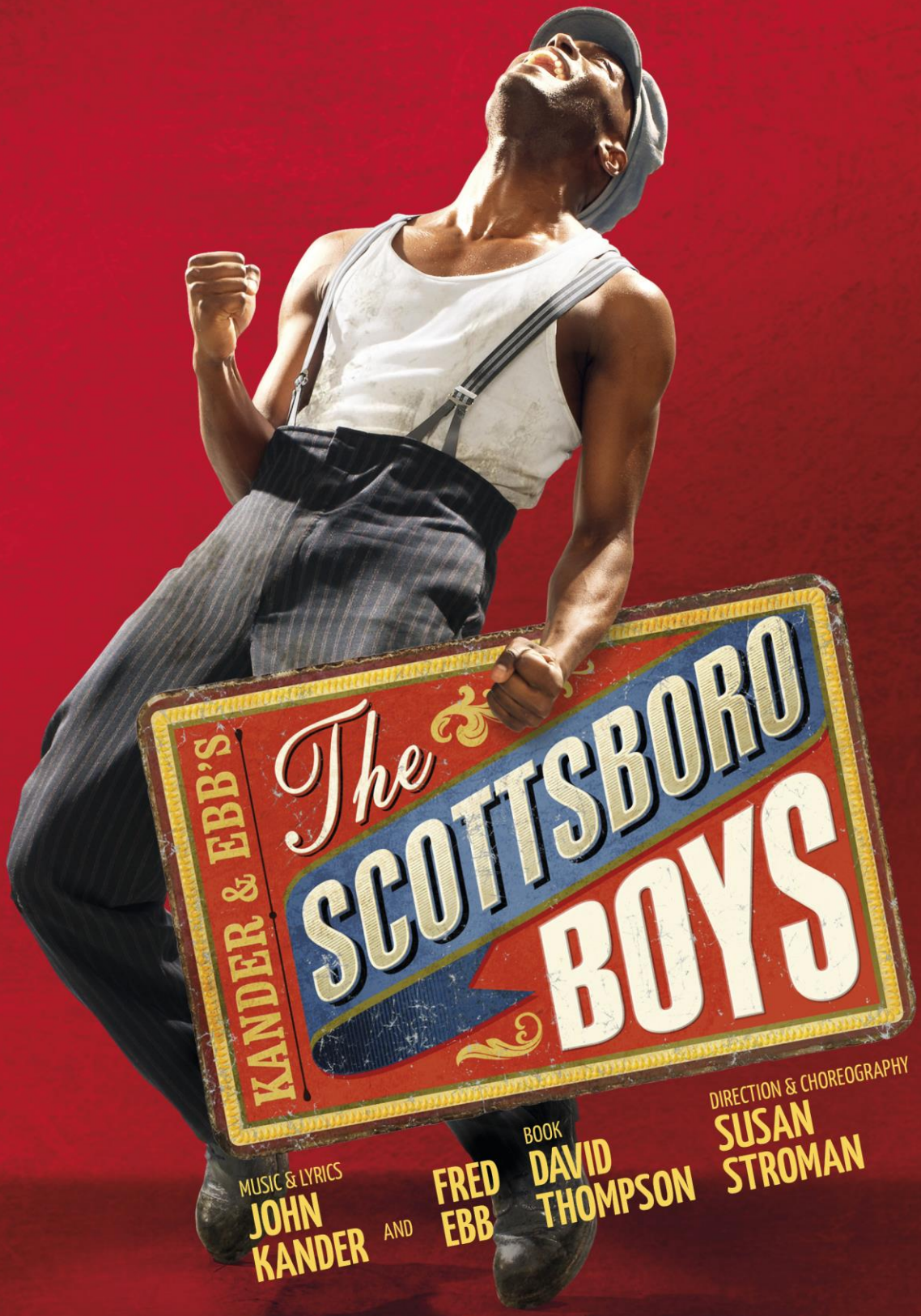
EDUCATION PACK



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INTRODUCTION

"Maybe times will turn, I pray so. Maybe someday I'll get lucky. Someone's gonna say 'all right son, take the train and go back home. Hop a freight and go back home.' Today, Haywood Patterson is finally free to go back home."

With these words, on 23rd April 2013, producer Catherine Schreiber addressed the assembled dignitaries at the signing through of legislation to exonerate 9 black boys who had been wrongly accused of rape in 1931. After 82 years, posthumous pardons had finally been achieved for Olen, Andy, Eugene, Haywood, Clarence, Willie, Ozie, Roy and Charlie, otherwise known as 'The Scottsboro Boys'.

Since its debut in 2010, the musical retelling of the story of the Scottsboro Boys has contributed to keeping the boys' case in the public eye. It's got people talking, discussing and thinking. Audiences who have been to the theatre have had a fantastic night out; have been entertained by the singing; have marvelled at the dancing; and have also been appalled. This is because the story behind *The Scottsboro Boys* is true; the racism, the bigotry and the injustice. The 9 boys who audiences have met were real people. They are the same 9 boys who were incarcerated in Alabama in 1931 and whose lives were ultimately destroyed, and the same 9 boys who, 82 years later, have eventually found themselves on the road to an official pardon. In a very real sense, *The Scottsboro Boys* is the musical that changed history.

Although never confirmed by the author, the Scottsboro Boys' case is widely thought to have been the inspiration for Harper Lee's celebrated novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Atticus Finch perhaps had some of the initial naiveté of Samuel Leibowitz, who represented the 9 boys in the Alabama courtrooms, when he said:

"There is one way in this country in which all men are created equal – there is one human institution that makes a pauper the equal of a Rockefeller, the stupid man the equal of an Einstein, and the ignorant man the equal of any college president. That institution, gentlemen, is a court. It can be the Supreme Court of the United States or the humblest JP court in the land, or this honourable court in which you serve. Our courts have their faults, as does any human institution, but in this country our courts are great levelers, and in our courts all men are created equal."

In fact, as Leibowitz discovered very quickly, the attitude of the law enforcement officials, and in fact most of white society in Southern America at that time, was very different. This extract from *The Jackson County Sentinel* newspaper from 1933 sounds like a quote from a Hollywood movie. It's shocking that this extract is real:

"Seventy years ago the scalawags and carpetbaggers marched into the South and said: 'The Negro is your equal and you will accept him as such.' Today, the reds of

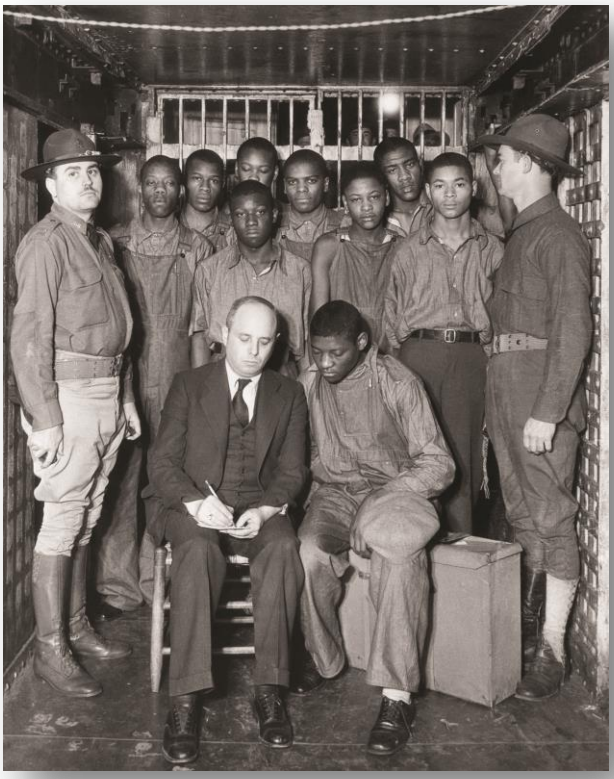
New York march into the South with a law book and again say, 'The Negro is your equal and you will accept him as such.' We will not!"

The Jackson County Sentinel, 1933

The Scottsboro Boys deals with sensitive issues. It deals with them head on, never faltering and never shying away from the truth of a very difficult time in American history. Truth is very much what it's all about; truth, and what happens when somebody tells a lie.

The show is rich with material that can be used immediately in the classroom. This pack seeks to guide you through the show, the real life history, the development of the show itself, and to suggest a wide variety of classroom activities that you can use with your students in your classroom right now.

The show is primarily suitable for students in KS4 and KS5. This pack suggests activities for students in English, Drama, Performing Arts, Music, Dance, History, Art & Design, Art Photography, PSHE, Citizenship, Religious Education and Social Science. We hope that it will be a starting point for your study of the Critics' Circle award winning musical; '*a shocking, gripping, superbly staged, fabulously well-performed show*' (Mail on Sunday); the extraordinary true story that changed history forever; *The Scottsboro Boys*.



Chief Defense Attorney Samuel Leibowitz speaks with defendant Haywood Patterson. The eight other Scottsboro Boys are behind. © Bettman/CORBIS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

"We have been sentenced to die for something we ain't never done. Us poor boys been sentenced to burn up in the electric chair for the reason that we is workers— and the color of our skin is black."

Roy Wright, Scottsboro Boy

Photography: Richard Hubert Smith

TIMELINE & CONTEXT

Background

> *"You're looking at a chapter in American history that was very important for a lot of different reasons, in the way that it dealt with civil rights and the way it dealt with the emergence of a very strong voice in the African American community."*
> David Thompson, Book Writer of *The Scottsboro Boys*

1619
The first African slaves land in America, in the state of Virginia.

1787
Slavery is made illegal in the area known as the Northwest Territory. However, a newly ratified US Constitution does not allow Congress to ban the slave trade overall until at least 1808.

1808
Congress bans the importing of slaves from Africa. Almost 12 million Africans had been transported across the Atlantic, with 10-20% dying in transit.

1820
Slavery is banned north of the southern boundary of Missouri in an act of Congress known as The Missouri Compromise.

1854
The Missouri Compromise is repealed, reigniting anti- and proslavery tensions.

1857
A legal case (the Dred Scott case) establishes that Congress does not have the right to ban slavery in states and that slaves do not have the status of citizens of the United States.

1861
The American Civil War begins when the deep South states (the Confederacy states) separate themselves from the Union.

1863
President Lincoln issues the 'Emancipation Proclamation', legally freeing all slaves in the Confederacy States.

1865
The Civil War ends and the thirteenth amendment abolishes slavery throughout the United States. Slavery finally ends on 19th June when 250,000 slaves in Texas finally receive the news that the Civil War ended two months earlier.
The first Ku Klux Klan is founded in Pulaski, Tennessee, by six Confederate Army veterans, who seek to restore white supremacy through threats and violence.

1866
The Civil Rights Bill is passed by Congress, granting citizenship to all men in the United States *"without distinction of race, colour, or previous condition of slavery or involuntary servitude."*
Tennessee passes the first "Jim Crow" laws, which legally enforced segregation between whites and blacks, for instance in schooling, public accommodation and transport.

1870
The state of Tennessee declares it illegal for intermarriage between whites and blacks.

1896
The US Supreme Court upholds the state laws requiring racial segregation in public facilities, based on the doctrine of *"separate but equal".*

1909
The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is formed, as a direct response to the horrific practice of lynching and the Springfield race riots of 1908. It remains America's oldest, largest and most recognised Civil Rights organisation.

1910-1920
During the Great Migration, six million black southerners move to northern industrial towns, sparking fresh race riots.

The Scottsboro Case

"In 1931, the entire globe is in a depression and these 9 boys jump on a train just for work. They very quickly become the centre of a national news story that they never wanted to be part of and because of that they became nothing more than 'The Scottsboro Boys'."
David Thompson, Book Writer of *The Scottsboro Boys*

1931
March 24th
Two white girls, Victoria Price and Ruby Bates, of Huntsville, Alabama, hobo their way to Chattanooga and stay there overnight.

March 25th
On a freight train from Chattanooga to Memphis, there is an argument between a group of black hobos and a group of white hobos. The black boys force the white boys off the train. The Authorities were alerted and the sheriff was waiting for the boys at Paint Rock. Also removed from the train are Victoria Price and Ruby Bates. In order to prevent themselves from getting into trouble, the girls accuse the black boys of rape. Late at night, Governor B.M. Miller calls out the National Guard to prevent the black boys being lynched.

March 30th
A grand jury indicts all 9 of 'The Scottsboro Boys'.

April 6th-9th
Tried before Judge A E Hawkins, Clarence Norris, Charlie Weems, Haywood Patterson, Olen Montgomery, Ozie Powell, Willie Roberson, Eugene Williams and Andy Wright are all found guilty and sentenced to die by electrocution on July 10th 1931.

April 9th
The case of Roy Wright, aged 13, ends in a mistrial after one juror votes for life imprisonment instead of the death sentence.

April 25th
Following a demonstration in Harlem, the case of the Scottsboro Boys comes to the attention of the American Communist Party. Their legal arm, the International Labor Defense (ILD) takes up the boys' case.

June 22nd – July 7th
The Alabama Supreme Court issues indefinite stays of executions three days before the boys were due to be executed.

