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**BY
SHELLEY
HOFFMAN
AND
STEPHEN
SPARKS**

STUDY GUIDE

SMARTY PANTS

STUDY GUIDE



CONTENTS

How to use this guide	3
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Theatre Etiquette	4
About Magnus Theatre	6

The Story	
Play Information	7
Cast/Crew	8
Shelley Hoffman & Stephen Sparks	9

The Themes	
The Future of Wearable Tech	10
Top 10 Richest in Tech	12
Revenge: Why not to get even	13

Learning: Curriculum Links	16
-----------------------------------	-----------

Learning: Classroom Activities & Discussion	17
--	-----------

References and Resources	24
---------------------------------	-----------

Glossary of Theatrical Terms	25
-------------------------------------	-----------

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 order 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:

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Theatre Etiquette

PLEASE REVIEW THE FOLLOWING WITH YOUR CLASS PRIOR TO ATTENDING THE PERFORMANCE. THANK YOU.

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 themselves 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 beverages from outside the theatre are not allowed in our auditorium. Concession items will be for sale in the lounge before the show and during intermission.
- 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 are 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.



Theatre Etiquette

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.
- 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 absolutely necessary, you will be seated in the back row upon your return and may return to your original seat at intermission. 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.
- 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 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.

About Magnus Theatre

- Magnus Theatre is a professional theatre company, which 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 in Education offers a diverse range of programming all year round, some of this includes:
 - **SCHOOL MATINEES** are held Wednesdays at 12 noon during show runs. Tickets are only \$12 each!
 - **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 THEATRE YOUNG COMPANY**, for students aged 13 - 18, runs from fall to spring and sees our students performing in play on our Mainstage.
 - **COLLECTIVE CREATION PROJECT**, for High School students. Create your own piece of theatre based around a relevant social issue.



Play Information

Synopsis

Linda and her friends have broken into her ex-husband's house, a man who has earned millions from a wearable tech invention – smart underwear that can control your home. This new modern comedy is about enduring relationships and the power of a good butt clench.

Character List

Linda—A stylish and witty woman with her own successful Real Estate brokerage. Divorced for just over 5 years, Linda has a chip on her shoulder about her ex-husband's huge success following their break up.

Trudy— A woman with a ready, sardonic wit. Trudy's been divorced for a year now and loves being on her own.

Gail—A sweet and somewhat naïve woman. A stay at home mom with 6 boys, a husband and a turkey thawing in the sink

Rob—Not an alpha-male by any stretch of the imagination. But since his breakup with Linda, he has sold one of his inventions for millions of dollars and has new-found confidence in dealing with his ex.

Cast/Crew



Amy Sellors
LINDA



Melanie Janzen
GAIL



Nicola Dawn-Brook
TRUDY



Stephen Sparks
ROB



Thom Currie
DIRECTOR

Stage Manager—Gillian Jones

Lighting—Rebecca Miller

Set Design—Kara Pankiw

Production Manager—Nicholas Palinka

Technical Manager—Tim Stephenson

Props, Scenic Painter—Nadia Cheechoo

Head Carpenter—David Brown

Costume—Lisa Macchione

Meet the Playwrights



Shelley Hoffman

Gemini Award-winning writer Shelley Hoffman is one of Canada's most in demand animation creative writers with international experience at all age levels. She draws upon a wealth of experience in the industry—including live performance, producing, storyboarding and indie filmmaking to bring a unique, wide-ranging perspective to every new project. She is as comfortable reinvigorating trusted pre-school properties like Max and Ruby and Caillou as she is writing frenetic comedies like *Rocket Monkeys*, *Jimmy Two-Shoes*, and Aardman's *Planet Sketch*, or action-adventure shows such as *Grossology*, *Beyblade* and *Bakugan Battle Brawlers*. This is the second play that Shelley has written with her husband, Stephen Sparks, following *Buying the Farm*, which was performed on stage at Magnus Theatre in 2019.

Stephen Sparks

Stephen is a much loved actor who has performed on stages across Canada and has many film and television credits to his name. He most recently appeared in *Murdoch Mysteries*, *The Boys* and *Star Trek Strange New Worlds*. He has performed here at Magnus Theatre on numerous occasions, featuring in *For The Pleasure of Seeing Her Again*, *Reflections on Crooked Walking*, *Sex Tips For Modern Girls* and *Dads in Bondage*. With his wife, Shelley Hoffman, he co-wrote the plays *Smarty Pants* and *Buying the Farm*.

