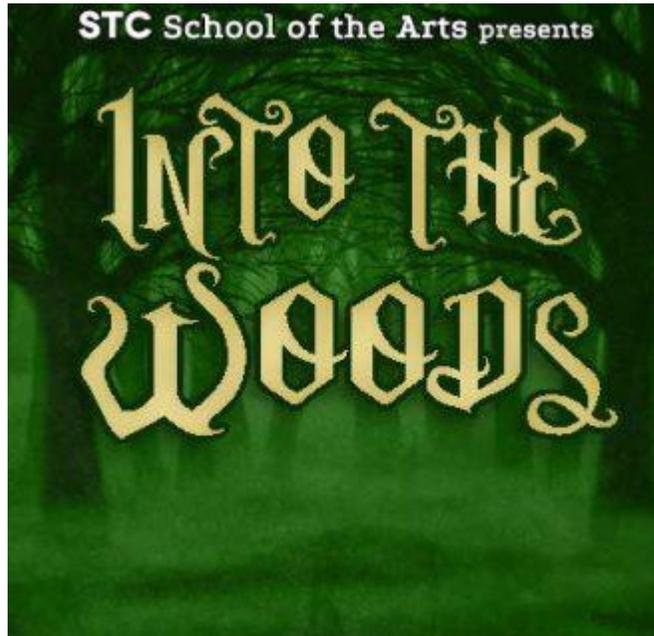


# Sacramento Theatre Company

## Study Guide



## Into the Woods

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim  
Book by James Lapine

Study Guide Materials Compiled by Anna Miles

# **Sacramento Theatre Company**

## **Mission Statement**

The Sacramento Theatre Company (STC) strives to be the leader in integrating professional theatre with theatre arts education. STC produces engaging professional theatre, provides exceptional theatre training, and uses theatre as a tool for educational engagement.

## **Our History**

The theatre was originally formed as the Sacramento Civic Repertory Theatre in 1942, an ad hoc troupe formed to entertain locally-stationed troops during World War II. On October 18, 1949, the Sacramento Civic Repertory Theatre acquired a space of its own with the opening of the Eaglet Theatre, named in honor of the Eagle, a Gold Rush-era theatre built largely of canvas that had stood on the city's riverfront in the 1850s. The Eaglet Theatre eventually became the Main Stage of the not-for-profit Sacramento Theatre Company, which evolved from a community theatre to professional theatre company in the 1980s. Now producing shows in three performance spaces, it is the oldest theatre company in Sacramento.

After five decades of use, the Main Stage was renovated as part of the H Street Theatre Complex Project. Features now include an expanded and modernized lobby and a Cabaret Stage for special performances. The facility also added expanded dressing rooms, laundry capabilities, and other equipment allowing the transformation of these performance spaces, used nine months of the year by STC, into backstage and administration places for three months each summer to be used by California Musical Theatre for Music Circus.

Sacramento Theatre Company can accommodate 292 patrons in the proscenium-style auditorium of its Main Stage, while the Pollock Stage offers a more intimate experience with only 87 seats in a black box-style theatre. Both provide good acoustics and sight-lines. This professional, Equity theatre presents seven professional productions per season with a reputation for excellent stage adaptations of classic literature. Three annual productions in the Cabaret Stage, which seats 100, round out the experience with high-quality Broadway musical revues.

The Young Professionals Conservatory, a training program for young theatre artists, was founded in 2003. The program, as well as the entire STC School of the Arts, is directed by Michele Hillen-Noufer.

**For further information about the Sacramento Theatre Company please visit us online:**

**<http://www.sactheatre.org>**

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\*written for the Sacramento Theatre Company by Anna Miles  
**Study Guide Materials Compiled by Anna Miles**

## About the Playwrights: Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine

By Don Leavitt

It's hard to imagine a more unlikely pairing in American musical theatre than Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine. When you consider some of the names that have shaped the modern American musical—Rodgers and Hammerstein, Rodgers and Hart, Lerner and Loewe, for example—well, “Sondheim and Lapine” just doesn't have the same ring to it.

Rarely have two people of such vastly different backgrounds, temperaments, and levels of experience joined forces so successfully, nor left such an indelible impression. There is no question that the collaboration between Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine has been successful—together, the duo created two of the most successful plays in Broadway history, and, between them, their work has been awarded more than a dozen times. Their success is that much more remarkable when considered in the context of their differences: Lapine's Midwestern, public school upbringing compared with Sondheim's life as the only child of wealthy parents in New York; Lapine's personable, gregarious personality compared to the introverted Sondheim's self-described melancholic nature; Lapine's almost accidental foray into theatre compared to Sondheim's position as a master of the genre.

