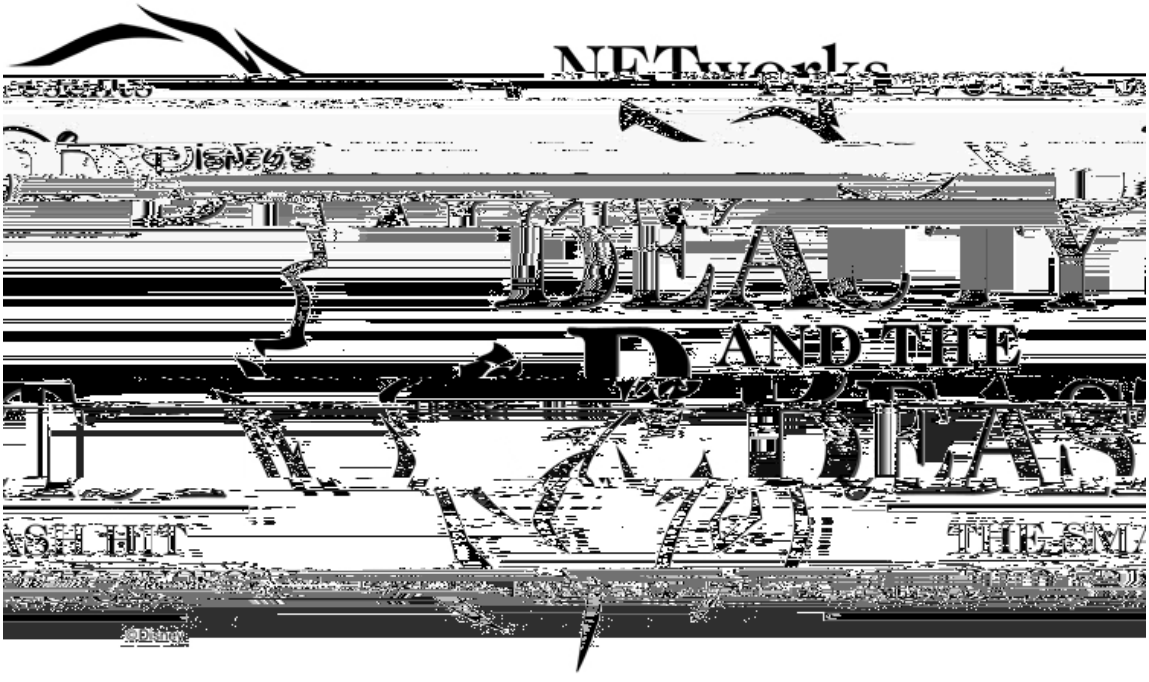

TEACHER STUDY GUIDE

I. HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

A. The Story
B. What is a Musical?
C. Background of **Disney's *Beauty and the Beast***

II. ELEMENTS OF THE STORY

A. Plot
- Structure
- Setting
- Complication
- Foreshadowing

B. Theme
- Relationships
- Irony
- Symbolism

C. Characterization
- Mood
- Dialogue
- Point of View

III. ELEMENTS OF PRODUCTION

A. Audience
B. Performers
C. Music and Sound
D. Costumes and Wigs, Make-up and Prosthetics
E. Sets, Lighting and Special Effects
F. Theatre, The Collaborative Art

IV. ACTIVITIES

A. Preshow Preparatory Assignments
B. A Real Yarn!
C. Snow White and The Frog Prince
D. Picture This
E. TV Interview
F. Home is Where the Heart is
G. Rooms
H. Exchange Characters
I. Character Walk
J. Where Am I?
K. Establishing a Where
L. Radio Story
M. Sound Tape

No Child is fully educated or adequately prepared to live in an increasingly technological world without understanding the meaning and beauty transmitted by the Arts.

-J.P. Getty Trust, Beyond Creating a Place for Art in America s School, 1985.

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 Beauty with her Beast, who is now a handsome Prince, live happily ever after.

B. WHAT IS A MUSICAL?

A musical is the presentation of a story using the aleets of music, ig igcaigf ano heatclproduction

a(s)4(t)-3(a)-4ghe(c)-4on(t)-3(e)-4(nt)7(i)-3(o(s)4(t73(ha)-4(t)-3((a)-4( )10(it)-3(e)-4nf)10(c)-4(e)-4(s)4(f)10 m)-

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 which would work on stage. Stan Meyer, scenic designer, and Natasha Katz, lighting designer, were challenged to create a 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.

