



WESTERN
CANADA
THEATRE



WESTERN CANADA THEATRE

PRESENTS A NEW PRODUCTION OF

BOUBLIL and SCHÖNBERG'S

LES MISÉRABLES

NOVEMBER 28 TO DECEMBER 11, 2013

SAGEBRUSH THEATRE

STUDY GUIDE

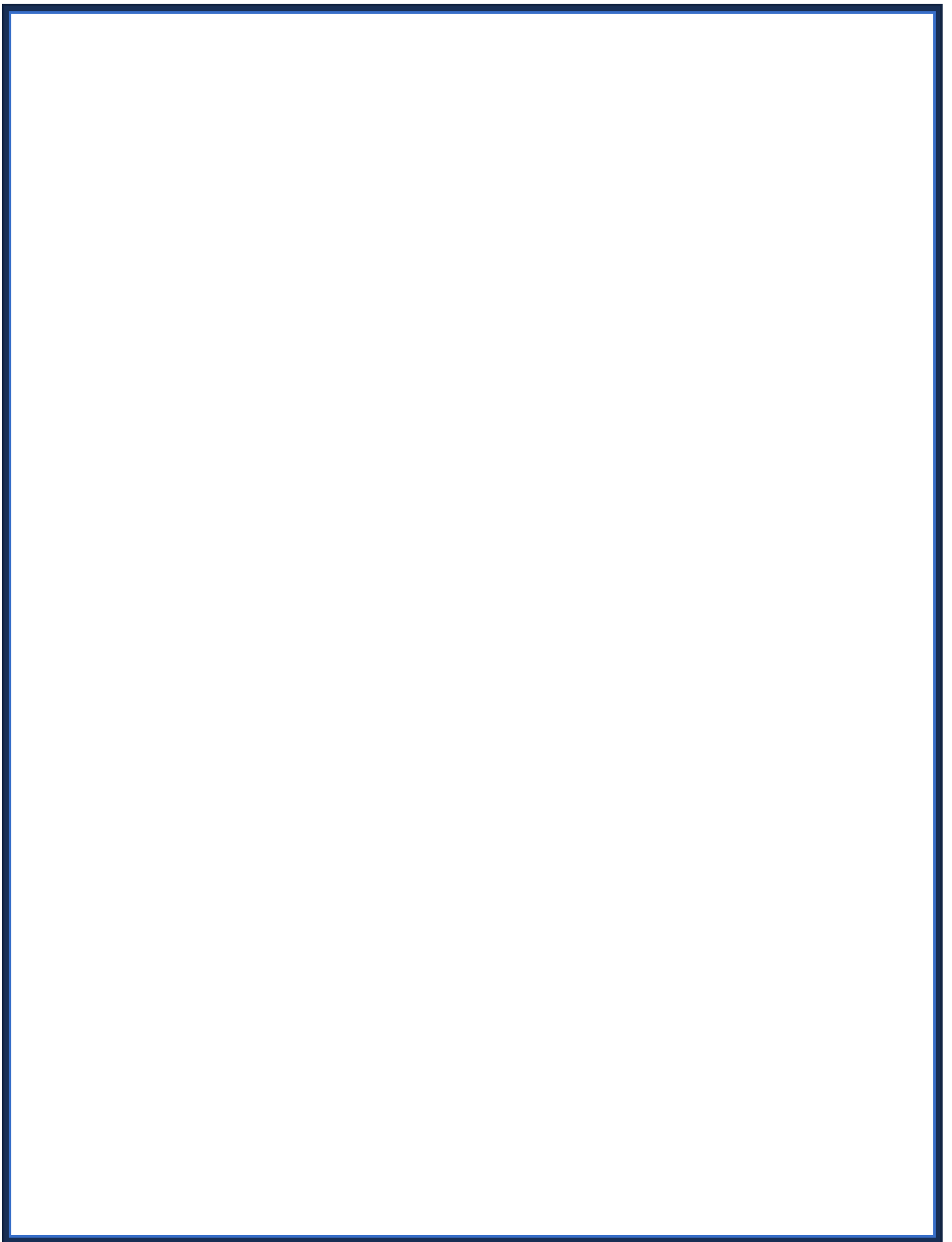
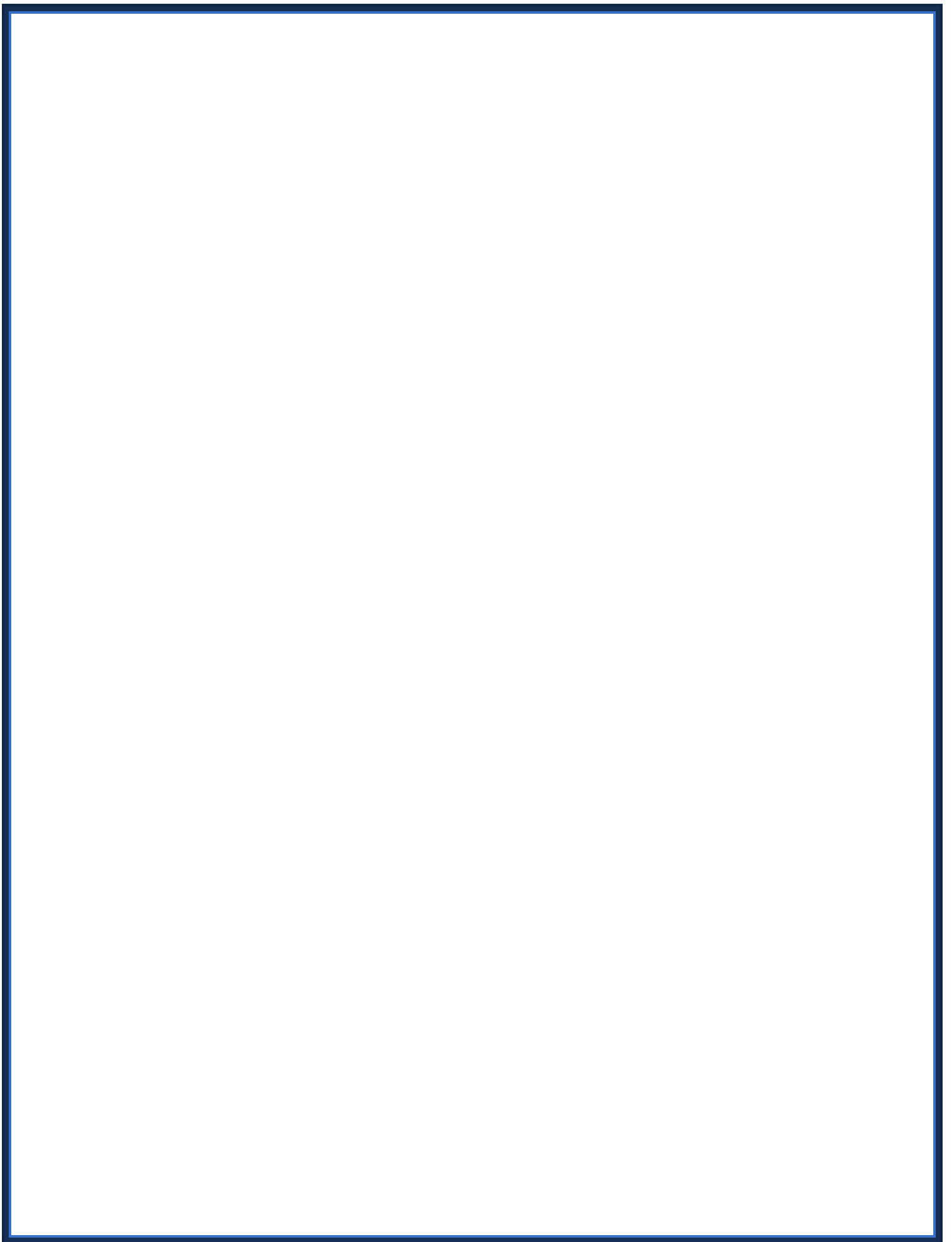