The way the two met is something of a Broadway legend. It was 1982, and Sondheim had just suffered a failure with his musical *Merrily We Roll Along*, a sixteen-performance flop that greatly affected the composer. Sondheim has said he was ready to quit theatre and create video games or write mysteries: “I wanted to find something to satisfy myself that does not involve Broadway,” Sondheim said (Gottfried, Martin, *Sondheim* [New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1993] 153).

Sondheim attended a performance of the play *Twelve Dreams*, written and directed by James Lapine, at the Public Theatre in New York, and was so impressed with the production he asked to meet with Lapine after the show. “I was discouraged, and I don't know what would have happened if I hadn't discovered *Twelve Dreams* at the Public Theatre,” Sondheim said (Wolf, Matt, “Stephen Sondheim: An audience with a theatre legend” [*The Independent*, April, 2013]).

As a result of that meeting, the pair would go on to create three musicals, books by Lapine, music and lyrics by Sondheim. They first collaborated in 1984 on *Sunday in the Park with George*, which received fairly mixed reviews but was nonetheless a commercial success and one of the few Broadway musicals to be awarded a Pulitzer Prize. This was followed in 1987 by *Into the Woods*, a retelling of classic Grimms' fairy tales that was both critically and commercially successful. Their final production together was 1994's *Passion*, a critically acclaimed play that holds the distinction for having the shortest Broadway run of any other winner of the Tony Award for Best Musical. In addition, the duo's work has spawned several revivals and countless regional performances; a big screen version of *Into the Woods* is currently in production and is scheduled for a December 2014 release.

Lapine is often overshadowed by the sheer depth of Sondheim's career, and it's a pity because his grasp of story and his taste for visually-oriented theatre is quite extraordinary. Sondheim has said that Lapine's production of *Twelve Dreams* gave him a sense of “renewed hope” for theatre, and he is quick to praise Lapine for coming up with the central idea of *Sunday in the Park with George*. According to Time Out London writer Jane Edwardes, Sondheim and Lapine visited the Art Institute of Chicago to view the painting by Georges Seurat on which the play is based. “We discussed the fact that nobody in the painting was looking at anybody else and we started to fantasise

[sic] about that and the fact that it looks like a stage set. And then James said, ‘The main character is missing,’ and I said, ‘Who?’ and he said, ‘The artist.’ Once that was spoken, it immediately became a play” (<http://www.timeout.com/london/theatre/stephen-sondheim-interview>).

Born in Mansfield, Ohio, in 1949, Lapine attended public school before graduating from Pennsylvania’s Franklin and Marshall College with a degree in history; he received an MFA in design from the California Institute of Arts and moved to New York City, where he worked as a freelance photographer and graphic designer. His freelance work on *Yale/Theater*, the magazine of the Yale School of Drama, brought him to the attention of Robert Brustein, dean of the school who offered Lapine a full-time job designing marketing materials and a faculty position teaching a course in advertising design (<http://jameslapine.com/biography>).

At the urging of his students, Lapine directed the Gertrude Stein play *Photograph*, and the director Lee Breuer helped arrange for a three-week run of the production at a small performance space in Soho; the run was wildly successful, and in 1977 Lapine won an Obie award for direction. Lapine recognized the opportunity and left graphic arts entirely to write and direct off-Broadway plays, including *March of the Falsettos* and *Twelve Dreams*; in addition to his work with Sondheim, Lapine also wrote the musical *Luck, Pluck and Virtue*; and the play *Fran’s Bed*. He has directed eighteen productions, including *Sondheim on Sondheim*, which he also wrote, and the 2012 revival of *Annie*; he also directed the 1991 film *Impromptu*, which was written by his wife, Sarah Kernochan. He has received four Drama Desk awards for outstanding book and outstanding direction, and three Tony awards for Best Book of a Musical; in 2010, Lapine was inducted into the American Theatre Hall of Fame.

While Lapine discovered his theatre career late in life, Sondheim’s career was a pursuit that began at the young age of eleven. Born in New York in 1930, Sondheim was the only child of a successful dress maker and his designer wife. His father left the family when Sondheim was ten, and his mother moved them to Pennsylvania, where he became good friends with the son of Oscar Hammerstein. Looking back, Sondheim has said that Hammerstein became a mentor and surrogate father; if Hammerstein had been a geologist, “I probably would have been a geologist,” Sondheim said (Mick Brown, “Still Cutting It at 80: Stephen Sondheim Interview” [<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/8022755/Still-cutting-it-at-80-Stephen-Sondheim-interview.html>]).

