TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE: DISNEY’S BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

The lessons and activities in this guide are driven by the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (2010) which help ensure that all students are college and career ready in literacy no later than the end of high school. The College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards in Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening and Language define general, cross-disciplinary literacy expectations that must be met for students to be prepared to enter college and workforce training programs ready to succeed.

21st century skills of creativity, critical thinking and collaboration are embedded in process of bringing the page to the stage. Seeing live theater encourages students to read, develop critical and creative thinking and to be curious about the world around them.

This Teacher Resource Guide includes background information, questions, and activities that can stand alone or work as building blocks toward the creation of a complete unit of classroom work.

The following is a partial list of Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy, History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects that align with the performance, lessons, and activities found in the Teacher Resource Guide:

**College and Career Readiness (CCR) Anchor Standards for Writing**
- Text Types and Purposes
- Production and Distribution of Writing
- Research to Build and Present Knowledge

**College and Career Readiness (CCR) Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening**
- Comprehension and Collaboration
- Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

**College and Career Readiness (CCR) Anchor Standards for Language**
- Conventions of Standard English
- Knowledge of Language
- Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

**College and Career Readiness (CCR) Anchor Standards for Reading**
- Key Ideas and Details
- Craft and Structure
- Integration and Knowledge of Ideas

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SYNOPSIS

A Prince, living in a glorious castle, is disturbed one winter’s night by an old beggar woman. She comes and offers him a single rose in return for shelter from the bitter cold. He is repulsed by her appearance and turns the old woman away. The old woman’s ugliness melts away to reveal a beautiful enchantress. Though the Prince is apologetic when he sees her beauty, the enchantress turns the cruel, unfeeling Prince into a hideous Beast. His stubborn pride compels him to remain in his bewitched castle with Lumière, the love-struck candelabra; Cogsworth, the pompous clock; the kindly Mrs. Potts; and an inquisitive teacup named Chip. To break the spell, the Beast must learn to love another and earn her love in return before the last petal falls from the Enchanted Rose. If not, he will be doomed to remain a Beast for all time.

Belle is a beautiful and intelligent young woman who lives with her father, Maurice, in a small village. When the Beast imprisons her father, Belle offers herself to the Beast in return for her father’s release. The Beast accepts Belle’s offer to exchange places. Later in the story, the Beast falls in love with Belle, but is afraid to tell her. He offers instead his Magic Mirror and her freedom to rejoin her father in the village. Belle unknowingly betrays the Beast to Gaston, who leads a frenzied mob to destroy the Beast. At the Castle, the Enchanted Objects repel the mob, but Gaston manages to stab the Beast in the back. Gaston is thrown to his death.

The Beast, dying from his wounds, tells the weeping Belle that he is happy that he got to see her one last time. Belle tells him that she loves him. The last petal on the Enchanted Rose falls. A magical transformation changes the Beast into the Prince once again. The spell has been broken! All the servants are also now human again, and everyone lives happily ever after.

BACKGROUND OF DISNEY’S BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

When Walt Disney Pictures full-length, animated feature film Beauty and the Beast was released, critics praised its songs worthy of a Broadway musical. It was observed that Broadway is as vital to the film staging and characterizations as it is to the songs themselves. Disney’s Beauty and the Beast went on to win Academy Awards for Best Song and Best Original Score and made history as the first animated feature ever nominated for a Best Picture Oscar.

When the decision was made to actually bring Beauty and the Beast to the Broadway stage, everyone associated with the production knew it had to be extraordinary. It had to have that special magic that audiences have come to expect from the Walt Disney Company.

The creative team crafted a timeless story with roots deep in the classic fairy tale, filled with humor, magic, mystery, romance and suspense. They created a gallery of memorable characters, including enchanted servants who had the misfortune of being caught under the same spell as the Beast. The motherly cook, Mrs. Potts, has been transformed into a teapot; the stuffy head butler, Cogsworth, is a clock; and the faithful (and amorous) valet, Lumière, is a candelabra. These characters provide comfort and hope for the heroine, Belle, as she adjusts to her new life, torn away from her father as a result of the bargain she made with the Beast.

