

stage NOTES™

A FIELD GUIDE FOR TEACHERS



Dirty Dancing®

THE CLASSIC STORY ON STAGE

By ELEANOR BERGSTEIN

**DIRTY DANCING-
THE CLASSIC
STORY ON STAGE**

A tool for using the theater
across the curriculum to meet
National Standards for Education

- Production Overview
- Lesson Guides
- Student Activities
- At-Home Projects
- Reproducibles



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Table of Contents

Using the Field Guide and Lessons.....	4
Synopsis and Character Breakdown.....	5
Overture to HISTORY.....	8
History Discussion Lesson.....	13
History Writing Lesson.....	14
History Experiential Lesson.....	15
History After Hours Lesson.....	16
Overture to LANGUAGE ARTS.....	17
Language Arts Discussion Lesson.....	21
Language Arts Writing Lesson.....	22
Language Arts Experiential Lesson.....	23
Language Arts After Hours Lesson.....	24
Overture to LIFE SKILLS.....	25
Life Skills Discussion Lesson.....	30
Life Skills Experiential Lesson.....	31
Life Skills After Hours Lesson.....	32
Overture to BEHAVIORAL STUDIES.....	33
Behavioral Studies Discussion Lesson.....	37
Behavioral Studies Writing Lesson.....	38
Behavioral Studies Experiential Lesson.....	39
Behavioral Studies After Hours Lesson.....	40
Overture to THE ARTS.....	41
Q & A with <i>Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage</i> author, Eleanor Bergstein....	44
The Arts Discussion Lesson.....	45
The Arts Writing Lesson.....	46
The Arts Experiential Lesson.....	47
The Arts After Hours Lesson.....	48
<i>Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage</i> Resources.....	49

Using the Field Guide



Camp Broadway® is pleased to bring you this *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* edition of StageNOTES®, the 24th in our series. We are proud to be affiliated with this exciting new stage show that has entertained audiences all over the world. This guide has been developed as a teaching tool to assist educators in the classroom who are introducing the story in conjunction with the stage production.

By using StageNOTES®, you will understand how *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* reflects the life and times of the 1960s (History), expands our vocabulary (Language Arts), illuminates the human condition (Behavioral Studies), aids in our own self-exploration (Life Skills) and encourages creative thinking and expression (The Arts).

The Camp Broadway creative team, consisting of theater educators, scholars, researchers and theater professionals, has developed a series of lesson plans that, although inspired by and based on the musical *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* can also accompany class study. To assist you in preparing your presentation of each lesson, we have included: an objective; excerpts taken directly from the script of *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage*; a discussion topic; a writing assignment; and an interactive class activity. The reproducible lessons (handouts) accompany each lesson unit, which contains: an essay question; a creative exercise; and an “after hours activity” that encourages students to interact with family, friends, or the community at large.

The curriculum categories offered in the *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* study guide have been informed by the basic standards of education detailed in Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education, 2nd Edition, written by John S. Kendall and Robert J. Marzano (1997). This definitive compilation was published by Mid-Continent Regional Education Laboratory, Inc. (McREL) and the Association for Supervision and Curricular Development (ASCD) after a systematic collection, review and analysis of noteworthy national and state curricular documents in all subjects.

The *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* study guide is for you, the educator, in response to your need for a standards-compliant curriculum. We truly hope this study guide will help you incorporate the themes and content of *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* into your classroom lessons.

Philip Katz
Producing Director

Synopsis of

Dirty Dancing
THE CLASSIC STORY ON STAGE

Cast (in alphabetical order)

Johnny Castle
Robbie Gould
Frances 'Baby' Houseman
Dr. Jake Houseman
Lisa Houseman
Marjorie Houseman
Penny Johnson
Max Kellerman
Neil Kellerman
Billy Kostecki
Moe Pressman
Vivian Pressman
Mr. Schumacher
Mrs. Schumacher
Stan
Tito Suarez

It's the summer of 1963, and 17 year old Frances Houseman is about to learn some major lessons in life as well as a thing or two about dancing.

On holiday in New York's Catskill Mountains with her older sister and parents, 'Baby' shows little enthusiasm in the resort activities, and instead discovers her own entertainment when she stumbles upon the staff quarters when an all night dance party is in full swing. Mesmerized by the sensual dance moves and the pounding rhythms, 'Baby' longs for acceptance in that world, especially when she catches sight of Johnny Castle the resort dance instructor. 'Baby's' life is about to change forever as she is thrown in at the deep end as Johnny's leading lady both on-stage and off, with breathtaking consequences.

Using the Lessons



Featured Lesson Units

- 1 History
- 2 Language Arts
- 3 Behavioral Studies
- 4 Life Skills
- 5 The Arts

Each Lesson Unit (History, Language Arts, etc.) contains the following Lessons:

Discussion:

The focus is on facilitating an in-depth class dialogue.

Experiential:

The focus is on understanding social dynamics as well as collaboration and teamwork in small and large groups.

Writing:

The focus is on the expression of thoughts in written form.

A take-home “After Hours” lesson

Each StageNOTES™ lesson generally includes the following components:

The components are:

Objective:

An overall note to the teacher outlining the goals of the lesson to follow.

From the script:

An excerpt from the script of *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* to help “set the stage” for the activity that follows.

Exercise:

A detailed description and instructions for the activity to be facilitated in class.

Teaching Tips:

Direct questions teachers may use to help guide the students through the activity.

The Standards listed throughout the StageNOTES™ Field Guide are excerpted from *Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education (2nd Edition)* by John S. Kendall and Robert J. Marzano, published by Mid-Century Regional Educational Laboratory, Inc. (McREL) and the Association for Supervision and Curricular Development (ASCD), 1997.

The ^{CAMP} *Broadway* Guide to Theatergoing Etiquette

In the early part of the nineteenth century, theatrical performances usually began at six o'clock. An evening would last four or five hours, beginning with a short "curtain raiser," followed by a five-act play, with other short pieces presented during the intermissions. It might be compared roughly to today's prime-time television, a series of shows designed to pass the time. With no television or radio, the theater was a place to find companionship, light, and warmth on a cold winters evening.

As the century progressed, the theater audience reflected the changing social climate. More well-to-do patrons still arrived at six o'clock for the full program of the evening, while half price admission was offered at eight or eight-thirty to the working class. This allowed for their longer workday and tighter budgets. Still, the theaters were always full, allowing people to escape the drudgery of their daily lives and enjoy themselves.

Because of this popularity, theaters began to be built larger and larger. New progress in construction allowed balconies to be built overhanging the seats below—in contrast to the earlier style of receding tiers. This meant that the audience on the main floor (the section called "the orchestra") were out of the line of sight of the spectators in the galleries. As a result, the crowds became less busy people watching and gossiping among themselves, and more interested in watching the performance. The theater managers began the practice of dimming the lights in the seating area (called the "house lights"), focusing the attention of the audience on the stage. The advent of gas lighting and the "limelight" (the earliest spotlights) made the elaborate settings even more attractive to the eye, gaining the audience's rapt attention.