II. 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 which carry meaning in a song, and the score, which is the music of the show.

Since most theatre begins with the text, or book in this case, let s examine the elements of the text.

A. PLOT

The plot is the structure of the play. It is the action/events which make up the story. The plot was five parts:

Exposition: The presentation of information that the audience needs to enter the play's action.

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

Climax: The highest point or turning point in the action, which pits protagonist and antagonist against each other in a final confrontation that settles all their difficulties.

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.

Disney’s

In the case of **Disney's *Beauty and the Beast***, the stage show would be an adaptation of an animated musical. It is important to note that the Disney's screenplay and the musical's book were written by the same person, Linda Woolverton, who thus was able to make both versions compatible.

Discussion Section:

Is the structure of the play similar to or different from the movie? How?

SETTING

Definition: The time and place of the story. Geography, social eras and political events are all influential to a story s setting.

Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* is set in Fairy tale time. There are references to France as the geographic location, and the costumes and customs reflect life of several centuries ago. While there was an emerging middle class in this era, manual labor was still valued over learning by the masses.

Discussion Section

Describe the two settings in the story (the village and the castle). Would the story work in a different setting, (i.e. the city, modern-day France)?

COMPLICATION

Definition: A complication is a force, and obstacle, a reversal, a sharply disappointing setback, or an unexpected event that changes the course of the play. There are numerous complications in **Disney's *Beauty and the Beast***.

Most plots are made up of a series of complications. The playwright introduces complications to create conflict in the play. An example of a complication or a sharply disappointing setback appears in the play when the Beast allows Belle to return to care for her father. Although prepared to ask Belle to marry him, he allows her to leave the castle because his love does not permit him to keep her prisoner. In setting her free, he jeopardizes his opportunity to return to his former princely shape. The servants of the castle, sensing the time has come for the spell to be broken, are shocked to learn that Belle is to leave the castle and return home.

Discussion Section:

What other complication can you identify in the story? What obstacles must all the major characters overcome?

FORESHADOWING

Definition: Foreshadowing is a device used by the playwright to build suspense and tension, and to prepare the audience for action that follows. *The Mob Song*, which Gaston sings, prepared the audience for this attack on the castle and on the Beast.

Discussion Section:

How does the song prepare the audience for his future action? Identify other elements of foreshadowing in the play. How are the wolves surrounding the castle an element of foreshadowing? How was music used to express the idea of foreshadowing? How was stage lighting used to express ominous things to come?

B. THEME

The theme is the central idea, thought or meaning of the play. Sometimes it is referred to as the spine of the play, since like the spine of the body, it is the central core uniting and controlling all of the parts into a cohesive whole. It answers the question, 'what is the play about'?

Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* explores the idea of **what is beauty**. It also explores the idea that love is learned. The most obvious message of the play is that beauty is but skin deep, and that one should look beneath the surface to search for the true meaning of beauty within. The incorporation of the character of Gaston in the musical underscores this point. He is very handsome man and at first glance appears to be a good match for the lovely Belle. It doesn't take the audience long to discover that his personality is as ugly as his face is fair. During the scene in which he attacks the Beast, the question arises of who is the true animal.

Belle learns that when she has the opportunity to look below the surface of the Beast s appearance, she only then truly discovers what he is like. Looking deeper into another person leads to self-discovery and sometimes change as well. All the major characters are changed somehow through the action in the story.

In his treatise on fairy tales and fables, *The Uses of Enchantment*, Bruno Bettelheim makes the statement, Each fairy tale is a magic mirror which reflects some aspect of our inner world, and of the steps required by our evolution from immaturity to maturity.

Discussion Section:

How is the story of **Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*** the story of the Beast s maturity, of his growing up? What does Belle discover about herself as she learns to look below the surface of the Beasts ferocious appearance?

Discuss the phrase 'beauty is in the eye of the beholder' in regards to Belle. When she sees the man behind the monster, what does she see? Does what she sees change during the course of the play?

Belle is torn between her feelings for her father, Maurice, and for the Beast. How does she resolve the conflict?

When Belle first sees the Beast, she is very much afraid. This fear eventually turns to love. When have you experienced having an emotion change from one extreme to another? Is it possible to love something/someone and have the emotion develop into fear or loathing? How/when does the media manipulate our emotions in this way?

