CAROLINA FOREST HIGH SCHOOL
Performing Arts Department
PRESENTS

Music and Lyrics by Lisa Lambert and Greg Morrison
Book by Bob Martin and Don McKellar

March 24, 25, 26, & 27

This Study Guide is adapted from
The Drowsy Chaperone Study Guide by Peter Royston & Natl. Arts Centre Study Guide
The Drowsy Chaperone is a unique combination of the past and the present: a brand new Broadway musical that celebrates musical theatre!

The Drowsy Chaperone begins when a die-hard musical-theatre fan plays his favorite cast album, and the musical magically bursts to life! We are instantly immersed in the hilarious tale of a glamorous bride and her uproarious wedding day, complete with thrills and surprises that take both the cast (literally) and the audience (metaphorically) soaring into the heavens.

Students will love The Drowsy Chaperone’s cutting sense of humor and its headlong theatrical momentum; educators will appreciate the opportunity to use the show as a launch point for discussions and activities based on the use of comedy in literature and theatre, the history of the 1920s and the influence of the American Musical.

This study guide for The Drowsy Chaperone explores this hilarious show in an interdisciplinary curriculum that takes in English/Language Arts, History/Social Studies, Music and Theatre. And of course, mirroring the show’s madcap sense of humor, expect some puzzles and games, too!

Completely original material is such a rarity on Broadway nowadays. Students, especially those who have never been to the theatre before, will come away from The Drowsy Chaperone with a tremendous sense of possibility: the potential of what theatre, or any art form, can achieve.

The Creative Team

Artistic Director……..Wayne Canady
Musical Director……..Kraig McBroom
Assistant Director……..Becky Bannon
Choreographer…………Bryan Beaman
Dramaturge…………….Kelly Hall
A Note from the Director

My name is Wayne Canady; I want to take this opportunity to announce the spring, 2011 musical, The Drowsy Chaperone. I hope you will find the study guide to be a valuable tool in preparation for viewing this wonderful stage production.

I am delighted to report that last year, our production of Grey Gardens was an unprecedented success. Our theatre students were the first high school in the U.S. to perform this documentary musical. The sets were awesome, the costumes were perfect, and the lighting and technical theatre students performed at their very best, and we even turned the theater into an art gallery featuring the works of Kris Kessler. The live orchestra, featuring many of our own student musicians, was exquisite. The entire show was just a phenomenal experience for all involved, especially me! In my 28 years of theatrical productions, I believe this one was the best so far... We had so many positive comments after the show from folks who saw the show on Broadway, and even in the original documentary and movie. They all agreed that we performed on a par with the professionals, some said even better. Now that's some high praise indeed!

Having said all of that, the wheels have been put in motion for another monumental production, The Drowsy Chaperone. We are extremely excited about this musical, and will be working to make this performance as enjoyable and memorable as last year's performance.

As you review our website and study guide, we hope that you will take a moment to let us know who you are. We want to contact you and make you aware of all of our upcoming performances. We have a large group of talented young people at Carolina Forest. I am convinced that a few of our current students will be performing on Broadway one day soon, if not, they have had the experience of what it is like to be a performer on Broadway. We hold the bar extremely high for our young performers, and they never disappoint, that's for sure.

We are so fortunate that in our school district, we are able to offer our children a chance to learn about the stage, theatre, music, and art in the public school system. Theatre, show choir, band, orchestra, art, broadcasting, and technical theatre -- we have it all in our curriculum at Carolina Forest High School. We hope that you will make plans to attend some of many upcoming performances that we offer during the school year. After you review the study guide and web site information tell your friends about The Drowsy Chaperone.

Remember you can reserve tickets online at our website www.CFHSshows.com

Wayne Canady
Director
# Table of Contents

**Before the Show**
- Meet the Characters
- The Golden Age of Broadway
- The Roarin’ 20s
- About the Creators

**During the Show**
- Theatre Etiquette
- At a Glance
- Definition Game
- The Power of Theatre

**After the Show**
- English/Language Arts Activities
- Social Studies Activities
- Theater Activities
- Music Activities
- Themes and Explorations
- Recommended Reading
- Credits, Quotes, and Awards
- Resources
- Glossary
Meet the **CHARACTERS**

**Man in Chair:** Our narrator, he describes the action and music of *The Drowsy Chaperone*

**Mrs. Tottendale:** The wealthy widow at whose estate the wedding is to take place

**Underling:** Mrs. Tottendale’s butler

**Janet Van De Graaff:** A former showgirl, she’s ready to give up show-business to get married

**The Drowsy Chaperone:** Janet’s companion, weary of the world

**Robert Martin:** The Groom

**George:** Robert’s Best Man

**Feldzieg:** Janet’s producer, who hopes the wedding will fall apart

**Kitty:** A chorus girl

**Aldolpho:** A womanizing cad

**Pastry Chefs:** Two gangsters disguised as pastry chefs who are demanding money from Feldzieg

**Trix:** An aviatrix, or a female airplane pilot

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**Welcome to the study guide, there’s so much more inside!**
The Drowsy Chaperone is a Valentine to 1920s Broadway musicals, albeit one with a gently mocking tone. The original show, first performed at the stage party for co-author Bob Martin, featured songs parodying musicals from the 1920s to 1940s. As it developed into a full-fledged musical, however, the character of Man in Chair was added and the focus became on "recreating" a 1920s style musical in all its glory and absurdity.

The 1920s may not have been Broadway’s Golden Age of musicals in qualitative terms — most consider that to fall somewhere in the quarter-century between 1943 and 1968 that began with Oklahoma! and ended with Hair — but in quantitative terms, the 1920s was the busiest decade in Broadway history, with an average of 50 productions opening each year. In comparison, fewer than ten musicals will open in any given season nowadays, including revivals. Moreover, the 1920s was a decade of development, encompassing musical comedy, show-stopping revues, operettas and the introduction of the musical play.

The Drowsy Chaperone — the musical within the comedy — is a typical, if exaggerated, example of a 1920s musical comedy, with a book that is mostly subordinate to the spectacle. The Man in Chair compares it to the “plot” in pornography: “The story exists only to connect the longer, more engaging...production numbers.”

Those stories, such as they were, generally involved a boy and girl falling in love and overcoming obstacles or separations before finally marrying. Sunny (1925), for example, told the story of a bareback rider who falls in love with a rich playboy while entertaining the troops during World War I, much to the dismay of his family. The musical was a showcase for triple threat sensation Marilyn Miller, who had tap danced and sang her way into theatregoers’ hearts with her first starring role in Sally (1920). It also featured singer Cliff Edwards, better known as "Ukulele Ike" (and the voice of Jimmy Cricket in Pinnochio), who is credited with popularizing the ukulele in the 1920s.

Sunny was written by Jerome Kern, Oscar Hammerstein II and Otto Harbach and featured the songs “Who?” and “D’Ye Love Me?”. Although musical comedies from the 1920s are rarely performed today, many of the songs have become standards. Composers and lyricists such as Kern, Hammerstein, Cole Porter, George and Ira Gershwin, and Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart, cut their teeth in musical revues and comedies, and laid the foundations for the musicals that would transform the artform in the 1930s and 1940s.

The Drowsy Chaperone also pays homage to another staple of Broadway theatre in the 1920s. The producer, Ziegfeld, is a stand-in for Florenz Ziegfeld, whose elaborate theatrical productions, the Ziegfeld Follies, ran on Broadway from 1907 to 1931. The Follies were based on the Paris Folies Bergères and London musical halls, and featured beautiful chorines — the Ziegfeld Girls — comedic acts such as W.C. Fields, and singing sensations like Eddie Cantor. Marilyn Miller emerged as a star in the 1918 Follies, and it was because of her that Ziegfeld first branched out into book musicals written to showcase her combination of talents. His most lasting contribution to musical theatre, however, was the first great book musical, Show Boat, which he produced in 1927.

According to the Man in Chair, The Drowsy Chaperone opened at the Morosco Theater in November 1928. That was a banner season for Broadway musicals, the last one before the Great Depression and burgeoning movie industry devastated Broadway receipts. Marilyn Miller starred in Rosalie, with music by George Gershwin and Sigmund Romberg and lyrics by Ira Gershwin and P.G. Wodehouse. Cole Porter had his first Broadway hit with Paris, most notable for introducing the song, “Let’s Do It, Let’s Fall in Love.” The Marx Brothers starred in Animal Crackers, their second Broadway hit.

It was the end of an era, but the opening chapter in the book musical that continues to enrich the theatre.
The Roaring Twenties

The 1920s were a time of reckless prosperity and social upheaval. Known as the “Roaring Twenties” in North America, the “Golden Twenties” in parts of Europe and “Les Années Folles” in France and francophone Canada, the era was also often referred to as the Jazz Age – a reflection of the spirit of the times as expressed in the ended at the beginning of the Great Depression.

It was a time of rebirth, after the devastating death tolls of the Great War and the Spanish Flu, which together had decimated a generation. The survivors seemed intent on living life to the fullest, and the period was marked by a break from traditions and an embracing of “modernity” and new technologies. The first trans-Atlantic flight took place, feature films were being produced in record numbers, and mass-produced consumer goods were available like never before. It was a time of flappers, jazz, Art Deco and mass marketing. Rampant consumerism, unfettered julep de vivre, and endurance contests such as marathon dancing, pole-sitting and sixteen-day bicycle races reflected a society testing its limits in every way possible.

