

2012-2013
SEASON
FOR young
PEOPLE



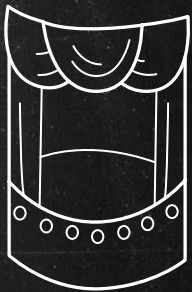
HOT SEASON FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
2012-2013
TEACHER GUIDEBOOK

Cranked

Green Thumb Theatre



Kyle Cameron/ Photo by David Cooper Photography



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A Note from our Sponsor

For over 125 years Regions has been proud to be a part of the Middle Tennessee community, growing and thriving as our area has. From the opening of our doors on September 1, 1883, we have committed to this community and our customers.

One area that we are strongly committed to is the education of our students. We are proud to support TPAC's Humanities Outreach in Tennessee Program. What an important sponsorship this is – reaching over 25,000 students and teachers – some students would never see a performing arts production without this program. Regions continues to reinforce its commitment to the communities it serves and in addition to supporting programs such as HOT, we have close to 200 associates teaching financial literacy in classrooms this year.

Thank you, teachers, for giving your students this wonderful opportunity. They will certainly enjoy the experience. You are creating memories of a lifetime, and Regions is proud to be able to help make this opportunity possible.



Jim Schmitz
Executive Vice President
Area Executive
Middle Tennessee Area



CRANKED

By Green Thumb Theatre

Dear Teachers,

Thank you for choosing to bring your students to *Cranked*. With partners like you, we are confident that this experience will open the door for meaningful conversations about the realities of addiction and the horrific dangers of meth use.

The news reports and statistics are sobering, and yet the manufacture and use of methamphetamine persists and grows closer than we want to believe. It endangers not only the users, but also neighbors, children and communities who are unaware of the signs and hazards.

A recent editorial published in the Tennessean noted:

“Our state, sadly, is in the thick of this problem. Tennessee has for years vied with Missouri as the rural meth capital of the world. Now, authorities are seizing meth labs in and around Nashville at triple the rate of just a few years ago.”

Expressions of concern over societal issues and personal stories of tragedy and redemption are not new to the arts. And forms of artful communication continue to evolve. TPAC Education is proud to bring the artistry and expertise of Green Thumb Theatre to our audience for this eye-opening performance that masterfully addresses such a relevant topic.

Sincerely,

TPAC Education

CRANKED

Guidebook for Teachers

Written by Amanda Cantrell Roche
Susan Sanders, General Editor

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CRANKED

Cranked is the story of Stan, aka “definition,” a fictional recovering teenage meth addict and rapper who blew his first big chance at commercial success through addiction to methamphetamine. The story is told by one actor through first-person narration, dialogue, and freestyle and rap performances. The storyline weaves between past and present as the recovering “definition” recounts the challenges which led him to meth addiction and the horrific journey and nearly



fatal accident that landed him in recovery. This gritty performance utilizes slang, rap music, some profanities and gripping descriptions of meth addiction to deliver a powerful warning against meth use, as well as hope for recovery. Actor Kyle Cameron is accompanied by DJ Joel Etkin.



Playwright Michael P. Northey

Cranked was written by Michael P. Northey, a Canadian actor and playwright with multiple theater, television and film credits. He grew up in Surrey, Canada, a mid-sized city which was named the car theft capital of North America in 2002. In 2005, a school board survey indicated that nearly nine percent of high school students in Surrey had used meth, and that four percent of eighth graders had used meth more than once a week. These alarming results are significantly higher than average meth use in that time frame for American middle and high school students.

Green Thumb Theatre

In the nearly four decades since its founding, Vancouver-based Green Thumb Theatre has grown from a company devoted to bringing entertaining theater to Canadian children to a group focusing on hard-hitting social issues for youth, and reaching four million audience members in tours of the United States, Mexico, Europe, Hong Kong, Singapore and Australia.



Green Thumb Theatre creates and produces plays that explore social issues relevant to the lives of children, youth and young adults. Their mission is to provide theatre that celebrates the language and stories of today’s generation and culture to stimulate empathy, debate and critical thinking.

