

Thank you for participating in Western Canada Theatre's matinee programming! We would like you and your students to get the most out of your experience with us. Included in this package is some inside information exclusive to teachers and students, discussion questions, classroom activities, and online resources. We hope you find them useful before and after seeing the show.

Please take a few minutes to review appropriate theatre etiquette with your students. While clapping and laughing are most appropriate for the theatre, whispering, talking, and excessive movement during the show is distracting to others in the audience and our actors on stage.

Audience members are encouraged to get comfortable, remove coats, use the washroom and turn all electronic devices OFF before a show begins. Please remind your students that texting is not allowed during the show.

Remembering theatre etiquette makes the show more enjoyable for everyone!

Warning: Due to the historical content of the show, there is racially provocative language.

DRIVING MISS DAISY

A Study Guide

Production Personnel	3
Western Canada Theatre Staff	4
Playwright – Alfred Uhry.....	5
The World of the Play	6
The Plot.....	6
The Characters	6
The Themes of Interest in Driving Miss Daisy.....	7
Rules of Interaction and Social Etiquette	7
Transformative Power of Friendship.....	8
Civil and Human Rights of the Elderly, Religious, Political and Racial Groups	8
A Civil Rights Timeline	10
An Interview with Nicola Lipman	12
Activities in the Classroom.....	13
Activity #1: Theme Discussion	13
Activity #2: Social Etiquette and New Rules of Interaction.....	14
Activity #3: Theatre in the Classroom: Tableaus.....	15
Activity #4: Post-Show Classroom Discussion	17
Activity #5: An Unlikely Friendship	18
Resources Used	19

Production Personnel

Cast

Miss Daisy
Hoke
Boolie

Nicola Lipman
Walter Borden
Brian Linds

Creative Team

Ashlie Corcoran	Director
Jung-Hye Kim	Set Designer
Tim Fort	Lighting Designer
Conor Moore	Lighting Associate
Sean Mulcahy	Costume Designer
Adam Harendorf	Sound Designer
Isabelle Ly	Stage Manager
Skylar Nakazawa	Assistant Stage Manager
Christine Leroux	Apprentice Stage Manager

Western Canada Theatre Staff

Daryl Cloran
Lori Marchand

Artistic Director
General Manager

Administration

Ron Thompson
Marilyn Zuke
Catrina Crowe
Coby Fulton
Bryce Herman
Alexis Tuytten
Terri Runnalls
Sylvia Gropp

Financial Manager
Associate Financial Manager
Marketing & Communications Director
Development Director
Fundraiser and Marketing Consultant
Special Events & Fund Development Coordinator
Education Coordinator
Special Events and Administration Assistant

Production

Ross Nichol
Heather Cant
Gal Minnes
Brian St-Amand
Cindy Wiebe
Andrew Wallace
Jungyeon Ji
Darren John
Roya Mole
Joel Eccleston

Production Manager
Associate Artistic Director
Production Technical Director
Sagebrush Technical Director
Head of Wardrobe
Head of Carpentry
Head of Properties
Technician
Technician
Technician

Facilities

Heather Regan
Jean Choi
Allison Clow
Phyllis Mader
Carling Ryan
Melissa Thomas

Facilities Manager
Volunteer Coordinator
Guest Services
Guest Services
Guest Services
Guest Services

Kamloops Live Box Office

Janet Riggs
Judy Day
Geraldine Penny

Box Office Manager
Box Office Staff
Box Office Staff

Playwright – Alfred Uhry



Alfred Uhry, a playwright, lyricist, and screenwriter, was born in 1936 into a Jewish family in Atlanta, Georgia, the son of a furniture designer and a social worker. Uhry graduated from high school in 1954 and subsequently graduated from Brown University where he wrote two original musicals. Uhry's early work for the stage was as a lyricist and librettist for a number of commercially unsuccessful musicals. His first collaboration with Robert Waldman was the disastrous 1968 musical *Here's Where I Belong*, which closed after one performance. He celebrated more success with *The Robber Bridegroom*, which was mounted on Broadway in both 1975 and 1976, enjoyed a year-long national tour, and garnered Uhry his first Tony nomination.