A secondary theme in **Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*** is the idea of **difference.** From the beginning of the play, the audience learns that Belle is considered different than the other people in the village. In the song *Belle,* the villagers sing:

Look, there she goes
The girl is strange, no question
Dazed and distracted, can't you tell?
Never part of any crowd
Cause her head s up on some cloud
No denying she's a funny girl, that Belle,

Look, there she goes the girl is so peculiar I wonder if she's feeling well
With a dreamy, far-off look
And her nose stuck in a book
What a puzzle to the rest of us in Belle

Now it s no wonder that her name means beauty
Her looks have got no parallel
But behind that fair facade I'm afraid she s rather odd
Very different from the rest of us
She's nothing like the rest of us
Yes, different from the rest of us is Belle.

Discussion Section:

Why do you think the townspeople thought Belle was odd ? Was it only because she liked to read so much? What ideas did Belle have that differed from the townspeople? What moments in the play reveal that Belle was bothered that others found her strange? Identify moments in the play when there was social pressure placed on Belle to think like the group/the crowd. Why do you think it took courage for Belle to retain her individualism? How were Belle and her father Maurice alike?

Gaston used the idea of difference to arouse the emotions of the villagers. In *The Mob Song* Gaston sings:

It s a beast! He's got fangs
Razor-sharp ones
Massive paws, killer claws for the feast
Hear him roar! See him foam!
But we're not coming home till he's dead!
Good and dead! Kill the Beast!

Later, the mob responds:

We don t like what we don't understand
In fact, it scares us
And this monster is mysterious at least
Bring your guns, bring your knives
Save your children and your wives
We'll save our village and our lives
We'll kill the beast!

Discussion Section:

- Why do you think that everyone was willing to march to the castle and kill the Beast, although they had never met or spoken to him? What was it about the Beast that made everyone afraid of him? Why do you think Belle was unsuccessful at convincing the mob that the Beast was not threatening?

- What makes it difficult for an individual to take a stand against a crowd? When have you ever held an unpopular opinion and defended your right to maintain your beliefs? When have you actively sought to turn people s opinions around to share your point of view?

- Give examples of situations where individuals or groups of individuals have been feared, threatened or killed because of their apparent differences from the rest of society. Find examples where people have been compared to animals in order to instill fear in the rest of society. Give examples where this kind of thinking still occurs today.

RELATIONSHIPS

There are a number of relationships that are explored in the story **Disney's *Beauty and the Beast***. The relationship between Belle and her father Maurice is explored very early in the play. This relationship is one that is very important to the story.

Another relationship that exists in the play is that between Belle and Gaston. It is a relationship that Gaston pursues despite the fact that he has little in common with Belle. When he recognizes her love of reading, he says that it is not right for a woman to read because she might get ideas. In the song *Me,* Gaston reveals what he thinks a relationship between husband and wife should be:

Will you be a wife?
Will you be some he-man's property
Good news! That he-man's me!

This equation
Girl plus man
Doesn't help just you
On occasion
Women can
Have their uses too
Mainly to extend the family tree
Pumpkin, extend with me!

You'll be keeping house with pride
Each day gratified
That you are part of this idyllic scene

Ma 323 Td [(W) .(W) .(W) .(W)(o re) Td [(Maod d (1(a0 T5j EM(1y)-3(h)10(i)-3(s)4(i)7e) Td [(7))

Disney's *Beauty and the Beast Teacher Study Guide*

MOOD

Definition: The feeling an audience gets from the play changes as the action progresses.

This is a result of the acting by the various characters on stage. The **mood** is this range of emotion that the audience moves through. The mood changes from scene to scene. Stage effects and music work together with the actors to reinforce the mood appropriate for various parts of the story.

Discussion Section:

Describe Belle s feelings after she is locked up. How does the audience feel about the Beast at this point in the story?

What is the mood in Gaston s pub? What about in the village after the Beast has been revealed in the mirror? How does the ensemble play into this mood?

How do you feel about the Beast at the end of Act I?

DIALOGUE

Definition: The talking that goes on between characters on the stage is the dialogue.

The written version of a play is called the book. However, in a musical or opera, much of the normal dialogue is replaced by song to convey the important information. An audience has to listen very carefully to the lyrics or words in the songs as they enjoy the melodies. Since the events of several days often have to be condensed, dialogue helps move the action in new time frames. Listening is an important skill to maximize understanding. The words for spoken dialogue and lyrics are always carefully chosen.

Discussion Section:

How does an actor's tone of voice influence the meaning of words?
How does body language affect the communication between characters and reinforce the dialogue?
What were the high points for you in the spoken word?
What were the high points for you in the sung lyrics?