Simply staging a theatrical version of the film would have slighted both media. Disney focused on combining the strengths of the beloved story with the possibilities that only live theater can offer. The directive: Maintain the essence of the movie, while developing an unique theatrical production.

This stage version of Beauty and the Beast was produced by Robert W. McTyre for Walt Disney Theatrical Productions. The Oscar winning score by composer Alan Menken and the late lyricist Howard Ashman was not only expanded by Menken, but lyricist Tim Rice added several new songs for the Broadway version. Author Linda Woolverton adapted her work into this new stage play. Choreographer Matt West then teamed up with costume designer Ann Hould-Ward to come up with a look for the enchanted objects that would work on stage. Stan Meyer, scenic designer, and Natasha Katz, lighting designer, were challenged to create an unique fairy tale atmosphere for the stage. Director Robert Jess Roth ultimately brought all these elements together with the performers to create the finished piece.
ELEMENTS OF THE STORY

In creating a musical, the first element is usually the book, or spoken word. The book contains the plot, characters, thoughts, dialogue, placement of songs and dances, and some stage direction. Another element of the musical is lyrics, the words that carry meaning in a song, and the score, which is the music of the show. Since most theater begins with the text, or book, let’s examine the elements of the text.

**PLOT**
The plot is the structure of the play. It is the action/events that make up the story. The plot has five parts:

**Exposition:** The presentation of information (i.e., setting, characters, etc.) that the audience needs to enter the play’s action.

**Rising Action:** Central part of the story during which various problems and complications arise, causing the characters to take action.

**Climax:** The highest point or turning point in the action.

**Falling action:** Contains the action or dialogue necessary to lead the story to a resolution or ending.

**Resolution:** The end of the story in which the problems are solved and the story is finished.

**DISCUSSION SECTION:**
The function of the exposition is to acquaint the audience with the characters in such a way that the audience becomes concerned with what happens to them. In Disney’s *Beauty and the Beast*, the audience learns about all the major characters in the story though exposition revealed both in dialogue and action, and also through song. Identify the following moments of exposition in the musical.

- An action that showed that the Prince was arrogant and cruel
- An action that showed the consequences of his act of cruelty
- Dialogue that revealed what the Prince needed to do to alter his fate
- A song that expressed what the village thought about Belle

Below are some of the important moments in the stage production of Disney’s *Beauty and the Beast*. Discuss with your class how these moments fit into the five parts of the plot.

- Belle expresses her desire to explore the world beyond her small village.
- Belle’s father gets lost, is chased by ferocious wolves and takes shelter in the castle.
- Belle, running from the castle, is attacked by wolves and then rescued by the Beast.
- The mob attacks the castle.
- The Beast, weakened by his longing for Belle to return, is stabbed by Gaston.
- Gaston falls to his death.
- Belle declares her love for the Beast as he lies dying.
- The Beast, regaining his princely appearance, declares his love for Belle.
- The residents of the castle are restored to their original form.

Is there a subplot in Disney’s *Beauty and the Beast* (a story within a story)? Read another version of *Beauty and the Beast*. Outline the plot of that version and compare it with Disney’s version.

The character of Gaston is unique to Disney’s *Beauty and the Beast*. Why do you think he was added? What function does he serve? How does the addition of this character affect the plot of the story?

The characters Lumière, Cogsworth, Mrs. Potts and Chip are not found in the original story. What function do they serve in the Disney version?

Compare this story with other works that involve an ugly man in love with a beautiful women, e.g., *The Phantom of the Opera*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Richard II*, *The Frog Prince*, etc.
COMING TO THE THEATER!

PlayhouseSquare is an exciting venue to see live theater! As the country’s largest performing arts center outside of New York, the not-for-profit performing arts center utilizes the arts to engage individuals and attract more than one million guests per year to 1,000+ annual events. PlayhouseSquare thus acts as a catalyst for economic growth and vitality within the region.