1932
January 5th
A letter surfaces from Ruby Bates to a boyfriend. In it, she denies that she was raped by the 9 boys.

Jan 5 1932
Huntsville Ala
215 Connelly Ally

dearest Earl
i want to make a statement too you Mary Sanders is a goddam lie about those Negroes jassing me those police man made me tell a lie that is my statement because i Want too clear my self that is all to it if you Want too Believe ok. if not that is ok. You Will be sorry some day if you had to stay in Jail With eights Negroes you would tell a lie two those Negroes did not touch me or those white Boys i hope you will believe me the law dont. i love you better than Mary does are any Body else in the World that is why i am tell you of this thing I was drunk at the time and did not know what i was doing I know it was wrong too let those Negroes die on account of me i hope you Will Believe my Statement Because it is the gods truth i hope you Will Believe me i was jazed But those white Boyes jazed me i Wish those Negroes are not Burnt on account of me it is these white Boys fault that is my statement and that is all I know i hope you tell the law hope you will answer
P.S. this is one time that i might tell a lie But it is the truth so god help me.
Ruby Bates

* original grammar and punctuation retained

March 24th
The Alabama Supreme Court upholds the convictions of seven of the boys. Eugene Williams is granted a new trial because he was a juvenile at the time of his original conviction.

May 27th
The US Supreme Court agrees to hear the case.

November 7th
In a landmark case, the US Supreme Court reverses the convictions of the Scottsboro Boys on the grounds that the Alabama court had failed to provide the boys with adequate assistance of counsel. This was required by the due process clause of the 14th Amendment.

1933
January
The ILD asks New York lawyer Samuel Leibowitz to take the boy's case, although they admit that they have no money to pay a fee. He agrees.

March 6th
Following an appeal from Leibowitz, a change of venue is agreed. The new trial will take place in Decatur, but not outside of Alabama, as Leibowitz had requested.

March 27th – April 9th
During the retrial of Haywood Patterson, Ruby Bates is called as a surprise witness. She testifies that she had lied during the first trial. Dr Bridges, one of the doctors who had examined Price and Bates just hours after the alleged rape, provides detailed testimony that refutes Price's accusation that she was raped.
Haywood Patterson is found guilty and sentenced to death.

June 22nd
Judge Horton sets aside Haywood's conviction and orders a new trial on the grounds that the evidence did not warrant the conviction.

November – December
In a new trial in front of the hostile Judge Callahan, Haywood Patterson and Clarence Norris are found guilty and sentenced to death.

1934
June 28th
The Alabama Supreme Court unanimously denies Leibowitz's appeal for new trials, based on the fact that black citizens were not given the opportunity to serve on the trial juries.

1935
April 1st
In another landmark ruling, the US Supreme Court overturns Hayword and Clarence's convictions because African Americans were excluded from sitting in the juries in their trails.

November 13th
A black man sits on an Alabama jury for the first time.

1936
January 23rd
Haywood Patterson's fourth trial is once again heard in front of Judge Callahan. He is found guilty and sentenced to 75 years in prison. It is the first time in Alabama history that a black man has been sentenced to anything other than death for the rape of a white woman.

January 24th
As he is being transported back to jail following Haywood's trial, Ozie Powell argues with Deputy Sheriff Edgar Blalock, who slaps him. Ozie slashes Blalock's neck with a pen knife. Sheriff Sandlin shoots Ozie in the head. Both injured men survive, but Ozie is left brain damaged.

1937
July 12th – 24th
Clarence Norris is tried for a third time, convicted and sentenced to death in the electric chair. Andy Wright and Charlie Weems are convicted and sentenced to 99 years and 75 years respectively. The rape charge against Ozie Powell is dropped. He pleads guilty to assaulting Deputy Sheriff Blalock and is sentenced to 20 years.
In a deal bargain by Leibowitz, all charges against Roy Wright, Eugene Williams, Olen Montgomery and Willie Roberson are dropped. They are released.

October 26th
The United States Supreme Court declines to review the convictions of Haywood Patterson and Clarence Norris.

1938
June 16th
The death sentence of Clarence Norris is affirmed by the Alabama Supreme Court. He is ordered to be put to death on August 19th 1938.

> *"I was under a death sentence for seven years. I had so many dates to die, I can't remember them all. Living that way, waiting, wondering and hoping is hell. Finally, I stopped thinking about whether I would die or not. And I had to get used to other men being killed right on schedule, practically under my nose. Believe me, man can get used to anything. Lots of men in the death house went nuts, some worried until they wasted away and died in the hospital. Some killed themselves. I couldn't go like that if I ever wanted to see freedom again."*
>
> Clarence Norris, *Last of the Scottsboro Boys,* 1979

July 5th
Governor Bibb Graves commutes Clarence Norris's sentence to life imprisonment.

Later Years

1943
Haywood Patterson escapes, but is caught five days later and returned to jail.
Charlie Weems is paroled and moves back to Atlanta, Georgia.

1944
Clarence Norris and Andy Wright are released on parole. Both violate their paroles by leaving Alabama and are made to return to jail.

1946
Ozie Powell is released on parole. Clarence Norris is granted another parole, but once again leaves Alabama. He never returns to jail.

1947
Andy Wright is released for a brief period, but is returned to jail when his employer discovers that he is a Scottsboro boy and fires him.

1948
Haywood Patterson escapes again, this time fleeing to Detroit.

1950
Haywood Patterson's autobiography *Scottsboro Boy* is published.
Andy Wright is the last Scottsboro boy to leave the Alabama prisons permanently. He moves to New York.

December 18th
Haywood Patterson kills a black man in Detroit, Michigan, and is arrested. He is later convicted of manslaughter.

1951
July 12th
Andy Wright is found innocent of the rape of a 13 year old girl.

1952
August 24th
Haywood Patterson dies in jail of lung cancer.

1954
The US Supreme Court rules unanimously against school segregation, overturning its 1896 decision.

1955
Emmett Till, a 14 year old black boy from Chicago, is murdered for whistling at a white woman in Mississippi.

Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, triggering a year long bus boycott.

1958
Willie Roberson dies in his Brooklyn apartment after an asthma attack.

1959
Roy Wright stabs his wife to death, suspecting her of infidelity, and then commits suicide.

1963
Martin Luther King Jr. delivers his *"I Have a Dream"* speech to a crowd of more than 200,000 gathered in Washington DC.

1964
The Civil Rights Act is signed by President Johnson, outlawing discrimination in employment, voting and education.

1972
The Equal Employment Opportunity Act is passed, prohibiting job discrimination on the basis of race.

1976
25th October
After living for 30 years in violation of his parole, Clarence Norris is pardoned by the state of Alabama.

"On October 25th, 1976, the attorney general gave the board his official findings of fact. The members wrote on that document they were adopting it as proof that I was innocent and they signed it. The certificate of pardon which restored my civil and political rights was signed by them and taken over to Governor Wallace, who signed it, and from that point on I was a free man. Jim Meyerson was in Alabama and he called me the night before and told me the pardon would be approved. I found it hard to believe, but it happened.
How did I feel? What were my plans? It had been thirty years and one month since I had left Alabama. It had been forty-five years of being hounded for something I didn't do. I was full and I couldn't hold the tears back. I was thinking of those eight boys who grew to manhood in the penitentiary.
On November 29th, 1976, I returned to Alabama a free man, nearly forty-six years after being taken off that freight train. I had spent years in Alabama and I had been treated worse than a dog, treated as nothing. The world changed in the three days I was in Alabama. During that time, I was treated as a king and to me that is what every free man is!"

Clarence Norris, *Last of the Scottsboro Boys,* 1979

1977
July 12th
American broadcaster NBC screen a documentary entitled *Judge Horton and the Scottsboro Boys*. Victoria Price files a lawsuit against the company for defamation and invasion of privacy. Her case is dismissed.

1979
Clarence Norris published his autobiography, *Last of the Scottsboro Boys*.

1989
January 23rd
Clarence Norris, the last of the Scottsboro boys, dies.
The final whereabouts of Olen Montgomery, Ozie Powell, Charlie Weems, Eugene Williams and Andy Wright are never known.

'The Alabama National Guard protects the accused, March 20, 1931. From left to right: Clarence Norris, Olen Montgomery, Andy Wright, Willie Robertson, Ozie Powell, Eugene Williams, Charles Weems, Roy Wright and Haywood Patterson.' © Bettman/CORBIS

The Scottsboro Boys, the Musical

2002
Theatre director Susan Stroman meets with writer David Thompson, composer John Kander and lyricist Fred Ebb to *"research the famous American trials".* Upon finding the Scottsboro Boys trial, they decide that it was *"a story that needed to be told".*

2004
January
A plaque is unveiled outside the County Courthouse in Scottsboro, acknowledging the injustice of the Scottsboro Boys case. The FBI were called to the event due to threats from the Ku Klux Klan.

JACKSON COUNTRY COURTHOUSE AND THE SCOTTSBORO BOYS

This courthouse was the site of the first of the Scottsboro Boys trials. Two white women accused nine black youths of rape on March 25, 1931 while riding a freight train as it passed through Jackson County. In April 1931, at the first of four trials, a jury convicted eight of the nine defendants and sentenced them to death. The judge declared a mistrial in the case of one defendant. Soon after the guilty verdicts, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the International Labor Defense (ILD) came to the defence of the "Scottsboro Boys", contending the trials were unconstitutional.

The United States Supreme Court overturned the verdicts and new trials were held in Decatur, Alabama. After a series of new trials, convictions, and overturned decisions, a compromise was reached in 1938, with some of the "Scottsboro Boys" freed immediately and the others released by 1950. In 1976, Alabama Governor George C. Wallace pardoned the last living "Scottsboro Boy." Two landmark United States Supreme Court decisions arose directly from the case. In Patterson vs. Alabama (1932), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the defendants were denied the right to effective legal counsel, and in Norris vs. Alabama (1935), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the defendants had not received equal protection under the law because Jackson County juror rolls excluded African Americans.

Many consider the Scottsboro case and its aftermath one of the beginnings of the civil rights movement in America.

September 11th
Lyricist Fred Ebb dies and *The Scottsboro Boys* musical project is put on hold.

2008
John Kander approaches director/choreographer Susan Stroman and book writer David Thompson to continue with *The Scottsboro Boys* project. Kander decides to complete the lyrics in Ebb's place.

2010
February
After years of work, founder Sheila Washington officially opens The Scottsboro Boys Museum and Cultural Centre in Alabama.

March 10th
The Scottsboro Boys opens off-Broadway at the Vineyard Theatre. The New York Post describes the show as a *"masterwork, both daring and highly entertaining".*

October 7th
After a brief trip to Minneapolis, *The Scottsboro Boys* opens on Broadway. It is later to be nominated for 12 Tony Awards.

2011
March 25th
Scottsboro Boys historian Dan Carter, US District Judge Victoria Roberts and producer of *The Scottsboro Boys* musical Catherine Schreiber, all receive keys to the city of Scottsboro, in recognition of their work in keeping the memory of the Scottsboro Boys alive. It is the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the boys' arrest.

2013
April 4th
82 years after they were wrongly accused, the Alabama Legislature unanimously votes to pardon the Scottsboro Boys.

April 19th
The Bill approved by the Alabama Legislature is signed off as a formal resolution by the Governor of Alabama. The Scottsboro Boys are formally, and legally, exonerated.

> *"We cannot take back what happened. But we can make it right moving forward. That's why I'm signing this legislation. It's important to clear the names of the Scottsboro boys."*
>
> Governor Bentley, April 19th 2013

> *"While we cannot erase the dark days when the Scottsboro Boys incident occurred, what we have done is acknowledge our mistake. Hopefully, our great State of Alabama can be Alabama the Beautiful, where justice is dispensed equally and fairly without regard to race, sex, social class or religious belief."*
>
> Representative Laura Hall, 19th April 2013
>
> *"We can't go back in time and change this unfortunate event in Alabama's history, but this legislation is a significant step toward recognising and correcting this gross injustice. It is never too late to right a wrong."*
>
> Senator Arthur Orr, 19th April 2013

October 18th
The Scottsboro Boys opens in London at the Young Vic to critical acclaim, rave reviews and sold out houses. Its run is extended into December.

November 21st
As perhaps a final coda to the case of the Scottsboro Boys, the Alabama Parole Board posthumously pardons Charlie Weems, Andy Wright and Haywood Patterson, who join Clarence Norris, Willie Roberson, Eugene Williams, Roy Wright, Ozie Powell and Olen Montgomery as free men.

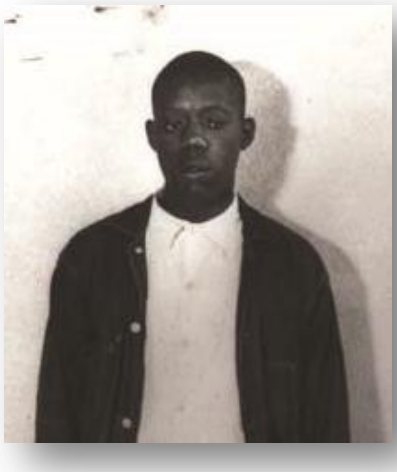
> *"In the years since their arrests, these nine boys have changed lives, sparked movements and altered the course of history. They have proved that justice need not be denied, that the truth will set you free – and most of all, that they matter. And now, after all these years, they are free to hop a freight and go back home."*
> Statement from John Kander, Susan Stroman and David Thompson

2014
October 4th
The Scottsboro Boys transfers to the West End, where it opens at the Garrick Theatre.

"They were just boys, they were just on a train.
They were not angels, they were not a bunch of boy scouts.
But by the same token, they were guilty of nothing.
Other than that they were black."
David Thompson, Book Writer of *The Scottsboro Boys*

Sources:
Scottsboro Boy, Haywood Patterson & Earl Conrad, 1950
Last of the Scottsboro Boys, Clarence Norris & Sybil Washington, 1979
Words on Plays, *The Scottsboro Boys*, American Conservatory Theatre, 2012
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/scottsboro/index.html
http://www.scottsboromusicallondon.com/

THE 'REAL' SCOTTSBORO BOYS



Olen Montgomery (1914-?) was riding alone toward the back of the train when the alleged crime occurred and though he was tried and convicted of rape, by 1937 everyone involved in the case agreed that he was not guilty of anything, including the fight with the white boys that set the whole tragic event in motion. He was released in 1937 as part of a deal struck by Samuel Leibowitz.

