

STUDY GUIDE



Book by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Jeremy Sams

**Music by Harold Arlen, Andrew Lloyd Webber (additional), and
Herbert Stothart (incidental)**

Lyrics by E.Y. Harburg and Tim Rice (additional)

The Cumberland County Playhouse

February 14 – March 23, 2025

INTRODUCTION

This is an educational packet designed for use by you, the teacher, in preparing your students for the upcoming production of THE WIZARD OF OZ at the Cumberland County Playhouse. We have endeavored to provide you with suitable information about the show and its roots in literature and pop culture, and to incorporate core curriculum standards in the suggested activities to help you relate this production to particular grade level expectations for each child.

What is the audience's role?

A performance needs an audience. It is as much a part of the theater event as our actors, our designers, our technicians, and our crew. Each playwright asks you to come into the world he or she has created. However, this world is different from television or movies. The actors need your responses, your laughter, your applause. But as you can imagine, cell phones, inappropriate talking, and other distractions will disrupt the world that is being created. If any student becomes disruptive to the point of interference with the performers or other audience members, a chaperon will be asked to remove that student. The theater would cease to exist without an audience, so if you play your part well, the actors can play their parts well – and you both will enjoy the show!

SYNOPSIS

L. Frank Baum's classic novel comes to life in *The Wizard of Oz*. Young Dorothy Gale is swept away by a tornado from her Kansas farm to the magical land of Oz. There, she encounters a host of whimsical characters: good witches, bad witches, animals that talk, scarecrows that walk, and things magical to behold. To find her way home, she must journey along the Yellow Brick Road to see the mysterious and all-powerful Wizard in Emerald City. Along the way, she makes new friends, but must also brave many dangers, including the Wicked Witch of the West, who will stop at nothing to get her hands on Dorothy's magical ruby slippers. To make it home safely, Dorothy must learn an important lesson: there's no place like home.

Act I

Orphaned teenager Dorothy Gale lives on a farm in Kansas with her Aunt Em, Uncle Henry and dog Toto, but feels misunderstood ("Nobody Understands Me"). The unpleasant Miss Gulch threatens to call the sheriff after Toto bites her leg. Dorothy wants to escape to a nicer place, somewhere ("Over the Rainbow"). She runs away from the farm and meets Professor Marvel, who tells her all about ("The Wonders of the World"). They are interrupted by a twister, and Dorothy runs home for shelter. Inside the farmhouse, she bangs her head on the bedside. The house is blown away by the storm.

Landing in Oz, Dorothy's house flattens the Wicked Witch of the East. Glinda, the Good Witch of the North, greets Dorothy and tells her where she is. Glinda calls for the Munchkins to come out. These little people, overjoyed at the demise of their wicked tormentor, welcome Dorothy and Toto ("Munchkinland Music Sequence"). Glinda presents Dorothy with the magic ruby slippers that belonged to the dead witch. This enrages the witch's sister, the Wicked Witch of the West. Glinda tells Dorothy that the Wizard of Oz might be able to help her return home, and how to find him. Dorothy sets off toward the Emerald City to speak to the great Oz ("Follow the Yellow Brick Road").

On her way, she meets the Scarecrow, who feels inadequate with a head full of only stuffing ("If I Only Had A Brain"). Dorothy invites him to travel with her, hoping the Wizard can help him ("We're Off to See the Wizard"). They soon meet the Tin Man, who is unhappy with his empty tin chest ("If I Only Had a Heart"), and invite him to

join them. The Wicked Witch of the West threatens to light the Scarecrow on fire unless Dorothy gives her the ruby slippers; Dorothy refuses. In the dark forest, they encounter a very unhappy Lion, afraid of his own tail ("If I Only Had the Nerve"). He too joins the group on the road to the Emerald City.

