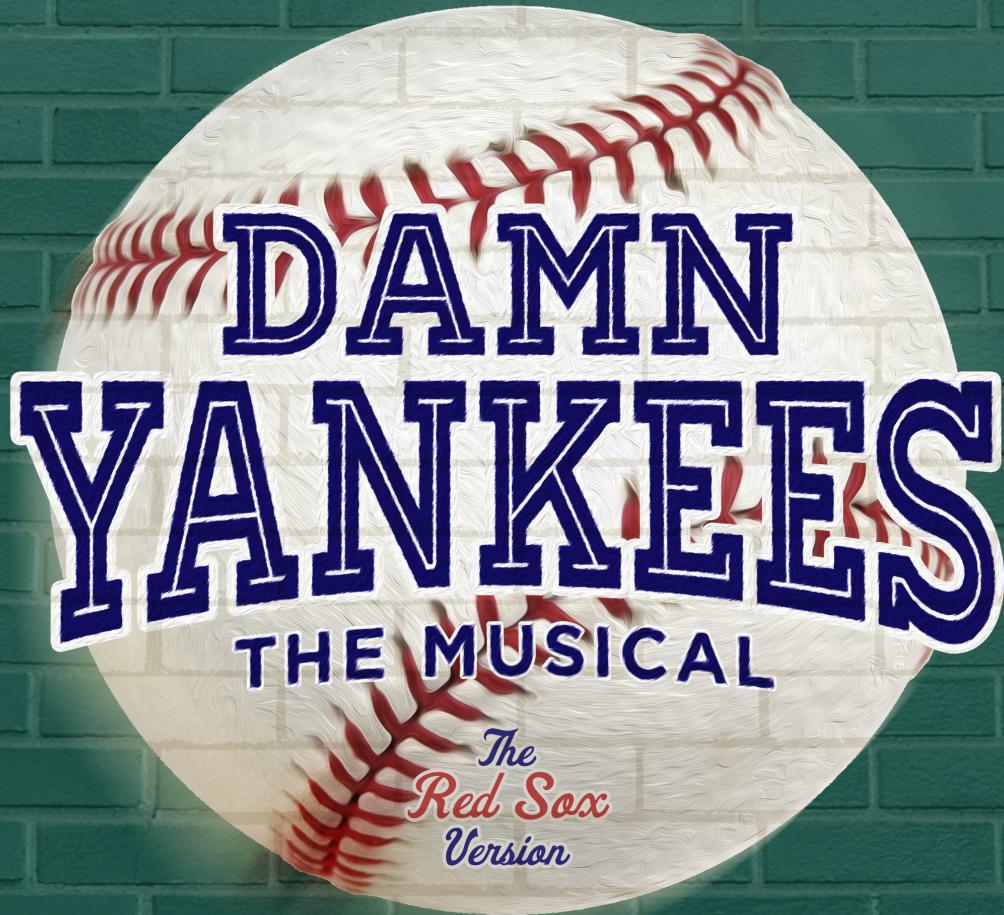


# GOODSPEED MUSICALS

## TEACHER'S INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE



GOODSPEED  
MUSICALS®

The Max Showalter Center for  
Education in Musical Theatre

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Goodspeed's Audience Insights can be found on our website:

[www.goodspeed.org/pages/guides](http://www.goodspeed.org/pages/guides)

## DAMN YANKEES

Goodspeed Opera House  
April 11 - June 21, 2014

WORDS AND MUSIC BY  
**RICHARD ADLER**  
&  
**JERRY ROSS**

BOOK BY  
**GEORGE ABBOTT**  
&  
**DOUGLASS WALLOP**

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY  
**DOUGLASS WALLOP**

BOOK ADAPTATION FOR  
THE RED SOX VERSION BY  
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LIGHTING DESIGN BY  
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MUSICALS BY  
**MICHAEL P. PRICE**

# DAMN YANKEES

## THE MUSICAL

### Audience Insights

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# HOW TO USE THE GUIDES

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 background information, teaching ideas, and prompts to facilitate students' knowledge and appreciation of the show's themes and characters. The TIG activities are influenced by state and national standards associated with the arts, language arts, social studies, and science.

THE STUDENT GUIDE TO THE THEATRE 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, and a behind-the-scenes look at the production. It also includes fun facts, theatre terms, 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.

The chart below maps the connection between the TIG's lessons and supporting material with the corresponding pages in the Student Guide. (Click page numbers to jump to section.)

LEVEL/SUBJECT	LEARNING PHASE	LESSON TOPIC	TIG	STUDENT GUIDE
<b>Middle School</b> Language Arts	Before the Show	The Music and Dance of <i>Damn Yankees</i>	Lesson: p. 19 Support Material: p. 17-18	Student Material: p. 6, 11-12
<b>Middle School</b> Language Arts	Understanding	Writing Exercise	Lesson: p. 16 Support Material: p. 4, 5, 15	Student Material: p. 3, 4, 10
<b>Middle School</b> Language Arts	After the Show	Debate: Joe Boyd vs. Joe Hardy	Lesson: p. 8 Support Material: p. 4-5	Student Material: p. 3-4
<b>Middle School</b> Social Studies	Before the Show	Archetypes and Global Stories	Lesson: p. 6 Support Material: p. 4-5	Student Material: p. 3-4
<b>Middle School</b> Social Studies	Understanding	Baseball Timeline	Lesson: p. 23-24 Support Material: p. 21	Student Material: p. 13
<b>Middle School</b> Social Studies	After the Show	Radio Play: Where is Joe Hardy	Lesson: p. 13 Support Material: 12	Student Material: 9
<b>High School</b> English	Before the Show	The Music and Dance of <i>Damn Yankees</i>	Lesson: p. 20 Support Material: p. 17-18	Student Material: p. 6, 11-12
<b>High School</b> English	Understanding	Writing Exercise	Lesson: p. 16 Support Material: p. 4, 5, 15	Student Material: p. 3, 4, 10
<b>High School</b> English	After the Show	Hero and Anti-Hero	Lesson: p. 8 Support Material: p. 4-5	Student Material: p. 3-4
<b>High School</b> History	Before the Show	Archetypes and Global Stories	Lesson: p. 7 Support Material: p. 4-5	Student Material: p. 3-4,
<b>High School</b> History	Understanding	Baseball Timeline and Ideals	Lesson: p. 25 Support Material: p. 21	Student Material: p. 13
<b>High School</b> History	After the Show	Radio Play: Where is Joe Hardy	Lesson: p. 14 Support Material: 12	Student Material: 9

# SHOW SYNOPSIS

## THE CHARACTERS

**JOE BOYD:** A middle-aged real estate salesman who is tired of watching his favorite team, the Boston Red Sox lose to those “damn Yankees.” He is a lover of baseball and would do anything to help his beloved team win the pennant, even leave his wife and risk his eternal soul.

**MEG BOYD:** The devoted wife of Joe Boyd, who is sick of being ignored by her husband during baseball season. When Joe suddenly disappears, she never loses hope that he will come home.

**MR. APPLEGATE:** The devil in disguise. He offers Joe the chance to become young, athletic and a hero to the city of Boston by leading the cursed Red Sox to a pennant victory.

**JOE HARDY:** The alter ego of Joe Boyd and the new rising star of the Boston Red Sox. He is the greatest baseball player in the world and he owes it all to the mysterious Mr. Applegate.

**GLORIA THORPE:** A sharp-tongued newspaper reporter who takes an interest in the vague origins of baseball's newest star, Joe Hardy—or as she calls him, “Shoeless Joe from Hannibal, Mo.”

**LOLA:** Applegate's right-hand woman and go-to vixen. She is called in to help keep Joe's mind off his homesickness and his wife, but ends up having tender feelings for him.

**SISTER:** A childhood friend of Meg Boyd from Hannibal, Missouri, and one of Joe Hardy's biggest fans.

**DORIS:** A childhood friend of Meg Boyd from Hannibal, Missouri, and Sister's sister.

**BENNY VAN BUREN:** The Boston Red Sox team manager.

**ROCKY:** A simple-minded but lovable baseball player for the Boston Red Sox.

**SMOKEY:** A baseball player for the Boston Red Sox who lets Joe Hardy borrow his shoes for a team tryout.

**SOHOVIK, HENRY, VERNON, LOWE, MICKEY, BOMBER:** Players on the Boston Red Sox

**ANNOUNCER:** The voice of the Red Sox and the man who tells the audience about Joe Hardy's triumphs.

## ACT ONE

Damn Yankees opens in 1952 Boston, Massachusetts, where Meg Boyd laments losing her husband for 6 months a year to the Boston Red Sox. Frustrated by the losing streak of his beloved Red Sox, Meg's husband, Joe, blurts out that he is sure the Sox are cursed! He tells Meg how the Red Sox haven't won a World Series since they traded Babe Ruth to the “New York damned Yankees.” While thinking about the latest humiliating loss for the Sox, Joe murmurs that he would sell his soul to “reverse that curse.” Suddenly, a strange man appears in his living room and asks Joe if he has heard him correctly, would he really sell his soul to end the Red Sox curse? The man introduces himself as Mr. Applegate. Applegate claims he can make Joe the greatest baseball player in history. Applegate confirms that there is a curse on the Red Sox and that Joe can reverse it—all he has to do is allow Applegate to turn him into the greatest player in all of history, 27-year-old Joe Hardy, in exchange for his soul. Joe agrees to the deal, but convinces Applegate to add in an escape clause. If Joe is unhappy with his deal he can back out, but he must use the clause by the last day of the season on September 24th.