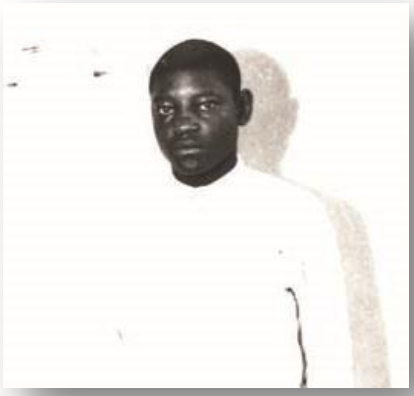
Montgomery was extremely near sighted and nearly blind in one eye from a cataract. Before boarding the freight train to Memphis, he was in Chattanooga trying to earn enough money to buy a new pair of glasses.

Montgomery was a frequent letter writer whilst in prison and often wrote to friends and supporters seeking money to buy musical instruments, or to pay for treats. On his release, he travelled the country with Roy Wright, speaking in defence of the remaining Scottsboro boys. He eventually resettled in his native Georgia.

Clarence Norris (1912-1989), the last of the Scottsboro boys (also the name of his 1979 autobiography), died in New York City in 1989. The son of Georgia sharecroppers, he only had a second grade education. From the age of 7, he worked in the cotton fields and in a Goodyear rubber plant, prior to hitchhiking on the Southern Railroad, which led to his arrest for raping Ruby Bates and Victoria Price.

His second conviction was overturned by the US Supreme Court in the landmark case Norris v Alabama, which found that the systematic exclusion of black people from Alabama juries was unconstitutional. Convicted of rape for a third time in 1937, Norris received the death sentence, which was commuted to life imprisonment by the Governor of Alabama. He was paroled in 1944 and moved to New York City. This was a violation of the terms of his parole and he was convinced to return to Alabama, where he was once again imprisoned, to be paroled again in 1946. Following this, he left Alabama, which technically made him a fugitive from justice. In 1976, with the help of the NAACP, he was pardoned by Alabama Governor, George Wallace.

Haywood Patterson (1912-1952) was, in many ways, the centre of the Scottsboro trials. From the time he was falsely accused of rape in 1931, until his escape in 1947, he was tried and convicted four times and spent 16 years in Alabama prisons.



Patterson was a Georgia native, but grew up in Chattanooga, where his father worked as a steelworker. He left school after third grade to work as a delivery boy and began riding the rails aged 14, travelling through Ohio and Florida in search of work.

Patterson entered jail as an illiterate but learned to read and write within eight months with the help of the bible, a dictionary and guidance from other prisoners. Over the years he was given a number of jobs in the various prisons he was held in, including removing the bodies of executed inmates from Kilby prison where his cell was immediately adjacent to the electrocution chamber. In 1941, he was stabbed 20 times by another inmate who had been paid by a prison guard to kill him. He survived and managed his first prison break in 1943. After five days of freedom, he was apprehended and faced even worse treatment than before.

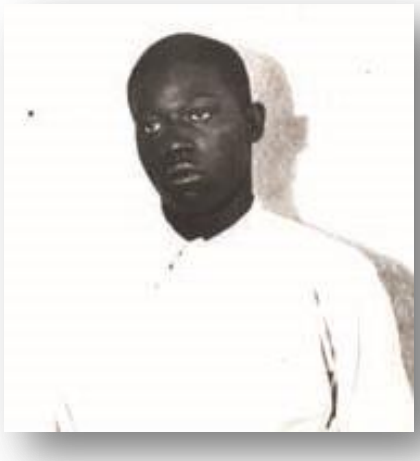
In 1947, while working on the chain gang, he managed to escape and eventually made it to his sister's home in Detroit. He lived underground for three years, and at the urging of journalist I.F. Stone, he published his memoir, *Scottsboro Boy*, in 1950. He was subsequently arrested by the FBI. Alabama sought his extradition but Michigan Governor, Mennen Williams, refused after a national letter-writing campaign convinced him that Patterson would be subject to cruel and inhumane treatment if sent back to Alabama.

In December 1950, Patterson was involved in a bar room brawl that resulted in the death of the other man. Arrested again and convicted of manslaughter, Patterson died of cancer in prison in 1952.

Ozie Powell (1916-?) was 15 when first charged with raping the two white women on the train in Scottsboro. It was under Powell's name, in Powell v Alabama, that the US Supreme Court ruled that the 1931 trials had violated the boys' constitutional right to adequate counsel.

In 1936, after testifying at Haywood Patterson's fourth trial, Powell stabbed a sheriff's deputy while being transported back to jail. The sheriff shot him in the head at point blank range. Both the deputy and Powell survived, but Powell had permanent brain damage. He suffered from trouble speaking, hearing and memory loss and

weakness in his right leg and arm. After the shooting, doctors estimated Powell's IQ to be about 64 – an extremely low functioning intellect.
The rape charges were dropped against Powell, but he was sentenced to 20 years in prison for assaulting the deputy. On his release in 1946, he moved back to his home state of Georgia.



Willie Roberson (1915-1958) was 15 when he was arrested for raping Ruby Bates on the railroad. He was an active syphilitic and suffering from gonorrhoea, which would have made sex extremely uncomfortable due to the sores on his genitals. He was also unable to walk without the aid of a cane, which undermined the prosecution's accusation that he leapt from the railcar to escape apprehension. He did not receive any medical treatment for his painful and progressively degenerative disease until 1933.
He had worked as a busboy in Georgia and went to Chattanooga to look for work. Finding none, he hopped the train headed to Memphis. Throughout the ordeal, Roberson stood by his story – that he had neither participated in nor seen any alleged rape – and was one of the four released in Leibowitz's deal with prosecutors in 1937. He settled in New York City where he took a number of odd jobs before dying of a severe asthma attack n 1958.

Charlie Weems (1911-?) was convicted of rape in 1931 and again in 1937. He was paroled in 1943. Weems was the oldest of the Scottsboro boys and had a difficult life prior to his conviction and in prison. He was one of seven siblings, born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and raised outside of Atlanta, Georgia; only two survived beyond childhood. His mother died when he was four years old, and Weems only had a fifth grade education.
In 1934 he was found reading Communist literature, provided by the ILD, in his prison cell and was beaten and tear-gassed, causing permanent eye injuries. In 1937, he contracted tuberculosis, and in 1938 he was stabbed by a prison guard who mistook him for Andy Wright.
On his parole in 1943, he returned to Atlanta and took a job in a laundry, which he did not enjoy. By 1946, he was married and lived a quiet life. Nothing else is known of his life outside prison.

Eugene Williams (1918-?) was only 13 at the time of his arrest in 1931, and had worked as a dishwasher in Chattanooga prior to hitchhiking along the Southern Railroad. He was travelling with his friends Patterson and the Wright brothers.

He was convicted in 1931, but the Alabama Supreme Court struck down his conviction due to his youth. He remained in jail until 1937 when he was released as part of the deal struck by Leibowitz with the prosecution. He eventually settled in St. Louis, where he lived with relatives and enrolled in the Western Baptist Seminary. Although it is known that he briefly pursued a vaudeville career, nothing else is known about his later life.

Andy Wright (1912-?), 19 at the time of his arrest, was Roy Wright's older brother. With Haywood Patterson, his brother and Eugene Williams, Wright boarded the train in Chattanooga and ended up accused of rape with the other boys. Wright had a sixth grade education and drove a truck after leaving school.

At the Scottsboro trials, Wright was convicted multiple times of rape, sentenced to death and then ultimately 99 years in jail. He was paroled in 1944, but left Alabama in 1946 in violation of his parole, leading to his re-imprisonment. He spent the next several years in and out of Alabama prisons until he was freed in 1950. He was the last of the Scottsboro Boys to be freed from Alabama prisons after which he moved to New York. Nothing else is known of Andy Wright.

Leroy "Roy" Wright (1918-1959), aged 13 when arrested, was the youngest of the Scottsboro Boys. He was arrested with his older brother Andy, travelling with Haywood Patterson and Eugene Williams en route to Memphis from Chattanooga on the Southern Railroad. His first trial ended in a mistrial when one juror voted to sentence him to life imprisonment, due to his youth, while the other eleven held out for the death penalty.

At the first trial, he testified that he saw the other defendants rape Bates and Price. His testimony followed a severe beating by law enforcement officers.

Wright was freed in 1937 along with the others in the Leibowitz deal. After touring the country in support of the other Scottsboro Boys, he served in the army, married and then joined the Merchant Marine.
In 1959, Wright became convinced that his wife had been unfaithful while he was away at sea: he killed her, and then shot himself.

Sources:
Words on Plays, *The Scottsboro Boys*, American Conservatory Theatre, 2012
Play Guide, *The Scottsboro Boys*, The Guthrie Theatre, 2010

CREATIVE & ACADEMIC INSIGHT: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

"The American Civil War had ended in 1856. The reconstruction of the South is still underway and the South still very much had their own sense of who they were and how they saw themselves in the concept of America. So you had very much of a North and South divide.

Here, you have the North, looking at the South, and through their lens deciding what's right and what's wrong. And clearly the entire issue of race in the South still hadn't sorted itself out. There was still very much a 'plantation' existence in the South and the Southern states saw themselves as able to control what they did and what they didn't want to do. But the North was looking at the South and there was a lesson to be learnt.

You're looking at a chapter in American history that was very important for many different reasons, in the way that it dealt with civil rights and the way it dealt with the emergence of a very strong voice in the African American community. That said, it also transcends those American parameters and what happens when there's been a miscarriage of justice, or when there's been a rush to a conclusion in any form, in any race and how that plays all over the world, in countless stories, again and again and again. When people are marginalised, or grouped together or somehow diminished because they aren't given the full due of who they are and what the actual story is. You just hear it over and over again, it crosses colour boundaries, it crosses race, it crosses all nationalities.

This is the way that justice would have been treated in the South – very quickly, very deliberately, it was just black and white, with no greys involved. It was just assumed that these boys were guilty and 'we deal with them the way that we deal with them.' I would imagine the town of Scottsboro thought that they were being a little bit modern because they weren't lynching them. It was really the tradition at the time, if a white woman had cried rape, the boys would have been lynched immediately and they weren't. So they probably thought that they were quite honourable by at least giving them a trial. That was their perception.

So it was a very complicated time in American history and it was made more complex by the arrival of a Jewish lawyer from the North who brought to provide legal counsel for these boys in subsequent trials. So we come to not only the whole concept of racism, you bring anti-Semitism into the story and when those two joined forces, it really got ugly. "

from a conversation between David Thompson, book writer of *The Scottsboro Boys* and Mark Palmer, July 2014

"Alabama in the 1930's was literally a world coming apart, with massive unemployment in a state that had always been poor, with increasing conflict between both classes and races. It was a state that was in calamitous conditions, families were disintegrating. Hoboes were frequenting the railroads by the thousands and the tens of thousands.

Like the nine alleged rapists, their two accusers had been driven onto the rails by economic necessity. Ruby Bates, 17, and Victoria Price, 21, hailed from the cotton center of Huntsville, 50 miles from Scottsboro. They worked together in the poorest of the town's textile mills. At 21, Price was already twice married and had served time in the workhouse for adultery and vagrancy."

Wayne Flint, Historian, from *Scottsboro: An American Tragedy*, PBS

"Victoria Price was tough, a survivor in every way. She hardly fit the stereotype of the young Southern lady - hard-talking, tobacco chewing, but a kind of feistiness to her. Ruby Bates is totally different. Very quiet, soft spoken. In effect it was a kind of relationship in which Victoria totally dominated Ruby Bates.

The mills in which the girls worked employed mostly young women. They laboured up to 14 hours a day in deafening noise, air choked with cotton lint, and near complete darkness. By 1931, wages in the mills had dropped so low that Victoria and Ruby could only afford to live in the black section of Huntsville."

Dan Carter, Historian, from *Scottsboro: An American Tragedy*, PBS

"Their lives are in fact a complete violation of the ideals of segregation. But the second they accuse a black man of rape, at least for an instant, they became a pure white woman.

In the early 1930's, the best-known criminal lawyer in America, after Clarence Darrow, was New York's Samuel L. Leibowitz. Leibowitz had won fame and fortune by defending gangsters, kidnappers, rapists, corrupt cops, and jealous lovers. In fifteen years, he had won 77 out of 78 murder cases - the 78th resulted in a hung jury.

Leibowitz was, first of all, a remarkably thorough researcher. He studied every aspect of a case. Never left a stone unturned. Add to that, he was a showman. He literally could have been an actor."

James Goodman, Historian, from *Scottsboro: An American Tragedy*, PBS

"I think that's perhaps an ultimate tragedy. People pulled into history who never wanted to be pulled into history suddenly put on a national platform, and tragically paraded out for everybody's benefit but their own. And the question of who really cared about them, who really defended them? Almost everyone had an agenda that

involved the Scottsboro boys. And I think the courage of the Scottsboro boys is just surviving, just enduring."