Emerging into the light, the friends encounter another obstacle. The Wicked Witch has cast a spell creating a huge field of poppies that puts Dorothy and the Lion to sleep. Glinda counters with a snowfall that nullifies the poison, so the friends may continue on their journey ("Optimistic Voices"). Arriving at the Emerald City, Dorothy and company persuade the gatekeeper to admit them. They are welcomed with open arms and are groomed in preparation for a meeting with the Wizard ("The Merry Old Land of Oz"). The Wicked Witch flies down into the city with more threats, still angry that she doesn't have the ruby slippers. The four friends and Toto go into the Wizard's chamber. The great Oz appears as a frightening, disembodied head and says he will grant the group their wishes if they do something for him first. He demands: they must bring him the broomstick of the Witch of the West ("Bring Me the Broomstick").

Act II

In a forest on the way to the castle of the Wicked Witch of the West, the group tries to figure out how to steal the broomstick. They hide from a group of the Witch's Winkies ("March of the Winkies"). Meanwhile, in her castle, the Witch sends her flying monkeys to capture Dorothy and Toto and bring them to the castle ("Red Shoes Blues"). She imprisons Dorothy and tells her to give up the slippers within the hour or die ("Red Shoes Blues" (reprise)). Dorothy wishes more than ever that she was back at home and cries ("Over the Rainbow" (reprise)). The Scarecrow, Tin Man and Lion consider how to rescue her from the Witch's castle ("If We Only Had a Plan"). They disguise themselves as Winkies and sneak into the castle ("March of the Winkies" (reprise)). They find the Witch and Dorothy. When the Witch tries to attack the Scarecrow, a Winkie hands Dorothy a bucket of water, which she throws over the Witch, melting her. The Winkies are thrilled to be free of the wicked witch, and the quartet return to Emerald City with the broomstick to be greeted by a large celebration of the demise of the Witch, including the people of Emerald City, the Munchkins and the Winkies ("Hail – Hail! The Witch is Dead").

Dorothy and her friends go to see the Wizard with the broomstick. Toto reveals that the Wizard's fearsome visage is an illusion; he is just an ordinary man. Still, he gives the Scarecrow, Tin Man and Lion tokens of the brains, heart and courage that

they already had inside of them. He tells Dorothy that he himself will take her to Kansas in his hot air balloon, appointing the Scarecrow as prime minister of Oz, with the Tin Man and Lion as other ministers. Just before the balloon flies off, Toto runs into the crowd, and Dorothy retrieves him, missing her ride; she is seemingly stranded in Oz. Glinda appears to tell her that she and Toto had the power to return home all along ("Already Home"). After saying goodbye to her friends, Dorothy taps her heels together three times, chanting "There's no place like home".

Back in Kansas, Aunt Em and Uncle Henry tell Dorothy that she hit her head and had been unconscious for days. Dorothy insists her adventure in Oz was real, not a dream, but she is very grateful to be home. As Aunt Em and Uncle Henry leave her alone in her bedroom to rest, a gust of wind blows open her cupboard door, revealing the ruby slippers.

Musical Numbers

Act I

"Overture" – Orchestra and Ensemble

"Nobody Understands Me"* – Dorothy, Aunt Em, Uncle Henry, Hunk, Hickory, Zeke and Miss Gulch

"Over the Rainbow" – Dorothy

"The Wonders of the World"* – Professor Marvel and Dorothy

"The Twister" – Orchestra

Munchkinland Sequence: "Come Out, Come Out" / "It Really Was No Miracle" /

"Ding! Dong! The Witch is Dead" / "We Welcome You to Munchkinland" – Glinda, Dorothy and Munchkins

"Follow the Yellow Brick Road/You're Off to See The Wizard" – Dorothy and Munchkins

"If I Only Had a Brain" / "We're Off to See the Wizard" – Scarecrow and Dorothy

"If I Only Had a Heart" / "We're Off to See the Wizard" – Tin Man, Scarecrow and Dorothy

"If I Only Had the Nerve" / "We're Off to See the Wizard" – Lion, Tin Man, Scarecrow and Dorothy

"Optimistic Voices" – Dorothy, Lion, Scarecrow, Tin Man and Offstage Chorus

"The Merry Old Land of Oz" – Dorothy, Scarecrow, Tin Man, Lion and Emerald Citizens

"Bring Me the Broomstick"* – The Wizard

Act II

Entr'acte – Orchestra

"Haunted Forest (We Went to See the Wizard)**" – Dorothy, Scarecrow, Tin Man and Lion