The Red Sox had another lousy game and Benny Van Buren, the team manager, has called a meeting to ask the team what's going on. The players reply that they think the team really is cursed and that the Yankees have an unfair advantage. Benny nervously tells his team there is no such thing as curses and gives the team a pep talk. After Benny's speech, Gloria Thorpe, a reporter for a local paper, strolls in; she is curious as to what the Red Sox think of the Yankees. Gloria and Benny are “discussing” the Yankees when Mr. Applegate arrives with a transformed Joe. Van Buren doesn't want to let Joe try out for the team, but is ultimately convinced and allows Joe to hit and field. The entire team is astounded by Joe's talent, despite the fact that he has never played professional baseball. When the team asks where he played in the past, Joe quickly tells them that he played sandlot ball in his small mid-west hometown of Hannibal, Missouri. After seeing Joe tryout for the Red Sox, Gloria is starting to sense a story. She asks Applegate questions about Joe, but he is surprisingly closed-mouthed on the subject.

Although Joe is loved as “Joe Hardy” by everyone in Boston, he starts to feel depressed. Applegate notices that Joe is miserable and asks him what is

Continued • • • • • • • • • • ▶

# SHOW SYNOPSIS CONTINUED

wrong. Joe tells him that Gloria Thorpe is making him nervous by asking questions about his past and that he misses his wife, Meg. Gloria barges into the locker room and asks Joe more questions about his past in Hannibal. When he responds with vague answers she then asks him if he really thinks the Red Sox can beat the Yankees. Joe defends the team and guarantees a win, but finds out that the season actually ends on September 25th, the day AFTER his escape clause.

Applegate has noticed Joe's homesickness and is concerned that he might use the escape clause. Applegate calls in Lola, his sassy helper, to distract Joe. Meg's friends, Sister and Doris, are trying to convince her to come out with them and to stop waiting for her husband to come home. While Meg is defending Joe Boyd, Joe Hardy comes to the door to see if Meg will rent him a room. Meg likes the idea of taking in a boarder and asks Sister and Doris to meet the young man.



The cast of Goodspeed's Damn Yankees. ©Diane Soblewski.

At the next Red Sox game, Gloria Thorpe approaches Benny to tell him that she thinks something odd is going on with Joe Hardy. She thinks Joe could be the disgraced baseball player Shifty McCoy. While Gloria and Benny are speculating about Joe's past, Applegate finally introduces Joe to the stunning Lola. Applegate makes up an excuse to leave the couple alone in the locker room and Lola tries to seduce Joe. He manages to resist Lola's charms and makes a quick escape. Joe heads to the baseball field to think and runs into Benny and the rest of the team. They tell Joe that he is accused of being Shifty McCoy, a baseball player that disappeared after throwing games in the Mexican League. Joe denies the accusation, but the league bans him from playing until he can clear his name.

## ACT TWO

The second act opens the next day on the discouraged Red Sox, who think that they will lose the game without Joe Hardy. A short time later, Doris and Sister are walking home with Meg and discussing how badly the Red Sox lost. Joe finds the three women and asks to speak with Meg alone. He tells her that there is a witness coming into town to meet with the team, that the witness knew Shifty McCoy, and that he should be able to clear his name. Meg is thrilled that Joe will soon be able to prove the gossip wrong but she wishes she could remember him from her days living in Hannibal.

Meanwhile, Applegate is gloating to Lola that he has finally cornered Joe Hardy. He is certain that Joe won't use the escape clause while he is under suspicion and leave the people who trust him in the lurch. However, Joe enters Applegate's office and says that since today is the 24th, he wants to change back to Joe Boyd. Applegate tells him that all changes have to happen at the stroke of midnight and that he can be changed back during his hearing that night.

Everyone is gathered in Benny Van Buren's office eagerly waiting for the witness that can clear Joe's name, but it is nearly midnight and Applegate's "witness" is nowhere to be found. Meg, Sister, and Doris barge into the room; Meg declares that she remembers Joe Hardy from growing up in Hannibal and that he is exactly who he says he is. The thrilled team celebrates due to Joe's name being cleared, but as they leave, the clock strikes midnight and Joe's chance to change back passes. Lola finds Joe wandering around the back alleys of Boston after his escape clause expires and the two commiserate on their shared fate.

The next day, everyone is on edge as the Yankees play the Red Sox for the Pennant. Applegate is angry with Lola for making him late to the game and says he will make the Red Sox lose even if he has to transform Joe in front of the whole stadium! The Red Sox are down by one run and Joe is at bat. Joe hits the ball deep into center field and he takes off, desperately trying to make it to home plate. Before Joe can complete his run, Applegate waves his hand and changes Joe Hardy back into Joe Boyd. To avoid exposure, Joe runs off the field and the Red Sox lose once again.

Joe, transformed back to his old self, goes home to his wife Meg. Applegate follows Joe home to make one last sales pitch, but when Joe ignores him, Applegate swears he will make sure the Red Sox don't win a World Series until the next millennium!

# LESSON

**Skills Applied:** creative writing, critical thinking, group participation, public performance, and public speaking

**History/Content Knowledge 1.13**  
Students will demonstrate an understanding of the characteristics of and interactions among culture, social systems, and institutions.

## The Arts: Visual Arts: Content Standard 1

Students will conceive and create original works of art that demonstrate a connection between personal expression and the intentional use of art materials, techniques, and processes

## CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9

Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

# Middle School Social Studies

## BEFORE THE SHOW: Archetypes and Global Stories

Damn Yankees is such a fun musical that it is easy to lose sight of the rather silly battle going on between good and evil. Joe and Mr. Applegate are on opposite sides of a major fight for Joe's soul. If Mr. Applegate wins the fight then Joe's soul belongs to him and he would be a slave to Mr. Applegate for eternity. Damn Yankees goes out of its way to create a lighthearted tone throughout the show and Mr. Applegate is so affable that it is difficult to really see him as a villain in the traditional sense. In most fictional stories the division between good and bad is obvious, but in Damn Yankees there are moments when that line becomes blurred.

Not only is Damn Yankees a musical with an interesting dynamic between its hero and villain, it is also an adaptation. Damn Yankees was adapted from a novel titled, The Year the Yankees Lost the Pennant by Douglass Wallop. An adaptation is defined in the Webster-Merriam dictionary as "something that is adapted; especially: a movie, book, play, etc., that is changed so that it can be presented in another form." A story or book that is changed into a script for a movie, TV show, or stage production is an adaptation. Use the following lesson to introduce archetypes and the idea of good vs. evil that runs through different areas of our society and the world as a whole.

## ACTIVITY

After explaining what an adaptation is, break students into small groups and have them read a version of the following fairy tales:

1. Rumplestiltskin – German
2. Cinderella – French
3. Jack and the Beanstalk – English
4. Aladdin – Middle Eastern

After reading the stories, have the groups consider what the stories have in common with each other. Is there one story they like the best out of the three? Why?

After each group of students has picked out their favorite fairy tale, have them write a short adaptation of that story. Once each group has completed their story, have them present their adaptation to the class. One group member may act as the narrator while the remaining group members act out the various characters and actions during the reading. Students may say lines as they are acting out their stories, but it is not necessary if students are more comfortable remaining silent.

Discuss, as a group, why they think there are stories of good vs. evil in different cultures all over the world. Can the students find any similarities between fairy tales and Damn Yankees? Could Damn Yankees be considered a fairy tale? Please keep in mind that a fairy tale is defined as "a story involving fantastic forces and beings (as fairies, wizards, and goblins)" or "a story in which improbable events lead to a happy ending."

# LESSON

## High School History BEFORE THE SHOW: Archetypes and Global Stories

**Skills Applied:** creative writing, critical thinking, group participation, public speaking, and public performance

**History/Content Knowledge 1.13**  
Students will demonstrate an understanding of the characteristics of and interactions among culture, social systems, and institutions.

**The Arts: Visual Arts Grades 9-12**  
**Content Standard 1:** Students will conceive and create original works of art that demonstrate a connection between personal expression and the intentional use of art materials, techniques, and processes

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9**  
Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

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Lead a group discussion on the following topics:

- Why are there stories of good vs. evil in cultures all over the world?
- Can the students find any similarities between fairy tales and Damn Yankees. Could Damn Yankees be considered a fairy tale?

# LESSON

## Skills Applied

Public speaking and critical thinking

## English Language Arts Grades

Pre-K-12

**Communicating with Others**  
**Standard 3.1; Students will use oral language with clarity, voice, and fluency to communicate a message.**

# Middle School Language Arts

## AFTER THE SHOW: Joe Boyd vs. Joe Hardy

After seeing the stage production of *Damn Yankees* have students re-read the "Show Synopsis" and "Character Summary." Once the students have reviewed the details of the show have them, as a class, list the things they liked and didn't like about both Joe Boyd and Joe Hardy on the board.

### ACTIVITY

Break the class up into 2 groups and assign each group Joe Hardy or Joe Boyd. Ask the students to expand upon the list they created together on the blackboard and request that they make a case for which Joe is the best. Ask for a volunteer from each group to come to the front of the room and have a small debate with each volunteer making a case for why their assigned Joe is the better Joe.

# LESSON

## Skills Applied

Public speaking and critical thinking

## English Language Arts Grades

Pre-K-12

**Communicating with Others**  
**Standard 3.1; Students will use oral language with clarity, voice, and fluency to communicate a message.**

# High School English

## AFTER THE SHOW: Hero or Anti-Hero?

### ACTIVITY

After familiarizing yourself and your students with the plot of *Damn Yankees*, lead a discussion on what the students believe is the main conflict of the show. What are their thoughts on Joe as the hero of the story?

Have them discuss the following questions:

1. How can Joe Boyd/Hardy be considered a typical hero?  
A hero is defined by Merriam-Webster dictionary as "a person who is admired for great or brave acts or fine qualities, a person who is greatly admired, or the chief male character in a story, play, movie, etc."

