ABOUT THEATRE IN EDUCATION

Magnus Theatre in Education

The

RIVER

by Jez Butterworth

featuring: Kevin Hare, Marisa McIntyre, Meredith Zwicker
directed by: Thom Currie
set designer: Laura Gardner lighting designer: Tim Rodrigues
costume designer: Mervi Agombar stage manager: Gillian Jones

FEBRUARY 1 - 17, 2018

STUDY GUIDE

Content & Layout by Amanda Vinet and Danielle Chandler
Magnus Theatre offers alternative ticket prices

**Student Ticket Prices**
$20 for any show (best seat available)
Available in person at the box office on show day, with a valid student ID.

**Pay What You Can**
On the second Sunday of the run of each play, we are offering tickets at a Pay What You Can price. That is, there will be no subscriptions or reserved seating for those particular performances. Patrons will line up and pay what they want, on a first come first served basis.

**UPCOMING SHOWS**

2017-18 Season

**Sept 7-23**
*We Will Rock You*

**Oct 26-Nov 11**
*Only Drunks and Children Tell the Truth*

**Dec 7-23**
*Miracle on 34th Street*

**Feb 1-17**
*The River*

**Mar 22-Apr 7**
*Bed and Breakfast*

**May 3-19**
*Perfect Wedding*
HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Magnus Theatre is committed to presenting top quality, passionate theatre to enrich, inform, empower and educate people of all ages. It is our goal that the performance not only be entertaining but also a valuable educational experience.

This guide is intended to assist with preparing for the performance and following up with your students. It provides comprehensive background information on the play as well as suggested themes, topics for discussion, curriculum-based activities and lesson plans which will make the content and experience of attending Magnus Theatre more relevant and rewarding for your students.

Using this guide, teachers can encourage students to conduct historical research, utilize critical analysis, think creatively, and apply personal reflection in relation to the play and its themes, which often crosses over into other subjects or areas of the curriculum.

Please use this guide in whatever manner best suits you. All activities and lesson plans may be modified to meet your classroom needs in to make it accessible and applicable for your students.

We hope that this study guide provides stimulating and challenging ideas that will provide your students with a greater appreciation of the performance and live theatre.

If you would like further information about the production, Magnus Theatre, the various programs we offer, or to share your thoughts and suggestions, please contact:

Danielle Chandler, Theatre in Education Director
Magnus Theatre
10 S. Algoma Street, Thunder Bay, ON P7B 3A7
education@magnus.on.ca

Did You Know?...

Brown trout have between 38 and 42 pairs of chromosomes. Humans have only 23 pairs. Brown trout are one of the most genetically diverse vertebrates known. There is far more genetic variation present across British populations of wild brown trout than between any populations in the entire human race.

Adapted from: www.wildtroat.org
THEATRE ETIQUETTE

Please review with your class prior to arriving at the theatre.

We want your students, and everyone who attends a Magnus Theatre performance to thoroughly enjoy it. In a live theatre environment, the performers and other audience members are affected by the students’ behaviour (both positively and negatively). Our actors, technicians, and staff have worked hard to create an enjoyable and entertaining experience for you and your students. Below are a few items that, if followed, will greatly enhance the experience for all concerned.

WHEN SHOULD WE ARRIVE?

• We recommend that you arrive at the theatre at least 30 minutes prior to the performance (doors open approximately one hour before show time.)
• School matinees begin promptly at 12 noon – we cannot hold the curtain for latecomers.
• Please be in your seat approximately 15 minutes before the performance begins. Latecomers are not guaranteed seating.

WHERE DO WE SIT?

• Magnus Theatre has assigned seating and therefore it is important for teachers/chaperones to pick up the tickets before arriving to the theatre, or to arrive early to allow time for distribution of tickets.
• Students must sit in their assigned seats. We ask that teachers/chaperones disperse among the students to provide sufficient supervision.
• Ushers and/or Magnus Theatre staff will be happy to assist you, if needed.

WHAT CAN WE BRING WITH US?

• Food and drink (including gum, candy and water) are not permitted in the Margaret Westlake Magnus Theatre Auditorium. You may bring purchased beverages into the auditorium, provided they are in an approved plastic container. Ask the bartender/ usher for more information. We have a limited number of concession items for sale in the lounge before the show and during performances. Please note that beverages and food from outside the theatre are not permitted.
• Please turn off – do not place on vibrate or silent – all electronic devices before entering the theatre. The lights as well as the sounds are very distracting.
• We do not have storage space for backpacks and ask that these items be left at school or on the bus.
• Please refrain from applying perfume or aftershave before coming to the theatre as a consideration for those who may have sensitivities to scents.

CAN WE TAKE PICTURES?

• Photography, audio or video recording are not allowed during the performance. This is a copyright infringement.

WHAT DO WE DO DURING THE PERFORMANCE?

• We encourage students to let the performers know that they appreciate their work with applause and laughter, when appropriate.
• Please do not talk during the performance. It is disruptive to the other patrons and the actors on stage.
• Please do not text or use your phone during the performance.
• Please do not leave your seat during the performance. If it is absolutely necessary to leave your seat, you will be seated in the back row upon your return and may return to your original seat at intermission. Younger students needing to leave must be accompanied by an adult.
• We ask that students refrain from taking notes during the performance as it can be distracting to the actors and audience members. If note taking is required, please do so before or after the show or during intermission.
• Please do not put your feet on the seats.
• Please do not go on the stage at any point.

