



The Goodspeed Musicals  
production of

# Billy Elliot

the musical

Book and lyrics by Lee Hall    Music by Elton John    Originally directed by Stephen Daldry

GOODSPEED MUSICALS  
TEACHER'S INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

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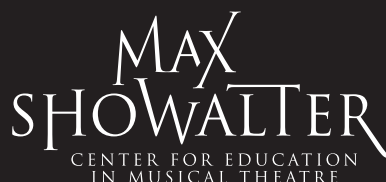
**THE TEACHER’S INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE (TIG)** is intended for use by teachers who will bring their school groups to attend performances at Goodspeed Musicals. The TIG provides lessons, worksheets, and handouts to accompany the information found in the Student Guide. The TIG activities are influenced by state and national standards associated with the arts, language arts, social studies, mathematics and science.

**THE STUDENT GUIDE** serves as a companion to the Teacher’s Instructional Guide (TIG). It includes a plot and character summary, accessible historical and thematic background information to support the lessons in the TIG, discussion questions, and activities. Each lesson in the TIG corresponds to a specific section in the Student Guide. Reading the Student Guide before attending a Goodspeed production will increase the likelihood that students will take active, critical roles as audience members, which will then lead to valuable classroom discussions.

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Goodspeed’s Teacher’s Instructional Guide can be found on our website:  
[www.goodspeed.org/guides](http://www.goodspeed.org/guides)

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# LESSON 1

## DESIGNING BILLY ELLIOT'S BEDROOM

### STANDARDS

**TH:Cr1.1.I.** Apply basic research to construct ideas about the visual composition of a drama/theatre work.

**RL.11-12.3.** Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama.

**RL.7.3.** Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

**OBJECTIVE:** Students will be able to add their own contributions to the Goodspeed scenic design for *Billy Elliot The Musical* using collage in order to draw connections between the character Billy and his environment.

**PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:** Students should have seen the Goodspeed Musicals production of *Billy Elliot the Musical* at The Goodspeed.

**MATERIALS:** blank cardstock, magazines, newspapers, colored pencils, research images, scissors, glue

### ACTIVITY/PROCEDURE

1. Begin by reflecting on the production of *Billy Elliot The Musical* you saw at The Goodspeed. What elements made the biggest impressions on the students? Which characters do they identify with most, and why?
2. Discuss the scenic design of the production. What kinds of colors, textures, and furniture were used to indicate each new location or room in the Elliot house? What elements did the designer leave out in order to allow the audience to use their imagination?
3. Explain that today, the students will add their own contributions to the Goodspeed's scenic design for *Billy Elliot The Musical* by decorating Billy's bedroom. On stage, Billy's room is indicated by a bed, but we do not get to see what else might be in his room. Brainstorm a list of things that would probably be in an 11-year-old's bedroom, keeping in mind that this story takes place in northern England in 1984. Some suggestions are:
  - a. Posters
  - b. Photos
  - c. Desk
  - d. Dresser
  - e. Items of personal significance
  - f. Paint color or wallpaper
  - g. Rug
4. Pass out a piece of cardstock and a pencil to each student. Distribute collage materials including magazines, newspapers, colored pencils, scissors, and glue. If your classroom allows, students may conduct internet research to find additional images to use in their collages.
5. Instruct the students to use the available materials to create a complete scenic design for Billy Elliot's room based on what they know and understand about him as a character, using the cardstock as the base for the design. Remind them that their design should be in keeping with the environment of *Billy Elliot The Musical*.
6. Once all the students have finished their designs, have them leave their collages on their desks or tables and do a museum walk of all the designs created by the class. A museum walk is a silent opportunity for students to view the works of their classmates by physically moving from project to project and develop their own interpretations of each piece, much in the same way patrons at an art museum would do. The museum walk will inform your class's reflection discussion.

### REFLECTION

1. What commonalities did you see in your classmates' designs?
2. Did you develop any new ideas from viewing your classmates' work?
3. How does the environment in which a character lives help us understand their motivations and decisions?

