



# YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative  
2014 Volume IV: Eloquence

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## **Auditorium Building, Chicago: "The Temple of Peace."**

Curriculum Unit 14.04.11, published September 2014  
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### **Introduction and Rationale**

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One Saturday evening in March, a few of my colleagues and I welcomed some students to a viewing of Alvin Ailey's "Four Corners" by Ronald K. Brown as well as "Revelations" at the Auditorium Building of Chicago. The space spoke to us. Fascination swelled for us educators and students alike as we walked through the vomitoria, which compressed us as a community and then released us into the expansive and ornate interior before sitting in front of the transformative proscenium stage. It was not only the magnetic and eloquent bodywork of the performers who moved us by telling their story, though that would have provided more than enough eye candy, but the place we were in—a palace full of persuasive ornateness and the strength of a fortress simultaneously.

The Auditorium Building embodies rhetoric for equal opportunity, for the people, for community, for labors of love, for monumental permanence, for acceptance of diversity, for change which is ever-flowing and constant. The Chicagoan influence is realness. I mean, can you get a more blood and guts, desperately human city than Chi-town? And my students are Chicago. They need to know her and she them.

I want students to understand the importance of eloquence and the meaning of rhetoric. When you make a good argument for something, be it logical (logos), emotional (pathos), or ethical (ethos-out of character), people will listen to you. When people listen to you, and the argument is good, they may believe in what you're saying. If people believe what you want them to believe, action happens; change happens. Our students need to believe that change is possible.

I also want students to understand the history and politics behind the conception of a place like this one. Chicago's Auditorium Building was built for them, for The Public based on democratic ideals. This was true in the time of its original construction, from 1886-1889, and in its reopening and reconstruction, from 1957-1967. After studying the Civil War, my students will begin to study the historical content of this unit. They will be ready to understand the democratic ideals of equal opportunity and the acceptance of diversity from the point of view of knowing the consequences of neglecting those ideals.

The design of the building provides continuing effectiveness. I want students to understand that the process for creating a democratic place is never easy and is necessarily complex. Compromise is involved and always important. Finally, I want students to understand that a building can embody and provide witness to rhetoric.

If the plan is good, the space will speak. If it's really good, the space will also listen and be reinvented as culture shifts around it. The students I teach and learn from will benefit greatly from learning elements of history, politics, design, writing argumentatively, and speaking with purpose about their hometown. I would argue that all learners would benefit from the critical depth of intellectually excavating a Chicago space some named a wonder of the world after the World's Fair of 1893. It is increasingly important for our students to be able to communicate their ideas eloquently, both to express themselves and to synthesize information for a new understanding of history. Using the lens of rhetoric will focus my students on learning basic compositional information that comprises the foundations for the facts of present-day realities. As they develop such an understanding my students will be lead far down a path to responsible citizenship.

I have taught at National Teachers Academy (NTA) for three years, and I will continue in the fall. NTA is located on the south side of Chicago in the South Loop community. We have 540 students in grades Pre-K through eighth. Over 91% of our students qualify for free/reduced lunch. Our student population, racially, is 90% African American. We have a large percentage of displaced african american families who once lived in project housing that has since been demolished who reside with friends, family members, and/or in shelter-housing. There is high gang activity in and around our neighborhood.

Our neighborhood is at an apex between Chinatown, McCormick Place, Downtown, and Bronzeville. Last year NTA welcomed an additional 85 students as a result of the Chicago Public School (CPS) neighborhood school closings. We continue to experience shifts from gentrification on the northeast end of our community. One effect of those shifts is NTA's acceptance of a Regional Gifted Center (RGC). The RGC started in kindergarten and first grade last year and will have a second grade classroom as well this coming school year. The RGC brings in a more diverse population. The shape-shifting of our school community requires communication about these changes.