WHAT DO WE DO AFTER THE SHOW?

• Applaud! If you particularly enjoyed the performance, it is customary to give a standing ovation at the end as well.
• Please stay in your seat until the performance ends and the auditorium lights come on.
• If your group is NOT attending the talk back session, please collect your personal belongings and promptly exit the auditorium.
• If your group is attending the talk back session, please remain in your seats. A member of the Magnus Theatre staff will invite the actors back to the stage to begin the talk back session. Students should take advantage of this opportunity by asking questions.

MAGNUS THEATRE

Some information for you and your class.

• Magnus Theatre is a member of P.A.C.T (Professional Association of Canadian Theatres). Magnus Theatre operates under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement, engaging professional artists who are members of the Canadian Actor’s Equity Association.
• Magnus Theatre was founded in 1971 by British director Burton Lancaster in conjunction with a citizens’ committee, and was incorporated June 15, 1972.
• Thom Currie, the new Artistic Director of Magnus Theatre, joined us in August 2016.
• In 1998, Magnus received the Lieutenant Governor’s Award for the Arts from Ontario Arts Council Foundation.
• MAGNUS IN THE PARK opened in September, 2001 after a successful $5.5 million campaign to relocate the theatre from the old location on McLaughlin Street.
• Magnus services reach over 40 000 adults, students and seniors in Thunder Bay and Northern Ontario each year.
• STUDENT TICKETS cost $20 and are available for any show. Simply come to the theatre on the day of the show and present valid student I.D.
• Theatre in Education is a community outreach program initiated at Magnus in 1987.
• Throughout the year, Magnus operate a THEATRE SCHOOL with classes for all ages in the fall, winter and spring. Drama camps run during March Break and the summer.
• The THEATRE FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES SCHOOL TOUR brings entertaining, socially relevant productions to elementary and secondary schools throughout Northern Ontario to communities that may not have the opportunity to experience live theatre otherwise. Booking begins in the fall for performances in the spring.
• Magnus offers WORKSHOPS for students, teachers and community groups in Thunder Bay and across the region. Workshops can be designed to meet specific needs, or can be selected from various topics including introduction to drama, improvisation, anti-bullying and more.
Magnus Theatre can make learning dynamic, interactive, enriching and – above all – fun! Whether you are interested in bringing your school to the theatre, or prefer having us come to you, there are a variety of educational and entertaining programs that will benefit your students.

For more information, please contact Danielle Chandler at education@magnus.on.ca

ABOUT THEATRE IN EDUCATION

• Theatre in Education refers to theatre that is used as a tool for educational purposes, with the goal of changing attitudes and/or behaviours of audience members.

• Using the art form of drama as an educational pedagogy at any grade level, drama can reinforce the rest of the school curriculum, and has been proven to improve overall academic performance.

• It is a multisensory mode of learning, designed to:
  • Increase awareness of self (mind, body, voice) and others (collaboration, empathy)
  • Improve clarity and creativity in communication of verbal and nonverbal ideas
  • Deepen understanding of human behaviours, motivation, diversity, culture and history

• It incorporates elements of actor training to facilitate students’ physical, social, emotional and cognitive development.

• It also employs the elements of theatre (costumes, props, scenery, lighting, music, sound) to enrich the learning experience, reenact stories and mount productions.

• Theatre students are able to take responsibility for their own learning and skill development as they explore the various aspects involved in theatre, such as acting, directing, playwriting, producing, designing, building, painting, leading etc.

• It is a powerful tool for social change as emotional and psychological responses can be more intense as it is a live event, giving audiences an opportunity to connect with performers.

• Theatre can provide a believable, entertaining and interesting way to explore sensitive issues that are not typically discussed in public, such as racism, suicide, bullying and substance abuse. It is particularly effective with young audiences.

• By engaging audiences and capturing their attention, theatre can influence positive behaviour and healthy lifestyles, particularly if it is delivered with a message that audiences can understand. Hence, Theatre in Education performances are typically accompanied by study guides, activities, support material and/or workshops. The more interactive and participatory the event, the more successful it is.

• The arts, including drama, cater to different styles of learning and have positive effects on at-risk youth, and students with learning disabilities.

• Involvement in the arts increases students’ engagement, encourages consistent attendance, and decreases drop-out rates in schools.

• Drama allows students to experiment with personal choices and solutions to real problems in a safe environment where actions and consequences can be examined, discussed and experienced without “real world” dangers.

• Drama makes learning fun and its engaging and interactive nature makes learning more memorable.

• Drama increases language development as students express themselves by using a range of emotions and vocabulary they may not normally use.

• As students realize their potential, they gain confidence which extends to other areas of learning and their lives.

Did You Know?...

The difference between brown trout and sea trout is the lack of food. Some trout will swim to the sea to go feed before returning to spawn. Brown trout and sea trout are the same species.