Q & A for Teachers

(Most likely your students will know this information.)

What is freestyle and how is it different from hip hop or rap?

Freestyle is a form of rap that is improvised with little or no preparation, but which usually rhymes, has a strong rhythm and plays on words. It can be set to backbeats or performed *a cappella* and requires lightning-fast thinking on one's feet.

What is a freestyle rap battle?

A freestyle rap battle is when two rappers face off, taking turns improvising raps that often inflate themselves and degrade their opponent. A winner is frequently chosen by judges or audience vote in formal battles in venues. They can also occur on streets, in parking lots or wherever rappers are hanging out.

What are the advantages of this form of battle?

Expressing anger and battling via rap is an alternative to physical battle. It requires a form of verbal eloquence and quick wit, and can be a way of letting off steam in a manner which does no physical harm. However, freestyle rap battles have been known to incite violence.

What does cranked mean?

"Cranked" in this context refers to being high on methamphetamine, a highly addictive and destructive substance which affects the nervous system, causes euphoria, hallucinations, anxiety, aggression and can cause brain damage and death. Crank is a term for a low-grade, powdered form of meth.

About the Meth Problem in Tennessee and Across the Country

(from Tennessee Methamphetamine Task Force website)

Methamphetamine has been identified as the largest drug threat by most law enforcement professionals in the country. It is a highly addictive drug that affects the central nervous system. Meth destroys the addict, the homes where they manufacture their drug, children, and family members. It is harmful to everyone in the community where it is allowed to exist.

Meth became a popular drug because it can be manufactured with common household products; the high is more powerful and lasts longer than most drugs. Meth has also been heavily marketed by major drug trafficking organizations, and the addictive qualities of Meth are among the strongest of any known drug. In the late 1990's Tennessee became one of the largest producers of clandestine Meth labs in the country.

Since the Meth Free Tennessee Act of 2005 clandestine labs in Tennessee have been cut in half. With the recent expansion of the Task Force to the entire state and the passage of the federal Combat Meth Epidemic Act of 2005, we look to the elimination of these labs in Tennessee.

Signs that someone may be using meth:

(Courtesy Green Thumb's *Cranked* Study Guide)

- Loss of appetite and weight loss
- Dilated pupils
- Rapid speech
- Anxiety
- Psychotic symptoms (hallucinations and delusions)
- Headaches
- Over-confidence
- Insomnia
- Changes in dress, friends and slang
- Drug paraphernalia; light bulbs, glass straws (also called "lollies" or "popeye")

Meth goes uptown

Urban production, distribution bring more people into drug's lethal reach

Jan 6, 2013

Editorial

Methamphetamine, the illicit drug that much of America has dismissed as a backwoods rural problem and the punchline to "redneck" jokes, has moved uptown.

And it's no joke.

Meth is almost as deadly in its production process as it is in its consumption, and for that reason alone, its move into cities the size of Nashville, St. Louis and Kansas City, Mo., should concern everyone. And as The Associated Press reported last month, law enforcement authorities have found that gangs are getting in on the action.

If this trend continues, Americans should brace themselves, as they will be confronted with a drug that kills and maims those who manufacture it; is distributed by gang members who will kill and maim to get their money for it; and will kill and maim the people foolish enough to smoke it.

Our state, sadly, is in the thick of this problem. Tennessee has for years vied with Missouri as the rural meth capital of the world. Now, authorities are seizing meth labs in and around Nashville at triple the rate of just a few years ago.

Much of the reason is the newer "shake and bake" production method – smaller, portable and without the tell-tale ammonia odor of the backwoods labs – that allows urban meth production in an apartment, a motel room or the back of a car.

Another reason is that demand for the highly addictive drug has been stoked among urban users by meth brought in from Mexico.

Tennessee and federal agents and task forces are adapting their detection and seizure methods in an attempt to keep up.

But a greater public awareness and attitude shift are needed to keep this problem from overwhelming all attempts to stop it.

