

A Fall From Royalty

Activity and Discussion Guide

Grades 6-12



CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6-10.2

Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges.

What is the theme(s) of the play “A Fall From Royalty ”? How do the characters’ responses to challenges help to develop this theme? Use specific examples from the play to support your answer. Provide an objective summary of the play.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6 - 10.3

Describe how a particular story’s or drama’s plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

How does the plot of “A Fall From Royalty” build tension through key events? Choose two major scenes and explain how the characters respond to the events and how their responses contribute to the resolution.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6 - 8.6

Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

How do the characters in the play see the same situation differently? What do their points of view reveal about their personalities or roles in the story? Some examples have been provided for you. Complete the chart below.

Characters	Situation	Point of View	Revelation
King Kweku, The Queen, Kumba	Business w/ King Ed and King Jafu	King Kweku: The Queen: Kumba:	
Brenda and Joe	The death of their father	Brenda: Joe:	
King Kweku and King Ed	The signing of the Transatlantic Slave Trade	King Kweku: King Ed:	

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6 -12.4

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

What does the following dialogue tell you about the mood or tone of the scene? How does it enhance the story?

King Necca: *Manage your tongue King. False accusations tend to lead to a lot of bloodshed.*

King Kweku: *Is that a threat?*

King Necca just smiles.

King Kweku: *You know a wise man fills his head before emptying his mouth. Besides, Kumba doesn't like threats.*

King Necca: *I don't pose threats. I deliver promises.*

King Necca: *But of course, and in five seconds, I shall deliver mine.*

As Joe reveals his truth about his father's death he says “*Just know my back tells stories that no books have the spine to carry.*” What does Joe mean by this? How does this one line impact the tone or mood?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6 - 8.9

Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Compare the actions of one character in the play to those of a historical figure from the 1400s. What similarities and differences do you observe in how they responded to challenges?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Examine how King Kweku’s decisions are influenced by the political or social structures of his time. How might these structures limit or empower the King’s choices? Do you believe King Kweku would have signed the Transatlantic Slave Trade if he had known the impact it would have on his descendants?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI. 9-10.6

Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

What do you think Gallion’s purpose was in writing this play? How does the dialogue or action support his purpose? Use examples from the play.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6 -10.1

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

Write a short essay arguing whether the resolution of “A Fall From Royalty” is satisfying or not. Use examples from the performance to support your claim.

Do you think the following character's actions were justified? Why or why not?

Character	Action(s) - What was the action taken by the character?	Justified? (Yes/No)	Reason(s) - Provide reasoning for your decision
King Ed			
King Kweku			
Joe			
Ella Nora			
Bubba			
King Necca			

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8 -12.6

Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

Describe a moment in the play where the dialogue or action seems to imply something deeper than what is explicitly said? What might Gallion be suggesting? Explain your answer using evidence from the play.

****Hint:** What does King Kweku say to King Necca when King Necca breaks into his chambers and suggests they join forces with each other?

Stretch question:

How does irony shape your understanding of a specific character or scene?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

What are your thoughts on the following dialogue? Do you believe this is a true statement? Have people lost their identity as time has passed? Discuss with a partner your opinion.

***Kumba:** Yes but that's all a part of life. I just hate that many more generations will suffer from one's ignorance. It still doesn't change the fact that we are all Kings and Queens. It's just as time passed, you've lost your identity.*

***Joe:** Honestly, we don't know our history and from what I hear, there's not many books left that tell us who we really are. They are all burned and destroyed.*

Partner Name:

Have people lost their identity as time has passed? Explain.

Additional Questions for Discussion

Who is Mansa Musa? How is he significant to the upbuilding of African kingdoms in “A Fall From Royalty”?

How did Europeans take over the Manikongo and its neighboring kingdoms? How did they take advantage of the African kingdoms?

What was the purpose of the Transatlantic Slave Trade?

How are King Kweku, King Ed, King Necca, and King Jafu similar? How are they different?

What motivated King Ed to meet with King Kweku?

What character traits describe King Kweku? Use evidence from the play to support your answer.

How did King Kweku’s decision to sign the Transatlantic Slave Trade impact the future, 400 years later? How were the slaves impacted mentally and physically as a result of his decision?

If you were to write the resolution to “A Fall From Royalty”, how would it end?

What questions do you have for specific characters or Mr. Gallion? What did you enjoy the most about the show? What would you change? (be creative)

What new knowledge did you gain after viewing “A Fall From Royalty”?

The decisions you make today will impact your tomorrow, good or bad. How is “A Fall From Royalty” relevant to today’s society? Explain.

What does the chair by the door in the 1800s represent? What trauma does it bring to the family? Provide details from the play to support your response.

