology and the tools, thinking that you can't have these tools, so you can't do the work. Well...get an overhead projector! Get a light bulb and a sheet of glass! Get to work!

questions for discussion

1. Otis begins the story by saying that, “there’s no progress without sacrifice.” What do you think he means by that? Have you ever had to make a sacrifice for progress?

2. How was Otis able to put the original Temptations together? How did he persuade everyone to join?

3. What is important to keep a group working together and getting along?

4. Paul says that, “you could be on top of the world and still feel beneath it.” What struggles did group members experience with their increasing fame?

5. What does it mean to be a “crossover artist”? Why do you think David Ruffin is angry that artists aren’t “crossing over” to them?

6. What influence can music artists have on societal problems? How might they be able to change hearts and minds?

7. Do you think artists have a responsibility to speak out about social injustice? Why or why not?

8. How might you have handled the personalities and problems the group experienced over the years?

9. Have you ever had to “let go of one dream to get to something bigger” like Otis did? Explain.

10. Despite their differences, The Temptations had a special bond. What do you think drew them together and kept them going?

11. Explain what happens to the original lineup of The Temptations. What lessons can we draw from their experiences?

12. Otis finishes the show by saying “the only thing that really lives forever is the music.” Do you agree? Why or why not?

language arts

YOUR TASK: The song "My Girl," The Temptations first number one single and the first to feature David Ruffin, has elements in common with the poetic ode form. The "ode" is a lyrical poem that usually celebrates a person, place or thing. Utilize the questions below to examine "My Girl" and use your discoveries to create your own ode poem or song.

MY GIRL

*I've got sunshine on a cloudy day
When it's cold outside I've got the month of May
Well I guess you'd say
What can make me feel this way?
My girl (my girl, my girl)
Talkin' 'bout my girl (my girl)*

*I've got so much honey the bees envy me
I've got a sweeter song than the birds in the trees
Well I guess you'd say
What can make me feel this way?
My girl (my girl, my girl)
Talkin' 'bout my girl*

*I don't need no money, fortune, or fame
I've got all the riches baby one man can claim
I guess you'd say
What can make me feel this way?
My girl
Talkin' 'bout my girl*

What do the opening lines celebrate specifically about the girl in question?

Describe what the comparisons mean in the second verse:

How does the final section sum up the feelings for the girl?

Now think about a subject you might want to celebrate and utilize some of the figurative language you identified and other techniques to create your original ode. You can research classic odes for further inspiration. Share your work with the class!

CCSS Utilized [Grades 9-12 • Reading: 1, 2 • Writing: 1, 4, 5, 9, 10 • Speaking & Listening 1, 4]

language arts

YOUR TASK: The song that opens the show, "The Way You Do The Things You Do," utilizes a series of comparisons as its basic structure. Poets and songwriters often use comparisons, such as metaphors or similes, as a way of enriching the points they're trying to make by asking the reader or listener to visualize the items and make connections. Work through the questions below to analyze the technique.

THE WAY YOU DO THE THINGS YOU DO

*You got a smile so bright
You know you could have been a candle
I'm holding you so tight
You know you could have been a handle
The way you swept me off my feet
You know you could've been a broom
The way you smell so sweet
You know you could've been some perfume
Well, you could've been anything that you wanted to
And I can tell
The way you do the things you do*

*As pretty as you are
You know you could've been a flower
If good looks was a minute
You know you could've been an hour
The way you stole my heart
You know you could've been a crook
And baby you're so smart
You know you could have been a school book
Well, you could've been anything that you wanted to
And I can tell
The way you do the things you do*

*You may make my life so rich
You know you could've been some money
And baby you're so sweet
You know you could have been some honey
Well, you could've been anything that you wanted to
And I can tell
The way you do the things you do*

What kinds of things are used in the comparisons? Why do you think they're utilized? _____

Which one of the comparisons do you like the best? Why? _____

What is the rhyme scheme utilized in the song? How does it help the song flow?

Use the back of this paper to create a series of your own comparisons about someone. Share your creations with your classmates and who you're writing about.

CCSS Utilized [Grades 9-12 • Reading: 1, 2 • Writing: 1, 4, 5, 9, 10 • Speaking & Listening 1, 4]

language arts

YOUR TASK: Throughout the production, characters have missed opportunities for direct and clear communication. Write a letter from one character of **ain't too proud** to another. This letter should express some important thoughts that the first character wants to express to the other. You'll be expressing that character's point of view on a particular event that happened in the production. It may be a friendly greeting, an apology, a question that needs answering, or something you think they'd need to share or speak about. Read your letter to the class—compare messages and meanings.

Which character would you choose to write the letter? Why?

Which character would you write the letter to? Why?

Outline below what the main points of your letter will be. Just what do you have to say?

Now that you've outlined what you have to say, write the letter. Be sure to use the proper letter format with an opening greeting and a final message and signature. Organize your ideas paragraph by paragraph so they develop smoothly and flow from one idea to the next. Try to use the character's "voice" as you write as much as possible.

