

PLAY GUIDE



Disney's High School Musical Jr.

Book by David Simpatico. Songs by Matthew Gerrard & Robbie Nevil; Ray Cham, Greg Cham, & Andrew Seely; Randy Petersen & Kevin Quinn; Amy Dodd & Adam Watts; Bryan Louiselle, David N. Lawrence & Faye Greenberg; Jamie Houston. Music Adapted, Arranged and Produced by Bryan Louiselle. Based on a Disney Channel Original Movie written by Peter Barsocchini.

Presented on the LCT Learning Stage March 3 - March 16, 2019



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Major Contributors:



Dear Educator –

Lexington Children's Theatre is proud to be producing our 79th season of plays for young people and their families. As an organization that values the arts and education, we have created this Play Guide for teachers to utilize in conjunction with seeing a play at LCT.

Our Play Guides are designed to be a valuable tool in two ways: helping you prepare your students for the enriching performance given by LCT's performers, as well as serving as an educational tool for extending the production experience back into your classroom.

We designed each activity to assist in achieving the Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS), including the National Core Arts Standards for Theatre. Teachers have important voices at LCT, and we rely heavily on your input. If you have comments or suggestions about our Play Guides, show selections, or any of our programming, your thoughts are greatly appreciated. Please email Jeremy Kisling, our Associate Artistic Director in Charge of Education, at jkisling@lctonstage.org.

Please use the Teacher Response form following a performance. We are thrilled that you rely on LCT to provide your students a quality theatrical experience, and we hope this resource helps you in your classroom.

LCT's Education Department

The mission of our education programming



The mission of Lexington Children's Theatre's Education Department is to **provide students of all ages with the means to actively explore the beauty, diversity, complexity, and challenges of the world around them through the dramatic process.** We strive for young people to develop their own creative voice, their imagination, and their understanding of drama and its role in society.

Your role in the play

You may wish to have a discussion with your class about your upcoming LCT experience and their role as audience members. Remind your students that theatre can only exist with an audience. Your students' energy and response directly affects the actors onstage. The quality of the performance depends as much on the audience as it does on each of the theatre professionals behind the scenes and on stage.

Young audiences should know that watching live theatre is not like watching more familiar forms of entertainment; they cannot pause or rewind us like a DVD, there are no commercials for bathroom breaks, nor can they turn up the volume to hear us if someone else is talking. Your students are encouraged to listen and watch the play intently, so that they may laugh and cheer for their favorite characters when it is appropriate.

At the end of the play, applause is an opportunity for your students to thank the actors, while the actors are thanking you for the role you played as an audience.



What to know - before the show!

Play Synopsis

The students of East High are back from winter break. Troy, captain of the basketball team, recognizes new student Gabriella, who he met at a karaoke contest on his ski trip. Ms. Darbus gives Troy detention for trying to call Gabriella during class. Between classes, Gabriella and Troy reconnect and stop by the audition sign-ups for *Juliet and Romeo*, but Sharpay, president of the drama club, discourages them from signing up. During basketball practice, Troy is tempted to audition for the musical, but his best friend Chad and the jocks are opposed to the idea. Coach Bolton, Troy's dad, barges into detention and argues with Ms. Darbus about giving his players detention.

The next day, the thespians prepare for their auditions, but are not up to par with Sharpay and her brother Ryan. The student musical composer, Kelsi, plays a song after auditions; Gabriella and Troy join in singing. Ms. Darbus overhears and gives them a callback. Sharpay is furious about Ms. Darbus' decision. Troy and Gabriella auditioning gives courage to the other students to confess their inner dreams to their friends.

Upset that Troy and Gabriella are focused on the callbacks and not on the basketball team and science decathlon team, the jocks and brainiacs devise a plan to trick Troy and Gabriella into ditching the musical and committing to their teams. The plan turns Gabriella and Troy against each other and all seems lost. Sharpay convinces Ms. Darbus that Troy and Gabriella are planning to make a farce out of her musical. Ms. Darbus moves callbacks to the same day and time as the basketball championship and science decathlon. Feeling bad for what they have done, the jocks and brainiacs make things right again between Troy and Gabriella.