By the 1850's, the wealthier audiences were no longer looking for a full evenings entertainment. Curtain time was pushed back to eight o'clock (for the convenience of patrons arriving from dinner); only one play would be presented, instead of four or five, freeing the audience for other social activities

afterward. Matinee (afternoon) performances were not given regularly until the 1870's, allowing society ladies, who would not have ventured out late at night, the opportunity to attend the theater.

Now in a new millennium, many of these traditions are still with us. The theater is still a place to "see and be seen"; eight o'clock is still the standard curtain time; and the excited chatter of the audience falls to a hush when the house lights dim and the stage lights go up, and another night on Broadway begins.

You can make sure everyone you know has the very best experience at the theater by sharing this Theater Etiquette with them. And now, enjoy the show!

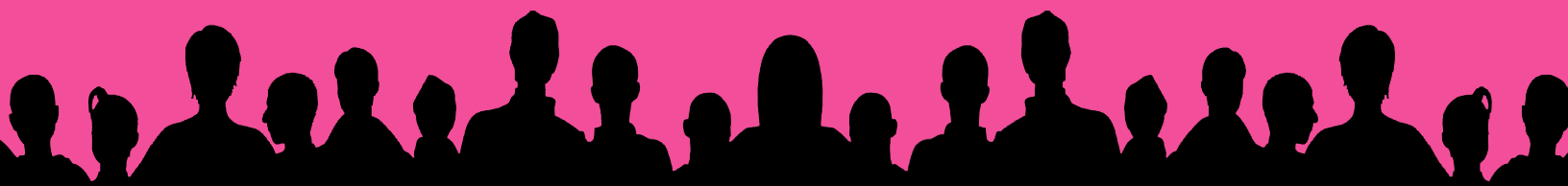
Remember, going to the theater isn't like going to a movie. There are some different rules to keep in mind when you're at a live performance.

Believe it or not, the actors can actually hear you. The same acoustics that make it possible for you to hear the actors means that they can hear all the noises an audience makes: talking, unwrapping candy, cell phones ringing. That's why, when you're at a show, there is no food or drink at your seats (eat your treats at intermission; save the popcorn-munching for the multiplex)

No talking (even if you're just explaining the plot to the person next to you)

Always keep cell phones and beepers turned off (This even means no texting your friends during the show to tell them how great it is...)

Of course, what the actors like to hear is how much you're enjoying the performance. So go ahead and laugh at the funny parts, clap for the songs, and save your biggest cheers and applause for your favorite actors at the curtain call. That's their proof of a job well done.





Overture to History

Summary of Standard for Historical Understanding

1. Understanding and analyzing chronological relationships and patterns:

■ Analyze influence of specific beliefs on these times. How would events be different in the absence of these beliefs?

■ Analyze the effects specific decisions had on history. How would things have been different in the absence of these specific decisions?

2. Understanding the historical perspective:

■ Understand that the consequences of human intentions are influenced by the means of carrying them out.

■ Understand how the past affects our private lives and society in general.

■ Perceive past events with historical empathy

■ Evaluate credibility and authenticity of historical sources.

■ Evaluate the validity and credibility of different historical interpretations

Dirty Dancing, *The Classic Story On Stage* is a story told through movement, a perfect metaphor for the moving, shifting times in which it takes place. Transformations in the story's characters are reverberations of the seismic changes stirring in the outside world during that emotionally charged summer of 1963. The Civil Rights Movement provides the backdrop and a heightened social consciousness, particularly among young people, penetrates the carefully controlled, idyllic resort environment and goes to the heart of the characters' conflicts and decisions.

Before 1954, the "separate but equal" policy allowed segregationist practices to proliferate. Eventually those practices would foment rebellion in the 1950s and 60's. But what accounted for the transition from long-standing civil rights abuses to actions and reactions that represented real "movement?"

As with all major historical shifts, many factors came together to create a climate ripe for change. By the end of the 50's most American homes had a television set which meant that racism and images of its abuses could no longer be kept out of view. Increasingly, these injustices became part of the national consciousness. In addition, the teen culture that was born in the 50's, gained momentum and weight as this large, powerful group of baby-boomers turned their attention to social and political arenas. With these two major factors providing the eyes, ears and voices of conscience, individual acts of courage would not stand in isolation and could not go unnoticed.

We Shall Overcome. . .

What is now known as The Civil Rights Movement can be charted through a series of significant events during the 1950s and 60's. A combination of court contested policies, acts of protest and Supreme Court rulings, are the events which cumulatively brought an end to overt segregation.

Protesters challenged segregation wherever they found it, in the schools, on the buses and at lunch counters. Frequently, these peaceful protesters met with violence that could only be controlled with federal intervention. In many cases, these protesters were students, both white and African-American. Their courage and coalition aroused national attention and became the impetus for movement.

The beginning of the Civil Rights Movement is often identified with the 1954 Supreme Court case known as Brown vs. The Board of Education, Topeka, Kansas, in which the Court ruled that segregation in the schools was unconstitutional. It was this federal ruling that emboldened many, particularly in the southern states, to protest the ongoing segregated conditions that persisted in direct violation of what was now federal law.

This Land Is Your Land

Unprovoked violence on the part of segregationists was rampant during this time. In 1955, the horrendous, brutal beating and murder of Emmett Till, a 14-year-old African-American boy from Chicago who had been visiting family in the south, became a galvanizing event in the Civil Rights Movement.

Also in 1955, instigated by Rosa Parks' refusal to relinquish her bus seat to a white man, the Montgomery Bus Boycott resulted in huge losses of revenue for the bus company and, in the process, received national publicity. Within eight months, the Supreme Court had found segregation on buses to be in violation of the constitution. As an organizer of this Boycott, the young Reverend Martin Luther King emerged as a public figure.

In 1957, three years after the Supreme Court's school desegregation ruling, by order of the state's governor, nine African-American students were prevented from entering Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. Only through President Eisenhower's intervention, with 1,000 paratroopers and 10,000 National Guardsmen, was the conflict suppressed and the school brought into compliance with federal law by becoming desegregated.

One day in 1960, an African-American college student was refused service at the Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, NC, he returned the following day with three friends who were also refused service.

Timeline of the Civil Rights Movement

Leading up to the Summer of '63

1954

Brown vs. Board of Education

Supreme Court rules segregation in schools is unconstitutional.



1955

Emmett Till murder

Rosa Parks/Montgomery Bus Boycott

Resulting in Supreme Court ruling that segregation on buses is unconstitutional.



1957

Little Rock Central High School

Nine African-American students prevented from attending Little Rock Central High School. 1,000 paratroopers and 10,000 National Guardsmen finally achieved desegregation in the school.



1960

Woolworth's lunch counter sit-ins the "Greensboro Four"

Four African-American students were refused service at a luncheon counter and staged a sit-down strike at the F.W. Woolworth store in Greensboro, NC.



Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) is founded.

Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) is founded.

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) is founded.

President Eisenhower signs the Civil Rights Act of 1960.

John F. Kennedy wins the election becoming the first Catholic president.

1961

Freedom Riders

Travel throughout the south to test anti-segregation laws on interstate buses and trains.

JFK creates the Peace Corps.



1962

The Supreme Court rules against prayer in public school

Texas students just after the U.S. Supreme Court outlawed prayer in public schools.