At the same time, there was a greater sense of disillusionment and cynicism. Ernest Hemingway popularized the phrase “the Lost Generation” to describe the expatriate American writers living in Europe, as well as the entire generation that came of age during and after World War I.

In North America, the peacetime economy boomed, as the United States abandoned isolationism and became heavily involved economically in the rebuilding of Europe. It was a time of unprecedented prosperity – for some at least. While many got rich playing the stock market, millions still lived below the poverty line. Prohibition – which banned the manufacture, sale and distribution of alcohol from 1920 to 1933 – encouraged a new underclass of criminals and the development of organized crime, as well as created an underground economy.

Charlie Wales, the central character in F. Scott Fitzgerald’s short story “Babylon Revisited”, looks back at that time and the man he’d been before everything changed: “Again the memory of those days swept over him like a nightmare—the people they had met travelling; the people who couldn’t add a row of figures or speak a coherent sentence. The little man Helen had consented to dance with at the ship’s party, who had insulted her ten feet from the table; the women and girls carried screaming with drink or drugs out of public places—The men who locked their wives out in the snow, because the snow of twenty-nine wasn’t real snow. If you didn’t want it to be snow, you just paid some money.”

The bottom fell out on the market – and the decade’s ethos – on Tuesday, October 29, 1929. Black Tuesday marked an end to the bull market of 1928-29 and a beginning to a worldwide depression. The Roaring Twenties were over.
About the Creators

Lisa Lambert (Music & Lyrics) received 2006 Tony, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards for her work on The Drowsy Chaperone. U.S. credits: The Drowsy Chaperone (Center Theatre Group; Ahmanson, NAMT’s 2004 Festival of New Musicals). Canadian credits: The Drowsy Chaperone (Fringe of Toronto Festival, Theatre Passe Muraille, Mirvish Productions; Winter Garden Theatre); Honest Ed: The Bargain Musical and Mirth (Poor Alex Theatre); Ouch My Toe (Fringe of Toronto Festival); The Irish Musical and People Park (Rivoli); All Hams on Deck (SummerWorks); An American in Harris (Second City); An Awkward Evening With Martin & Johnson (Tarragon, Tim Sims Playhouse). TV: “Slings and Arrows” (Rhombus Media, broadcast on Showcase and the Sundance Network), “Getting Along Famously” (CBC), “Skippy’s Rangers: The Show They Never Gave” and “The Joe Blow Show” (Comedy Network). Film: Pippi Longstocking, Highway 61, Blue. Radio: “Madly Off In All Directions,” “Definitely Not the Opera.”

Greg Morrison (Music & Lyrics) received 2006 Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle and Backstage West Garland Awards for his work on The Drowsy Chaperone. Canadian credits: composer/ musical director for Hello...Hello (Tarragon Theatre); Pochsy’s Lips; Oh, Baby; Citizen Pochsy and Pochsy Unplugged (Toronto Fringe, Canadian/U.S. tours); The Drowsy Chaperone (Toronto Fringe, Theatre Passe Muraille, Mirvish Productions, Winter Garden Theatre, Toronto); Mump and Smoot In Something Else (Canadian Stage, Yale Repertory Theatre); Mump and Smoot in Flux (Canadian Stage); An Awkward Evening With Martin & Johnson (Tim Sims Playhouse); The Age of Dorian (Artword Theatre). TV songwriter credits: “Slings & Arrows” (Rhombus Media for Showcase/Sundance) and “Getting Along Famously” (CBC). Other: musical director for the Second City National Touring Company and The Alumni Café (Tim Sims Playhouse). Score for the short film My Name Is Pochsy: An Industrial Film (BravoFACT).

Bob Martin is a comedian/actor/writer from Toronto, Ontario, Canada. He has been in many TV shows and has written many TV shows. He also provides the voice of Cuddles the comfort doll on the Canadian TV show Puppets Who Kill aired on the Comedy Network. He most recently starred in the Broadway success The Drowsy Chaperone as the Man in Chair. He also collaborated with Don McKellar on the book. He was nominated for a Tony Award for his performance as Man in Chair, and won a Tony Award with Don McKellar for the book. After reprising his role as the Man in Chair in London’s West End production of The Drowsy Chaperone, for which he received an Olivier nomination, he starred in the show’s North American tour for its first stop in Toronto until October 14, 2007, before “relinquishing his chair” to stay in Toronto with his wife and newborn son. Martin was greatly involved in the award-winning series Slings & Arrows (THN/Sundance), a TV show about a Canadian theatre company struggling to survive while a crazy genius director haunted by his dead mentor helps the actors find authenticity in their acting. As one of the creators, Martin also served as a writer (alongside fellow writers Susan Coyne and Mark McKinney) and the Creative Producer.

Don McKellar (Book) received 2006 Tony and Drama Desk Awards for his book for The Drowsy Chaperone. His career began as co-founder of Toronto’s The Augusta Company, with whom he co-created six critically acclaimed experimental plays. Since then he has become a ubiquitous presence in the independent Canadian cinema. As screenwriter for the award-winning films: Roadkill (for director Bruce McDonald), Highway 61, co-writer of Dance Me Outside, Thirty-Two Short Films About Glenn Gould (with director Francois Girard) and The Red Violin. For TV he wrote and starred in the CBC series “Twitch City” (which also played on the Bravo Network in America). As an actor in films: Exotica (directed by Atom Egoyan), eXistenZ (David Cronenberg), When Night Is Falling (Patricia Rozema), Clean (Olivier Assayas), Waydowntown, The Red Violin, The Event, Monkey Warfare. He was a regular on “Slings & Arrows,” which played on the Sundance Channel and Showcase.
Theatre Etiquette

When attending a theatrical performance, such as a play or musical, there is a set of rules that each audience member must follow. These rules ensure that everyone has an enjoyable experience and helps our actors and technicians to do their job. Please take a moment to cover these etiquette rules with your students. We hope you enjoy the show!

1. Turn off all cell phones and any other electronic devices. It is distracting to both the audience and the actors to see the glow of a cell phone or to hear beeping during a performance. Texting or calls can also interrupt the wireless microphone signal that allows everyone to hear the actors on stage.

2. It is important that each audience member is quiet. There should be no rustling of material, such as candy wrappers or paper. There should also be no talking or whispering during the show.

3. No food or drink is allowed inside the auditorium, except water. So make sure you throw your trash in the trashcan before you come in.

4. Sit in your assigned seat. Assigned seating ensures that everyone has their preferred seat. It also keeps the house running in an organized fashion. So, make sure to check your ticket and/or follow your teacher’s instructions, and the instructions of the ushers and House Manager.

5. Do not put your feet on the back of the seat in front of you. If someone needs to pass, let them through with little disruption.

6. It is best to use the restroom before the show, during the intermission, or after the show (not during the show). If you must leave during the performance, do so during a scene change. However, you may not be permitted back into the theater, so only leave in an emergency. Note: It is best not to leave or enter during a musical or dance number.

7. No flash photography or video cameras are permitted. A theater pays rights to produce a play and has certain guidelines that must be followed. Filming a production may not follow these guidelines and can be illegal.
The Drowsy Chaperone
At A Glance

Nuts and Bolts

The Drowsy Chaperone began life in 1999 as a spoof of old-time musical first performed at the stag party before the wedding of actors Bob Martin and Janet Van De Graaff. Martin joined the three original creators to revise the show for the Toronto Fringe Festival. David Mirvish financed an expanded production for Theatre Passe Muraille in 1999, which led to a mainstage production at the Winter Garden Theatre in 2001. Interest from New York producers led to an out-of-town engagement at the Ahmanson Theatre in Los Angeles in 2005 and culminated in The Drowsy Chaperone opening on Broadway on May 1, 2006.

It was nominated for 13 Tony Awards, and won five, including Best Book and Best Original Score.

Setting: The Morosco Theater, New York City, 1928, through the imagination of the Man in Chair, circa 2008.
photo of Debbie Timuss and Jay Brazeau by David Cooper.

What to Look For

Another World
The lights come up on a man sitting alone in a chair. He lives alone and he’s feeling a little blue, but when he puts on the record of his favourite 1920s Broadway musical, his world transforms. The scratchy monotone record segues into a live band. Suddenly, he is transported to a manor home, the scene of a lavish wedding. As his environment transforms, so too does his mood. “It does what a musical is supposed to do,” he tells the audience. “It takes you to another world.”

Song and Dance
The Drowsy Chaperone is a show to make anyone a musical aficionado. It pokes fun at the genre, but with a loving touch, not unlike the mockumentaries of Christopher Guest. It takes the most artificial elements of the genre – the sudden outbreak into song and dance, the improbable plots twists, the set comedy pieces – and celebrates them for what they were intended to be: an escape to a place where it makes perfect sense for a man to rollerskate blind-folded across the stage.

What It’s About

A lonely man, known only as Man in Chair, escapes his drab existence by listening to the cast recording of his favourite musical, “The Drowsy Chaperone.” As the needle falls, the fourth wall shatters, and the musical comes to life around him. Delighted, Man in Chair leads the audience through the show, introducing the characters and commenting on this 1920s musical from the perspective of a 21st century fan. It’s a romantic comedy, typical of the era, full of mistaken identities, misunderstandings, and catchy song and dance numbers.