Rhetoric can be defined simply as the art of persuasion, be it in speaking, writing, or design. Chicago's Auditorium Building is a prime example of persuasion through architectural design. As Joseph R. Roach (Sterling Professor of Theater and English at Yale University) helped me to understand, "There are ways of thinking specifically about rhetorical tropes—such as allusion, synecdoche, etc.—and architectural expressiveness. This is particularly true of the decorative surfaces of a building like this one (Chicago's Auditorium Building), which was meant to make an argument." As influenced by the readings and activities of our seminar titled "Eloquence" for the Yale National Initiative (led by Roach), my students and I will read, discuss, and memorize powerfully persuasive words, but we will also imagine/look at/listen to some spaces as if they were rhetorical texts.

One of the central ideas of this narrative curriculum unit focuses on figures of speech, or "any artful deviations from the ordinary mode of speaking or writing," as explained in *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*. We'll identify schemes (Greek schema, form, shape) as a transference of order and tropes (Greek tropein, to turn) as a transference of meaning. Some of the figures of speech that we'll use as parallels to design elements are allusion (a brief reference to a moment in history, a piece of art, an entity, etc.), allegory (characters or events in a literary, visual, or musical art form represent or symbolize ideas), oxymoron (a contradiction that oddly makes sense), and antithesis (places one item, such as an emotion or action, against its opposite).

Students will be exposed to the strategic design-story of the Auditorium. That story begins with the master minds Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan who worked as a team in collaboration with visual artists and interior designers to create a space of relaxation, contemplation, and inspiration for The Public, based on democratic

ideals, such as equality, justice, political participation, compromise and negotiation. The creators have stories just as the building has a story, but more importantly, the creators had strong life purposes just as the building continues to have a strong purpose for The Public. The conceptual jump being made for students, adds an artistic and intellectual edge to the unit that I believe creates a new perspective for our students. It is this type of flexibility in our minds that allows for empathy, but the kids have to feel the connection. What's the way in? I would argue that it's direct experience and this unit is full of exposure to the Auditorium Building that aims to speak to all who enter it.

## Content Objectives

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### History

We begin with the history of Chicago's Auditorium Building. Why was this structure's conception so vital? At the time, Chicago was in desperate need of a cultural and political common ground that welcomed the elite and working classes. The Great Chicago Fire of 1871 had just obliterated over a thousand buildings, killing at least three hundred people, and costing the city millions upon millions of dollars in damages.<sup>a1a</sup> In the late 19th century, Chicago was at the height of unrest between the classes. Joseph Siry, leading American architectural historian and professor in the Department of Art and Art History at Wesleyan University, wrote an article titled *Chicago's Auditorium Building—Opera or Anarchism*.<sup>a2a</sup> Siry argues that the social political environment of 19th century Chicago gave birth to this space; note the many variations on the same name—Chicago Auditorium Building-Auditorium Hotel-the Auditorium Theater-Roosevelt University-the Auditorium Theater at Roosevelt University.

Chicago was suffering from social/political unrest. The political climate between the elite and the working classes was volatile. This came to a head on May 4th, 1886 during the Haymarket Massacre-Riot-Event—"From newspaper comments on secret meetings of Anarchist groups, and the utterances of their organ, the Arbeiter Zeitung, edited by

August Spies, and the *Alarm*, edited by Albert Parsons, it became known to the police that the Anarchists would probably attempt to seize upon the opportunity of expected labor disturbances on the 1st of May, 1886 to precipitate an outbreak against capital, and the law and order of the city."<sup>a3a</sup> Ferdinand Peck, member of the elite class but also a philanthropist and politically left, used Haymarket to make his case for the need for a public space that catered to ALL. Peck hired the reputable architecture firm Adler & Sullivan to prove the importance of his purpose in design as well as programming. Dankmar Adler was known as a great structural engineer and acoustic genius who married into a politically driven reform Jewish family. Sullivan's designs generally involved a simple geometric form decorated with organic ornamentation informed by local nature. He was considered one of the most influential architects in the Chicago School. His political and spiritual views were informed by transcendentalists such as John Trumbull and Ralph Waldo Emerson. A like-minded team was born.

