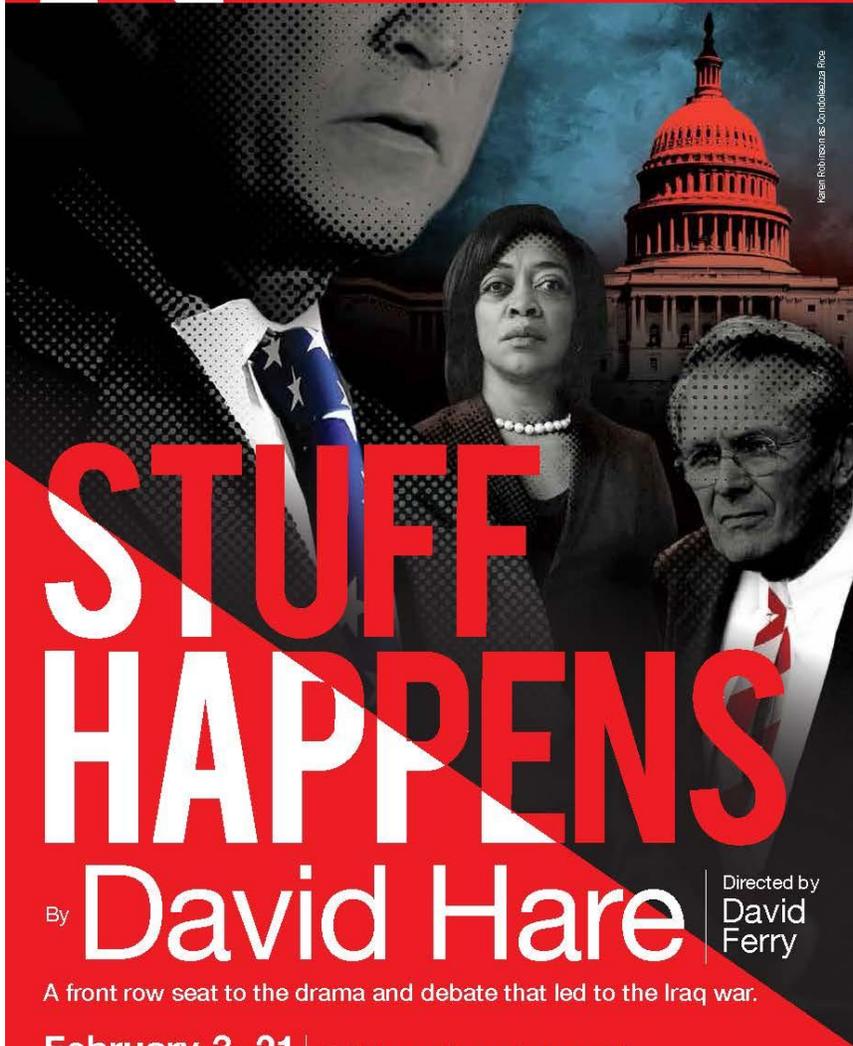




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Karen Robinson as Condoleezza Rice

STUFF HAPPENS

By **David Hare** | Directed by **David Ferry**

A front row seat to the drama and debate that led to the Iraq war.

February 3–21 | "Stuff Happens" is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.
Tickets from \$25

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Study Guide

by Marjie Chud

This study guide is intended as a resource for educators to accompany the National Arts Centre’s production of *Stuff Happens* by David Hare. This guide provides a synopsis of the play, contextual information including an historical timeline of events, a glossary of terms, a list of characters, a biography of the playwright, and a note from the director. The guide also includes pre-and post-performance activities that link to the play along with discussion questions and various connecting curriculum strands and expectations. These activities are designed to engage students in exploration of the themes of the play and encourage discussion before and beyond the production. All activities may be adapted to meet the learning goals of your classroom. Should you have any questions or comments, please contact Judi Pearl in the English Theatre Department at the NAC: judi.pearl@nac-cna.ca / 613-947-7000 ext. 537.

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Synopsis

Stuff Happens is a partly fictional account of the diplomatic and political process leading to the post 9/11 invasion of Iraq. The world premiere of *Stuff Happens* opened at the National Theatre in London, UK on September 1, 2004, 18 months after U.S. and British forces invaded Iraq on March 19, 2003. Playwright David Hare refers to his play as a historical drama. He combines the dramatic form of verbatim theatre (a style of documentary theatre in which plays are constructed from precise words spoken by people interviewed about a particular event or topic) with dramatic fiction. *Stuff Happens* captures a variety of perspectives held by international leaders along with viewpoints spoken by actors who directly address the audience. The political figures are real and many of their speeches are on the public record, such as Bush's use of the term "axis of evil" to refer to Iraq, Iran and North Korea. The conversations behind closed doors were invented by Hare.