"March of the Winkies" – Winkies

"Red Shoes Blues"* – The Wicked Witch of the West and Winkies

"Bacchanalia"*** – Orchestra

"Red Shoes Blues (Reprise)"* – The Wicked Witch of the West

"Over the Rainbow (Reprise)**" – Dorothy

"If We Only Had a Plan***" – Lion, Tin Man and Scarecrow

"March of the Winkies (Reprise)" – Winkies/Emerald Citizens, Dorothy, Tin Man, Scarecrow and Lion

"Hail – Hail! The Witch is Dead!" – Ensemble

"You Went to See the Wizard**" / "Farewell to Oz"* – The Wizard

"Already Home"* – Glinda, Dorothy and Ensemble

"Finale" – Dorothy

*denotes a new song by Webber and Rice.

**denotes new lyrics by Rice.

***denotes a new song by Webber.

CHARACTERS

Dorothy Gale - The pretty young heroine, she is transported to Oz from her home in Kansas. Initially dreams of leaving her dull Kansas life, but discovers that home is where her heart is.

The Wizard of Oz / Professor Marvel - The fortune teller who Dorothy meets when she runs away, he encourages her to return home. He is also the Wizard who helps her to return to Kansas from Oz.

The Scarecrow / Hunk - A corn field fixture who joins Dorothy to get a brain from the Wizard. Kind and clumsy, he realizes that a new hat is all he needs to unlock the potential of his brain.

The Tin Man / Hickory - A very mechanical man who believes he doesn't have a heart. Joins Dorothy on her quest. Wide-eyed and gentle, but moves like a robot.

The Cowardly Lion / Zeke - A beast of the forest, venturing to Oz to get courage from the Wizard. He is frightened of everything, and his terror and subsequent sadness is extremely over-the-top. By the end, he is able to find his confidence.

The Wicked Witch of the West / Miss Gulch - The villain of the story, she is bent on grabbing Dorothy after she accidentally kills her sister and takes her shoes. A comedic villainess who is also crafty and menacing.

Glinda the Good Witch - The Good Witch of the North. Beautiful and graceful. Both ethereal and somewhat whimsical, she helps guide Dorothy once she lands in Oz.

Aunt Em - Dorothy's aunt and Henry's wife. A typical midwestern farm worker, her main concern is the upkeep of her farm.

Uncle Henry - A Kansas farmer and Dorothy's uncle.

Toto - Dorothy's dog who, although lands her into trouble with Miss Gulch, is a loyal companion.

SOURCE MATERIAL

The Wizard of Oz is a 1939 American musical fantasy film produced by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM). Based on the 1900 novel *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum, it was primarily directed by Victor Fleming, who left production to take over the troubled *Gone with the Wind*. It stars Judy Garland, Frank Morgan, Ray Bolger, Bert Lahr, Jack Haley, Billie Burke, and Margaret Hamilton. Noel Langley, Florence Ryerson, and Edgar Allan Woolf received credit for the screenplay, while others made uncredited contributions. The music was composed by Harold Arlen and adapted by Herbert Stothart, with lyrics by Edgar "Yip" Harburg.

The Wizard of Oz is celebrated for its use of Technicolor, fantasy storytelling, musical score, and memorable characters. It was a critical success and was nominated for five Academy Awards, including Best Picture, winning Best Original Song for "Over the Rainbow" and Best Original Score for Stothart; an Academy Juvenile Award was presented to Judy Garland. It was on a preliminary list of submissions from the studios for an Academy Award for Cinematography (Color) but was not nominated. While the film was sufficiently popular at the box office, it failed to make a profit until its 1949 re-release, earning only \$3 million on a \$2.7 million budget, making it MGM's most expensive production at the time.