When a Broadway star tries to give up the stage for love, her producer tries to sabotage the wedding to save the show – and his neck from two gangsters disguised as pastry chefs. Featuring a Latin lothario, a ditzy chorus girl, an overwhelmed best man, a confused hostess and her uber-efficient manservant, and of course a drowsy chaperone, this musical comedy within a comedy is a delightful homage to a simpler and less cynical time.
DEFINITION GAME

Here are some terms you will hear in The Drowsy Chaperone. Can you pick the right definition?

CHAPERONE:
1. a person, usually a married or older woman, who, for propriety, accompanies a young unmarried woman in public
2. a German pastry, made with raisins and sherry
3. a lone sheep left in the field after sundown

ROLLING:
1. a stinging sensation of the tongue
2. carefree and joyous
3. desperate and callous

OVERTURE:
1. being overly old; mature
2. an orchestral composition forming the prelude or introduction to an opera, oratorio, or musical
3. to do to excess; overindulge

AVIATRIX:
1. a woman who is a pilot; aviator
2. apt or tending to deceive
3. readily obtainable

DEBONAIR:
1. a first public appearance on a stage
2. the act of throwing someone named "Deborah" up high
3. courteous, gracious, and having a sophisticated charm

NUPTIALS:
1. food supplies; provisions
2. of or pertaining to marriage or the marriage ceremony
3. of or pertaining to seeing or sight

JITTERS:
1. to be nervous or uneasy
2. a strenuously acrobatic dance consisting of a few standardized steps augmented by twirls, splits, somersaults, etc.
3. a tasty, salty snack

ENCORE:
1. the central part of a fleshy fruit
2. a sculptured representation of a young woman, esp. one produced prior to the 5th century B.C.
3. a demand, as by applause, for a repetition of a song, act, or performance

SCOUNDREL:
1. a rounded rod, usually of wood, tapering toward each end, used in hand-spinning
2. an unprincipled, dishonestable person
3. one of the carts used during the French Revolution to convey victims to the guillotine

DROWSY:
1. sleepy, sluggish
2. nearly drowning
3. unable to stop speaking
"It does what a musical is supposed to do: it takes you to another world. And it gives you a little tune to carry in your head, you know? A little something to take you away from the dreary horrors of the real world. A little something for when you're feeling blue. You know?"

Man in Chair, from The Drowsy Chaperone

**POWER OF THEATRE**

*The Drowsy Chaperone* is a celebration of the healing powers of theatre. As we've seen, after World War I, the world was tired of the "dreary horrors of the real world." The musical theatre of the 1920s was an answer to that weariness. Audiences did not come to the theatre for realism; they came to be transported; they came for spectacle, for fascinating characters, clever lyrics and melodies you would always remember. They came for a happy ending. In real life and in his stage persona as Man in Chair, Bob Martin longs for the days when musicals had the funny, absurd and joyous atmosphere that *The Drowsy Chaperone* matches so perfectly.

What about you? How do you feel about musical theatre? Is *The Drowsy Chaperone* the first musical you've ever seen? Can theatre heal and restore today, as it did in the 1920s?
In his book, *Facets of Comedy* (Grosset & Dunlap, 1972), Walter Sorrell writes, “Laughter is a psychological and physiological phenomenon, comedy the act of man’s humorous capacity.” Whew! Large words just for making people laugh. But comedy can be serious business. As the English actor Donald Wolfit once said, “Dying is easy; comedy is hard.”

Although full of joyous fun, *The Drowsy Chaperone* can teach an important lesson. The ability to not take things seriously, to look at life and art with a humorist’s eye, is an important one to nurture in young people, especially in these increasingly serious times. Comedy can be a carefree interruption to life’s troubles, a solace to grief, or even a weapon against authority.

What makes us laugh can often be a reflection of our culture and the times in which we live. *The Drowsy Chaperone* is a celebration of the musicals of the 1920s, and it faithfully captures the spirit of that wild, carefree age. Throughout history, comic writers like Aristophanes, Jonathan Swift, Mark Twain, James Thurber, P.D. Wodehouse, Dorothy Parker, and more modern wits like Lenny Bruce, Woody Allen, Richard Pryor and Al Franken have played a vital role in the life of society. Especially today, young people need to look at sacred cows with an analytical, comedian’s gaze.

Looking at life’s funny side is an important skill to develop. *The Drowsy Chaperone* will be a perfect launching point for discussions about the history and importance of comedy. By connecting *The Drowsy Chaperone* to other forms of humor they experience every day, and creating their own comic writing, students will see themselves as part of a long, and important, lineage: those who have made us laugh, and made us think, through comedy.
CHARACTER SCRAPBOOK

Create a scrapbook based on the characters in The Drowsy Chaperone. Break your class or group up into smaller groups, enough so that each group is assigned one character from the musical. Each group will choose or be assigned one of the characters from The Drowsy Chaperone.

Using the describing words you wrote down on page 5 as a foundation, create a one-page collage based on your character.

First, cut out the photo of your character from the gallery on page 5, and attach it to a piece of paper with the adhesive of your choice. Then add the rest of your collage.

Possible items for your collage:

Photos from magazines or the Internet that remind you of your character.

Photos from magazines or the Internet of props similar to those used by your character in the show.

Write down, in long hand or on a computer, a favorite line said or sung by your character in the show (don’t worry if you don’t get it exactly right!)

Your own drawing of your character.

Your own drawing of a scene from the show featuring your character.
UNTIL LAUGHTER DO US PART?

What makes a wedding so funny? The Drowsy Chaperone shares one element with many famous comedies, such as William Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream or As You Like It; they end with a wedding. What is it about a wedding that makes it the perfect ending to a comedy?

Imagine that you’ve met someone from Mars, who doesn’t know about our strange wedding rituals here on Earth. Write 5 sentences describing a wedding.

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

* Compare your list with others in your class or group. Choose one aspect – how could it be retold in a funny way?

DID YOU KNOW?

Just as in the musical, the real-life story of The Drowsy Chaperone’s creation is full of love and marriage!

Man in Chair was originally played by Bob Martin, who co-wrote the musical as a wedding gift for his real-life wife, Janet Van De Graaff (complete with their names as the fictional bride and groom!).
### COMEDY JOURNAL

What makes you laugh? Create a comedy journal. Over a one week period, write down the funny things you see and experience, both in popular culture and in your own life. Make a list of the TV shows you may have watched, movies you may have seen, comic strips or books you may have read or Internet sites you may have clicked on. For the same day, write down any funny things that may have happened to you, your family or friends.

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<tr>
<th>POPULAR CULTURE</th>
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Choose one item from popular culture, and one item from real life. What about them was so funny? Explain in a short paragraph. Compare with others in your class or group. Is there a consensus about what is funny today? Are there any elements in what you found funny over the week that were shared with The Drowsy Chaperone?
WHAT'S SO FUNNY?

Can you find comedy in a stressful situation? How about in school? Often the best comedy blossoms from the most awkward or difficult situations.

Create your own comic story about school life. First, brainstorm five school events that might prove to be difficult or stressful (i.e., taking a test):

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

Now, focus on one of your choices above. Brainstorm ideas on how the situation you’ve chosen might be seen in a comic way. Write three ways the situation you’ve chosen might develop in a humorous fashion (to an audience or a reader, if not to the people involved!):

1. 
2. 
3. 

Who are the characters in the situation you’re developing? Below, write their names and a one sentence description of each character. If these are based on real-life people, change their names:

NAME:
DESCRIPTION:

NAME:
DESCRIPTION:

NAME:
DESCRIPTION:

Now, focus on one of your choices above. Brainstorm ideas on how the situation you’ve chosen might prove to be difficult or stressful (i.e., taking a test):

1. 
2. 
3. 

Where does your comic situation take place? Including as much detail as possible, write a brief description of the setting of your comic situation:

NAME:
DESCRIPTION:

Using your Ideas (and a separate piece of paper), write a short comic story about school life.
"Imagine, if you will, it’s November, 1928. You’ve just arrived at the doors of the Morosco Theatre in New York. It doesn’t exist anymore, it was torn down in 1982, and replaced with an enormous hotel. It’s awful. Unforgivable. Anyway, it’s very cold and a heavy grey sleet is falling from the sky but you don’t care because you’re going to see a Broadway show! Listen!

Man in Chair, from The Drowsy Chaperone

THE ROARING 20s

Sometimes after a great shock or sorrow, you just want to have a party. That’s what the 1920s were: one long, fabulous, roaring party of a decade after years of horror and war. World War I had brought the world so much death; tens of thousands of young men had been lost. The old ways of behaving, the old moralities, seemed old-fashioned. People had had enough of reality – they wanted spectacle and romance, fun and frivolity. Solemnity and seriousness were out – fun and spectacle were in. The American people wanted a new way of looking at the world, a new perspective. And they got it, in their music, their clothes, their architecture, and especially in their theatre.