The four of them returned day after day to sit in protest at the counter. Others, both African-American and white, joined them and similar protests sprang up around the country in spite of beatings, fines and arrests.

Eventually the national attention prevented police from continuing the arrests. In the same year, President Eisenhower signed the Civil Rights Act of 1960.

In 1961, sponsored by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), more than 1,000 student volunteers, African-American and white, began traveling through the south as a way of testing whether the new laws prohibiting segregation on interstate trains and buses were being implemented. Not surprisingly, these Freedom Riders found that this was far

from the case and their journey was met with arrests and violence. After a confrontation between the state of Alabama and the 600 federal marshals sent by President Kennedy, the Freedom Riders were thereafter allowed to proceed without being arrested.

This Land Is My Land

At the beginning of *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage, Baby* sets the stage by telling us that, in the summer of 1963 Kennedy had not yet been assassinated and that it was “before the Beatles came,” (both of which happened in November of that year). She doesn’t tell us what has happened so far in that year, but 1963 turned out to be a year of political and social conflict.

Things were heating up in Birmingham, Alabama one of the most segregated cities in the country. In May, a protest march, led by Dr. Martin Luther King and two other ministers, gained national attention when protesters were attacked by police dogs and assaulted by powerful water hoses. The march resulted in the arrest of all three ministers with Reverend King held in solitary confinement for three days during which time he wrote and smuggled out his famous “Letter from Birmingham Jail.”

Meanwhile, things were also heating up in Southeast Asia. Thich Quang Duc, a Buddhist monk, set himself on fire in the middle of a busy intersection in Saigon, Republic of Vietnam (later South Vietnam). This horrifying act in protest of government persecution of Buddhists, eventually led to a change in regime. U.S. involvement in that change would lead to the loss of thousands of American lives in an unsolvable conflict.

In July of that year, approximately 200 peaceful protesters, many of whom were children and teenagers, marched down Cotton Avenue in Americus, Georgia singing “We Shall Overcome.” In spite of their refusal to resist, fight or even swear, more than 100 of the marchers were arrested. The local jail could not accommodate them all and 32 young women were placed in an abandoned stockade – unused since the Civil War era. There they endured inhuman conditions for weeks until a photographer, secretly escorted to the site by the SNCC, captured the horrific scene on film. The image



President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Rev. Martin Luther King stands behind.

Women’s Rights A Movement on the Horizon

While The Civil Rights Movement during the 50’s and 60’s made great strides confronting problems of racism and segregation, the issue of women’s rights, though gathering momentum, had a long way to go. Though the Equal Pay Act was passed in 1963, there were many women at both ends of the spectrum in the workplace who were not protected by it including domestics, administrators and executives.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 would prohibit employment discrimination by private employers, employment agencies, and unions based on race, sex, and other grounds and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission was formed to enforce the new law. But by 1966, women found it necessary to join together, forming

the National Organization for Women (NOW), to contend with the ineffectiveness of the EEOC.

The inciting dramatic event that sets the story of *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* in motion, is an unintended pregnancy and the crisis precipitated by a young woman’s limited options. The FDA had approved the first birth control pill in 1960 but it was still not widely available; and *Roe vs. Wade*, the landmark Supreme Court case that struck down most state laws restricting a woman’s right to an abortion, was still a decade away.

eventually reached President Kennedy who ordered the intervention of the National Guard and the release of the prisoners. The girls were never formally charged.

At the end of that summer, on August 28th, 200,000 Civil Rights protesters marched on Washington and heard, as did the nation, the iconic words of Dr. Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech.

This Land Was Made For You and Me

With the backdrop of these dramatic events moving the country in a new, and for some frightening, direction, the characters in *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* ask themselves: what kind of person do I want to be? Baby's father, Jake, is forced to accept the full implications of the independence and values he has admired and encouraged in his daughter. Neil, the owner's grandson and heir to Kellerman's, wrestles with where to place his sense of responsibility and temporarily abandons his plan to join the Freedom Riders. Johnny finds the fortitude to reject the invisible class barriers that have held him back and to fight for what he wants.

Appropriately, Baby's journey embodies the theme of movement and transformation. As the social conscience of the story, she has only to discover for herself the power and joy of giving physical expression to her free spirit. Through "dirty dancing," she finds an avenue into womanhood; and this glimpse of an independent and sensual woman signals the "liberated woman" who had yet to emerge from this era.

Max and Tito, who have weathered thick and thin together, sense the future. As Max tells his friend: "It's not just changes so much this time, Tito...it's that it all seems to be ending...like it's all slipping away." And he dreams of having his hotel, in pristine condition, all to himself, sans guests and with none of the messiness of humanity. Max knew that the innocence of families enjoying simple holidays was going to end soon.

1963 A Year of Movement and Change

Late March

Police dogs used against 42 African-Americans as they marched home in Greenwood, Mississippi, after having registered to vote.

May 1963

Medgar H. Evers (Mississippi field secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) joins boycott of Jackson Merchants.

May 2

Children ages 6 to 18 sing "We Shall Overcome" at a Baptist Church in Birmingham, AL. They are arrested and placed in police vans. 3 hours later, there were 959 children in jail.



May 3

Over one thousand children march in Birmingham – police attack them with dogs and fire hoses.

The streams of water shot out of these hoses were strong enough to break bones, and their force rolled the protesters down the street. K-9 forces were mobilized and attacked protesters. Pictures of confrontation between children and the police shock the nation – the entire country was watching Birmingham. As the demonstration escalated the jails were filled. The police did not know what to do. Finally, the Birmingham business community, which feared damage to downtown stores, agreed to integrate lunch counters and hire more African-Americans, over the objections of city officials.

June 11

Students in Jackson, Mississippi, protest beatings and arrests of demonstrators. President Kennedy makes televised speech on civil rights.

July 25

Ban on nuclear testing.

August 13

Buddhist student priest burns self to death in third such suicide in South Vietnam's religious political dispute.

August 15

2 more Buddhists commit suicide by burning, bringing to 5 the number of self-immolations in South Vietnam's religious political dispute.



August 18

James Meredith receives degree from the University of Mississippi, becoming the first African-American alumnus of the 115 year-old school.

August 21

South Vietnamese order nationwide martial law after troops and police attack Buddhist pagodas, and arrest hundreds of Buddhists. U.S. State department charges President Diem violated promise to seek reconciliation with Buddhists.

August 25

South Vietnamese troops and police arrest at least 600 students in an effort to crush opposition to government.

August 27

David Fellin and Henry Throne pulled to surface after being trapped 300 feet underground by a mine cave-in at Sheppton, PA, for 14 days. 25 men trapped by explosion in potash mine near Moab, Utah. Only 7 are rescued.

August 28

After Birmingham (see May '63), President Kennedy proposed a new civil rights bill. To show that the bill had widespread support, civil rights groups united to organize a march to Washington. A crowd of 100,000 were expected, but on this day, 250,000 African-Americans and whites gathered from around the nation, having arrived in Washington D.C. in more than 30 special trains and 2000 chartered buses, to hold an orderly rally for civil rights and equal job opportunities. There, they heard speeches and songs from numerous activists, artists, and civil rights leaders. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered the closing address, the famous "I Have a Dream" speech. Despite the overwhelming success of the day, Kennedy's bill was not signed into law until 1964.