Sondheim wrote his first play at fifteen, a musical about life at a Quaker boarding school. He studied theatre at Williams College in Massachusetts and went on to study composition with composer Milton Babbitt. While working briefly as a television scriptwriter, he composed the musical *Saturday Night*, which was not produced but did attract the attention of Leonard Bernstein, who hired Sondheim to write the lyrics for *West Side Story* in 1957; he wrote the lyrics for *Gypsy* (1959) and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (1962) before suffering his first major failure with *Anyone Can Whistle* (1964). In 1970, Sondheim wrote *Company*, and has said it was the first musical in which he “began to hear my own voice loud and clear” (Brown). Though he has not always been a critical favorite, Sondheim has nevertheless won more awards for theatre than most people know even exist. His catalog of awards includes Grammys, Tonys and Obies; Drama Desk awards and several Laurence Olivier awards. *Telegraph* reporter Mick Brown writes, “He is, by universal acknowledgement, the man who revolutionised American musical theatre, and the last survivor of a form that is all but extinct, swept away in the deluge of ‘jukebox musicals’, overblown crowd pleasers and ‘theme-park’ spectacles that now dominate the Broadway stage” (Brown).

Sondheim appreciates the sentiment but recognizes that his time may have passed. He has produced only one new play in the last nineteen years, and at age eighty-three, wonders if there is a place for him in modern theater. In the *Telegraph* interview, Sondheim says, “I don’t know that there is an audience now for the kind of shows I would want to write. . . . The fact is if I had something I really wanted to write, I would write it. But I don’t. . . . I don’t have to prove anything to myself. I don’t have to prove anything to the world. I’m venerable now.”

## **Synopsis: *Into the Woods***

*Into the Woods* begins with a montage of familiar fairy tale characters and stories. Cinderella wishes to attend the Prince's festival, but her cruel stepsisters and stepmother are trying to prevent her from going. Jack (of Jack and the Beanstalk) wishes for a better life; but his mother, desperate for money, makes him take his cow, Milky White, into the woods to sell her. Little Red Riding Hood visits the Baker and the Baker's Wife to purchase bread to take to her sick grandmother in the woods.

Meanwhile, the Baker and his wife lament the fact they are childless. Soon, the Witch from next door visits and reveals she is the cause behind their infertility: in the past she placed a curse on their family because they stole from her precious garden. In order to reverse the curse, the Witch assigns them a series of tasks to complete in "three days time." During their quest to fulfill the witches' demands, they encounter Little Red Riding Hood, Rapunzel, Cinderella, and numerous other fairy tale figures in the woods. Each story is altered and intertwined, and most eventually work towards the same goal, but not until they each realize the repercussions of their desired "happily ever afters."

## Characters: *Into the Woods*

**Narrator:** A gentleman who helps guide the story along, the Narrator also plays a surprising role in the show later on.

**Cinderella** – Even though she lives with her father, wicked stepmother, and two cruel stepsisters, Cinderella is kind and good and her only wish is to go to the Prince’s festival (a.k.a. the ball), but once she does go and the Prince pursues her, she is uncertain about how to proceed.

**Jack:** Young, foolhardy, and desperate for a better life, Jack sells his cow for magic beans which lead him on a journey of growing up and learning to accept consequences.

**Jack’s Mother:** A single mother and a fighter, Jack’s Mother is mainly concerned with not starving. When she forces Jack to sell his cow, little does she know what *big* things are in store!

**Baker:** The “hero” of the story (although his actions are not always heroic), the Baker feels he must “fix” he and his wife’s inability to have children and initially tries to pursue his quest without her; but he soon realizes he is much better off with her by his side.

**Baker’s Wife:** Badly wanting a child, the Baker’s Wife would go to any length to have one. When her husband sets off into the woods to seek the things that would enable them to remove their “curse” of infertility, her assertiveness and stubbornness eventually helps bring about a change between her and her husband.

**Cinderella’s Stepmother:** Greedy, selfish, and mean-spirited, Cinderella’s Stepmother wants what is best for herself and her two daughters, but not Cinderella.

**Florinda and Lucinda:** Cinderella’s cruel stepsisters.

**Cinderella’s Father:** A pushover, Cinderella’s Father is out-of-touch with his family.

**Little Red Riding Hood:** A sassy, spoiled girl, Little Red Riding Hood must journey from youth and innocence into adulthood and responsibility through an adventurous and scary path.

**Witch:** Originally portrayed as “the villain,” the witch’s story is much more complicated. She has an ulterior motive when she reveals she was the one who placed the curse of infertility on the Baker’s family.

