



Ira Aldridge

Text Book

# **Ira Aldridge - Text**

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Ira Aldridge was born in New York in 1807.

At age 13 Ira attended the African Free School.

He learnt English, maths, geography and astronomy.

He saw plays including productions of Shakespeare.



Ira first acted with the African Company in New York.

The company was attacked by racists and thugs.

In America black actors were discriminated against.

In 1824 Ira sailed to England for better prospects.

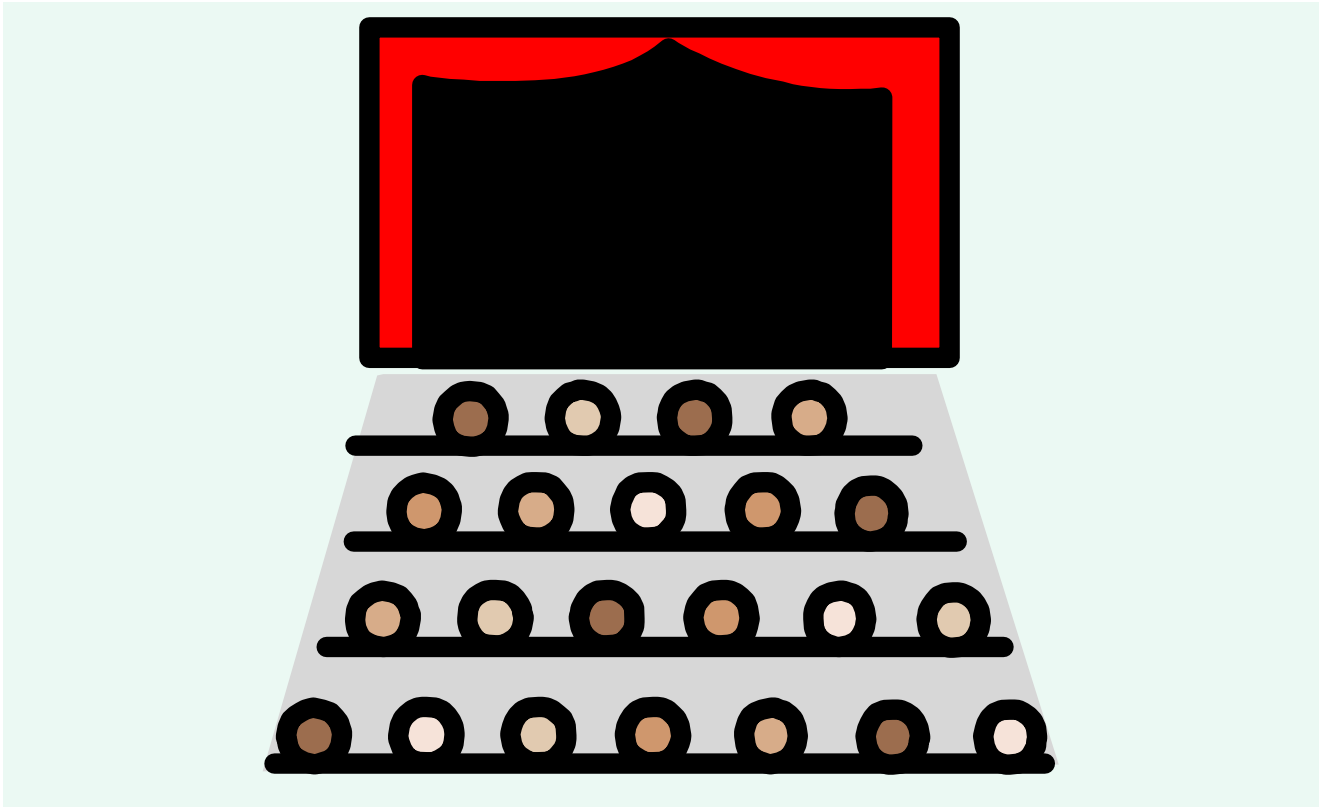


Britain had abolished the slave trade in 1807.

Britain next wanted to outlaw slaves in its colonies.

Ira appeared in London as Othello in 1825.

Ira became very famous in Europe playing Othello.



Ira became known as the 'African Roscius'.

He told people he was as an African prince.

He acted in King Lear, Othello and Macbeth.

Ira was very popular with his audiences.