Dr. Martin Luther King – "I Have a Dream" speech.



August 29

Senate Foreign Relations Committee approves nuclear test ban treaty by 16-1.

Sept. 1963

Governor George C. Wallace prevents start of public school desegregation in Alabama by surrounding Tuskegee High School with State Troopers

September 5

Birmingham Alabama Board of Education, at request of Governor George Wallace, closes 3 white schools scheduled for desegregation, after a night of rioting and bombing of African-American homes.

September 15

Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, bombed during Sunday school classes killing 4 African-American girls.



October 7

SNCC organize "Freedom Day," an attempt to register African-Americans to vote. A local photographer, under orders from Sheriff Jim Clark, took pictures of 250 African-Americans who lined up to register and asked them what their employers would think of the pictures. Police beat SNCC workers who tried to bring food and water to those in line. (In 1963 Selma, Alabama, a small town of about 30,000 people, located in Dallas County, only 1% of eligible African-Americans were registered to vote. Many African-Americans were apathetic to voting, which they perceived as "white folks' business." Like Mississippi, it was extremely difficult for African-Americans to register to vote. Few African-Americans passed the required test for registration, even though they were sometimes more educated than the registrars.)

President Kennedy signs Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

November 22

President John F. Kennedy is assassinated in Dallas.

"America wept tonight not alone for its dead young president but for itself... Somehow the world prevailed over the best... Some strain of madness and violence had destroyed the highest symbol of law and order." – James Reston



Discussion History



THE CLASSIC STORY ON STAGE

OBJECTIVE

Students assess their ability and willingness to confront injustice and get involved.

EXERCISE

“We Shall Overcome” is an overriding theme throughout the story. Many of the characters in the stage show talk about the injustices in the world at the time. For example Jake talks about authorities’ use of police dogs on civil rights protestors in Birmingham, Alabama, Baby talks about Monks burning themselves in protest which refers to the persecution of Buddhists in South East Asia and Neil is going to join his fellow workers to go Freedom Riding to protest in the South against segregation.

The Think Tank

Students research the activities of The Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee and the Freedom Riders.

In guided open discussion, have students present their views on the activities of the group from both legal and moral standpoints.

Encourage students to evaluate their generation’s willingness to stand up for what they believe is right, no matter the cost. Students give examples both personal and general.

Who were Michael Schwerner, James Chaney and Andrew Goodman and what did they do?

FROM THE SCRIPT

Lisa is upset as she has forgotten a pair of shoes and Jake reminds her that this is nothing worth getting upset about when you compare her situation to what’s going on in Alabama...

(Bellhops are rushing around rolling clothes racks laden with summer cocktail dresses and shoe boxes.)

LISA

Oh God, look at that! Ma, I should have brought those coral shoes. You said I was taking too much.

MARJORIE

Well sweetheart, you brought ten pairs.

LISA

...but the coral shoes matched that dress.

JAKE

This is not a tragedy. A tragedy is three men trapped in a mine, or police dogs used in Birmingham...

BABY (chiming in eagerly)

Monks, burning themselves in protest...

TEACHER TIPS

Much of the Civil Rights movement was generated by students.

Do you think students today are as involved as they were in the 1960s?

Do you believe you have the power to change things? Why? Why not?

How would you define social conscience?



THE CLASSIC STORY ON STAGE

OBJECTIVE

To reinforce the role of women in the Civil Rights movement

EXERCISE

In 1955, Rosa Parks, took a stand against racism by refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a white man. Following in her path, numerous women stepped up and took their place in the fight for Civil Rights. Women in general found a voice to challenge the old establishment, and with that voice the courage to pursue their dreams.

Baby says she wants to join the Peace Corps and Neil Kellerman wants to go freedom riding with the busboys. Both young people want to do something to change the world. Several times during the play Baby is praised for her plans to “save the world”. Johnny says “I’ve never known anybody like you. You look at the world and you think you can make it better...” The world is on the cusp of social upheaval. Changes are occurring faster than anyone can keep track.

Students research women in the civil rights movement from the 1960s to today. Have them choose one and write an essay on why they chose that person and what she has contributed to the movement. Ask students to collect photos of their subject and make a book of the essays with photos to donate to the school library. Include in the book a Table of Contents and bibliography. Students suggest titles for the book and vote on the final title.

TEACHER TIPS

Do you think women would have had a greater role in history for standing up for people’s rights if they were equals?

Is a woman’s role in the civil rights movement harder than a man’s?”

FROM THE SCRIPT

Johnny saves Neil from the other staff kids when they threaten to throw him in the pool for preferring to act in the best interest of Kellerman’s. Johnny makes an off handed comment about Neil not being able to stand up for himself and Baby stands her ground and tries to tell Johnny that Neil is fighting for people’s rights and is brave. Baby and Johnny have their first fight as Baby tries to make Johnny understand her point of view. The scene ends with Baby crying, but she is not upset with Johnny, more so with herself as she has failed to explain what is important to her.

BABY

That’s so...

JOHNNY

What? That’s so dumb? Was that what you were going to say?

BABY

Jobs, then. The right to have a job, don’t you think everyone has as much right to have a job as you do?

JOHNNY

Yeah, well my cousin Lou doesn’t have a job.

BABY

Right to eat where you want. They go to lunch counters where there are signs that say whites only and they sit there—

JOHNNY

Neither does my friend Mac.

BABY

-- And nobody serves them

JOHNNY

No one’s handed me a job either Baby...and no one’s marchin’ for me.

BABY (crying)

And they say over and over I’ll have a cheese sandwich, I’ll have a cheese sandwich.

JOHNNY (Trying to joke, lower the tone)

I’ll get you a cheese sandwich, Baby.

BABY

And then people come and beat them up, just for trying to sit at a counter and eat where other people are sitting and eating.

Experiential History



THE CLASSIC STORY ON STAGE

OBJECTIVE

To nurture confidence and determination by drawing on lessons from history.

EXERCISE

Johnny is an accomplished dancer; with equal potential to the other characters, however, he spends his life feeling less worthy due to the separation of guests and staff. Dancing is his whole life, yet he uses the societal class he was born into as an excuse for not achieving his goals. The themes of fighting harder and following your dreams are important to Baby and Johnny as they face adversity and overcome the differences in their backgrounds. When Johnny allows Neil to tell him to end the season dance with the Pachanga, Baby accuses Johnny of not fighting for what he believes in. However when Johnny returns to Baby at the end of the story and defies Max Kellerman's orders to leave quietly he finally fights for what he wants.

The class compiles a list of obstacles experienced by Dr. Martin Luther King in his fight for civil rights. They read aloud his "I Have a Dream" speech. Afterwards, students talk about a particular dream for the future they might have, and what obstacles beyond their control may keep them from achieving them. Other students suggest ways to conquer the obstacles.

A Secret Challenge

Set a small goal for yourself that may involve some obstacles. (Nothing too hard, but something that may be a bit tricky in terms of getting around things) Keep it a secret. In one month come back to the class. Reveal your goal and report on how well you did in terms of achieving it. Detail any problems and how you got around them.