While the science decathlon team and the basketball team compete in their respective competitions, Sharpay and Ryan crush their callback performance. Taylor, president of the science club, turns off the electricity in the science lab and the gym, which gives Troy and Gabriella the opportunity to rush to their callback. When the students of East High arrive at the theater to cheer on their friends, Ms. Darbus agrees to let them sing. For their performance, they receive the lead roles. Back at the gym the Wildcats win the game, the science decathlon team wins their competition, and the school comes together as winners because "We Are All In This Together."



What to know – before the show!

Theatre Vocabulary

Students can learn about the different terms used in the making of a theatrical production by matching the following terms with their definitions:

Blocking	Choreography	Stage Left
Projecting	Audition	Stage Manager
Composer	Thespian	Dress Rehearsal
Box Office	Director	Roles

DEFINITIONS

1. The left side of the stage from the perspective of the actor, not the audience.
2. The act of practicing the whole play, including lights, sound, and costumes.
3. How actors on stage speak so that the entire audience can hear them.
4. Another word for a person who works in theatre.
5. The person who is in charge of all of the technical parts of a show and makes sure everything runs smoothly.
6. The plan for how actors move around onstage during a performance.
7. The writer of all of the music in the show.
8. This department is in charge of selling tickets and making sure everyone is properly seated.
9. All of the characters that actors can play in a production.
10. The plan for how actors dance onstage during a performance.
11. The process in which actors try out for roles in a production.
12. The person who is in charge of putting a whole production together.

TH:Cn10.1.4. TH:Cn10.1.5. TH:Pr5.1.4 TH:Pr5.1.5.

Brain Basketball

Encourage your students to get their heads in the game with Brain Basketball! Divide the class into two teams, and flip a coin to decide which team gets possession of the “ball” first. Put a science question on the board for the team with the “ball” to answer. If the team answers correctly, they win a point and get to answer another question. Teams that correctly answer three questions in a row can “shoot a basket” and answer a more difficult question for bonus points.

If a team answers a question incorrectly, they must turn possession of the ball over to the other team.

TH:Cn10.1.4. TH:Cn10.1.5. TH:Pr5.1.4 TH:Pr5.1.5.

Bop to the Top

In *High School Musical*, a student named Kelsi composes a musical that the main characters audition for. Students can test their musical knowledge with this fun activity. Fill a small bowl or container with slips of paper that have simple musical notes or symbols. Divide the class into two groups, and have one member of each group come to the front of the room. Select a slip of paper from the container, write it on the board, and whichever student recognizes the note or symbol wins a point for their group.

MU:Re8.1.4 MU:Re8.1.5

What to know – before the show!

Contextual Article

In 2006, *High School Musical* took the world of children's media by storm and became one of Disney Channel's highest grossing films along with the premier of its sequel the following summer. The television franchise became so popular that it spawned a third film released theatrically. At its peak, *High School Musical* was everywhere. The film's stars were among the most popular young adult talents in the industry, the songs were undeniably catchy, and the message that you can be the star athlete and the lead of the school play bolstered the franchise to the status of "iconic" for a generation of youth across the country.

That popularity – the concert tours, fashion lines, best-selling soundtracks, etc. – allowed Disney to turn their beloved media goldmine into a stage musical in 2007. What started as a small screen phenomenon shortly became the stuff of legends for school theatre programs throughout the nation. *High School Musical* joined classics such as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Our Town*, and *Guys and Dolls* as common productions for high school theatre programs. It's the kind of production that students are excited to audition for, likely because of its relevance to their childhoods but also for the connection to the characters that often feel familiar to them in the real world.

The trend of adapting popular books, movies, and television into stage musicals extends far beyond *High School Musical*. Disney alone has several hit movies they've turned into even bigger successes through the stage including *The Lion King*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Aladdin*, *Mary Poppins*, *Newsies*, and *Frozen*. Tina Fey capitalized on her 2004 hit *Mean Girls* by taking it to Broadway in 2018. *Legally Blonde*, *Clueless*, *Elf*, *Shrek*, and *School of Rock* are all box office hits turned stage musicals. Even the likes of long-running cartoons such as Nickelodeon's *SpongeBob SquarePants* have started finding their way to Broadway. And the trend works in reverse as well - popular stage musicals such as *RENT*, *The Wiz*, *Annie*, and *West Side Story* have all been turned into high-grossing, popular theatrical films.