THE FUTURE OF WEARABLE TECH

I have a confession to make. Despite my specialization in wearable technology, I haven't worn my FitBit in months. I'm not the only one.

Many people found the first wave of wearables came up short. Entry-level price points were high, form factors were clodgy and accuracy left a lot to be desired. It's no wonder there was a 30% return rate and high product abandonment after six months.

Companies found getting wearables "right" is a tall order. To be truly useful, usable and desirable for people, we'll see the following future improvements in wearable tech products to come in 2015 and beyond.

Invisible. Moore's Law contends that as components get smaller, products gain efficiency and become more powerful. In other words, you can think of current wearables as a boombox on your wrist. Between conductive fabrics or sensor-clad smart garments, wearables will intertwine so closely with fashion we won't be able to distinguish them apart.

Companies like AiQ Clothing, Hexoskin and OMSignal are already paving the way with biometric garments that measure body vitals. Future wearables could be more hidden by adding a thin film inside your favorite jewelry to measure biometric data, activity levels and even let you know when you've been typing at a keyboard too long.

Personalized. From wedding rings to Invisalign, objects worn on the body 24-7 are a personal thing. Unless the product addresses a critical medical need like a hearing aid, it is unlikely for a single wearable to be desirable enough to be worn all of the time.

Take a note from companies like Cuff or Misfit that employ a personalized approach to wearable tech. Their technology nests inside a system of jewelry that a person can select from and wear that day. Wearables are a part of the jewelry legacy, and they should be thought of as both parts tech gadget and a fashion statement.

Efficient. Alternative forms of energy to power wearables are on the rise. In December 2014 Tommy Hilfiger launched clothing with solar cells to charge devices. We've seen kinetic energy-powered gadgets from Chicago-based AMPY to Darla Hollander of Everywhere Energy. A personal favorite is the Peltier Ring by Sean Hodgins that leverages body heat to power small LED lights on a ring. While energy advancements require more polish to achieve commercial viability, they'll be on your wrist sooner than you think.

Accurate. From your kids' GPA to your own body's BMI, our culture is getting more numbers oriented across many aspects of life. Approximations of how many steps you walked will no longer suffice as people demand accurate data from their devices – including wearables.

We have yet to see industry standards emerge to set manufacturer guidelines and advocate on consumers' behalf. I anticipate advocacy boards to be formed to evaluate devices and require brands to deliver accuracy percentage guarantees. Can you picture a label on Jawbone packaging with a '99.5% accurate gesture tracking' guarantee?



THE FUTURE OF WEARABLE TECH

(continued...)



Permissions-based. Marketers are salivating at the prospect of pushing wearables advertising to you around the clock. As ad revenues dwindle on TV and newspaper formats, next generation devices offer a new opportunity for brands to target people like we've never seen before.

Savvy consumers will demand the ability to set specific permission settings on their device to structure who, what, where and when they can be disturbed. Picture smartwatch settings to configure that your partner, child's school and mother have access to send a push notification to your smartwatch's screen during work hours on Monday through Friday. Conversely, people will also need to play an active role to own their body's data generated. Optimal experiences for wearables will be contingent consumers being well-informed and demanding certain privacy settings.

Sentient. In Spike Jonze's "Her," Samantha explains how she works as, "Intuition... what makes me me is my ability to grow through my experiences. Basically, in every moment I'm evolving, just like you."

Even Furbies in 1998 could learn new things, so why is it that \$150 activity trackers can't learn additional activities like jumping rope, swinging a kettlebell or salsa dancing? Peoples' interests evolve. Their wearables need to be able to evolve too and learn new things. The single feature, fancy pedometers of today's activity tracking market won't sustain for much longer.

Multi point. The wearable tech conversation will quickly shift from discussion of your wearable (singular) to the system of sensors on your body at any point in time. Already people are wearing an activity tracker and have a smartphone in their purse; both of which are gathering motion-sensing data through the accelerometer and gyroscope inside. Technologists are working on ways to derive meaning from multiple sensors on the body at one time, to give a person a holistic view of how her body is moving or performing across multiple devices and sensors.

Seamless. I'm excited to see what happens when wearables converge with connected homes to drive efficiencies without having to tap a button on a screen. Imagine approaching your home's door with groceries in hand, and the heartbeat signature via your wearable signals the door's smartlock to unlock. While crossing your living room, a sensor on your wrist wearable notices your core body temperature is above average and automatically interacts with Nest thermostat to trigger the air conditioning. Your wearable also includes a sensor to detect hydration levels, and it triggers your smart refrigerator to automatically pour a glass of water for you as you enter the kitchen to unload your groceries.