For the more "uptown" folks who have paid little attention to meth: You probably know it's made with cold pills, but those are mixed with substances such as battery acid or drain cleaner to make meth. Ingesting these poisons on a regular basis damages brain functions and can cause heart failure. Users are subject to loss of bone density and dental structure, dangerous weight loss and psychotic episodes.

Meth labs are volatile and frequently explode in flames, killing or disfiguring the makers, and often injuring small children around them, who also suffer from the fumes from meth production.

So, even as we hear in public opinion surveys that more Americans want at least some decriminalization of drug use, let's be very clear:

With substances such as methamphetamine, we are not in the same ballpark as with marijuana. The consequences of contact with meth are devastating at every level, and the public should take it as seriously as heroin and cocaine, because it's every bit as addictive and damaging, and possibly more seriously, as a batch can be cooked up as quickly as a trip to the local drugstore and as nearby as the car next to yours.

By the way, meth isn't used only by lower-income white people ages 30-55 who try it so they can handle double work shifts. The average age of meth users, according to some studies, is 17. Learn about meth, so that you can warn your child to spot it, avoid it and, hopefully, report it to authorities.

This is a case where a "war on drugs" is called for.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20130106/OPINION01/301060050/Meth-goes->



Written by Michael P. Northey
Produced by Green Thumb Theatre

Summary of the Performance

Told through media reviews

Typically, when adults try to impart life lessons to tweens and teenagers, the effort is met with blank stares or outright derision – usually, deservedly so. Fortunately, “Cranked” is not the theatrical equivalent of an “ABC After School Special”...Cranked avoids this fate for two reasons: first, it never adopts a lecturing tone base on simplistic moralizing and, second, [Green Thumb Theater] is actually adept at laying down beats and “spitting out” rhymes.

--Joseph Pisano EDGE NewYorkCity 1/14/09

While nervously awaiting his turn to perform in a freestyle competition, Stan delivers an alternately spoken and rapped account of his difficult upbringing, including his parents’ breakup (“divorce is the new marriage”); his lapse into addiction after scoring a record contract (“I went from king of the hill to bottom of the barrel”); and how he turned to crime to pay for his habit.

Using zombie movies as a metaphor for the toll the drug takes on his body, Stan’s tale is definitely not for the squeamish. But it’s compelling all the same.

-- Frank Scheck, New York Post 1/17/09

The script has a heavily autobiographical flair (at points, it brings to mind a hybrid of *8 Mile* and James Frey’s *A Million Little Pieces*), but Stan is, in fact, a fictionalized character assembled from the experiences of several real-life addicts.

Stan’s story is framed by a performance that the rapper gives after checking out of a rehab clinic. Stating that he is not ready to go onstage, he throws himself into a series of flashbacks that narrate his early teenage years, his short-lived success in hip-hop, and his decision to check himself into rehab. Most vividly, however, Stan describes what it feels like to crave the drug, comparing himself to a zombie. “I’m rotting from the core,” he says in one segment. “I’m gutless, I’m soulless, I’m dead,” he later describes.

--Laura Palotie, offoffonline.com 1/11/09

What follows is a descent from the heaven of his first sampling of the drug into the hell of an addiction that causes immediate brain damage: sleeping in the streets, stealing from his family, lying, car theft, delusion and even smoking his own flesh for the meth in his scabby skin. In rehab he is obstinate and insolent, and only after a near-death experience does he finally return to the living and to the rap competition that frames his story.

--Lawrence Van Gelder, New York Times, 1/20/09

“...the piece doesn’t sugarcoat the truth about this horrible addiction. Stealing from his family, hallucinations, sleeping on the street, and a sort of self-induced physical torture all come into play. When he describes how he would scrape his scabs and smoke them because his skin had enough crystal meth in it to get him high, you know you’re hearing a tale told from hell. Using conventional music by Kyprios and Stylust and compelling lyrics by Kyprios and Northey, Stan’s story manages to sidestep melodrama while at the same time avoiding a preachy tone.