The title of this play is taken from then U.S. Secretary of State Donald Rumsfeld's response to a journalist's question regarding the looting that took place after the fall of Baghdad – "Stuff happens." The playwright begins the play with this quote from Rumsfeld, indicating that the 2003 invasion of Iraq has already occurred. We are then introduced to the main political players of the time including Colin Powell, Dick Cheney, Condoleezza Rice, Paul Wolfowitz, Tony Blair, Kofi Annan, and George W. Bush, with revealing details about each character's nature and perspective.

The play has two acts with 24 scenes in total, most beginning with an unnamed actor who locates the scene in time and space. The audience is led through a series of press conferences and behind-closed-doors meetings which culminate with the U.S.-led coalition's invasion of Iraq. We learn of the events before 9/11, the political points of view of the various leaders post 9/11, and arguments for and against the war, ending with a monologue by an Iraqi exile about the state of Iraq.

About the Playwright

David Hare was born in Sussex, England on June 5, 1947. He graduated from Cambridge University in 1968. He co-founded Portable Theatre Company soon after, acting and directing, and writing his first script, *Slag*, in 1970. He was resident dramatist for both the Royal Court Theatre, London and Nottingham Playhouse. In 1975 he co-founded the Joint Stock Theatre Company. In 1978 the National Theatre produced his play *Plenty*. He went on to write several other plays. In 1985, Hare adapted *Plenty* as a screenplay. Hare continues to work as a director and playwright and is best known for his satires of British society post-World War II. He has received numerous awards for his contributions to the arts and was knighted in 1998.

For a detailed lists of David Hare's work please refer to the reference page at the end of the Study Guide (p.22).

Director's Note by David Ferry

A point of departure for discussing *Stuff Happens* with your students might be the Steven Spielberg movie adaptation of H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds*. The classic story is brought into modern times and deftly illustrates America's fears and paranoia in a post 9/11 world. In David Hare's *Stuff Happens* there is also an invasion... this time not by Martians but by Earthlings, and the landscape is not Chicago but Iraq.

The play likewise deftly illustrates America's fears and paranoia in a post 9/11 world. Both stories tell us about malevolent forces bent on conquest. And both stories illustrate, in their own way, the folly of invasion. One is pure escapist entertainment. The other is entertaining political analysis.

War of the Worlds is a simplistic tale told from a human (well, American human) point of view. *Stuff Happens* is not so simplistic. Perhaps because it attempts to shine a light on the real motivations behind the George W. Bush-led coalition of western armies into Iraq in 2003.

It might be interesting to discuss the Obama-led incursion into Iraq and Syria as an interesting parallel. In 2003 the Bush White House told us incessantly that there were weapons of mass destruction (WMD) stashed all over Iraq. Today we are being told that ISIS is a threat to international security. In due time we learned that there were no weapons of mass destruction and that so-called "intelligence" had been massaged and manipulated by the Bush administration to provide a justification for an invasion. Is there any possibility that this ISIS threat may be another (possibly more plausible) [paper tiger](#)?

David Hare's play does not use the [jingoistic](#) simplicity of *War of the Worlds* to look at the invasion and conquest of one peoples' country by another. It looks beyond the surface of the act of aggression and digs into the real personal and geo-political motivations and consequences in the act. In Hare's investigation he takes historical figures, and like Shakespeare, enlarges them to heroic (Colin Powell), anti-heroic (Condi Rice, Tony Blair), villainous (Cheney, Rumsfeld) and messianic fool (George W. Bush) size.

If you're looking for a literary comparison for *War of the Worlds* you need but look to Marvel comics. For *Stuff Happens* look to *Henry V*, *Richard III*, or *King Lear*.

David Hare asks us to look carefully at what we are being told, and like all serious citizens, demands that we question authority very carefully. He reminds us that [power corrupts but absolute power corrupts absolutely](#).

Timeline

The historical timeline below places the events of the play *Stuff Happens* within the larger context of the conflict in the Middle East and the events surrounding Iraq beginning in 1979 and ending in 2011. For more detailed timelines, please refer to the reference page at the end of the Study Guide (p.22).

DATE	EVENT
1979	Saddam Hussein becomes President of Iraq.
1980-88	Iran-Iraq War
1990	Iraq invades Kuwait putting its relationship with international community at risk.
1991	Iraq is subjected to sanctions, weapons inspections, and no fly zones by U.N. coalition in ceasefire negotiation.
October 1995	Hussein wins referendum for President for seven more years.
May 1997	Tony Blair elected Prime Minister of Great Britain.
December 1998	Operation 'Desert Fox' created by U.S./U.K. coalition to destroy Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programs.
February 1999	Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr, spiritual leader of the Shia community, is assassinated in Najaf.
December 1999	U.N. Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) created to replace United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM); Iraq rejects the resolution.
January 2001	George W. Bush becomes president of U.S.; implements more aggressive policy towards Iraq.
February 2001	U.S. and Great Britain carry out bombing raids to try to disable Iraq's air defence network.
September 11, 2001	Four planes are hijacked; two hit the Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre; one flies into the Pentagon; a fourth headed for Washington, D.C. crashes into a field in Pennsylvania.