Jazz was the soundtrack of this wild new era, and musical theatre artists did not hesitate to use this uniquely American sound in their shows. If America broke its political ties with Europe in 1776, it finally broke away theatrically during the 20s. During the 19th century, the European operetta had been the model for American theatre, but, like all of American culture, something new was needed. As Prince Brough says in Popular-Music Culture in America, “The 1920s musicals...avoided the sentimentality and slightly aristocratic tone that came from Viennese operetta. American musical comedies were brassy and brash, lively and spicy, colloquial and earthy. They employed more of the elements of dance and music that were identifiable American, and they accurately reflected the optimism and hedonism, the frenetic energy, and the abandoned, carefree attitudes of the postwar-boom era.” This is the joyous passion that The Drowsy Chaperone celebrates.
In his 1877 essay, "An Essay on Comedy," George Meredith writes, "comedy teaches the world to understand what all is it." How has comedy changed over the years? Create a comic timeline of the 20th century. Break your class or group up into ten smaller groups; every group will be assigned one of the decades of the 20th century. Using at least three Internet or Library resources, research the comedy of that decade. Using the timeline below, write the titles and authors of three novels, plays, comic poems, movies, television shows or web sites that were created during your decade.
COMEDY TIMELINE

Use the space below to brainstorm on the following discussion points:

- Discuss the important historical events of the decade you have chosen. Write a one-paragraph reflection on this idea: “Comedy is influenced by the times in which it is created.”

- Focus your discussions on the 1920s. How did the musicals of the 1920s reflect the times in which they were created? Consider that Bob Martin, one of the creators of The Drowsy Chaperone passionately believes in the healing power of musical theatre, saying, “There’s something very healing about being transported by a romantic fantasy.” How can escapism help us to heal? How was the 1920s musical, with its defiant sense of humor, a direct answer to the horrors of World War I? How did musicals change after the Stock Market Crash of 1929?

- Go back to your Comedy Journal (page 9). Compare some of your comic findings from your week-long research with some of the comic art forms you researched for your part of the timeline. How does the comedy you watch reflect the times in which you live today?
SILENT COMEDY

During the 1920s, musical theatre thrived, but another form of art was blossoming that would soon overtake theatre’s popularity. The first movies were created in the late 19th century. The first films were silent films, and many of them were comedies.

Silent film comedians like Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, Harold Lloyd and Jean Harlow (many of whom started in live theatre) held the attention of their audiences and generated laughs using only gestures, body language and movements and facial expressions. A whole world was created without any sound.

Watch a silent film comedy (see Resource section for some suggestions). As you watch the film, use the chart below to write down gestures, body language and movements and facial expressions that the actors use to create humor and tell the story.

Gestures:


Body Language:


Body Movements:


Facial Expressions:


Think about it: The Drowsy Chaperone is supposed to have taken place in 1926. Why is that year significant in the history of theatre and the movies?
How do the actors in The Drowsy Chaperone use the “vocabulary” of silent films? When you see The Drowsy Chaperone, watch for gestures, body language, facial expressions used to create humor without words or music. How are they similar to what you saw in silent movies? How are they different?

**Gestures:**


**Body Language:**


**Body Movements:**


**Facial Expressions:**


HOT SEAT

Here's a fun and enlightening theatre game that was used during the rehearsals of The Drowsy Chaperone!

Interviews are a part of life. You get interviewed for a job or when you're applying for a school. Actors and politicians are interviewed on television, the Internet and newspapers. Performers are often interviewed as part of the audition process.

Now's your chance to interview the different characters from The Drowsy Chaperone! After seeing the show, have each member of your class or group choose one of the characters from the show from the list on page 3. One at a time, each member of your class or group will sit in the “hot seat” in front of everyone else. Once in that seat, you are no longer yourself, you are the character from the show you have chosen! Class or group members will ask the character questions, and the person in the “hot seat” must fully answer in the personality and voice of the character. Remember, no one word answers: you must explain WHY!

Possible questions:


What do you think about Musical Theatre?

What are your hobbies?

What are your weaknesses? What are your strengths?

What are your goals in life?

Do you like to take risks?

Do you work well under pressure?

What can you do that the other characters cannot?
The Drowsy Chaperone features a song called "Show Off," in which the Bride, Janet Van De Graaff, tells the world that she is done with show business and no longer wants to be a "show off." Theatre in the 1920s, when The Drowsy Chaperone is supposed to have been written, was all about being a "show off," with each new production trying to outdo the others with bigger stars, more spectacular sets and more elegant, humorous and inventive lyrics. This competition to be the best created more theatre than had ever been produced before; it also laid the foundation for the creation of the art form known as the American musical.
The 1920s were the golden age of American musical theatre. Musical theatre composers and lyricists created the foundation for the growth of the art form throughout the 20th century.

Break your class or group into smaller groups and with your teammates choose one famous musical theatre artist from the 1920s. Each group will research the lives, achievements and innovations of the person you have chosen, and present a brief report on their findings.

These reports, along with all photos, images, newspaper clippings, and anything else you find on your subject, will be placed in one book, your 1920s Musical Theatre Who’s Who!

Here are some suggestions of possible additions to your book:

EUBIE BLAKE
RICHARD RODGERS
LORENZ HART
COLE PORTER
GEORGE GERSHWIN
IRA GERSHWIN
ARTHUR SCHWARTZ
RAY HENDERSON
BUDDY DESYLVIA
JEROME KERN
OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN II

The 1920s were the busiest decade in Broadway history. Sometimes as many as 50 new shows would open in one season.

Use the “-1” code to find the names of the 1920s musicals below. For every letter, subtract 1, that is, go to the previous letter in the alphabet. (i.e. “b” would be “a”)

2. Tvoox (1925)
3. Efbsftu Fofniz (1925)
4. Spbmjif (1928)
5. Uif Wbhbcpoe Ljoh (1925)
6. Uif Uiff Nvlfuffst (1928)
7. Uif Efifs Tpoh (1926)
8. Tivggmf Bmpoh (1921)
9. B Dpoofudjvdv Zbolff (1927)
10. Gjguz Njmjmjo Gflodinfo (1929)

After you’ve deciphered the titles, choose one musical. Using Internet and library resources, research the musical’s composer, lyricist, where it was first produced and how long it ran. What was your musical’s story? Compare it to the story of The Drowsy Chaperone.

DID YOU KNOW? In The Drowsy Chaperone, the musical theatre producer who wants to stop the wedding is named Feldzeig. Turn this name around and you get the name of one of the 1920s most successful producers: Florenz Ziegfeld!
Themes & Allusions

Imitation is the Sincerest Form of Flattery

The Drowsy Chaperone could be considered both pastiche and parody. The line between the two forms is a thin one – both imitate and poke affectionate fun at an original work or style, but a pastiche is generally written on face-value, while a parody is designed to comment on the source material.

On its own, the musical within the comedy is a pastiche – it takes as its model one of the hundreds of musical comedies that dominated the Broadway stage in the 1920s, reflecting not only the musical styles of the era, but also the form of the storytelling. Comedy pieces such as the “spit take” scene and the pastrym punning by the gangsters were inspired by the musical revues of the decade and the vaudeville and musical hall shows that came before.

The narration by the Man in Chair provides a more cynical framework for the musical, bringing it into the realm of parody. Yet he also pays homage to a simpler time and a genre of theatre that existed purely for entertainment’s sake. While the Man recognizes the improbabilities of the storyline and the cultural differences that make “The Drowsy Chaperone” itself anachronistic and even offensive by 21st century standards, his affection for the show, warts and all, is undeniable. “Look, I know it’s not a perfect show,” he concludes; “the spit take scene is lame and the monkey motif is labored. But none of that matters. It does what a musical is supposed to do: it takes you to another world. And it gives you a little tune to carry with in your head, you know? A little something to help you escape the dreary horrors of the real world.”

It’s All in the Meta

Metatheatrical – or in this case, meta-theatre – is a literary term for a work of fiction or drama that alludes to or explicitly draws attention to the devices of the form, particularly those works that openly comment on its own fictional status.

The Drowsy Chaperone isn’t primarily designed to pose deep, intellectual questions about the relationship between fiction and reality. Yet the Man in Chair acts as a framing story for the musical within the comedy, a common device in metatheatrical, and his interjections about the musical are similar to narrative footnotes – continuing the story while commenting ironically on it. Furthermore, many of his asides are comments not just about 1920s musicals, but the state of theatre (and the world) in the 21st century. “Mature contemporary audiences are too sophisticated to enjoy broad racial stereotypes on the stage,” he says of Roman Bartelli/Adolphe, “so we’ve banished them to Disney. Let the children sort it out.”

From the first moment of the play, in fact, the fourth wall is deliberately and irrevocably shattered. The line between “reality” and “fiction” – as it exists within the overall show is further blurred when the Man becomes part of the final number and is subsumed by the story he has previously been presenting.

Love Is Always Lovely

Four different couples find love – or some version of love – in The Drowsy Chaperone. It is, of course, a musical comedy, and love and romance are inexorably twined within the genre. The road of love is full of potholes, especially when the grooms are blindfolded and on roller skates, but they stumble into happiness all the same. Mrs. Tottendale, the daffy hostess, sings the musical’s romantic theme of unbridled optimism: “Love is always lovely in the end,” she proclaims. In her confession of love for the Underling, she cites Romeo and Juliet, Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, and Samson and Delilah as examples of love always working out in the end. And it does when love occurs within the framework of a 1920s musical comedy.

