

Honoree: Nikky Finney

Grade Level: 6-8

Subject: Theatre

Introductory Statement: Nikky Finney is a famous poet from South Carolina, whose poems frequently focus on the relationship of the family in community. First-person poetry is similar in form to a dramatic monologue and poetry can be staged and performed using the conventions of theatre.

SC Standards Addressed:

T7-1.2 Use theatre vocabulary to analyze the elements of a drama (including theme, character, climax, and catharsis).

T7-2.1 Demonstrate a knowledge of essential acting vocabulary (for example, blocking, objective, motivation, projection, diction, rate, pitch).

T7-2.3 Utilize vocal acting skills (for example, breath control, appropriate tone of voice, voice placement, and effective speech).

T7-2.6 Analyze the given circumstances of the script or scenario in order to explain and justify character motivation.

Goals/Objectives: To prepare a piece of dramatic text for performance, using knowledge of dramatic structure and vocal technique to support the text content.

Items/Materials Needed: A copy of the poem "Red Velvet" from *Heads Off and Split*, Nikky Finney.

Steps/Strategies: Students will read the biographical information on Nikky Finney and additionally, read biographical information on Rosa Parks, the subject of poem "Red Velvet" from *Heads Off and Split*.

Activity One: The students will analyze the poem for elements of dramatic structure-introduction, exposition, rising action, etc. The students will rehearse a dramatic reading of the poem, using vocal techniques such as volume adjustment, rate, and pitch to support the dramatic structure of the piece.

The students will perform the poem and will create a written justification supporting their vocal choices based on scriptural interpretation.

Activity Two: In a group, the students will create a series of tableau that support the poem's narrative. The group will add 5-10 supporting tableau to a student's spoken performance of the poem. The class will compare and contrast the spoken performance alone to the performance supported with tableau.