The word/root polis- refers to a state or society, characterized by a sense of community. This is the root of a number of contemporary words including policy, politics, police, and metropolis. One might also translate this word as The Public. Edward R. Garczynski wrote a commemorative text of The Auditorium, Chicago in 1890. "Garczynski perception of the building's allusions to Rome aligned with Peck's choice of the name

"Auditorium" rather than the term "Grand Opera House." In its ancient Latin usage, auditorium (as distinct from a ruler's private palace, or palatium) referred to the space of the audience in a theater as a public hall for cultural and political gatherings, just as Chicago's Auditorium would hold both opera and conventions."a4a

The building's history is a bold one. The doors opened on December 9th, 1889 with a huge gala, including a concert with opera star Adelina Patti singing "Home Sweet Home". (This year is the theater's 125th year anniversary and Patti Lupone who is Patti's great grand niece will sing the same song at a celebratory gala on the same date.) President Harrison was in attendance. In 1893, the year of the first World's Fair in Chicago—The Columbian Exposition-The White City, Imre Kiralfy's "Grand Historical Spectacle: America" opened at the Auditorium Building. According to Kiralfy, originally from Pest, an Austro-Hungarian Empire city, "The pageant is dealing with the history of four centuries of American civilization...tableaux would be a mere trifle."a5a In the monumental original poster for the show I viewed at Beinecke Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, what struck me was the caption to the scene depicted in gorgeous bold color paints: "The Temple of Peace". Is it America that is "The Temple of Peace" or the Auditorium? Ferdinand Peck had been named the First Vice President of the World's Columbian Exposition, so this historical spectacle must have been a means of welcoming the world to the progressive minds of Chicago whom he hoped would share in his democratic ideals.

In 1900, Booker T. Washington spoke on the stage. In 1912, President Theodore Roosevelt gave his famous "Armageddon" speech at the building. By 1930, the doors couldn't be kept open any longer, but the building remained as it would have been more expensive for the city to tear it down and replace it. In 1942, the USO took over the space for soldiers during WWII. A bowling alley and hotdog stands took over the interior. And then the doors were closed and locked. But in 1967 with the assistance of another Chicago philanthropist Mrs. Beatrice Spachnera6a, architect Crombie Taylor's ornamental precisiona7a, and eighty eight year old architect and original draftsman of the building Frank Lloyd Wright, the building reopened with "Midsummer" and became a partnership with Roosevelt University.

## **Politics**

In the introduction to the text *Declaring Independence: Jefferson, Natural Language, & the Culture of Performance* by Jay Fliegelman, he reminds us that "American culture is revolutionary."a8a The moment in time that the Chicago Auditorium Building was conceived was the moment of Chicago's rebirth, three dense years before the Columbian Exposition. The journey was not so easy.

For years, Chicago philanthropists tried to open a civic opera house in Chicago as a physical and political response to New York's Metropolitan Opera House, a space owned and operated by the elite class of New York city. Ferdinand Peck was on the board of the Auditorium Association. Peck incorporated the Chicago Auditorium Association in December 1886 to develop what he wanted to be the world's largest, grandest and most expensive theatre. Ferdinand Peck also dreamed of creating a venue that embodied the democratic ideals in which he believed. On the board were Marshall Field, Edson Keith, Martin Ryerson, George Pullman, and other Chicago business tycoons. The renowned firm of Adler and Sullivan were hired to design the project.a9a

The Haymarket Riot had created quite a stir in the ever-bubbling pot of unrest between classes. The Socialist Party and the labor class, which some argued were one and the same, had an adverse reaction to the trial. Members of the mob were being accused of planting a bomb that killed a few people and injured many. Local mainstream media referred to the event as a massacre. Four men were tried and hanged for initiating the bombing. Two of the men were August Spies and Albert Parsons, members of the Socialist Party and

organizers of the popular underground publications *Zeitung* and *Alarm*. Rumors spread that the men were wrongly accused. Needless to say animosity grew exponentially and people with money in Chicago were terrified. Peck used the rhetoric of fear to promote his ideals for the Auditorium Building. His empathic rhetoric presented this basic inquiry: Why not have the auditorium be a common ground? This could be a place of dialogue as well as a place of rest for the laborers of the city who couldn't afford to seek out luxurious cultural experiences.