October 2001	Operation Enduring Freedom: In response to the attacks, the U.S. invades Afghanistan in an attempt to overthrow the Taliban government, which is suspected of harbouring Osama Bin Laden, leader of al-Qaeda, the organization the U.S. believes is responsible for the 9/11 attacks.
September 2002	President Bush tells world leaders at U.N. to join him or stand aside as U.S. confronts Iraq; Bush administration successfully obtains a U.N. Security Council resolution to return weapons inspectors to Iraq; British Prime Minister Tony Blair publishes a questionable dossier on Iraq's military capability.
November 2002	U.N. weapons inspectors return to Iraq; Bush signs the Patriot Act into law creating the Department of Homeland Security.
February 15, 2003	The largest anti-war protest of all time involving 100 million protesters in over 600 cities worldwide takes place following a report by Hans Blix, U.N. Chief Weapons Inspector to the U.N., that shows no evidence of WMD.
March 20, 2003	U.S.-led coalition begins bombing Baghdad, Iraq; Hans Blix reports that Iraq has accelerated its cooperation but says inspectors need more time to verify Iraq's compliance; U.K. declares diplomatic process in Iraq has ended.
April 2003	U.S. forces take control of Baghdad.
May 2003	Bush declares, "Major combat operations in Iraq have ended."
July 2003	Attacks on U.S. forces continue; US Governing Council meets for the first time; Saddam Hussein's sons, Uday and Qusay, are killed.
August 2003	Bombing of Jordanian embassy and UN headquarters; car bomb in Najaf kills 125 including Shia leader, Ayatollah Mohammed Baqr al-Hakim.
September 2003	Report reveals Bush approved the overall Iraq strategy in August of 2002, long before his failed attempt to get a U.N. mandate for the war.
October 2003	Bin Laden congratulates his followers and denounces democracy.

December 2003	As part of Operation Red Dawn, U.S. soldiers capture Saddam Hussein who is hiding in a hole, nine miles outside his hometown of Tikrit, Iraq.
January 2004	David Kay, American leader of survey group in Iraq, declares that no WMD have been found in Iraq.
April - May 2004	Several hundreds killed during the month-long U.S. military siege of the Sunni Muslim city of Fallujah; Iraq's first human rights minister, Abdel Bassat Turki, reports that the U.S. military is abusing Iraqi prisoners. Photographs of abuse taken by American soldiers serving as military police at the Abu Ghraib jail in Iraq emerge.
June 2004	Hand-over of power to interim Iraqi government headed by Prime Minister Iyad Allawi.
July 2004	Bipartisan 9/11 Commission releases report on the events leading up to 9/11 stating there was no operational link between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda, thereby contradicting one of the justifications for going to war with Iraq.
November 2004	Major U.S.-led offensive against insurgents in Fallujah.
January 2005	Iraqi Parliament elects Kurdish leader, Jalal Talabani, as President and Shia Ibrahim Jaafari as Prime Minister.
June 2005	Masoud Barzani sworn in as regional president of Iraqi Kurdistan.
December 2005	Iraqis vote for first time since U.S.-led invasion.
2006	U.N. states an average of more than 100 civilians per day are killed in violence in Iraq; al-Qaeda leader in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, is killed in an air strike; Saddam Hussein is executed for crimes against humanity.
December 2007	Britain hands over security of Basra province to Iraqi forces ending five years of British control of southern Iraq.
September 2008	U.S. forces hand over control of the western province of Anbar to the Iraqi government.
November 2008	Iraq parliament approves security pact with U.S stating U.S. troops due to leave the country at the end of 2011

July 2009	Masoud Barzani (KDP) re-elected in presidential election
January 2010	Ali Hassan al-Majid, key figure in Saddam Hussein's government, is executed.
August 2010	Last U.S. combat brigade leaves Iraq.
November 2010	Parliament re-appoints Jalal Talabani as President and Nouri al-Maliki as Prime Minister.
May 2, 2011	Osama bin Laden killed in joint operation by U.S. troops and CIA operatives.
December 5, 2011	U.S. completes troop pull-out.

Definitions

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD): chemical, biological or radioactive weapons capable of causing widespread death and destruction (missiles with a range of more than 150 km). It was believed that Saddam Hussein harboured these weapons against sanctions from the United Nations.

War on Terror: a phrase first used by U.S. President George W. Bush on September 20, 2001. It specifically referred to the ongoing military campaign led by the U.S., U.K. and their allies against organizations and regimes identified by them as terrorist.

United Nations (U.N.): an international organization of countries set up in 1945 to promote international peace, security, and cooperation. U.N. headquarters are in New York City.

U.N. Security Council: bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security and may call on members to take chiefly peacekeeping action to enforce its decisions.