# LESSON 2

## BRINGING YOUR PASSION TO LIFE ONSTAGE

### STANDARDS

**TH:CR1.1.8:** Develop a scripted or improvised character by articulating the character's inner thoughts, objectives, and motivations in a drama/theatre work.

**TH:CR1.1.II:** Use personal experiences and knowledge to develop a character that is believable and authentic in a drama/theatre work.

**OBJECTIVE:** Students will be able to write a scene depicting their discovery or practice of a personal passion in order to relate a personal experience to the story of Billy Elliot and explore multiple points of view.

**PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:** Students should be familiar with the "Billy Elliot Stories" section of the *Student Guide*.

**MATERIALS:** Notebooks, writing utensils, copies of the *Student Guide* to the Theatre

### ACTIVITY/PROCEDURE

1. Begin by reviewing the "Short Take Synopsis" of *Billy Elliot* with your students, identifying significant plot points and characters that have been introduced to the story so far.
2. Ask your students to define the word "passion," and record their responses on the board. As they brainstorm, discuss the passion that Billy Elliot has for ballet, and that this passion came as a surprise both to him and his community. Through Mrs. Wilkinson's encouragement and his participation in ballet class, he was able to discover his passion for ballet, which opens up a world of opportunities for him.
3. Give your students a moment to think about a passion that they have, and how they discovered that passion. Once everyone has thought of a passion, they may share that passion with the whole class, in small groups, or with a partner.
4. Now that your students have shared their passion and how they discovered it, instruct them to write a scene that depicts the moment where they discovered that passion. This scene must include lines of dialogue between at least two characters. Encourage your students to be as specific in their dramatizations as possible, and to use their own experiences to add detail to the scene. Mention that the person in their scene who helps them discover their passion does not have to be a "person" at all—it could be a YouTube tutorial, a film, a book, etc. Challenge students to think about how to create a character and a point of view from an unconventional source.
5. Once students have completed their scenes, ask for volunteers to share their scenes with the class, using other students as readers.
6. Answer the reflection questions below as a class.

### REFLECTION

1. How did it feel to create a scene based on a real life event in your life?
2. For those of you who had learned their passion from a source that was from a book or a video, how did you decide to create another character in your scene? What were some challenges that you faced in this process?
3. For those of you whose pieces were read aloud, how did it feel to have your classmates reenact an event from your own life

# LESSON 3

## BILLY ELLIOT AND EXPLORING ADAPTATION

### STANDARDS

**Anchor Standard #7:** Perceive and analyze artistic work.

**Anchor Standard #8:** Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

**TH:PR4.1.II:** Discover how unique choices shape believable and sustainable drama/theatre work.

**OBJECTIVE:** Students will be able to outline an adaptation of a favorite story into a new artistic medium in order to highlight prevalent themes in the source material.

**PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:** Students should be familiar with the “Short Take Synopsis” section of the Student Guide for this lesson. The synopsis is located on page 3 of that guide.

**MATERIALS:** Adaptation Worksheet, loose-leaf paper or notebooks, writing utensils, copies of the Student Guide

### ACTIVITY/PROCEDURE

1. Begin by reviewing the “Short Take Synopsis” of *Billy Elliot* with your students, identifying significant plot points and characters that have been introduced to the story so far.
2. Have students read, either aloud as a class or individually, the “Production History” of *Billy Elliot*, which is found on page 8 of the *Student Guide*. Answer the discussion questions at the bottom of the page, keeping in mind that *Billy Elliot* is a musical based on a film. Mention that adaptation, the act of taking an existing work and reinventing it for a different artistic medium, is a process that takes as much thoughtful work as creating a completely new story. When adapting a story into different artistic mediums, artists and writers often choose the artistic medium based on themes in the story that they believe to be the most important. Ask students to think of examples of adaptations that they have seen in popular culture.
3. Then, ask students to take a moment and think of a favorite story. This story could take the form of a novel, play, or poem, but could also be a movie, television show, video game, song, or any number of things.
4. After students have chosen their story, explain that for this activity, they will be adapting their favorite story into a completely different artistic medium. Instruct students to create an outline of the new version of this story, including characters, major plot points and 1-2 major themes. (NOTE: This activity can also be done as a group, with multiple people working to adapt one story.)
5. Have students share their adaptations either as a class or in small groups. Answer the reflection questions below:

### REFLECTION

1. What was the most challenging part of creating this outline?
2. Were any aspects of this story altered in order to make it fit into the artistic medium of your choosing? (i.e. adding or eliminating characters, adding music or dance, etc.)

Using what you already know about adaptation and the definition provided below, complete the worksheet below to outline a new version of your favorite story. This story can be from a book, movie, television show, graphic novel or comic book, song, poem, play, video game or any other type of story you can imagine.

**DEFINITION OF ADAPTATION:** The process of changing or modifying the way a story is told to an audience. For example, all Marvel Cinematic Universe movies (i.e. *Black Panther*, *Captain Marvel*, *Avengers*, etc.) are movie adaptations of comic books.

### ACTIVITY QUESTIONS:

1. What is the title of your favorite story? \_\_\_\_\_

2. How was your story told originally? Circle your answer below.

Book   Movie   TV Show   Play/Musical   Poem   Internet Video   Song   Comic Book/Graphic Novel   Video Game

3. Why do you like this story, and why should it be told in a new way?

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4. List two major themes or ideas in this story. (i.e. What can we learn by knowing the story?)

Theme/Idea 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Theme/Idea 2: \_\_\_\_\_

5. How could you tell this story in a new way such that the themes you listed above are highlighted? **Circle your answer below**, and remember that your answer should be different from your answer to number 2 above.

*Example:* The authors adapted the **movie** *Billy Elliot* into a **musical** because it is about a boy following his passion for dance, and musicals use dance as a way to tell a story.

Book   Movie   TV Show   Play/Musical   Poem   Internet Video   Song   Comic Book/Graphic Novel   Video Game