Wayne Flint, Historian, from *Scottsboro: An American Tragedy*, PBS

"The treatment of the young men who became known as 'the Scottsboro Boys' in the 1930's is considered to be one of the greatest travesties of justice in the US. They endured physical abuse, verbal lynching in the press and total injustice. They would have been lynched immediately if it weren't for the brave efforts to keep them alive including the work of the NAACP and many Communists and Jews. True, their case was turned into a kind of a circus with everyone wanting to use their story for their own agendas, but if that hadn't happened, the boys certainly would have been executed. In the mix were heroes who risked their careers and lives to tell the truth such as Judge Horton of Scottsboro and the Jewish lawyer Samuel Leibowitz from New York. An incident that stemmed from a scuffle on a train soon became the trials that helped to inspire the Civil Rights movement and led to two landmark Supreme Court rulings mandating proper legal representation and the right to a trial by a jury of one's peers.

When the Scottsboro Boys got into my heart, I felt I had to do something with it. I got involved with the Scottsboro Boys Museum to help founder Shelia Washington in her determination to carry the story on. I was honoured to receive the key to the city and was honoured to speak April 18th, 2013 when The Scottsboro Boys Act was signed by Governor Bentley in Scottsboro. Then, to have the show playing at the Young Vic when the pardons of the last three Scottsboro Boys was achieved in November was an unbelievable experience. We even had a group of people from the Alabama Government Tourism Bureau fly to London to see the show (and they loved it.) This show is a part of history and the way the actors bring life to their characters in every glorious, brilliant performance is a tribute to the Scottsboro boys and what they endured. The slide at the end of the show announcing the pardoning of the boys 82 years after their arrests just grabs one's heart."

from *Catherine Schreiber on The Scottsboro Boys*, Young Vic Blog

ACTIVITIES

YOU CAN'T DO ME

The first reading, which was scheduled in advance, turned out to be on the morning of the day after Obama was elected. Obama was elected Tuesday night and on Wednesday, the country couldn't believe it. We had a black President. On that same morning, we had gathered together a group of African American actors to start doing the first reading of The Scottsboro Boys. A crazy, crazy coincidence.

In fact, at the time we thought, 'are we now in a post racial world? Have we now resolved a lot of these issues? Have they already been answered?' Of course, very quickly in the days and the years that followed, we realised that we aren't and we haven't.

The play comes down to one line, 'you're guilty because of the way that you look.' You can hear the audience gasp, but that becomes the truth of so much of it and that, right there is what defines so much of the way we deal with one another - how we look. I don't mean what we're wearing, or how cool we look, but racially, when we look at people, do we diminish them? Do we marginalise them? Do we collectively put them together in a group? And then somehow be able to write them off? That's ultimately what happened to these boys. It was about how they looked, they were black.

from a conversation between David Thompson, book writer of *The Scottsboro Boys* and Mark Palmer, July 2014

<u>RELIGIOUS EDUCATION / MEDIA & FILM STUDIES / PSHE / SOCIAL SCIENCE / ENGLISH</u>

Behind the story of the Scottsboro Boys is the context of the dark and racist period of American history, which began with 17th century slavery and continued until as late as the 1960's. Some might even argue that, in some ways, it continues today. Students often find it difficult to understand why anybody would be as mean as some of the racist characters are in the Scottsboro Boys' story.

Ask your students to consider what they think it means to be human. What are the characteristics or personality traits of someone who could be considered to be 'humane'? What qualities do we have to exhibit in order to display 'humanity'? Ask them to come up with a word bank that seeks to answer these questions with words and phrases of their choice.

Now ask them to consider a recent time when they were mean to somebody. This could have been at home, in the playground, or in class. It could be a time when they said something that wasn't very nice, or when they pushed somebody or called them

a name. Ask them to try to reconcile this action with the words that they came up with previously. By doing something mean, were they acting in a way that we would consider to be 'inhuman', by their own definition?

Watch the following clip with your students (the trailer for the film *Boy in the Striped Pajamas*):
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_EfD5VaTX0A

Ask them to consider the character of the father. In the trailer, he is seen being a loving and kind parent, looking after his son and wanting his best for him but he is also a Nazi officer, in charge of an extermination camp in the depths of the forest. He is staunchly anti-Semitic in his beliefs, as many of the Southern whites are to Samuel Leibowitz in *The Scottsboro Boys*. How can this father be both things at the same time?

- Where is the line between actions that are okay and those that aren't?
- Can a person be human one minute and inhuman the next?
- How was the father himself able to balance these contradictions, or did he not see them as contradictions at all? If they're not seen as contradictions, is that okay?

Ask your students to create a short piece of writing, a dance or a piece of film that promotes their idea of what it means to be human and to have humanity. For your more able students, add an additional level of challenge by explaining that their work should not include any dialogue, but rather be told only through actions. They can use captions or music to create their atmosphere or mood, and to tell their story. This will encourage them to think carefully about the power of the images that they select. Some students may like to do this in a series of still, rather than moving images, which may give their final piece more power.

If you do not have access to the technical equipment to make films or to take still photographs, students could create their pictures by using themselves to make still images.

Once the work is complete, watch them as a class and see whether it is possible to bring the different ideas to a conclusion – is it ever truly possible to reconcile some of the contradictions in what it is to be human? How might this question look from the point-of-view of the Scottsboro boys?

DRAMA / PERFORMING ARTS / MEDIA & FILM STUDIES

Through the lens of the 21st century, the rights and wrongs of the story of the Scottsboro boys seems clear cut. Their case was entirely based on the lies of Victoria Price and Ruby Bates, and compounded by the prejudice of the white law enforcers in Alabama.

In order to better understand why people adopt such appalling positions when it comes to their fellow human beings, ask your students to create a *Crimewatch* style reconstruction that takes place just as the freight train is stopped at Paint Rock in Alabama and the sheriff and his deputy arrest the 9 Scottsboro boys.

Students will be aware that, in television, everything that is presented is selected and edited to tell a story, and even supposed factual material is made up of elements that are chosen, and often crucially, elements that are left out. Their challenge in this activity is to present the *Crimewatch* reconstruction as if it is the sheriff and his deputy, Price and Bates, who are the villains. They must not change any elements of the story as it happened, just its presentation. Narration or voice-over might help them here.

They should remember what we clearly know, that nothing actually happened. The Scottsboro boys were guilty of nothing. Any flashbacks to events on the freight train *must* stick to this fact. They should consider including police interviews and comments from friends and family as they would expect to see on *Crimewatch*.

The programme can be presented as a piece of video or as a performance piece for the stage. Either way, students should watch each other's work once it has been successfully created, and then discuss the attitudes of the sheriff, the deputy and the girls. How has the lens of history helped us to understand the events at Paint Rock that had such a profound effect on the lives of 9 innocent boys?

<u>MEDIA STUDIES / ART & DESIGN / PSHE / CITIZENSHIP</u>

At the time that the Scottsboro Boys were arrested, at Paint Rock, Alabama in 1931, it wasn't just the law enforcers who were prejudiced; but also the local media, as is clear from newspaper headlines of the time:

DEATH PENALTY PROPERLY DEMANDED IN FIENDISH CRIME OF NINE BURLY NEGROES

NINE NEGRO MEN RAPE TWO WHITE GIRLS, THREW WHITE BOYS FROM FREIGHT TRAIN AND HELD WHITE GIRLS PRISONER UNTIL CAPTURED BY POSSE

ALL NEGROES POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED BY GIRLS AND ONE WHITE BOY WHO WAS HELD PRISONER WITH PISTOLS AND KNIVES WHILE NINE BLACK FIENDS COMMITED REVOLTING CRIME.

In 21st century Britain, the controversies over the media's interpretation of 'truth', newspaper journalism and freedom of speech may seem like they have much in common with 1930's Southern America. Many in Alabama at the time saw through these negative headlines and support for the Scottsboro Boys grew as quickly as it might in the age of social media, simply through word of mouth.

Discuss with your students the ability of negative words and images to influence positive outcomes. This might include shocking images that encourage people to give to charity, for instance.

Ask your students to study 'Article 2.1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child':

Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

Ask them to create a billboard poster, either photographically or artistically, that shows one area that the article declares against. Explain that the intention is to use this shocking image with some or all of the text of the article clearly featured on their finished poster.

Once this is complete, ask your students to repeat the task, but this time to create an image that shows the result of the 'right of the child' in question being observed. They should similarly include the text of the article (in part, or in full), as before. Discuss the results with your students:

- Which are most successful, the positive or the negative posters? Why?
- Have we been conditioned by the media to react to negative images in a way that makes them more effective? Is this a good thing or a bad thing?

<u>DRAMA / PERFORMING ARTS / ENGLISH / PSHE / RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</u>

Study the following quotes from *The Scottsboro Boys* with your students:

"Nobody calls the womanhood of Alabama liars! They may be miserable white trash! But they are our white trash! And that's good enough for me!" (Sheriff Bones)

"Fine white *gentlemen of the jury… it is this court's opinion that these here innocent boys are guilty as charged."* (The Interlocutor as the Judge in the First Trial)

"My daddy says there shouldn't be no trial. Thirty cents of rope would do the work and it wouldn't cost the county much." (Little George)

What do they tell us about the racist attitudes in the Southern states of America in the 1930's?

Use either teacher-in-role or ask a couple of your students to play the parts of either Sheriff Bones, the Judge in the first trial of the Scottsboro boys, or Little George (George Wallace). Explain clearly that you or they will be taking on the attitudes and

opinions of someone else for the purposes of this exercise and that what is said in improvisation is in character, rather than the actor's personal position.

Hotseat each character in turn while rest of the group look for ways to convince the character that their position is flawed. The actor should answer each point 'in role', trying to think of the answer that their character would give.

At the end of the improvisation, discuss the wider question of how it is possible for society to affect the change of opinion of a large number of people. Looking at the UK's recent changes to the laws on smoking might act as an example of how legislation can have an impact on people's behaviour. Can racist attitudes ever be completely banished to the annals of history?

ART PHOTOGRAPHY / ART & DESIGN / PSHE / CITIZENSHIP / RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

With your students, look at the images at this link:
http://www.bihr.org.uk/galleries/changing-the-face-of-human-rights-photo-gallery

In these photographs, people from a range of backgrounds and cultures have chosen an object that relates to their lives and stories and expresses what human rights means to them. Ask your students to consider each of these objects. Discuss each person's story and how the object that they have chosen relates to that story.

Ask them to consider which of the characters from *The Scottsboro Boys* would be likely to have the most interesting opinion on human rights and what object they might choose to indicate their position or story.

Ask students to create images for the characters that they have chosen. If they can, use real objects and try to adopt appropriate body language and facial expressions to show which character is being portrayed. Use a digital camera to take these photographs and then ask students to caption them appropriately, either using quotes from *The Scottsboro Boys*, or their own slogan to highlight an area of human rights.

For the more able, use photo manipulation software to change the background of the photograph, placing the characters into an appropriate setting, which should make the message relevant to as many people as possible.

FROM HISTORY TO MUSICAL

"Behind the headlines, the spectacle, the ongoing trials, the histrionics of politicians and lawyers was the story of nine young African American boys, determined to prove that they mattered."

John Kander

Photography: Richard Hubert Smith

SYNOPSIS OF *THE SCOTTSBORO BOYS*

On an early evening in December 1955, a lady sits on a bench waiting for a bus. As she sits, she is caught up in a memory. The world around her fades away as a distant minstrel march is heard. One by one, the minstrels greet The Lady. Finally, the Interlocutor—the master of ceremonies—enters and, in traditional fashion, tells the minstrels to be seated.

The Interlocutor introduces Mr Bones and Mr Tambo, traditional minstrel 'end men', who will lead off the night's entertainments about the Scottsboro Boys. The proceedings are about to begin, when Haywood Patterson asks if tonight, for a change, they can tell the truth. The Interlocutor agrees, even though Bones and Tambo confess that they have never told the truth before.

The story begins on March 25th, 1931, as the nine Scottsboro boys hop a Memphis-bound boxcar in Chattanooga, Tennessee. As the train slows to a stop in Scottsboro, the sheriff (played by Mr Bones) enters the train and accuses the nine Scottsboro boys of instigating a fight with a group of white boys on the train. While searching the train, the sheriff's deputy (played by Mr Tambo) discovers Ruby Bates and Victoria Price, two "fallen" women, and threatens to take them to jail for prostitution. Rather than face jail, the girls, led by Victoria, falsely accuse the nine black boys of rape. Almost instantly the sheriffs' attitudes toward the women change. They are now delicate flowers of the American South. They demand that Haywood admit what he's done and when he does not, they hit him across the face. *"Are you going to give us any more trouble?"*, they ask him. *"No. Not no more,"* he says, *"I'm gonna sit here and rest my feet."*

The Scottsboro boys are hauled to jail. Terrified, Olen Montgomery accuses the other boys in hope that the guards will let him go. They don't. The first show trial is swiftly concluded with nine guilty verdicts and nine death sentences provided by an all-white jury.

As the boys wait in prison for their execution, they bicker. When the guards torment 12-year-old Eugene Williams with visions of the electric chair, Haywood comes to his defence. He commandeers a guard's gun. It is not loaded, but it is enough to deflect attention away from the scared child. Some of the boys celebrate his heroism while others think he's reckless.

As a guard leads Haywood to the electric chair, the Interlocutor announces that the U.S. Supreme Court has granted a new trial because the boys did not have a proper lawyer— they're getting a second chance at life. As the boys celebrate, the guards take Haywood to solitary confinement; while there, Roy Wright teaches him the alphabet.