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Thank you for participating in Western Canada Theatre's matinee programming! We would like you and your students to get the most out of your experience with us. Included in this package is some inside information exclusive to teachers and students, lesson ideas, discussion questions, 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!

Curriculum Connections

Course	Strand(s)
English Language Arts Grades 8 to 12	Oral Language (Speaking and Listening) (Strategies)(Thinking)(Features)
Drama 8 to 10	Exploration and Imagination (Expression and Trust) Drama Skills (Drama as Metaphor) (Body and Voice)(Role) Context (Making Connections)
Theatre Performance 11 and 12	Exploration and Analysis, Performance Skills (Body and Voice) Performance skills, (characterization) Context, Company
Theatre Production 11	Exploration and Analysis, Production Skills (Design) Production Skills (Technical) Production Skills (Management) (context) (Company)

Les Misérables

Production Personnel

Cast

David Adams	Thenardier
Mat Baker	Enjolras
Jaida Barker	Young Eponine
Barbara Barsky	Mme. Thenardier
Sarah Baughn	Young Cosette
Kyra Bayers	Young Cosette
Shane Carty	Javert
Adam Charles	Marius
Alan Corbishley	Bishop, Feuilly, Ensemble
Michael Culp	Babet, Joly, Ensemble
Caitlin Goulet	Young Prostitute, Ensemble
Sheanna Beau James	Old Woman, Ensemble
David Keeley	Jean Valjean
Alexa Marshall	Young Eponine
Kevin Mulligan	Claquesous, Prouvaire, Ensemble
Tracey Power	Factory Girl, Ensemble
Kirk Smith	Bamatabois, Montparnasse, Combeferre, Ensemble
Cailin Stadnyk	Fantine
Sebastien Tow	Gavroche
Amy Wallis	Eponine
Robyn Wallis	Cosette
Leon Willey	Factory Foreman, Grantaire, Ensemble

Band

Percussion	Nick Apivor
2 nd keyboard	Andrew St. Hilaire
Guitar/Bass	Kris Ruston

Creative Team

Director	Daryl Cloran
Music Director	Marek Norman
Choreographer	Tracey Power
Set and Costume Designer	Cory Sincennes
Lighting Designer	Gerald King
Sound Designer	Cayman Duncan
Sound Engineer	Greg Klohn
Fight Director	Nick Harrison
Stage Manager	Lisa Russell
Assistant Stage Manager	Skylar Nakazawa
Assistant Director	Amy Baskin
Apprentice Stage Manager	Christine Leroux