2. Does Joe meet all of these requirements to be a hero? Explain.

3. Could Joe Boyd be considered an antihero?

An antihero is defined by the Merriam-Webster dictionary as "a main character in a book, play, movie, etc., who does not have the usual good qualities that are expected in a hero, a protagonist or notable figure who is conspicuously lacking in heroic qualities."

After the idea of Joe as a hero has been discussed by the class as a whole, divide the students into two groups. Assign one group the task of finding and analyzing points that prove Joe is a hero while the other group is given the task of finding and analyzing points that prove Joe is an anti-hero. Each group should elect a spokesperson and present their findings to the class in a small debate.

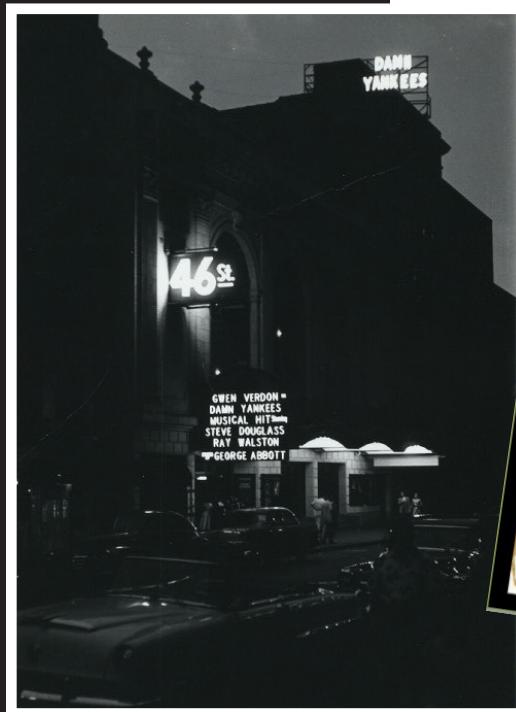
# MEET THE WRITERS



**CLICK HERE**  
to listen to an  
NPR interview  
with Richard Adler

**RICHARD ADLER & JERRY ROSS** (Music & Lyrics) were a team of successful song writers in the 1950s. Richard Adler was born on August 23, 1923 and Jerry Ross was born on March 9, 1926. Both men were originally from New York. The duo was first brought to the attention of composing legend, Frank Loesser, in 1951. When Loesser heard the songs of Adler and Ross, he was so impressed he signed them to an exclusive contract with his publishing label. These "two young Loessers," as Leonard Bernstein deemed them, had a wonderful view of the writing and composing process that quickly made them stand out. Ross stated, "Subconsciously, and from our training, we're writing for the man in the street." To which Adler added, "We try to write universal truths in colloquial terms. We're just trying to bring out the expression of the times in which we live in terms of the people with whom we're dealing. We're writing the way our generation demands we write."

This philosophy eventually led them to producing legend, George Abbott. The team had actually auditioned for Abbott twice before being commissioned to write the score for *The Pajama Game*. At each meeting Abbott was encouraging but it was not until signing with Frank Loesser that he was willing to give them a chance. *The Pajama Game* opened in 1954 and had a production team almost entirely comprised of theatre newcomers. After the success of their first Broadway composing venture, George Abbott again used the musical team to compose the score to the baseball-themed *Damn Yankees* in 1955. Though the lengthy run of both shows is largely contributed to George Abbott, Adler and Ross brought a much needed infusion of flair to Broadway. It is said that the duo, "was remarkably adept at combining a wide range of catchy, familiar rhythms—and original sound effects—within the framework of a single score." Sadly the partnership came to an abrupt end when Jerry Ross suddenly died of a lung ailment on November 11, 1955. Richard Adler was unable to continue writing for the stage without his partner and moved his attention to writing television commercials.

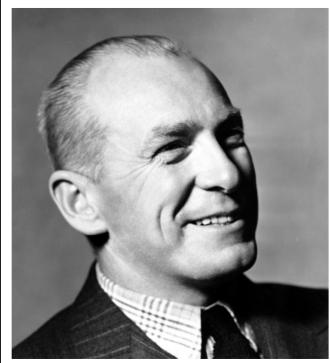


Damn Yankees Marquee

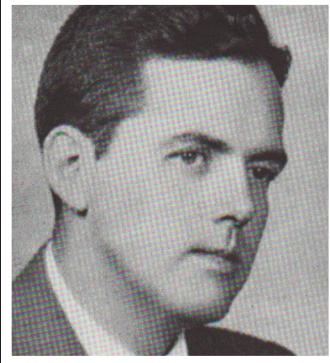


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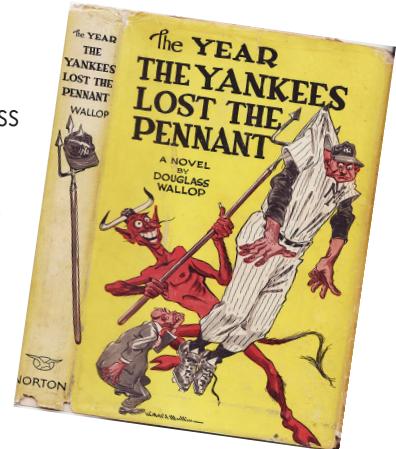
# MEET THE WRITERS CONTINUED



**GEORGE ABBOTT** (Book) was born George Francis Abbott on June 27, 1887 in Forestville, NY and was an American theatre and film producer and director, actor, and writer. Mr. Abbott graduated from the University of Rochester in 1911 and had his first role on Broadway in 1913. He was involved with several notable musical productions like *Jumbo*, *Boy Meets Girl*, *The Boys From Syracuse*, *Pal Joey*, *Call Me Madam*, *The Pajama Game*, and *Damn Yankees*. Mr. Abbott had a knack for spotting young talent and helped launch the careers of many Broadway legends such as June Allyson, Ezra Stone, Shirley MacLaine, Gene Kelly, Carol Burnett, Liza Minnelli, Gwen Verdon, and Bob Fosse. George Abbott was considered a no-nonsense consummate theatre professional. His name was attached to one of Broadway's very rare distinctions, more shows to achieve 500 performances than any other man in show business. According to his contemporaries he, "conducts his activities with a minimum of hanky-panky, hysteria, and other occupational vapors. He is a singularly cool and collected citizen." Mr. Abbott was a notable member of the theatre community until his death in 1995. At the time of his death Abbott was well over 100 years old and a Broadway revival of *Damn Yankees* was playing at the Marquis Theater.



**DOUGLASS WALLOP** (Book) was born John Douglass Wallop in Washington, D.C. on March 8, 1920. Mr. Wallop attended the University of Maryland and graduated in 1942. He then turned his attention to writing and wrote over a dozen novels including, *The Year the Yankees Lost the Pennant*, the story upon which *Damn Yankees* is based. Mr. Wallop co-wrote the book to *Damn Yankees* alongside George Abbott and won a Tony Award for his contributions.



**JOE DIPIETRO** wrote the revised book for *Damn Yankees*, transforming it from a musical about the Washington Senators to a musical featuring the Boston Red Sox. The Red Sox and Yankees rivalry is notorious and very hotly debated in the New England/Tri-State area so the revamped version of the show is sure to attract more baseball fans than ever before. Mr. DiPietro wrote the book for the musicals *Memphis*; *All Shook Up*; *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*; *The Toxic Avenger*; and *The Thing About Men*. He also wrote several plays including *Over The River And Through The Woods*, *The Art of Murder*, *Creating Claire*, and *The Last Romance*. For his work on *Memphis*, Mr. DiPietro won two Tony Awards, a Drama Desk Award, and an Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Musical.

# BEHIND THE SCENES

COSTUMES BY DAVID C. WOOLARD

## UNIFORMS IN THE 1950s

In 1951, just over 30 years after numbers were first worn on the back of player uniforms, the Springfield Cubs began placing a player's number on the front, as well as the back, of their jersey. Soon, the practice caught on with other big league clubs and today nearly every major league club uses jersey-front numbers on their home or road uniform.

In 1960, the Chicago White Sox introduced the first uniforms to feature player names on the jersey. The innovation was a success and today every major league club has adopted the practice. That is, all but one team. The New York Yankees have yet to don a uniform (home or road) adorned with player names.



**CLICK HERE**  
to learn more about  
the history of the  
baseball uniform



# CULTURE OF THE 1950s



Rosa Parks, 1956

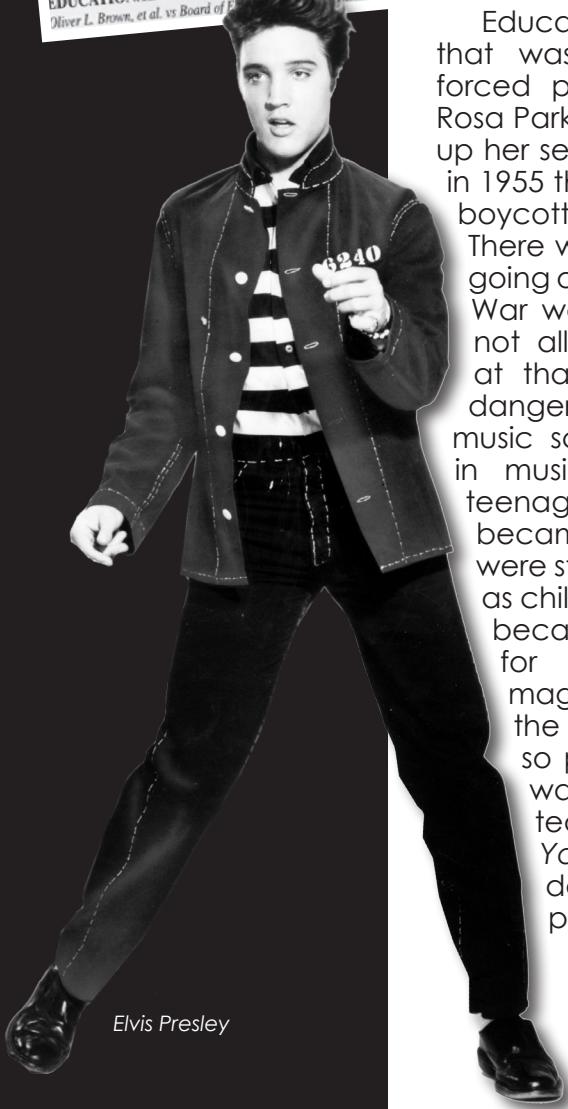
The United States in the 1950s is, in many people's minds, an idealized era. In fact, many popular movies and TV shows like *Grease*, *Happy Days*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, *Cry-Baby*, *James and the Giant Peach*, *Mona Lisa Smile*, and *Monster House* are all set in the 1950s and demonstrate how the decade was romanticized. When people think of the 1950s they often think of Elvis, poodle skirts, and sock hops, but the 1950s were full of far more changes than people tend to remember.

