

# **“I HAVE A THEME”**

**There are many themes that arise throughout the play “1800s vs. 2020”.  
Identify three themes that resonated with you from the play. Explain and  
analyze evidence from the play that supports each theme.**

- Importance of family
- Deception
- Greed
- Perseverance
- Generational curses
- Doubt

- Overcoming obstacles
- Strength
- Courage
- Selfishness
- Desperation

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## “WHATCHA SAY?”

There are many words used throughout the play that might sound unfamiliar. Read the dialogue below and use context clues from the scene to determine the meaning of the underlined word.

1. What is the meaning of the word pieces as used in the following dialogue? \_\_\_\_\_

**LOLA (CONT'D) - Hezekiah?**

**HEZEKIAH - Hey.**

**LOLA - Them are some mighty different pieces you have on. Where'd you get something like that from brotha?**

2. What is the meaning of the word chamber pot as used in the following dialogue? \_\_\_\_\_

**GRANNY: ...Hezekiah come on help me to the chamber pot.**

**(Granny walks pass Joshua and takes a deep breathe).**

**GRANNY: Make it right. Hezekiah walks to Joshua.**

3. What is the meaning on the word toy as used in the following line?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**MASSA: You trying to toy with me? Congo, get from by that couch!**

## “WHAT’S TO IT?”

What is Gallion’s purpose for writing the play “1800s vs. 2020”? Provide three pieces of evidence from the play to support your answer?

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## “FACT VS. OPINION VS. REASONED JUDGMENT”

We later find out in Act 2, Scene 1 that Lola is the sixth sibling that Congo refused to speak of earlier. Lola struggles with her identity being biracial but thinks she is better than dark skinned people. **Is her opinion justified? What facts do you know from history that might support her opinion? (i.e. the “Willie Lynch” letter, “one drop rule”, biracial children passing for white, lighter skinned blacks working in the house, etc.)**

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## **“PRIMARY VS. SECONDARY”**

Students will compare the play as a secondary source to primary documents, documentaries and photos relating to black history. (The teacher selects primary documents.)

## **“DID YOU KNOW?”**

Gallion shares a variety of historical and present day facts throughout the script. Below is a list of questions relating to those facts.

What new knowledge have you learned after viewing the play “1800s vs. 2020”?

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1. In Act 1 Scene 4, 1800 Hezekiah mentions the slaves have to wear light colors. Why were they required to do so?

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2. What was the name of the double spy that won the American Revolutionary war? Circle one.

James Armistead

Wentworth Cheswell

Harriet Tubman

3. Who was America’s first African American judge in 1768 that served for 50 years? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What was the significance of the Confiscation Acts and the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863? \_\_\_\_\_

**5. What was the name of the black national anthem created in 1900?**

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**6. Who was Madam CJ Walker?**

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**7. The NAACP was established in 1909. What does the acronym mean?**

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**8. What year did black people get the right to vote? Circle one.**

1905      1945      1965

**9. What was the name of the white abolitionist who formed the League of Gileadites and freed over 50 slaves at Harper Ferry before being killed?**

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**10. What was the transatlantic slave trade?**

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**“LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION, QUESTIONS”**

**In Act 1 Scene 4, 1800 Hezekiah tells us he has six siblings but is cut off by Congo before giving details about his sixth sibling. What do we later find out about his sixth sibling?**

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**What is the significance of the mother and grandmother in the 1800s? How does their presence influence the family? Compare their presence to the mother's absence in the 2020s and how her absence affects the modern day family in Act 1.**

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**In Act 2 Scene 3, Congo humbles himself, kneels down and begins to pray. What things started to change in his life after he prayed?**

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**What encouraged Congo to stand up for his family at the end the play? Use specific evidence from the play to support your response.**

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**Toward the end of the play, Joshua reveals that he sold his half-sister to a sex trafficking ring. In retrospect, what signs were there that Joshua was up to something? When thinking about the real world, what signs should you look out for that are indicative of a scam as they relate to everyday life? i.e. unprofessional signs posted on the street, unfamiliar phone numbers, etc.**

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**Congo makes a very bold and profound statement referencing the 2020s. What are your thoughts on the following statement? Do you agree or disagree with Congo? Explain your opinion.**

**CONGO**

*“Sounds like a bunch of lazy cowards living in 2020. That’s what you are. Killing each other, killing our women and children, don’t want to read and write. Heck you wouldn’t find me without a book. We would better ourselves and everybody around us. Our ancestors died with hopes that we would all someday be free and in 2020 that could be a reality. But I see their hopes died right with them, because you \*\*\*\*\* ain’t free. Here in the 1800s, we enslaved physically, in 2020 ya’ll enslaved mentally.”*

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**Granny also makes many thought provoking statements relating to decisions throughout the play. What does she mean when she says the following?**

**GRANNY**

*“The day you’re born you look like your parents, but the day you die you look like your decisions.”*

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*“Sounds like your generation don’t make many good ones but I can’t blame you, I blame us. We prayed for you guys freedom, but we didn’t pray for your wisdom.”*

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## “LIKES AND DIFFERENCES”

The 2020 characters travel back in time finding themselves in the 1800s with their ancestors. **Compare and contrast the traits of the following characters from the “1800s vs. 2020”.** Use the table below to list the similarities and differences between the characters.

<b>1800s Character</b>	<b>Similar Traits</b>	<b>Different Traits</b>	<b>2020 Character</b>
<b>Kimberly</b>			<b>Kimberly</b>
<b>Hezekiah</b>			<b>Hezekiah</b>
<b>Massa</b>			<b>Lester</b>

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