Western Canada Theatre Staff

Staff

Daryl Cloran
Lori Marchand

Artistic Director
General Manager

Administration

Ron Thompson
Marilyn Zuke
Catrina Crowe
Kelly Manson
Alexis Tuyttens
Melissa Thomas
Munther

Financial Manager
Associate Financial Manager
Marketing & Communications Manager
Special Events & Administrative Associate
Special Events & Development Coordinator
Education Coordinator

Production

Ross Nichol
Heather Cant
Gal Minnes
Brian St Amand
Michelle Inksetter
Jungyeon Ji
Cindy Wiebe
Darren John
Joel Eccleston
Jared Rashke

Production Manager
Associate Producer
Production Technical Director
Venue Technical Director
Head Carpenter
Head of Properties
Head of Wardrobe
Technician
Technician
Technician

Facilities

Heather Reagan
Jean Choi
Nicole Bremner
Amy Baskin, Allison Chlow, Christine
Leroux, Phyllis Mader, Gabrielle Putoto,
Jessica Reid, Carling Ryan, Melissa Thomas
Sharen Michael

Facilities Manager
Volunteer Coordinator
Lead Concession Services
Guest Services Staff
Parking Attendant

Kamloops Live Box Office

Geraldine Penny
Janet Riggs
Judy Day

Box Office Staff
Box Office Manager
Box Office Staff

Inside Western Canada Theatre

with Artistic Director Daryl Cloran

Artistic Director, Daryl Cloran, gives a short description about what he does at Western Canada Theatre.

Type or paste the following link into your browser:

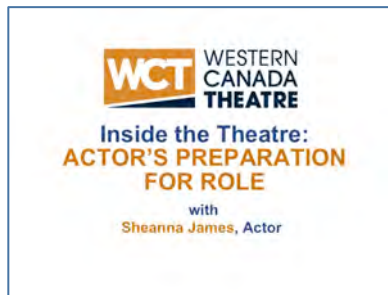


<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KuFNu8F6zdQ&feature=youtu.be>

Preparation with Actor Sheanna James

Sheanna James tells a bit about her excitement for the play and what an actor does to prepare for a show

Copy or click the following link into your browser to view this youtube clip:



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GasZV1ANjWc&feature=youtu.be>

About the Play

The Plot

PROLOGUE: 1815, DIGNE

Jean Valjean, released on parole after 19 years on the chain gang, finds that the yellow ticket-of-leave he must, by law, display condemns him to be an outcast. Only the saintly Bishop of Digne treats him kindly, and Valjean, embittered by years of hardship, repays him by stealing some silver. Valjean is caught and brought back by police. He is astonished when the Bishop lies to the police to save him, also giving him two precious candlesticks. Valjean decides to start his life anew.

1823, MONTREUIL-SUR-MER

Eight years have passed and Valjean, having broken his parole and changed his name to Monsieur Madeleine, has risen to become both a factory owner and mayor. One of his workers, Fantine, has a secret illegitimate child. When the other women at the factory discover this, they demand her dismissal. The foreman, whose advances she has rejected, throws her out.

Desperate for money to pay for her daughter's keep, Fantine sells her locket, her hair, and then joins the whores in selling herself. Utterly degraded by her new trade she gets into a fight with a prospective customer and is about to be taken to prison by Javert when the Mayor arrives and demands she be taken to a hospital instead.

The Mayor then rescues a man pinned down by a runaway cart. Police Inspector Javert is reminded of the abnormal strength of convict 24601, Jean Valjean, a parole-breaker whom he has been tracking for years but whom he thinks has just been recaptured. Valjean, unable to see an innocent man go to prison in his place, confesses to the court that he is prisoner 24601.

At the hospital Valjean promises the dying Fantine he will find and look after her daughter, Cosette. Javert arrives to arrest him, but Valjean escapes.

1823, MONTFERMEIL

Cosette has been lodged for five years with the Thénardiens, who run an inn, horribly abusing the little girl whom they use as a skivvy while indulging their own daughter, Eponine. Valjean finds Cosette fetching water in the dark. He pays the Thénardiens to let him take Cosette away and takes her to Paris. But Javert is still on his tail...

1832, PARIS

Nine years later there is a great unrest in Paris. The urchin Gavroche is in his element mixing with the whores and the beggars of the capital. Among the street-gangs is one led by Thénardier and his wife, which sets upon Jean Valjean and Cosette. They are rescued by Javert, who does not recognize Valjean until after he has made good his escape. The Thénardiens' daughter Eponine is secretly in love with the student Marius but reluctantly agrees to help him find Cosette, with whom he has fallen in love.

At a political meeting in a small café, a group of idealistic students prepare for the revolution they are sure will erupt on the death of government critic General Lamarque. When Gavroche brings the news of the General's death, the students, led by Enjolras, stream out into the streets to whip up popular support. Only Marius is distracted by the thoughts of the mysterious Cosette.