POINT OF VIEW

Definition: The angle from which a story is told.

A narrator introduces the action as this play begins. Once the Storyteller has disappeared, the audience is quickly drawn into the action to follow with their own interpretation. The focus moves between Belle, Gaston, the Beast and the Enchanted Objects as the musical moves form scene to scene.

Discussion Section

What point of view is **Disney's *Beauty and the Beast***? Is it effective? How would the story change if Belle told the story (first person point of view)? Or the Beast?
Try to write a new opening for the play given from Belle s point of view.

B. PERFORMERS

The performer or actor (meaning a male or female actor) is also essential to the art of the theatre. When a person stands in front of a group of people and begins to speak and move in a way that portrays a character that is not the performer, that person is acting.

Acting is a demanding profession which requires intelligence, a flexible body and voice, energy, stamina, sensitivity and imagination. In a 4(a)_____pen1/c14(t)1(ho)4(r)4().e)-4(. W)17(he)-4(n a)-

C. MUSIC AND SOUND

The original animated film score was expanded to include several new songs. *Home* is Belle's song of determination. *Me* tells you everything you might need to know about Gaston. *If I Can t Love Her* is the Beast s way to show his yearning and loneliness. *Human Again* conveys the passage of time and continued hope. All the new songs are integrated so as to appear both familiar and new. The audience can relate to the characters through the music.

A design element that is not visual is sound. Sound effects include special effects like thunder, the sound of wind and falling rain. Sound effects also include the clink of the cups in *Gaston*. Every time Lefou was hit, pounded, tripped or thrown by Gaston was accompanied by sound effects. Incidental music that was frequently played to underscore the action of the play, setting a tone or mood for the action, is also considered a sound effect. The performers also wore body microphones so that their voices could easily be heard by everyone in the large auditorium. Augmentation of stage voices is actually more difficult than it appears and the task falls to the sound designer.

Discussion Section:

> Listen to the music from Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*. Which instruments signal different characters, moods or feelings? Which instruments were used to express sorrow, laughter, mystery, excitement, happiness, terror, love, loneliness or frustration?
> Chart the musical program of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*. Pick a character and show how a particular song reveals his/her deepest desires. Do specific songs focus on specific character?

life, their age, occupations and personalities. Clothes indicate the historical period the play as well as the locale in which the action occurs.

The costumes also need to meet the needs of the individual performer, making it possible for an actor to move or dance freely, make a quick change from one costume to another, or to make a change/transformation on stage in front of the audience.

Discussion Section:

How did the Beast s costume tell you that he had become more animal than human?
How did the costume also tell you that he was still a Prince?
Many of the characters in the Beast s castle appeared in costumes that indicated they had been turned into enchanted objects. Describe the costumes of the following characters and explain what objects they were meant to represent.

- **Cogsworth**
- **Lumiere**
- **Mrs. Potts**
- **Madame de la Grande Bouche**
- **Babette**

How do the costumes reflect a time period and place?
Costumes also should indicate something of the personality of the character. What are the personality traits of Gaston? How is that reflected in his costume? Look at the color, fabric choices (Gaston does not wear silk or velvet), the line of the costume (fabric does not drape on his body: he is poured into the costume), and the costume accessories such as his wig. In designing the Beast s costume, the costumer had to consider the fact that the actor needed to undergo a magical transformation.
Examine the costume designs of Lumiere and Babette. By looking at the colors, line and fabric, explain how the costumer indicated that there was a relationship between these two characters.
Write down a list of adjectives that would describe the character of Belle. Using a picture of Belles costume, how are the adjectives expressed through the design? Compare her dress to those of the silly girls of the village.
Imagine that the story of **Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*** was placed in the 19th

1960 s in China? The setting also tells the audience what kinds of characters the play is about. The scenery depicting a palace immediately suggests that the play is about kings and other royalty. A farmhouse porch suggests the play is about an ordinary rural family. A set design can also indicate whether the play is realistic or non-realistic, both in the way the elements of design are visually presented and how they move in and out of view of the audience.

The element of scenic design was a very important element in the staging of **Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*.** Visually, the stage design very much followed the film version of the story in its use of line, color and texture to help set the tone and style of the production. The vibrant use of color together with the two-dimensional look of the set appropriately conveys the fairy tale origin of the story.