The 1956 television broadcast premiere of the film on CBS reintroduced the film to the public. According to the U.S. Library of Congress, it is the most seen film in movie history. In 1989, it was selected by the Library of Congress as one of the first 25 films for preservation in the United States National Film Registry for being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant"; it is also one of the few films on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register. The film was ranked second in *Variety's* inaugural 100 Greatest Movies of All Time list published in 2022. It was among the top ten in the 2005 British Film Institute (BFI) list of 50 Films to be Seen by the Age of 14 and is on the BFI's updated list of 50 Films to be Seen by the Age of 15 released in May 2020. *The Wizard of Oz* has become the source of many quotes referenced in contemporary popular culture. The film frequently ranks on critics' lists of the greatest films of all time and is the most commercially successful adaptation of Baum's work.

Source Cited: Wikipedia, *The Wizard of Oz*
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Wizard_of_Oz

Questions for Discussion

1. How do the songs help move the action along? How would *The Wizard of Oz* be different if there were no songs? Would it change your reaction to the characters?
2. Why do you think the movie *The Wizard of Oz* has remained popular for so many years? Do you think people will still watch this movie or attend the musical 100 years from now?
3. How is your life different from or similar to Dorothy's?
4. Choose a character from the show and describe how that character changes as the plot moves toward resolution.
5. How does lighting affect the mood of the play?
6. Choose your favorite character and select 15 vivid and compelling words to describe that character.
7. Choose a partner and retell the story of *The Wizard of Oz* as if you were any one of the main characters. Be sure to include the names of characters you encounter, details of your journey, what conflicts you face, and how you resolve them in the end.
8. What are the advantages or disadvantages of adapting a film for the stage? How does the theater affect the presentation of a particular topic or idea?
9. What is the conflict in *The Wizard of Oz* and how is this conflict resolved? Discuss internal vs external conflict in your answer.
10. Pick three characters and describe a heroic moment each of them experience during the play.

Independent Writing

JOURNAL ENTRIES:

Character Reflection: Which character from The Wizard of Oz do you relate to the most and why? How do their challenges or personality traits connect to your own experiences?

Theme Exploration: The musical explores themes of courage, friendship, and home. Which theme stood out to you the most, and how was it shown in the production?

Production Elements: Think about the set, costumes, lighting, and special effects in the show. Which element impressed you the most, and how did it enhance the storytelling?

A Different Perspective: Imagine you are one of the characters in the story (other than Dorothy). Write a diary entry about your journey through Oz and how you felt about meeting Dorothy and her friends.

Personal Takeaway: What is one lesson or message from The Wizard of Oz that you can apply to your own life? How might you use it in your daily experiences?

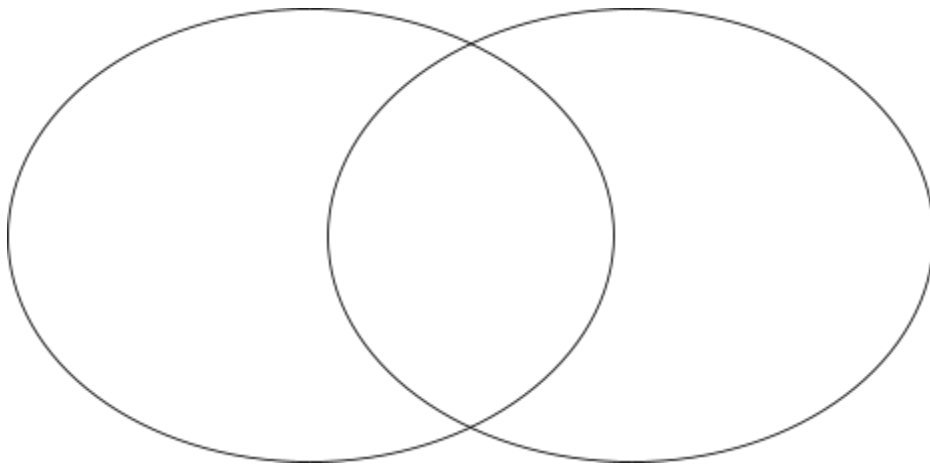
(Use one of the following prompts to begin your entry: I wonder, I began thinking of, I noticed, I was surprised, Why did, What if, This play was...)

