**Dramatic Networks Activity Instructions**

**Step 1: Data Collection**

Track the interactions between characters in a play. The goal is to interpret who a character is talking to in any given line. This allows you to take the role of a director of drama rather than a general reader. Record the results of the interactions in an Excel spreadsheet.



Notice that not all interactions are between just two characters. Sometimes you must decide if a character is speaking to one other character or a group of characters. If a character is speaking to a group and only one character responds, only record 1 interaction between the first character and the group and 2 between the character and the second character who responds. In example #2, notice how the principal switches who he is speaking to and how the numbers of interactions correspond to this shift in focus.

**Example #2:**

Principal: *Students are to attend a mandatory meeting the first day of school.*

Billy: *I have a doctor’s appointment.* Principal: *Your parents already spoke to me Billy. You are excused.*

Peter: *Can I be excused because I*

*don’t want to go?* Principal: *No Peter.* Peter: *Please?* Principal: *No!*

**Step 2: Data Application**

Use the open source program Cytoscape to look closer at the networks you created.

* If your computer does not have the Cytoscape program, obtain it at this website: <http://www.cytoscape.org/>
* Click “Download Cytoscape now” and follow the instructions to download it.

* The Cytoscape icon looks like this:

**Instructions:**

1. Open Cytoscape.
2. Click File > Import > Network from table (Text/MS Excel).
3. Click on the Select File(s) button > select the Excel file you created from where you saved it on the computer.
4. Select the interaction relationship. Set Source Interaction to the column containing the first character. Set Interaction Type to the column containing the number of interactions between character #1 and character #2. Set Target Interaction to the column containing character #2.

1. Click Import and Cytoscape
renders a rough version of the
network that looks like this:
2. In order to make the data useful, click on the Plugins menu at the top of the page > select Network Analysis > click on Analyze Network.
3. Select the Treat Network as Undirected > click OK.
4. Select Visualize Parameters, which alters the nodes and connections.
5. Set the Map node size to “degree.”
This represents the characters that do the
most communicating as larger nodes.
6. Set the Map node color to
“BetweennessCentrality.” This changes to
warmer colors the characters (nodes) that do the
most communicating with great numbers of other characters.
7. Set the layout: Click in the Layouts menu > select Cytoscape Layouts
> select the Attribute Circle Layout option > set it to “degree.”
This generates a final product that looks somewhat like this
example from *Medea* (on the right). 🡺
8. As necessary, use your mouse to spread out the nodes so that they
do not block each other.

Now you have a visual representation of the relationships
between the characters in your play.