**Cinderella’s Mother:** Though no longer living, Cinderella’s Mother is still pivotal in granting useful advice and helping fulfill Cinderella’s wish of going to the Prince’s ball.

**Mysterious Man:** A wanderer in the woods, the Mysterious Man is full of riddles and a secret.

**The Wolf: Lustful,** hungry creature, the Wolf represents a lot more than just a dangerous animal in the woods.

**Granny:** Rapunzel's grandmother who lives in the woods, Granny is feisty and vindictive towards the Wolf.

**Rapunzel:** Raised and locked away by the Witch, Rapunzel grew up confined to a tower in the woods; and even though she escapes to start a new life and learn her true history, she struggles to maintain her sanity after her distressing upbringing.

**Cinderella's Prince:** Though charming, handsome, and seemingly perfect, Cinderella's Prince thinks his royal birth entitles him to take anything, and anyone, he wants.

**Rapunzel's Prince:** Attractive and pompous like his brother, Cinderella's Prince, Rapunzel's Prince tries his best to help when Rapunzel starts to lose her grip on reality.

**Steward:** A self-important, surly servant to the royal family.

**Giant:** Loud, angry, and very, very big.

**Snow White and Sleeping Beauty:** These two catch the attention of Cinderella's and Rapunzel's princes.

# The Fairy Tale in the Forest

By Ace G. Pilkington

Sondheim and Lapine's *Into the Woods* is a musical based, in part, on the fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm. Jack Zipes, one of the most important and most published of contemporary folklore scholars, has said about such things, "Folk and fairy tales as products of the imagination are in danger of becoming instrumentalized and commercialized" (*Breaking the Magic Spell* [Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 2002], 2). With the new big-budget Disney film version looming at the end of 2014, Zipes's warning seems more than ever to apply to *Into the Woods*. However, the history of the musical suggests that the inclusion of the Brothers Grimm fairy tales had more to do with desperation than exploitation.

In "A Fairy Tale Musical Grows Up," Stephen Holden writes, "Originally the Sondheim-Lapine team attempted to create a picaresque fantasy using totally original characters." But as Sondheim himself says, "I don't know how Frank Baum invented *The Wizard of Oz* or Lewis Carroll *Alice in Wonderland*. . . . Jim [Lapine] and I were able to invent a couple of underlying structures, but nothing came to fruition. Then Jim came up with the idea of bringing together a group of established characters from different milieus into one situation and having them concatenate. Then he came up with the idea of having them be characters from fairy tales" (<http://www.nytimes.com/books/98/07/19/specials/sondheim-tale.html>).

In addition, the assumption behind the notions of commercialization or exploitation is that the underlying structures and messages of fairy tales are violated or simply omitted. Instead, Lapine and Sondheim did their best to discover and foreground those structures and messages. As Sondheim told James Lipton, "If there's any outside influence, it's Jung. . . . In fact, we spoke to a Jungian analyst about fairy tales" ("The Art of the Musical" originally appeared as an episode of the television series *Inside the Actors Studio* and then was excerpted for *The Paris Review* 142 [Spring 1997], <http://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/1283/the-art-of-the-musical-stephen-sondheim>). Carl Jung's emphasis on deep structure, on the patterns and archetypes of myths and folktales, makes him, perhaps, the ideal guide for a passage through the dark places of fairy tales.

The main stories that Sondheim and Lapine borrowed from the Brothers Grimm were "Cinderella," "Rapunzel," and "Little Red Cap," more commonly known as "Little Red Riding Hood." There are, of course, a number of changes to the tales, but the most typical has to do with "Little Red Cape." In the Grimms' version, the wolf eats both the girl and her grandmother, but they are rescued by a passing hunter who "did not shoot but took some scissors and started cutting open the sleeping wolf's belly" (*The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm*, trans. Jack Zipes [New York: Bantam Books, 1992], 104). Both victims emerge alive, something that is unlikely to happen outside of a fairy tale (or musical). *Into the Woods* substitutes the Baker for the hunter as a means of connecting the stories but doesn't change the message. James Lapine also used the little-known ending of the story in constructing Red Riding Hood's character, "Little Red Ridinghood I thought of as Ramboette, because in the Grimm version of the story she and her grandmother go back into the woods and lure the wolf into a trough of water and drown him. What interested me was her brutality" (Holden). It is a second wolf, the grandmother lives in the woods, the drowning of the wolf is the grandmother's plan, but there's no doubt that the old woman and young girl share in the brutality.