It doesn’t in real life, of course. “Often, in the end, there are lawyers,” the Man in Chair points out. And yet despite his own disappointments in life and love, even he comes to the conclusion that “in the larger sense, in a broader sense, it’s better to have lived than left, right?”
Ideas & Exploration

**Pastiche**

Pastiche is an artistic form that can be found in literature, art, architecture and music. In one meaning of the term, it is a hodgepodge of different styles blended together to create a new form. An example of this in theatre would be Tom Stoppard’s *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, which is a pastiche of *Hamlet*, *Waiting for Godot*, vaudeville and existentialism.

A pastiche can also be an imitation of a particular form or story. The *Star Wars* and *Indiana Jones* movies are a pastiche of the serial adventure films of the 1930s and 1940s. Vincent Van Gogh created a series of paintings based on works by Jean-Francois Millet, including *The Sower* and *Night* (based on Millet’s *The Four Hours of the Day*). “It is not copying pure and simple that one would be doing,” Van Gogh wrote his brother Theo about *Night*. “It is rather translating into another language, the language of colours, the impressions of chiaroscuro in white and black.”

*The Sower* by Jean-Francois Millet (left) and Vincent Van Gogh (right)

Choose a poem, short story, or song and write something in the style of that piece. Options could include taking the specific structure of a poem and writing an original piece within that rhyme scheme and metre, writing a sequel to a favourite story, or adopting a specific voice (eg: the narrator of a hardboiled detective story) as a significant element of the piece.

**Musical theatre**

Trace the development of musical theatre from the 19th century to today. How have changing styles of musicals reflected changes in society? Are there specific musicals that can be said to have defined their era?

*Broadway: The American Musical* spotlights 15 musicals as having had a major impact on the development of the form in the 20th century. Choose one of the musicals below and discuss what was innovative, influential or important about it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Show Boat</th>
<th>A Chorus Line</th>
<th>Guys and Dolls</th>
<th>The Lion King</th>
<th>Company</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kiss Me Kate</td>
<td>La Cage aux Folles</td>
<td>Hair</td>
<td>Oklahoma!</td>
<td>Cats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabaret</td>
<td>Porgy and Bess</td>
<td>42nd Street</td>
<td>West Side Story</td>
<td>The Producers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who were some of the key figures on Broadway – the important directors, stars, songwriters and librettists? Choose one individual or writing team and write a brief biographical sketch discussing their career.

**The Roaring Twenties**

What were some of the defining characteristics of the Roaring Twenties? What music did people listen to? What did they do for fun? What were some of the major political and social issues?

Sir John Paul Getty II said, “The Roaring Twenties were the period of that Great American Prosperity which was built on shaky foundations.” Can a comparison be drawn to the first decade of the 21st century in terms of the current mortgage and equity crisis? How have rapid advances in technology, then and now, affected Western society?

Create a timeline of key events in the decade and discuss the importance of each one.
A musical comedy produced in 1925, written by Jerome Kern, Oscar Hammerstein II and Otto Harbach, it was a showcase for Marilyn Miller, who played a bareback rider who falls in love with a rich playboy. Kern and Hammerstein next collaborated on *Showboat*, the show that transformed Broadway musicals.

**No, No Nanette**
A 1925 Broadway musical by Otto Harbach, Irving Caesar, Vincent Youmans and Frank Mandel that enjoyed a successful 1971 revival. According to baseball lore, the reason for the Boston Red Sox’s 86-year World Series drought was due to owner Harry Frazee selling Babe Ruth to the Yankees to finance a Broadway musical – disputably *No, No Nanette* (he actually used the money to finance the play the musical was based upon).

**The Boy Friend**
A 1954 musical by Sandy Wilson set during the Roaring ’20s, *The Boy Friend* is a pastiche of 1920s British musical comedies that became a parody of Busby Berkeley film musicals when it was made into a movie.

**Follies**
A 1971 musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Goldman about a reunion of the “Weismann’s Follies” in a soon-to-be-demolished Broadway theatre. Many of the songs are pastiches of 1920s and ’30s musical theatre numbers.

**Words and Music (Rodgers and Hart)**
*De-Lovely* (Cole Porter)
*Rhapsody in Blue* (George Gershwin)
Three biopics about important figures in 1920s musical theatre, each one telling the story with varying degrees of accuracy and success.

**The Great Gatsby** by F. Scott Fitzgerald
One of the great novels of the Jazz Age – a term popularized by Fitzgerald in his collection of short stories “Tales of the Jazz Age”.

**Gentlemen Prefer Blondes** by Anita Loos
A novel (and later Broadway musical and film) about a gold-digging flapper in the 1920s. Originally a series of sketches in *Harper’s Bazaar* the novel is written in the form of the diary of Lorelei Lee, the “Little Girl from Little Rock.”

**Broadway Musicals: Show by Show** by Stanley and Kay Green
A survey of hit Broadway musicals from 1866 to the present, including synopses, trivia and credits for over 300 shows.

**Strike Up the Band: A New History of Musical Theatre** by Scott Miller
A look at the evolution of musical theatre over the past century, focusing on the connections to the social and political atmosphere of the time.

**Waiting for Guffman, A Mighty Wind**
Christopher Guest’s mockumentaries (about community theatre and folk music, respectively) poke fun at their subjects, but with a degree of affection.

**The Princess Bride** by William Goldman
A novel – later made into a movie – that is written as if it were an abridgement of a work by the fictional author S. Morgenstern.
What the Critics Said...

"The more I see *The Drowsy Chaperone* (and, for those counting, this is my sixth time with the show in its various incarnations starting with its run at the Toronto Fringe in 1999), the more I'm delighted by its goofiness, impressed by its intelligence and touched by its bigger-than-life heart. I love the sophistication of Lisa Lambert's lyrics and adore how Greg Morrison's score captures the sound of an era while keeping its modern identity intact."  *The Globe and Mail*

"...here is a musical that frankly sets itself up as a short (1 hour 40 minutes), happy exercise in escapism, adorned with just enough postmodern footnotes to make you feel all insiderly. It's sort of like being able to eat your cake and eat it too. Surely few productions have ever pulled an audience so immediately and unconditionally on their sides."  *New York Times*

"I loved *The Drowsy Chaperone* when I saw it on Broadway last year ... and I enjoyed it even more the second time around.... Only the self-importantly serious and the chronically depressed will fail to enjoy this preposterously entertaining evening."  *The Daily Telegraph*

"With a title as bad as that, it had to be good. Well, this unexpected new musical is more than good. It's a smashing, witty and brilliantly staged show, and I enjoyed every mad minute of it. Put it this way: If you don't end up loving *The Drowsy Chaperone*, there's no hope for the world."  *New York Observer*

"A witty valentine from musical theater lovers to the frothy tunes of the 1920s, this refreshing cocktail of a show gets the audience on its side in the opening minutes and keeps them there for the duration."  *Variety*

"Scampering along at an intermission-free 100 minutes, *The Drowsy Chaperone* is not an insider piece of theatrical pastiche. Its valentine to 1920s musical style is sufficiently broad to be easily enjoyed."  *Star-Ledger*

"Those with a taste for melodic, feelgood (sic) nostalgia will find plenty to feast upon in this musical's breezy, interval-free 100 minutes."  *The Times*

"*The Drowsy Chaperone* is a frolicking great show of immense colour and pace – and a must to see."  *The Daily Express*

"It's a rare evening when a musical makes me laugh out loud and often but it happened last night."  *The London Evening-Standard*
Notable Quotes

"Most convicted felons are just people who were not taken to museums or Broadway musicals as children." Libby Gelman-Waxner (aka Paul Rudnick)

"He who sings frightens away his ills." Miguel de Cervantes

"I don't think today's younger audience... would even know what 1920s musicals were like." Julie Andrews

"Sometimes I like to play the soundtracks to famous musicals so we can all sing along. South Pacific is one of my favorites. Our neighbors must hate us." Louise Brown

"We all sing about the things we're thinking; musicals are about expressing those emotions that you can't talk about..." Anthony Stewart Head

"The musicals had a good, happy feeling, saying that the world is a better place. They say it's not reality, but who cares? There's too much reality these days." Shirley Jones

"Look at the darkest hit musicals – Cabaret, West Side Story, Carousel – they are exuberant experiences. They send you out of the theater filled with music." John Lithgow

"Musicals are, by nature, theatrical, meaning poetic, meaning having to move the audience's imagination and create a suspension of disbelief, by which I mean there's no fourth wall." Stephen Sondheim

"All the best stories in the world are but one story in reality – the story of escape. It is the only thing which interests us all and at all times, how to escape." Arthur Christopher Benson

Words of wisdom from Man in Chair:

"I hate theatre. Well, it's so disappointing, isn't it? You know what I do when I'm sitting in a darkened theatre waiting for the show to begin? I pray. Oh, dear God, please let it be a good show. And let it be short, oh Lord in heaven, please. Two hours is fine, three hours is too much. And keep the actors out of the audience. God. I didn't pay good money to have the fourth wall come crashing down around my ears. I just want a story, and a few good songs that will take me away. I just want to be entertained. I mean, isn't that the point? Amen."