6. Describe your new adaptation below.

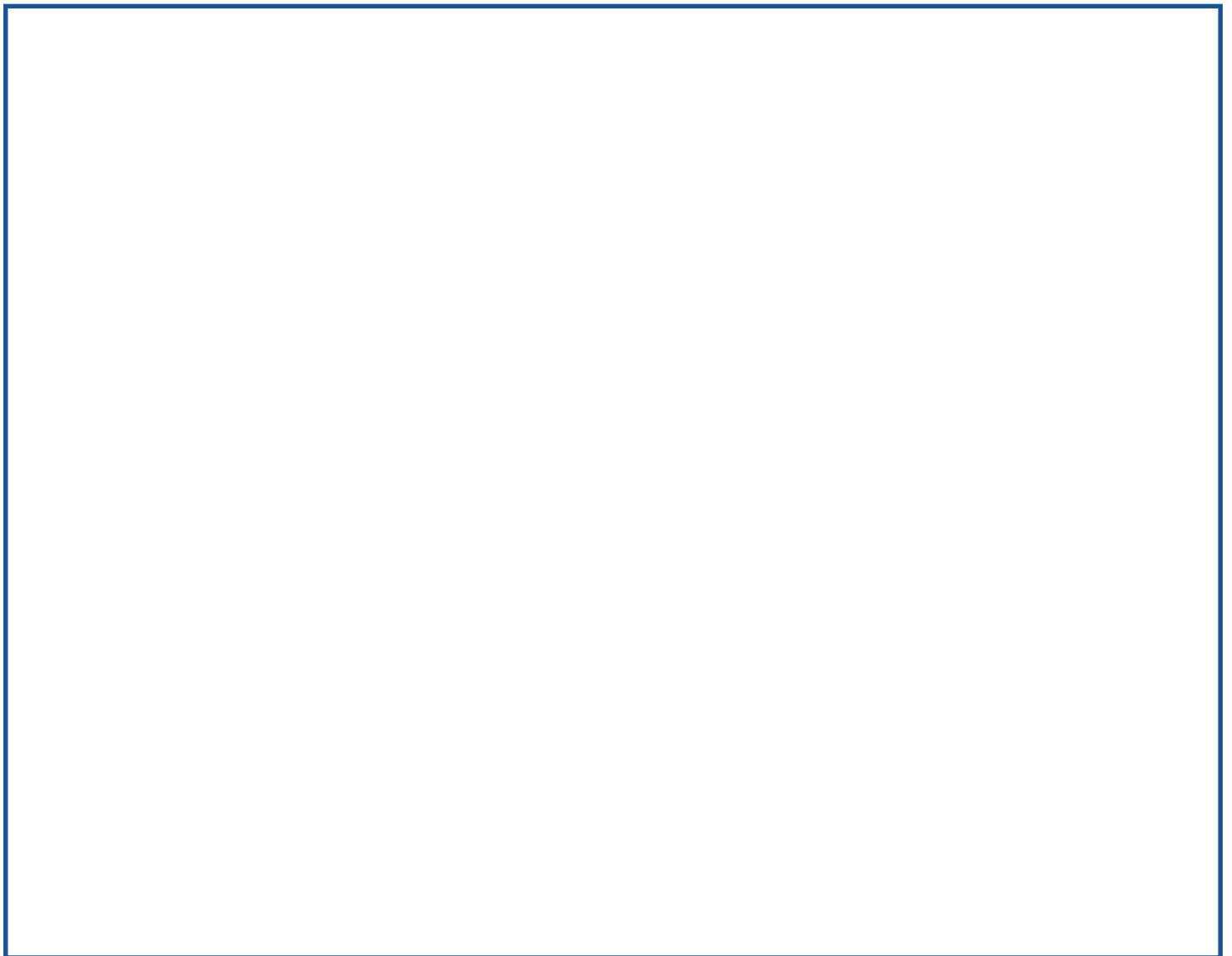
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7. Draw a picture to show what your adaptation would look like. If your adaptation is a book, poem, or song, draw a picture of what the cover would look like.



# LESSON 4

## CREATE A CLASS COOKBOOK

### STANDARDS

**VA:Cr1.2.1a.** Shape and artistic investigation of an aspect of present-day life using a contemporary practice of art or design.

**VA: Cr2.3.8a.** Select, organize, and design images and words to make visually clear and compelling presentations.

**OBJECTIVE:** Students will be able to curate a personal page of a class cookbook including story and design elements, in order to demonstrate how food is a reflection of our cultures.

**PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:** Students should have seen the Goodspeed Musicals production of *Billy Elliot The Musical*.

**MATERIALS:** recipes brought from students' communities; multiple options of colored paper; colored pencils; glue; magazines, newspapers, and/or internet image research, markers; lined paper

### ACTIVITY/PROCEDURE

1. Discuss how food and recipes play a role in *Billy Elliot The Musical*. What kinds of food do the characters eat? Explain that all of the food mentioned in the show (i.e. "pasties," fried eggs, crisps, soup) is traditionally English food and is reflective of the culture and tradition of their town.
2. Ask the students to reflect on the recipe they brought to class and what it means to them. Then, using the available materials as a reference, the students will choose a color scheme of at least 2 but no more than 4 colors to design their page of the class cookbook.
3. Next, pass out a piece of lined paper and a pencil to each student. Instruct the students to write a one-paragraph story or introduction to accompany their recipe. They should write the rough draft on the lined paper in order to transfer it to their final page later.
4. Encouraging students to be creative, guide them through designing their recipe pages in a thoughtful, organized, and relevant way. Each page should work within the color scheme the student chose and include a story or introduction and at least one image.
5. Once all the students have finished their recipe pages, have them leave the pages on their desks or tables and do a museum walk of all the pages created by the class. A museum walk is a silent opportunity for students to view the works of their classmates by physically moving from project to project and develop their own interpretations of each piece, much in the same way patrons at an art museum would do. The museum walk will inform your class's reflection discussion.