CCSS Utilized [*Grades 9-12 • Writing: 3, 4, 5, 6 • Speaking & Listening 1, 3, 4, 6*]

social studies

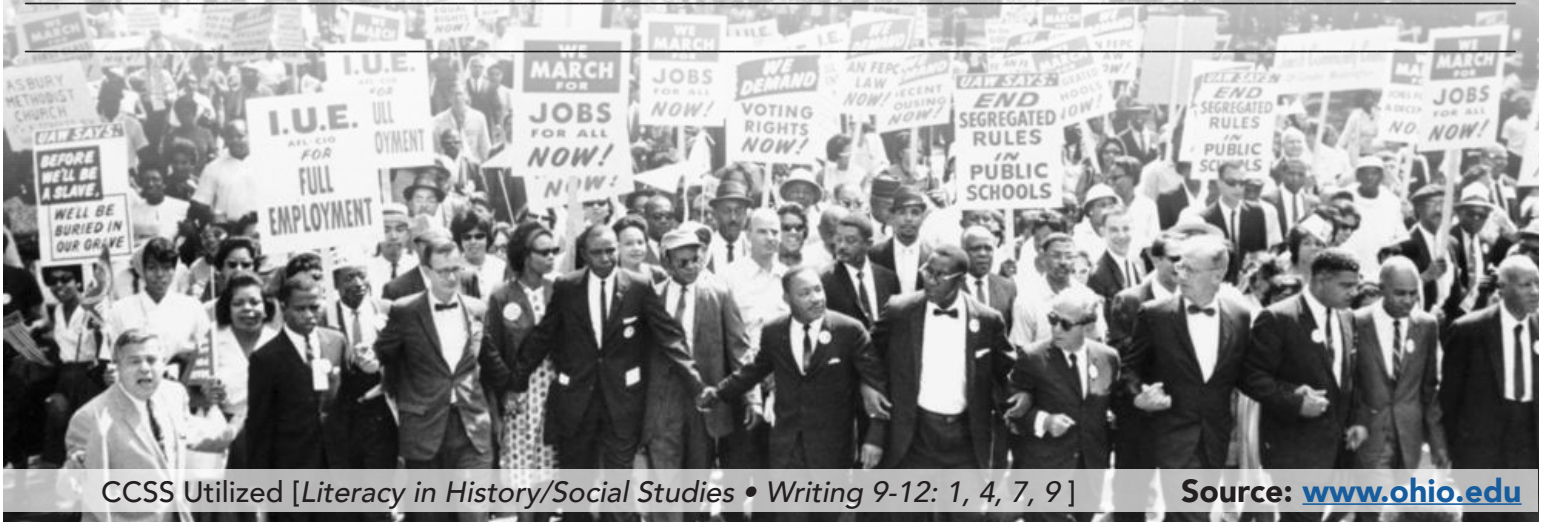
YOUR TASK: As The Temptations were achieving higher levels of success in the 1960s, the country was experiencing a tumultuous social upheaval as African Americans were protesting racial segregation and discrimination. Utilize the prompts below to begin a deep look into the important aspects of the civil rights movement and its achievements to provide context for the events of the production.

What are some of the significant events that occurred during the civil rights movement? _____

Describe some of the important figures in the civil rights movement and their contributions:

Explain the government legislation enacted as a result of the protests: _____

How might these events from the 1960s provide a deeper understanding of the characters and situations you encountered in **ain't too proud**? _____



CCSS Utilized [*Literacy in History/Social Studies • Writing 9-12: 1, 4, 7, 9*]

Source: www.ohio.edu

social studies

YOUR TASK: The Temptations struggled with how to best utilize their popularity to bring attention to social issues they were affected by and concerned about in songs like "Ball of Confusion (That's What The World Is Today)." Since its flourish in the 1960's, singers have used their public presence to prompt changes in attitudes and policies. Research a range of "protest songs" and present your findings below. Work with classmates to create a broad range of artists and issues to share with the class.

PROTEST SONG TITLE: _____

ARTIST: _____ **DATE RELEASED:** _____

ISSUE: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

PROTEST SONG TITLE: _____

ARTIST: _____ **DATE RELEASED:** _____

ISSUE: _____

SONG DESCRIPTION: _____

PROTEST SONG TITLE: _____

ARTIST: _____ **DATE RELEASED:** _____

ISSUE: _____

SONG DESCRIPTION: _____



Singers such as Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Woodie Guthrie, Bob Marley and Beyoncé have used their music to deliver socially conscious messages. Image Sources:

[Wikipedia](#) • [Wikimedia](#)

CCSS Utilized [*Literacy in History/Social Studies • Writing 9-12: 1, 4, 7, 9*]

theater arts

YOUR TASK: Characters can express association or estrangement depending on how they interact physically. Recall three powerful moments from the production where characters' emotional shifts were matched by shifts in physicality to create a meaningful picture onstage. Explore and examine those moments using the prompts below.