As audience members, you and your students play a vital role in the success of the performances. You are part of a community that creates the theater experience. For many students, this may be their first time viewing a live theater production. We encourage teachers to discuss some of the differences between watching a television show, attending a sporting event or viewing a movie at the cinema. Here are a few examples to start the discussion:

- Students are led into the theater and seated by an usher.
- Theaters are built to magnify sound. Even the slightest whisper can be heard throughout the theater. Remember that not only can those around you hear you, the performers can too.
- Appropriate responses such as laughing or applauding are appreciated. Pay attention to the artists on stage; they will let you know what is appropriate.
- There is no food, drink or gum permitted in the theater. Photography and videotaping of performances is not permitted.
- When the houselights dim, the performance is about to begin. Please turn your attention toward the stage.
- After the performance, you will be dismissed by bus number. Check around your seat to make sure you have all of your personal belongings.
GLOSSARY

Author – the writer of a musical script.

Audition – to perform in order to get a role in the production; can include but is not limited to: singing, dancing and reading from a script.

Ballad – a slow, romantic song for actors to showcase vocal clarity.

Blocking – the specific movements of actors on stage.

Box Seating – a separate compartment of seats usually elevated on the sides of the theater, for the accommodation of VIPs.

Box Office – a booth inside the theater where tickets are sold.

Calling the Show – the process of calling out lighting, sound and scene-change cues during a performance; usually done by the stage manager.

Casting – the process through which actors are chosen for roles in the production.

Casting Agent – one who chooses actors for roles in the production.

Choreographer – one who designs dance sequences.

Composer – one who writes music.

Conductor – one who directs the orchestra or band.

Dance Captain – one who teaches and rehearses dance sequences with the performers.

Director – one who supervises the creative aspects and guides the artistic vision of the production.

Dress Rehearsal – rehearsal in which performers practice with costumes and props.

Dresser – one who assists performers with costumes during dress rehearsals and shows.

Electrician – one who works with the lighting designer to adjust and operate lighting instruments.

Ensemble/Chorus – a group of singers, dancers or actors who perform musical numbers.

Flyman – one who pulls the curtain before and after performances and operates the flying system, if one is used.

Gallery – the section of seats in a theater farthest away from the stage; separated into front gallery and rear gallery.

Head Carpenter – one who builds the sets for the production.

Headshot – a photograph of an actor from the shoulders up or ¾ body shot.

House Left – the left side of the theater, when facing the stage (audience’s point of view).
**House Right** – the right side of the theater, when facing the stage (audience’s point of view).

**Lighting Designer** – one who decides where the lighting instruments should go, how they should be colored, and which ones should be on at particular time to affect mood, visibility and to showcase costumes and sets.

**Lyricist** – one who writes the words to a song.

**Makeup Artist** – one who applies cosmetics to a performer’s face and body.

**Mezzanine** – the middle section of seats in a theater between the orchestra and the gallery, separated into front and rear mezzanine.

**Program** – a listing of the order of events, names of the cast and crew and other relevant information for the production.

**Property (Props) Master** – one who manages all items used on stage that cannot be classified as scenery, electrics or wardrobe.

**Read-through** – the cast reads through the script without blocking or dance.

**Rehearsal Pianist** – one who plays the piano for early-stage rehearsals.

**Set Designer** – one who creates the scenery for the stage.

**Sitzprobe** – the first rehearsal with both the performer and the orchestra, no staging or dancing.

**Sound Designer** – one who plans and executes the layout of all sound playback and equipment for the show.

**Sound Operator** – one who runs the sound playback and equipment for the show; works with the sound designer.

**Sound Board** – a desk comprising a number of channels where each sound source is provided with its own control channel through which sound signals are routed into two or more outputs; changes the quality of the sound.