Cosette is consumed by the thoughts of Marius, with whom she has fallen in love. Valjean realizes that his 'daughter' is changing very quickly but refuses to tell her anything of her past. In spite of her own feelings for Marius, Eponine sadly brings him to Cosette and then prevents an attempt by her father's gang to rob Valjean's house. Valjean, convinced it was Javert who was lurking outside his house, tells Cosette they must prepare to flee the country. On the eve of the revolution the students and Javert see the situation from their different viewpoints; Cosette and Marius part in despair of ever meeting again; Eponine mourns the loss of Marius; and Valjean looks forward to the security of exile. The Thénardiens, meanwhile, dream of rich pickings underground from the chaos to come.

The students prepare to build the barricade. Marius, noticing that Eponine has joined the insurrection, sends her with a letter to Cosette, which is intercepted at the Rue Plumet by Valjean. Eponine decides, despite what Marius has said to her, to rejoin him at the barricade.

The barricade is built and the revolutionaries defy an army warning that they must give up or die. Gavroche exposes Javert as a police spy. In trying to return to the barricade Eponine is shot and killed. Valjean arrives at the barricades in search of Marius. He is given the chance to kill Javert but instead lets him go.

The students settle down for a night on the barricade and, in the quiet of the night, Valjean prays to God to save Marius from the onslaught which is to come. The next day, with ammunition running low, Gavroche runs out to collect more and is shot. The rebels are all killed, including their leader, Enjolras.

Valjean escapes into the sewers with the unconscious Marius. After meeting Thénardier, who is robbing the corpses of the rebels, he emerges into the light only to meet Javert once more. He pleads for time to deliver the young man to a hospital. Javert decides to let him go, and his unbending principles of justice having been shattered by Valjean's own mercy, he kills himself by throwing himself into the swollen River Seine. A number of Parisian women come to terms with the failed insurrection and its victims. Unaware of the identity of his rescuer, Marius recovers in Cosette's care. Valjean confesses the truth of his past to Marius and insists that after the young couple is married, he must go away rather than taint the sanctity and safety of their union. At Marius and Cosette's wedding, the Thénardiens try to blackmail Marius. Thénardier says Cosette's

"father" is a murderer and, as proof, produces a ring which he stole from a corpse in the sewers the night the barricades fell. It is Marius' own ring, and he realizes it was Valjean who rescued him that night. He and Cosette go to Valjean, where Cosette learns for the first time of her own history before the old man dies, joining the spirits of Fantine, Eponine, and all those who died on the barricades.

Background

During the Paris Uprising of 1832, Victor Hugo sat amidst the sound of gunfire in Les Halles and wrote a play. At first he was unaware of the barricades until he had hidden and seen the bullets flying both ways in front of him.

This June Rebellion was later the basis for the setting of his novel, *Les Misérables*, which was first published in 1862. While the characters and interactions are fictional, the story takes place within a 20 year period and the authentic historical events serve as a rich setting for the overall plot. In addition to a sophisticated storyline, the novel, play, and film, provide a glimpse of this important historical event in France.

Characters

Jean Valjean

Prisoner 24601, who changes his identity to Monsieur Madelaine, a wealthy factory owner and Mayor of M____-sur-M__.

Javert

A police official at the prison, who later searches for the missing Jean Valjean

The Bishop of Digne

The bishop houses Valjean after he leaves prison. His generosity inspires Valjean to start anew.

Factory Foreman

The foreman at Valjean's factory. The foreman fires Fantine after her coworkers discover that she is the mother of an illegitimate child.

Bamatabois

The man who tries to buy Fantine's services and treats her in an abusive manner.

Fauchelevant

The elderly man who is trapped under a cart and rescued by Valjean.

M. and Mme. Thenardier

A dishonest couple who own and operate an inn.

Enjolras

A friend of Marius's and the leader of the revolutionaries.

Eponine

The daughter of the Thenardiers. As a child, she grows up with Cosette. As an adult, she is in love with Marius.

Cosette

The daughter of Fantine. As a child, she is under the care of the Thenardier's and has to work at the inn. She is adopted by Valjean and properly cared for. She marries Marius.

Marius

A student revolutionary and friend of Eponine. In love with Cosette.

Fantine

A dismissed factory worker who pays the Thenardiers to care for her daughter Cosette.

Gavroche

A boy on the streets who helps the revolutionaries.

Author: Victor Hugo

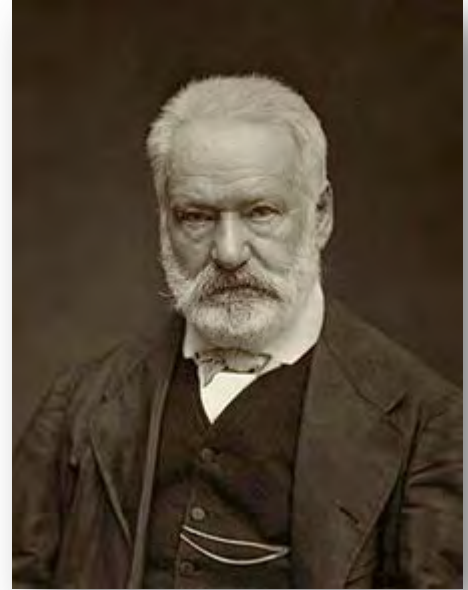
Les Misérables, both the 2012 film and the popular staged musical, are based upon the novel of the same name written by Victor Hugo in 1862.