The physical act of building such a massive space and the conceptual act of purposefully planning a space that must be intricate and thoughtful enough to convince the public to unite was a monstrous endeavor. This needed an exorbitant amount of funding. The Chicago Auditorium Association did not want to ask the government to fund this project, due to the traditional system of the wealthy paying with perks for several box seats, the best seats in the house. Peck specifically asked for box seats to be taken out of the design; they weren't democratic. Peck's idea was to have private funders for the project and then include a hotel, banquet hall, and apartments to facilitate a self-sustaining auditorium that would remain separate from the city's budget.

The building would have multiple purposes: conventions of all kinds, political and otherwise, mass-meetings, reunions of army organizations, and, of course, great musical occasions in the nature of festivals, operatic and otherwise, as well as other large gatherings. Unfortunately, sound financial planning for the operations of the project was wanting. So, tragically, the rent was not enough to keep the building open beyond 1931.

## **Design**

The Auditorium Building, Chicago is an arrangement of an experience in time just like a speech. The plan for the auditorium sprouted from the genius of Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan, who were both deeply influenced by the combined structures and democratic ideals of ancient Greece and Rome as well as the detail and spirit of nature. Sullivan's design was a "unified program", echoing the unity that the building inspires in *The Public*. Adler's design explicitly recalled the amphitheater-like shape of the ancient Greek theaters. The building became Classical allusion. During performances, the Greek idea of rising tiers of seats gave the opportunity for everyone in the hall to see almost everybody else. This social effect anticipated descriptions of the Auditorium's opening, when the full house became a metaphor for civic unity.<sup>a10a</sup>

Adler's acoustical engineering for the interior of the auditorium was modeled after classical designs. He echoed dimensions from the Greeks so that no matter where you were sitting as an audience member your sight lines and hearing paths were equal to all. There shouldn't be a bad seat in the house. There could be nothing in the sound path that would block the flow which meant minimal soft surfaces. The means of moving into the auditorium's Romanesque interior with the main programs on the proscenium stage was by way of the vomitoria. This is a tunnel-like structure that makes use of the compression and expansion technique (contrary to the misconception of a Roman space for regurgitating to make room for more food): "When entering into the theatre's front orchestra level, every patron must go through the small, low and dark vomitoria. This allows for the largest contrast possible when then stepping into the very large, open and bright theatre house."<sup>a11a</sup>

The exterior of the theater offered a public monument for democratic ideals to take shape. The structure had the look and feel of a fortress—safe and sturdy. The stones used for the building were made of limestone from Indiana near Peck's family property. As people of Chicago waited to enter the space, they stood and spoke underneath the colonnades arches that welcomed organic and spontaneous conversation. These were planned moments by the creators of the space. The intentions of the building came shining through the design of the

building. As Garczynski wrote, between such structures and the Auditorium, "the progress has been a mighty leap forward . . . making this building the commencement of a new era. Here all is simplicity, stateliness, strength. There is in its granite pile a quality that strongly reminds the traveled spectator of those grand engineering constructions which the Romans raised in every part of their vast empire."a12a This was a space designed for necessity in a democratic society.

The interior utilized Sullivan's study of nature and architecture to create its ornate beauty. The theater was illuminated by Edison bulbs and the bulbs seemed to burst out of a supple sunflower, native to the midwestern prairies. The patterned designs used to decorate walls, floors, and ceilings were inspired by the seed of a milkweed plant, native to Chicago. The murals that towered above the audience members to the north and south were modeled after dells in Wisconsin by Madison and the woods just north of the city in Highland Park. The arch-shaped mural that framed the proscenium used real human beings as models for the elusive figures. In this spirit, all forty-five figures were painted by a young American artist, Charles Holloway. Louis Sullivan decided to write the poem himself that was to be engraved on the walls of the theater.a13a

Sullivan had attended school for design in Paris, France and came back to the states with a new mantra: "form ever follows function (the golden words of the Chicago School of Architecture)". What does this truly mean for the public who utilizes and inhabits these planned spaces? And can you anticipate function? How do you insist that a building ebbs and flows with time? If a building is a living monument, what does its function become and become and become again?a14a We must acknowledge that Ferdinand Peck, along with the Association felt the need to keep the space's purpose flexible. As referenced before, the auditorium was used for lectures, dialogue about current issues, choral functions, etc. Adler said that the space was used to its fullest potential when a chorus populated the stage representing voices of Chicago at the same time as having a full house in the audience to present the call and response act.