United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM): established in April 1991 to implement the non-nuclear provisions of the resolution (cease-fire between Iraq and the coalition of Member States co-operating with Kuwait) and to assist the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in the nuclear areas.

United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC): adopted in December 1999 to replace UNSCOM with a mandate to verify Iraq's compliance with its obligation to be rid of its weapons of mass destruction and to operate a system of ongoing monitoring and verification to ascertain that Iraq did not reacquire the same weapons prohibited by the Security Council.

U. N. Security Council Resolution 1441: established in November 2002 offering Iraq a "final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations which had been set out in previous resolutions". Although it did not authorize war as a consequence, it did allow for nations to act independently against the threat posed by IRA.

al-Qaeda: a militant Islamic fundamentalist group founded in 1988/89 by Osama bin Laden and other militants. It is designated as a terrorist organization by several countries, the U.N. Security Council and NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization).

Taliban: a fundamentalist Muslim movement whose militia took control of much of Afghanistan in the mid 1990s setting up a radical Islamic state.

Characters

American:

George W. Bush: 43rd President of the United States (2001-2009); believed that Iraq was part of an “axis of evil” allied with terrorists and posed “a grave and growing danger” to U.S. interests through possession of WMD; urged the U.N. to join the U.S. in the fight against terrorism.

Laura Bush: First Lady, wife of President Bush; advocate for health and well being of women, education, and HIV/AIDS prevention.

Dick Cheney: 46th Vice-President (2001-2009); alleged there were links between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda.

Colin Powell: 65th Secretary of State (2001-2005); retired four-star General in U.S. army, believed that “war should be the politics of last resort”.

Condoleezza Rice: National Security Advisor (2001-2005); believed that there was a regime in Iraq that abused the U.N. Security Council resolutions and that under Saddam Hussein they were concealing Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Donald Rumsfeld: 21st Secretary of Defence (2001-2006); encouraged Bush to fight the war on Iraq as a pre-emptive measure before 9/11.

George Tenet: Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) for the U.S. (1997-2004); provided the first intelligence on Iraqi weapons for the Bush administration before 9/11.

Paul Wolfowitz: Deputy Secretary of Defence (2001-2005); reported to Rumsfeld and supported pre-emptive measures on terrorism and the war on terror.

Paul O’Neill: 72nd Secretary of the Treasury (2001-2002); was fired for his public disagreement with the Administration.

Michael Gerson: speechwriter for President Bush (2001-2006); responsible for the “axis of evil” quote among other phrases used in relation to the Iraq war. Of note, Canadian David Frum, also a speechwriter for Bush, had initially suggested “axis of hatred”.

Mark Dayton: Democratic Senator (Minnesota 2000-2006); voted against the authorization for the war on Iraq.

Dan Bartlett: Deputy to the Counselor to President Bush (2001-2003); White House Communications Director (2002-2005); supportive of the President.

John Negroponte: permanent representative to the United Nations (2001-2004); Ambassador to Iraq (2004-2005), wanted the inspection process to have a chance before rushing into war.

John McCain: Republican Senator (2000-2008); strongly pro-military and believed that the U.S. would be seen as liberators by the Iraqi people.

Jessica Stern: policy consultant on terrorism; wrote op-eds about al-Qaeda and warned U.S. of the increasing strength of terrorist groups.

David Kay: Special Advisor for Strategy regarding Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction Programs; stated at the time that Iraq stood in violation of international orders to rid itself of WMD but later resigned (2004) claiming that this was not true.

Ari Fleischer: White House Press Secretary (2001-2003); was with Bush at the time of 9/11 attack; coined the phrase “homicide bombers”.

British:

Tony Blair: Prime Minister of the United Kingdom (1997-2007); saw the invasion of Iraq as a humane intervention to save an oppressed people; tried to strike a 2nd U.N. resolution.

Jack Straw: Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (2001-2006); intelligence given to him confirmed Iraq had had no responsibility for 9/11 attacks and no significant links to Osama bin Laden or al-Qaeda; advised further investigation was needed on WMD for war to be lawful.

David Manning: British Ambassador to the U.S. (2003-2007); believed to have driven British foreign policy post 9/11.

Jonathan Powell: Downing Street Chief of Staff (1995-2007); believed that the British government should have talks with al-Qaeda.

Alastair Campbell: Director of Communications and Strategy (2000-2003); believed strongly in the need for Britain’s policies to be consistent with the U.S.; accused of altering dossiers making a case for war.

Richard Dearlove: Chief of Secret Intelligence Service (1999-2004); believed that the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy to justify war.

Philip Bassett: head of Strategic Communications Unit; helped create, with Campbell, the dossier that claimed that Hussein could prepare and fire WMD in under 45 minutes.

Trevor McDonald: host of current affairs program, *Tonight with Trevor McDonald* (1999-2009); interviewed both Blair and Bush on Iraq.

Alan Simpson: Member of Parliament for Nottingham South (1992-2010); created a “Labour Against the War” group which opposed the Iraq war.