### REFLECTION

1. Did you see any recipes for dishes you had not heard of before? What questions do you have for the person who created that page?
2. How did you convey the importance of your recipe to your audience?



# LESSON 5

## SIGNS AND SYMBOLS OF PROTEST: THE 1984 BRITISH MINERS STRIKE

### STANDARDS

**TH:CR1.1.1.I:** Investigate historical and cultural conventions and their impact on the visual composition of a drama/theatre work.

**TH:CR2.I:** Explore the function of history and culture in the development of a dramatic concept through a critical analysis of original ideas in a drama/theatre work.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

**OBJECTIVE:** Students will be able to create a protest sign, slogan, and/or symbol focused on an element of the 1984 British Miners Strike in order to empathize with the characters in *Billy Elliot* and demonstrate their understanding of an historic event.

**PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:** Students should have read the Synopsis of *Billy Elliot*, along with the “1984 British Miners Strike” article; both of which can be found in the *Student Guide*.

**MATERIALS:** Cardstock or poster board, markers, paint, scissors, research images, and other art supplies.

### ACTIVITY/PROCEDURE

1. Begin this lesson by reviewing information about the 1984 British Miners Strike with your students; an introduction to the strike is located on page 10 of the *Student Guide*, though you may choose to assign additional research projects as well. Share with your students that *Billy Elliot* takes place in the midst of this strike in a coalmining town, and that this environment influences the motivations and personalities of the characters in the production. By learning more about the strike and the incidents of violence and unrest that it caused, it will deepen their experience of the show and help them better understand the story.
2. Once the students have reviewed the events of the strike, show them the research images of protest signs from the strike, which are also found in the *Student Guide*. Explain that signs are used to encourage unity with those fighting for the same cause, and that they can take many forms, from humorous to angry to straightforward to elaborately decorated. In addition to the signs, show that the red carnation was used as a symbol of solidarity for miners during that time.
3. Introduce the main activity to your students, showing them that they will now have the opportunity to craft their own Miners Strike protest signs showcasing a specific element of the strike. For example, a sign could specifically be highlighting the immense job loss that could happen as a result of mine closures, or it could focus on workplace safety for miners.
4. Pass out art supplies and pieces of cardstock or poster board to students, and allow them time to craft their signs. Once the signs are complete, share them with the group before answering the reflection questions below.

### REFLECTION

1. Which element of the strike inspired your protest sign, and why did it stand out to you?
2. How do symbols like the carnation influence a strike or political protest, and why does something seemingly small make such a large impact?

# THEATRE ETIQUETTE

Seeing a musical at The Goodspeed is a unique and exciting experience. All the members of the production, both cast and crew, work hard to give you a great show. As an audience member, you also have an important job. You must help the performers give their best performance possible. You can do this by practicing these rules of theater etiquette:

- Do laugh when the performance is funny.
- Do applaud when the performance is over. Applause is how you say “thank you” to the performer. The actors will bow as you applaud. That is how they say “Thank you for coming.”
- Do stand and applaud if you thought the show was outstanding.
- Don’t forget to turn off your cell phone. A ringing or buzzing phone can be very distracting. It can also be embarrassing for you if it is your phone that is disrupting the show!
- Don’t text during the performance.
- Make sure to visit the restroom before the production begins.
- Don’t speak or whisper during the performance. Whispering is still speaking, so only in an emergency should whispering occur.
- Remember that the overture (introductory music) in musical theatre is part of the performance, so remain silent when the show begins.
- Don’t take pictures during the performance. It can be very distracting to the actors and it can result in an accident.
- Don’t put your feet up on the seats or kick the seat in front of you.
- Do sit ONLY when your seat is in the folded down position.
- Do remain in your seat for the entire performance. If you must leave, exit during intermission. In an emergency, calmly walk toward the nearest exit.