While it is premature to predict specific features or form factors that will prevail in the future, wearable tech presents a fascinating field to study. Never before has computing been small enough to be worn relatively comfortably around the clock on the body, presenting opportunities for breakthrough medical advancements and unfortunately marketing nuisances. With innovations on the horizon cited in this article, we're moving closer to making possible products that are useful, usable and desirable for people.

<https://www.wired.com/insights/2015/02/the-future-of-wearable-tech/>

TOP 10 RICHEST IN TECH

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE FIRST APPEARED ON FORBES.COM AND WAS PUBLISHED
ON APRIL 5, 2022

1. Jeff Bezos

Net worth: \$171 billion

Source of wealth: Amazon

Country: U.S.

2. Bill Gates

Net worth: \$129 billion

Source of wealth: Microsoft

Country: U.S.

3. Larry Page

Net worth: \$111 billion

Source of wealth: Alphabet

Country: U.S.

4. Sergey Brin

Net worth: \$107 billion

Source of wealth: Alphabet

Country: U.S.

5. Larry Ellison

Net worth: \$106 billion

Source of wealth: Oracle

Country: U.S.

6. Steve Ballmer

Net worth: \$91.4 billion

Source of wealth: Microsoft

Country: U.S.

7. Michael Dell

Net worth: \$55.1 billion

Source of wealth: Dell Technologies

Country: U.S.

8. MacKenzie Scott

Net worth: \$43.6 billion

Source of wealth: Amazon

Country: U.S.

9. Ma Huateng

Net worth: \$37.2 billion

Source of wealth: Tencent

Country: China

10. Shiv Nadar

Net worth: \$28.7 billion

Source of wealth: HCL Technologies

Country: India

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/rachelsandler/2022/04/05/here-are-the-richest-tech-billionaires-2022/?sh=6c4baf9b5e37>

WHY GETTING EVEN MAY MAKE YOU FEEL WORSE IN THE LONG RUN

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE FIRST APPEARED IN THE WASHINGTON POST AND WAS PUBLISHED ON NOVEMBER 11, 2017

A colleague steals your idea and then undermines you in front of the boss. It's human nature to want revenge. But will getting even make you feel better in the long run?

People are motivated to seek revenge — to harm someone who has harmed them — when they feel attacked, mistreated or socially rejected. Getting an eye for an eye, Old Testament-style, is thought to bring a sense of catharsis and closure.

A growing body of research suggests it may have the opposite effect.

While most of us won't engage in the type of vengeful displays that grab headlines or warrant prison time, our everyday lives often include small acts of retaliation such as gossiping about a neighbor who snubbed you, lashing out on Yelp after poor customer service or engaging in the endless Twitter tit for tat typified by certain elected officials.

Evolutionary psychologists believe we are hard-wired for revenge. Without laws and prisons, our earliest ancestors relied on the fear of retaliation to help keep the peace and correct injustices. "Acts of revenge not only sought to deter a second harmful act by a wrongdoer but also acted as an insurance policy against future harm by others, a warning signal that you're someone who will not tolerate mistreatment," says Michael McCullough, a professor of psychology at the University of Miami.

In modern life, betrayal and social rejection hurt. The desire to repair that pain and improve our mood may be one of the things that motivates us to seek revenge, according to six studies published this year in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.



In one experiment, researchers asked 156 college students to write a short essay that would be submitted for comments. The essays were randomly assigned to receive either positive feedback ("great essay!") or negative ones ("one of the worst essays that I have EVER read!"). Afterward, all participants were given a test that measured their emotional state, and then offered the chance to retaliate by sticking pins into a voodoo doll that represented the grader of the essay.

Researchers found what we might suspect: Getting revenge felt good. After sticking their dolls, the vengeful participants, whose moods slumped after they read their negative feedback, reported a rise in their moods to a level on par with those who had received the positive comments. (Those who received positive feedback showed no change in mood after the voodoo doll task.)

WHY GETTING EVEN MAY MAKE YOU FEEL WORSE IN THE LONG RUN

(continued...)