Do you see a shift in the confidence of the characters in the 1800s versus those in the 1400s? If so, explain. **Hint - Ella Nora makes a comment regarding this.

Lesson Plan: Character Diaries

Grade Level: 9th–12th Grade

Time Required: 3 class periods (50 minutes each)

Objective: Students will write a diary entry from the perspective of a character, demonstrating an understanding of the play’s events, themes, and character motivations.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

Materials Needed:

- Journals or writing paper
- Prompts for diary entries

Lesson Steps:

Day 1: Character Exploration

- 1. Recap the Play:** Facilitate a discussion to refresh students’ memories of the performance. Use guiding questions:
 - Which characters stood out to you and why?
 - What were the key moments in the play?
- 2. Choose a Character:** Have students select a character to focus on for their diary entry.

Day 2: Writing the Diary

- 1. Set the Scene:** Ask students to recall a specific moment in the play that significantly impacted their chosen character.
- 2. Write the Diary Entry:** Provide the following instructions:
 - Imagine the character’s thoughts and emotions during this event.
 - Include vivid details and references to the play’s events.
 - Use the character’s tone and voice.

Day 3: Sharing & Reflecting

- 1. Peer Sharing:** Pair students to exchange and discuss their diary entries. Partners should provide feedback on how well the entry captures the character’s perspective.

2. Class Reflection: Lead a group discussion on how this exercise enhanced their understanding of the play’s characters and themes.

Rubric for Character Diaries

Criteria	4 - Excellent	3 - Proficient	2 - Needs Improvement	1 - Incomplete
Perspective	Captures the character’s voice and emotions with depth and nuance.	Shows a clear understanding of the character’s voice and emotions.	Some attempt to capture the character’s perspective but lacks depth.	Little or no effort to reflect the character’s perspective.
Details	Includes vivid, specific details tied to events from the play.	Includes relevant details from the play.	Includes minimal or vague details from the play.	No details or irrelevant information provided.
Creativity	Demonstrates exceptional creativity and engagement with the task.	Demonstrates good creativity and effort.	Limited creativity; basic engagement.	Lacks creativity; minimal effort shown.
Clarity	Entry is well-organized and easy to follow.	Entry is mostly clear with minor issues in organization.	Entry is somewhat disorganized or unclear.	Entry is disorganized and difficult to follow.

Lesson Plan: Debate the Play

Grade Level: 9th–12th Grade

Time Required: 3 class periods (50 minutes each)

Objective: Students will engage in a debate to analyze a central theme, moral dilemma, or character decision, demonstrating critical thinking and collaboration skills.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Materials Needed:

- Debate topics/questions (e.g., “Was the protagonist justified in their actions?”)
- Paper for notes

Lesson Steps:

Day 1: Preparing for the Debate

1. **Introduce the Debate:** Present the debate topic to the class. Examples:
 - Was the protagonist's decision at the climax morally justified?
 - Did the antagonist have valid reasons for their actions?
2. **Divide into Teams:** Assign students to two groups: “for” and “against.”
3. **Plan Arguments:**
 - Encourage students to recall moments from the play that support their position.
 - Have each team prepare opening arguments, counter arguments, and closing statements.

Day 2: Debate Day

1. **Conduct the Debate:**
 - Each team presents opening arguments, followed by rebuttals and closing statements.
 - Emphasize respectful dialogue and evidence-based reasoning.
2. **Moderation:** Act as the moderator, ensuring fair time and equal participation.

Day 3: Reflection

1. **Post-Debate Discussion:** Facilitate a class discussion on the key points raised during the debate.
 2. **Reflection Writing:** Ask students to write a brief response to the following prompts:
 - Did the debate change your perspective?
 - What did you learn about the characters, themes, or decisions in the play?
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Rubric for Debate the Play

Criteria	4 - Excellent	3 - Proficient	2 - Needs Improvement	1 - Incomplete
Argument Development	Arguments are well-developed with strong, specific evidence from the play.	Arguments are clear with some evidence from the play.	Arguments are basic or lack sufficient evidence.	Arguments are unclear or lack any evidence.
Collaboration	Actively engages, listens respectfully, and builds on others' ideas.	Participates with some effort to engage and respect others.	Limited participation or engagement.	Does not participate or disrupts the activity.
Critical Thinking	Demonstrates excellent reasoning and analysis of the topic.	Demonstrates good reasoning and some analysis.	Reasoning is basic; lacks depth of analysis.	Little or no reasoning or analysis provided.

Clarity and Delivery

Speaks clearly and persuasively; ideas are easy to follow.

Mostly clear with minor delivery issues.

Somewhat unclear or disorganized in delivery.

Ideas are unclear and difficult to follow.

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