Adapted from: www.wildtrout.org
SYNOPSIS

On a moonless summer night, when the trout are ready to run, a man brings his new girlfriend to a remote family cabin where he has been fly-fishing since he was a boy. But she’s not the only woman he has brought there, or the last.

RECOMMENDED FOR GRADES 12+ due to language and sexual content

The Man: Kevin Hare

The Woman: Marisa McIntyre

The Other Woman: Meredith Zwicker

Understudies: Danielle Chandler/ Hanna Laaksonen Korpi

Director: Thom Currie

Set Designer: Laura Gardner

Lighting Designer: Tim Rodrigues

Costume Designer: Mervi Agombar

Stage Manager: Gillian Jones

Props: Hanna Laaksonen Korpi

Scenic Painter: Stefani Celine
Jez Butterworth was born in London, England. His brother Steve is a producer and brothers Tom and John-Henry are also writers. Jez attended Verulam Comprehensive School and St. John’s College in Cambridge.

Butterworth is an English playwright, screenwriter, and film director. He has had major success with the play MOJO that premiered at the Royal Court Theatre in 1995. MOJO won the Laurence Olivier, an Evening Standard and the George Devine awards.

He directed and co-wrote the film “Birthday Girl” with his brother Tom in 2001. The film was produced by his brother Steve and starred Nicole Kidman.

In 2002, Butterworth also achieved positive reviews on his play “The Night Heron”, which was premiered at The Royal Court Theatre in Liverpool.

On October 26, 2012 “The River” debuted at the Royal Court Theatre. “The River” had its American debut on Broadway at the Circle in The Square Theatre in a limited engagement on October 24, 2014. The Broadway premiere starred Hugh Jackman and was directed by Ian Rickson. Butterworth’s latest work is the play “The Ferryman” which opened at The Royal Court Theatre in 2017. Directed by Sam Mendes, it is the fastest selling play in The Royal Court Theatre history.

Did You Know?...

Trout don’t have scales for the first month of their life. They also have a brain about the size of a pea.

Adapted from: www.wikipedia.com
A Traverse stage is a theatrical stage where the audience is typically on either side of the stage facing towards each other. It is comparable to a fashion cat walk. The stage is also known as corridor seating or an alley. There are various implications for the actor on a traverse stage, such as a need for greater projection of voice. Since there are seats on either side of the actor, the actor will need to maneuver their bodies to project their voice appropriately to the entire audience. The actor must also make sure that every action is visible to either side. In this case often there is a disappearance of wings for the performers. Naturally, this type of staging allows a whole new challenge for the actors.

The traverse stage, with its one central platform, also presents challenges for the director, lighting, scenic and sound designers. But, it can also present an exciting opportunity for productions and actors to engage the audience in an unusual way. From a design perspective staging is very limited; it may be a challenge to not block sight lines across the stage. For sound, these issues are problematic because any speakers that face one side of the audience also face the stage and are prone to feedback. The sound designer has the challenge of finding the perfect angle for adequate stereo mixing, which is almost impossible. Many sound engineers do not mic traverse productions at all, since many of these theatres are small to begin with.

Additionally, lighting the stage from one side only will cast a shadow over the actors’ face when viewed from the opposite side. Sometimes the props need to be kept to a reasonable size so that the audience can still view the play. It is obvious that the set cannot be traditionally built. Set pieces often need to be hung from above instead of being placed on the stage. Pieces must be minimal so that the audience can have a view of the performance. As well, depending on where you sit you may see the show from a different view than the other side. The majority of the audience are going to see the profile of each actor for most of the time.

One apparent advantage from this style of staging is that it is an intimate experience. It allows the actors to use the audience for a greater effect. The audience can also see one another and create that familiarity. Typically in scenes of confrontation, this type of layout can make the scene more real for the audience. Here at Magnus Theatre during THE RIVER, the seating is placed on the stage to achieve this layout of staging. The audience will get a new experience of theatre through this type of seating which is not traditionally used.

Adapted from: www.thedramateacher.com
The Celts believed that many common occurrences had deeper meanings, and this symbolism can be used as a way to interpret some of the events in THE RIVER.

They believed that a **black horse** was a symbol meaning death and dark forces, and that the black horse was a messenger of esoteric knowledge.

Celtic myth also indicates that when inhabitants of the Otherworld required passage to physical life, they would take the shape of the **swan**. Furthermore lore states they would travel out of the Otherworld in multiples.

**Three** is an especially important number in many traditions, but the Celtic in particular. Some examples of this include the shamrock, typically each leaf represents The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit, the triple aspect of ancient gods and goddesses, and the ancient triple spiral symbol, also known as the triskel. The “3” is a sacred number in ancient Celtic mythology and religion. Riddles and triadic phraseology pepper Celtic folk lore and faerie stories. The triskel signifies the three-layered nature of a human soul, and is in itself a central figure in ancient Celtic symbolism. The earth, sea, and sky share a three-fold marriage in oaths and as witnesses to deeds, and represent sacred elements. Multiples of three were also thought to represent the past, the present and the future, which may be notable in THE RIVER because the audience sees three women on stage during the production.

The **yew** came to signify death and resurrection in Celtic culture. This tree’s needles are toxic, which can prove fatal, and which may have further contributed to connections with death.