Driving Miss Daisy (1987) is the first in what is known as his "Atlanta Trilogy" of plays, all set during the first half of the 20th century. Produced off-Broadway at Playwrights Horizons, the play earned him the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. He adapted it into the screenplay for a 1989 film starring Jessica Tandy and Morgan Freeman, an adaptation which was awarded the Academy Award for Writing (Adapted Screenplay). He received a Tony Award for the second of the trilogy, *The Last Night of Ballyhoo* (1996). The third in the trilogy was a 1998 musical called *Parade*, which also earned him a Tony Award for Best Book of a Musical.

Uhry is the only playwright to win the Pulitzer Prize, an Academy Award and a Tony award for his work. He is married to Joanna Kellogg. They have four daughters and live in New York.

"I think the primary function of a playwright is to entertain audiences and take their minds away from their own lives while they are in the theatre. If they come away with something to think about, that's all the better." –Uhry

"I want people to know this is a story about regular people and how they learn, change and grow." -Uhry

The World of the Play

The Plot

The play spans a period of twenty-five years during the civil rights movement. At the beginning of the play, Daisy Werthan, a seventy-two-year-old, southern Jewish widow, has just crashed her brand new car while backing it out of the garage. After the accident, her son Boolie insists that she is not capable of driving. Over her protests, he hires a driver — Hoke Coleburn, an uneducated African American who is sixty. At first, Daisy wants nothing to do with Hoke. She is afraid of giving herself the airs of a rich person, even though Boolie is paying Hoke's salary. She strongly values her independence, so she also resents having someone around her house. The play follows the development of an unlikely and special relationship during a time of great change.

The Characters

Daisy Werthan is a 72 year old Jewish widow and former school teacher when the play begins and is 97 years old by the end of the play.

Hoke Colburn is 60 years old at the beginning of the play and 85 at the end. He is an uneducated, unemployed African American Christian man and a member of the working class. He is hired by Boolie Werthan, Daisy's son, to work as Daisy's driver. He has previously worked as a driver and milk-delivery man.

Boolie Werthan, Daisy's son, is 40 years old when the play begins and 65 at the end. He has inherited his father's printing company, and as the years progress, it makes him one of the best established, leading businessmen in the community. He has a wife named Florine.

The Themes of Interest in Driving Miss Daisy

Rules of Interaction and Social Etiquette

Etiquette is a system of rules that dictate how people should interact with one another. At the beginning of *Driving Miss Daisy*, it's 1948 and Miss Daisy Werthan is 72-years of age, having been born in 1876. In the early 1900s, when Miss Daisy was a young women living in Georgia, she would have been highly aware of the rules of social etiquette and ensured that she followed these rules very closely. Southern manners at the turn-of- the-century involved an extremely complex system of dos and don'ts that upheld the values of the day, such as order and stability; offering hospitality to guests; refinement and delicacy; diction and poise.

Observance, or non-observance, of the minute details and rules of etiquette indicated one's class and level of consideration for others. The rules of etiquette demanded conformity to certain norms of behaviour in order to get along in society. Disregard for the rules of etiquette could be the cause of social ostracism.

In the following excerpt we see that Daisy is concerned that Hoke's actions will give a negative impression to others.

HOKE: How yo' Temple this mornin', Miss Daisy?

DAISY: Why are you here?

HOKE: I bring you to de Temple like you tell me. (He is helping her into the car.)

DAISY: I can get myself in. Just go. (She makes a light little social smile and a wave out the window.)
Hurry up out of here! (Hoke starts up the car.)

HOKE: Yassum.

DAISY: I didn't say speed. I said get me away from here.

HOKE: Somethin' wrong back yonder?

DAISY: No.

HOKE: Somethin' I done?

DAISY: No. (A beat.) Yes.

HOKE: I ain' done nothin'!

DAISY: You had the car right in front of the front door of the Temple! Like I was Queen of Romania!
Everybody saw you! Didn't I tell you to wait for me out back?

Transformative Power of Friendship

Daisy and Hoke come from two different worlds. Hoke is an uneducated, unemployed Christian, while Daisy is a Jewish, retired school teacher who has been able to retire comfortably. Despite these differences, their relationship transcends all societal boundaries placed between these two unlikely individuals.

At the beginning of the play, we see that Daisy wants nothing to do with Hoke. At the end, however, she trusts him and allows him to fully take care of her. This is achieved by Daisy and Hoke slowly developing their relationship through talking and sharing stories in their lives. Hoke is very honest with Daisy and while stubborn at times, she appreciates that he is so candid.

Civil and Human Rights of the Elderly, Religious, Political and Racial Groups: The Changing Values in the South from 1948-1973.