Among significant events during this era was the Brown vs. the Board of

Education Supreme Court decision that was decided in 1954 which forced public schools to integrate. Rosa Parks was arrested for not giving up her seat to a white bus passenger in 1955 that precipitated a year-long boycott of the public bus systems. There was a search for communists going on in Hollywood and the Cold War was on everyone's mind. But not all of the changes occurring at that time were frightening or dangerous. Elvis burst onto the music scene causing a major shift in musical styling, dancing, and teenage social opinion. Until Elvis became a public figure, teenagers were still viewed by society at large as children and with his arrival they became a target demographic for advertisements, products, magazines, and records. In fact, the new rock and roll sound was so popular that George Abbot was encouraged by his writing team to include it in *Damn Yankees*; however Mr. Abbott decided not to take that particular risk.

During the 1950s the gross national product more than doubled, unemployment was down, inflation was low, and wages were high. Many Americans began moving from the cities to the suburbs which caused the economy to climb again with the construction of new highways, freeways, and homes. Wartime inconveniences and draft programs were at an end and the baby boom was taking shape during this time period—World War II had just ended and many returning Americans were eager to have children now that the conflict was over. In order to meet the needs of the country and the troops overseas during World War II, the government had implemented restrictions on how much of certain things the American public could buy. These government restrictions were called rations and applied to household items like sugar, coffee, rubber, aluminum cans, gas, nylon, margarine, meats, cheeses, and shoes. Although World War II ended in 1945, rationing did not end in the U.S. until 1946. The U.S. emerged from the war as a super power and citizens were once again able to indulge in household luxuries.

Theatre, like all aspects of American life, was affected during the war and began to climb back into vogue during the early 1950s. Musicals produced on Broadway rose from 11 in 1952 to 26 in 1955. Musical comedies became popular and productions like *Wonderful Town*, *Peter Pan*, *Guys and Dolls*, *The Pajama Game*, and *Damn Yankees* rose to success because of their contemporary settings and family-friendly music. Overall, the 1950s was a decade characterized by growth and readjustment for the American people.



Elvis Presley



# LESSON

## Skills Applied

critical thinking, creative writing, historical research, and public speaking

## English Language Arts Grades Pre-K-12: Reading and Responding Standard 1.4

Students communicate with others to create interpretations of written, oral and visual texts.

## CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.6

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

## CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.9-10.10

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

# Middle School Social Studies

## AFTER THE SHOW: Testing 1-2-3 Radio Broadcast

Damn Yankees takes place in the late 1950s, the heyday of radio broadcasting and the very beginning of television broadcasting. Before television was a mainstream mode of entertainment many homes depended on radio broadcasts as their nightly diversion. A common radio program used to entertain families was a radio play; a radio play is a purely acoustic dramatic performance. Use the following lesson to highlight the technology of the era and the importance of available information.

### ACTIVITY

Have students create a mock radio play on the disappearance of Joe Hardy. Have them research broadcasting styles from the 1950s and write their scripts using the vernacular of the era. Have the class decide, as a group, an explanatory theory Joe Hardy's disappearance and how they would like to vocally act it out on the radio.

Break the students up into groups and assign each group one of the following tasks:

- Creating sound effects
- Researching popular radio plays
- Writing the script
- Performing

#### Potential Disappearance Scenarios:

1. Joe was kidnapped by the New York Yankees.
2. People that bet money on the baseball game chased Joe out of town.
3. Joe really was Shifty McCoy and went back to Mexico.
4. Joe was abducted by aliens.

You may use the following links for information:

- <http://www.finalrune.com/radio-drama-craft/>
- <http://dramateachersnetwork.wordpress.com/2011/03/05/resources-and-suggestions-for-creating-radio-plays/>
- <http://www.old-time.com/toc.html>

Once the class has written their radio play, assembled their sound effects, and assigned their performers; have them perform their radio play and record it on a computer or other device. Play the radio broadcast back to them and discuss what they think of this form of entertainment.

Please rate the following on a scale of 1-5. 1 being the worst and 5 being the best.

How well did your radio play communicate a story?

Is a radio play an effective form of entertainment?

Were your sound effects appropriate and thought out?

Did your radio play accurately and appropriately use the vernacular of the 1950s?

# LESSON

## High School History AFTER THE SHOW: Testing 1-2-3 Radio Broadcast

### Skills Applied

Critical thinking, creative writing, historical research, and public speaking

### The Arts: Theatre Grades 9-12

#### Content Standard 6: Connections

Students will create and solve interdisciplinary problems using theatre.

#### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.6

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

#### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.9-10.10

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Damn Yankees takes place in the late 1950s, the heyday of radio broadcasting and the very beginning of television broadcasting. Before television was a mainstream mode of entertainment many homes depended on radio broadcasts as their nightly diversion. A common radio program used to entertain families was a radio play; a radio play is a purely acoustic dramatic performance. Use the following lesson to highlight the technology of the era and the importance of available information. Use the following lesson to highlight the technology of the era and the importance of available information.

### ACTIVITY

Have students create a mock radio play on the disappearance of Joe Hardy. Have them research broadcasting styles from the 1950's and write their scripts using the vernacular of the era. Have the class decide, as a group, what they would like their theory to be about Joe Hardy's disappearance and how they would like to vocally act it out on the radio.

Break the students up into groups and assign each group one of the following tasks;

- Creating sound effects
- Researching popular radio plays
- Writing the script
- Performing

#### Potential Disappearance Scenarios

1. The New York Yankees kidnapped Joe.
2. People that bet money on the baseball game chased Joe out of town.
3. Joe really was Shifty McCoy and went back to Mexico.
4. Aliens abducted Joe.

You may use the following links for information and examples of radio plays;

- <http://www.finalrune.com/radio-drama-craft/>
- <http://dramateachersnetwork.wordpress.com/2011/03/05/resources-and-suggestions-for-creating-radio-plays/>
- <http://www.old-time.com/toc.html>

Once the class has written their radio play, assembled their sound effects, and assigned their performers; have them perform their radio play and record it on a computer or other device. Play the radio broadcast back to them and discuss what they think of this form of entertainment.

As a class, discuss the following questions;

Could there be any ramifications if someone heard a radio play in 1950 and did not know it was fiction?

How did radio change the face of mass communication?

What are the advantages of radio over television and vice versa?

How did radio impact American morale during the 1940s and 1950s?

How is radio broadcasting used today vs. how it was used in the 1950s?

# THE FAUST LEGEND

## GLOSSARY

**Iambic pentameter** is a form of writing that was extremely popular in Elizabethan England. It is characterized by 5 beats to every line of text with 2 syllables to each beat, with the accent on the second beat. For example this line from the start of *The Tragical Death of Doctor Faustus* is written in iambic pentameter:

"**Not marching now in fields of Trasimene,**  
Where **Mars did mate** the **Carthaginians,**"

**Archetype** is the original pattern or model of which all things of the same type are representations or copies: prototype; also: a perfect example"

## FAUST STORIES

The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus by Christopher Marlow

Faust: Der Tragodie erster Teil (*Faust: The First Part of the Tragedy*) and Faust: Der Tagodie zweiter Teil (*Faust: The Secod Part of The Tragedy*) by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe



**CLICK HERE**  
to read Goethe's  
**Faust**

## GOETHE & MARLOWE

The story of *Damn Yankees* is loosely based on the Faust legend. Two of the most well-known versions of the legend come from Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe and Christopher Marlowe. While Marlowe and Goethe used the same legend for inspiration, they approached the story in two very different ways. Goethe used the story of Faust to compose a dramatic poem with many theatrical elements of Romanticism such as directly addressing the audience and creating a heavily detailed atmosphere onstage. Marlowe approached Faust strictly from a playwright's point of view and wrote the play in **iambic pentameter**.

It is important to remember that even though Goethe and Marlowe wrote the best-known versions of the Faust legend, there is no one definitive version of the story.

## THE STORY OF FAUST

Faust is the story of a scientist (or magician, depending on the version you are reading) who sells his soul to the Devil in exchange for knowledge, power, and earthly pleasures. The legend is believed to have originated in Germany sometime in the early 1500s and is thought to be loosely based on the life of an alchemist/magician who lived in Germany in the beginning of the 15th century. There is some speculation that the man Faust is based on, Dr. Johann Georg Faust (c. 1480-1540), was the business partner of Johann Gutenberg, the inventor of the printing press. There is even a small town named Staufen in southwest Germany that claims to be where Faust died.

