

Teaching the odd couple

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There are many things to be considered when deciding whether a play should be taught to high school juniors in class.

One play that should be taught to high school juniors is *The Odd Couple* by Neil Simon. It is about two conflicting roommates: Felix, the clean one, and Oscar, the messy one who live in an apartment in New York City together. The plot revolves around their interactions with each other and their interactions with their friends. This play should be taught in class to high school juniors because it would grab the attention of the students with Simon's constant humor and wit. When deciding whether to teach a play to high school juniors in class, a person should determine whether the play meets these three requirements: will a class be able to have quality discussions regarding the play; will the play contain enough content for the teacher to be able to teach the students important concepts; and will the play grab the attention and interest of the students. If a play meets all of these criteria, it should be taught in class.

There are many elements in literature that add to class discussion; These discussions offer a great value to teachers and students. The topics discussed usually go into great detail, offer many new perspectives, and reveal details in the work of literature that were previously missed. A class cannot have a quality discussion if the play doesn't have enough content that is open to discussion. *The Odd Couple* does have enough content to have a quality discussion; It gives the reader many things to wonder about or think about. The play is not only a comedy but it is also a character study. This is where the play lends itself to discussion.

Classes can have quality discussions about each character or setting, and they can also discuss how the play was written. In An Overview of The Odd Couple, critic Terry Nienhuis comments: For example, in the play's initial poker scene Murray chides Oscar for not paying his alimony, asking Oscar if it doesn't bother him that his kids might not have enough to eat, and Oscar retorts: " Murray, Poland could live for a year on what my kids leave over from lunch!" This exaggeration takes us by surprise on many levels and can cause wild laughter in a typical audience. Psychologically, we probably are also laughing because we recognize that alongside the surprising incongruity there is a certain truth to Oscar's remark—that Oscar's wife still has plenty of money and that American children are very frequently spoiled. (Nienhuis, P. 4) This shows that there is a level complexity in The Odd Couple.

It requires a person to think in order to understand all of the symbolism that Neil Simon has written into the play. The Odd Couple is a great play to have a discussion about because in the example above, every student is going to have a slightly different perspective and that is what makes a great discussion. It is because of the fact that The Odd Couple lends itself to a great discussion that the play should be taught in class to high school juniors. When considering whether to teach a play to high school juniors, a person ought to determine whether the play contains enough content for the teacher to be able to teach the students important concepts. Neil Simon's complex plot in The Odd Couple offers many things for teachers to teach their students. The Odd Couple lesson plan contains a variety of teaching materials that cater to all learning styles.

Inside you'll find 30 Daily Lessons, 20 Fun Activities, 180 Multiple Choice Questions, 60 Short Essay Questions, 20 Essay Questions, Quizzes/Homework Assignments, Tests, and more. The lesson and activities will help students gain an intimate understanding of the text, while the tests and quizzes will help you evaluate how well the students have grasped the material. (" The Odd Couple Lesson Plans for Teachers.", P. 1) This shows that there is an abundance of material for the teachers to use to teach the students and test the students on their understanding of the material. When a class reads a play that does not offer enough material for the teachers to teach their students, the time it took for the class to read the play was wasted; if the class had instead read a play such as The Odd Couple, they would have learned new concepts or they would have reinforced their understanding of the concepts.

It is because of the fact that The Odd Couple offers many activities for the teacher to assign and as a result it should be taught in class to high school juniors. An education is only effective if the person who is being taught is interested in and intrigued by the material being taught. The Odd Couple's persistent humor and the comic one-liners give the play a very intriguing dynamic. After its long run on Broadway, The Odd Couple was turned into a successful film in 1968 and then became a popular television series (on the American Broadcasting Company network) running from 1970 to 1975. Thus, Oscar Madison and Felix Ungar, the " odd couple" of the title, were steadily prominent in the popular entertainment industry for ten years and, as a result, became a part of American culture.

... The television show is still syndicated in reruns, the movie version appears frequently on television, and regional and local theatre groups mount productions of the play with great regularity. (Overview: The Odd Couple.

“, P. 1) The fact that this play has become part of the American culture, was made into a movie and a TV show, and is still produced by regional and local theatre groups just goes to show how popular, liked, and well thought of this play is; When a play is this popular, liked, and well thought of, it grabs the attention of the student reading the play. It is because of the fact that The Odd Couple has become immensely popular and thus grabs the attention of the students reading it that it should be taught to high school juniors. The Odd Couple should be taught to high school juniors because it meets the three criteria a person should consider when deciding whether to teach a play to high school juniors or not: classes can have a quality discussions on topics related to The Odd Couple; The Odd Couple contains enough content for teachers to be able to teach their students important concepts; and The Odd Couple will grab the attention of the students. By meeting these three considerations, The Odd Couple, insures that the students will benefit from being taught this play in class. That is why this play should be taught to high school juniors.

Works Cited: Nienhuis, Terry. “ An overview of The Odd Couple.” Drama for Students. Detroit: Gale. Literature Resource Center.

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