**Standby//Understudy** – one who studies a role and is prepared to substitute for the principal performer when needed.

**Stage Left** – the left side of the stage, when facing the audience (performer’s point of view).

**Stage Manager** – one who is responsible for the quality of the show’s production; assists the director and oversees the show at each performance.

**Stage Right** – the right side of the stage; when facing the audience (performer’s point of view).

**Swings** – one who is prepared to substitute for ensemble or chorus members who are unable to perform.

**Technical Rehearsal** – a rehearsal incorporating the technical elements of a show, such as the scene and property shifts, lighting, sound and special effects.

**Usher** – one who guides audience members to their seats.

**Wig Master/Mistress** – one who obtains and customizes wigs for performers to wear.
PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

College and Career Readiness (CCR) Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening
Comprehension and Collaboration 1,2,3
Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas 4

College and Career Readiness (CCR) Anchor Standards for Language
Conventions of Standard English 1
Knowledge of Language 3
Vocabulary Acquisition and Use 4, 6

BUILD BACKGROUND
Disney’s Beauty and the Beast
Have student’s view Disney’s Beauty and the Beast. Note-taking is suggested, but optional. This will provide students with background information in preparation for the Discovering the Performing Arts for Middle School Students workshops experience.

Duration: Movie runs 84 minutes. Activities last approximately 45 minutes.

Objectives
- Students will critically analyze the film.
- Students will use their prior knowledge to make connections to the film.

Movie Discussion Questions
1. What particular moments in the film stood out to you and why?
2. Which character was your favorite? Least favorite? Explain.
3. Why did the old woman turn the prince into a Beast? What was she trying to teach him?
4. Which character do you consider to be the villain? The hero/heroine? Explain.
5. If you could be any one of the characters in the film, which would you choose? Why?
6. Why do the townsfolk think Belle is odd? If you were one of them, would you be Belle’s friend? Why or why not?
7. Why does Belle choose to be the Beast’s prisoner?
8. How do you think the Beast felt when he scared Belle away?

RESEARCH
Who was Walt Disney? Why is his work so important? Students can research and present what they learn about this American icon through informative/explanatory writing, narratives, presentations, skits and projects. Their work should include information from multiple print and digital resources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source and integrate technology, including the Internet. To get you started, here are a few web sites:

Just Disney.com
Biography.com-Walt Disney
World Changers-Walt Disney
Walt Disney: Ruler of the Magic Kingdom-TIME
Kidzworld.com-Walt Disney Biography
POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES

College and Career Readiness (CCR) Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening
Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas 4

College and Career Readiness (CCR) Anchor Standards for Language
Conventions of Standard English 1
Vocabulary Acquisition and Use 5, 6

BEAUTY IS ONLY SKIN DEEP
In Beauty and the Beast, Belle discovers that the Beast is not a beast at all. Rather, he is a kind and caring soul and she eventually falls in love with him. Form groups of 3-4 people. Act out a scene showing people befriending and accepting someone whose looks or behaviors are different from the rest of the group.

LIVING WAX MUSEUM
Each student should choose a character from Beauty and the Beast. Students will write a back-story for their character from what they have learned from Beauty and the Beast, and/or from their imaginations. For the Living Wax Museum, they will dress up or create life-sized paper dolls of their characters and perform in the wax museum. The students will pose as wax statues until someone presses the “button.” At that time, they will come to life and tell about themselves. This is a short speech based on their writing. It should be memorized and take only about one minute. Students may even want to make props for their character.

CRITICAL RESPONSE

Students develop their comprehension when they reflect upon what they noticed, wondered about and felt. Engage your students in a discussion by posing the following questions:

1. Think about a character in Beauty and the Beast. What are his/her character traits? How are you like the character? How are you different?
2. How did the music and sound effects help tell the story?
3. What feelings did each character show (joy, sorrow, fear, amazement, surprise, etc.)?
4. After seeing Disney’s Beauty and the Beast, what questions do you have (“I wonder. . .”)?