The first recorded version of the Faust legend is a small chapbook bearing the title Historia von D. Johann Fausten published in 1587. This *Faustbuch* or "Faust book" is a collection of stories about men who were practitioners of occult skills and potential magic. The story may have originally been written in Latin, but all earlier recorded versions of the legend have been lost. Most versions feature a man who is unhappy with his lot in life and longs for a way

to reach his desired potential. One night, when the man is lamenting the limits of his mind, the Devil appears and offers him a deal—great knowledge, power, and comforts for a set period of time (usually 24 years) could be his if the man agrees to surrender his soul. In most Faust stories, the man approached by the Devil (or a demon agent of the Devil) agrees to surrender his soul, proceeds to make use of his new-found powers, and is ultimately damned. An interesting evolution occurs in later versions of the story where Faust (or the protagonist) begins to regret selling his soul. The source of redemption and cause for regret usually comes in the form of a woman who the man has wronged. His love for her and the regret he has over the pain he has caused her allows him to be redeemed. In some versions, Faust caused the death of a young woman who was in love with him and she goes before God to plead for his help and intervention. For example, in Goethe's version, Faust escapes damnation by divine intervention and pleading from the spirit of Gretchen, his deceased lover. However, in the early tales, Faust believes his sins are unforgivable and he is eternally damned.

With a story that uses the Devil as a main character, there are, understandably, some religious undertones. The religious aspects of the story are more apparent in the medieval versions of the story and more than one of them involves a priest pleading with Faust to save his immortal soul. Faust's story is one where an **archetype** of Evil is trying to seduce man away from an archetype of Good. Dating all the way back to the Bible, the Devil is seen as the original source of evil and temptation in the world. This representation of ultimate Good vs. ultimate Evil can be seen in many movies, books, and TV shows that are popular today. For example: Harry Potter, Supernatural, Charmed, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, The Lord of the Rings, The Hobbit, The Wizard of Oz, The Mummy, The Matrix, Star Wars, Once Upon A Time, Alice in Wonderland, Twilight, Dracula, Bedazzled, Carrie, and many, many more.

# LESSON

**Skills Applied:** creative writing, public speaking, public performance, and creative thinking

## English Language Arts Grades

### Pre-K-12:

**Exploring and Responding to Literature Standard 2.3:** Students discuss, analyze and evaluate how characters deal with the diversity of human experience and conflict.

### **Communicating with Others**

**Standard 3.1:** Students will use oral language with clarity, voice and fluency to communicate a message.

### **The Arts: Theatre Grades 5-8**

#### **Content Standard 1: Creating:**

Students will individually and in groups, develop characters, environments and actions that create tension and suspense.

### **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3**

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

### **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.9-10.4**

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

## Middle School Language Arts UNDERSTANDING: Writing Exercise

Have your students read the “Character Summary,” “Faust Legend,” and “Show Synopsis” sections of the Student Guide to familiarize themselves with the plot of the musical, the background of the story, and the characters in *Damn Yankees*.

### **ACTIVITY**

Have your students write out a short scene between a Mr. Applegate character and themselves.

Have them address the following questions:

- What does Mr. Applegate look like?
- What does he sound like?
- How does he introduce himself?
- Do the students immediately know who he is?
- What does Applegate offer a modern student in exchange for his or her soul?
- Does he or she accept or refuse his offer? Why?

Once all students have written their short scene, have them perform their work for the class.

## High School English UNDERSTANDING: Writing Exercise

Have your students read the “Character Summary,” “Faust Legend,” and “Show Synopsis” sections of the Student Guide to familiarize themselves with the plot of the musical, the background of the story, and the characters in *Damn Yankees*.

### **ACTIVITY**

Have your students write two short scenes between themselves and a Mr. Applegate character. The first scene should take place during their conversation with Mr. Applegate and detail his offer. Their second scene should take place at the end of their experience and address their debt to Mr. Applegate.

Have them address the following questions:

- What does their Mr. Applegate look like?
- How does he introduce himself?
- Do the students immediately know who he is?
- What does their Applegate offer them?
- Do they have a set time limit on their new life?
- What do they do with their new life?
- Do they miss their old life and their family?
- Do they find a way to get out of their deal?

Once all students have written their scenes, have them present their work in pairs to the class.

# BROADWAY OR BUST: THE RISE OF GWEN VERDON AND BOB FOSSE



Gwen Verdon as Lola in  
Damn Yankees, 1958



**CLICK HERE** to see Verson and Fosse perform “Who’s Got the Pain” in the 1958 film, *Damn Yankees*

GWEN VERDON

Gwen Verdon was a relative newcomer to the Broadway stage when she auditioned for *Damn Yankees*. She had established herself as a comedic talent in the show *Can-Can*, but *Damn Yankees* was her first true starring role. Ms. Verdon was born in Culver City, California in 1926 and was raised and trained by her mother who was a dance teacher. Gwen started dancing professionally when she was 13 but decided to quit at 17 years old to get married. She divorced her husband and began dancing again 10 years later with choreographer Jack Cole. She was working as Cole's assistant on the film *Gentleman Prefer Blondes* when her friend, Michael Kidd, asked her if she was going to New York to audition for the show *Can-Can*. Gwen was initially not going to audition, but changed her mind after speaking with Michael.



The role that launched Gwen's career was a rather small part but was performed so well that it brought the house down. She was a dancer in *Can-Can* and during a comic dance scene, titled the "Apache Dance," she took a knife, in slow motion, out of a block of cheese that a waiter in the scene was carrying, stabbed her lover, then, again in slow motion, put the knife back into the cheese and sauntered offstage. This sounds like a fairly small moment in the show as a whole, and it was, but the audience on opening night in 1953 gave the dance and the comic moment a standing ovation. They refused to let the show move on until a stage manager found Gwen backstage in her dressing room changing and shoved her onstage in her bathrobe to take a bow. According to friend, Cy Feur, "The next morning on the cover of *Life* magazine, there's a picture of

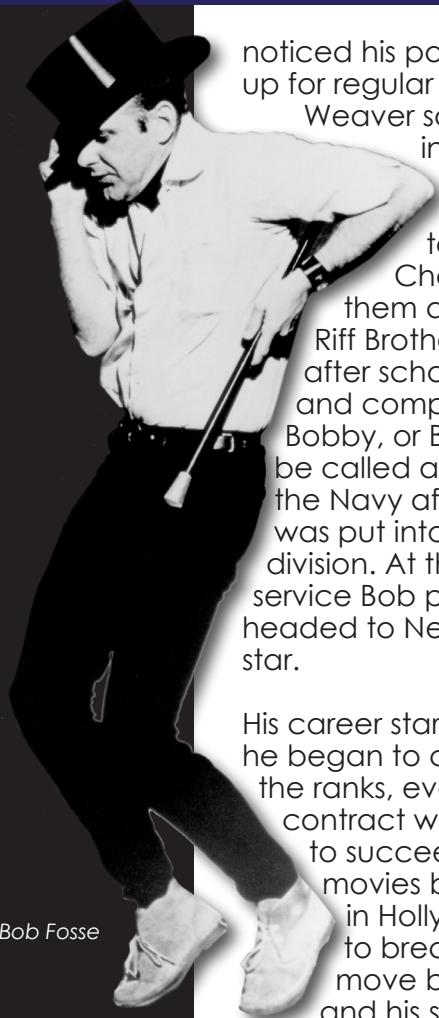
Gwen with her leg straight up in the air and the heel out. She was off! That's old fashioned show business."

Gwen went from *Can-Can* to *Damn Yankees* where she worked with future husband Bob Fosse for the first time. She credited Bob with most of her success in the show saying he choreographed everything from, "the flirtatious quality, the accent, minuscule things like where you push your hair back, when you breathe, when you blink your eyes, and when you move your little finger." Walter Kerr referenced her in his review of *Damn Yankees* saying, "She is simply and insanely inspired. She is everything undesirable made absolutely and forever desirable." Originally, Gwen (as Lola) did not appear onstage until "Whatever Lola Wants, Lola Gets" but she was such a hit during preview performances that the production team added "A Little Brains, A Little Talent" so she could enter the action earlier. Gwen married Bob Fosse in 1960 shortly after his divorce from Joan McCracken, and went on to star in many of his trademark shows like *New Girl In Town*, *Redhead*, *Sweet Charity*, and *Chicago*.

BOB FOSSE

Bob Fosse (one of five siblings) was born in Chicago Illinois on June 23, 1927 to Cyril and Sadie Fosse. His dance career was unwittingly started by his older sister, Patricia. Patricia Fosse was a very awkward young girl and was embarrassed to be taking dance lessons, but her parents considered dance a necessary activity for a young woman and forced her to continue with the hated lessons. She was so miserable that she begged for "Bobby" to come with her. Her parents complied with her request and Bobby began attending classes. Once he was at the Chicago Academy of Theater Arts, his instructor Frederic Weaver

# BROADWAY OR BUST CONTINUED



Bob Fosse

 **CLICK HERE**  
to listen to NPR's  
story "Fosse's  
Genius: Working  
Even As He Was  
Dying"

noticed his potential and signed him up for regular classes at no charge.

Weaver soon put young Bobby into a dance act with another young boy (they were both about ten years old) named Charles Grass and billed them as The Riff Brothers. The Riff Brothers traveled around after school giving performances and competing in local shows. Bobby, or Bob as he preferred to be called as he got older, joined the Navy after high school and was put into their entertainment division. At the end of his military service Bob packed his bags and headed to New York City to be a star.