Victor Hugo is considered one of the best and well-known French writers around the world. He is most notably recognized for his novels *Les Misérables* and *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*. Although he is often immediately known for his literary works, he was quite passionate about having his political voice heard. His works were littered with social issues prevalent for his time. Also, he was an avid artist, poet, and statesman.

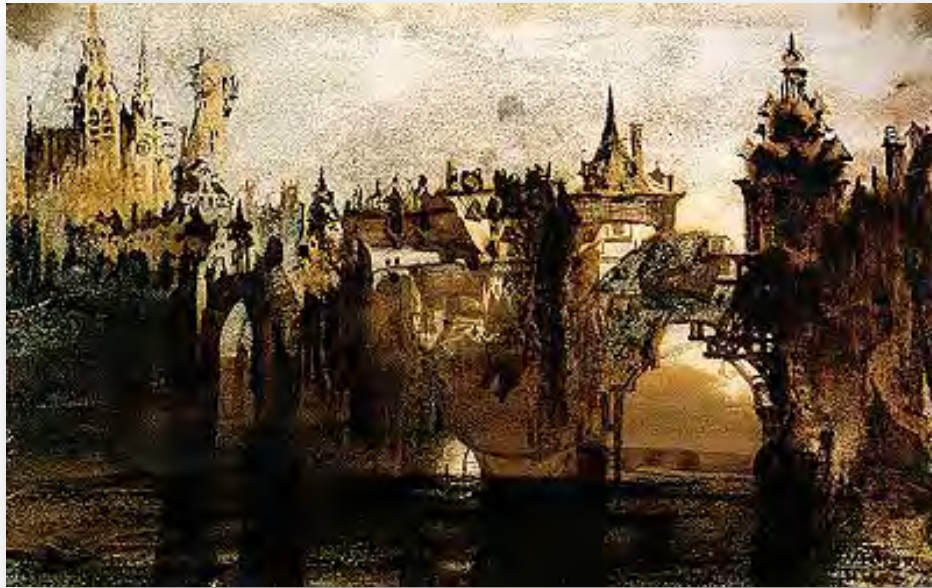
Hugo was born in 1802 and died of pneumonia in 1885. During his childhood, he moved often, as his father was an officer. His mother gave a determined focus to Victor's education. As a result he wrote many works of poetry and fiction.

During his adult years, he married and had children. One child died during infancy, and another died at age 19 in a drowning. He wrote many poems about his drowned daughter's life and death and had a terrible time recovering from her loss.

For political reasons, Hugo decided to live in exile in many different places but eventually returned to France for the last years of his life.



Victor Hugo's Art





Interview with Director Daryl Cloran

Q: What drew you to selecting this show for the Western Canada Theatre season line up?

A: This is my favourite musical of all time. I have always wanted to direct it. The music is incredible, and the story is beautiful. The company that holds the rights does not often let other theatre companies do new productions of *Les Mis*. So it's quite exciting and rare that we're allowed to do our very own production!

Q: Is there a particular aspect of directing this show that you anticipate to be a challenge?

A: It's huge!! We have 22 actors and many of them are playing more than 5 roles each. So there are hundreds of costume changes and things to keep straight.

Q: What would you say to audience members who might have seen the recent film version of this play?

A: I really enjoyed the movie, but I believe this musical was meant to be seen live. There's nothing like the excitement an audience gets from hearing live singers come together in gorgeous harmonies. The movie had a huge special effects budget, but in theatre we rely on more inventive stage magic.

Q: In directing this show, are there any similarities to *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, which you also directed?

A: Both shows require incredibly talented singers. *Les Mis* is a much more detailed, dramatic story, and it involves a lot of gun battles and fight choreography, while *Dreamcoat* required a lot of dance choreography.

Q: Do you have a specific goal in mind for directing this show?

A: To bring Kamloops audiences something they never thought was possible on our stage.

Q: How does your directing differ from the Music Director's job? How is what you two do the same, and how is what you two do different? How do you work together? What about the Sound Designer?

A: The Music Director (Marek Norman) works very closely with the actors on their songs, helping them hit all the right notes and shape the song correctly. He also leads the band (and plays keyboards in the show)!

My job as director is to shape the picture on stage – how the lights and sound and set all come together. I work with the actors on their characters, their blocking and their motivations.

The Sound Designer (Cayman Duncan) creates all the sound effects for the show: the gunfire and battle sounds, the rain sounds, the soundscape in the sewers, things like that. The Sound Engineer (Greg Khlon) is the one who stands at the sound console for every show and mixes the

show to ensure it sounds good. He makes sure all the microphones are working and at the right levels and that the balance of sound between the band and singers is right.

Q: What do you want students to know before they see the show?

A: There are some very sad moments in this story. People die. Unfair things happen. But ultimately it is a hopeful story about our ability to transcend the worst things life throws at us.

Did You Know?...

Here are some little known facts, courtesy of www.imdb.com:

The Broadway production of 'Les Misérables' opened at the Broadway Theater on March 126, 1987 and ran for 6,680 performances, making this production the third longest running show on Broadway (February 2013).

[Colm Wilkinson](#), playing the Bishop of Digne in the 2012 film, originated the role of Jean Valjean in both the London and New York stage productions.