The other folk tale that is especially important to the plot is not from the Grimms at all. "Jack and the Beanstalk" is a traditional English fairy tale, and the inclusion of "Milky-white" as the name

of the cow, plus the description of Jack as a thief and not as the son of a knight trying to retrieve what was rightfully his father's, identifies the version as that of Joseph Jacobs from *English Fairy Tales*. (The other one, by the way, can be found in Andrew Lang's *The Red Fairy Book*.) Jack is smarter and more heartless in the fairy tale, or at least he understands that bulls don't give milk, and he doesn't think of Milky-white as a friend. Finally, there are two other stories from the Brothers Grimm that receive brief mentions in the play when the two princes go looking for additional princesses. They are "Brier Rose" and "Snow White." There's even a reference to J.R.R. Tolkien and his misspelling of "dwarfs" as "dwarves" when the princes discuss why they can't reach the new princesses they've found (Libretto <http://theatre-musical.com/intothewoods/libretto2.html>).

Ironically, *Into the Woods* comes closest to the truth of folk tales when it is furthest from the actual stories. The very notion of going into the woods is at the heart of fairy tales. The forest is a dark and magical other world, filled with marvelous adventures, terrible challenges, and life or death resolutions. The witch with a house in the forest is one of the most enduring and powerful archetypes in literature. To enter her hut and garden is to enter the underworld and confront death. This is true for the Grimms, for Baba Yaga in Slavic tales (e.g. "Vassilissa the Beautiful" in Pilkington *Fairy Tales of the Russians and Other Slavs* [Forest Tsar Press, 2010]), and for Sondheim and Lapine. Often in such stories, the witch is not evil but neutral, a great power who can be placated or offended. As the witch sings in her "Last Midnight" number, "I'm not nice,/ I'm not good,/ I'm just right" (Sondheim and Lapine, *Into the Woods*, Brandman Productions Inc. 1990, DVD).

The journey into the forest is a journey to understanding. Sondheim's songs clearly mark the stages of that journey, and as the songs are repeated and altered in the course of the musical, we see how much the characters have learned and changed. We see how much they have gained and the terrible losses they have suffered, and this too is true to the nature of fairy tales, which do not all end happily, and even when they do, do not end happily for everyone. Death comes randomly and unfairly. Love appears to offer more than it can possibly deliver. Children won't listen. But fairy tales also send the message of what is arguably the central song of *Into the Woods*, "No One Is Alone." So, the grim journeys come to a warm ending—as fairy tales should. And as, more often than not, they do.

# The Fairy Tale and the Fallacy

By Anna Miles

While *Into the Woods* does maintain many classic characteristics of traditional fairy tales (as demonstrated in Pilkington's article "The Fairy Tale in the Forest"), it's important also to discuss the ways in which the play subverts and critiques its source material and the themes within it. The human brain is programmed to make connections, to find meaning in everything, to make sense of the chaotic world in which we all live. In order to understand the world and our place in it, we tell stories- about witches, about princesses and bakers and little girls in red capes, but also about us, and our own experiences. This is why fairy tales have always appealed to us- every culture across time and space has engaged in some kind of storytelling tradition, usually an oral tradition in which folk tales, myths, and fables were passed down verbally from generation to generation. They allow us to make sense of the unexplainable- they put our complications (our morals, our values, our relationships, our fears) into an easily digestible, simplified narrative. The Greek myths about the gods often served to explain natural phenomena, such as the story of Persephone, who descends into the Underworld for half of the year, causing her grieving goddess mother Demeter to wither the crops in fall and winter. The fairy tales *Into the Woods* is directly based upon often ended with some kind of clear lesson, or moral. The virtuous characters always lived happily, and the bad characters always were punished. Stories turn our messy existence into something clean and tidy. Fairy tales don't represent the world as it is, but rather, how we wish it could be.

One of the most enduring motifs in *Into the Woods* are the "midnight" refrains- on each midnight, the characters break from their action, and each directly address the audience with some kind of platitude. "The prettier the flower, the farther from the path," Little Red says, while Cinderella tells us that "opportunity is not a lengthy visitor": tidy lessons the characters have picked up so far. In these "midnights," all the action and conflict we've seen so far gets reduced to one easily-understandable sentence for each character. But as the midnights keep passing and the refrains continue to be repeated throughout the show, the one liners become increasingly more complicated. "Wanting a ball is not wanting a prince," Cinderella says in the second midnight, when she starts to understand that her simple wish might not yield such simple consequences. She's getting more than she bargained for: because, after all, we always get more than we bargain for.