In the story, acts of segregation and integration are fuelled by the racism and prejudice of this time period. We see examples in the story that some progress is being made. These instances are results of the civil rights movement that was gaining considerable momentum during this period.

The following excerpt depicts several prejudices that occur in the play.

HOKE: You cain' go to Temple today, Miz Daisy.

DAISY: Why not? What in the world is the matter with you?

HOKE: Somebody done bomb the Temple.

DAISY: What? Bomb the Temple!

HOKE: Yassum. Dat why we stuck here so long.

DAISY: I don't believe it.

HOKE: That what the policeman tell me up yonder. Say it happen about a half hour ago.

DAISY: Oh no. Oh my God! Well, was anybody there? Were people hurt?

HOKE: Din' say.

DAISY: Who would do that?

HOKE: You know as good as me. Always be the same ones.

DAISY: Well, it's a mistake. I'm sure they meant to bomb one of the conservative synagogues or the orthodox one. The Temple is reform. Everybody knows that.

HOKE: It doan' matter to them people. A Jew is a Jew to them folks. Jes like light or dark, we all the same nigger.

This excerpt shows Daisy's opinion that her temple is more accepting than others. She has blinders on that do not allow her to see that she does indeed have negative opinions of others. We also see in Hoke's final comment that he too makes judgement on a certain group of people.

Other examples in the play:

- Boolie makes decisions for Daisy behind her back because he thinks she is unable to drive and take care of herself.
- Daisy's invitation to Hoke to attend the Martin Luther King dinner. Daisy believes she is broadening her view, but it depicts the fact that she has a long way to go. Hoke states, "...next time you ask me someplace, ask me regular".

In the following excerpt we see examples of preconceived ideas that existed at the time:

BOOLIE: How long you been out of work?

HOKE: Since back befo' las' November.

BOOLIE: Long time.

HOKE: Well, Mist' Werthan, you try bein' me and looking for work. They hirin' young if they hirin' colored, an' they ain' even hirin' much young, seems like. Mist' Werthan? Y'all people Jewish, ain' you?

BOOLIE: Yes we are. Why do you ask?

HOKE: I'd druther drive for Jews. People always talkin' bout they stingy and cheap, but don' say none of that 'round me.

"Things changin', but they ain't change all dat much." -Hoke

A Civil Rights Timeline

Driving Miss Daisy provides an overview of the changing values in the South between 1948 and 1973. In the story, acts of segregation and integration are fuelled by the racism and prejudice of this time period. Not only is it a story about the transformative power of friendship that transcends all the societal boundaries placed between two unlikely individuals, it is also a story about civil and human rights of the elderly, as well as of religious, political, and ethnic groups.

During these years, the civil rights movement gained considerable momentum and included some of its most important developments.

1947 - First Freedom Ride organized by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE).

1954 - U.S. Supreme Court declares school segregation unconstitutional in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* ruling.

1955 - Rosa Parks refuses to move to the back of a Montgomery, Alabama, bus as required by city ordinance and is arrested. A boycott follows and the bus segregation ordinance is declared unconstitutional. Federal Interstate Commerce Commission bans segregation on interstate trains and buses.



Little Rock Seven

1957 - Arkansas Gov. Orval Rubus uses National Guard to block nine black students from attending a Little Rock High School; following a court order, President Eisenhower sends in federal troops to ensure compliance.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. leads the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott. In 1960, four black college students begin sit-ins at lunch counter of a Greensboro, North Carolina, restaurant where black patrons are not served.

1961- Freedom Rides begin from Washington, D.C., into Southern states.

1962- President Kennedy sends federal troops to the University of Mississippi to quell riots so that James Meredith, the school's first black student, can attend.

1962 - The Supreme Court rules that segregation is unconstitutional in all transportation facilities.

1963 - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivers "I Have a Dream" speech to hundreds of thousands at the March on Washington.



March on Washington

Civil rights leader Medgar Evers is killed by a sniper's bullet.

Race riots prompt modified martial law in Cambridge, Maryland.

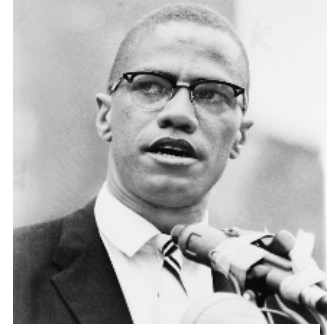
Church bombing in Birmingham, Alabama, leaves four young black girls dead.