The building did not function according to its original design for over forty years. But this space lived many lives in its monumental form and then had a revival in 1967. The architects who fought for the revival were Frank Lloyd Wright, who had worked as a draftsman for Adler & Sullivan, Crombie Taylor, along with Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill as design partners. Roosevelt's partnership seemed natural, given the parallels in the mission of the university conceived by FDR and the democratic mission of the Auditorium Building. Taylor especially, in partnership with Roosevelt University, wanted to flaunt the history of the building instead of concealing the richness. His work on rehabilitation with restorative architect John Vinci reinvented the ornate interior and this meant carving through years of covered-up art. The building now strives to be a space "engaging us at our own complexity".a15a

## **Rhetoric**

Again, as Joseph R. Roach suggested to me, the building is an arrangement of an experience in time just like a speech. The building speaks. One might ask: How can a building speak? Well, it is a conceptual jump but we can follow it. If an audience listens, the speaker is heard. The building wants to be heard, right? As was planned by the creators, the function must come first and the building's function is a consolidated democracy. The form comes next and the form is that of a monument-fortress-safety net on the outside and down home inspiration on the inside. The exterior's argument is that of permanence while the interior's argument is that we must accept the complexities of a democracy and see the fluidity of the natural details.

As in the art of speech the building reflects the Classical Invention, Arrangement, Style, Memory, and Delivery. The Invention, Arrangement, and Style of the building has the rhetorical structure of a funeral oration: honoring the dead and instructing the living. It is monumental. The building is chock full of transparency-



deliberate design but with genuine feeling/purpose in the democratic ideals that this space is meant for The Public. Sullivan's spiritual ties to nature must have played a part in this. Matthew Craske writes of panegyrics, or eulogies, in his text *The Silent Rhetoric of the Body*.<sup>a16a</sup> In considering the Auditorium Building as a monument through local symbolism, deriving from a system of patronage and by in large being fully political in nature, one might argue that the building eulogizes Classical rhetoric. It demands to be seen.

There are several rhetorical tropes that can be used to assist this concept of buildings speaking. Allusion happens to be present in the references to nature and classical architecture throughout the interior and exterior of the building. The theater's lights have been compared to jewels as a metaphor. If we personify the building, its speaking is not surprising. As a person walks through the entryway to the alcove she would view several allegorical figures on walls, including that of wisdom. An oxymoron used to describe the space by media is "sumptuous and chaste." A rhetorical scheme is used to fuel the spirit of the place with antithesis: life and death again and again and again. Strength and vulnerability has great power in a speaker and a building. Most important though is the extended metaphor—the interior of the theater "speaks" of its social ideals [continuity, eloquence, community] & the exterior "speaks" of its communicated social intentions (an auditorium is a space for its audience in a theater as a public hall for cultural and political gatherings) through its architectural style.

Eloquence is the great leveler. With the assistance of Garry Wills, consider President Lincoln who had less than a sixth grade education, but he was a performer, an avid audience member, and an extremely eloquent writer. The writing of the Gettysburg Address indirectly follows Louis Sullivan's words of wisdom, "Form ever follows function." It was William Saunders through the design of the Gettysburg Cemetery and Edward Everett who took The Public through the ritualistic function of mourning for his address and then it was Lincoln who delivered a speech act in which the country could move on: "(that) all men are created equal". Lincoln was an artist like Sullivan or Adler. The building definitely echoed a revolution in thought and style.<sup>a17a</sup>

## Strategies and Activity Ideas

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### Categories/Definitions

The sections of content in this unit are broken into literacy and social studies related categories that are lenses for viewing all information. At the beginning of the school year we'll introduce categorizing as a way to organize information in our lives in general. Perhaps our first categories will be the content areas that we are supposed to cover: reading, writing, and social studies. Whenever we introduce a new concept or text or project, we'll pose the question: What kind of information is this? Is it historical, political, creative, functional, or economical? Students will begin to keep a self-monitoring document that reflects their knowledge of categorizing. This can be done on Google Spreadsheets, as we have 1:1 Chromebooks in our classroom OR in a composition notebook. Eventually, we will establish main categories that academic vocabulary and examples fall into. My hope is that they reflect the categories of the unit: History, Politics, Design, and Rhetoric.