--Barbara & Scott Steigel, TheaterMania.com 2009

In order to believably channel an underground hip-hop show, a microphone stand is the only prop on the otherwise empty stage, and a backdrop of graffiti art provides a canvas for both gritty realism and drug-induced fantasy. The background depicts several ghoulish figures standing underneath rows of speakers and a white, skull-like face. On occasion, this face serves as a video screen that alternately shows close-ups of Stan and stylized images recalling a meth trip. Combined with flashing, red lights and a bass-heavy music rack, the overall effect is appropriately surreal.

--Laura Palotie, offoffonline.com 1/11/09

Narration, Dialogue and Rap: Telling a Story through Multiple Methods

35 minutes

Materials needed: paper and pen

Class Discussion: 7 minutes

What are some ways a story can be told in a play? How is a story told in a musical? What's the difference between narration and dialogue? (May answer with examples). The performance *Cranked* uses these three main methods for telling the story:

Narrator/Monologue:

Person who is telling the story about himself/herself, using first person.

Example: "Rock bottom is smoking your own scabs because there is actually enough meth in your skin to get you high."

Dialogue:

Lines spoken as if talking to someone. Example: "Why are you looking like me like that? What, you think I did it or something? Family doesn't steal from family!"

Freestyle/Rap:

Spoken word/rap often set to a back beat, emphasizing rhymes and rhythm. The freestyle in this production is part of the script so it is technically not freestyle because it is not improvised at each performance, but is representative of freestyle. Example: "I am living with the dead/I'm living in my head/I'm rotting from the core/I want more, and I want more".

With the exception of a DJ's introduction, Cranked is told by one actor who plays multiple roles and uses different forms of storytelling throughout the performance. The main character, Stan aka "definition" alternates between first person narration, dialogue in which he sometimes plays multiple characters, and through rap and "freestyle" performances, though in this setting it is a portrayal of freestyle rather than pure freestyle.

Writing and Staging Activity: 20 minutes

Divide students into groups of 4-5 per group.

Instructions for groups:

- Working as a group, create a very short scene (30 seconds to 1 minute) based on this scenario: You are a former meth addict who is clean but still in recovery. You are preparing for a freestyle rap performance about your experience of being clean, and having flashbacks to what it was like when addicted.
- In your scene, use as least two of the three forms of performance discussed: narration, dialogue and rap. Write down the lines or lyrics you create, then decide how your group wants to stage them. You may choose to use different actors to do different parts: Example, one actor raps and another is the narrator, or one actor may perform all of the parts, as in the show *Cranked*. Students who are not performing will serve as directors, giving instruction on how the lines might be delivered or emphasized, how the performer would position him or herself on stage, etc. as well as DJs providing beat box or electronic sound effects if rap is one of the forms used.
- After some time has been given to write the lines, encourage students to practice their scene and "get it on its feet" by standing and rehearsing it. They will likely still be "on book" or reading their lines.

Performing: 7 minutes

Have groups perform for the whole class and ask audience members what they noticed about the different forms of storytelling. Which form was most affective and why? If you do not have enough time for all groups to perform their skits, consider pairing groups to perform for each other.

Zombies Vs. Meth Addicts: Modified Freestyle Rap Battle

The main character in Cranked is a horror movie fan, and in the play he compares meth addicts to zombies. This activity introduces the creative structure of a “battle”, a form of freestyle rap performance used in Cranked, as well as driving home the point of meth use transforming people into monsters.

35-45 minutes

Materials: paper and pen, computer with speakers if you want to provide electronic beats for the battle.

Classroom set up: Space to separate the class in half, facing each other.

Class Discussion: 10 minutes

Discuss the effects of meth use and symptoms meth addicts exhibit. Then brainstorm characteristics of zombies. Capture some of these words and phrases on the board. What do these two groups have in common? What are their differences?