His career started off slowly but he began to climb steadily up the ranks, even getting a movie contract with MGM. Bob wanted to succeed Gene Kelley in the movies but after a few months in Hollywood, he decided to break his contract and move back to New York and his second wife Joan

McCracken. It was actually Joan who suggested to George Abbott that Bob Fosse be his choreographer for *The Pajama Game*. Mr. Abbott had seen Bob's work and decided to give him a try as a choreographer but also asked Jerome Robbins to be on standby in case things didn't work out. Abbott shouldn't have worried. Fosse passed his first test as a Broadway choreographer with

flying colors so it was truly a "no brainer" when he was asked to come back and choreograph *Damn Yankees*.

Fosse went on to become one of the greatest dancers, directors and choreographers in musical theatre history with stage hits like *Bells Are Ringing*, *New Girl in Town*, *Redhead*,

*How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, *Little Me*, *Pleasures and Palaces*, *Sweet Charity*, *Pippin*, *Liza with a Z*, *Chicago*, *Dancin'*, and *Big Deal*. He eventually returned to Hollywood and was involved with such films as *Sweet Charity*, *Cabaret*, *The Little Prince*, *All That Jazz*, and *Star 80*. Something that sums up Mr. Fosse best is an interaction described in his biography, *All His Jazz*. The story goes that a young actor named James Kirkwood, with whom Bob had worked about 10 years earlier, came in to audition for one of his shows. Bob recognized the young man and went up to the stage to speak with him. Bob asked if he was nervous, "No," said Kirkwood, full of baloney. "I'm just fine. I never knew you were going to turn into Bob Fosse." Bob grinned. "Neither did I, he said."



Bob Fosse and Gwen Verdon.

## BOB AND GWEN

Gwen Verdon and Bob Fosse had a daughter named Nicole and they continued to work together until Bob's death in 1987. Their marriage was cause for speculation in many social circles because they had been legally separated from each other since 1971 and Gwen had even been known to have Bob and his girlfriends at her home for dinner. Gwen Verdon often said, "A lot of people don't understand our relationship because he lives in his house and I live in mine. It's a very strange relationship but I think it's wonderful." Despite their differences, Verdon and Fosse were one of the brightest dance pairings to ever have crossed a Broadway stage.



Bob Fosse in rehearsal for *Pleasures and Palaces*, 1965.

# LESSON

**Skills Applied:** music appreciation, critical thinking, group participation, and critical listening

## English Language Arts Grades Pre-K-12:

**Exploring and Responding to Literature Standard 2.3:** Students listen to, read, and respond to texts about and from many cultures and times.

## The Arts: Music Grades 5-8

**Content Standard 9: History and Culture:** Students will understand music in relation to history and culture.

## **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.9-10.6**

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.

# Middle School Language Arts

## BEFORE THE SHOW: Exploring Themes

### The Music and Dance of *Damn Yankees*

*Damn Yankees* uses numerous musical and dance forms throughout the course of the show. From Latin styles to hoedowns, the show is infused with diverse musical compositions and highlights choreography based on many different styles. Use this lesson to explore the different genres of music and dance styles that are portrayed in *Damn Yankees*.

#### ACTIVITY

Have your students read the "About the Show: The Writers" and "Gwen Verdon and Bob Fosse" sections in the Student Guide to familiarize themselves with the writers and choreographer of *Damn Yankees*. Have a discussion with your students to assess their concepts of show tunes and musical theatre dance styles. Contextualize the genres by exploring examples from books, theatre, television, and film.

Discuss the following questions with your class:

- a) Based on songs that you have listened to and videos you've seen, what are some characteristics of Mambo and Tango?
- b) Based on songs that you've listened to and videos you've seen, what are some characteristics of Soft Shoe and a country Hoedown?
- c) Are there other books, plays, television, or film pieces that you have seen that featured music or dance from these genres? Name them.
- d) What aspects of the songs made you conclude that it belongs to the Mambo, Soft Shoe, or Tango?

Play the songs "Whatever Lola Wants," "Shoeless Joe From Hannibal, MO," "Those Were The Good Old Days," "Who's Got The Pain," and "Heart" from the *Damn Yankees* Original Broadway Cast album. While listening, have students raise their hands and identify the style of each song and why they think it fits into that genre.

# LESSON

**Skills Applied:** music appreciation, critical thinking, public speaking, critical listening historical and contextual research

## English Language Arts Grades Pre-K-12:

Exploring and Responding to Literature Standard 2.3; Students listen to, read, and respond to texts about and from many cultures and times.

### **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.9-10.6**

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.

### **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.7**

Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

## High School English BEFORE THE SHOW: Exploring Themes The Music and Dance of *Damn Yankees*

The show *Damn Yankees* uses numerous musical and dance forms throughout the course of the show. From Latin styles to hoedowns, the show is infused with diverse musical compositions and highlights choreography based on many different styles. Use this lesson to explore the different genres of music and the various dance styles that exist in *Damn Yankees*.

### ACTIVITY

Have your students read the "About the Show: The Writers" and "Gwen Verdon and Bob Fosse" sections in the Student Guide to familiarize themselves with the writers and choreographer of *Damn Yankees*. Have a discussion with your students to assess their concepts of show tunes and musical theater dance styles. Contextualize the genres by exploring examples from books, theatre, television, and film.

Discuss the following questions with your class:

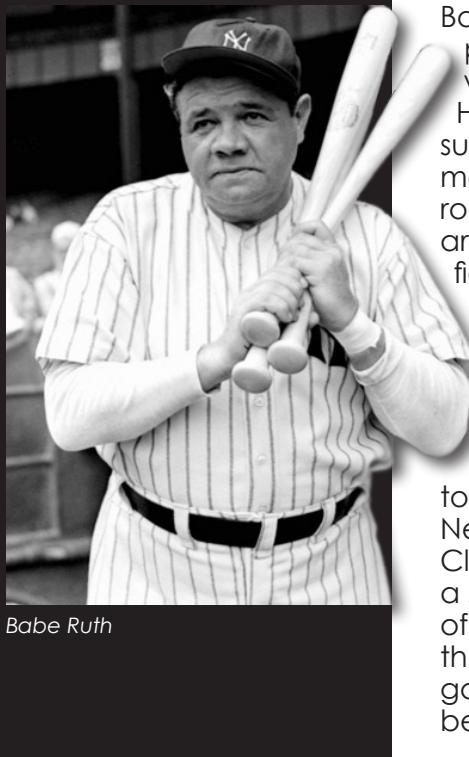
- a) Based on songs that you've listened to and videos you've seen, what are some characteristics of Mambo and Tango?
- b) Based on songs that you've listened to and videos you've seen, what are some characteristics of Soft Shoe and a hoedown?
- c) What other books, plays, television, or film pieces have you seen that might feature music or dance from these genres?

Play the songs "Whatever Lola Wants," "Shoeless Joe From Hannibal, MO," "Those Were The Good Old Days," "Who's Got The Pain," and "Heart" from the *Damn Yankees* Original Broadway Cast album. While listening, have students raise their hand and identify the genre of each song and why they think it fits into that genre.

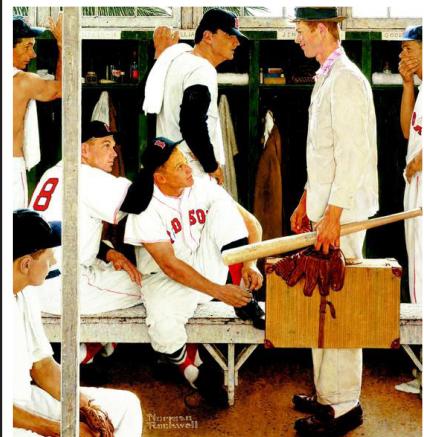
Pick one of the following styles and create a short presentation on its history and its use in *Damn Yankees*.

1. Mambo
2. Soft Shoe
3. Barbershop Quartet
4. Tango
5. Hoedown

# THE HISTORY OF BASEBALL



Babe Ruth



Norman Rockwell's "The Rookie"



**[CLICK HERE](#)**  
to visit the Baseball  
Hall of Fame  
website and learn  
more about the  
history of baseball

Baseball is often called America's pastime and has been intertwined with our national identity for years. However, some people might be surprised to know that baseball has many similarities to the English game, rounders. Both rounders and baseball are played on a diamond-shaped field with a base or marker at each corner and one base where the hitter stands to take his swing. One big difference between rounders and baseball is that if a ball hits the field in rounders the runner must be physically hit by the ball to be considered out. In 1845 the New York Knickerbocker Base Ball Club was formed and formulated a set of rules for the game, many of which are still used today. Once there was a set rulebook for this new game other clubs were formed and it began to gain popularity.

Interestingly enough, until about 1861 there were two versions of baseball. There was a New York version of baseball using a hard ball and using it to "tag" players, and a Massachusetts version using a soft ball and hitting players to strike them out. If you're a baseball fan in modern America, then you have heard of the Yankees/Red Sox rivalry. This rivalry is thought to date back to the 1900s when Babe Ruth was famously traded by Harry Frazee from the Boston Red Sox to the New York Yankees. But with a division between New York and Massachusetts dating back to the 1800s and the start of baseball, maybe the two teams were cursed to be rivals from the game's inception.

And speaking of curses, the trade of Babe Ruth led to the urban legend of The Curse of the Bambino. By 1932 the Red Sox had lost 111 games and the apparent inability for the Red Sox to win consistently or make it into a World Series became known as a curse. Supposedly, the Sultan of Swat, the Babe himself, had cursed the Sox to a losing streak that would not be broken for 86 years. But before baseball could become the thriving industry that it is today,

organization and rules had to be created. The National Association of Base Ball Players was organized in 1857 and more clubs in the New York area began to pop up. Soon other cities began following New York's example. In 1859, Washington, D.C. organized a baseball club and in 1860, clubs were formed in Lowell, Massachusetts; Allegheny, Pennsylvania; and Hartford, Connecticut. Baseball was not a professional sport until 1871 when the National Association of Professional Base Ball Players was formed. The Association only existed until 1875 and many baseball scholars will debate whether or not it would qualify as the first major league.