I'd like our students to be able to categorize their knowledge of the Auditorium Building through these lenses. We'll look at the history, politics, design, and rhetoric of the building. Each of the categories will have content-specific words that are suggested to be taught and used and referred to within their category. For example,

The Haymarket Riot is considered both a historical event and a historical term. Within politics is the policy as well as the description of democratic ideals. The umbrella category of design includes terminology from the entire plan, such as architecture, plasterwork, and murals. Rhetoric holds the strategies of public speaking as well as the specific tropes and schemes. It may be useful to students at the middle level to identify tropes as figurative language.

In the direct teaching of the unit, we'll move through the categories in a way that supports the most concrete knowledge to the most abstract. This way students' learning is scaffolded. Students will explore the history of Chicago at the time, then the politics and policy of the building of a place like the Auditorium, then the actual design of the building with a structural engineering element provided by our math teacher, and finally the practice of persuasive public speaking. Only then will students be able to make the conceptual jump to see the parallels of rhetorical tropes and architectural expressiveness.

### **Democracy in Design**

One of the unit's central ideas is: democratic ideals can be used in designing democratic spaces. In our classroom we have two very useful tools for designing a space which promotes democratic ideals: dream lab furniture (light-weight and on wheels) and 1:1 technology. As in the strategy of categorizing, the democracy strategy will be used not only as part of this unit but throughout the school year in order to create a base of knowledge that students can pull from while dealing with the content of this unit in the early spring after studying The Civil War.

Students will first have to identify the ideals. We'll begin in a simple and straightforward manner, looking up the two academic terms separately and then fitting them together: What is a democracy? What is an ideal? We'll categorize these terms and then look at the words together as one term: What is a democratic ideal? Why are democratic ideals important? What democratic ideals would you want to support you as a citizen? Students will brainstorm and then narrow our classroom democratic ideals to five.

After they are established, we will decide how best to support the ideals. One way will be through design. We will design a classroom environment and the procedures for enforcing this design. Following Louis Sullivan mantra, "Form ever follows function.", students will discuss the functions that this space must accommodate. We'll need to decide if the room remains as is or if we shift the environment depending on the function. Both the furniture and the technology need to be included in the plan.

An activity that supports this strategy is students creating a blog for the Auditorium Building to document their experience in designing a space for The Public. Staff at the theater have already presented the idea of students blogging on their website/blog. After studying the history, politics, and design of the building, students would be able to see how the design of their classroom reflected the process of designing the theater. We'll begin by presenting a prompt about democracy and design and having students respond to the prompt in writing on their computers: How are democratic ideals used in the design of the Auditorium and in your classroom?

### **Images as Primary Sources**

This strategy will also be introduced at the beginning of our school year. I was reminded by Timothy J. Barringer, Yale University Professor of History of Art, that images can be viewed as primary resources. I intend to communicate this to students throughout the year by presenting photographs and visual art that connect to the time periods we are studying. We will look at the images as text. This process will aid in students' abstract



thinking capabilities. We'll compare the information an essay gives us to the information an image

gives and explore the similarities and differences. The main question we'll address is: What is this image telling me about the time period—the people, the place, the culture?

The activity related to this strategy will help students create their own narratives in text for images. One element will be a scavenger hunt. The goal is to find as many images that tell the story of the Auditorium Building of Chicago as possible: Then and Now pictures, photographs of the creators, photographs of speeches and lectures being given, and images of the pageant "The Grand Spectacle: America!" by Imre Kiralfy, are just a few of the images I've been able to locate in exploration. Images included can also be related to the history, design and politics of the building—The Haymarket Riot, Ferdinand Peck, Mrs. Spachner, Sullivan & Adler, and the Athenian spaces the theater is modeled after.