In another experiment, 167 participants were invited to play a video game where some players were snubbed by others. Rejected players were given the chance to seek revenge by increasing the volume in the other players' headphones. But before they could retaliate, some received what they were told was a cognition-enhancing drug (actually, a placebo) that would steady their mood for 60 minutes.

While most wronged players turned up the volume, those who took the placebo — and presumably thought they wouldn't get a mood boost for doing so — were less likely to retaliate, supporting the notion that we choose revenge because we think it will make us feel better, explains David Chester, a Virginia Commonwealth University assistant professor who studies the psychological and biological processes involved in human aggression.



Revenge may provide a lift, but the positive effects appear to be fleeting, according to new research by Chester that has not yet been published. “Revenge can feel really good in the moment,” he says, “but when we follow up with people five minutes, 10 minutes and 45 minutes later, they actually report feeling worse than they did before they sought revenge.”

Seeking revenge can backfire — but not for the reasons you may think. University of Virginia psychology professor Timothy Wilson and colleagues conducted a study in 2008 on the “paradoxical consequences” of revenge.

Study participants played an investment game where they were told that they could earn money if they all cooperated but that if one player betrayed the group, that person would earn more and the other players would earn less, an experimental construct known as the “free-rider paradigm.”

Researchers staged the game so that players were double-crossed and some were given the chance to retaliate. When asked by researchers how they imagined they would feel after seeking revenge, the players predicted it would make them feel better. But when surveyed afterward, those who had retaliated reported feeling worse than players who didn't get the opportunity to punish and so had “moved on.”

Seeking revenge may remind us of the pain we experienced when we were wronged and can make an event appear even larger in our minds, Wilson theorizes. “By not retaliating, we're able to find other ways of coping, like telling ourselves that it wasn't such a big deal,” he says.

WHY GETTING EVEN MAY MAKE YOU FEEL WORSE IN THE LONG RUN

(continued...)

Ruminating about getting even — stewing over what the person did to you and what you would like to do in return — can interfere with day-to-day well-being and happiness.

"When someone persists in revenge fantasies, over time they can develop anxiety and remorse, as well as feelings of shame," says California-based psychotherapist Beverly Engel, who treats clients who have been abused and often struggle with vengeful thoughts. These feelings can also take up important cognitive resources, depleting you of time and energy that could be better spent on healthier, more constructive ways of dealing with anger, such as learning to accept the injustice, putting yourself in the other person's shoes or acknowledging that you, too, may have hurt someone in similar ways, says Engel, author of the book "It Wasn't Your Fault."

Research suggests that when it comes to valuable relationships, "what the angry mind ultimately wants is a change of heart from the transgressor," McCullough says. He points to studies showing that when a victim receives an explanation and an apology, the desire for revenge weakens. (Other research suggests that doctors who apologize to patients when they have made a mistake may decrease their risk of a lawsuit.)

It may seem counterintuitive, but sometimes the most helpful thing a wronged party can do is to create conditions that make it easier for the person who hurt you to be honest about what they did and to take responsibility, McCullough says.

"You're not giving the person a free pass," he says, but it may be in your best interest "to stay open to an apology" and "to help pave a road" that would allow the offender to make it up to you.

Take this year's World Series, for example, in which Dodgers pitcher Yu Darvish was the victim of a racially insensitive insult and gesture by a player on the Houston Astros. Instead of retaliating, Darvish accepted the player's apology, tweeted that "no one is perfect" and asked fans to "stay positive and move forward instead of focusing on anger."

"Revenge may make you feel better for a moment," McCullough adds, "but making the effort to repair a valuable relationship can pay bigger dividends over a lifetime."

https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/why-getting-even-may-make-you-feel-worse-in-the-long-run/2017/11/10/a314d54e-b440-11e7-9e58-e6288544af98_story.html



Learning: Curriculum Links

The following lesson plan and activities are intended to be used as preparation for and/or follow-up to 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 activities 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:

Creating and Presenting or Creating and Performing or Creating, Presenting and Performing
Reflecting, Responding and Analyzing
Foundations

The English Curriculum:

Oral Communication
Writing
Media Studies
Reading and Literature Studies

The Social Sciences and Humanities Curriculum:

Foundations
Research and Inquiry Skills



Discussion Topics

ATTENDING THE THEATRE

Please review the Theatre Etiquette guidelines with your class (page 4).