"What a mess! Will it all work out in the end? Of course it will! It's not real! It's a musical. Everything always works out in musicals. In the real world nothing ever works out and the only people who burst into song are the hopelessly deranged."

"So, one day you say it to someone, you say 'I love you' and you basically phrase it as a question, but they accept it as fact and then suddenly there she is standing in front of you in a three thousand dollar dress with tears in her eyes, and her nephew made the huppah, so what do you do? Do you say I was kidding, I was joking? No, you can't! You live, right? You choose to live. And for a couple of months you stare at the alien form in bed beside you and you think to yourself 'Who are you? Who are you?' And one day you say it out loud... then it's a trial separation and couples counseling and all your conversations are about her eating disorder and your Zoloft addiction, and you're constantly redefining and re-evaluating and revisiting before you finally lose the deposit on the house and the whole 'relationship' ends on a particularly ugly note with your only copy of Gypsy spinning through the air and smashing against the living room wall. But still, in the larger sense, in a broader sense, it's better to have lived than left, right?"
Awards

- 2000 Canadian Comedy Award Pretty Funny Comedic Play
- 2006 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Book of a Musical – Book by Bob Martin, Don McKellar
- 2006 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Costume Design – Gregg Barnes
- 2006 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Featured Actress in a Musical – Beth Leavel
- 2006 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Lyrics – Lisa Lambert, Greg Morrison
- 2006 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Music – Lisa Lambert, Greg Morrison
- 2006 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Musical
- 2006 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Set Design of a Musical – David Gallo
- 2006 Theatre World Award – Bob Martin
- 2006 Tony Award for Best Book of a Musical – Bob Martin, Don McKellar
- 2006 Tony Award for Best Costume Design of a Musical – Gregg Barnes
- 2006 Tony Award for Best Featured Actress in a Musical – Beth Leavel
- 2006 Tony Award for Best Original Score – Lisa Lambert, Greg Morrison
- 2006 Tony Award for Best Scenic Design of a Musical – David Gallo

Nominations

- 2000 Dora Mavor Moore Award Outstanding Costume Design - Christopher Richards
- 2006 Drama Desk Award Outstanding Actor in a Musical – Bob Martin
- 2006 Drama Desk Award Outstanding Actress in a Musical – Sutton Foster
- 2006 Drama Desk Award Outstanding Choreography – Casey Nicholaw
- 2006 Drama Desk Award Outstanding Director of a Musical – Casey Nicholaw
- 2006 Drama Desk Award Outstanding Featured Actor in a Musical – Eddie Korbich
- 2006 Drama Desk Award Outstanding Orchestrations – Larry Blank
- 2006 Drama Desk Award Outstanding Sound Design – Acme Sound Partners
- 2006 Tony Award for Best Actor in a Musical – Bob Martin
- 2006 Tony Award for Best Actress in a Musical – Sutton Foster
- 2006 Tony Award for Best Choreography – Casey Nicholaw
- 2006 Tony Award for Best Direction of a Musical – Casey Nicholaw
- 2006 Tony Award for Best Featured Actor in a Musical – Danny Burstein
- 2006 Tony Award for Best Lighting Design of a Musical – Ken Billington, Brian Monahan
- 2006 Tony Award for Best Musical
- 2006 Tony Award for Best Orchestrations – Larry Blank
PETER ROYSTON - (Writer)

A writer and a teaching artist, Peter Royston has worked in various capacities to bridge the gap between the entertainment industry and the educational community. As the co-founder and co-director of Theatre Direct’s educational program, Broadway Classroom, Peter helped to bring thousands of students to Broadway, to experience—and learn from—the history, grandeur, and just plain fun of live theatre.

Peter Royston is the author of over 35 study guides for Broadway, Off-Broadway, touring and regional productions, including The Phantom of the Opera, Miss Saigon (co-author), Les Miserables (co-author), Sunset Boulevard, Rent, Forever Tango, The Last Night of Ballyhoo, The Scarlet Pimpernel, The Lion King, The Diary of Anne Frank (co-author), The Civil War, Swan Lake, Martin Guerre, Annie Get Your Gun, A Moon for the Misbegotten, Riverdance, The Rhythm Club, Picca At the Lapin Agile, Magic On Broadway, Jam On The Groove, Mindgames, Gross Indecency, A Chorus Line, Gumboots, Saturday Night Fever, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, King Hedley II, A Christmas Carol at Madison Square Garden, Thoroughly Modern Millie, Mamma Mia (co-author), The Exonerated, Like Jazz (Mark Taper Forum), Topdog/Underdog (Mark Taper Forum), the 2004 Dallas Summer Musicals season, Little Shop of Horrors (Ahmanson Theatre), Nothing But the Truth (Mark Taper Forum), A Perfect Wedding (Kirk Douglas Theatre), Play Without Words (Ahmanson Theatre), All We Ever Wanted (Ahmanson Theatre), The Drowsy Chaperone (Ahmanson Theatre), On the Record, Dancing On Common Ground, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang All Shook Up, Lennon, The Black Rider (Ahmanson Theatre), Curtains (Ahmanson Theatre), Lestat, Eight in the Piazza (Ahmanson Theatre), A Chorus Line, Beauty and the Beast, Tarzan, and Mary Poppins.

He is the creator of the award-winning study guide and educational program for the 2004 Broadway production of Sly Fox, by Larry Gelbart, which brought together the disparate worlds of the educational community, Broadway theatre, and the Museum of Cartoon and Comic Art (MOCCA).

A contributor to Center Stage, Stagebill, Equity News, and American Theatre Magazines, Peter is the author of the special timeline/history of Actors’ Equity, created for the Union’s 90th anniversary in 2003.

Peter was a contributing writer to the New York City Department of Education Blueprint for Theatre Educators.

Peter writes the monthly “Village Arts” column for Westchester’s Hudson Independent newspaper. He is a member of the League of American Theatres and Producers, and a licensed New York City Walking Tour Guide.

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TIM THAYER - (Designer)

Tim is the owner of Eyebuzz Design. Tim works with a variety of clients from the music industry, film editing, travel, fashion, theatre, and online stores (as well as Broadway Study Guides). Tim is currently developing a comic strip for newspaper syndication called Three Feet. Contact Tim at tim@eyebuzz.com, or through his websites, www.eyebuzz.com or www.threefeet.com.

Photos by Carlo Pieroni
RESOURCES

TEXTS
The Musical: A Look at the American Musical Theater by Richard Kielan (Applause, 2000)
Facets of Comedy by Walter Sorrell (Grosset & Dunlap, 1972)
How to Be Funny: Discovering the Comic You by Steve Allen (Prometheus, 1998)
Made You Laugh: The Funniest Moments in Comedy (Hardcover) by Joe Garner (Andrews McMeel, 2004)

VIDEO OR DVD
Steamboat Bill, Jr. (1928) Directed by Charles Reisner (Image Entertainment, 1999)
The Harold Lloyd Comedy Collection (New Line, 2005)

RECORDINGS
The Drowsy Chaperone Original Broadway Cast Album (Ghostlight, 2006)

Goals:

- LANGUAGE ARTS: Uses a variety of prewriting strategies (e.g. develops a focus, plans a sequence of ideas, uses structured overviews, uses speed writing (brainstorming), creates diagrams)
- LANGUAGE ARTS: Uses reading skills and strategies to understand a variety of literary texts (e.g., fiction, nonfiction, myths, poems, biographies, autobiographies, science fiction, supernatural tales, satires, parodies, plays, American literature, British literature, world and ancient literature)
- LANGUAGE ARTS: Understands how literary forms can be represented in visual narratives (e.g. allegory, parable, analogy, satire, narrative style, characterization, irony)
- HISTORY: Analyzes the values held by specific people who influenced history and the role their values played in influencing history
- HISTORY: Analyzes the influences, specific ideas and beliefs held on a period of history and how events might have been different in the absence of those ideas and values
- THEATRE: Understands the basic physical and chemical properties of the technical aspects of theatre (e.g. light, color, electricity, paint, makeup)
- THEATRE: Understands production requirements for a variety of dramatic texts from cultural and historical perspectives
- THEATRE: Improvises, writes, and refines scripts based on personal experience and heritage, imagination, literature and history
- THEATRE: Conceptualizes and realizes artistic interpretations for informal or formal productions
- MUSIC: Understands characteristics that cause various musical works (e.g. from different genres, styles, historical periods, composers) to be considered exemplary
- MUSIC: Classifies unfamiliar but representative aural examples of music (e.g. by genre, style, historical period, culture)
- MUSIC: Knows sources of American music genres (e.g. swing, Broadway musical, rock), the evolution of these genres, and the musicians associated with them
Internet Sites of Note

Playhouse Theatre Company
www.vancouverplayhouse.com

The Drowsy Chaperone – A Musical Within a Comedy
www.drowsychaperone.com
The official website of The Drowsy Chaperone, including photos, videos and e-cards to send on special occasions.

Musicals 101 – The Cyber Encyclopaedia of Musicals
www.musicals101.com
A reference site for musicals, both on stage and in film.

Broadway: the American Musical
http://www.pbs.org/wnet/broadway/index.html
Website supporting a PBS special about Broadway musicals.

Musicals.Net
http://www.musicals.net
A resource page for musicals, including show information and forums.

