

#flo #hw #disorganized

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## 1 | Pitch A Play

the assignment

idea: - modern day facebook - old tabbaco / sugar industry

### 1.0.1 | Meta Outline

- **Write** a one-page, double-spaced pitch for the play
- **Write** two or three paragraphs of stage directions that indicate one of the play's settings
- **Write** three paragraphs of prose introduction that discuss a particular character and then go on to illuminate key elements of the play's history

### 1.0.2 | parallels!

shift from the world of the physical to the world of the digital. increasing addiction to fight over attention  
*economy of attention becomes an economy of addiction*

- whistleblower, on 60 minutes.
- fighting over the commodity of addiction
- **Write** a one-page, double-spaced pitch for the play. In your pitch, you need to include your rationale for why the historical event is pertinent today.
- Discuss the parallels you see between the historical event and contemporary life in America,
- the overall structure and development of the play
  - (its plot,
  - major characters,
  - and themes),
- and the emotions you would want to inspire in the play's audience.
- **Write** two or three paragraphs of stage directions that indicate one of the play's settings. (See *The Crucible* as well as the exemplar.)
- Your stage directions need to use vivid language and imagery to communicate a strong sense of
  - place,
  - mood, and
  - theme. Be descriptive!

two parts:

cause, and effect.

left side of stage, illuminated to begin: - lab - immaculate, gleaming with carefullness - beakers and tools packed tight, ready to fall at the slightest accidental interruption. - pile of torn off warning labels lay to the side

right side of stage: - someones home, messy. old man get's visited

- Write three paragraphs of prose introduction that discuss a
  - particular character and then go on to
  - illuminate key elements of the play's history.
  - In effect, you are using strong rhetorical writing to put your readers in a mindset that will help them understand the rest of the play.
    - \* For examples, see Miller's descriptions of Hale, Proctor, Giles Corey, and Parris, as well as the attached exemplar (Links to an external site.).
- I am just going to do characters.
- Jeffery Wigand
  - A high u
- "granddad"
- B&W's Chief Executive Officer Thomas Sandefur

## 1.1 | Writing? Lets just, frickin, go?

Our modern lifestyle has undergone a massive shift in the way we interact with the world. We have moved away from the world of the physical and into the realm of the digital, a phenomenon represented perhaps most clearly in the events of the last year and a half. However, while massively altering, this medium shift still allows the same fundamental evils to exploit our society. After a medium shift, these evils can reemerge in a new form only evident as a reconstruction of its previous incarnation upon closer inspection. Without this inspection – tying modern incarnations to previous ones – we are doomed to fall victim to the same traps. One such tie is what this play is meant to illuminate: modern day social media companies like Facebook to old tobacco companies.

Social media companies like Facebook operate within the same fundamental evil as old tobacco companies: the economy of addiction. This parallel has become increasingly clear in light of recent events due to Frances Haugen, a data scientist turned whistleblower at Facebook. Bar the change in medium, Frances Haugen's findings in 2021 are almost an exact match to Jeffrey Wigand's findings in 1996. This play hopes to explore and articulate the modern day situation with Haugen and Facebook through its parallel with big tobacco and Wigand. The fundamental parallel it hopes to illuminate is how both industries rely on grabbing the populace's attention, and thus, intentionally turned to utilizing addiction for their own self interests. As revealed by Wigand, big tobacco harnessed the power of addiction by using toxic chemicals like ammonia to increase the addictiveness of nicotine, just as Facebook optimizes its algorithm to create addicting reward cycles and increase app interaction, harming the health of its users.

The play would explore this parallel by following Wigand's life – navigating through bureaucracy, ethics, and death threats – up until just before his interview on 60 minutes revealing the truths about big tobacco. Wigand's findings would be reflected by intermittent scenes of transient characters, each suffering from the effects of tobacco. These characters are transient to represent the ubiquity of tobacco's negative effects, placing its exploitation on a societal level instead of an individual level. This alternating between the suffering

and distraught lives of big tobacco's victims and Wigand's navigation through the elite and machievellion world of business serves to instill a sense of organized dread and urgency in the audience, hopefully inspiring change.

#### STAGE DIRECTIONS:

The curtain rises on two separated scenes, each lit with soft silhouetting light. Stage left is lit in red, while stage right is lit in blue. Stage left becomes fully illuminated in now sickly fluorescent light, with low red lights casting long diagonal shadows. Revealed is a glimmering lab – immaculate, and reeking of anxiety. There are no windows. Beakers and tools line winding and cramped pathways through the lab, forming a veritable maze of unknown potentials. Every item on the walls and tables lie neatly organized yet on the brink of chaos, waiting for a small accident to send them all into disarray. A pile of torn off warning labels are stacked neatly on the side of the scene, illuminated in red.

The left side of the stage recedes into beckoning red darkness, while the right becomes illuminated in a soft sky-blue. Large rusted shut windows lie just out of reach near the ceiling above unused and crooked shelves. A small living room strewn with miscellaneous and unorganized living items is revealed. One sun-baked and deteriorated expensive shoe collects dust by the door, the other still sitting in a shoe box to the right patiently waiting its turn. A broom stands solemnly defeated against the back wall, a large pile of used cigarettes lying at its feet. The rest of room is scattered with cigarettes and coated in dust, except for a well overworn sofa chair sitting in the dead center of the room.

A man seemingly much older than he is sits solemnly, imprisoned to his once comfortable sofa chair. He looks to two young children, accompanied by a young woman, waiting just inside the door. He collects his focus, and with all his efforts, tries to speak, only to be met with an array of coughs. The young woman looks on with a defeated pity – not concern. Increasingly intense coughing fits echo as the man desperately tried to speak to his visitors, and the lights shift back to the lab. Two men stand carefully, about to engage in conversation.

#### INTRODUCTION:

JEFFERY WIGAND is a confident, comfortable family man who sits at a well paying job in the Brown and Williamson Tobacco Corporation. He exudes a casual kindness which gains him the respect of his peers. While attempting to be an ethical man, WIGAND views his first priority as his family – something he isn't willing to risk for anything. Despite his aged white hair, WIGAND approaches conversation with vigor, always doubting his own opinions and seeking help from others. WIGAND's success thus far has stemmed from a history of following the road laid out for him by society, instilling WIGAND with a sense of naive optimism and almost blind trust. Internally, WIGAND fears his own curiosity, viewing it as a beast that needs to be tamed lest it erode his naive, optimistic, and trusting view of the world he has surrounded himself with.

THOMAS SANDEFUR is an intensely charismatic businessman