The boys have attracted a lot of attention, and they have a new northern lawyer, Samuel Leibowitz. On the stand, Ruby admits that she and Victoria lied about the rape. As the boys wait for a verdict, the Interlocutor delivers a cake baked by The Lady. The gift lifts the boys' spirits enough that they muse about what they'll do once they are free. However, despite Ruby recanting, the jury once again convicts the boys, having been swayed by the prosecution's argument that northern 'Jew money' bought Ruby's testimony.

The boys begin work on a chain gang. Haywood attempts to escape to go and see his dying mother, but Olen rats on him and he is caught and returned to solitary confinement.

The Scottsboro case drags on for nearly nine years. With each passing year, each passing trial, and each guilty verdict, the boys continue to languish in prison for a crime they did not commit. In a moment of rage, Ozie Powell tries to strangle a guard with his handcuffs and is shot in the back of the head. He survives, but with severe brain damage.

Through a deal struck with the prosecutors, Leibowitz is able to secure the freedom of four of the Scottsboro boys – Eugene Williams, Willie Roberson, Olen Montgomery and Roy Wright. *"It's a raw deal,"* he tells the other boys, *"but for the moment, it's the best we can do."* Leibowitz is able to get the remaining five convicted boys an audience with the governor. They'll be released on parole—if they admit to him that they are guilty. Haywood refuses. The governor returns him to prison.

The boys briefly tell the story of the rest of their lives. Haywood spent most of the remainder of his behind bars, but, whilst briefly escaped, he was able to write his autobiography.

To close the show, the Interlocutor tries to get the boys to do the cakewalk—the customary ending to the minstrel act. This time, however, they refuse, and one by one they leave the stage. Haywood, Bones, and Tambo set up a row of chairs. As they leave, they reveal The Lady sitting on what is clearly a bus. The Interlocutor, as the bus driver, tells her to move to the back. *"No. Not no more,"* she replies. *"I'm gonna sit here and rest my feet."*

Sources:
Words on Plays, *The Scottsboro Boys*, American Conservatory Theatre, 2012
Play Guide, *The Scottsboro Boys*, The Guthrie Theatre, 2010

CREATIVE INSIGHT: FROM HISTORY TO MUSICAL

"You can't tackle these subjects by just being really macabre about it ... you can't make someone sit through an hour and a half and assault them with, 'this is hideous', 'this is terrible'; you need to make someone enjoy it first, and then through doing that, when it gets kicked out from under them, they get a realisation of how easy it is to fall into the trap."

Alex Constantin, Company Stage Manager of the Young Vic production of *The Scottsboro Boys*, 2013

"The thing about Kander and Ebb is that they like to write about ordinary people in extraordinary situations. Kander and Ebb write about the underdog, about people who sing 'Maybe this time I'll be lucky' [Cabaret], they love to write for these people who have hope and who are trapped so they jumped at the idea of writing about the Scottsboro Boys. For them to write about how one lie destroyed the lives of 9 young men was very important to them and to make these 9 young men come to life again and have people remember them.

We started to research the story and realised how many wonderful dramatic characters are involved in the story, like Sam Leibowitz, a New York lawyer who went down to the South and thought that he'd get the Scottsboro boys out in one day. Of course there was more prejudice against a Northern Jewish lawyer from New York than there was against the 9 Scottsboro boys, so it was quite a feat for him to try to get these kids out. Also, the two women who accused them of this horrific crime, they're wild characters. It was so rich with material that we just started to write, and for me it was 'well how can I possibly have a cast that would be that large, a white cast and a black cast?' And then I thought, 'what about if it was an all-African American cast, an all-black cast, and they got the chance to play these white characters.' They would get to play characters that they would never be allowed to play. Once that idea came, we were off and running. "

from interview with Susan Stroman by Mark Lawson, *Front Row*, BBC Radio 4

"Ultimately, when you start telling a story like this, you have so much history available to you that you don't have to make a lot of it up. Whether it's in newspapers or books or court transcripts, so much is available to you that the process of invention is not about finding some crazy detail to pull forward. In fact, so many of the speeches that are delivered in the courtroom scenes themselves are paraphrased from the real courtroom trails. I actually cleaned them up a little bit, because some of them were so incredibly racially charged that it was impossible to use them.

In that first trial scene when the District Attorney is saying "hide them", that's what they were calling for, just "hide them, get them out of our sight", it didn't matter whether they were guilty, the situation was just too ugly and they needed to be got

rid of. In the second trial that we look at, Ruby has recanted the whole thing about smelling Liebowitz and saying that he smells of money from the North and it's the smell of Jew money - that was exactly what was said. When you discover these things, you realise very quickly that there's so much here, it's so ripe, the trick is being able to keep it very streamlined so that it becomes dramatic. And that, of course, is the challenge, because we tell the story in about an hour and 45 minutes.

That's where the use of the minstrel format became the way that we could tell the story. It's because it's such a racially charged form and we have such a racially charged story, the minute you put those two together and you let them collide, you can move a lot faster and you can cover a lot of ground very quickly.

Hayward was singled out by the press as being the ugliest and the surliest so he was the one who was always tried first and was always the publicity 'poster boy' for why the Scottsboro Boys should be punished and put away. He was always the one who was in front of the press because of this and we felt we should tell his story because clearly he had that presence. And on top of that he also wrote a book and his book became very helpful in getting the detail of what was actually happening, at least from his perspective.

We take Haywood's book up to maybe the first third. The trials went on and on and on and pretty soon they went from making National headlines to slowly disappearing from the headlines and then disappearing altogether as a news story but they were still all locked up in jail and they still hadn't been released. Our snapshot of the story really begins from the time the story starts in 1931 through to the point at which the first round of boys were actually pardoned and released.

In the American judicial system, similarly to in England, truth is no defence in a court of law. You can't really argue a case based on the truth. You can argue it based on evidence, but it's an interpretation of that evidence. The truth is not really a part of the discussion, because you can reinterpret what that means. You think that truth is really the basis of all cases but it's not, there are too many ways to interpret it. As a writer I find that very fascinating, because just as a layman you would think "well of course, if it's the truth then that should be the way it is", but it's not.

If you look at any case in history, it's driven by either a precedent, or what the instructions are to the jury, or it could be anything, but it's not "is that girl telling the truth?". That's a hard thing to interpret, so that's why you have to go to the evidence. Even if the evidence is discounted, there are still so many other things in play – I always find that very interesting."

from a conversation between David Thompson, book writer of *The Scottsboro Boys* and Mark Palmer, July 2014

"When you think about it, nine people just disappeared from the world after being destroyed by it. I guess it's a terrible and familiar story all over the world but when

you particularise it, and get to know each man involved in this case, it ceases to be something you could ignore."

from interview with John Kander, *SFGate.com*, 24th June 2012

"To take this dark event and turn it into a musical that entertains, moves people to tears and laughter, and inspires change is a brilliant achievement only made possible by John Kander and Fred Ebb, Susan Stroman and David Thompson. They have brought the story to life in a way that gets into your soul so that you cannot forget. Their glorious music uplifts you, the dance delights you and the story stays with you and haunts you so that you must do something with it. To me, the moment near the end of the show when the cast sings the powerful melody 'The Scottsboro Boys' with such fierceness is one of the greatest moments in musical theatre. The music, lyrics and choreography are a solid punch, grabbing you in the gut, lifting you up and not letting you go.

Added to this is the wondrous interplay of history and theatre. Patterson wrote a book so the story would not be forgotten. Kander and Ebb then created a vehicle to bring the story to the public so it would not be forgotten."

from *Catherine Schreiber on The Scottsboro Boys*, Young Vic Blog

"People say, how could you possibly tell the story of the Scottsboro Boys? Why is that entertainment? That, in itself, was a challenge for John and Fred to take you there. Any story of injustice is a great story, an important story and the fact that people would question why we even thought we could do that is an indication that, oftentimes, people want their stories to be fun and easily digested.

On one level, it's related to the circus around those trials and what happened—the characters, the different situations, and the way it was approached by not only the media, but by the North and the South. What was really attractive was the story of the nine boys themselves, because there's something very compelling about looking at how an innocent person is thrown into jail. What would you do, how would you survive, and how would you try to make sure people listened to you when you said you were innocent? You've got nine boys with no intention of ever going into the public spotlight—they just were looking to survive. That idea of what happens when you're trapped was compelling.

We like to believe these issues are behind us and pretend that we're in a post-racial world and every once in a while, we start having conversations as if we are. We have a crazy economy that's turning left and right, and a lot of people are being thrown off the train. So much of that is still so much a part of our world. It's a very confusing time. The discussions that happen when people leave the theatre after seeing The Scottsboro Boys *resonate because these issues are still so much a part of our society."*

from interview with David Thompson by Tom Matlack, *The Good Men Project*, December 2010

*"*The Scottsboro Boys *is a story that still resonates today as we struggle to give voice to those who are marginalized or disenfranchised. I remember how much the story touched me as a young boy growing up in Kansas City. It touches me even more today. "*

from John Kander's letter on *The Scottsboro Boys*, published in the New York show programme, 2010

Demonstrators march in Washington, D.C in support of the Scottsboro Nine, 1934 © Bettman/CORBIS

ACTIVITIES

MAKE FRIENDS WITH THE TRUTH

"With Haywood, it wasn't until he learned how to write, that he discovered that he had a voice. At the start of the play, he doesn't have the language, or the certainty, or the clarity of what has to happen, or how he has to move forward. As he learns to read and learns to write, he begins to be more aware of what his power is and what's important to him and why you must tell the truth. That's something that I found very interesting, that as he does move forward, he has the ability to articulate what is right and what is wrong so when he's asked to lie in order to free himself, he realises that he can't do that.

At the top of the play, when he's standing on that boxcar, he screams in the middle of that song that he's free and it's exhilarating. He begins the first jail scene by just screaming, by letting out this primal scream and then over the course of the play, he begins to find his language. At the end of the play, he repeats that same line, "I am free", even though he knows he's about ready to go to jail and never be let out, but in his own mind, he's free. He's returned to that sense of freedom, because now he knows who he is. That becomes his resolution. He is free because he won't lie, even though he's in a place that he will never escape from, that's the paradox of it."

from a conversation between David Thompson, book writer of *The Scottsboro Boys* and Mark Palmer, July 2014

<u>ENGLISH / CITIZENSHIP / PSHE / SOCIAL SCIENCE</u>

The moral imperative at the centre of *The Scottsboro Boys* asks us to consider what we would do in Haywood's situation. Convicted numerous times of a crime that he didn't commit, sentenced to death in the electric chair, he is finally offered a way out – all that he has to do is to lie.

LEIBOWITZ: *Listen son, I got you a parole hearing in front of the Governor of Alabama. He's the biggest man in all the land. It's your last chance. After this, the only way out of jail is in a coffin. But let me warn you. The only way to get parole is to plead guilty.*

HAYWOOD: *You mean lie.*

LEIBOWITZ: *Haywood, the truth will not set you free. But a lie can. Isn't that right son? Son…*

Divide your students into two debating groups. Ask each group to elect a chairperson and a spokesperson. The chairperson needs to be able to direct the group's discussion, keeping them focused on their core question and making sure that every voice in the group is heard and that the group's argument is sound. The spokesperson needs to be able to articulate the group's decisions and to speak for the group by understanding the agreed line.

Nominate one group to represent Haywood's view, that whatever happens, he cannot lie. The other group should represent Leibowitz's view that he should lie in order to be set free. Each group should discuss and explore the point of view that they have been given and find ways to argue *for* that point of view.

Remind students that they may not agree with Haywood or Leibowitz personally, but their job is to represent their points of view. They should look at things as their character would, put themselves into their shoes and try to understand *why* they think as they do.

Allow the two groups around 30 minutes to discuss their response to the question '*Should Haywood lie in order to be released?'* The chairperson should coordinate the debate, making sure that every aspect of the question is considered from their character's viewpoint and that the group is moved on if sticking points are reached.

When you bring the two groups back together, ask each spokesperson to make a statement on behalf of their group, putting forward their character's point of view. What do they think and why? Once this is done, each group will have 10 minutes to prepare a response to the opposing team's statement, considering the arguments that have been put forward and addressing them from their character's point of view. The better they understand their character, the more effectively they will be able to argue their position against the opposing team.

Bring the groups back together for a final time and ask the chair people to coordinate their response, allowing members of their group to put forward points which can then be responded to directly by a member of the other team. It may be worth reminding students at this point that this is a formal debate and, as such, each person is allowed to make their point fully before someone else responds. Nobody should talk over anyone else at any time.

In order to finish the session, ask students to respond to you but this time from their own point of view. Have they been persuaded by any of the arguments? Have their thoughts changed as a result of the debate? What are the rights and wrongs of the situation that Haywood found himself in? What would they do in that situation and, in the end, did Haywood do the right thing?

MEDIA STUDIES / ENGLISH / DRAMA / PERFORMING ARTS / PSHE

HAYWOOD: *Ma, everybody's telling us to be hopeful. Especially the letters we've been getting. By the bagful. Prison guards hate us 'cause they've got to do the carrying of the bags. Must be from all the work you're doing. Talking to crowds up North. Rallies! Communists must love you, buying you a fine new feathered hat like that. 'The Truth Shall Set us Free!' I got hope, ma, I got hope.*

With these words, Haywood tells some of the other boys about the campaigning that's going on outside the jail and about the hope that it gives him. Where would you start if you were going to coordinate a campaign in the way that Haywood's Mum has been doing?

Using their research skills, ask your students to try to find out about some recent high profile media cases involving members of the public and campaigns that they have launched for one reason or another. They do not have to be miscarriages of justice. Examples might be:

- Madeleine McCann
- Stephen Lawrence
- Millie Dowler

Ask them to focus their research on the campaigning methods that were used. For instance, was a website set up? Was social media used? Was there a television or poster campaign? How were people able to get behind the campaign and support it? How was the campaign controlled / coordinated?