Geoff Hoon: Secretary of State for Defence (1999-2005); felt that he would support the war after being advised by Attorney General of its legality but still supported diplomatic proceedings as first option.

Robin Cook: Leader of the House of Commons, Lord President of the Council (2001-2003); protested the invasion of Iraq and resigned in 2003.

French:

Jacques Chirac: 22nd President of France (1995-2007); believed that going to war with Iraq was a grave enough decision to veto any war resolution, believing it would jeopardize any future peaceful resolutions.

Dominique de Villepin: Minister of Foreign Affairs (2002-2004); strongly backed U.N. Resolution 1441 in speech to U.N.

Maurice Gourdault-Montagne: Senior Diplomatic Advisor (2002-2007); supported Chirac's view on proceeding with caution.

Jean-David Levitte: French Ambassador to the U.S. (2002-2007); believed there was always more room for more inspections and force was a last resort, supporting his President.

Gérard Errera: French Ambassador to the U.K. (2002-2007); strongly supported the U.N. route to keep the Security Council at the core of the decision-making process.

Iraqi:

Saddam Hussein: 5th President of Iraq (1979-2003); Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council of Iraq (1979-2003); Prime Minister of Iraq (1994-2003); believed that the Americans and their allies were against Muslims and Arabs with premeditated intentions.

General Hassan Muhammad Amin: spokesman and head of Iraqi National Monitoring Directorate (chief for Iraq nuclear programming); insisted that there were never any WMD in Iraq and that submitting a list as per the UNMVIC would be futile.

Other:

Hans Blix: 1st Executive Chairman of the [United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission](#), Swedish (2000-2003); accused the US and British governments of dramatizing the threat of weapons of mass destruction in order to strengthen the case for the invasion of Iraq.

Kofi Annan: [7th Secretary-General of the United Nations](#), [Ghanaian](#) (1997-2006); called on the U.S. and U.K. not to invade Iraq without the support of the U.N. believing the invasion was in violation of the U.N. Charter.

Igor Ivanov: Foreign Minister of Russia (1998-2004); supported Russia's belief in strengthening the role of the U.N. in the international anti-terrorist efforts based on international law and the U.N. Charter.

Sergei Lavrov: Russian Ambassador to the United Nations (1994-2004); concerned about the deteriorating situation in Iraq, was quoted as saying, “We are positive that starting a dialogue to promote national reconciliation and peace is the most important thing at the moment.”

Mohammed ElBaradei: Director General of the [International Atomic Energy Agency](#), Egyptian (1997-2009); maintained that Iraq's nuclear program had not restarted before the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

Ricardo Lagos: [33rd President of Chile](#) (2000-2006); welcomed the idea of setting benchmarks for Iraqi disarmament, however believed that the deadline for Iraqi disarmament in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1441 was too early.

Yo-Yo Ma: Cellist, French and American; awarded title of Peace Ambassador by U.N. Secretary-General in January 2006.

Actors/Journalists/A Brit in America: characters providing narration and various viewpoints.

Themes

Politics is at the core of this play literally and figuratively. There are the public and private debates within and between governments, and between individuals about personal beliefs and principles.

War is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as “a state of armed conflict between different countries or different groups within a country; a state of competition or hostility between different people or groups; a sustained campaign against an undesirable situation or activity.” In *Stuff Happens*, the play explores the physical combat between states, individual perspectives, and the question of the morality of the players. The play also touches on a fourth interpretation of war, the war within ourselves, as it raises the question of morality and the conflicted choices individuals make.

Power: Hare believes that his play is, “... about power, and it's about the exercise of power, and it's about people who think they can make an accommodation with power...” The play explores how Bush ultimately gets his way and the struggles and power shifts between the other characters behind closed doors and within their own cabinets. Questions of shifting power, power in political structures, the power of words, the power of the people, and the power of the media are all explored as well.

Ethics are the “moral principles that govern a person's behaviour or the conducting of an activity” (Oxford Dictionary). When it becomes clear that Bush has decided his country will go to war, the people around him must find justifications to support him.

Paranoia is the suspicion and mistrust of people or their actions despite the lack of any evidence or justification for this feeling. How far will someone be driven by their fear of what they *think* is at play despite lacking any proof to justify their suspicions?

Curriculum Connections

By attending the performance and participating in the activities in this study guide, curriculum connections may be achieved in the following combined strands of the Ontario Curriculum for grades 11 and 12:

The Arts (Drama, Integrated Arts, Visual Arts): creative process; dramatic form; conventions; techniques and terminology; critical analysis process; drama and society; concepts and terminology; contexts and influences; elements and principles; function of arts in society, arts and personal development; elements and principles of design; connections beyond the classroom.

Canadian and World Studies (History, Geography, Economics, Law): systems and structures; interactions and interdependence; power and governance; communities; change and continuity; citizenship and heritage; social, economic, political structures and systems; methods of historical inquiry and communication; global connections; heritage; justice and equity; rights and freedoms; philosophical and historical point of view.