1. How is live theatre different than a movie? How is the role of the audience different?
2. Why attend live theatre? What is the value of attending?
3. 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 while at the theatre and/or from the information provided in the show program.
4. Ask students to pay attention to the following during the performance:
 - Staging/blocking: how the actors move on stage, where they move to and from, etc.
 - Costumes: colours, styles, what they say about the characters, costume changes, how they work with the set, the props and the lighting, etc.
 - Lighting: lighting cues, colours, spotlights, special effects, etc.
 - Music/sound effects: songs, background music, sound cues, etc.
5. 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 7 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. *Smarty Pants* is a comedy. What is the difference between a comedy and drama?
3. Do you have any wearable technology at home? What do you use these devices for?
4. Have you ever lost something that was important to you? What was it and how did you lose it?
5. Why would someone want to get their revenge on someone? Think of some different examples

DURING THE SHOW & 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?

Discussion Topics (continued...)

YOUR 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, etc.?
2. Did the characters change or grow during the play? Identify specific moments of change.
3. How does their age, status, gender, religion, ethnicity, etc. 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.

DESIGN

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. Did the costumes look like you expected them to? Why or why not? Why do you think that the costume designer chose to costume them like she did?
4. 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?
5. Create a sketch or series of sketches depicting an alternate set or costumes for one, or all, of the actors.
6. A play must establish setting very early in the plot. How was that achieved in *Smarty Pants*?



Lesson Plan for English at Grade 7 +

Smarty Pants — Write a Scene

This lesson plan is intended for use with students studying English at Grade 7 and above. Drama teachers will also find this exercise to be useful when engaging students with creative writing exercises. Students will create interesting characters and settings around simple writing prompts designed to engage their imaginations

TIPS FOR CREATING PLAYS

It's important to make sure that your students get the basics. Such as how scripts are formatted, the manner in which dialogue is written, and the need to understand that they are writing for the stage and not TV or the movies.

Here are a few quick tips:

- All scenes that they write should have a title
- Writers need to describe the set, time, and place
- Characters need to have objectives (what they want to achieve in the scene)
- Focus on dialogue
- Make sure necessary physical actions are clearly defined
- Keep scenes simple- one setting and 2 to 3 characters

Each short play should have a beginning, middle, and end



EXERCISE 1: THE PROP

Give students a list of props (no weapons or guns). The list may include food items, hand props, such as a lighter, wallet, a cup, flower, or calculator; and larger props, such as a computer, coffee maker, or framed picture.

From that list they must:

- Choose one prop
- Pick setting/location
- Use it in a scene between two characters
- The conflict must be over the prop
- It needs to be important to both characters but for different reasons

By the end of the scene one character has the prop

Write a Scene (continued...)

EXERCISE 2: I LOVE YOU

In this scene, which is between two characters, one must tell the other that they love them without saying the words “I love you.”

- One setting, minimal set pieces
- Two characters
- One tells the other they love them
- The writer must define what type of love is involved- paternal, romantic, friendship, etc.
- Expressing love should be difficult due to some outer or inner conflict
- The other character may or may not return the sentiment
- Encourage writers to use language creatively, an unusual prop or a series of actions

The scene needs to have a beginning, middle and end

EXERCISE 3: PICTURE THIS

Gather some pictures of people from the Internet. The people in these pictures should include regular, everyday people, glamorous and rich individuals, people of all ages and from all walks of life. Look for people whose stories you want to know.

- They choose 2 or 3 of the pictures
- You will base a character on each of the photos
- Write a scene with these 2 or 3 characters
- One setting
- There must be a conflict

The scene needs to have a beginning, middle and end

USE THIS SPACE TO WRITE DOWN ANY NOTES YOU MAY WISH TO MAKE

Write a Scene (continued...)

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

You will be assessed on the following criteria so use this as a checklist while you are writing:

Use an appropriate form and layout (remember to use full sentences and paragraphs)	
Use effective or powerful vocabulary to create interesting characters	
Use a range of sentence types (simple, compound, complex) and lengths	
Use a range of punctuation	

EXTENSION

Once scenes are written, swap them with someone else and have them make comments and suggestions for where they could be improved. Have some time to make those adjustments, if necessary. Then, as a class, read the scenes aloud. Discuss each, starting with the positive and then focusing on in which manner scenes may be improved. Could any of the ideas be expanded into longer plays, especially if the characters, situations, and themes have the potential for more development.

We love to hear from you!

We would be happy to receive copies of any student plays written as a result of this exercise. Please send them to:

Education@magnustheatre.com

Activity: Design a Poster

ACTIVITY

In *Smarty Pants* Rob's wearable tech has made him millions.