ESSAY SUGGESTIONS:

- I. **Grades 3-5.** Write a narrative essay about taking a journey through Oz. Be sure to include any challenges you encounter and any rewards that you perceive.
- II. **Grades 6-8.** Write an expository essay that describes your theater experience at the Playhouse listing three examples that support and describe that experience.
- III. **Grades 9-12.** Write a persuasive essay reviewing the performance you attended. Include theatrical terms such as scenery, lighting, costumes and sound as well as literary terms such as plot, point of view, theme, foreshadowing, and/or symbolism.

VENN DIAGRAM:

This graphic organizer uses overlapping circles to compare and contrast. Traits that are shared are written in the overlapping area and individual traits are written in the portions that do not overlap. Have students compare and contrast the movie *The Wizard of Oz* and the stage adaptation, *The Wizard of Oz*.



Post-Show Unit

Town Hall Meeting and Newspaper: Exploring Dorothy's Decisions

Objective

- In this exercise, students and the teacher will work together in roles to actively investigate and improvise the situations provided. The intention is to create an experience that feels real; in order to do so, commitment to the exercise is crucial.

Town Hall Meeting:

Directions

Set the class up for success by outlining the following parameters for students:

1. Determine how long the improvisation will last (5mins, 10mins).
2. Will there be a way to stop the improvisation for a moment to discuss things out of role? If so, choose a code word the class can use to stop the improvisation and then resume the action where it was left off. However, students should do their best to hold questions until the improvisation has ended.
3. Decide on a setting for the improvisation.
4. Determine what happened just before the start of the improvisation.
5. Students should decide on a role before the improvisation begins and they should be specific (Aunt Em, Hunk, Uncle Henry, Zeke, Hickory, Miss Gulch, sheriff, a towns person with an interest in the case i.e. police officer) Students may invent new characters if they are appropriate (i.e. Dorothy's best friend).

As a class, decide which scenario will be investigated. Either "Kansas" or "Oz" (or do both!)

The Situation: Kansas

Dorothy has gone missing. Using the teacher-in-role method, as the mayor of Dorothy's hometown, conduct an inquiry into her disappearance. Lead the class in an investigation by prompting the following questions:

- What time did she go missing?
- Did she leave any clues behind?
- When was the last time people saw her? What was she wearing?
- Could she have run away? Why? What would have made her so upset that she would run away?
- What are we going to do about her disappearance? How are we going to bring Dorothy back home?

The Situation: Oz

Dorothy and Toto have arrived in Oz to everyone's surprise. Lead the class in an investigation by prompting the following questions:

- Who is Dorothy?
- Where has she come from?
- Has anyone in Oz heard of Kansas? What is Kansas like?
- How does Dorothy feel when she first arrives in Oz?
- How do we feel about her killing the Wicked Witch?
- What are the positive/negative consequences of the Wicked Witch being dead?

Once these and other questions (as determined by the class) have been discussed, bring the improvisation to a close with an action plan of what will happen next (i.e. the citizens of Oz decide to help Dorothy get home.). Keep the Town Hall context alive by referring to it as a real event (i.e., What about when Miss Gulch said _____ in the Town Hall meeting? What did she mean by that?).

Culminating Activity: Creative Writing Newspaper Assignment

Directions

1. Divide the class in two and create an edition of the Kansas Gazette/Oz Standard (or any other newspaper name) as a group. Use the following suggestions/questions to give students ideas of what they can put in their newspaper OR brainstorm as a class to develop the content for the newspaper. Make sure that students approach the newspaper activity from a number of different points of view and editorial angles (see below).
2. What are the headlines/main stories on the front page?
3. Have students draw or photograph the front page picture and include (in the form of captions) information about what happened in the town hall meeting.
4. What other stories would be on the following pages?
5. Who would advertise in this newspaper? Create the advertisements.
6. Have students write editorials using their journal entry from Extension 1 or from the perspective of other characters in the play (i.e., Explain, from the Wicked Witch of the West's point of view, why she finds Dorothy threatening. Or explore Miss Gulch's point of view and why she may feel bad about Dorothy running away from home).

From Young People's Theater

<https://www.youngpeoplestheatre.org/schools/the-wizard-of-oz-study-guide/>