In some ways, this tendency to adapt pre-existing material into other visual art forms raises questions about how far media, creativity, and art can reach. Many of the adaptations from screen to stage and vice versa follow the plots of their predecessors closely with only minor changes made for the sake of time and convenience. There's not necessarily new content being generated in the way of storytelling when recycling old ideas for the screen or stage. This often differs when transferring storylines from written works to visual art forms where new content can come more easily by taking liberties and deviating from the text (i.e. – *Game of Thrones* ultimately differs from the *Song of Fire and Ice* novels because the television episodes are produced more quickly than George R.R. Martin can write and publish the next book). The boundaries pushed in stage and screen adaptations tend to be technical design elements as opposed to the story itself which can leave the arts lacking in opportunities for new works.

Still, there may be benefits to this age of revivals, reboots, and adaptations. More people are getting access to the arts and the timeless stories that come along with it, especially young people who thrive on social media and technology. Networks like NBC and FOX have jumped on the bandwagon of "theatre live" productions such as *The Sound of Music Live* and *Grease Live* which bring Broadway to the average family that may not be able to afford a ticket to see a show in person. Reviews are spread quickly through social media, productions and movies can be viewed at any time, and a new generation's love for the arts can easily be sparked from wherever they are with the click of a button. Things that were once popular in their heyday, even something as youthful and cheesy as *High School Musical*, can rise to prominence again and continue to ride their waves of success from now until the end of time.

How to grow - after the show!

Become a Science Decathlon competitor!

In *High School Musical*, Gabriella joins the Brainiacs at her school to compete in the Science Decathlon! Now it is your turn to create your own team and compete!

Divide the class into three or four teams and have them sit together somewhere in the class room. Each group will get some time to create a team name and will receive some kind of noise maker to “buzz in” (ie a bell, a shaker, a rubber chicken). Once they have all determined a name, the teacher will write each team down on the board to keep score of points.

Then, the teacher will serve as the moderator and will read science questions out loud, which can be directly related to what the class is currently studying. Once the team has an answer they will “buzz in” with their noise maker to take a guess! If they are right they will receive one point, if they get a question incorrect they do not gain any points and the other teams are able to steal the question!

2.20 5.G 5.MD

Take a Stand

Divide the classroom in half with an imaginary line and tell students to go stand on one side or the other based on which they like more from the list below. Encourage everyone to take a stand and make a choice even they are indifferent or cannot make a decision, stand on a side.

R	L
Pepsi	Coke
Popcorn at Movies	Chocolate at Movies
Pop Tarts	Cereal
Cheeseburgers	Pizza
Siblings	No Siblings
Play Instrument	No Instrument
Play a Sport	No Sport
Dogs	Cats
Car/Walk to School	Took Bus to School
Loves Art	Loves Math
Seen Someone Bullied	Never seen Anyone Bullied
Like to be Cold	Like to be Hot
Carrots	Broccoli

- In your reflection, ask the students what surprised them during the game
- Ask students how it felt when people were laughing at them from the other side and talking about how they didn't agree with their stance.
- Additionally, talk about similarities and differences. Even though we may see each other as completely different from each other, we probably agreed on at least one thing with everyone in the class.

Now, lead a discussion on how separating ourselves based on our differences and not focusing on our similarities relates to the themes of *High School Musical*. How were the cliques intolerant of each other? Where do we see that in schools today? How can we work to build a more positive community and take care of each other?

2.16 2.20

How to grow - after the show!

Words to Know

R M C H T T Z B N D F M K I D
C E F O P I F W I F A O C O D
T O H I L F V R C E T N A R J
I S R P Y D E L T W I O B O L
O C I A A C R C W D V L L T L
S T D L T R I E E W V O L C M
R R L O T T G P A Q G G A E K
U F R G S S S O M D Q U C R Y
B E N I K G A B E T I E J I Y
R A T M T T S C O R E N H D E
L R N O I T I D U A O R G C Z
A G K Q Q Y P N X L I H W I Q
S T A G E M A N A G E R C S I
R Y F L A H I X R M Q N A U X
G K S D T P H H C J S T K M M

ARTISTIC TEAM
AUDITION
CALLBACK
CAST LIST
CHOREOGRAPHER
COLD READING
DIRECTOR
MONOLOGUE
MUSIC DIRECTOR
SCORE
SCRIPT
STAGE MANAGER

How to grow - after the show!