These refrains culminate, of course, in the Witch's "Last Midnight," sung in Act 2 long after the neatness and prettiness has worn off. "You're not good, you're not bad, you're just nice. I'm not good, I'm not bad, I'm just right. I'm the witch. You're the world," she spits at the surviving characters. Life can't be broken down into "bad" vs. "good." Lessons can't be boiled into platitudes. In this way, Sondheim uses the form of the fairy tale to critique the fairy tale's very nature.

One specific similarity Pilkington points out between *Into the Woods* and the basic fairy tale structure is the lack of a happy ending- but while it's true that many traditional fairy tales do not end happily (particularly many of the original Grimm versions of the stories), it's also true that our cultural understanding of the fairy tale extends far beyond those originals. In fact, most contemporary members of society aren't just also familiar with but in fact more familiar with fairy tales as they exist in popular culture, and in particular, Disney. Fairy tales are inextricably associated with unequivocally happy endings for the modern audience member- in this way, the unhappy (or at the very least, complicated) endings of Sondheim's fairy tales serve as a challenge to the uncomplicated ways in which we are conditioned to understand storytelling.

The first act of *Into the Woods* ends where we're used to the stories ending: at the happy endings. But the play doesn't actually end there. The play keeps going, until everyone's happy ending is turned upside down and twisted beyond recognition. The stories get jumbled up into each other (The Baker's Wife even says so with her line, "This is ridiculous, what am I doing here, I'm in the wrong story"). *Into the Woods* takes our comforting ideas of how we wish life could be and reminds us instead how life actually is- and reminds us that if we let ourselves believe real life can imitate fairy tales, we are setting ourselves up for a very rude awakening.

Be careful what you wish for. Be careful the things you say. Life doesn't work like a fairy tale- which is exactly why Sondheim leaves us with a bidding to "be careful the tale you tell, that is the spell." Because children will listen. We love to listen to happy endings; but this won't best prepare us for when the pretty refrains start to break down into something much more complicated.

## Study Guide Questions: *Into the Woods*

- 1.) Pick a character from the play (Little Red, Cinderella, Jack, etc.) and compare their journey in *Into the Woods* to what happens in the original fairy tale.
- 2.) Where does *Into the Woods* seem to celebrate and uphold the fairy tale structure, and where does it seem to critique that structure?
- 3.) Fairy tales often end with some kind of lesson- does *Into the Woods* have a moral it wants to convey to the audience? Why or why not? If you think it does, explain why you think so, and what in the play supports it.
- 4.) Write your own new version of a fairy tale: how can you use an existing story to write a new story with a whole new message?

# Study Guide Questions: Engage With the Play

By Anna Miles

Take charge of your theatre-going experience and make it your own by asking yourself questions before, during, and after watching a play.

## Questions to ask before the play:

If you **HAVE** read the play:

How did you envision the set, or the visual world of the play, while reading?

How did you imagine the characters looked while reading the play?

What themes did you notice repeating throughout the play?

What images jumped out at you while reading the play?

How would you describe the central theme of the play in one sentence?

If you **HAVEN'T** read the play:

Do you know anything about the play? If so, what do you know?

In General:

When you think about "theatre," what impressions come to mind? What does "theatre" mean to you?

What do you expect your experience to be when you watch a play? Do you expect to be bored? Excited? Engaged? Curious? Angry? Tired?

## Questions to ask after the play:

If you **READ THE PLAY BEFORE SEEING IT**:

How did the production set differ from what you had imagined while reading the play? How was it similar? How did these changes affect your understanding of the story?

Did the characters look different from how you envisioned them looking while reading the play? Did they sound different? Act differently? How did these changes affect your understanding and opinion of each character? How did these changes affect your understanding of the overall story?

How did the themes and images you noticed while reading translate to performance? Did the same themes and images jump out at you? Did you notice new ones?

Did this particular production seem to have the same central theme, or a different central theme from the one you discovered while reading? What elements of the staging, acting, or design helped convey the theme?

Did they play gain or lose anything in performance? Did you enjoy reading it more, or watching it?

If you **DIDN'T READ THE PLAY BEFORE SEEING IT:**

How did the play live up to your expectations? Did it turn out the way you thought it would? Was your knowledge of the play correct?

Were you able to follow the story?

Which part of the story did you most respond to? What themes and images jumped out at you?

Which character did you most relate to? Why?

In General:

How did this production change or confirm your original impressions of "theatre"?

How did your experience watching the play differ from how you expected it would go?

In your own words, how would you summarize the plot of the play? How is the plot different from the story, or the thematic implications, in the play?

Did you feel the story was relevant to your life? How and why?