**THE WOMAN:** And there, standing on the slope, was this horse. Jet black. I approached it but it bolted away over the crest. I walked down the track. Into the village. I went into the graveyard. I read the names on the stones.... Then the strangest thing happened. It was going dark.

**THE MAN:** What?

**THE WOMAN:** It was going dark, and I heard this whirring above, and right overhead, three white swans flew over. Low through the yew trees…

- Pg. 23
The way in which the fly is casted is an art in its own. Each fly is rhythmically casted with a purpose. There is a great satisfaction in standing in the stream making each cast count for many fisherman. Most people are familiar with spin or bait fishing. This is where fishermen cast a lure or weight on the end of the line: just like throwing a rock into the water. In fly fishing the fishermen attempt to cast a weightless fly made of feather or hair to a target. That fly is presented as an organic food source to the target.

Casting the fly is not only artistic, but it is practical. Understanding the concept of the mechanics is the first step in mastering the art of the fly cast. The laws of physics and their application to a flexible rod being moved through a casting stroke to a point that aims the line precisely at the target, landing exactly as intended, is challenging and exciting.

Fly fishing is an angled method in which an artificial “fly” is used to catch fish. The fly is cast using a fly rod, reel, and specialized weighted line. Fly fishing can be done in salt or fresh water. The fly line is coated in plastic and is heavy enough to send the fly to the target.

Just like any type of fishing, essential gear is needed. First and foremost, you will require a fly rod. There are various different brands, sizes, and models to choose from. You will also need a fly reel to attach to the rod. Next, you will need a fly line, which is the plastic clear fishing line. A fly will be necessary to catch a fish; this is the bait to grasp the fish’s attention. They are various types of bait to catch different types of fish.

Fly fishing is typically used to catch specific species, such as trout, grayling, and salmon. But, it can also be used to catch a wide variety of species, such as pike, bass, panfish, and carp. It can be used to catch marine fish as well such as redfish, snook, tarpon, bonefish, and striped bass. Just like any other type of fishing a lot of fishermen catch an unintended species instead of their main target. With advancement of technology, the rods and flies are becoming a lot stronger. Many fishermen have tried to catch larger species of fish such as sharks. Realistically, any type of fish can be caught on a fly as long as the main food source is effectively replicated by the fly itself.

Adapted from: www.masterflycatching.com
1. **A Lucky Hat**

Many fisherman believe that the hat they place on their heads bring them luck while fishing. Mainly, the hat is worn for protection from the sun but as the season continues, fisherman wear the same hat every time.

2. **Never Rename Your Boat**

To many fishermen, renaming your boat is like renaming a dog or a child. It just doesn’t happen.

3. **No Bananas On Board**

There are many theories about why bananas on board are bad luck. The origin dates back to the Caribbean trade of the 1700s. The wooden sailing boats of that time had to move quickly to deliver bananas before they spoiled. Fishermen had a hard time trolling for fish on boats moving so fast, which is how the superstition came about. Another theory that originated during that time is that bananas will cause the boat to sink. The belief developed after many boats failed to make it to their destinations. Often, these boats were the boats carrying bananas.

4. **Breaking in New Rod**

A lot of anglers believe that they must choose the “right” spot to break in their new rods or reels. The tale is if you want to successfully fish with equipment, you must choose the perfect location. If it is lightweight equipment, you must go to a place that has proven to harbour a good population of properly sized fish. If it is a travel set, it must not be broken in in a local setting.

5. **Red Sky at Night…**

“Red sky at night, sailor’s delight. Red sky in the morning, sailors warning,” is how the old saying goes. A red sunset indicates a beautiful day is to come. While a red sunrise indicates that rain or bad weather will occur.

**Other Superstitions:**

- Never whistle on board. It is said to turn the fish away
- Don’t bring a suitcase or a black bag on board
- Don’t ever wear yellow
- Women are bad luck when on board
- Don’t leave port or go fishing on a Friday
- Don’t mention four-hooved animals (pigs, horses, etc.)
- Hang coffee mugs with the opening facing inboard
- Don’t comment on good luck, or the possibility of bad luck
- Dolphins are a good omen. Sharks are a bad omen
- Leaving a fishing trip on Sunday is good luck
- Don’t wear green (it makes the boat seek land)
- Don’t step onto a boat with your left foot
- Don’t bring an umbrella on board
- Always toss the first fish back

Adapted from: www.saltstrong.com
Magnus Theatre invites aspiring playwrights between 13 & 19 to submit their scripts to the revamped Young Playwright’s Challenge! Scripts will undergo an adjudication process. A winner and two runners up will be chosen to have their scripts workshopped at Magnus Theatre. A public performance will follow.

**Challenge Rules:**

1. Eligible playwrights must be between the ages of 13 and 19
2. Submissions must be suitable for a production on stage
3. Scripts containing more than eight characters on stage simultaneously will not be considered for this challenge
   a) Submissions must be typed (to be submitted in person, by mail or e-mail)
   b) A list of characters must be included before the first page of dialogue
   c) All pages must be numbered
4. Include a page of information stating your name, age, title of your play, e-mail address and phone number
5. Collaborative efforts are eligible as long as all participants are within the required age range
6. Please submit original work; no adaptations will be accepted.