The Nineteen Twenties in History
www.1920-30.com/
A snapshot of life during the 1920s, the setting of the musical within the musical.

Digital History - Prohibition
www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HID=441
An overview of the Prohibition era in the United States, part of a series of articles on the 1920s.

YOUTUBE/GOOGLE VIDEO LINKS:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcVqP-TKCIg
Behind-the-scenes footage and interviews from the West End production of The Drowsy Chaperone.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=weCfO2zYdkU&feature=related
An interview with John Glover, who played Man in Chair on Broadway for several months.

Tips from Man in Chair:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=I_Yj1nOvVaw&feature=related
Tip #46 – Times Square (“It’s clearly marked marquee above it, just to help you do the math.”)

Tip #372 – the stage door (“Other than that, the theatre community is very welcoming.”)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nde78PfcnQO&feature=related

Tip #710 – theatre vs. television (“Don’t you want to see things Romans did?”)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8dBFiH0k&feature=related

Tip #1224 – the marquee (“I’d be screaming in pain if I tried to do that.”)
Glossary

Adam and Eve
In Judaism, Christianity and Islam, Adam and Eve are the parents of the human race, created in God's image on the sixth day. They were banished from the Garden of Eden for succumbing to temptation and eating fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Antarctica
A continent lying primarily within the Antarctic Circle and including the South Pole, almost 95% of its landmass is covered by an ice cap nearly four kilometres deep in some areas. There are no permanent settlements on the continent, though there are more than 30 year-round research stations in operation. In 1959, the Antarctic Treaty reserved the continent for free and non-political scientific study.

Busby Berkeley
(November 29, 1895-March 14, 1976) A pioneering director/choreographer, Busby Berkeley learned the basis for his kaleidoscopic and regimented dance numbers from his training as a field artillery officer in World War I. He was the dance director for nearly two dozen Broadway musicals in the 1920s, moving to film in the 1930s. He was the first director to explore dynamic camera angles and roving cameras, opening new visual perspectives.

Aviatrix
A female pilot; a male pilot is an aviator.

Biscotti
An Italian biscuit often made with nuts and flavoured with anise. It is baked twice, first in a loaf and then sliced. This was originally done to allow for long periods of storage, making them popular with explorers and the military.

Anne Boleyn
(c. 1504-May 19, 1536) The second wife of Henry VIII and the mother of Queen Elizabeth I, Anne Boleyn became Queen of England in 1533 after Henry's first marriage to Catherine of Aragon was annulled. The circumstances surrounding their marriage formed the basis for the split between England and the Roman Catholic Church. When Anne was unable to produce a male heir, however, she was found guilty of adultery and beheaded.

Boutonniere
A flower worn in a buttonhole, most often as a part of men's formal wear.

Broadway
An avenue that runs north-south across Manhattan, Broadway is now synonymous with the theatre district of New York City. There has been a theatre on Broadway since 1735, though most are now film house, with most "Broadway" theatre venues located between Times Square and 53rd Street.

Buddha
The epithet given to one who has achieved enlightenment and experienced nirvana without the assistance of a teacher. Buddhist teaching holds that there can only be one Buddha in any era – the Buddha of the current era is Siddhartha Gautama, a 6th-century BC North Indian prince and founder of Buddhism.

Cannoli
An Italian tube-shaped fried pastry filled with a mixture of ricotta cheese, candied fruit and chocolate.

Carnival
The final celebration before the fasting and austerity of Lent, the largest and most famous carnival is held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Carnival has its origins in pagan fertility rites, which were later subsumed by the Catholic Church. In Rio, Carnival features parades of musicians and revellers known as blocos and masquerades.

Cats
A musical by Andrew Lloyd Webber based on T.S. Eliot's Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats. It held the record as the world's longest-running musical until surpassed by Les Misérables in London and The Phantom of the Opera on Broadway.
Champagne
Sparkling wine produced exclusively in the Champagne region of France by the méthode champenoise, and using only Chardonnay, Pinot Noir or Pinot Meunier grapes. Sparkling wine can be produced from other grapes, in other regions, and by other methods, but it legally cannot be called Champagne.

Chinoiserie
A style of Western art dominated by Chinese or pseudo-Chinese ornamentation. It was most popular in the 18th century when it blended well with the rococo style.

Chorine
A woman who dances in a chorus line.

Cocaine
An addictive stimulant to the nervous system, cocaine is extracted from the leaves of the coca plant. Although coca leaves were used to combat altitude sickness and depress appetite by the Incas, it was only towards the end of the 19th century that cocaine hydrochloride was first extracted. It quickly became a common ingredient in patent medicines and products such as the original formula for Coca-Cola, though it is now a Schedule II drug only used legally as a local anaesthetic.

Confucius
A 6th century BC teacher and scholar whose commentary on works of Chinese literature developed into a humanistic school of philosophy. After his death, his students compiled his sayings, and his belief system was formalized into a state cult during the Han Dynasty. Confucianism remained the state orthodoxy in China until the early 20th century. The name Confucius is the Latin rendering of K'ung Fu-tzu (Great Master K'ung).

Disney
An entertainment company originally founded in 1923 as a small animation studio by brothers Walt and Roy Disney, the Walt Disney Company is now the second largest media conglomerate in the world, encompassing movies, music, television and theme parks.

Dixie
A sentimental nickname for the South, it was in the song “Dixie’s Land” by minstrel singer Dan Emmett in 1859. The region of Dixie is generally considered to encompass the 11 states that seceded from the Union and the name is thought to come from either the Mason-Dixon line (the boundary separating the North and South) or the ten-dollar bills printed in New Orleans, called “dixies” from the French word for ten printed on the back of the bills.

Éclair
An oblong choux (aka puff) pastry filled with custard or whipped cream and often iced with chocolate.

Elocutionist
Elocution is the art of public speaking or reading, focussing on correct intonation, inflection and gesture.

Encore
From the French word for “again”, an encore is a command additional performance, usually solicited by an audience’s applause or demand.

Falklands
Also known as the Islas Malvinas, the Falkland Islands are a group of islands in the southern Atlantic Ocean, claimed by both England and Argentina and administered as a British crown colony. The islands were invaded by Argentina in 1982 but quickly re-occupied by Britain. The war hastened the collapse of the military junta in Argentina and helped Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher win the 1983 general election.

Footlights
A row of lights set along the front of a stage to illuminate a scene. Footlights are rarely used in modern theatre due to advanced overhead lighting techniques.

Fourth Wall
The space separating the audience from the action onstage in theatre, generally envisioned as an imaginary wall enclosing a proscenium stage. Breaking the fourth wall occurs when an actor directly addresses or displays awareness of the audience.
Sigmund Freud
(May 6, 1856-September 23, 1939) The founder of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud revolutionized understanding of the human mind, introducing such concepts as the ego, id and superego, the Oedipus complex, and the unconscious. His early work with Jean-Martin Charcot on hysteria led him to believe that mental disorders could have a psychological rather than organic cause, opening the door to new forms of treatment.

Ganache
A mixture of chocolate and whipping cream, poured over a cake or tart, or as a filling in soufflé form.

George Gershwin
(September 26, 1898-July 11, 1937) One of the greatest American composers of the 20th century, George Gershwin straddled the worlds of popular and concert music, leaving behind a songbook of orchestral music and show tunes alike. He scored several musicals and movies with his lyricist brother Ira, winning a Pulitzer Prize in 1932 for *Of Thee I Sing* and redefining American opera with *Porgy and Bess*. His orchestral work includes *Rhapsody in Blue*, *An American in Paris* and the *Piano Concerto in F*.

Ira Gershwin
(December 6, 1896-August 17, 1983) One half of one of the greatest fraternal partnerships in songwriting history, Ira Gershwin wrote the lyrics for numerous popular songs with his brother George. After George’s death, Ira collaborated with Kurt Weill, Jerome Kern and Harold Arlen, retiring in 1960. He shared the 1932 Pulitzer Prize with his brother for *Of Thee I Sing*, the first time a musical comedy received that honour.

Gibson
A dry gin martini garnished with a pickled onion, it was named for illustrator Charles Dana Gibson.

Gimlet
A cocktail made from vodka or gin, lime juice, sugar syrup and soda water, though the syrup and water are optional. It is served straight up with a slice of lime.

Global warming
The increase in global temperatures and disruption to weather patterns brought about the emission of greenhouse gases. While climate change has occurred throughout history, the concerns raised now are over the rate of change caused by human activity, in particular industrial activity and transportation.

Jane Goodall
(April 3, 1934– ) A British ethologist best known for her study of chimpanzees in Gombe National Park, Tanzania, Jane Goodall transformed the basic understanding of the species and has worked tirelessly for conservation and the humane treatment of chimpanzees in captivity. She began her work at the behest of anthropologist Louis Leakey, who arranged for her to take her PhD at Cambridge.

Greasepaint
Theatrical make-up, often made up of a mixture of grease and colorings.

Great Wall of China
A fortification in northern China, the Great Wall of China runs approximately 4500 miles along the southern Mongolian plain from the Gulf of Chihli to deep in central Asia. Although some sections date back to the seventh century BC, existing defensive structures were linked together in the third century BC by the founder of the Qin dynasty. It was rebuilt in its present form during the Ming dynasty (1368-1644).