Did you feel the story said something about our society, or about the world at large? If so, what?

Do you feel this story is an important one to tell and keep telling? How and why?

What kind of stories do you most respond to?

# California State Standards

Giving students the chance to experience live theater at the Sacramento Theatre Company not only gives them the chance to enrich their understanding of literature, humanity, and the world, but also includes the added benefit of fulfilling several of California's State Standards for Education, including:

## California Arts Standards in Theater:

**RESPONDING—Anchor Standard 7:** Perceive and analyze artistic work.

6.TH:Re7	7.TH:Re7	8.TH:Re7	Prof.TH:Re7	Acc.TH:Re7	Adv.TH:Re7
Describe and record personal reactions to artistic choices in a drama/theatre work.	Compare recorded personal and peer reactions to artistic choices in a drama/ theatre work.	Apply appropriate criteria to the evaluation of artistic choices in a drama/theatre work.	Respond to what is seen, felt, and heard in a drama/theatre work to develop criteria for artistic choices.	Demonstrate an understanding of multiple interpretations of artistic criteria and how each might be used to influence future artistic choices of a drama/theatre work.	Use historical and <b>cultural context</b> to structure and justify personal responses to a drama/theatre work.

**Enduring Understanding:** Theatre artists reflect to understand the impact of drama processes

PK.TH:Re7	K.TH:Re7	1.TH:Re7	2.TH:Re7	3.TH:Re7	4.TH:Re7	5.TH:Re7
With prompting and supports, recall an emotional response in <b>dramatic play</b> or a <b>guided drama experience</b> .	With prompting and supports, express an emotional response to characters in <b>drama experience</b>	Recall choices made in a <b>guided drama experience</b> .	Recognize when artistic choices are made in a <b>guided drama experience</b> .	Understand and discuss why artistic choices are made in a drama/theatre work.	Identify artistic choices made in a drama/theatre work through participation and observation.	Explain personal reactions to artistic choices made in a drama/theatre work

**RESPONDING—Anchor Standard 8:** Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

**Enduring Understanding:** Theatre artists’ interpretations of drama/theatre work are influenced by personal experiences, culture, and aesthetics.

**Essential Question:** How can the same work of art communicate different messages to different people?

**Process Component:** Interpret

PK.TH:Re8	K.TH:Re8	1.TH:Re8	2.TH:Re8	3.TH:Re8	4.TH:Re8	5.TH:Re8
a. With prompting and supports, explore preferences in <b>dramatic play</b> , <b>guided drama experience</b> or age-appropriate theatre performance.	a. With prompting and supports, identify preferences in <b>dramatic play</b> , a <b>guided drama experience</b> or age-appropriate theatre performance.	a. Explain preferences and emotions in a <b>guided drama experience</b> or age-appropriate theatre performance.	a. Explain how personal preferences and emotions affect an observer’s response in a <b>guided drama experience</b> or age-appropriate theatre performance.	a. Consider multiple personal experiences when participating in or observing a drama/theatre work.	a. Compare and contrast multiple personal experiences when participating in or observing a drama/theatre work.	a. Justify responses based on personal experiences when participating in or observing a drama/theatre work.
b. With prompting and supports, name and describe characters in <b>dramatic play</b> or a <b>guided drama experience</b> .	b. With prompting and supports, name and describe settings in <b>dramatic play</b> or a <b>guided drama experience</b> .	b. Identify causes of character actions in a <b>guided drama experience</b> .	b. Identify causes and consequences of character actions in a <b>guided drama experience</b> .	b. Consider multiple ways to develop a character using physical characteristics and prop or costume design choices that reflect <b>cultural perspectives</b> in drama/theatre work.	b. Compare and contrast the qualities of characters in a drama/theatre work through physical characteristics and prop or costume design choices that reflect <b>cultural contexts</b> .	b. Explain responses to characters based on <b>cultural contexts</b> when participating in or observing drama/theatre work.

- c. With prompting and supports describe how personal emotions and choices compare to the emotions and choices of characters in **dramatic play** or a **guided drama experience**.
- c. With prompting and supports describe how personal emotions and choices compare to the emotions and choices of characters in **dramatic play** or a **guided drama experience**.
- c. Explain or use text and pictures to describe how personal emotions and choices compare to the emotions and choices of characters in a **guided drama experience**.
- c. Explain or use text and pictures to describe how others' emotions and choices may compare to the emotions and choices of characters in a **guided drama experience**.
- c. Examine how connections are made between oneself and a character's emotions in drama/theatre work.
- c. Identify and discuss physiological changes connected to emotions in drama/ theatre work.
- c. Investigate the effects of emotions on posture, gesture, breathing, and vocal intonation in a drama/theatre work.