English: listening and understanding; understanding form and style; speaking to communicate; reading for meaning; using knowledge of form and style; applying knowledge of conventions; investigating, practising, and reflecting on writing; understanding and analysing texts; critical literacy; literary criticism; role of literature in society; understanding media perspectives and impact.

Social Sciences and Humanities (Anthropology, Psychology, General Social Science, Philosophy): explaining human behaviour and culture; socialization; explaining human mental processes and behaviour, research and inquiry; relationships; decision making and problem solving; challenge and change in society; forces that shape social trends; dynamics of human relationships; social justice; ethics; social and political philosophy; philosophical reasoning; responding to big questions.

Questions

Pre-performance:

1. What do you think of when you think of war?
2. What makes someone powerful? What tools do people use to get power?
3. Should an elected leader have ultimate power for decision-making for a country? Can they ever?
4. How do you go about making big decisions?
5. What does propaganda mean? When is it used?

Post-performance:

1. The title, *Stuff Happens*, is directly drawn from a Donald Rumsfeld quote in response to a journalist's question about post-invasion looting in Iraq. Why do you think Hare chose this title?
2. Characters in this play speak directly to the audience. This is called direct address. Why do you think the playwright chose this convention and what do you think he achieved by doing so?
3. The play addresses several points of view. Which character's point of view could you connect to most? Why? Does the way the play addresses various points of view through manipulation of form and content affect how you view the content as reality? Does the playwright have a point of view? Is it fair and balanced? Does it need to be?
4. Who is the hero of the play?
5. Who has the most power and how is it used? In what ways does Hare show Bush using his power to get what he wants?
6. Hare has said in reference to when he wrote his play that "a lot of the stuff that has now been accepted as fact was speculation...My version of events was much more controversial when I wrote it." Knowing what we know now, can we view the play in the same way as when it was first produced?
7. The character, A Brit in New York, says, "You are not an American, you don't understand." Is this necessarily true? Do you think an American audience would react to this play in the same way as a British audience?
8. Bush says the intention behind the bombing of Iraq was "to disarm Iraq, to free its people, and to defend the world from grave danger." Was he successful?
9. After time and inquiry, it has been discovered that British dossiers and other intelligence and assumptions were inaccurate. "We conclude that the Intelligence Community was dead

wrong in almost all of its pre-war judgments about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction." — Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction (Letter of transmittal), the President's Commission on WMD. Why do you think the politicians jumped to the conclusions they did? What are the lessons we've learned?

10. In the play, an Editor says, "Do you think Americans would have supported this war if weapons of mass destruction had not been the issue?" What do you think?

Exercises

PRE-PERFORMANCE EXERCISES:

Stand the Line

(Philosophy, General Social Science, English, Drama)

1. Create an open space in the classroom.
2. Have students imagine a line across the centre of the space with one end representing the opinion Strongly Agree and the other end Strongly Disagree.
3. Using the questions, statements, and quotes below (one at a time), have the students position themselves along the imaginary line according to their beliefs.
 - *"War should be the politics of last resort."* - Colin Powell
 - *"When you give up freedom for safety you lose both."* - Benjamin Franklin
 - *"The west has the right – no, more than a right, a responsibility – to intervene against regimes which are committing offences against their own citizens. It's simple humanity."* - Tony Blair
 - *"...in politics, in life, one thing is certain: there will always be reasons not to act."* - 'Politician'
 - *"Military intervention for humane purposes [is justified]"* - Tony Blair
 - *The best way to deal with your own problems is to take care of them yourself.*
 - *Democracy is worth fighting for.*
 - *It is OK to forcefully impose one country's view of democracy on another.*
 - *A small amount of harm is worth it for the greater good of all.*
 - *War is never justified.*
 - *The mind in a hurry sees what it expects or wants to see.*
 - *Power is determined by status.*
 - *Honesty is not always the best policy.*
 - *Everyone is judgmental.*
 - *It is never right to tell a lie.*

4. After each statement/question/quote, ask a couple of students to share why they chose where they are standing. Encourage the other students to simply listen to the points of view of their classmates rather than entering into debate or discussion.
5. Students may then reposition themselves once a few viewpoints have been shared.
6. Post-exercise debrief:
 - *If you moved, why? Were you influenced by what other students said?*
 - *What influences your decision-making?*
 - *What did you learn from this exercise?*

Brainstorm: What do we already know about 9/11 and the events leading up to the Iraq War?