Auditions!

In the show *Troy*, Gabriella, Ryan, Sharpay, and many other students audition for the school's play original play, *Juliet and Romeo*.

Begin by having students reflect on how the auditions worked in the show, below are a few questions to ask the class.

- How did students sign up?
- What did they do in the audition?
- What happened after the auditions?
- Do you think this is how auditions normally work?
- How could you tell if a character was having a successful audition?

Once this conversation has come to a close below are some vocabulary words and a short lesson that you can teach students on how auditions typically run at a theatre in real life!

At Lexington Children's Theatre we usually do at least five shows a year that young people can audition for! All of our audition information is posted on our website, lctonstage.org. If students are interested in auditioning they can find out how through this link!

The students that the class saw perform onstage in the production all auditioned for the show in December. In our auditions for musicals, students are split into small groups and go to three different rooms. In one room auditionees learn part of a song, in another they do cold readings of scenes from the play, and in the third they learn a dance combination.

Then, at the end of the day, we all return to the same room for performers to sing in front of the director. Lexington Children's Theatre usually has multiple days of auditions so after all of the days are completed the stage manager will send out a callback list.

Callbacks are like a second round of auditions. When casting a show, directors need to look at lots of different factors and see a wide variety of performers do quite a few things. People can be called back for a wide variety of reasons, it depends on the creative team. However, no matter what, a callback always gives the artistic team the chance to see a performer do their work again!

Once callbacks are finished a cast list will be posted, also by the stage manager. The cast list will include everyone who is in the show along with the name of the character they will be playing. Usually actors will need to respond back to let the team know if they'll be participating or not. Then, once the show is cast rehearsals begin!

So, auditions at LCT don't usually run exactly the way that it is represented in *High School Musical*. But also, auditions can vary widely from group to group! The biggest thing to remember is that auditions are a chance to have fun and share your artistry with people or just try something new! If someone is not cast in a show that they audition for it often has nothing to do with their talent; lots of things go into casting a show. Sometimes actors need to be certain heights, ages, or have very specific skill sets to take on certain roles. Tell students to keep that in mind if they ever decide to audition!

How to grow - after the show!

What to Read Next



Drama by Raina Telgemeier

It's not the classes of high school that socialize us, it's the activities. Those clubs where kids are free to find their clique, or cliques, and bounce around with little to no consequence or commitment? They're where we find people like us at a time when we might feel awkward and alone. This is particularly true with drama club, a beacon to so many teens outside the mainstream who want to make art.



Stargirl by Jerri Spinelli

From the day she arrives at quiet Mica High in a burst of color and sound, the hallways hum with the murmur of "Stargirl, Stargirl." She captures Leo Borlock's heart with just one smile. She sparks a school-spirit revolution with just one cheer. The students of Mica High are enchanted. At first. Then they turn on her. Stargirl is suddenly shunned for everything that makes her different, and Leo, panicked and desperate with love, urges her to become the very thing that can destroy her: normal.



Replay by Sharon Creech

With the backdrop of a large family and a theater as its frame, this is a story about twelve-year-old Leo, who has a talent for transforming the ordinary into the extraordinary. That's why he's called "fog boy." He's always dreaming, always replaying things in his brain. As an actor in the school play, he is poised and ready for the curtain to open. But in the play that is his life, he is eager to discover what part will be his.

LCT teaches in YOUR school!

Would you like to see some of these play guide activities modeled in your classroom?

Book a workshop for your class with one of LCT's teaching artists! In our pre-show workshops, our teaching artists will engage students in acting skills and themes from the play through drama activities. In our post-show workshops, students will extend their play-going experience by strengthening their personal connection to the play and deepening their understanding of the themes and characters.



Call us at 859-254-4546 x226 to book a pre or post-show workshop for your class!

To learn more about Lexington Children's Theatre and our programming for your school visit:
www.lctonstage.org/for-educators/in-school-experiences/