Rap Battle Activity: 20 minutes

Divide the class in half. One half of the class will be “Zombies” and the other half will be “Meth Addicts.” Within each group, create small groups of approximately 4-5 students per group. Each small group is assigned to quickly come up with a verse (two to four rhyming lines set to a beat) saying something about themselves and “dissing” the opposite group. For example, the Zombie group might write “I’m a flesh-eating zombie/and I got no soul/but at least I got teeth/not a gaping hole.”

Add a Beat

Take volunteers to beat box or play a backbeat while the students are creating their rhymes. You can find free backbeats at ibeat.org (see resource section for details). If you have time, you could let students listen to two or three and vote. “Bigbeat Hip Hop Section” is one recommendation. At 4+ minutes you will still need to replay the track during this exercise.

Note: If your students can truly freestyle, meaning they are just given the theme and no time to prepare lines but able to improvise well, you can skip the composition part. However, since freestyling is often rick with foul language, this may not be safe. It is also unlikely that many students would be able to pull this off.

Share

Give the two sides the opportunity to hear the verses from all the small groups within their larger group (zombies or meth addicts) and decide on an order in which to present them. Each small group will rap their own verse, and the raps will pass back and forth between the two larger groups. Example: Zombie group 1, Meth Addicts group 1, Zombie group 2, etc.

Reflection 5-10 minutes

Note that a big difference between zombies and meth addicts is that meth addicts have a choice to not be an addict. Addiction is hard to break, but it’s not impossible, and is not a state of being that is never reversible. Remind students that, while the activity was light-hearted, there’s nothing light-hearted about being a meth addict. Sharing a before/after image of a meth addict may be a quick way to get this point across. You can do before and after meth use mug shot match-ups under the “Will Using Meth Change How I Look” menu on www.themethproject.org or simply do a Google image search for “what meth does to your body.”

Rap and Spoken Word as Creative Problem Solving and Release

35 minutes + additional time for performing if you choose

Materials: pen and paper

Class Discussion: 10 minutes

What are some problems within our schools or neighborhoods?

Have students give suggestions (e.g. homelessness, bullying, discrimination) and capture these on the board. Choose one or two and ask students to describe what feelings this problem evokes. What images come to mind when you think about this? Ask for suggestions on what it would take to solve or at least help reduce this problem.

If you feel students would benefit from an example of spoken word that acknowledges and describes a problem and offers a solution, this 3 ½ minute video features three local spoken word poets competing in San Francisco: Southern Word, Lost Souls <http://vimeo.com/32004362>

Timed writing activity: 10 minutes total

Each student chooses a problem on which they wish to focus.

Instructions:

Think of how you would describe this problem to someone who is not affected by it or aware of it.

Think of what it looks like, sounds like, and feels like.

Get paper and pens, and do a timed freewrite on this subject.

Explain to students that at timed freewrite is writing anything down about that subject that comes to mind as quickly as you can, and not worrying about grammar, spelling, or composing it like an essay or poem. They should never let their pen stop moving, and write whatever comes to mind but trying to stay on the topic.

Give them about 7 minutes for the timed writing.

Sharing: *Look over what you wrote and find a sentence or phrase that stands out.*

Ask for volunteers to share.

Word crafting: 15 minutes

Using the ideas that came out in the timed writing, craft rap lyrics or spoken word poetry about the problem you chose. When writing, think about how the lines might sound when spoken – are they fast, slow, does the speed change? What words or parts of words are you going to emphasize when speaking them? How can you give a powerful and clear picture of the problem? Is there hope for solving this problem and if so, what is it?

Ask one or two volunteers to perform.

Consider giving students time to refine their writing if desired and be prepared to perform at the next class meeting.

In real life just as in the show Cranked, teenagers often use rap and spoken word as a way to highlight problems and vent anger and frustration. Some of the best and most productive spoken word and rap acknowledges and vividly describes a problem, then offers some kind of solution or hope. This lesson will guide students through creatively acknowledging a problem and offering some hope for a solution.