1964 - Congress passes Civil Rights Act declaring discrimination based on race illegal after 75-day long filibuster.

Riots in Harlem, New York and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Mississippi "freedom summer": over 1000 students, teachers, and others converge on Mississippi to organize black voters.

1965 - March from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, to demand protection for voting rights; two civil rights workers slain earlier in the year in Selma.



Malcolm X

Malcolm X assassinated.

Riot in Watts, Los Angeles leave 34 dead.

Congress passes Voting Rights

1967 – First African American, Thurgood Marshall, is named to the Supreme Court.

1968 – Martin Luther King, Jr. is assassinated.



Martin Luther King Jr

1972 – Congress passes the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, opening the door for Affirmative Action.

An Interview with Nicola Lipman

Nicola Lipman will be playing lead character, Daisy Werthan in *Driving Miss Daisy*.

What drew you to the character of Daisy Werthan? What do you have in common with the character? Did you watch the film before portraying her and did that in any way influence how you found the character?

When I was offered the role of Daisy Werthan (for the first time two years ago), I opened the script, having never seen a production or read it before or seen the movie; even so, I have to admit now, in retrospect, that I had certain preconceptions...based on the years of publicity the play and, subsequently, the movie have provoked since it was written in 1986. I was surprised and shocked by the humanity, the complexity, the humour and intelligence of this woman and her two companions who travel through the 25 years of this story, which is revealed in an intensely, brief 90 minutes. My encounter with Daisy has come at a time in my own life, where I am her and she is me and she is my Mother who died many years ago and she is my father who passed away recently at 100 years of age. There is currently such a swell of people who are living longer; and their children and families who are dealing and trying to cope with all the accompanying problems, prejudices and joys, so it thrills and challenges me to be Daisy and all that she represents. We have a lot in common, Daisy and I, but, oddly, the character trait of hers that I most relate to is her obsessive desire for privacy and independence.

What are the main themes in the play? Do you have a favourite theme that helped you through the process?

The story deals with so many aspects of life besides aging...love, class, parents and children, politics, religion and the passing of time, in such clear funny non-judgemental ways, it speaks to everyone. Daisy develops and changes over the 25 years that the play covers, so having the chance to re-examine her and her life is a rare opportunity as an actor to do what one tries to do in real life: look back and attempt to remember and understand what brought us to who and what we are now.

How does it feel to remount a character with a different director?

This is the second time I've played Daisy and each production has been completely unique; the specific chemistry of the different actors and a director with a new point of view is ephemeral and exciting, like rereading a favourite book, or re-encountering an old friend, someone you love; the experience is invariably richer and more challenging.

Activities in the Classroom

Activity #1: Theme Discussion

Curriculum Connections

Social Studies	Think critically, evaluate information and practise effective communication
Social Justice	Defining, recognizing and analysing Reflection, discussion and critical analysis
Drama	Exploration and context
Communications	Comprehend and respond

Read the script and discuss which theme strikes you the most. Why?

Where do we see evidence of these themes? In what scenes?

How do the themes change throughout the play?

Activity #2: Social Etiquette and New Rules of Interaction

Curriculum Connections

Social Justice	Reflection, discussion and critical analysis
Language Arts	Research, writing and representing

Review the time period in the play (1948-1973) and the social etiquette and rules of interaction. Google social etiquette in the mid 20th century.

A good beginning can be found at: www.ehow.com/info_8161645_good-manners-1950's.html.

Or try the book, *Living A Gracious Life*, by Amy Vanderbilt.

How has etiquette changed in today's society, accounting for all of our technological advances? Create a mock book of etiquette on our current devices: cell phone and social media sites. Compare them to that of the play's time period. What are the consequences of not obeying these rules? Then and now?

Activity #3: Theatre in the Classroom: Tableaus

Curriculum Connections

Drama	Theatre performance Exploration, drama skills and context
Communications	Comprehend and respond

A tableau is a dramatic still picture. Tableau comes from the old French word for “picture” or “painted target”.

A tableau can be created with your students and their bodies to represent a scene from a story, play or movie. Because there is no movement, a tableau is a great place to start doing improvisation with your class! It can be used to explore moments in a story and will certainly reveal deeper analysis. Tableaus give a sense of space and dramatic action. We can discover details regarding relationships and what the subjects are feeling from one still image.