(American History, World History, Geography, Economics, Law, English, Anthropology, Philosophy, General Social Science, Philosophy)

1. Ask the students, “What comes to mind when I say 9/11?” and, “What comes to mind when I say, “Invasion of Iraq.”
2. Create a list with their responses.
3. Compare and connect opposing ideas: are there categories that emerge such as perception and reality or fact and fiction?
4. Save this chart for post-performance activity.
5. Post-exercise debrief:
 - *How do we get information about historical events?*
 - *How can we discern fact from fiction?*
 - *Does media play a role in your perception of reality? How?*

Pre-Performance Debate: The United Nations is a necessary organization for world peace

(American History, World History, Geography, Economics, Law, English, Anthropology, General Social Science, Philosophy, Psychology, Drama)

1. Explain to the class that they will be debating the above motion and may or may not be debating on the side in which they believe.
2. Review the rules of debate with your students. The Ontario Student Debating Union format is provided and there is a link to the Canadian rules from this page:
<http://osdu.on.ca/site/about/cndf/>
3. Divide the students into debate teams arguing for and against the motion above.
4. Decide who will moderate the debate. A student may wish to take on this role.
5. Students will conduct research to support their position. You may choose to have them all research independently or together as a team dividing their research according to the roles they will play on the debate team.
6. Post-exercise debrief:
 - *Which side won the debate? Why?*

- *Was all the research and information accurate or were there some biases? Explain.*
- *How does it feel to support something in which you did not necessarily believe?*

POST-PERFORMANCE EXERCISES

Brainstorm Part 2

(American History, World History, Geography, Economics, Law, English, Anthropology, General Social Science, Philosophy, Psychology)

1. Create a class list of everything students have learned from the play about 9/11 and the 2003 invasion of Iraq.
2. Compare it to the original list.
3. Post-exercise debrief:
 - *Have you learned anything new?*
 - *What is fact and what is fiction? NB. “The term propaganda rings melodramatic and exaggerated, but a press that—whether from fear, careerism, or conviction—uncritically recites false government claims and reports them as fact, or treats elected officials with a reverence reserved for royalty, cannot be accurately described as engaged in any other function.” — Glenn Greenwald, A Tragic Legacy: How a Good vs. Evil Mentality Destroyed the Bush Presidency*
 - *How do you know?*

Post-Performance Debate

(American History, World History, Geography, Economics, Law, English, Anthropology, Psychology, General Social Science, Philosophy, Psychology, Drama)

Using the same format as the pre-performance exercise, debate either of the following statements:

“America has taken a country that was not a terrorist threat and turned it into one. Even if there weren’t any Al-Qaeda in Iraq before the Americans went in, there most certainly are now.”

- Counter-terrorism expert Jessica Stern

We are currently heading down the same path as 2003 with regards to recent events in the Middle East and, in particular, ISIS.

PERSPECTIVE EXERCISES:

(American History, World History, Economics, Law, Geography, Anthropology, Psychology, General Social Science, Philosophy, English, Drama)

Part 1 - Group Brainstorms and Research

1. Divide the class into four groups.
2. Give each group a large piece of chart paper and some markers.
3. Assign one of the following categories to each group: United States, United Kingdom, United Nations, Iraq.
4. Ask the students to write everything they know about their category as it relates to the invasion of Iraq. Their information can be drawn from previous class discussion, the play, and further research (probably necessary for the Iraq group). The objective is for every student to become an “expert” in at least one perspective of the war.
5. Post-exercise debrief:
 - How did you decide what to record?
 - What roles did each of you play in decision-making?
 - How does this process connect to the play?

Part 2 - Tableaux*

1. Using their own sheet of chart paper, ask the students to create a series of five tableaux representing their findings and connecting them in an interesting way. Encourage the students to include elements of tableaux such as levels and emotion.
2. Share the tableaux with the rest of the class.
3. Post-exercise debrief:
 - What made the images most interesting?
 - How do tableaux tell a story?
 - What did you learn about the other perspectives from the tableaux?
 - Were any of the images similar? Does this translate to similarities in perspective?

****Drama conventions are italicized.***

Definitions can be found here:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/arts18b09curr.pdf> (Glossary pages 165-174)

Part 3 – “Wordscape”

1. In the same groups and using the same charts, ask the students to pick out a series of words that stand out for them or that they feel some connection to in some way.
2. Combining several drama conventions such as *gesture*, *choral speaking*, and *soundscape*, the students will use these words as a jumping off point for a short performance piece. This

is a completely open-ended collaborative performance inspired by the research they have done. They may have some difficulty starting; encourage the students to play with possible ways the words connect and actions that are then inspired by the words.

3. Share the “wordscapes” with the class.
4. Post-exercises debrief:
 - What mood did each of the “wordscapes” evoke? Why were they different/the same in each group?
 - Is it easier to understand a theme or story with words?
 - How did your group decide which words to use and how to put them together?