The scenery works together with all production and performance elements to create artistic consistency throughout the play. For example, the bright reds, orange and yellow of the early village scene are consistent with the happy, playful upbeat songs and dance numbers presented early in the play. Spurred on by Gaston, the mood of the villagers turns ugly in Act II, and they attack the Beast s castle. This mood is reflected in a change of costume consisting of dark, somber colors, diffused shadowy lighting, and sharply angular sets that elicit a sense of foreboding.

Discussion Section:

The mood of the play begins in a very happy, upbeat way. At what point does the mood begin to change? How is the mood expressed through the change of the set?

The set of the Beast's castle is large and grandiose with curved ar whis l produ

SECTION IV. ACTIVITES

Special thanks to Dr. Patricia Harter, UCLA School of theatre, Film & Television,

The following activities are designed to aid you in exploring theatrical concepts. These can

B. A REAL YARN!

Objective: Develop concentration, listening skills, encourage storytelling skills, foster group cooperation.

Activity: Seat the students together in one large circle. The teacher begins the activity by introducing an idea for a story (exposition), setting the place and introducing a character. As the teacher begins to tell the story, he/she unwinds a ball of yarn. When he/she comes to a knot in the yarn, the teacher stops his/her storytelling, and passes the ball of yarn to the student on his/her right. The student picks up the story where the teacher left off, adding details and action to the story until she/he comes to a knot in the ball of yarn. The yarn and the story are passed along the circle until the story of the ball of yarn reaches an end.

Evaluation: Examine the story that was passed around the circle for elements of exposition, rising action, climax, etc. Which elements made the story exciting? Which elements are omitted? What could have been added to make the story more interesting? Replay

Preparation: A large ball of yarn with knots randomly added.

C. SNOW WHITE AND THE FROG PRINCE

Objective: Develop improvisational dialogue skills, explore storytelling skills, foster group problem-solving skills.

Activity: Bring a picture/book of a well-known fairy tale and present it to the class. Outline the plot of the story. Discuss how the story would change if a major character was eliminated from the story; what changes would occur if another character was added?
Divide the class into four of five small groups. Give each group a card with the title of a well-known fairy tale, i.e. The Three Pigs, Cinderella, The Frog Prince, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty. Also, give each group a name of a well-known character from another story i.e. Rumpelstiltskin, a dragon, seven dwarfs, etc. Each group must find a way to incorporate the character into the story, changing the plotline to accommodate the new character.

Evaluation: How did the addition of the character change the original story? What elements of the plot had to change significantly to accommodate the change? How did the new character add/eliminate complications in the original story? Was foreshadowing employed to prepare for the new addition to the story?

D. PICTURE THIS

F. HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

Objective: Learn to express oneself through body actions.

Motivation: Discuss how Belle felt about missing her home when she first went to live in the Beast s castle. Ask what Belle missed about her home. Ask students what they miss most about home when they are away. Ask the question, If you were suddenly taken from your home, what things would you miss doing the most?

Presentation: Have students pantomime an action that represents something they love most about their homes. (This can be done individually or planned in groups.)

Alternative: Have students pantomime an action that one of the characters in the play would most enjoy about home or in the village.

Disney's *Beauty and the Beast Teacher Study Guide*

G. ROOMS

Objective: Stimulate imagination, spontaneous verba(o e)-4(x41S)4

L. RADIO STORY

Objective: Development of association and reasoning skills; enhancement of auditory skills.

Motivation: Ask students to identify sounds that accompanied specific action in the play, i.e. Lefou tripping, Maurice s invention, the rain falling, etc. Ask the students to find ways of reproducing those sounds.

Presentation: Divide the class into groups of five. Give each group a card that has the outline of a scene in which the action is accompanied by sound effects. Each group should plan how the sound effects alone will communicate the action of the scene. Example: The opening of a door, sound of footsteps, sound of sitting in a chair, sound of opening drawers, sound of shuffling paper which soon stops following by a low laugh of satisfaction, sound of a match being struck, low laugh, sound of body rising from chair, sound of footsteps running from room, crackling sound of fire, final sound of distant fire engines.

Each group plans the story using only the sound. The story is played to the entire class which listens with eyes shut.

M. SOUND TAPE

H_____ Tj EMo Tf 11.525p>BDC p8>Tj /TT3 5C</MCID 35 l 0 Tc .s.375 -1.323 T
of0]TJ T* ofh, sde 2GID 11 >EB3(oxy6)21(i)-13(s)4(.)10(0)1Tdr]TJ[H Exampl Tj EM)auo Tf