Now, ask them to return to the story of the Scottsboro Boys. Ask them to imagine that the case was happening today in England. They have been appointed by Samuel Leibowitz to coordinate a campaign for the boys' release. Their campaign must be focused, coordinated and must be multi-media. They will need to blitz as many forms of different media as they can, with appropriate elements designed for each.

This website provides details of all of the individuals in the case, alongside photographs, and may be useful for students in designing their campaign: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/scottsboro/peopleevents/index.html

It is important that the campaign is clearly linked so that the general public can recognise that the information that they are receiving from different parts of the media is part of the same, coordinated campaign.

Depending on the resources at your disposal, students could create examples from their campaign using ICT, or appropriate artwork or prose.

ENGLISH / DRAMA / PERFORMING ARTS

The Scottsboro Boys, particularly Haywood, are understandably angry at the situation they find themselves in. They are also poor and often uneducated boys- Haywood is initially illiterate- so putting forward a persuasive argument as to why they are innocent and should be released is difficult for many of them. However, sometimes, for all of the education of Samuel Leibowitz and the judges or Alabama, it is raw passion that wins the argument:

HAYWOOD: *Go on! Take my shoes. The shirt off my back. Strip me naked. Take my name. Make me an animal. So you can kill me. Then forget all about me. Like I never happened. Like I don't matter. But I didn't do this! I am not taking the blame! I am gonna get out of here! I gotta get out of here! I ain't dying for a lie!*

Using persuasive language, ask your students to use the biographies of the other boys (see pages 15-18) to write a persuasive speech for one of them. They should try to take into account the boys' individual personality. The younger boys, Roy and Eugene, would probably argue their case very differently to the older boys. Charlie, for instance, was the oldest of the Scottsboro boys and had a difficult upbringing, with his mother dying when he was four years old. How might this have affected him and his ability to think positively?

Once their speech has been written, ask your most confident students to deliver their speech in character. Other good examples could be studied as pieces of prose, in order to establish which are the most effective and why.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION / PSHE / CITIZENSHIP / ENGLISH

We are routinely taught that we shouldn't lie; lying is bad and the truth is good, but why? Even Samuel Leibowitz, the Scottsboro Boys' defence lawyer, espouses lying in order to secure release. Yet Haywood will not do so, and we are taught that neither should we. Religions teach that lying is wrong - it's an absolute, it's non-negotiable. Why?

In *The Scottsboro Boys*, Haywood explains it like this:

HAYWOOD: *It was hot that morning. Been hot all week. When I came into the kitchen, my momma, she was drying a dozen glass jars. Holding each up to the light to make sure they sparkled. When she asked if the honeycombs dripped clean overnight, I lied. Said no. See, I was headin' to the quarry to swim. Nothing was gonna stop me. 'Bout then, boss man came 'round, looking for his share of the honey. Ma came on the porch, said, "No honey today." But he kept teasing. Saying he needed him some honey. Pulling her skirt. Then he stopped smiling. He picked her up. Took her inside.*

I heard the table tipping. And all those glass jars breaking on the floor. I blame myself for the bad things that happened that day. I lied. And my ma ... Don't you see? You can never lie. Or bad things happen.

Ask your students to discuss why society takes such a dim view of lying. Can it ever be a good thing to lie? What about a white lie? Where is the line that you shouldn't cross? If they were an older Haywood, looking back, would they stick by his decision not to lie, or would they think differently?

In our lives, most of us have told a lie, done something that we aren't proud of, or that we regret. Ask students to consider this and to try to come up with an example, however small, of something that they would do differently if they had their time again.

Ask them to write a letter to their younger self, giving themself advice with the benefit of hindsight. In that situation, what *should* they have done? They should ensure that their letter explains what happened, as Haywood does, and then looks at the situation with the benefit of historical insight. They should think carefully about the advice that they give.

Some of your students may find this activity difficult, particularly given the personal nature of the letter. Reassure them that their work does not need to be shared with the group if they do not want it to be. However, those that feel comfortable should be encouraged to share their letters.

<u>DRAMA / PERFORMING ARTS / DANCE / ENGLISH / ART & DESIGN / MEDIA & FILM STUDIES</u>

In *The Scottsboro Boys*, the song *Make Friends with the Truth* is a moral tale about a character called Billy who always lies. It's told in the traditional minstrel form of a shadow play.

"The shadow play was oftentimes used in the minstrel form just for fun, it was something that was kind-of theatrical and what we've done with that is played with the image. Behind Haywood singing the song, his shadow is dressed up as Jim Crow. We added to it the artwork of Kara Walker (http://learn.walkerart.org/karawalker), who's a contemporary artist who deals with some very powerful, very grotesque images of the African American existence, especially in the South, all done in silhouette. So we merged all that together, the tradition of the shadow play, which is very much in the minstrel tradition, the image of Jim Crow, which is very much a statement about what the song was about, and then the images of Kara Walker to give it a more contemporary feel.

It's an interesting number because it's very bright, and halfway through the song, in the middle of the shadow play, there's a noose and a little boy is lynched and you're like "Holy crap, did I just see that?" Then the number picks up and it's continuing on

and it's bright and it's polished and fun and by the time you get to the end, you're loving it because they're singing and kicking so well, but what you've seen is very upsetting. So it's kind of an awful moment."

from a conversation between David Thompson, book writer of *The Scottsboro Boys* and Mark Palmer, July 2014

Using an appropriate medium, whether it be drama, dance, physical theatre, prose, art, animation or film, ask students to retell the story of Billy and how he learns his lesson. They do not have to use the words as they are sung in *The Scottsboro Boys*, they can add dialogue of their own, or interpret the story using non-verbal means. However, lyrics are reproduced here as a basis for students to work from.

Students should make sure that they fully understand the twist at the end when St Peter asks Billy to use the back door, particularly the racial connotation of this part of the song in the context of the minstrel form and the social attitudes in America at the time when *The Scottsboro Boys* is set. Ask them to consider when their retelling of the story is going to take place – is it period, or is it contemporary? They will need to interpret the end carefully, to be true to the time period that they decide to set their story in.

They should carefully establish who their audience is and particularly make sure that their work has a very clear moral message for this audience. At the end of their piece Billy must learn his lesson.

Song: MAKE FRIENDS WITH THE TRUTH

BILLY PUT HIS FINGERS IN THE COOKIE JAR, BUT WHEN HIS MOM ACCUSED HIM BILLY LIED
SHE SAID, "BILLY PLEASE 'FESS UP, SON" BUT BILLY SAID, “I TOOK NONE”
HE ATE WHAT HE HAD TAKEN AND HE RAN OUTSIDE
AND THE VERY NEXT DAY, THE VERY NEXT DAY
BILLY'S GOLDFISH DIED
HOLY JEHOSOPHAT!

WHAT DID I LEARN FROM THAT, BACK IN MY DISSOLUTE YOUTH?
WHY BE UNCOOL AND UNCOUTH?
YOU BETTER MAKE FRIENDS WITH THE TRUTH

BILLY BROKE THE WINDSHIELD ON HIS NEIGHBOR'S CAR , BUT BLAMED IT ON HIS COUSIN TIMMY BROWN
ALTHOUGH HIS NEIGHBOURS SPIED IT BILLY STILL DENIED IT
HE SAID, "IT WASN'T ME 'CAUSE I WAS OUT OF TOWN"
AND THE VERY NEXT DAY, THE VERY NEXT DAY
BILLY'S HOUSE BURNED DOWN
HOLY JEHOSOPHAT!

WHAT DID I LEARN FROM THAT, BACK IN MY DISSOLUTE YOUTH?
WHY BE UNCOOL AND UNCOUTH?
YOU BETTER MAKE FRIENDS WITH THE TRUTH

BILLY BOUGHT SOME FIRECRACKERS LAST JULY , BUT TOLD HIS FATHER “I DID NOT” AND THAT WAS THAT
THE DEVIL THEN SUGGESTED “THE CRACKERS SHOULD BE TESTED”
SO BILLY TIED THE CRACKERS TO THE SHERIFF’S CAT THEN THE CRACKERS WENT BOOM
SHERIFF’S KITTY WENT ZOOM
ONCE AGAIN BILLY LIED
SHERIFF’S KITTY WAS FRIED, BILLY’S FUTURE WAS CLINCHED, COUSIN BILLY GOT LYNCHED

OUTSIDE THE PEARLY GATES UP WHERE ST. PETER WAITS BILLY WAS QUESTIONED FORSOOTH

SAINT PETER: DID YOU STEAL THOSE COOKIES?"
BILLY: YES I DID"
SAINT PETER: DID YOU BREAK THAT WINDSHIELD?
BILLY: ‘DEED I DID
SAINT PETER: DID YOU KILL THAT KITTY?
BILLY: 'FRAID I DID
SAINT PETER: HE FINALLY MADE FRIENDS WITH THE TRUTH

BILLY KICKED HIS HEELS AND UP THE STEPS HE FLEW
SO THRILLED TO SEE WHAT HEAVEN HAD IN STORE
BUT WHEN HE KNOCKED THE KNOCKER BILLY GOT A SHOCKER

Saint Peter: Now son, you know you gotta use the back door. And that’s the real truth!

YOU GOTTA MAKE FRIENDS WITH THE TRUTH

CREATIVE INSIGHT: THE MINSTREL SHOW

"During the research, there was an article that talked about how the trials had a feeling of a minstrel show. We thought that's really interesting, because you're taking an essentially extremely racist art form to tell a very racist story. What happens when you bring those two together and how can you make that theatrical? Suddenly, we have a music form we can pull from that can begin to inform how we use music and how we tell our story and give this story a dramatic edge that on one level is very entertaining and on another level very unsettling."

from interview with David Thompson in *The LA Times*, 29th May 2013

"When we stumbled upon the minstrel show form it opened up everything. In a minstrel show you could have the whole company sing, there'd be individual songs and cakewalks, stories can jump all over the place…that gave us the freedom to do something not so linear. At the time these guys were arrested, there were still lots of minstrel shows. I saw several as a kid and even put one together at camp, but they're unabashedly racist. The demeaning nature of these shows becomes a perfect metaphor for the way these guys were treated."

from interview with John Kander by Michael Mellini, *Broadway.com*, October 2010

"Here you have the minstrel show, once the most popular form of entertainment in America, often with white performers in blackface, and all those wildly danceable minstrel songs and you're telling a tragic and ugly story. I found that irresistible. I don't know how to explain this. It's like what Freddy and I did in 'Cabaret' - it's a pretty grim show, but if you use the entertainment style of the Weimar Republic, your audience relaxes because you've entertained them. Then you can say and do things they didn't expect or realize they were going to think about."

from interview with John Kander, *SFGate.com*, 24th June 2012

"The minstrel form itself is a very episodic form, by its very nature it's about "let's hear a song about this, let's do a skit about that, let's move forward and let's tell the next story", and when we started using the minstrel form, when we were investigating that, we realised that it could help us tell a very large story, very swiftly and we use it for that very reason.

When we came up with the idea, Fred Ebb said, and he was right, he said "never pull back on this idea, you have to do it 100%. The minute you pull back on it, or soften it, or try to make it easier for the audience, you're going to lose the right or the privilege to use such a racially charged form. You have to do it 100%.

By the same token, you have to 'entertain' the audience, if you're going to tell a very complicated story. If you don't 'entertain' them (and I put that very softly in quotes), if you're going to 'entertain' them, they will listen.

The form provided a lot of structure and because of that, it felt right. The way that the minstrel show works, the use of The Interlocutor, the 'end men', the use of the chairs, how they function as a piece of scenery and then, more importantly, and this is the important piece of it, through the process of the show, the boys deconstruct that minstrel tradition and flip it on its head. So, at the beginning of the story, they're willing participants in the telling of the piece through the minstrel form, they are minstrels in a minstrel troupe. Throughout the piece, they begin to drop that mask and take control themselves, so that at the very end, in the act of taking off that blackface, which they only wear for about 30 seconds in the closing musical number, they take that off and they leave the stage and they walk away from the piece. They have now taken control of that form, flipped it on its head and rejected it. That becomes another form of their own empowerment, when they reject the form and they leave it.

A minstrel troupe would arrive in town, there would be a parade of music, they would come into town and they would march through the town and everyone would follow them to the theatre and then they would come into the theatre and they would sit on their chairs, in the semi-circle, and The Interlocutor would say "Gentlemen be seated" and the show would begin. And we follow that tradition of all those devices and concepts that were part of the minstrel form. They become the tools that we use to tell the story.