Students will also explore the visual art of the interior space of the Auditorium Building. This consists of the many murals painted by Charles Holloway using live human models. The murals all tell a story and with the assistance of the Chicago's Landmark Stage website, students will learn the stories well enough to tell them in their own perspective as written narratives. Students will be able to write narrative text telling the stories of the photographs they find in their scavenger hunt as well.

The first step for this activity will be creating Pinterest accounts to collect the images. They will then write narratives for one photograph and one mural. The focus questions for this narrative will be: What story is this image telling us about the time in history it was created?

### **Eloquent Recitation**

Students will recite beautiful famous and infamous rhetoric in different environments: the classroom, the yard, the train, the Auditorium, and at home. This work on memory will build an awareness of self in the physical world and voice in their writing. To begin our school year, students will watch the Ken Burns documentary "The Address". This film sets the tone for acceptance of diverse learners and the importance of eloquent public speaking. The students in the film are asked to memorize the Gettysburg Address. I'd like our students to do the same.

In the two months leading up to the content of this unit, students will be studying The Civil War. At this time students will begin to develop a public speaking voice by memorizing some or all of "The Address". This activity will create building blocks to the rhetoric that students will begin to write themselves. It is at this time that we'll define and categorize the terms rhetoric and eloquence.

Another supportive activity for eloquent recitation would be reading quotations that represent good rhetoric. I'd like students to find and recite quotations written and recited by people who visited and spoke at the Auditorium. Examples are: President Theodore Roosevelt, President William Henry Harrison, Booker T. Washington, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Sarah Bernhardt, and Anna Pavlova.

### **Rewriting Rhetoric**

In presenting the art of rhetoric, we'll read aloud and silently and listen to many of the great works of eloquence. Students will first be exposed to these speeches in chronological order through history taught in the classroom. As seventh graders in Chicago using Social Studies 3.0 as a guide, we begin the year with world exploration, move to colonial times and The Revolutionary, the constitution, slavery and The Civil War,

The Reconstruction Era, and we'll complete a Civil Rights Era unit together with the eighth graders in the spring.

The list of historical rhetoric we'll study follows but some may be added and others might be taken away: The Declaration of Independence by Jefferson, The Gettysburg Address by Lincoln, The Atlanta Cotton Exposition Speech by Booker T. Washington, The Challenger Speech by Reagan, The Fourth of July Speech by Douglass, and perhaps Queen Elizabeth's Inaugural Speech. Students will rewrite speeches in their own language and their own voice. I'm leaning towards Gettysburg being the first one we try together because they will have learned the words already. It is by associating these rich words and purposeful words with my kids' real lives that will make the most meaning.

Another activity idea would be to look at the art of pageantry and spectacle in American history as universal rhetoric and rewrite a pageant. "The Grand Spectacle, America!" by Imre Kiralfy was performed on the Auditorium stage in 1893 as part of The Columbian Exposition. Kiralfy had to make the work accessible to people across language barriers. I'd like students to rewrite "America!" as readers theatre. The original text is not very accessible but the gist of the story is a comprehensive history of America from 1492-1892. The main characters are historical allegories: Progress, Perseverance, Liberty, and Genius of Invention. Liberty frees the slaves, unites the country, inspires the west, and greets Chicago at the World's Fair as the "Temple of Peace". Pageants used mimic and operatic styles. For reflection on the experience we'll have a class seminar on the rhetoric of the pageant.

### **The Tour**

We have the luxury of the Auditorium Building's 125th year anniversary happening in tandem with the creation of this curriculum unit. That being said, there are a number of events that my students have already been invited to. These events include a musical instrument exploration day, a sing-a-long film night with "Chicago: The Musical", a Halloween parade, an architectural lecture with a focus on the banquet hall of the building, a general interior architecture tour, and the gospel jazz review in honor of MLK "Too Hot To Handel". This gives us ample time as a community to really get to know the space well.

I'd like the kids to be able to share their knowledge of the space by speaking eloquently about it. Students will be writing a speech defending how the building as rhetoric. This is a culminating activity. These speeches need to be shared and an intimate audience might be a good way to get them used to conveying their very important ideas in front of others, but without the pressure of being onstage in front of thousands of people.