Use the space provided to design a poster for the smart underwear. What are its key features? Come up with a fun tagline. How would you market this product to people? Who is its target audience? Use colour and bold images to make your poster stand out

Practical Exercises

Improvise on those scenes we do not witness but which are referred to in the play.

1

Hot Seating is used as a device to explore a character in more depth by creating past events and events outside of the text. One person chooses to be a character in the play and is asked questions, which challenge either events in relation to the story or outside the text. The person being hot seated must form their answers based on their knowledge of the play.

Hot Seat one of the unseen characters e.g. Darren (Gail's Husband) or Tannis (Rob's girlfriend). What insights do they bring to the characters and the story? Write a diary entry based on the story that materializes from this exercise.

2

You are about to have an important meeting with a group of people who are willing to invest in your new line of smart underwear. Write a persuasive speech that will convince these investors to give you the money you need for your product. Rehearse the speech and perform it for the class. What was the most effective thing you said and why was it so helpful?

3

Focusing on one of the relationships:
In groups of 4 create an imaginary incident from the immediate past, prior to the events in the play, that adds to the animosity Linda feels for Rob. What is this incident? How does it play out? What could it add to our understanding of these characters? Perform this scene for the class and feedback.

4

Smarty Pants discusses a number of themes. The following are a few of the most obvious and important themes that come to light:

Revenge
Success
Relationships
Conflict
Jealousy

In Pairs

Exploring one of these themes, choose which you are going to represent first and together form a sculpture expressing it. Slowly move into another sculpture expressing the opposite theme. i.e. Success and Failure, Conflict and Peace, Revenge and Forgiveness.

5

In Pairs

You are two people who do not get along after one of you wronged the other. One of you is angry and resentful. The other is defensive and emotional. One of you receives some information about the other that changes your opinion. Develop this scene and explore the ideas of jealousy and forgiveness.



References and Resources

Technology

See the Wearable Tech of the Future—ARTICLE

<https://time.com/see-the-wearable-tech-of-the-future/>

A Brief History of Wearable Technology—ARTICLE

<https://www.modjoul.com/blog/a-brief-history-of-wearable-technology>

The Pros and Cons of Wearable Technology—ESSAY

<https://digital.wings.uk.barclays/digital-learning-blog/pros-cons-wearable-technology-guide/>

Revenge & Forgiveness

The Hidden Upsides of Revenge—ARTICLE

<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20170403-the-hidden-upsides-of-revenge>

The Complicated Psychology of Revenge—ARTICLE

<https://www.psychologicalscience.org/observer/the-complicated-psychology-of-revenge>

Forgiveness: Your Health Depends On It—ESSAY

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/forgiveness-your-health-depends-on-it>

The Power of Forgiveness—ESSAY

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/the-power-of-forgiveness>

Stephen Sparks/Shelley Hoffman

Catching Up with Stephen Sparks, a master of the stage—INTERVIEW

<https://citizen.on.ca/catching-up-with-stephen-sparks-a-master-of-the-stage/>

Everyman Sparks a mainstay on the Lighthouse stage—INTERVIEW

<https://lighthouse theatre.com/everyman-sparks-a-mainstay-on-lighthouse-stage/>

Shelley Hoffman—IMdB

<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm1903262/>

Shelley Hoffman: The Craft of Animated Series to Screens all the World Over—VIDEO

<https://www.anomalia.eu/board/shelley-hoffman-the-craft-of-animated-series-to-screens-all-over-the-world/>

Glossary of Theatrical Terms

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 lines

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 intention

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

Glossary of Theatrical Terms

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

Rehearsal - the time during which performers develop their characters and learn lines and blocking

Role - a character in a play that is written by the playwright

Scene - the basic structural element of a play; each scene deals with a significant crisis or Confrontation

Scenery - onstage decoration to help establish the time and place of a play

Script - the text of a play

Set - the onstage physical space and its structures in which the actors perform

Set Designer - the person who develops the design and concept of the set

Stage Manager - the director's technical liaison backstage during rehearsals and performances, responsible for the smooth running of a performance

Strike - to remove something from the stage; or to take down the set

Tableau - a silent and motionless depiction of a scene; a frozen picture

Theatre - the imitation/representation of life, performed for other people; or the place that is the setting for dramatic performances

Theme - underlying meaning of a literary work

Tragedy - a play that ends in defeat or death of the main character