For a complete list of rules, please visit: https://magnustheatre.com/the-young-playwright-challenge/

**Prizes:**

- 1st - $500, 2nd - $300, 3rd - $200

Submit to: education@magnus.on.ca

Deadline: February 28, 2018
THEATRE GLOSSARY

ACT – to perform or play a role, or a section of a play that is often subdivided into scenes

ACTOR/ACTRESS – a person who performs a role in a play

BACKSTAGE - the areas that surround the stage that the audience cannot see

BLACKOUT - a lighting term in which the stage is in complete darkness

BLOCKING - the pattern actors follow in moving onstage, usually determined by the director

BOX OFFICE - where ticket sales are handled

CAST - to choose the actors to play roles in a play, or the group of actors who perform the roles in a play

CHARACTER - a role played by an actor

CHOREOGRAPHER - an artist who designs dances for the stage

CLIMAX - the turning point or decisive moment in a plot

CONFLICT - struggle between opposing ideas, interests or forces; conflict can be internal (within one character) or external (between two or more characters)

COSTUME - any clothing an actor wears onstage

COSTUME DESIGNER - in accordance to the vision of the director, he/she designs costumes to build, rent, borrow, or buy for a production

CREW - the backstage team responsible for the technical aspects, such as lighting, sound and set/prop movement

CUE - a signal for an actor to begin their next line/speech

CURTAIN CALL - when the actors acknowledge applause and bow at the end of the performance

DIALOGUE - the lines of the play spoken by the actors while in character

DIRECTOR - the person who oversees the entire production; she/he chooses the play, runs rehearsals and develops the artistic vision for the play

DRAMATIC CONFLICT - the conflict in which the main character in a play engages; can be person vs. person, person vs. society, person vs. self, or person vs. nature/fate

EXPOSITION - the beginning of the plot that provides important background information

FOURTH WALL - an imaginary wall between the audience and actors in a play

GREEN ROOM – lounge area for actors when they are not needed onstage

HOUSE - the auditorium or seating of a theatre

Improvise - to speak or to act without a script

LIGHTING DESIGNER - the person who develops and plots a lighting concept and design for a production

MONOLOGUE - a story, speech, or scene performed by one actor alone

MOTIVATION - a character’s reason for doing/saying things

Musical Theatre - theatre that combines music, songs, spoken dialogue and dance

OBJECTIVE - a character’s goal or intension

OBSTACLE - something that stands between a character and his/her ability to meet an objective

PANTOMIME - to act without words through facial expression and gesture

PLAYWRIGHT - a person who writes plays

PLOT - the sequence of events; the structure of a play

PRODUCER - the person or company who oversees the business details of a theatrical production

PROPERTY/PROP - anything that an actor handles onstage; furniture and other items used to enhance the set

PROTAGONIST - the main character of the play, who the audience identifies with the most
THEATRE ETIQUETTE, F.A.Q & MAGNUS INFO

GLOSSARY OF THE RIVER TERMS

BACCY - An informal term for tobacco.

BLACK BOMBER - A type of fishing lure that is shaped like a fish and has two sets of hooks at the bottom of the lure.

BLACK GNAT - A small, biting, two-winged fly such as the black fly.

CHEETO™ - A brand of cheese-flavoured puffed cornmeal snack.

DROPPER - A practice of fishing two flies at the same time, often one on the surface and a second underwater.

DRY FLIES - Any fly fished upon the surface of the water, usually constructed of non-water-absorbent materials. Dry flies are most commonly used to imitate the adult stage of aquatic insects.

FLY - A hand-tied artificial lure imitating natural insects or baitfish to entice fish. Flies incorporate different natural and synthetic materials wound onto or otherwise secured on hooks.

FLY BOX - A box in which a fisherman keeps his flies.

FORCEPS - A hand-operated medical instrument widely used in fly fishing to remove flies from the jaws of a hooked fish. Smooth or lightly serrated jaws utilize a ratchet-locking mechanism to clamp onto the hook until you release them.

GINK - A foolish or contemptible person.

LAPWING SLEDGE - A fishing lure.

LEADER - The section of monofilament line (a clear nylon used in all types of fishing) between the fly line and the fly. It is usually tapered, so that it will deliver the fly softly and away from the fly line.

MALLOW FILER - A lure typically used for trout fishing.

ORANGE DARTER - Is a lure that resembles a fish (specifically the darter endemic to central and eastern United States where it is native to parts of the Mississippi River Basin and Lake Erie Basin).

PRIEST - A mallet used to kill fish caught when angling.

NYMPH - The immature form of insects. Fly fisherman are usually concerned with aquatic insects. A type of fly.

SEDGE FIELD YELLOW - The “Sedge” is a type of fishing lure that is very buoyant and has a distinct side to side, nose dive action.

THE DOUBLE SURGEON - This is a type of knot used to connect a leader to the fly line on the fly fishing rod.

WET FLIES - Any fly fishing below the surface of water, nymphs and streamers are wet flies.