For 100 years in America, from certainly around 1840, maybe a little bit earlier, it was the number one form of how we got our entertainment. There were songs that were written and it was the way we did our comedy. A lot of our dance form came out of it, whether it was the tap dance or the cakewalk, and we were drawn to that form. It wasn't the only form, but it was a very important form in American culture. It continued on through the 50's and the 60's in amateur community groups, church groups would often do their minstrel show, it was very harmless, nobody really saw any problem with it, it wasn't as distasteful as it would become very quickly through the Civil Rights Movement, especially in the 60's. It found its way into American lives in a lot of different ways."

from a conversation between David Thompson, book writer of *The Scottsboro Boys* and Mark Palmer, July 2014

"It's the true appropriation of art, if you will, because the minstrel form is a very American art form, but for the actors in our show, they start out with that form and by the end, they deconstruct the minstrel form in front of the audience. At the beginning of the show, there's a perfect semi-circle, as you would find in a normal minstrel show, but by the end of the show, all the chairs are tipped over and they gracefully walk away from it."

from interview with Susan Stroman by Mark Lawson, *Front Row*, BBC Radio 4

"The minstrel form is what makes it work. If you're looking at a story about 1931, the world where it takes place thought of minstrelsy as entertainment. It was in radio, it was in movies, it was one of the most popular forms of entertainment. Everybody—from high school to church groups to camps—was doing minstrel shows. To do a minstrel show requires a certain sense of how you view yourself and that's how the world viewed itself. To take that out of the equation is to rewrite history. The minstrel form was an exact reflection of what that world in 1931 was thinking was acceptable. On another level, though, on the knee-jerk level, it's a very racist form, and, by combining it with a very racist story, suddenly you've got something that makes them uncomfortable. You should feel uncomfortable when you see nine boys about ready to be executed for rape. So, to me, it was the secret engine of the piece. It constantly entertained the audience, and at the same time made them feel uncomfortable – to me, that's great. It makes people feel something that they're not sure of, they have to think about it, and they have to talk about it. They find themselves laughing at things that they know are inappropriate. They enjoy things like a tap dance, but that makes them also cringe, because they know that it's about an electric chair. It's that crazy thing of making them look at things as if they were fresh for the first time, and I wouldn't change that for anything."

from interview with David Thompson by Tom Matlack, *The Good Men Project*, December 2010

ACTIVITIES

ELECTRIC CHAIR

"[The Brechtian nature of the show] comes naturally out of the minstrel format. There was never any discussion about anything like that. In fact, if you were to say to John [Kander], "how were you influenced by Brecht," he'd look at you like, "really? I'm not really so sure," because it never came as part of the discussion. It's really just a part of how they [Kander and Ebb] wanted to tell the story. So there's never anything deliberate about it being this way, or being that way, just about what's the best way to tell the story.

In their style, they're always looking to entertain you, but at the same time, at the end, surprise you with what they've just told you. I think that's their brilliance. In so many of their pieces there's a form used to tell the story. If you're looking at something like Cabaret, we're in a cabaret club; if you look at Chicago, we're in a vaudeville theatre; you look at Kiss of the Spider Woman, we're inside a Spanish cinema so you have this framework that helps to justify how you're using music to tell that story.

In The Scottsboro Boys, the music always comes out of a minstrel tradition. So suddenly, everything in that score makes sense and because it's in the minstrel form, suddenly we have a duality that's built into the numbers. The Brecht question is a hard question to answer because I don't think it was ever overtly intentional, but by the same token, the observation is correct."

from a conversation between David Thompson, book writer of *The Scottsboro Boys* and Mark Palmer, July 2014

<u>DRAMA / PERFORMING ARTS</u>

Ask your students to consider which aspects of *The Scottsboro Boys* they would consider to be Brechtian, and which, perhaps, could be considered to be anti-Brechtian. Ask them to consider *verfrumdunkseffekt*. In what ways do Kander and Ebb 'distance' the audience, reminding them that they are watching a play and not a slice of 'real life'? How does this fit with the fact that *The Scottsboro Boys* is a true story?

In groups of 5, ask your students to create a role play that features, in the centre of the stage, an electric chair. They should aim to include as many Brechtian techniques as possible, but certainly narration, a non-linear narrative, multi-role play and humour. The stimulus for their work is the following lyrics from *The Scottsboro Boys*:

JUST TO HEAR THAT SIZZLIN' SOUND
PEOPLE COME FROM MILES AROUND.
MOM AND DAD GET CRAMMED INSIDE
WHILE THEIR SONNY BOY'S ELECTRIFIED

Allow them some time to rehearse and then spotlight examples that are particularly successful in highlighting Brechtian techniques.

Next, in the same groups, ask students to create a role play that is naturalistic, as much a recreation of real life as they can achieve. They should use any drama techniques with which they are familiar, to help to tell their story. The electric chair remains the centrepiece of the stage. The stimulus for this piece of work is the following two lines of dialogue from *The Scottsboro Boys*:

GUARD 2: *Hey, little boy. Are you curious 'bout what's that smell coming from the other side of that door?*

GUARD 1: *We electrified two boys just last night. Their bodies are still in there.*

As before, allow some time for rehearsal and development and then spotlight examples that are particularly successful in adopting the naturalistic style.

Finally, having watched examples in both styles, ask students to discuss what they think of the different approaches to the same subject matter. Which is more successful? Which is more engaging? Which is more disturbing? Which makes you think?

Following your visit to see *The Scottsboro Boys*, ask students to consider how the electric chair scene is approached in the play and how Brecht's ideas are used and how they make the audience feel.

<u>MUSIC / PERFORMING ARTS</u>

The Brechtian nature of *The Scottsboro Boys* becomes clear in songs such as *Electric Chair*, in which an apparently cheerful musical number contains lyrics that are designed to stop the audience getting emotionally involved with the characters, reminding them that they are watching a piece of theatre and making them question what is really going on in the scene. Ask your students to consider the following lyrics:

IT'S NOT EV'RY GUY
GETS TO LIGHT UP THE SKY
WHAT A FABULOUS WAY
A FAB-YU-ABULOUS WAY
TO DIE

How do these lyrics achieve the aim of making the audience question what's going on? How does it make them feel to juxtapose a bright, upbeat song, with a serious subject and lyrics that seem to work against what's really going on?

Ask your students to select an upbeat, up tempo song that they are familiar with, and then to change the lyrics to create the effect that Kander and Ebb achieve in *Electric Chair*. Provide them with the following selection of themes from *The Scottsboro Boys* that could become the subject of their song:

LIFE IN AN ALABAMA PRISON
BEING ACCUSED OF SOMETHING THAT YOU DIDN'T DO
BEING SCARED
BEING SINGLED OUT BECAUSE OF THE WAY THAT YOU LOOK

Allow your students some creative time to compose their new lyrics and then share them with the class. For each, consider how well they achieve the aim of making the audience question, and maybe even making them feel uncomfortable. If you have the facilities, you could record some of the most successful songs, perhaps using instrumental or karaoke tracks from YouTube, or using small groups of talented students to record the music.

<u>DANCE / DRAMA / PERFORMING ARTS</u>

Form your class into a circle and place a chair in the centre. One by one, ask your students to make contact with the chair, creating an interesting action as they touch it. Next, ask them to do the same again, but this time they are going to imagine that they get a small electric shock from the chair. They should not make their reaction to this too big, probably just unexpected at this stage.

Now, ask them to return to the chair, but this time consider the movement that they will use to get to the chair and the fact that they have already received a small electric shock from it. They are bound to be wary, but whatever happens they *must* touch the chair again. When they are ready, they should do so, and this time they are going to receive a massive electric shock. Ask them to consider both their physical and emotional reaction to this shock, particularly given that they already had an idea that something might happen when they approached the chair because of what had happened to them previously.

Divide your class into small groups of around 3 and provide them with the following lyrics from *The Scottsboro Boys*:

OH, THE JUICE RUNS THROUGH YOU
AND YOU START TO SHAKE
IT'S A KIND OF TAP DANCE
BUT YOU AIN'T AWAKE

Ask them to use these lyrics as a stimulus for a piece of choreographed dance or physical theatre work that has the electric chair as its centrepiece. They can select the style that they would like to use, perhaps a specific dance style such as jazz, or their own choice of movement and expression.

The teacher should decide on an appropriate piece of music to accompany the piece, or use *Electric Chair* from *The Scottsboro Boys.*

DRAMA / DANCE / PERFORMING ARTS / ENGLISH / ART & DESIGN

The electric chair sequence in *The Scottsboro Boys* forms part of Eugene's nightmare. Share the following text with your students – it is taken from Clarence Norris's autobiography, *Last of the Scottsboro Boys* (1979):

"It was near midnight when they took him out of his cell. He went around and shook hands with all the prisoners and wished them luck. He walked through the green door and they killed him. I couldn't see into the room where they had the electric chair, but I could hear every word and sound just like I was there with them. They turned the juice on him twice and it was all over. No one came to get his body – few bodies were ever claimed."

This powerful and disturbing description tells us what the 9 Scottsboro Boys would have seen and heard on many occasions during their incarceration. Eugene, as one of the youngest boys, must have been particularly affected by this experience.

David Thompson, book writer of *The Scottsboro Boys*, describes how this idea became a sequence in the show:

"The guards would taunt the boys and Clarence talks about the smell of the electrocution, the lights browning out and how terrifying that was. The idea for us was, if this was happening at night, and you've got this little boy in jail who's 13 years old, how terrifying that must be, knowing that this is going on. Sometimes the guards would march the boys and sit them on the electric chair, then laugh and take them back. There's something very real, it happened, it's the way that they were treated and how horrifying that was. So we thought, ok let's make this his nightmare."

from a conversation with Mark Palmer, July 2014

Ask your students to consider these events from Eugene's perspective. How must he have felt? Ask them to discuss in pairs how they could describe his feelings and his fear.

For students in the Creative Arts, using their specialist discipline, ask them to create a piece of theatre that explores Eugene's nightmare. Their work should be non-naturalistic and should include at least two of the following lines from *The Scottsboro Boys*, which can be repeated as many times as they like:

"I gotta get out of here!"
"I ain't dying for a lie!"
"Come on now, let's take him for a little walk."
"I gotta go home to my momma!"
"It was just a nightmare, kid!"
"Why ain't nobody listening?"
"May the Lord have mercy on your soul."

For English students, ask them to create a piece of creative writing in the style of their choice (creative writing, poetry, a letter, for instance), that explores Eugene's thoughts, feelings and nightmares. For those that are most able, ask them to do so in as abstract a way as possible, in an attempt to reflect the non-linear nature of a nightmare.

Ask art students to use the same stimulus material to create an abstract piece of artwork, in their specialist art form. Again, it should reflect the world of Eugene's nightmares and should utilise one or more of the dialogue lines above.

CREATIVE INSIGHT: THE PRODUCTION

"It's profoundly entertaining, it's very inventive, very theatrical: London loves amazing theatre and this is a piece of amazing theatre."

"This isn't your typical subject matter for a musical which makes it so intriguing, and a lot of people don't know about the Scottsboro Boys – I didn't know about the Scottsboro boys before I did the musical. It's a very nasty part of American history, but because of this musical, we're bringing these boys back to life and we're telling their story in the right way. I think the wonderful thing about this show is that people don't walk away from it and not talk about it or think about it – they Google it, they want to learn more, and I think it's so great."

"You arrive not really knowing what to expect, so you don't know what you're getting – you'll laugh, you'll cry and you'll be thoroughly entertained when you get out and you'll be talking about it for days."

"Everyone was so sensitive about this material and this mission to tell the story became less of an artistic thing, I think we all became activists as well. So we're all out there, all together as a team and putting that across the footlights, and I think people receive it as such."

from interviews with 2013 Young Vic cast members Forrest McClendon (Mr Tambo), Colman Domingo (Mr Bones), Christian Dante-White (Charlie Weems) and Emile Ruddock (Willie Roberson) for WhatsOnStage.com, September 2013

"The Scottsboro Boys *is a masterwork, both daring and highly entertaining. The book, score and staging are so organically linked, you can't imagine one without the others.*

The stroke of genius — and the word feels right here — was to stage the piece like a traditional minstrel show with an [almost] all-black cast.

Using only some chairs to suggest a train, a jail and a courtroom, [Susan] Stroman follows minstrel conventions to tell the story. Juxtaposing deep emotions and often exaggerated gestures, she creates a mood that feels straight out of Brecht and Weill. Paradoxically, this makes the piece feel incredibly modern. It's certainly more provocative than most self-consciously "edgy" rock musicals, as the creative team and its fearless, irreproachable ensemble constantly push the audience to the brink of discomfort — while dishing out one catchy number after another.

There's nothing Kander and Ebb won't dare to do as they explore pet issues such as justice as spectacle and the corruption of the American dream. Here, they apply their signature musical style to some stupefying scenes in which razzle-dazzle rubs elbows with tragedy."

Elizabeth Vincentelli, *Ugly prejudice, dazzling drama*, New York Post, 11th March 2010

"When Stro [Susan Stroman] does her choreography, it's never about putting steps into songs, it's about making it very believable, in terms of how it fits into the story and the characters. She started by drawing on all the dance forms that would have been appropriate in 1931, so you're looking at tap dancing, the soft shoe, ragtime, snake hips, different dance steps and moves, the cakewalk in particular, being very important to the minstrel tradition. She wasn't restricted to it. She wasn't living in that world specifically, but it all comes from what would have been organic from that period of time and from the minstrel tradition itself. So, from there, it was interesting because she makes all of the actors look like they're dancers by giving them choreography that's very organic to the numbers themselves. It definitely came from what would have been that dance tradition in the early 30's.

We were very careful not to use the 'n' word – we never used it, even though it was almost built into all of the transcripts – it just wasn't necessary. We were very careful not to get too much racial language built into it. In a way there's almost more power in the fear of the language than in the language itself. There was no reason to go and guild the lily on that and make it even worse, so we didn't. We talked about it, and the actors even sometimes wondered why it wasn't in there, and we were like, 'we just don't need it, we don't need to go there.'