During the "Master Of The House" song (at around 49 minutes into the film version), you can see the Thenandiers stealing someone's bags. They traded it for a basket with a baby.

That baby is actually Gavroche, the Thenandiers' abandoned child. It is not stated in the musical but it is in the book. In an interview with director Tom Hooper, he stated it was a clue to see if someone knew who that baby actually was.

The scene where Fantine is assaulted by a rejected customer is based on an actual incident from Victor Hugo's life that resulted in Fantine's creation: he was on his way to his editor's office when he encountered a young man harassing a prostitute.

When she rejected his advances, he shoved a handful of snow down her dress and shoved her to the ground. When she defended herself with her fists, he immediately called the police to arrest his "assailant". Hugo was a minor celebrity at the time and spoke up on the woman's behalf when the police arrived and was able to have her set free. Hugo said he was horrified by the unfairness of the woman's situation and began to imagine that she might have children depending on her, and thus Fantine appeared in his mind.

[Frances Ruffelle](#), the original Eponine on Broadway and in the West End, played a prostitute in the 2012 film adaption of Les Mis.

History of Parole in Canada

Part 1 - The Beginning of Parole in Canada

The 1890s were a time of energy and optimism in this country. Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier promised that the 20th century would be the century of Canada. People looked forward to a new era of prosperity and progress, and they were ready to try new things. The public mood was exactly right for the introduction of parole.

On August 11, 1899, An Act to Provide for the Conditional Liberation of Convicts – the Ticket of Leave Act – was enacted by the Canadian Parliament.

It shall be lawful for the Governor General by an order in writing under the hand and seal of the Secretary of State to grant to any convict under sentence of imprisonment in a penitentiary a license to be at large in Canada, or in such part thereof as in such license shall be mentioned, during such portion of his term of imprisonment, and upon such conditions in all respects as to the Governor General may seem fit; and the Governor General may from time to time revoke or alter such license by a like order in writing.

The Canadian Ticket of Leave Act was based almost word for word on the British legislation. There was no reference in the text to the purpose of conditional release, though ticket of leave was generally understood to be a form of pardon.

Prime Minister Laurier, in introducing the new legislation, described the kind of person the act was designed for:

...a young man of good character, who may have committed a crime in a moment of passion, or perhaps, have fallen victim to bad example, or the influence of unworthy friends. There is a good report on him while in confinement and it is supposed that if he were given another chance, he would be a good citizen.

This statement reflected the growing concern about the effects of imprisonment on young and first offenders. Penitentiaries, many people believed, were schools of crime where the (relatively) innocent should not be kept.

There were other considerations as well. Parole could be used to mitigate disparities in prison sentences, which caused a great deal of discontent among prison inmates. It was also cheaper to release some inmates early rather than maintain them in prison at \$254 a year. The sooner a man could be paroled, the sooner he could get back to supporting himself and his family.

The act did not set any minimum term of imprisonment before parole could be granted. Nor did it make any provision for supervision, though prisoners on ticket of leave had to register with and

report regularly to the local chief of police. They also had to agree to obey the law, abstain from leading an "idle and dissolute life" and avoid the company of "notoriously bad characters."

The application procedure for parole was the same as for pardons. Full investigation of each case was the responsibility of officials in the Department of Justice, and administrators were allowed considerable leeway. Parole was granted at the discretion of the Minister of Justice- there were no guidelines. In practice, it was pretty much reserved for first offenders, the so-called accidental criminals.

Because ticket of leave was considered an experiment, the government took a cautious approach at first. There were fears that parolees might discredit the system by behaving badly and that undeserving inmates might make a cynical use of the system.

In the beginning, the Governor General granted paroles on the advice of Cabinet as a whole. The act was later amended so that the power to advise the Governor General was limited to the Minister of Justice. This was a significant departure from traditional practice in the use of executive clemency; it was an attempt to separate parole decisions from politics. Even so, because conditional release was still in the hands of an elected minister, public opinion would still have a strong, and sometimes questionable, influence on policy.

The First Parolees

The first person to be granted ticket of leave in Canada was Henry A. Clermont, who had been convicted of stealing a letter. On November 29, 1899, he was released from St. Vincent de Paul Penitentiary in Montreal.

Of the 71 people granted tickets of leave (or licenses) in 1899, only five had their licenses revoked for non-compliance with conditions, and only seven forfeited their licenses because of a subsequent conviction. The other 59 parolees went on to complete their sentences in the community.

The experiment appeared to be a success. Over the next decade, the number of licenses granted grew at a rate greater than the increase in the prison population as a whole.

Information provided by the Parole Board of Canada

Lesson Activity

From a deck of regular playing cards, choose the same number of cards as you have students in the class. Be sure to choose a wide variety of cards, ensuring there are a few kings, queens, aces, and 2's and everything in between. Decide if aces are the highest card or the lowest card. Write the values of each card on your board so each student is aware. The highest cards will be a representation of the higher classes in society, the lower cards represent the lower classes, and mid-range cards represent the middle class.



Hand out a card to each student and ask them not to look at the value of their card. Instead, they will hold the card on their forehead so everyone else can see it (and know the class that they belong to in society). Ask students to mingle around the room as if at a party. Students will interact with others at the party and perhaps gravitate towards some more than others.