Adapted from: www.redington.com
Adapted from: www.wildtrout.org
ONTARIO CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

The following lesson plans and activities are intended to be used as preparation for and/or follow-up of the performance. It is our hope that the materials will provide students with a better understanding and appreciation of the production. Teachers may use and adapt the lesson plans as required to suit their classroom needs. Please note that many lesson plans are cross-disciplinary and are based on the Ontario Curriculum.

This Study Guide fulfills the Ontario Ministry of Education’s Curriculum Expectations in the following categories:

**The Arts Curriculum:**

A. Creating and Presenting or Creating and Performing or Creating, Presenting and Performing
B. Reflecting, Responding and Analyzing
C. Foundations
D. Exploring Forms and Cultural Contexts

**The English Curriculum:**

A. Oral Communication
B. Writing
C. Media Studies
D. Reading and Literature Studies

**The Social Sciences and Humanities Curriculum:**

A. Application
B. Research and Inquiry Skills
C. Understanding Social Construction

**The Canadian and World Studies Curriculum:**

A. Geography
   - Changing Populations
B. History
   - Communities: Local, National and Global
   - Historical Inquiry and Skill Development
PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION

It is important for all students to know what to expect when they arrive at the theatre. Preparing students for a live performance through discussions and activities enhances their overall experience and creates a more focused audience. Encouraging students to pay attention to certain aspects of the production and/or posing one or two specific questions to the class further enhances their experience, as they are actively listening and watching. As well, pre-show discussion provides teachers with an understanding of their students' prior knowledge on the themes/subjects, thus allowing lesson plans to be tailored accordingly.

ATTENDING THE THEATRE

1. Please review the Theatre Etiquette guidelines with your class (page 4).
2. How is live theatre different than a movie? How is the role of the audience different?
3. Why attend live theatre? What is the value of attending?
4. Discuss the elements that go into producing a live performance: casting, directing, rehearsals, designing (lights, sets, props, costumes), etc. Ask students to guess how many different administrative, managerial, technical, backstage, on-stage, and volunteer positions are required to put on a production (keep in mind the size of the theatre and the scale of the show). What do they think these various positions entail? In small groups, compare your definitions and discuss how each position contributes to the success of the production. After attending the performance, compare their guesses to what they observed at the theatre and/or from the information provided in the show program.
5. Ask students to pay attention to the following during the performance:
   a. Staging/blocking: how the actors move on stage, where they move to and from, etc.
   b. Costumes: colours, styles, what they say about the characters, costume changes, how they work with the set, the props and the lighting, etc.
   c. Lighting: lighting cues, colours, spotlights, special effects, etc.
   d. Music/sound effects: songs, background music, sound cues, etc.
6. If your group is attending the Talk-Back session after the performance, brainstorm possible topics as a class and ask each student to prepare one question to ask.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAY

1. Read the play’s synopsis on page 6 to students. Based on what they already know about the show, what do they think the play will be about? What do they expect the theme(s) and/or message(s) to be?
2. One of the major subjects touched on in THE RIVER is fishing. Why is this play an apt choice for Magnus Theatre’s audience?
3. The River is presented on a traverse stage. What is that? How do you think it might change the way an audience connects with a play?
4. Read Ted Hughes’ After Moonless Midnight, which is included in the play. What clues, if any, might this provide about THE RIVER?

DURING THE SHOW AND INTERMISSION

1. Have students examine the artwork located in the lounge. How does this artwork reflect the production? Does it help establish the tone for the show? If so, how? If not, why not?
2. Read the program. Ask students what, if anything, they would change if they were the designer. What would they add?
3. Throughout your visit to the theatre, encourage students to take note of the various people working. Who is responsible for different tasks? How do they work together to produce a show?
POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION

While watching a live performance, audiences are engaged physically, emotionally and intellectually. After the performance, discussions and activities allow students to ask questions, express their emotions and reactions and further explore the experience. The questions and activities below are listed by topic and can be utilized in many different courses. Please review the entire list and adapt questions and activities to fit your classroom needs.

STUDENT’S REACTIONS

1. What was your overall reaction to the performance? Explain.
2. What did you like best about the play? What did you dislike?
3. Are you satisfied with the way the story was told? Explain.
4. What, if anything, would you have done differently if you were the director of the play? An actor? The set designer? The costume designer? The lighting designer? The playwright?
5. Would you recommend this show to your friends and/or family? Why or why not?
6. What can you learn from these characters? Did watching the play offer any insight into your own life?

ACTORS & CHARACTERS

1. Make a list of the details of the main characters in the play. How did you learn this information – from dialogue, interaction with other characters, costumes?
2. Did the characters change or grow during the play? Identify specific moments of change.
3. How does their age, status, gender, religion, ethnicity affect each character?
4. How did the actors use their voices and bodies to portray the characters? Were the actors successful or unsuccessful at doing so? Justify your answer using specific examples from the production.
5. Create a physical description of one of the characters from the play including weight, height, body type, hair colour, etc. Share and compare descriptions with those of their classmates.
6. Do you think the characters were well cast? Justify your answer.
7. An actor’s main job is to pretend to be someone else. For this to be believable for the audience, an actor must know as much as possible about his or her character, from the way they feel about others to their favorite drink. Sometimes this information can be found with research about the history and culture of the time a character lived in, but sometimes the information must be created from what the actor believes about his or her character. Assign each student a character from the play you saw or from a book you’ve all read. Have each student create their character by researching and inventing everything needed to portray someone. When their research is complete, have the students become their character for the class. The student should be able to answer questions from others (as the character) about his or her life and provide solid evidence as to why this was chosen.