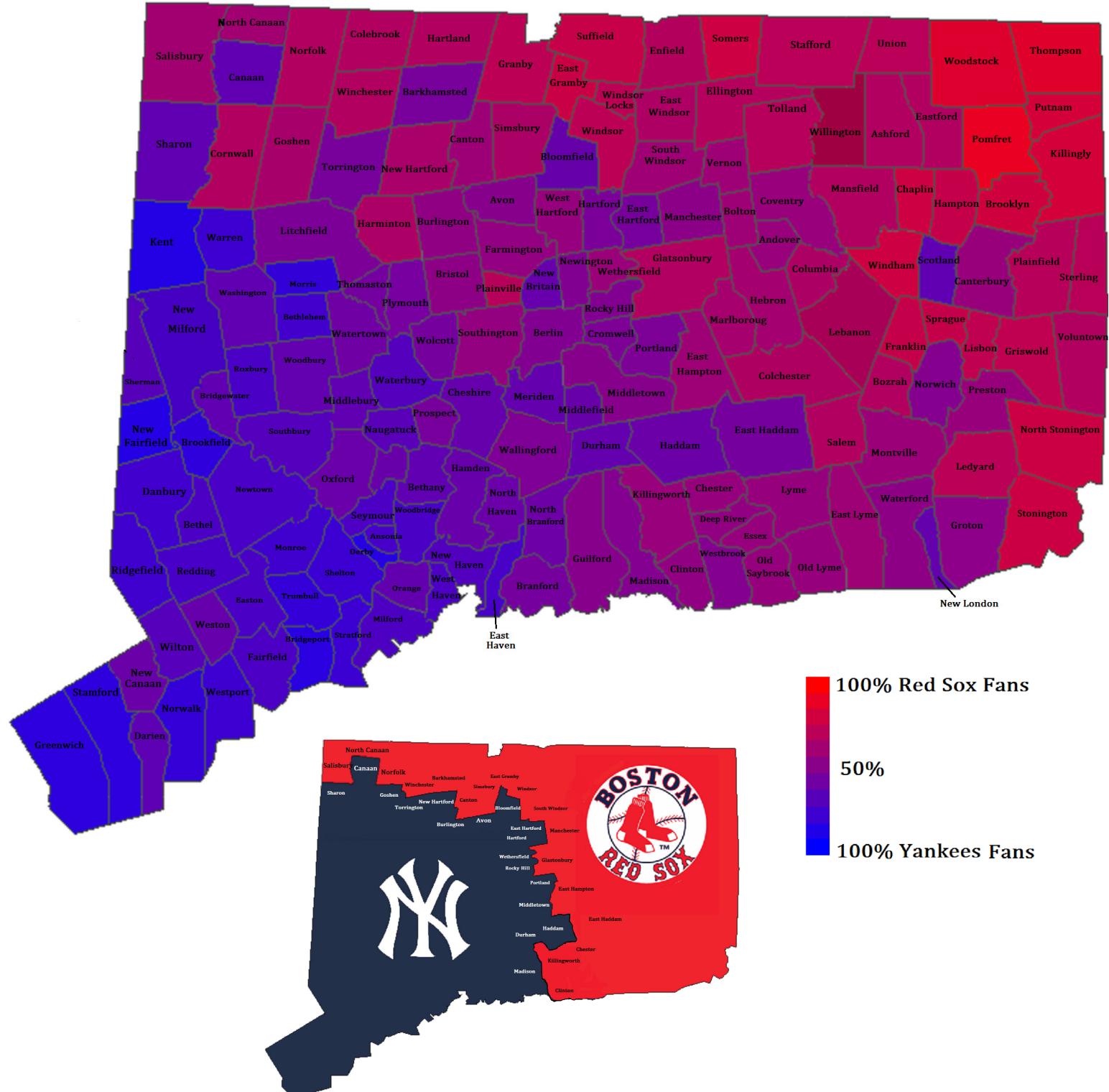
Despite differences in playing style, baseball eventually found a standardized method of play that worked for all involved and it began to become a true spectator sport. The game was eventually divided into the American League and the National League which led to the first World Series in 1902—pitting the champions of each league against each other. The newly established World Series was an immediate hit in the United States and quickly took its place alongside the Fourth of July and Christmas as a popular yearly rite. In fact in 1911, *Everybody's Magazine* called the series, "the very quintessence and consummation of the Most Perfect Thing in America." Baseball was quickly adopted into American culture and soon sayings like "he threw me a curve ball," "covering all the bases," and "that came out of left field" became common phrases. Baseball was even integrated into the arts with popular poems like "Casey at Bat," songs like "Take Me Out to the Ball Game," and illustrations on the cover of *The Saturday Evening Post* by Norman Rockwell. Soon baseball was not just a game to Americans, it became a symbol of the country's potential with men like Babe Ruth and Jackie Robinson embodying the continued faith of our society that all people were the masters of their own destiny.

# BASEBALL'S BIGGEST RIVALS

The Yankees/ Red Sox rivalry is a way of life in New England, but where do the borders of fandom really start? Ben Blatt, a researcher for the Harvard Sports Analysis Collective conducted a study on where the Red Sox and Yankees fan borders are in New England and some of the results might surprise you.



[CLICK HERE to read the full article and see all the results](#)



# LESSON

## Middle School Social Studies UNDERSTANDING: Baseball Timeline

**Skills Applied:** critical thinking, basic drawing, historical research, evaluation and selection of events

### **History Grades 5-8**

**History/Social Studies Literacy 2.2**  
Students interpret information from variety of primary and secondary sources including electronic media.

### **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7:**

Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

Damn Yankees focuses on baseball as an important part of American Identity and cultural influence. Use the following lesson to explore baseball history and to highlight its importance to society.

### **ACTIVITY**

Have students read the “History of Baseball” section in the Student Guide to familiarize themselves with the origins of baseball in America. Ask students to do the following:

1. Research and create a short timeline of the evolution of baseball in the United States.
2. Consider what they think is the greatest achievement in baseball history.

After students have created a basic timeline of the major events in baseball history, have them focus on the career of Jackie Robinson. Robinson is the ballplayer who broke the “gentleman’s agreement” that no African American player would be allowed to play in major league baseball.

Students will construct character sketches of Robinson and various people who played a significant role during his entry and first years in major league baseball. Distribute the “Character Sketch Handout” on the following page to all students and review the directions. Once students are familiar with the directions have them choose which person from Jackie Robinson’s life that they would like to learn more about. After students have developed their sketches, briefly review their work with the following questions:

1. What was the character’s position on Robinson’s integration into baseball?
2. What life influences led to this position?
3. What surprised students about their character?

### **The Characters**

- Jackie Robinson
- His mother, Mallie Robinson
- His wife, Rachel Robinson
- Branch Rickey, general manager, Brooklyn Dodgers
- Red Barber, sportscaster
- Leo Durocher, manager, Brooklyn Dodgers

After discussing the people in Jackie Robinson’s life, have students analyze what impact Robinson had on baseball history. Did students see any significant changes or events on their timeline that could be a result of Robinson’s entrance into the sport of baseball?

Feel free to use the following websites for research and guidance:

- <http://baseballhall.org/>
- <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query>
- <http://www.britannica.com/>
- [http://www.basebal-almanac.com/quotes/pee\\_wee\\_reese\\_quotes.shtml](http://www.basebal-almanac.com/quotes/pee_wee_reese_quotes.shtml)
- <http://www.baseballhistorian.com/index.cfm>
- <http://www.basebal-reference.com>
- <http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/players>
- <http://www.jackierobinson.org>
- [http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/history/mlb\\_negro\\_leagues\\_profile.jsp?player=robinson\\_jackie](http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/history/mlb_negro_leagues_profile.jsp?player=robinson_jackie)
- <http://www.nytimes.com/specials/baseball/robinson-index.html>
- <http://www.sportingnews.com/archives/jackie>

# CHARACTER SKETCH HANDOUT

**Directions:** In this activity, you will research some of the people involved in the life of Jackie Robinson and how they affected his life and career. Use this organizer to record your information on the person's characteristics from several different sources.

## CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Name	
Place of Birth	
Occupation	
Relationship to Jackie Robinson	
Personality Description	
How the person saw his or her place in society	
Values (career, family, country, money, fame)	
Career highlights and life events	

# LESSON

## High School History UNDERSTANDING: Baseball Timeline & Ideals

### Skills Applied

critical thinking, basic drawing, historical research, evaluation and selection of events

### History Grades 9-12

#### History/ Content Knowledge

**1.13;** Students will demonstrate an understanding of the characteristics of and interactions among culture, social systems, and institutions.

### The Arts: Visual Arts Grades 9-12

**Content Standard 1;** Students will conceive and create original works of art that demonstrate a connection between personal expression and the intentional use of art materials, techniques, and processes.

### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7:

Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

Damn Yankees focuses on baseball as an important part of American Identity and cultural influence. Use the following lesson to explore baseball history and to highlight its importance to society.

### ACTIVITY

Have students read the "History of Baseball" and "Culture of the 1950s" sections of the Student Guide to familiarize themselves with the origins of baseball in America. Ask students to do the following:

1. Research and create a short timeline of the evolution of baseball in the United States.
2. Is there a player that they feel has changed the game or face of baseball overall?
3. In what ways did the growing political unrest of the 1950s have an impact on the idealization of baseball as America's pastime?

After students have created a basic timeline of the major events in baseball history, have them focus on the career of Jackie Robinson. Robinson is the ballplayer who broke the "gentleman's agreement" that no black player would be allowed to play in major league baseball.