Gypsy
An American musical by Arthur Laurents (book), Jule Styne (music) and Stephen Sondheim (lyrics), *Gypsy: A Musical Fable* is based on the autobiography of burlesque artist Gypsy Rose Lee. It focuses on the efforts of the ultimate stage mother to see her two daughters become stars.

Henry VIII
(June 28, 1491-January 28, 1547) The second son of Henry VII, Henry became heir to the throne when his older brother Arthur died in 1502. He acceded in 1509, shortly before his 18th birthday. Henry VIII was a man of great appetite, for food and women, and in his search for a male heir, he married six times. His desire for an annulment from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon – his brother’s widow – ultimately led to the creation of the Church of England.
**Highball**
A drink served in a tall glass made up of an alcoholic base and a larger proportion of non-alcoholic mixer, first poured sometime in the 1890s. The name is said to come from the railway practice of raising a ball on a pole to signal for an approaching train to speed up – the process of making these drinks was sped up by pouring the alcohol and mix directly over ice in a glass.

**Ronny Howard**
(March 1, 1954 - )
Director/actor/producer Ron Howard grew up in a show business family and made his theatrical debut before he was two years old. As an actor, he is best known for his juvenile roles in *The Andy Griffiths Show* and *Happy Days*, as well as for playing Winthrop in the movie version of *The Music Man*. He moved from acting to directing in the 1980s, winning the Academy Award for *A Beautiful Mind* in 2001.

**Les Misérables**
A musical by Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schönberg, with English lyrics by Herbert Kretzmer, based on the novel by Victor Hugo. It is the longest-running West End musical in history, celebrating its 23rd anniversary in October 2008.

**Lido deck**
The lido deck on a cruise ship is generally the area around the outdoor swimming pool. In the United Kingdom, a Lido is a public outdoor swimming pool and its environs, or a bathing beach, named for the sandbar separating the lagoon of Venice from the Adriatic Sea.

**Lothario**
A man who seduces women, named for a character in Nicholas Rowe's 1703 play, *The Fair Penitent*, who seduces and betrays the heroine.

**Maccaroni**
A chewy cookie made with sugar, egg whites, and ground almonds or coconut, and baked on rice paper. It originated in Italy, where it is called *amaretti*.

**Elton John**
(March 25, 1947 - ) An English pop star and songwriter known for his flamboyant performances, Reginald Kenneth Dwight took the name Elton John from blues musicians Elton Dean and Long John Baldry. He teamed with lyricist Bernie Taupin in the late 1960s to write studio songs, soon launching his own recording career. He had a song in the Top 40 charts every year between 1970 and 1996; since the early 1990s, the royalties from his singles have been donated to charity. He collaborated with Tim Rice on the Disney musicals *The Lion King* and *The Road to El Dorado*, and composed the music for *Billy Elliot: the Musical* and the failed *Lestat: The Musical*.

**Miss Saigon**
An adaptation of Giacomo Puccini's opera *Madama Butterfly*, *Miss Saigon* is musical by Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schönberg, with English lyrics by Richard Maltby, Jr. The story is transplanted from Japan to Vietnam in the 1970s, and charts the doomed romance between an American G.I. and a Vietnamese bar girl.

**Morosco Theatre**
Opened in 1917 on West 45th Street, New York, the Morosco Theatre was designed by Herbert Krapp for the Shubert theatre chain. It was designed for dramatic theatre, with excellent acoustics and sightlines, and housed many Pulitzer Prize winning plays. It changed hands several times over the decades and in 1982 was razed to make way for a hotel. The fictional "The Drowsy Chaperone" is said to have opened in 1928 at the Morosco Theatre. *The Drowsy Chaperone*, itself, ran on Broadway at the Marquis Theatre, which is built in the Marriott Marquis, the hotel that was built on the old Morosco site.

**Overture**
A musical introduction to a larger work; in operettas and musical theatre, the overture generally introduces the major musical themes in the show.

**Pétit Four**
A piece of sponge or pound cake cut into a small square, frosted and elaborately decorated. They are usually eaten at the end of a meal or served as part of a buffet.
Cole Porter (June 9, 1891–October 15, 1964) An American composer and lyricist, Cole Porter was born into a wealthy family and educated at Yale and Harvard, abandoning law school for a life in the theatre. His musicals include *Anything Goes* and *Kiss Me, Kate*, and many of his songs are now American standards, including “Night and Day,” “Begin the Beguine” and “Love for Sale.”

Samson and Delilah
A warrior-hero of the Old Testament, Samson’s great strength was derived from a covenant with God, symbolized by a vow never to cut his hair. When he revealed this to his lover Delilah, she had his head shaved while he slept and betrayed him to the Philistines. He was easily captured and imprisoned, but as his hair grew, he regained his strength and pulled down the pillars of the temple, destroying his enemies and himself.

Powerbar
A brand name of energy bars first launched in 1986 by Brian Maxwell, a Canadian athlete. It was the first energy bar developed and paved the way for a range of snack food designed for use by endurance athletes.

Santa Claus
A mythical figure who delivers presents to children on Christmas Eve, Santa Claus lives at the North Pole, where he runs a toy workshop staffed by elves. The name comes from *Sinterklaas*, the Dutch nickname for St. Nicholas. Nicholas of Myra was a Fourth century bishop in what is now Turkey, famous for his generosity towards the poor.

Prohibition
The 18th Amendment to the United States Constitution went into effect on January 16, 1920, prohibiting the manufacture, sale, and distribution of alcoholic beverages in the United States. Prohibition resulted in a marked increase in organized crime in response to the demand for illegal alcohol. Prohibition was subsequently repealed by the 21st Amendment in 1933, the only time an amendment has been repealed in its entirety.

Pu pu platter
A tray of assorted meat and seafood appetizers first popularized in Hawaii and transferred to the mainland in the mid-20th century to become a staple of American-Chinese cuisine.

Puerto Rico
The second largest city in Brazil and former capital of the country, Rio de Janeiro is located on Guanabara Bay off the Atlantic Ocean. It is famous for its beaches—especially the Copacabana—and annual Carnival.

Romeo and Juliet
The title characters in a play by William Shakespeare and subsequent operas, ballets and symphonic compositions. Romeo Montague and Juliet Capulet were born into feuding families, but fell in love at first sight. Their attempt to marry and break free of their families results in tragedy for all.

Stratus
A low-altitude cloud formation, horizontally layered and formed from lifting fog or the movement of cold air at low altitudes.
Swanee Lake

“Swanee” is a popular song written in 1912 by George Gershwin and Irving Caesar, made famous by Al Jolson. Written as a parody of Stephen Foster’s “Old Folks at Home” it was Gershwin’s biggest hit, financing much of his later work. *Swan Lake* is a ballet by Tchaikovsky, one of the most frequently performed works in the ballet repertory.

The Music Man

A musical comedy by Meredith Willson about a con man who organizes boys’ bands in order to sell musical instruments and uniforms, even though he can’t read a note of music. It won the 1957 Tony Award for Best Musical and was made into a film in 1962.

Tiny Tim

(April 12, 1932-November 30, 1996)
Born Herbert Khoury, Tiny Tim was best known for his rendition of “Tip Toe Through the Tulips.” A novelty act in the 1960s, he played the ukulele and sang with a distinctive falsetto that endeared him to audiences, though his popularity waned in the 1980s. He passed away in 1996 after suffering a heart attack while performing his signature tune.

Toledo

A city in Ohio, Toledo is located on Lake Erie and is a major shipping centre on the Great Lakes.

Trifle

A sponge cake soaked in rum, sherry or brandy and topped with layers of custard, jam and whipped cream.

Truffle

A mixture of melted chocolate, sugar and cream, combined with various flavours. Once cooled the mixture is rolled into balls and coated with unsweetened cocoa, sugar or shaved chocolate. It takes its name from its resemblance to the prized fungus.

Ukulele

A small four-stringed guitar that originated in Portugal in the second century BC, it was introduced to Hawaii in 1879 by immigrants from Madeira. The instrument quickly became a staple of Hawaiian music and transferred to the mainland at the San Francisco Panama-Pacific Exposition in 1915, where it was a feature of vaudeville acts.

Utah

The 45th state to enter the union, Utah is located in the Western United States and contains the Great Salt Lake as well as parts of the Rocky Mountains. Originally populated by the Anasazi, its first European settlers were Mormons heading west following the murder of their founder Joseph Smith. The capital and largest city is Salt Lake City, headquarters of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Vaudeville

A variety show popular in the United States during the 19th and early 20th centuries, featuring songs, dances, skits, and a variety of entertainment acts. It developed from raunchier shows held in beer halls for male patrons — the first “clean variety show” was produced in New York in 1881. Many more quickly followed suit, with a chain of vaudeville theatres springing up around the country.

Meredith Willson

(May 18, 1902-June 15, 1984) A composer and lyricist best known for *The Music Man*, Meredith Willson performed in John Philip Sousa’s band and the New York Philharmonic, and later worked as a musical director in radio. He scored several films and composed two symphonies, as well as many popular songs.

Zoloft

The trade name for sertraline, a selective-serotonin reuptake inhibitor most commonly prescribed as an antidepressant.
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