DESIGN – COSTUMES, LIGHTING AND SETTING

1. Describe the use of colour, staging, lighting, costumes and/or other elements used within the production and how it worked (or failed to work) with the play content.
2. Did each character’s costumes seem appropriate for his/her character (personality, social status, age, occupation, etc.)? Why or why not?
3. A realistic setting tries to recreate a specific location. It generally consists of a painted backdrop, flats and furniture or freestanding set pieces. An abstract set, on the other hand, does not depict any specific time or place. Rather, it typically consists of platforms, steps, drapes, panels, ramps and/or other nonspecific elements and is used in productions where location changes frequently and/or quickly. Is this set realistic or abstract? How was the set used during the show?
4. Create a sketch or series of sketches depicting an alternate set or costumes for one, or all, of the actors.
Dramatic Arts

1. Blocking is a theatre term which refers to the precise movement and positioning of actors on a stage in order to facilitate the performance. In contemporary theatre, the director usually determines blocking during rehearsal, telling actors where they should move for the proper dramatic effect and to ensure sight lines for the audience. Describe the blocking used in the production. Were there any moments when you felt that such movement was particularly effective or ineffective? Describe them.

2. A tableau is a theatrical technique that requires participants to freeze their bodies in poses that capture a moment in time. Divide into groups of at least four, and ask each group to create a tableau depicting the most memorable part of the play. Encourage them to explore levels (high, low, depth).

3. Name one defining trait of each character in the play. How did the actors portray these characteristics?

4. What do you think that a director looks for when casting a play (e.g. physical appearance, captures the essence of the character)? What would you look for if you were casting THE RIVER?

5. Theatre is an interesting artistic medium because it employs other artistic skills in its creation. Ask the class to think about THE RIVER. What other art forms did they notice? What importance did they have in the play? How might the play have been different if these were not present?

6. Unlike movies or TV, theatre is performed live. Where movies filmed in Hollywood can take months or even years to film, a play is done in its entirety in just a few hours. There is little possibility in the theatre for grand special effects or venue changes, so any change in setting or time must be accomplished through action, lighting, props, scenery and costuming. Discuss these differences with the class. What in the play would be changed in the process of becoming a movie or TV show? How did the director and designers show the passage of time or indicate different locations? Have the students choose a favourite movie or TV episode, and convert it to a play. Make sure they include all the elements of the story and do not break any of the limitations of the stage venue.

English & Language Arts

1. Jez Butterworth includes the following excerpt from “T.S. Eliot’s Burnt Norton (No. 1 of ‘Four Quartets’)” in the play’s foreword:

“At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless; Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is, But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity, Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor towards, Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still point, There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.”

Why might Butterworth have chosen to include this?

2. The Woman is reading Virginia Woolf’s To The Lighthouse at the start of the play. Read or research it. What is its significance in THE RIVER?

3. The Man claims “there are monsters out there. Huge monsters. In the water” when he is attempting to sell The Woman on fishing. Why does he call the fish monsters? Is it a selling point? How might this reflect on his character?

4. The Woman moves the table in the cabin. What does this say about her character? How did the man react, and what does this tell us about him?

5. In Ted Hughes’ "After Moonless Midnight", the river repeats “we’ve got him”. It is significant that Butterworth chose to include it. What is the man’s relationship to the river and the fish?

Did You Know?...

Fly fishing lines originally were made out of braided horsehair which was then replaced with silk lines towards the end of the 1800s.

Adapted from: www.wildtrout.org
6. Many theorists argue that conflict is necessary for a dramatic text. Describe the conflict within THE RIVER. Which characters were in conflict? Was the conflict resolved or not? How? How did you feel about its resolution or lack of resolution?

7. The Other Woman says “one minute it was in its world. And now it’s in ours” when she speaks of the fish she caught. Could this have a second meaning? If so, what?

8. What is the significance of the robin?

9. The first fish that The Man caught escaped. The audience does not know what The Man is doing with the women he brings to his cabin in THE RIVER…what do you suppose he does? Do the women escape like the fish did?

10. The Man says that “the river is a mirror”, refers to the water as “mirror water”, and states that “before mirrors, this was the only way we could see ourselves. Reflected in the water.” If the river is a mirror, what is it reflecting?

11. Dissect this quote: “Most fishing is chucking in real food on a line and the fish gobbles it up. It's too easy. There’s nothing real about this. This is entirely artificial. It’s trickery. It’s a trick.” – The Man

12. Discuss The Man’s speech about brown trout and sea trout. Are the trout a metaphor for something else? Justify your answer, giving examples from the play.

13. The Man’s uncle allegedly referred to the women he brought to the cabin as “fillies”. What is the significance of The Man mentioning that?

14. In every play characters have back-stories known only in the playwright’s mind. Instruct the students to choose one of the women and imagine what their life was like before the time of the play. Have each student imagine that they came across their character’s diary from five, 10 or 20 years before the time the action takes place. Assign each student to write several passages from their character’s diary revealing events which may have influenced the way this character evolved.

SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

1. Using any of the characters in the play, explain how clothing was selected to suit a character’s personality traits or to project a desired image.

2. After seeing THE RIVER, ask students to analyze The Man’s relationships. What is the nature of the relationship? Is it a healthy one? What characterizes a healthy relationship? How is each character’s life influenced by the other?

3. How are gender roles presented in THE RIVER?

CANADIAN AND WORLD STUDIES

1. Jez Butterworth is an English playwright, born in London. In THE RIVER, the script includes many elements of British dialect. With this knowledge, research different areas where the play might be set.

2. Fly fishing has a long history, dating back as early as the 2nd century. Trace its history up to the present day. Consider what factors contributed to its growing popularity.
LESSON PLAN: RECOGNIZING SYMBOLISM

SUBJECT: English
GRADE: 12+

OBJECTIVE:
- Define the literary term of symbolism
- Recognize terms of symbolism
- Interpret Symbolism
- Use symbolism in writing

MATERIALS NEEDED:
- THE RIVER excerpts (provided below)
- markers, paper, pencils

KEY VOCABULARY:
- Symbolism
- Metaphor

INTRODUCTION:

After seeing the play, begin by having a discussion about THE RIVER. Ask students simple questions such as:
“What parts did you like or dislike about the play?”
“If you could change something about the play, what would it be and why?”

Next, introduce symbolism:
“What does the word symbolism mean to you?”
(Symbolism is the use of symbols to represent thoughts or ideas)
“Did you notice any symbolism in THE RIVER? If so, then what?”

PROCEDURE:

Begin by reading the poem from the play below:

“I waded, deepening, and the fish
Listened for me. They watched my each move
Through their magical skins. In the stillness
Their eyes waited furious with gold brightness,
Their gills moved. And in their thick sides
The power waited. And in their torpedo
Concentration, their mouth-aimed intent
Their savagery waited, and their explosion.
They waited for me… The whole river
Listened to me… and, blind,
Invisibly watched me. And held me deeper
With its blind invisible hands
“We’ve got him” it whispered. “We’ve got him”.”
(Butterworth, pg 15)

Lesson Plan adapted from: www.study.com
- Have students define what a metaphor is.
  (A metaphor is a figure of speech that describes an object or action in a way that isn’t literally true, without using “like” or “as”).

- Ask students to get into groups of 3 or 4 and decode the poem. See what they think the poem could symbolize in relation to the play.
- Meet back and ask students to share their group’s ideas. Then, guide it to a class discussion

  “I forgot to say. When I came back from my walk this evening there was a robin in here. Little bird flying madly about, desperate, trying to find a way out. I opened all the windows but I forgot to open that one up high and it flew right into it. It fell right here on the floor.” (Butterworth, pg 23)

- In your opinion what does the robin symbolize?
- Who is the robin in this script?

  “THE MAN: I’m drawing your reflection. Before mirrors, this was the only way we could see ourselves. Reflected in water. Can you see me? Hello.” (pg. 37)

- In your opinion what does the river in the play symbolize?
- What is the significance of the river?
- What is the river a metaphor for?

- Were there any other parts of THE RIVER that you think symbolize something?

CONCLUSION:

After the class discussion, ask students the following questions:
- Why do playwrights or writers use symbolism
- How does symbolism impact or enhance what we read or see?

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION:

- Participation in discussion
- Group collaboration

EXTENSIONS:

This lesson plan can be applied to other works as well. For example, return to symbolism as your read novels and short stories throughout the year. Students can begin to do their own analysis of written works.

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Did You Know?...

It is believed that fly fishing dates back to the second century. Claudius Aelianus, a Roman author, recorded the first instance of fly fishing. He penned how Macedonian fishermen fished and how they decided on which artificial lures to us. These lures have been adapted for modern use today.

Adapted from: www.wildtrout.org
LESSON PLAN: MAKING FLIES

SUBJECT: Visual Arts

GRADE: 12

OBJECTIVE:
Students will learn how to create a fly bait used for fly fishing.

MATERIALS NEEDED:
- a hook
- pipe cleaners
- different coloured feathers
- waterproof glue
- scissors

INTRODUCTION:
Show students pictures from online of what fly bait looks like.

Ask students:
“What do you think a fly bait is made out of?”
Next, begin to go over safety with the students. Make sure your students are aware of how sharp the fishing hook is.

PROCEDURE:
1. Have students attach a pipe cleaner around the hook. Students can glue the pipe cleaner on to the hook to ensure it remains attached.
2. Students can then glue a coloured feather on either side of the pipe cleaner to resemble the fly.

CONCLUSION:
Make sure students allow their flies to dry overnight at the school. Wrap the flies in paper towel and then place the dried flies into a Ziploc bag to go home. Make sure students are careful when placing the hook in the bag and taking items out of their bags.

EXTENSION IDEAS:
Have students explore what type of flies attracts what types of fish. Have students compare and have a class discussion.
REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

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https://treesforlife.org.uk/forest/mythology-folklore/yew/

FISHING SUPERSTITIONS
https://www.saltstrong.com/articles/top-fishing-and-boating-superstitions/

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