After multiple interactions have occurred, gather to discuss before students peek at their cards. Ask students to talk about the feelings that were evoked during the process. Did they feel unimportant, disrespected, like people were being fake to them, or even invisible? Talk about how being in a certain class in society can have its advantages or disadvantages.

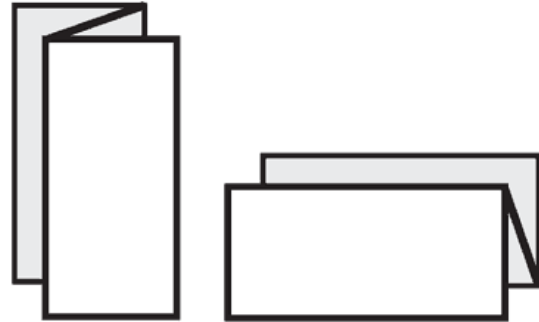
Lesson Activity

In preparation for this activity, you will need one 11"-by-17" piece of paper for each student (and perhaps a completed one to serve as an example).

Ask students to fold their piece of paper horizontally, into thirds in the shape of a "Z."

Choose several different characters from the musical that students will attempt to draw/imagine.

Students will write their character's name on the top (and also their own at the top), the middle section, and the bottom.



Students are to complete the activity sitting in a circle. The first step is for students to draw their character's head to their neck, providing as many details as possible. This is the only part they will be drawing or contributing to their work. Next, after a predetermined amount of time (example: 5 minutes), students will fold the part they just drew over, so that ONLY the second/middle portion is shown. They pass their paper to the person to the right. The person to their right may NOT look at the drawing of the head. They must only draw from the neck to the waist of the character. The character's name is written on each section, so they know who they are drawing. Again, adding details will make the end result better.

Once the second drawing is complete, they turn the paper over, so that the next person to the right cannot see any of the previous drawings. Again, they will know whose waist and below they are drawing because the character name should be on it.

After the third cycle, the paper is returned to the original owner.

Lesson Activity

Introduce the following terms indicated on the following page, “ascribed status” and “achieved status.”

Using a T chart, discuss the similarities and differences these two statuses might mean for an individual in our society or in early Paris society. While the musical’s storyline is sophisticated and interesting, one underlying theme to examine might be status and its role in society. It will also provide a perspective for students to consider while watching the production.

Ask students to reflect on their own statuses –which are ascribed and which are achieved?



Ascribed versus Achieved Status

Status is a term that is used often in sociology. It is a very broad word that refers to one's position in a social system. Status refers to what a person is, such as child, parent, pupil, playmate, etc. Individuals usually have multiple statuses assigned to them at any given time. Status is important sociologically because it comes with a set of rights, obligations, behaviors, and duties that people of certain positions are expected to perform.



There are two types of status: achieved status and ascribed status. An achieved status is one that is acquired on the basis of merit; it is a position that is earned or chosen and reflects a person's skills, abilities, and efforts. Being a professional athlete, for example, is an achieved status, as is being a lawyer, college professor, or criminal.

An ascribed status, on the other hand, is one that is beyond an individual's control. It is not earned, but rather something people are either born with or had no control over. Examples of ascribed status include sex and race. Children usually have more ascribed statuses than adults since they do not usually have a choice in most matters. A family's social status or socioeconomic status, for instance, would be an achieved status for adults, but an ascribed status for children. Homelessness might also be another example. For adults, homelessness usually comes by way of achieving, or rather not achieving, something. For children, however, homelessness is not something they have any control over. They become as such by default of their parents' actions.

The line between achieved status and ascribed status is not always black and white. There are many statuses that can be considered a mixture of achievement and ascription. Take Paris Hilton, for example, who has an achieved status of being an actress. Many might argue that she would never have achieved the status of actress if she had not come from a wealthy family, an ascribed status of hers.

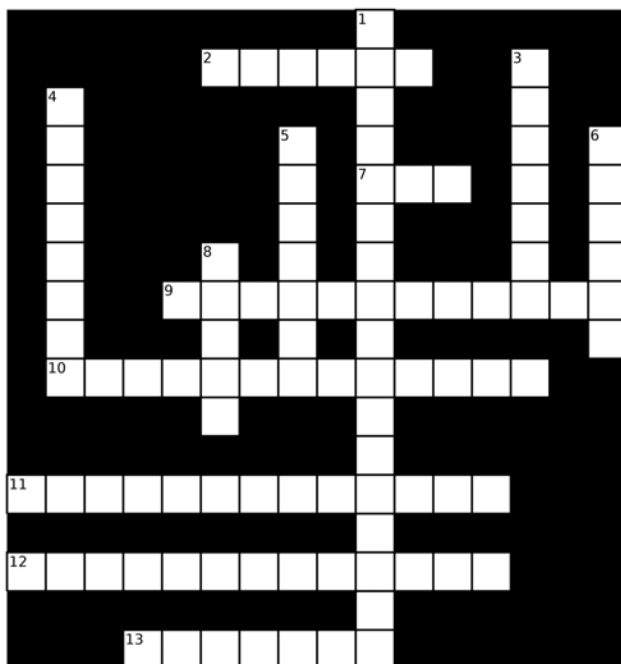
Article from: <http://sociology.about.com>

Lesson Activity

Photocopy the “About the Play” sheet for students and a copy of the crossword. Depending on the age of your students, read through the information pages together, and then have students work in partners to solve the crossword.

