



# life is a Dream

by Pedro Calderon de la Barca

The stage for the play is always set, the lights always lit, the actors, forever  
the same...resuming their roles, repeating their lines,  
twenty-four hours a day....  
It's the world's best unfinished play, ending only to start all over again...



**UIL Theatrical Design Contest 2020**

## 2019-20 Theatrical Design Prompt

We will produce ***LIFE IS A DREAM*** by Pedro Calderon de la Barca in a way that it has not been produced before. Originally written in Spanish verse, we will use the Penguin Classic modern translation of the script. The production prompt this year is inspired by a poem written by Edwin Honig, an earlier translator of the play.

*And there's **Life Is a Dream!**  
The stage for the play is always set, the lights  
always lit, the actors,  
forever the same, ardently speak their lines,  
go out and come back,  
resuming their roles, repeating their lines, twenty-four  
hours a day.  
It's the world's best unfinished play, ending only to start  
all over again...  
The message, of course  
(says the play going on), is **Long live the King of Life!**  
whoever he is.*

Essentially, the play becomes a group of time-travelling actors who have been performing (and will continue to perform) the play throughout all eternity. You are to choose a moment in time when your production will take place. You may choose any time either past, present or future, but keep in mind that whatever point you choose could also reflect travel through all time prior to that moment. You may elect to make the production timeless...representative of all time or no specific time. Your concept will be left totally for you to explain in your justification papers.

Because all theatre also is touched by the times in which it is produced, an issue that becomes more and more relevant daily is our impact on the planet. The theatre offers us opportunities to incorporate sustainable practices within our productions and to educate our audiences. Within the challenges, you will be charged with finding ways to address sustainability. Beyond "Reduce...Re-use...Recycle" is the chance to re-imagine, re-define, and reform. The requirements of each category are spelled out in the following pages to assist you in preparing your submissions for contest.

As always, your designs shall NOT reflect nor copy any other live or film, stage or broadcast versions of the play. You are encouraged to dig into the literature and imagine the world of the play. This script is full of beautiful imagery for you to work with and be inspired by. What makes a play a classic is the compelling universal truth that still strikes a chord with modern audiences. Your designs are part of that connection that draws the audience in. Enjoy your creative journey!

*But whether it be dream or truth, to do well is what matters. If it be truth, for truth's sake. If not, then to gain friends for the time when we awaken.*

--Pedro Calderon de la Barca

## 2019-20 UIL Theatrical Design COSTUME Challenge

Students designing costumes will submit a total of (5) plates plus their Justification Paper and Prompt Address Statement. They are outlined as follows:

**Justification Paper** Students will submit a maximum two-page double-spaced paper that includes the designer's production concept and justification from the script for artistic choices made. It should connect the script to the inspiration board and the finished products and explain how the concept is carried throughout the design because of the choices made.

**Prompt Address Statement** Students must also submit a 100-word maximum explanation of how they addressed the prompt.

**Plate #1** Students will still submit a 10" x 15" Inspiration Board showing research from their design process. Items contained in the Inspiration Board should reflect specific research that can be seen applied in the designs. Research is a critical element of this year's prompt and seeing how it is used in the final vision is an important connection to make.

**Plate #2** will be 11" x 17" inches and will be in a colored illustration format (Swatches are optional, notes can be included). This plate will include **BASIL**, **ASTOLF** and **STELLA** as the royal court. All three characters should be seen together and the plate should be labeled with the name of the play, characters' names, act/scene.

*HINT: Think about how you can tie the three characters together visually as a group and still give them individuality. How can you emphasize their personalities through your costume choices? Put your design connections right there on the illustration. Think of the illustration as a visual tool you would take to a production meeting to discuss your thoughts with the director.*

**Plate #3** will be 10" x 15" and will be a full color rendering with swatches. The designer will design **SEGISMUND**. The plate should be labeled with the play name and reflect the character name and the act/scene.

**Plate #4** will be 10" x 15" and will be a full color rendering with swatches. The designer will design **ROSAURA**. The plate should be labeled with the play name and should include the character name and the act/scene.