Tableaus should:

- Relate to a given story or theme, time or place
- Depict an emotional quality
- Engage in physical activity that incorporates a variety of levels (high, medium and low) and directions
- Are well balanced, large and easy to read with a focal point.

Tableaus to try with your class:

- A moment(s) in history (choose one from the list above or from a story or historic event you are studying in class).
- A moment(s) from *Driving Miss Daisy*. Pair up your students. Ask them to create a tableau using the following excerpt from the script in which we see Hoke and Daisy together for the first time.

DAISY: Good Morning.

HOKE: Right cool in the night, wadn't it?

DAISY: I wouldn't know. I was asleep.

HOKE: Yassum. What yo plans today?

DAISY: That's my business.

HOKE: You right about dat. Idella say we runnin' outa coffee and Dutch Cleanser.

DAISY: We?

HOKE: She say we low on silver polish too.

DAISY: Thank you. I will go to the Piggly Wiggly on the trolley this afternoon.

HOKE: Now Miz Daisy, how come you doan' let me carry you?

DAISY: No thank you.

HOKE: Aint that what Mist' Wherthan hire me for?

DAISY: That's his problem.

HOKE: All right den. I find something to do. I tend yo zinnias.

DAISY: Leave my flower beds alone.

HOKE: Yessum. You got a nice place back beyond the garage ain'doing' nothin' but sittin' there. I could put you in some butterbeans and some tomatoes and even some Irish potatoes could we get some ones with good eyes.

DAISY: If I want a vegetable garden, I'll plant it for myself.

HOKE: Well, I go out and set in the kitchen, then, like I been doin' all week.

DAISY: Don't talk to Idella. She has work to do.

HOKE: Nome. I jes sit there till five o'clock.

DAISY: That's your affair.

Tableaus will certainly create discussion with your class. Below are some questions to start the conversation.

- How can we show a relationship in a still picture?
- What positions can the body take that show social status?
- What do our body positions say about our character?
- What does the emotion on our face say about how we are feeling and/or thinking?

Things to consider: Levels

Body Language

Facial Features

Proximity

Activity #4 –Post-Show Classroom Discussion

Curriculum Connections

Language Arts	Oral language, speaking and listening
Social Justice	Reflecting, discussion and critical analysis
Drama	Theatre performance and theatre production
Communications	Comprehend and respond

1. Discuss overall reactions to the play. What were your favourite moments? Was there anything you did not understand about the story? Who was your favourite character, and why?

2. How did design elements add to your enjoyment and understanding of the play?

Set –Did the production’s set design support the play’s time period? If so, how? If not, how could it have been accomplished?

Costumes/props – Did the use of costumes and props on stage support the changing of years? If so, how? If not, how could it have been accomplished?

Sound – What did you notice about the sound design? Did it support the play’s time periods? If so, how? If not, how could this have been accomplished?

Lighting – Did the use of lighting support the play’s change of time and change of location? If so, how? If not, how could this have been accomplished?

3. What were the most powerful lines that stuck in your head? What were the most powerful images that stayed with you after the show?

4. What was the strongest moment of the play for you (i.e., a moment of tension, truth, drama, anger, beauty, sadness, joy)? What did you feel?

5. What did you learn from watching the play? Is there anything you’d like to learn more about now that you’ve seen this play?

6. What do you think the challenges are of telling this story as a play as opposed to as a movie?

7. What do you think the benefits are of telling this story as a play as opposed to as a movie?

8. This play was written almost 30 years ago and takes place during a time period more than 50 years ago. Do you think the themes and issues are still relevant today? Why or why not?

Activity #5 – An Unlikely Friendship

Curriculum Connections

Language Arts	Writing and representing
Drama	Exploration and context

Hoke and Daisy come from very different backgrounds and have very different and unique personality traits. Nevertheless they become good friends by the end of the play. What is it that brings them together? Use the table below to explore the two characters' similarities and differences.

Hoke's Unique Qualities

Daisy's Unique Qualities

Hoke and Daisy's Common Qualities

Resources Used

Uhry, Albert. *Driving Miss Daisy: A Play*. Theatre Communications, Inc., 1986.

Vanderbuilt, Amy. *Living a Gracious Life*. Double Day & Company, Inc., 1952.

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp

www.BroadwayStudyGuides.com

www.corn.com/EVENTS/1997/mlk/links.html

www.dramaresources.com/strategies/tableaux

www.ehow.com/info_8161645_good-manners-1950's.html.

www.mponstage.com

www.myteacherpages.com