FROM THE SCRIPT

Neil comes to Johnny to discuss his ideas for the final dance of the season, he interrupts Baby and Johnny. Johnny tries to tell him his ideas but Neil disagrees and Johnny gives up as he is worried he might lose his job.

JOHNNY

That little wimp, he wouldn't know a new idea if it hit him in the pachanga! He wants some new ideas, I could have told him some new ideas...

BABY

Why did you let him talk to you that way?

JOHNNY

What do you mean and fight the boss man?

BABY

Yeah and tell him your ideas. He's a person like everyone else and --

JOHNNY

Look, I know these people, Baby. They're rich and they're mean. They won't listen to me.

BABY

Well, then why not fight harder? Make them listen.

JOHNNY (savagely)

Because I need this goddamn job lined up for next summer.

When Johnny returns to Kellerman's he is a changed man. He returns with confidence to go for what he wants on his own terms.

JOHNNY (to the audience)

Sorry about the disruption, folks, but I always do the last dance of the season...this year, somebody told me not to...

(NEIL motions the band to let JOHNNY speak.)

So, I'm gonna do my kind of dancing with a great partner-- who's not only a terrific dancer—but somebody...who's taught me that there are people willing to stand up for other people no matter what it costs them, somebody who's taught me about the kind of person I wanna be-- Miss Frances Houseman.

TEACHER TIPS

Do you give up easily?

What are you willing to sacrifice to achieve your goals?

How important do you think determination is in getting what you want in life?

CHALLENGE N°. 1

Be the History Teacher

Aside from Civil Right protests, few events in 20th Century history tore our country apart like the Vietnam War. Once again our country is painfully divided by war, this time being war in Iraq.

How much do you know about the Vietnam War? Choose a topic from those listed below, or select one of your own. Research it thoroughly. Find someone who grew up in the 60's willing to discuss your topic with you. Read to them your research notes and talk about your findings. Analyze what they say, carefully separating fact from opinion.

National Liberation Front
Gulf of Tonkin Resolution
The Tet Offensive
The Geneva Peace Accords

Ngo Dinh Diem
Hamburger Hill
Ho Chi Minh Trail
Robert McNamara

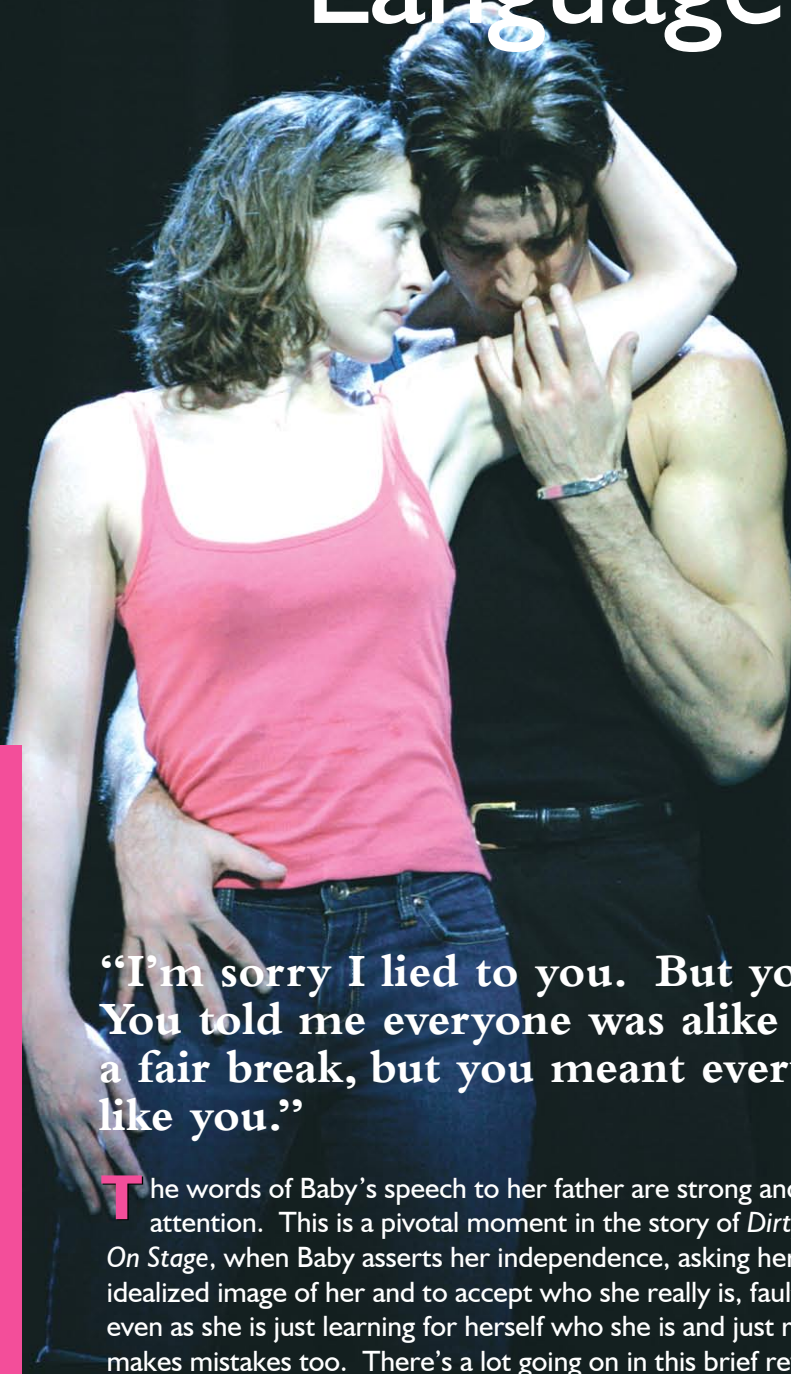
CHALLENGE N°. 2

Law Under the Microscope

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 established that women must receive the same pay as men for doing the same job. This was a significant legal step for women's rights.

Plenty of information exists on salary disparities. Find as many statistics as you can. Prepare a simple graph reflecting the disparities. Draw conclusions: Do laws necessarily resolve issues?

Overture to Language Arts



Summary of Standard for Language Arts

Writing

▪Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies of the writing process

▪Prewriting, drafting and revising, editing and publishing

▪Demonstrates competence in the stylistic and rhetorical aspects of writing

▪Uses grammatical and mechanical conventions in written compositions

▪Gathers and uses information for research purposes

Reading

▪Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies of the reading process

▪Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies for reading a variety of literary texts

▪Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies for reading a variety of informational texts

Listening and Speaking

▪Demonstrates competence in speaking and listening as tools for learning

“I’m sorry I lied to you. But you lied, too. You told me everyone was alike and deserved a fair break, but you meant everyone who was like you.”

The words of Baby’s speech to her father are strong and she instantly has his attention. This is a pivotal moment in the story of *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage*, when Baby asserts her independence, asking her father to let go of his idealized image of her and to accept who she really is, faults and all. She asks this even as she is just learning for herself who she is and just realizing that her father makes mistakes too. There’s a lot going on in this brief revelatory moment.