**Plate #5** will be 11" x 17" and will be in a colored illustration format (Swatches are optional, notes can be included). This plate will include **CLOTALDO** and **CLARION**. As part of our **SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES**, the design for these two characters must incorporate a recycled item that would be repurposed in the construction of their costumes. A photograph of the items should be included on the plate along with an explanation of how it would be used. The plate should be labeled with the play name and should include the characters' names and the act/scene.

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE: February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 by 11:59pm**

## 2019-20 UIL Theatrical Design SET Challenge

The play, *Life Is a Dream*, will be performed on a single unit set, but reflect 3 different settings. Students will choose one scene to create a rendering or model and complete small sketches of the remaining 2 settings. Setting locales are (1) Outside of the Tower, (2) Tower/Prison and (3) the Palace. Students will show the stage pieces and how the stage will change in the ground plan and describe the changes in their justification paper. Students entering set design will submit a total of (4) plates plus their Justification Paper and Prompt Address Statement. They are outlined as follows:

*HINT: Depending on your concept, your set design could be abstract or representational. There are lots of possibilities when you start playing around with the notion of time that you will present.*

**Justification Paper** Students will submit a maximum two-page double-spaced paper that includes the designer's production concept and justification from the script for artistic choices made. It should connect the script to the inspiration board and the finished products and explain how the concept is carried throughout the design because of the choices made.

**Prompt Address Statement** Students must also submit a 100-word maximum explanation of how they addressed the prompt.

**Plate #1** Students will still submit a 10" x 15" Inspiration Board showing research from their design process. Additionally, it should reflect the textures and colors that will be utilized in the final design.

**Plate #2** Students will submit an 11" x 17" plate showing **either** of the following options:  
a) Photographs of a scale scenic model illustrating the selected scene. ...**OR**...  
b) Full color rendering of the selected scene.

Be sure to label the photos or the renderings to indicate the name of the play and the act/scene when appropriate. Students should also include a figure(s) for size reference.

**Plate #3** Students will still submit an 11" x 17" plate that includes (2) 5" x 7" colored concept drawings of the other two scenes not depicted in Plate #2 (**see sample**). The plate should be labeled with the name of the play and each sketch should be labeled with the scene number/location. On this plate, students will include information illustrating/explaining their plan for **SUSTAINABLE DESIGN** practice within the eventual construction of their design.

**Plate #4** Students will submit an 11" x 17" drafted scale ground plan of their set design for the scene from their set rendering or model. The ground plan should also show any shifts required to actualize the looks for the other two locations. The ground plan must have a title block and should use USITT standards\*\*. Stage dimensions for the stage to be used will be provided on the website under League High School Stage Dimensions.

\*\*USITT Standards can be found at:

<https://department.monm.edu/theatre/Rankin/Classes/.../draftingusittstandards2.pdf>

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**SAMPLE OF CONCEPT SKETCH:**

**NOTE:** This is not to scale, loosely drawn and suggestively colored. You should include figure(s) for size reference. It should also be labeled with the name of the play and the act/scenes or location represented.



FIGURE ADDED

*HINT: THE PURPOSE OF THIS PLATE would be for the designer to use as a visual at a production meeting of how the set COULD change from scene to scene. These aren't final renderings. They are illustrations to facilitate a discussion of your vision for the overall show.*

## 2019-20 UIL Theatrical Design HAIR/MAKEUP Challenge

Students designing makeup will submit a total of (7) plates plus their Justification Paper and Prompt Address Statement. They are outlined as follows:

**Justification Paper** Students will submit a maximum two-page double-spaced paper that includes the designer's production concept and justification from the script for artistic choices made. It should connect the script to the inspiration board and the finished products and explain how the concept is carried throughout the design because of the choices made.

**Prompt Address Statement** Students must also submit a 100-word maximum explanation of how they addressed the prompt.

**Plate #1** Students will still submit a **10" x 15"** Inspiration Board showing research from their design process. Items contained in the Inspiration Board should reflect specific research that can be seen applied in the designs. Research is a critical element of this year's prompt and seeing how it is used in the final vision is an important connection to make.