Talk About It

Discussing the Performance

- What worked about the way this message was delivered? Is there anything you would have done differently and why?
- If you could ask the playwright questions, what would they be?
- What would you ask the character, Stan?
- Have you encountered a meth addict? If so, do you think this is an accurate portrayal?
- Look at the “Signs that someone may be using meth” list in this guidebook. Which of these signs did you see portrayed in the play and how?
- What about this performance surprised you?
- How did the performance affect your attitude about meth?

Thinking about your own life

Courtesy of Green Thumb Theatre’s Study Guide

*I’ve cried tears and I know that things will be better now.
I’ve fought hard just to say that I am better now.
Well for those passed remember this.
That as life goes on you’re gonna be missed.
When I wake up every morning it’s life I kiss.
From now on, life is a gift.*

(Excerpt from *Cranked*)

Turning a Negative into a Positive

The fact of the matter is that Stan chose to use crystal meth to help him through some difficult moments and feelings in his life. But that doesn’t mean that he is stuck and can never overcome his past choices. We can always have a fresh start. Sometimes the effort it takes to do this is immense and it can be a daunting decision. But it is in your power!

- Have you ever made an important decision that you’ve regretted?
- Were you able to turn that negative decision around? How?
- What did you learn from this decision/situation?
- Did this experience help you in making a better decision in a similar situation?
- How do you think Stan could have better dealt with his unhappiness at home?

Regaining Control

Stan’s life felt unmanageable to him and he turned to drugs as a solution.

By using crystal meth, Stan felt more in control of his life. The drug made him feel as though everything in his world was alright. But there were issues that Stan needed to deal with, like his anger at his father and his feelings of low self-worth. By relying on meth, Stan was really running away from his problems.

- What kind of situations make you feel like running away?
- Can you avoid problems by running away from them?
- Why or why not?
- When is it important to run away from a situation?
- When is it important to stay and try to work it out?

Resources

The Meth Project: www.methproject.org

Comprehensive, interactive site with information about effects of meth use, meth-related news articles, portals for sharing and reading meth stories and artwork, discussions on addiction and recovery, and action steps to prevent meth use and addiction.

Tennessee Methamphetamine Task Force: <http://www.rid-meth.org/>

Information on meth, educational programs offered for youth and teens, and portal to report meth use.

Crystal Meth Addiction Hotline TN: <http://crystalmethanonymoushotline.com/crystal-meth-anonymous-directory/tn>

Offers info on the top outpatient treatment centers and several hotlines for free help.

ibeat: ibeat.org/free-rap-beats

Website where you can play or download free beats for rap battles.

Southern Word: www.southernword.org

Local group which offers spoken word residencies in schools and an outlet for youth to participate in poetry slams. Formerly Youth Speaks Nashville.

Green Thumb Theatre: www.greenthumb.bc.ca/

Tennessee Performing Arts Center's Educational Resources:
www.tpac.org/education/HOT/ClassroomEnhancements

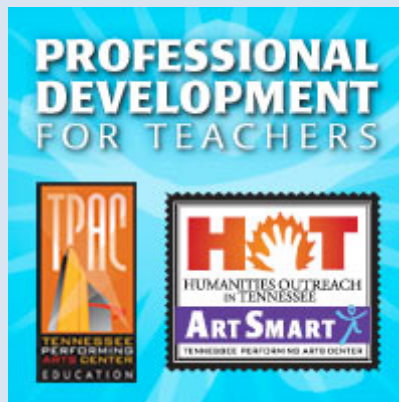
Learn more about the HOT Season for Young People and Discover Professional Development Opportunities in Arts Integration

HOT Workshops for the 2012-2013 Season

HOT Workshops offer insight into specific shows of the HOT Season for Young People and effective strategies to maximize the educational impact of the performance for your students. Choose from a wide variety of topics in these after-school, 3-hour workshops at TPAC.

Arts Integration Institutes

Experience best practices in Aesthetic Education with colleagues and teaching artists! Offered twice a year, (Fall/Winter and Summer), the Institutes provide an in-depth look at selected performances and art works on the HOT Season, and hands-on strategies to engage and motivate your students in three-to-four day Arts Integration Institutes at TPAC.



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www.TPAC.org/Education

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