Pivotal moments often come in the form of, or are accompanied by, speeches. In life or in drama as it imitates life, an impassioned speech is a signal for change. In looking closely at historical moments of significant change, great orators are always part of the process and their words are part of historical record. The history of this country can be traced through the passionate speeches delivered at such moments.

Just after the last of the British soldiers departed at the end of the Revolutionary War, George Washington tearfully bade farewell to his generals and soon after delivered his official resignation to the Continental Congress which included the quote printed below. His speech (and the act) was profoundly significant to the formation of our government by establishing the important precedent that the country would be run by civilians, not by generals, thereby protecting us from military dictatorship.



George Washington:

“Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action, -- and bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer today my Commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life.”

Well before the Civil War had secured, at least nominally, the freedom and rights of African-Americans, Sojourner Truth fought as an ex-slave campaigning for women’s rights. She powerfully confronts the opposition in this excerpt from her most famous speech given at a women’s rights convention in Akron, Ohio in 1851.



Sojourner Truth

“That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain’t I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain’t I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man - when I could get it - and bear the lash as well! And ain’t I a woman? I have borne thirteen children, and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother’s grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain’t I a woman?”

Considered to be one of the greatest speeches in American history and one of the most often quoted, Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address was delivered as part of the dedication of a cemetery for fallen soldiers near the end of the Civil War. In the last line of the speech, he spoke the words that have become the touchstone that Americans refer to as defining their government.



Abraham Lincoln

“...that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

In 1877, the Nez Perce Indians refused to be placed on a reservation. Led by Chief Joseph they traveled north trying to reach Canada. Just forty miles from the border, with half his tribe dead and the remainder starving and freezing to death, Chief Joseph surrendered with these famous words:



Chief Joseph

“Hear me, my chiefs. I am tired. My heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever.”

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt heartened America as he came to office during the Great Depression, one of this country's darkest hours, with these words from his first inaugural speech:



“...the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.”

Freedom and equality are recurring themes throughout our history and throughout these speeches. Never were those themes more fully explored, and never were those values more passionately demanded than during the Civil Rights era, in which the story of *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* is set. When we think of this era, we immediately think of the great speakers that emerged during that time and the potent words they used to motivate, inspire, heal and persuade.

On the evening of the day on which two African-American students were permitted to attend the University of Alabama, after National Guardsmen intervened on their behalf, President Kennedy delivered his televised Civil Rights speech calling for an end to segregation. This speech inspired the eventual passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, after Kennedy's death.

Excerpt from President John F. Kennedy's Civil Rights Speech June 11, 1963

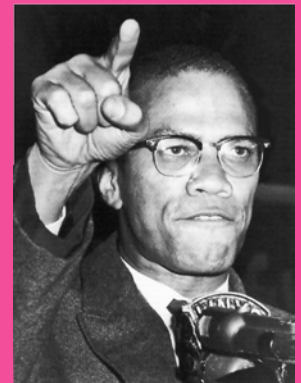
We face, therefore, a moral crisis as a country and a people. It cannot be met by repressive police action. It cannot be left to increased demonstrations in the streets. It cannot be quieted by token moves or talk. It is a time to act in the Congress, in your State and local legislative body and, above all, in all of our daily lives. It is not enough to pin the blame on others, to say this is a problem of one section of the country or another, or deplore the facts that we face. A great change is at hand, and our task, our obligation, is to make that revolution, that change, peaceful and constructive for all. Those who do nothing are inviting shame, as well as violence. Those who act boldly are recognizing right, as well as reality.



Originally advocating peaceful resolutions, Malcolm X eventually began to move in a more militant direction as this excerpt from his famous Ballot or the Bullet speech suggests.

Excerpt from Malcolm X's, "The Ballot or the Bullet" Speech April 12, 1964

This is why I say it's the ballot or the bullet. It's liberty or it's death. It's freedom for everybody or freedom for nobody. America today finds herself in a unique situation. Historically, revolutions are bloody. Oh, yes, they are. They haven't never had a blood-less revolution, or a non-violent revolution. That don't happen even in Hollywood. You don't have a revolution in which you love your enemy, and you don't have a revolution in which you are begging the system of exploitation to integrate you into it. Revolutions overturn systems. Revolutions destroy systems.



By far the most famous speech of the Civil Rights era was Dr. Martin Luther King's speech delivered to the 250,000 assembled peaceful protesters at the Civil Rights March in Washington D.C. The repetition of the phrase "I have a dream," made it a Civil Rights anthem, emotionally loaded and immediately recognizable to this day. This occurred just after the summer that Baby spent at Kellerman's.

Excerpt from Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have A Dream" Speech - August 28, 1963

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its Governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification, that one day right down in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today.



What makes a speech effective? Is it content or form or some combination of both? What makes a powerful speaker? Is it something one is born with or can it be learned? The ancient Greeks were the first to formalize the art of oratory as an element of rhetoric, the art of finding all available means of persuasion in a given situation. Effective public speaking was considered an important skill in public as well as private life. Later the Roman's followed the Greek model and would, in fact send their promising young speakers to be trained by the Greek masters – as was the case with Julius Caesar. The Greek method emphasized content whereas the Roman adaptation was more concerned with form. In the middle Ages and the Renaissance, oratory was considered to be part of a complete education. Today, we see it most conspicuously in political candidates as they make their bids for office largely based on the persuasiveness of their public speaking skills.

Whether powerful public speeches inspire us to stand up and make a difference in the world or merely in our own personal lives, eloquence is the key. At the end of *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage*, Johnny returns to the hotel, for the first time unwilling to turn his back on injustice. He takes the stage and eloquently echoing the language of civil rights orators, reveals how Baby has changed him.

JOHNNY

“. . . somebody. . .who's taught me that there are people willing to stand up for other people no matter what it costs them, somebody who's taught me about the kind of person I wanna be. . .”

His honesty, courage and passion turn out to be infectious and he does, in fact, effectively bring about a transformation at the resort - through dance, music and action.

Language Arts



OBJECTIVE

To reinforce the power of speech as a vehicle for positive change.

FROM THE SCRIPT

Baby and Neil are dancing together. Discussing their plans after summer ends, Neil asks Baby what her college major will be.

NEIL
Going to major in English?

BABY
No, economics of underdeveloped countries. I'm going into the Peace Corps.

NEIL
After the big final show I'm going to Mississippi with a couple of the busboys freedom riding.

BABY
Oh, that's great.

EXERCISE

There are references in the play to JFK, whose leadership and eloquence as president prompted many young people to join his newly formed Peace Corps.

Rent a copy of JFK's inaugural speech. Play it in class with students taking notes as they listen. In guided discussion ask what parts they found particularly inspiring. Why? On a scale of one to ten, have students rate their individual impact. Ask, "If you were a young person at that time would you have been inspired to action by this speech? Is the speech relevant today?"

Over the course of a month ask students to listen to three speeches. Suggest C-Span as a possible resource but speeches can be from anywhere, including entertainment, sports etc. Students grade the speeches for effectiveness and report their findings to the class.

Volunteer students share with the class a particular time when someone's words and/or actions inspired them to positive action.

TEACHER TIPS

Think of a time when someone's words inspired you to action.