Hot seating* and Prepared Improvisation/Scene Work*

1. Divide the students into groups of four with each group having one representative from each of the four previous groups (an expert from each perspective in every group).
2. Ask the group to choose a character from the play that represents the perspective work they have done (i.e. George Bush, Tony Blair, Saddam Hussein, Jacques Chirac).
3. Three members of the group will then *hot seat* the fourth member, in character, giving the actor a chance to play in role.
4. Together, the students in each group will improvise a scene that is not in the play where the four characters might meet.
5. Share scenes with the class.
6. Post exercise debrief:
 - What did it feel like to imagine you were another person?
 - What did you learn about your character from the *hot seating* activity?
 - Was your character’s perspective clearer as a result?
 - How does that change how you look at the play?

Perspective Extension: The Canadian Perspective

There is no Canadian perspective represented in *Stuff Happens*. You may wish to have your students research Canada’s role in the Middle East in 2003 and play with this point of view.

Day in the Life* and Writing in Role*:

(Psychology, English, Drama)

In this exercise, you will ask your students to imagine that they are a citizen of Iraq during the 2003 invasion.

1. Ensure that there is space in the classroom for students to move around safely.

2. Have each student prepare a notebook or piece of paper and a pen put to one side of the classroom for easy use after.
3. Ask the students to lie on their backs with their eyes closed.
4. Read the following out loud (and adapt as desired):

During this activity you will listen to my voice and follow my instructions. I want you to imagine you are a citizen of Baghdad. You are sound asleep. Think about the following questions: How old are you? What do you look like? Where are you sleeping? If you work, what do you do for a living? Who are the members of your family? Now once again, you are sound asleep. When you are ready, you will awake as if you are that character, miming your daily routine. You may move throughout the space but do not interact with anyone else in the room.*

Give the students a few minutes to go through their morning routine, prompting the students so that they are at a similar pace, with such statements as, “*If you have not already eaten breakfast, please do so,*” or “*What do you do when you leave your house (if you live in one) on a typical day?*” etc. Walk the students through a typical day until they are back in the sleeping position, without commenting on any choices they make.

5. As they are “sleeping”, tell them they are getting up again, but this is now March 20, 2003 – the day that the U.S. led the invasion in Iraq. Let them explore the events of that day independently, reacting to the bombing, *in role*, (and allow them to choose when and how they react), until you prompt them to sleep again. Likely, many of them will not have a home to return to.
6. Once they are back “asleep” have them awake and remain in role, find their paper and pen, and write in the form of a *monologue**. This first person piece will be directed to someone in reaction to the events of the previous day; how they feel, what has changed for them, etc. with as much detail as possible.
7. Once everyone has had a chance to write, ask the students to find a partner and share their monologues.
8. Post exercise debrief:
 - How did this exercise make you feel?
 - What did you learn from being in someone else's shoes?
 - How does this make you understand someone else's point of view?
 - Do you think you can ever know what someone else is feeling?

Comparing *Stuff Happens* with Shakespeare's Plays:

(Drama, English)

1. Ask students: What is the role of a tragic hero in theatre?
2. Discuss and record the character archetypes in Shakespeare's plays.
3. Ask students to compare and contrast Shakespeare's characters with the real characters in *Stuff Happens*. Who fits which role and why?

4. Explore the following questions with your class: What is the arc of a Shakespeare tragedy? Although this play is based in reality, how does it compare with other plays of war such as *Julius Caesar*?

Resources

Historical Context:

www.usiraq.procon.org

www.popularscience.com

www.un.org

www.theguardian.com

www.theglobeandmail.ca

www.cbc.ca

www.telegraph.co.uk

www.britishpoliticalspeech.org

www.bbc.co.uk

www.gov.uk

www.history.com

www.whitehouse.com

www.biography.com

www.iraqinquiry.org.uk

www.foreignaffairs.com

www.unmovic.org

www.oxforddictionaries.com

Detailed Timelines:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14546763>

http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/08/31/world/middleeast/20100831-Iraq-Timeline.html?_r=0#/#time111_3262

<http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/TheNote/10-year-iraq-war-timeline/story?id=18758663#4>

<http://www.cfr.org/iraq/timeline-iraq-war/p18876>

<http://thinkprogress.org/report/iraq-timeline/>

<http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/news/2013/03/19/57128/the-war-in-iraq-a-timeline-of-events/>

French Perspective:

www.am.gov.lv

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/middle_east-jan-june03-levitte_2-07/

Open Letter from Saddam Hussein to the American Public:

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/sadaamhusseinopenlettertous.htm>

Interview with Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov:

<http://www.acronym.org.uk/docs/0202/doc14.htm>

“Stuff Happens” speech - Donald Rumsfeld:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RY9I73Yo9Pw>

Compilation of Reviews of Stuff Happens:

<http://www.complete-review.com/reviews/hared/stuff.htm>

List of David Hare works:

<http://www.doollee.com/PlaywrightsH/hare-david.html>

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0002376/#writer>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Hare_\(playwright\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Hare_(playwright))

Information about David Hare:

<http://literature.britishcouncil.org/david-hare>

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0002376/>

Interview with David Hare:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFXJ9yu5hdc

Curriculum Connections:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/>