As a class, debate and analyze the motives of Branch Rickey, who was integral in breaking baseball's color barrier.

Was he strictly interested in the economic aspect, or was he a supporter of integration because it was the right thing to do?

How did Branch Rickey and Leo Durocher, the Manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, come to the decision to challenge that status quo in baseball?

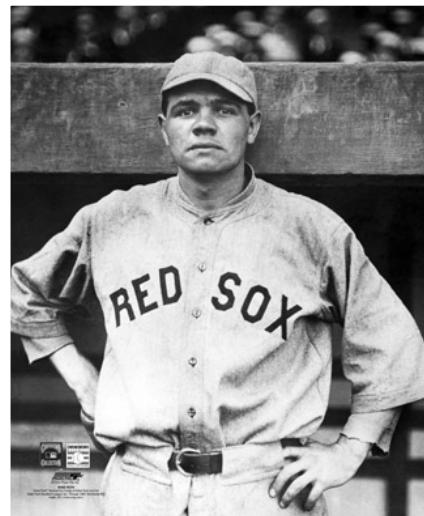
Are there any similarities between Jackie Robinson's situation and NBA Player, Jason Collins', situation today?

Once students have considered the aforementioned questions have them break into small groups. Students will analyze their baseball timelines to find the event that they think had the most significant impact on baseball as a sport and on society as a whole. Once each group has agreed on an event, have them present their opinion to the class with reasons to support their thoughts.

Feel free to use the following websites for research and guidance:

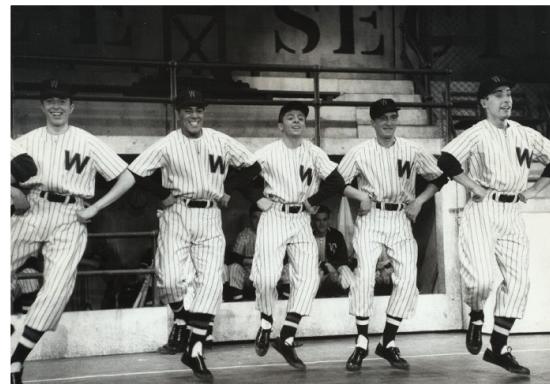
- <http://baseballhall.org/>
- <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query>
- <http://www.britannica.com/>
- [http://www.basebal-almanac.com/quotes/pee\\_wee\\_reese\\_quotes.shtml](http://www.basebal-almanac.com/quotes/pee_wee_reese_quotes.shtml)
- <http://www.baseballhistorian.com/index.cfm>
- <http://www.basebal-reference.com>
- <http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/players>
- <http://www.jackierobinson.org>
- [http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/history/mlb\\_negro\\_leagues\\_profile.jsp?player=robinson\\_jackie](http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/history/mlb_negro_leagues_profile.jsp?player=robinson_jackie)
- <http://www.nytimes.com/specials/baseball/robinson-index.html>
- <http://www.sportingnews.com/archives/jackie>

# RANDOM FACTS



Babe Ruth

- Babe Ruth was sold to the New York Yankees by Harry Frazee in 1920 and Frazee allegedly used the money from the sale to finance musical theater performances.
- Damn Yankees originally featured a team called the Washington Senators, not the Boston Red Sox.
- The Washington Senators were a real baseball team; they changed location in 1961 and became the Minnesota Twins.
- Jackie Robinson joined the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. He broke the color barrier in professional baseball 6 years before public schools were integrated in 1954.
- The Boston Red Sox did not get their name until 1907.
- The movie version of Damn Yankees was released in England with the title, *Whatever Lola Wants* so they could avoid using the word "damn" in advertisements.



Original Broadway cast of Damn Yankees, 1955

- The original poster for Damn Yankees featured Gwen Verdon in a baseball uniform but ticket sales for Damn Yankees were not doing as well as had been expected, so a new poster was created featuring Gwen Verdon in her skimpy outfit from the song "Whatever Lola Wants, Lola Gets." The new advertisement caused a major upswing in ticket sales.
- While filming the movie version of Damn Yankees there was a musicians strike going on in Hollywood. The actors in the movie had to sing along with a metronome to keep them on beat since there were no musicians to play for their scenes.
- The only member of the original Broadway cast of Damn Yankees not to reprise their role for the film was Stephen Douglass.

- The 1956 Broadway show Damn Yankees was nominated for 9 Tony Awards and won 7.
- The role of Lola was originally offered to Mitzi Gaynor and Zizi Jean Marie.
- Bob Fosse appears as Lola's dance partner in "Who's Got The Pain" for the movie Damn Yankees but is not listed in the film's credits as a dancer.
- Jean Stapleton made her screen debut in the movie version of Damn Yankees.
- Bob Fosse auditioned for a role in a George Abbott show as a teenager but did not get the part.



Gwen Verdon and Stephen Douglass recording the original Broadway cast album for Damn Yankees

# THEATRE TERMS



Orchestra Pit

**BOOK:** The script or libretto of a musical.

**DOWNSTAGE:** The part of the stage which is closest to the audience.

**DRESSING ROOMS:** Rooms in a theater provided for the actors in which they change costumes and apply makeup.

**FRONT OF HOUSE:** The part of the theater known as the auditorium where the audience is seated, the lobby and the box office.

**GREEN ROOM:** A place for the performers to relax while waiting to go on stage.

**LIBRETTO:** The term that describes the book or script of a musical.

**ORCHESTRA PIT:** An area at the front of house, sometimes hidden from the audience, where the musicians and conductor work during a show.

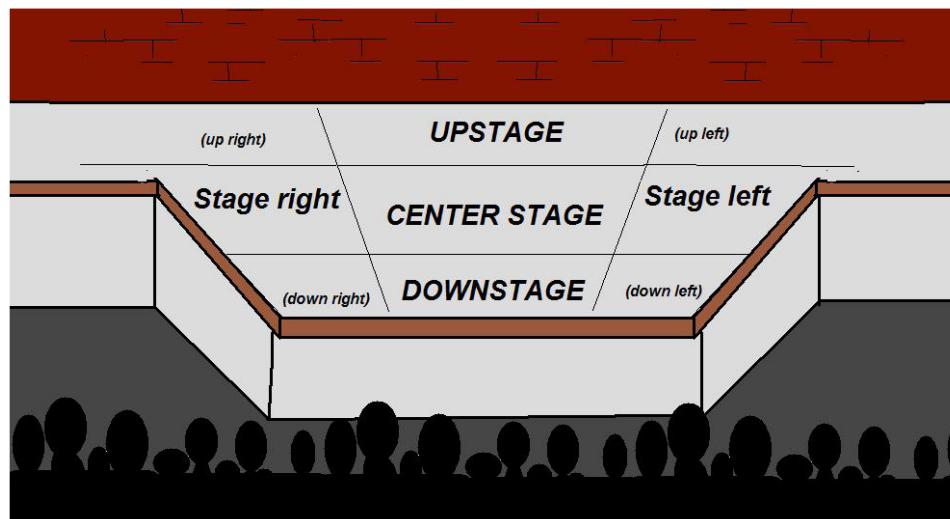
**OVERTURE:** The beginning music in a musical which usually contains parts from songs that will be heard throughout the show.

**PROPS:** All the items used in a play to tell the story not including scenery or costumes.

**REPRISE:** When a song or part of a song is repeated.



Goodspeed's Prop Shop



# RESOURCES

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# THEATRE ETIQUETTE

Seeing a musical at the Goodspeed Opera House 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.



## TAKE ADVANTAGE OF GOODSPED'S EXCITING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN 2014!

### AUDITION INTENSIVE • Aug 1 - 3, 2014

Goodspeed's Audition Intensive is a dynamic three-day program to help high school Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors prepare for college musical theatre auditions.

### MUSICAL THEATRE DANCE INTENSIVE • Aug 3 - 10, 2014

Goodspeed's Dance Intensive is designed as a musical theatre dance boot camp for college age performers and young professionals. Sessions are focused on preparing dancers for professional musical theatre auditions and the week will culminate with a full Broadway style mock audition.

### OBSERVERSHIP PROGRAM • Rolling Admission - Apply Now!

This tuition-based program allows talented young theatre artists to shadow Goodspeed's Director, Choreographer, or Music Director during rehearsals for a Goodspeed Opera House or Norma Terris production.

### AUDITION MASTER CLASS • October 25, 2014

#### Preparing a Successful Musical Theatre College Audition

Goodspeed's Audition Master Class is a one-day workshop with Brent Wagner, Chair of the acclaimed Musical Theatre Department at the University of Michigan.

### SCENE PAINTING INTENSIVE • Winter 2015

Don't miss this program for college-age participants, professionals, and educators.

### MUSIC DIRECTION INTENSIVE • Winter 2015

During this week-long intensive, participants will use the latest technology to receive hands on training from internationally renowned Music Direction experts in the management and implementation of the audition, rehearsal, and orchestration processes.

### MUSICAL MINDS

A team of world class performers and staff from Goodspeed Musicals can visit your location to give an educational presentation. The Musical Minds experience is appropriate for any age level and the program incorporates live dance, music, and acting to improve any group's appreciation of musical theatre. For more information, please contact Joshua Ritter, Education & Library Director, at [jritter@goodspeed.org](mailto:jritter@goodspeed.org).

### INTERNSHIP & APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM • Rolling Admission - Apply Now!

Goodspeed's Administrative Internship and Technical Apprenticeship programs serve as a training ground for aspiring theatre professionals by providing experiential learning, networking opportunities, regular seminars taught by staff members, and bimonthly meetings with members of the senior staff.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT  
[www.goodspeed.org/education-library](http://www.goodspeed.org/education-library)

The Max Showalter Center for Education in Musical Theatre