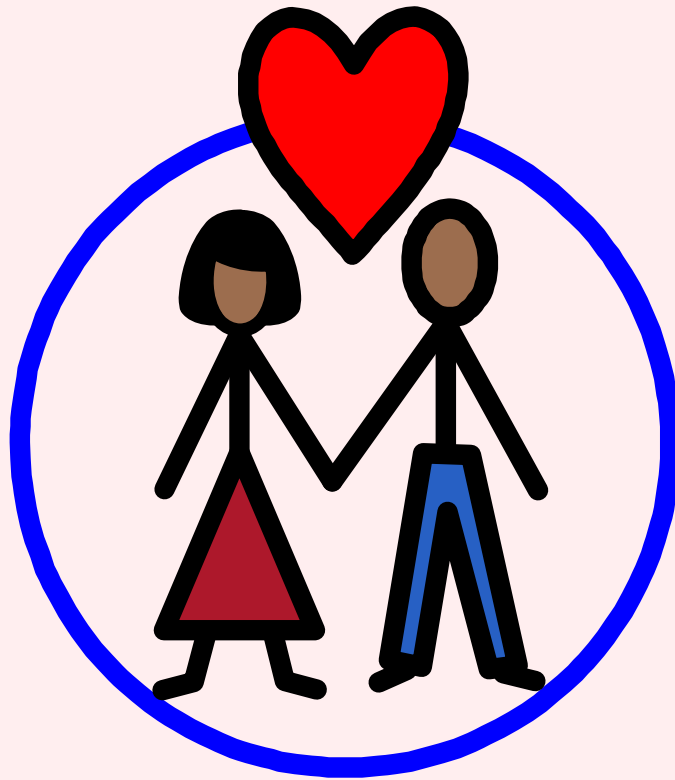


Ira became manager of Coventry Theatre in 1828.

He was the first black person to manage a theatre.

Ira's performances were hugely popular.

On closing night he would speak out against slavery.



In 1825 Ira married Margaret Gill.

They were married for 40 years until her death.

Then Ira married Amanda von Brandt.

Ira and Amanda had four children.



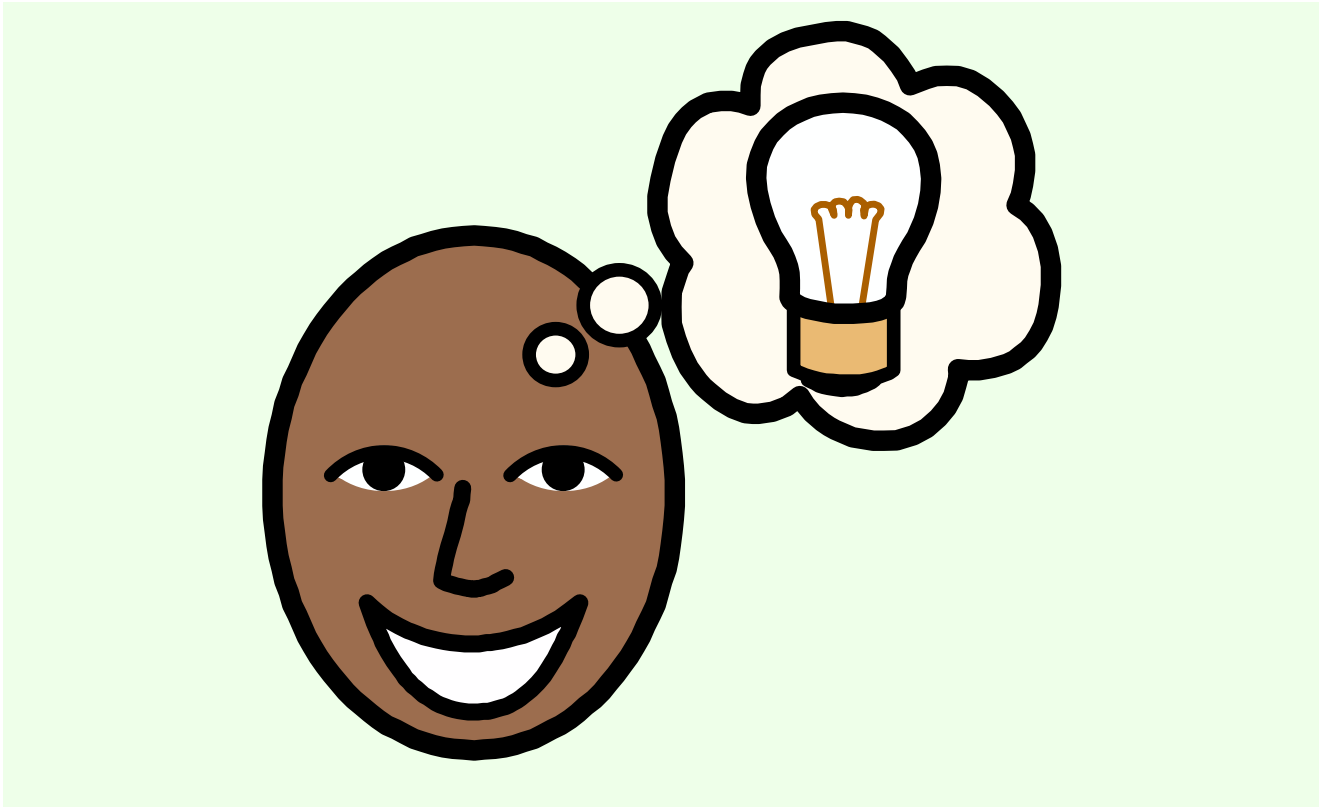


Ira first toured Europe in 1852.

