



Instructions:

In your group, using Web and print resources, research the melodrama as popular entertainment in the late 18th and first half of the 19th centuries in America. Your research should address the following issues:

- What is the basic structural pattern of the melodrama? What is the basic theme?
- How does the term “melodramatic” help to explain the tone quality of the melodrama?
- How was the melodrama form incorporated into the “Tom Shows” that became strong Abolitionist propaganda vehicles in the build-up to the Civil War?
- Discuss the 1866 performance of *The Black Crook* performance of 1866. (This work is generally recognized as the first “musical” as the term is currently used.)