Was it the person themselves, what he or she was saying, or both? What would you say makes a powerful speaker? How much is in the delivery? Is there a difference between hearing inspirational words and reading them?

OBJECTIVE

Literature as a moral and social statement.

EXERCISE

Penny becomes pregnant by Robbie. When Baby confronts him about being the father, and about helping Penny he brushes her off. He too needs the money earned from his summer job to pay for school. His whole life is at stake here. He can not afford to help her so he pretends not to care. He tosses Baby a copy of the novel, *Fountainhead* by Ayn Rand, and tells her to read it, saying "Some people count, and some people don't."

Have students visit the website: www.bookrags.com.

Under "Research Anything" type in *Fountainhead Plot Summary*. Click *Fountainhead Study Pack*. Click on *Plot Summary*. Other websites also explore the novel. Encourage students to gather as much information as possible. Students interpret the information and write an opinion paper on how the story relates to the statement, "Some people count, and some people don't."

FROM THE SCRIPT

Robbie is setting up a table. To cover their discussion, Baby is pouring water.

ROBBIE (softly)

And just where do you get off telling me what's right? (He picks up a tub of bagels, starts tossing them on each plate. His aim is deadly.)

BABY

You can't just leave her...I mean...

ROBBIE

I didn't blow a summer hauling toasted bagels just to bail out some little chick who probably balled every guy in the place. (Beat) A little precision, please, Baby.

Baby has spilled a few drops of water on the table.

Robbie pulls out a book from his back pocket.

Some people count and some people don't...read it. *The Fountainhead*. I think it's a book you'll enjoy, but make sure you return it -- I have notes in the margin.

BABY

You make me sick. Stay away from me, stay away from my sister or I'll have you fired.

She upends her ice water pitcher down Robbie's pants.

TEACHER TIPS

Consider the quote, "Art mirrors life."

Think of some books you've read. Do any of them have a serious message?

Do you like books that make you think, or would you rather read strictly for fun.

Experiential Language Arts



THE CLASSIC STORY ON STAGE

OBJECTIVE

To reinforce the power of speech as a vehicle for positive change.

EXERCISE

Listen Up

People use language techniques to achieve various goals. In the Discussion Lesson we talk about the use of words to inspire. Other goals might be to teach, educate or warn. Some characters try and communicate things they feel seriously about based on their experience to young people. When Neil goes to Tito he expects a proud endorsement of his plans instead he gets a strict warning based on Tito's own experience and fears for Neil's safety.

Divide the class into pairs. One student plays the role of a student who has just told his parents he or she plans to drop out of school. The other will play the role of a guidance counselor who cares deeply about his or her students. The second student's job is to convince the first that to drop out would be a mistake. Allow the entire class for this activity. At the end of it go around the room and ask the student "drop out" whether the "counselor's" argument changed their mind. Ask them what the counselor said or didn't say that made the difference.

FROM THE SCRIPT

NEIL
I'm going with them, Uncle Tito.

TITO
What?

NEIL
I've already decided to go with them down to Mississippi.

TITO
I know you want me to say you're a hero, son, but I think you don't know what you're doin'.

NEIL
Christ, Tito, I thought you'd be the one person who'd understand.

TITO
You're comin' back here with your ass in a sling--if you're comin' back at all. You stay up north here with your Grandpa. It's bad down there, more bad than you know.

TEACHER TIPS

Do you think people always say what they mean?

Do you take things on face value?

Do you question things or take the easy road and believe everything you hear?

Hearing what you want to hear makes you feel good, but is it the truth?

CHALLENGE N°. 1

That's Saying a Mouthful!

Until the 60's certain established norms of behavior governed society. **Research the definition of the term, antiestablishment. What events or situations in the play reflect a movement toward challenging old ideas and rejecting the status quo? Choose the one you think is most important and write a thoughtful essay defending your choice.**

CHALLENGE N°. 2

Strictly for Laughs

Throughout the show, lines exhibit the author's ability to incorporate wit into the dialogue.

Stan glances at a guest wearing a Cleopatra wig. He says: "My God, it's Cleopatra. I feel like such an asp."

Robbie, in a play on words from the famous JFK speech, kneels beside Lisa and says, "...ask not what your waiter can do for you; ask what you can do for your waiter."

Rewrite the original line replacing Cleopatra and asp. Think of another way JFK's famous quote can be used to convey humor by replacing the word waiter. Your class will decide whose rewrites are the wittiest.

Overture to Life Skills

Summary of Standard for Life Skills

Thinking and Reasoning

- Understands and applies the basic principles of presenting an argument
- Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning
- Effectively uses mental processes that are based in identifying similarities and differences (compares, contrasts, classifies)
- Understands and applies basic principles of hypothesis testing and scientific inquiry
- Applies basic trouble-shooting and problem-solving techniques
- Applies decision-making techniques

Working With Others

- Contributes to the overall effort of a group
- Uses conflict-resolution techniques
- Works well with diverse individuals and in diverse situations
- Displays effective interpersonal communication skills
- Demonstrates leadership skills

Self-Regulation

- Sets and manages goals
- Performs self-appraisal
- Considers risks
- Demonstrates perseverance
- Maintains a healthy self-concept
- Restraints impulsivity

Life Work

- Makes effective use of basic tools
- Uses various information sources, including those of a technical nature, to accomplish specific tasks
- Manages money effectively
- Pursues specific jobs
- Makes general preparation for entering the work force
- Makes effective use of basic life skills
- Displays reliability and a basic work ethic
- Operates effectively within organizations



KATE CHAMPION, choreographer of *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage*, played a key role in the creation of the stage version of this story which features dance so prominently. StageNOTES

spoke with her about her process, her background and her creative approach to the show.

Kate is a choreographer, director and teacher and has worked for many arts companies and institutions including Sydney Theatre Company, The Song Company, Legs on the Wall, Australian Theatre for Young People, The English National Opera, The Australian Dance Theatre and DV8 Physical Theatre among others. Her career in choreography was launched when she created and performed the premiere of her solo work, *About Face*, commissioned by the Sydney Opera House. She is now the Artistic Director of Force Majeure, a dance-theatre company based in Sydney, Australia whose first performance, the highly acclaimed *Same, Same but Different*, commissioned by the Sydney and Melbourne Festivals, was a sell-out success. It won a 2002 Helpmann Award for Best Visual or Physical Theatre Production. That year, she also won the Helpmann Award for Best Female Dancer for *About Face*. She was the choreographer for Cate Shortland's award-winning feature film *Somersault* and recently directed Force Majeure's second major work *Already Elsewhere* at the Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House for the Sydney Festival.

Kate choreographed the world premiere of *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* which opened in Sydney in 2004 and has subsequently opened productions of the show in Hamburg, London, Toronto and Utrecht.



SN - *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* is, in a sense, a story told through dance. As the choreographer, your work is really a focal point. What have been the particular rewards and challenges?

KC - They've been manifold. One thing I was particularly aware of was that the story was set in 1963, the film in 1987 and we were first re-creating it in 2004. The shock value of "dirty dancing" and what that meant in 1963, how it was recreated in the film and then, for me, looking at 2004 video clips trying to understand what we see as sexy or not sexy or how much can be revealed or shown. I find that a lot of video clips these days are verging on pornography. So

how do you, in 2004, maintain that element of - not the shock value - but (gasp) "My God what are they doing in front of our eyes!" How do you maintain that through those different cultural familiarities with what is sexual and what you're exposed to?

