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Imprint: Writing Lessons

French Canadian Writers: Michel Tremblay

Duration:

8 minutes (approx.)

Program Description:

Interview with Quebec author & playwright Michel Tremblay, once an avowed sovereigntist who now says he no longer believes in Quebec sovereignty. He first became famous with his play *Les Belles-Soeurs*, which was followed by a full cycle of plays, including the much-played *Hosanna*. His novels include *The Fat Woman Next Door is Pregnant* and *The First Quarter of the Moon*.

This segment would be appropriate in a unit of Drama.

Background Information:

BPN: 883432

"Literary gold from the Imprint archives"

Writing Lessons is a magazine-style archival series with links to creative writing and Canadian literature curricula. Based on TVO's long-running books and writers series *Imprint*, *Writing Lessons* features a lively mix of interviews, literary panels, mini-documentaries, author profiles, and on-the-street features that will engage students and enhance their study of creative writing or English literature.

For more on Imprint's Writing Lessons, please visit www.tvo.org/imprint

For more on TVO teacher resources, please visit Learn with TVO at
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Lisa Fernandes at lfernandes@tventario.org

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Curriculum Connections:

ENGLISH

EWC 4U0 The Writer's Craft

Investigating the Writer's Craft

Understanding the Writer's Craft

- analyze interviews with and articles by a variety of writers about the craft and practice of writing to increase knowledge of the techniques, skills, and processes of writing
- analyze selected works and articles by writers from around the world to assess their practices and beliefs about writing

Practising the Writer's Craft

Producing Effective Writing

- write frequently for various purposes, including exploring ideas, feelings, and experiences; responding to the writing of others; and making inferences about the craft of writing
- use information and ideas generated by research, discussion, reflection, reading, viewing, and exploratory writing to develop the content of written work

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Pre-Viewing

Answer the following questions in small groups. Be prepared to share your group responses with the class.

1. In your opinion, what makes a play interesting to watch?
2. What makes a play memorable?
3. What makes a play outlast its own era?
4. What responsibility does the playwright have to his/her culture or society?
5. What are the advantages of live theatre over film? What are its disadvantages?
6. Is there a future for live theatre in our media-driven society?

Viewing Questions:

Please see BLM 1 for a photocopy-ready student worksheet.

Post-Viewing/Assessment:

Follow-up Journal Entry:

Answer the following questions based upon ideas from your group discussion and the material presented in the interview with Michel Tremblay.

1. How were Tremblay's opinions similar to or different from your group's opinions?
2. Which of Tremblay's insights had the most profound impact upon you? Why?
3. How might his ideas influence your own play writing efforts?
4. If you were to become a successful playwright, what would you want to be remembered for? Explain.

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Related Resources

“Canadian Theatre Encyclopedia: Michel Tremblay”

<http://www.canadiantheatre.com/dict.pl?term=Michel+Tremblay>

“Playwright: Michel Tremblay”

<http://www.stage-door.org/authors/tremblay.htm>

“The Great Names of the French Canadian Community: Michel Tremblay”

http://edimage.ca/edimage/grandspersonnages/en/carte_j06.html

Catron, Louis E. The Elements of Playwriting. New York: Collier Books, 1994.

Egri, Lajos. The Art of Dramatic Writing: Its Basis in the Creative Interpretation of Human Motives. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1960.

Frome, Shelly. Playwriting: a Complete Guide to Creating Theater. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1990.

Packard, William. The Art of the Playwright: Creating the Magic of Theatre. New York: Paragon House Publishers, 1987.

Pike, Frank and Thomas G. Dunn. The Playwright’s Handbook. New York: New American Library, 1985.

Van Itallie, Jean Claude. The Playwright’s Workbook. New York: Applause Theatre Book Publishers, 1997.

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