MOMENT ONE: **characters involved:** _____

dramatic situation: _____

how did the movement tell the story? _____

MOMENT TWO: **characters involved:** _____

dramatic situation: _____

how did the movement tell the story? _____

MOMENT THREE: **characters involved:** _____

dramatic situation: _____

how did the movement tell the story? _____

theater arts

YOUR TASK: The cast portraying the characters in **ain't too proud** have particularly vigorous and physically demanding performance tasks each night of the production, but every actor needs to prepare physically and vocally for their work. Investigate new possibilities for warm-up exercises or explain your own preparations in the spaces below. Share your findings with the other members of your troupe to expand your preparation exercise portfolio.

WARM-UP: _____

FOCUS: _____

PROCEDURE: _____

WARM-UP: _____

FOCUS: _____

PROCEDURE: _____

WARM-UP: _____

FOCUS: _____

PROCEDURE: _____

WARM-UP: _____

FOCUS: _____

PROCEDURE: _____

RESOURCES: TheaterFOLK • [3 Fun, Physical Warm-Ups To Get Your Students Moving](#)
TheaterFOLK • [5 Collaboration or Warm-Up Games for the Drama Classroom](#)
PBS LEARNING MEDIA • [Theater Warm-Up Games | Ford's Theater](#)
THE NATIONAL Theater • [Warm-Up Exercises](#)
DIGITAL Theater • [A Frantic Assembly Warm-Up](#)

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS - Theater: Creating, Performing, Responding, Connecting

visual arts

YOUR TASK: The Temptations' song "Just My Imagination (Running Away with Me)," chronicles the dreams for a romantic future with imaginative visuals. Singers and other artists often utilize their creative minds in many imaginative ways to tell stories and create work. Utilize the prompts below to start creatively letting your artistic imagination "run away."

Why is imagination such an important tool for an artist? _____

Use your imagination to artistically capture a memory you have from **ain't too proud** (For example: a character, a moment, a visual, a song...) and sketch it out below:



Turn your sketch into a fully developed piece. Share it with us on Instagram: **ainttooproudmusical**.

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS - Visual Arts: Creating, Presenting, Responding, Connecting

visual arts

YOUR TASK: With the song "Can't Get Next to You," The Temptations create some intriguing, complex and powerful visuals to add texture and meaning. Look through the selection from the song below and utilize the captivating images to produce artwork that illustrates each idea you choose from the song.

I CAN'T GET NEXT TO YOU

I can turn the gray sky blue

I can make it rain whenever I want it to

Oh, I can build a castle from a single grain of sand

I can make a ship sail, huh, on dry land

But my life is incomplete and I'm so blue

Cause I can't get next to you (I can't get next to you, babe)

Next to you (I can't get next to you)

I just can't get next you (I can't get next to you, babe)

(I can't get next to you)

I can fly like a bird in the sky

Hey, and I can buy anything that money can buy

Oh, I can turn a river into a raging fire

I can live forever if I so desire

Unimportant are all the things I can do

Cause I can't get next to you (I can't get next to you, babe)

No matter what I do (I can't get next to you)

I can turn back the hands of time

You better believe I can

I can make the seasons change just by waving my hand

Oh, I can change anything from old to new

The things I want to do the most, I'm unable to do

Decide which visual images in the song appeal to you. Pick 3 images and work out plans for their illustration below:

image 1.

DESCRIPTION FROM SONG: _____

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS: _____

image 2.

DESCRIPTION FROM SONG: _____

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS: _____

image 3.

DESCRIPTION FROM SONG: _____

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS: _____

Now that you have a sense of the basics for each image, use the medium of your choice to realize your designs. Share the final results with your classmates and with us on Instagram: [ainttoproudmusical](https://www.instagram.com/ainttoproudmusical).

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS - Visual Arts: Creating, Presenting, Responding, Connecting

content standards

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS

theater

CREATING

- Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
- Refine new work through play, drama processes and theater experiences using critical analysis and experimentation.
- Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

PERFORMING

- Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.
- Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
- Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

RESPONDING

- Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

CONNECTING

- Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
- Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

SOURCE: <http://www.nationalartsstandards.org/>

visual arts

CREATING

- Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
- Refine and complete artistic work.
- Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

PRESENTING

- Select, analyze and interpret artistic work for presentation.
- Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
- Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

RESPONDING

- Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

CONNECTING

- Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
- Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.



Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History, Social Studies, Science & Technical Subjects

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ANCHOR STANDARDS

CCSS WRITING 6-12

- Text Types & Purposes
- Production and Distribution of Writing
- Research to Build and Present Knowledge
- Range of Writing

CCSS SPEAKING & LISTENING 6-12

- Comprehension & Collaboration
- Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas

CCSS LANGUAGE 6-12

- Conventions of Standard English
- Knowledge of Language
- Vocabulary Acquisition & Use

LITERACY IN HISTORY, SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE & TECHNICAL SUBJECTS ANCHOR STANDARDS

CCSS READING 6-12

- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
- Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

CCSS WRITING 6-12

- Text Types & Purposes
- Production and Distribution of Writing
- Research to Build and Present Knowledge
- Range of Writing

SOURCE: <http://www.corestandards.org/>

resources



the production web

OFFICIAL SITE: <https://www.ainttooproudmusical.com/>

social media

TWITTER: <https://twitter.com/ainttooproud>

INSTAGRAM: <https://www.instagram.com/ainttooproudmusical/>

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/AintTooProudMusical/>