*HINT: You may use a photo of the actor's face for the base of your renderings. Professional artists refer to this type of chart as a schematic as it shows the actual plan specific to the performer*

**For Plates #2, #3 and #4** The student will create hair and makeup designs for a male character, a female character and a character of their choice. Each plate should be **10" x 15"** and it should be labeled with the name of the play and the character name on each along with a product legend indicating the materials intended to create the design. In addressing the **SUSTAINABLE DESIGN** aspect, the designer must incorporate recycling into the hair designs of these characters. A before and after photograph of the recycled items should appear on the plates with explanation as to how they are incorporated.

*HINT: When thinking of "recycling", this could mean reworking an old wig for a new character or using some other materials for hair or hair embellishments. Be creative!*

**For Plates #5, #6, and #7**, the student will display **non-filtered photographs** of the realized designs that were rendered on plates #2, #3 and #4. Each plate should be **10" x 15"** and include a photo of the full-face. It may include detail shots at the designer's discretion. It should be labeled with the name of the play and the character name on each.

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## 2019-20 UIL Theatrical Design **MARKETING** Challenge

Students entering marketing will submit a total of (5) plates plus their Justification Paper and Prompt Address Statement. They are outlined as follows:

**Justification Paper** Students will submit a maximum two-page double-spaced paper that includes the designer's production concept and justification from the script for artistic choices made. It should connect the script to the inspiration board and the finished products and explain how the concept is carried throughout the design because of the choices made. Additionally, this paper should outline the marketing strategy and justify why it will work to bring audiences to the production.

**Prompt Address Statement** Students must also submit a 100-word maximum explanation of how they addressed the prompt.

**Plate #1** Students will still submit a **10" x 15"** Inspiration Board showing research from their design process. Items contained in the Inspiration Board should reflect specific research that can be seen applied in the designs. Research is a critical element of this year's prompt and seeing how it is used in the final vision is an important connection to make.

**Plate #2** Students will submit a **10" x 15"** marketing calendar indicating when all aspects of the marketing campaign are scheduled to occur.

*HINT: There are no assigned dates for this calendar. It is totally up to you when and how you plan your campaign. Some theatre companies advertise a year in advance!*

**Plate #3** Students will submit an **11"x17"** original poster design advertising the plays. They should use League High School as the producing organization and include the required information from the publisher as well as all the information needed to attend the show (when, where, how much, how to get tickets) The publisher guidelines will be included in the handbook.

The performances should take place May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm.

**Plate #4** As part of **SUSTAINABLE DESIGN**, Students will be creating a paperless playbill. Audience members should be instructed to access the program via a link. The playbill must include the cast and crew information for the play. The playbill should be a minimum of four pages and include information about how using this practice is part of **SUSTAINABLE DESIGN** in the theatre. A 5" x 7" black plate with a QR code and/or link for access will be displayed.

**Plate #5** Students will submit an original *Life Is a Dream* Study Guide for high school students to enhance their production experience. The Study Guide will be mounted on a **10" x 15"** plate and should be removable for viewing. It should be no more than 8 pages total including the cover and include a page educating students about **SUSTAINABLE DESIGN IN THE THEATRE**.

**FOR PLATES 3,4 and 5**, all images must be original or the designer must have legal rights to use them. You can address this in the Justification/Strategy paper.

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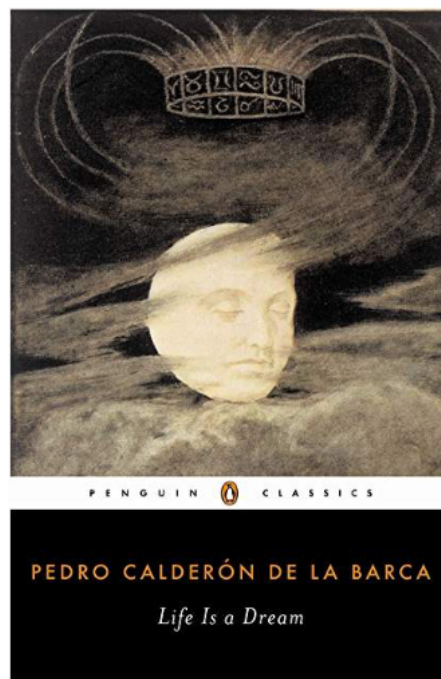
The Complete Handbook will be available by August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Questions?

Contact

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*We will use the Penguin Classic version of the script*