He performed in Germany, Hungary, Serbia and Russia.

Ira spent his final years in Europe and Russia.

He lived with his wife and children.



Ira Aldridge died whilst in Poland in 1867.

He was honoured by important heads of state.

Ira's successes inspired African-Americans.

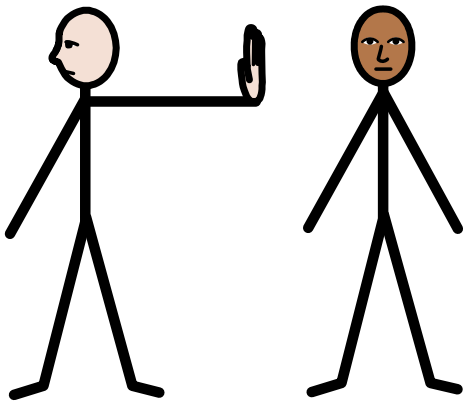
Theatres and acting troupes were named after him.



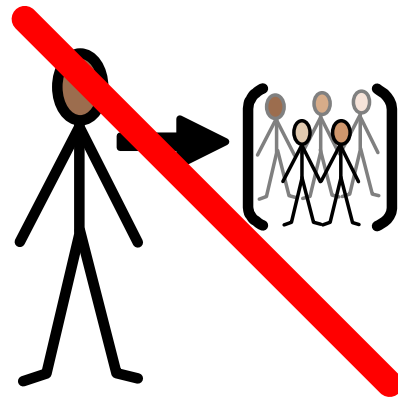
Ira Aldridge



actor



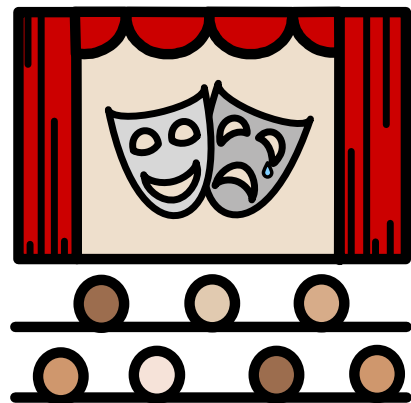
racist



discrimination



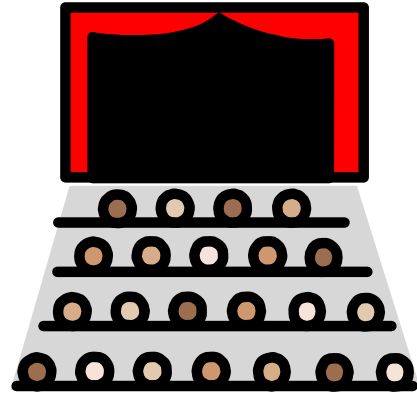
Shakespeare



plays



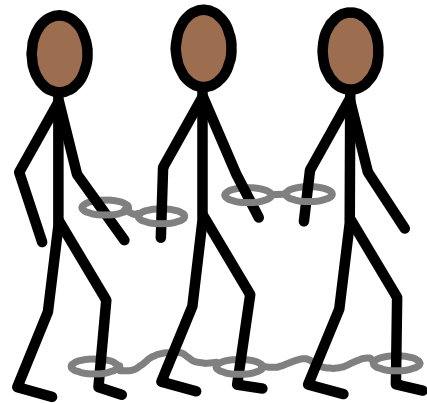
popular



audience



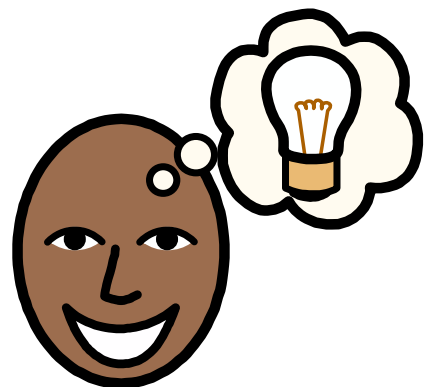
spoke out



slavery



success



inspire