**RESPONDING—Anchor Standard 9:** Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

**Enduring Understanding:** Theatre artists apply criteria to understand, explore, and assess drama and theatre work.

**Essential Question:** How do analysis and synthesis impact the theatre artist’s process and audience’s perspectives?

**Process Component:** Evaluate

PK.TH:Re9	K.TH:Re9	1.TH:Re9	2.TH:Re9	3.TH:Re9	4.TH:Re9	5.TH:Re9
a. With prompting a and supports, discuss and make decisions about <b>dramatic play</b>	a. With prompting and supports, discuss and make decisions with others in <b>dramatic play</b> or a <b>guided drama experience</b> .	a. Build on others’ ideas in a <b>guided drama experience</b> .	a. Collaborate on a scene in a <b>guided drama experience</b> .	a. Understand how and why groups evaluate drama/theatre work.	a. Develop and implement a plan to evaluate drama/theatre work.	a. Develop multiple criteria to evaluate drama/theatre work.
n/a	n/a	b. Compare and contrast the experiences of characters in a <b>guided drama experience</b> .	b. Describe how characters respond to challenges in a <b>guided drama experience</b> .	b. Evaluate and analyze problems and situations in a drama/theatre work from an audience perspective.	b. Analyze and evaluate characters’ choices in a drama/theatre work from an audience perspective.	b. Analyze and evaluate a character’s circumstances in a drama/theatre work from an audience perspective.
n/a	n/a	c. Identify props and costumes that might be used in a <b>guided drama experience</b> .	c. Use a prop or costume in a <b>guided drama experience</b> to describe characters, settings, or events.	c. Consider and analyze <b>technical theatre elements</b> from multiple drama/theatre works.	c. Explore how <b>technical theatre elements</b> may support a <b>theme</b> or idea in a drama/theatre work.	c. Assess how <b>technical theatre elements</b> represent the <b>theme</b> of a drama/theatre work.

## California Reading Standards in Literature:

**Standards in Integration of Knowledge and Ideas for grades 6-12:** Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

**Grade 6 students:** Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.

**Grade 7 students:** Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).

**Grade 8 students:** Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.

**Grade 9-10 students:** Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.

**Grade 11-12 students:** Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text.

# Theatre Etiquette

- Arrive at the theater on time.
- Visit the restroom before the performance begins.
- Turn off your cell phone. Do not speak on the phone or text during the performance.
- Pay attention to announcements that are made prior to the show about the rules of the theater you are attending and the location of the fire exits.
- Don't speak during the performance unless you are encouraged by the performers to participate.
- Remember that the Overture (introductory music) in musical theater is part of the performance, so be quiet when it begins.
- Do not take pictures during the performance. It can be very distracting to the actors and can cause a mishap. It can also be a violation of an actor's contract.
- Remain in your seat for the entire performance. If you must leave, exit during intermission. In an emergency, wait for an appropriate break in the show. It is rude to get up in the middle of a quiet moment.
- Do not eat or drink in the theater.
- Do not put your feet up on the seats or balcony and do not kick the seat in front of you.
- Don't put or throw anything on the stage.
- Do laugh when the performance is funny.
- Do applaud when it is appropriate during the performance.
- Do applaud when the performance is over... this tells the performers and crew that you appreciate their work.
- Stand and applaud if you really thought the show was great (a standing ovation).
- Do not whistle, stomp your feet, or scream out to the performers except for a Bravo or Brava.

## Additional Resources

***Into the Woods Study Guide, Music Theatre International***

[https://www.musikundbuehne.de/fileadmin/media/Downloads/Education\\_Packs/Into\\_the\\_Woods\\_Study\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.musikundbuehne.de/fileadmin/media/Downloads/Education_Packs/Into_the_Woods_Study_Guide.pdf)

***Into the Woods Study Guide, Theatre Works***

<http://djohn409.tripod.com/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/intothewoodsstudyguide.pdf>

***The Grimm Fairy Tales***

<https://www.cs.cmu.edu/~spok/grimtmp/>

***Into the Woods: The Real Fairy Tales Behind the Characters***

<https://www.sheknows.com/entertainment/articles/1066955/into-the-woods-the-real-fairy-tales-behind-the-characters/>

***Why Into the Woods is Important, The New Yorker***

<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/why-into-the-woods-matters>

***Out of the Psyche and Into the Woods***

<https://www.huffpost.com/entry/out-of-the-psyche-and-int b 6324398>