Whether we were in San Francisco, or Minneapolis, or Los Angeles, it [the show] was received in exactly the way you'd want, which is an intelligent theatre audience coming in and being willing to go with you on that story, let us take you to a place that might be difficult or unexpected. I think a British audience, in their theatrical traditions, are usually willing to go there and we found that at the Young Vic and it was exciting, it was great. There were probably chapters of [American] history that they didn't necessarily understand and there were moments in the piece that they probably didn't really get – there's a reference to George Wallace half way through the show and I'm sure nobody understood who the hell he was [the scene features a little boy selling souvenirs, who turns out to be a young George Wallace, a staunch segregationist but later the Governor of Alabama who signed the pardon of Clarence Norris]. We thought about changing it, but then we thought 'no, let's just keep it as it is.'

When we did the first reading, it turned out that it was on the first day after Obama was elected. Obama was elected Tuesday night and on Wednesday the country couldn't believe that we had a black President. On that same morning, we had gathered together a group of African American actors to start doing the first reading of The Scottsboro Boys*. Crazy, crazy coincidence. At the time we thought, 'are we in a post racial world? Have we now resolved a lot of these issues? Have they already been answered?' Of course, very quickly, in the days and the years that followed, we realised that we aren't and that they haven't.*

More than anything, that is what has always been very rewarding about the piece. When it is over, audiences find themselves in conversations that they never would have had with people that they never would have had conversations with. It's about that conversation. If you can have it, then you can continue to move the needle on – on issues of race – and be successful. Unless you start talking, you can't have it."

from a conversation between David Thompson, book writer of *The Scottsboro Boys* and Mark Palmer, July 2014

ACTIVITIES

GO BACK HOME

When we started working on the piece, The Lady wasn't part of it. However, we knew that it was important to show that what happened to the Scottsboro Boys meant something and that it moved people to do things, it pushed things forward and had a forward momentum – it wasn't just a miserable story, it actually made a difference.

When we were doing research, we realised that Rosa Parks had been very much influenced by the Scottsboro Boys – she met her husband during the rallies, she spent time raising money for the Scottsboro Boys' defence. She was there.

So we thought, when she was sitting there on that bench, and she was waiting for that bus, when that moment happened, when she made that choice, there were so many chapters in her life that were informing a moment that probably was not a deliberate choice, but was an inevitable choice. When we looked at that, we thought why not let's look at the story of the Scottsboro boys through the lens of Rosa Parks. Let's put her into this.

Very quickly it became clear that The Lady is not just *Rosa Parks. She plays more of a silent witness to history and it's deliberate to make sure that the audience thinks at different times that she represents different people. She's very much Haywood's mother; the mother of the boys; she could just be a passer-by. She's part of this, serving as our eyes into the story – when the boys are pained, she's pained. At the end, when you realise that she's become Rosa Parks, it should feel like the final tumbler clicks into place.*

It's a very silent piece, but it actually becomes incredibly important to help the audience better understand what's happening. If someone gets punched on stage, she's the one who offers them a handkerchief; if someone's coat is ripped, she's the one who sews it; she's the one who brings them a cake. So it's very subtle, it's a tiny thing, but I think it actually helps the whole piece to lift off a little bit, so you're not always looking for everything to add up, you're willing to hold all sorts of different parts up in the air as you're watching it, till it all comes together at the end.

There's so much going on, everyone keeps changing roles; the boys are now playing girls; the two end men are playing guards; now they're lawyers; and everybody's shape shifting all over the place but there's this one constant and it's her. She's the one who just moves through it and at the end she's the one who carries that lesson forward.

from a conversation between David Thompson, book writer of *The Scottsboro Boys* and Mark Palmer, July 2014

DRAMA / PERFORMING ARTS / HISTORY

Watch the following video clip with your students, which tells the story of Rosa Parks' famous bus protest, beginning at the very last moment of *The Scottsboro Boys*. Her peaceful protest and her subsequent arrest is credited with sparking the Montgomery Bus Boycott , becoming an important landmark for the Civil Rights Movement.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/clips/p019r2yw

Now, divide your students into groups of 4. In a series of four tableaux, ask your students to recreate the events on the bus, with Rosa refusing to give up her seat to a white man.

Allow some time for your students to create their tableaux and then watch them in a 'loop' (each image is held for approximately five seconds and then changed to the next image, giving the effect of a 'live' stop frame animation). The Rosa Parks song from the link above would work well as a backing to this performance. Following the last image, students should return to the first image and go through their sequence a second time.

Next, join two groups together. One group is going to recreate their 'loop' of still images. The other is going to create a soundscape to go alongside the still images. They will then swap over and repeat the exercise. They should create a non-naturalistic soundscape that builds up to a crescendo in the middle of which Rosa Parks is a quiet oasis. What sounds / echoes from history (in our past or in her present) might be appropriate here?

They could use some of the lyrics from *The Scottsboro Boys* to help to bring their pieces to life. For instance:

YOU CAN'T DO ME
LIKE YOU DONE ME
LIKE YOU DID ME BEFORE

DO NOT POKE ME
OR PROVOKE ME
I AIN'T GONNA TAKE IT ANYMORE
I WON'T STAND STILL
MY HANDS IN MY POCKETS WHAT WAS A WHISPER
IS NOW A ROAR

YOU CAN'T DO ME
LIKE YOU DONE ME
LIKE YOU DID ME BEFORE

WE WON'T STAND STILL
OUR HANDS IN OUR POCKETS WHAT WAS A WHISPER
IS NOW A ROAR

THEY CAN'T DO US
LIKE THEY DONE US
LIKE THEY DID US BEFORE

Whatever they decide, they should aim for maximum impact on their audience. Perform each piece to the whole class and then discuss which combination of still images and soundscape has been the most effective and why.

DRAMA / PERFORMING ARTS / HISTORY / DANCE

In *The Scottsboro Boys*, the very simple set is based on the traditional look of a minstrel show, framed by three staggered proscenium arches. Locations are changed by the simple device of moving the 9 chairs into different positions to create, for instance, the freight train, a jail cell and a courthouse.

Ask your students to study the timeline on pages 6-15 that gives a historical context to the story of the Scottsboro Boys. Using the timeline, they should select six events. These six events can be selected to meet their own criteria, either a snapshot of history, or a more overarching summary of events.

They should then select one or more of the following techniques to create their own performance, covering the six events that they have chosen:

STILL IMAGE
ROLE PLAY
PHYSICAL THEATRE
MOVEMENT
NARRATION
DANCE

As well as considering how to tell their stories, they should also think very carefully about how to show that time has passed. As in *The Scottsboro Boys*, they will need to come up with a convention to ensure that their audience doesn't get lost and can follow the events clearly.

Allow some time for the groups to create their work and then spotlight the most successful pieces. Ask students to discuss the effectiveness of the storytelling, particularly the device used to show that time has passed.

ENGLISH / RELIGIOUS EDUCATION / PSHE / DRAMA / PERFORMING ARTS / ART & DESIGN

Arguably credited to Roman Naval Commander Pliny the Elder, formerly Gaius Plinius Secundus (23-79AD), the proverb *"home is where the heart is"* certainly rang true to Haywood in *The Scottsboro Boys*.

Ask your students to close their eyes and relax – drama students may wish to lie on the floor, students in classrooms with desks may wish to lay their heads on their tables. Play them Haywood's haunting song *Go Back Home* from *The Scottsboro Boys*.

http://www.scottsboromusicallondon.com/music/

Play them the song for a second time, but this time, ask them to follow the lyrics as they are sung on the recording by Brandon Victor Dixon.

LYING ALL ALONE, I'M THINKIN'
STARING AT THE STARS, I WONDER
SINCE I BEEN AWAY, I'M LONELY
WHEN I'M GONNA GO BACK HOME

WALKING THROUGH THE WORLD, THINGS HAPPEN
RIGHT BEFORE YOUR EYES, THINGS HAPPEN
SOON ENOUGH YOU'RE LOST, AND THINKIN'
WHEN I'M GONNA GO BACK HOME

OH ME, OH MY TIME GOES SLOW
WHERE'S IT GONE TO I DON'T KNOW, BUT

MAYBE TIMES WILL TURN, I PRAY SO
MAYBE SOMEDAY I'LL GET LUCKY
SOMEONE'S GONNA SAY 'ALL RIGHT SON,
TAKE THE TRAIN AND GO BACK HOME
HOP A FREIGHT AND GO BACK HOME'

In pairs, ask them to discuss what home means to them and what they think it meant to Haywood. His time in jail clearly heightened his longing for the love and security that home provides – a home he was never to see again as a free man.

Ask your students to create their own representation of home, as they see it. They should consider Haywood's perspective and see whether they can apply a similar 'distance' to their own ideas. For instance, thinking about a home where they have lived previously, where they were happy. Or a holiday home that they have visited and met up with family members that they don't see very often. Their representation could be a piece of movement or drama, a piece of artwork, or a

piece of poetry or creative writing. It should be unashamedly rose-tinted and entirely positive, with just a dash of sentimentality.

Share the work of a selection of students and discuss their responses. Finally, ask them to put themselves in Haywood's shoes and to consider how they would feel if the thing that they have identified in their work were taken away from them, if they were never allowed to go back. Can they adapt their work to include these emotions and this possibility? How does this impact the work and change the way it looks and is received by others?

DANCE / PERFORMING ARTS

The Lady is an observer throughout *The Scottsboro Boys*, a silent witness to history, but also very specifically Haywood's mother, the mother of all of the boys, and finally, on the bus, Rosa Parks.

Following your visit to see *The Scottsboro Boys*, ask students to consider the role that The Lady plays in the song *You Can't Do Me*, in which Haywood is handcuffed and dances a soft-shoe. In a poignant moment, she joins Haywood's dance, shadowing every step and every move. What is the idea behind this and what is its effect on the audience?

In pairs, ask your students to create their own choreography to a number of their choice. They should aim to tell the story of a central character, whose movements are shadowed in the background by another character. Who is that second character and what is their purpose in the dance? Is the character representing a parent, a grandparent, a friend, or maybe even the shadow of the focused dancer.

Ask your students to explore what happens if the shadow character deliberately breaks the steps for a moment, perhaps slowing down, or dancing off-beat. How does this change the dynamic between the two characters and what is the effect on the audience?

GLOSSARY

THE CAKEWALK — A dance that originated in the slave plantations in the Southern United States, it was a mainstay in minstrel shows in the late 19th century.

CHIGGER — A harvest mite from the Trombiculidae family that lives in the grasslands of North America.

HOBO — An itinerant worker, a homeless vagabond who moves around to find work. The term probably originated in the Northwestern United States around 1890.

ILD — The International Labor Defense, established around 1925 as an off-shoot of the communist Workers Party of America in an attempt to coordinate its legal defence activities.

JIM CROW — A blackface character created around 1828 by Thomas Rice. Based on an old black slave whom Rice had observed, his performance developed to be exaggerated and highly stereotypical. So well-known was his character, that its name was used to describe the racial segregation laws adopted in the United States between 1876 and 1965 (The Jim Crow Laws), often erroneously lauded as *"separate but equal".*

JULEP — An alcoholic drink made up mainly of mint (often spearmint) and bourbon (whiskey).

KEESTER — North American informal word meaning 'bottom', as in 'slapped me on the bottom'.

KKK — The Ku Klux Klan, formed in Tennessee in 1865, the group sought to restore white supremacy through threats, violence and murder.

LYNCHING — The practice of killing people without trial, with justice meted out, usually by an angry mob. The practice was common, particularly in the Southern US following the Civil War, and particularly as the Civil Rights movement began to grow.

NAACP — The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, founded in 1909.

ZANUCK — Richard Zanuck (1934-2012), an American film producer, most famous for the film *Driving Miss Daisy*.

RESOURCES AND LINKS

BOOKS

Stories of Scottsboro by James Goodman
ISBN: 978-0679761594
Vintage Books, 1995

The Scottsboro Boys in Their Own Words: Selected Letters, 1931-1950
Edited by Kwando Mbiassi Kinshasa
ISBN: 978-0786472048
McFarland & Co Inc, 2013

Scottsboro Boy by Haywood Patterson and Earl Conrad
Gollancz, 1950

Last of the Scottsboro Boys by Clarence Norris and Sybil D. Washington
ISBN: 978-0399120183
Putnam, 1979

Scottsboro: A Tragedy of the American South by Dan T Carter
ISBN: 978-0807132883
Louisiana State University Press, 2007

Gentlemen, Be Seated! by Marc A. Bauch
ISBN: 978-3656086369
GRIN Verlag, 2013

Blacking Up: Minstrel Show in Nineteenth Century America by Robert C. Toll
ISBN: 978-0195018202
Oxford University Press, 1975

Rosa Parks: My Story by Rosa Parks and Jim Haskins
ISBN: 978-0141301204
Puffin, 1999

CD

The Scottsboro Boys by John Kander, Fred Ebb and David Thompson
Original off-Broadway Cast
Jay Records, 2010

WEBSITES

http://www.scottsboromusicallondon.com/
Official website of the London production of The Scottsboro Boys

http://scottsboromusical.com/
Official website of the Broadway run of The Scottsboro Boys

http://www.scottsboro-boys.org/
Official website of the Scottsboro Boys Museum and Cultural Centre in Alabama

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/scottsboro/
PBS website to support the American documentary 'Scottsboro, An American Tragedy'

http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/FTrials/scottsboro/scottsb.htm
Details of the chronology and trials of the Scottsboro boys

http://www.act-sf.org/content/dam/act/education_department/words_on_plays/The%20Scottsboro%20Boys%20Words%20on%20Plays%20(2012).pdf
American Conservatory Theater, Word on Plays series, The Scottsboro Boys

http://www.guthrietheater.org/sites/default/files/playguide_Scottsboro.pdf
Guthrie Theater playguide on The Scottsboro Boys