One way to do this would be to have the speech be given as a tour of the space. Docents act as guides for beautiful spaces voluntarily. Often times docents are people who have a deep love and appreciation for the place they are guiding. Students will access the Auditorium Building enough to be develop this type of appreciation. It will be up to them how they want to give the tour, knowing that a clear understanding of how the building persuades the public of its unifying qualities is the purpose.

## District Standards

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In standards addressed, I'll focus on enduring understanding that have a great need. Students should understand pathos, logos, and ethos. They need to know a space can speak and that this is made possible by rhetorical tropes having parallels in architecture and design. They will discuss how contrasts in design create meaningful experiences. Persuasion through writing is strategic and requires evidence and that persuasion through speech depends on the circumstances. Also, figurative language has multiple connotations.

Figurative language connections and understandings are a fundamental piece of the seventh grade literacy standards:

RI.7.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

The writing, speaking and listening common core state standards (CCSS) are newly assessed for middle school students:

W.7.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. a) Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. b) Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. c) Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence. d) Establish and maintain a formal style. e) Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

SL.7.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

SL.7.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

The art of persuasion is assessed as argument-based writing through CCSS and then students must deliver their writing in the form of an eloquent speech. These speeches will be given as tours of the interior and/or exterior of The Auditorium Theatre.

**Images:** Taken at Beinecke Rare Books and Manuscripts Library at Yale University





## Student Reading and Resource Bibliography

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## Notes

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Each of the resources listed below has helped me like a good friend. I'd like to honor the knowledge received from them.

(1) The Chicago Fire of 1871 [summary and images used from history.com] should be referenced as influencing The Chicago School of Architecture. Louis Sullivan's mantra: "Form ever follows function", can be viewed from the perspective of the Chicago native who lived through the fire. The city was rebuilt entirely in stone and steel for safety.

(2, 3, 10, 13) Joseph Siry discusses the politics of the building in his article *Opera or Anarchism*. The culture of anarchism in Chicago at the time was mainly in the labor class. August Spies and Albert Parsons were influential socialists who were accused of organized crime. I also used information from Joseph Siry's writing on the interior of the building. He stressed how involved Sullivan was in the design and art creation and quotes Sullivan's poem.

(4, 12) Edward R. Garczynski commemorates the building by first quoting the definition of an auditorium, that an auditorium is for the audience/the public and very different from a palladium which is for the ruling class. Edward R. Garczynski also discusses the Roman Empire and its parallels in the acoustical design of the Auditorium by Adler.

(5) Imre Kiralfy and his family created numerous pageants during the art form's heyday. He wrote of the importance of giving "The Grand Spectacle, America" meaning, that tableau would not do the World's Fair event justice.

(6, 7) Crombie Taylor's text did not note Mrs. Spachner's first name, but the Chicago's Landmark Stage website did: Beatrice, which I added to the text of the unit. Also noted is that Spachner invited Crombie Taylor to the reopening gala a bit late and he did not make the reopening of the theater due to work out of town.

(8) Jay Fliegelman discusses the revolutionary nature of American culture. This idea that fuels the Declaration of Independence as an act instead of a document, directly relates to the political force behind the Auditorium's conception.

(9) Fremont O. Bennett wrote the primary source of minutes for political events in Chicago. He recorded the names of board members for the Auditorium as well as the designers.

(11) Chicago's Landmark Stage website provides ample information on the interior and exterior of the theater as well as virtual tours of each.

(14, 15) Stewart Brand discusses how a building might learn. This is what helped me to shape the idea of a building listening. Brian Eno is quoted by Brand at the end of his book. The idea of a space meeting each person at their own complexity in both concrete and abstract.

(16) Matthew Craske discusses monuments and the rhetoric of certain style of monuments. He refers to the statues as eulogies in the visual form. I have taken this idea and layered it into our exploration of the theater.

(17) Garry Wills discusses The Gettysburg Address as revolution in thought and style for America, provoked by Lincoln himself. This provides a parallel for me in the unit for The Auditorium Building. The thought behind the building informed the style of the building: "All men are created equal."

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