Les Miserables

Western Canada Theatre



- Across
- 2 The colour of Valjean's ticket of leave from prison
 - 7 The Thenardiers run this type of establishment and this is where Cosette lives
 - 9 This is the Valjean's occupation after he changes his life around
 - 10 The name of this musical, novel, and film
 - 11 This actual historical event was the basis for the Les Mis novel
 - 12 This was the only person that was kind to Valjean after he left prison
 - 13 This factory worker gets fired, then sells her locket and her hair to help pay for medicines for her daughter

- Down
- 1 This is what Valjean changes his name to after he decides to turn his life around
 - 3 The main character in the musical who is released on parole at the beginning of the play
 - 4 It is at this place that Valjean promises to take care of Fantine's daughter
 - 5 Fantine's daughter
 - 6 He is a police official
 - 8 Later in the play, there is great unrest in this city, which leads to much conflict

Les Miserables

Western Canada Theatre



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 - 5 Fantine's daughter
 - 6 He is a police official
 - 8 Later in the play, there is great unrest in this city, which leads to much conflict

Lesson Activity

As a class, read through the “About the Play” sheet provided, then distribute the wordsearch for students to complete.

Les Miserables
Western Canada Theatre

e l t n r m a e o e r o a j
l e i e a u c s m e p l a y
r n j y e s a o i f h l s d
s t o n i i t d s r v n e d
r r g v a c r g e e a a f h
e j u n e a h v r t t p t e
s r h t n l o t a h r t f a
f n a e j l a v b g e o e s
a a h d u e v o l u v t g n
n t c t h i g h e a a u a a
t g i t c e a a s d j o t l
i o r t o o i m m i a r s y
n n o s i r p f i l m d o e
e r t f n t y i s y l l t m

lesmis
valjean
miserables
theatre
play
musical
paris
hugo
revolution
June
daughter
prison
death
film
novel
factory
mayor
stage
javert
love
victor
cosette
fantine
thenardier
jalvert

Les Miserables
Western Canada Theatre

n g o t h t v a a s s n a r
l m r t r e v l a j i f u t
u o a e h h i u o j i r h s
e e v y t e t v a l j e a n
d a i e o i a s m v n v s p
j l c t y r o t c a f o r t
o a t l m i s e r a b l e s
m v o t c t p d n e y u t t
v y r m u s i c a l a t h a
n r c o s e t t e s l i g g
o s j g r n o s i r p o u e
v r t u r d m e n i t n a f
e l e h n i c t e m v u d a
l l v l s e o o h b e o e o

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Lesson Activity

Group Juggle – Team Building Activity

Inspired by the incredibly large cast of Western Canada Theatre’s *Les Miserables* production, this exercise is intended to emphasize the importance of teamwork and healthy working relationships while working on any professional production.

You will need several beans bags or soft, large balls for this activity.

Have students stand in a circle. Introduce the entire activity using only one bean bag. Toss the bean bag to someone across the circle, using a pleasant greeting of your own, such as, “Here you go Travis.” Then Travis would reply his own personal reply. For example, “Thank you very much, Ms. Jones.” He would then use his own greeting and toss to another person who has not yet received it. Once the bean bag has made it to everyone and everyone has said their thank you and their greeting, you can move on to the next step. If the intro exercise went well, begin the same tossing activity again, remembering who you threw to and who you received the bean bag from. The tossing goes in the exact same order each time.

As you notice your students becoming more comfortable with the activity, introduce another bean bag at an appropriate interval. Get as many bean bags going as you can.

You should start to notice that students might get frantic, forget to thank others, or shorten their greetings. Allow for students to perhaps get to that point, or almost to a stressed feeling during the activity.

Facilitate a discussion where students might arrive at some conclusions that can highlight as applicable to working on a professional theatre production. For example, when one is strongly focused on a goal (example, learning one’s lines and learning one’s blocking), they may begin to forget the niceties that go along with completing a long project. When people begin to drop their focus or get off track, mistakes can happen – another point that may be highlighted. As you watch your students in this activity, think of discussion points that relate to healthy working relationships.

Post Show Discussion Prompts

- In what ways would/did reading the novel enhance the live production?
- Considering your previous associations with Les Miserables, whether it is popular culture references to it, people talking about it, reading the novel, or seeing the movie, what were you surprised by after seeing the production?
- In what ways did the musical components enhance the play?
- Valjean decided that attempting to shed his (criminal) past would allow him a fresh start because he was stigmatized for being a prisoner. Is there any truth to this today? Are ex-criminals who have been to jail treated differently in our society, or are they given a fresh start?
- Les Miserables has been a highly successful musical, film, and book. What do you think makes it so appealing to the masses?
- If you had a choice to play a character in the play, which one would you choose? Explain your choice.

Resources Used

<http://www.theatrehistory.com/french/hugoo001.html>

http://monologuearchive.com/h/hugo_victor.html

http://www.literary-quotations.com/h/victor_hugo.html

<http://www.imdb.com>

<http://musicals.net>

<http://www.pbc-clcc.gc.ca/about/legisl-eng.shtml>

<http://sociology.about.com>