SN - What was your approach to that challenge?

KC - I don't come from a commercial musical theatre background. I'm much more a contemporary and dance theatre artist where we maintain "the fourth wall," where we don't perform outwards. Whereas in most musicals it's very much an outward performing experience and you acknowledge the audience.

Particularly with people being so familiar with the film which is a voyeuristic experience, it was quite important for me that we maintain that fourth wall in the dancing as well; so that the live audience can continue to have that voyeuristic experience. I find that it also makes the sexuality of the dance more sensual than overt and I think it makes the experience more similar to what happened in the original era and subsequently the film. Working with dancers who are more used to performing outwards was a huge challenge - to make them understand the power of the "fourth wall."

SN - You've made reference to the precedent set by the film. To what extent were you influenced in your work on this show by the well-known film version? Did you have free reign to create from scratch?

KC - I think it's quite a challenge to take something that's so iconic for a lot of people because of their experience of the original film. So, how do you pay homage to that? There is attachment to the story as there is to certain dance sections - not so much specific steps, but certain dance moments need to be relived. I think it could be quite upsetting if it was something totally different. So it's the balance of bringing original movement and yet satisfying the experience that is in the memory of the audience. At the same time acknowledging that there will be people coming to the show that haven't seen the movie

SN - *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* includes a wide range of dance styles from formal Ballroom to informal "dirty dancing." What has prepared you to be able to work in those various genres?

KC - I was very open from my first interview that I am



not a Ballroom dancer and I insisted on having a Ballroom teacher and choreographer alongside me. His name is Craig Wilson and he's also from Australia. I would go out to his studio and learn from scratch so that I could be on top of the vocabulary. I worked very closely with Craig on how I could add my own moves in to the forms that already exist, while respecting the various Ballroom moves. I am also very passionate about being true to story and people looking real on stage. If they are meant to be kids who are employed at a summer holiday resort, for them to suddenly have this phenomenal dance technique - it's a bit suspicious. But at the same time, we're doing a show that people are paying to see. It's a fine balance to strike so that it's beautiful dancing

but still believable for the age group and the era.

SN – In the interest of characters looking “real,” I believe that in the film version, the cast of young, “dirty dancers” included performers who were actors first and not necessarily dancers. But dancing on stage has different demands. How have you addressed this?

KC – We definitely look for highly trained dancers. Dancers that have individual looks or character feel about them, but we have had to bump up the technical skill. We couldn't have actors. It's the dancing that takes the higher importance in the ensemble. They have to act and to act physically, but we have sought the highest level of dance skill. I do try to cast different body types, but sometimes those odder body types don't get through in a dance career. It's often harder to push through if you're an odder body shape - to get jobs and therefore to be in the realm of that sort of audition.

SN – So how did you reach out to get a more eclectic cast?

KC – The casting is incredibly detailed and long. Actors are called in for all the roles and often the ensemble cover the roles so there is a crossover between the theatre-based and dance-based skills. Every single person in the show dances. So in casting, they look at the ballet world, the contemporary dance world, the ballroom world and the acting world.

SN – As the professional dancers at the resort, the roles of Penny and Johnny have to be filled by trained dancers but you've really stepped outside the pool of Broadway show-trained dancers...

KC – Absolutely. The casting agents are encouraged to go to the contemporary dance worlds particularly for the roles of Johnny and Penny. The girl who plays Penny in the Toronto production was with Joffrey Ballet and Johnny in the West End company came from contemporary dance.

SN - And that's your background as well. Did you ever expect to find yourself working on a “commercial” show like this?

KC – No, absolutely not. When they rang me I said “I'm sorry I don't do musicals.” But Eleanor, the writer very much wanted to not have the typical musical theatre creative team. She wanted to flavor it with people from the art and theatre world. But my response was “I don't do musicals.



I'm really the wrong person." But they said "it's not a typical musical. It's more like a play that has dance and music and we're interested in working on it in an un-typical way." I felt that I at least owed them a personal explanation for why I wasn't the right person for the job. So when I went into the interview, I explained that I'm very, very passionate about people looking real on stage: different shapes and sizes and I don't want to just demonstrate steps. Otherwise there will just be 14 versions of Kate Champion on stage and that's not interesting to me. Working as a dancer in this way, and because I've always been interested in choreography, I've found it so satisfying to be able to develop steps that suited my body, that looked good on me. I also found engagement

of my creativity, my imagination, my intellect in that process. It respects me as a dancer, as an artist not just a facility for someone else's shape. That work is such an incredible excitement for me and what dance can do and how you can contribute to dance beyond just being a choreographer. And I said that's how I would work with the performers in creating *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage*. The producer's looked incredibly nervous! But Eleanor was very excited, I think because it was closer to how the film choreographers worked with the dancers. They created a nightclub setting with lighting and then got the dancers to improvise. I work strongly from an improvised base, video taping and then setting the movement.

SN - With all the different versions of the show that have been mounted around the world, a process like this could become very demanding, more hands-on and time-intensive.

KC - Yes and living in Australia, I've had to put a lot of that trust in David Scotchford, the associate choreographer on the original Australian production. Since he was part of that process from the beginning he maintains the integrity and the organic nature of the work. And it's a mixture. There do have to be set moves but, for instance, the Johnny in Holland is an amazing ballroom dancer and he can do all these tight really swively-hipped ballroom moves whereas the original Johnny was a contemporary dancer who can do these stretched out long moves. It would be ridiculous to make one or the other do otherwise. It just wouldn't look as fantastic as they do in this "show-off" number in the Sheldrake.

SN - That really makes this show a real celebration of dance and enhances the storytelling. It adds a whole other dimension to the underlying theme of self-discovery.

KC - Yes, and the majority of the dancers lap it up. They are so excited to work this way. But not everyone - and we accommodate that as well.

SN - Can you talk a bit about your background? You said that you've always loved to create. Was choreography always your goal - from the beginning?

KC - I went to a quite unconventional suburban dance teacher who encouraged us to choreograph from the age of seven or eight; giving us exercises to create dances and I'd do it on the weekend with my girlfriends. She taught us musical structure and all sorts of imaginative ways of creative movement. It just never occurred to me that it wasn't



part and parcel of dance. I didn't think I had the body or technique to get into something like the Australian Ballet Company; but I went to Munich with my parents when I was 14 and attended a school there that was more focused on technique. Two weeks after my 16th birthday I went on my own to Munich to join their professional company. So I had the creative side initially and then had to come up to the line with all the technical aspects if I really wanted a career as a dancer. A choreographer really does need to have been a dancer. Pretty much every choreographer I know has at some stage been in a full-time dance company and gone through that process. I performed for at least 26 years which seems like a long time but I was always so interested

in choreography that I would go to one company and learn from that director and then find another one. At one point I became totally disillusioned with dance and felt that it was too limited an art form. I was quite frustrated as an artist and I wanted to reach a wider spectrum of humanity than just those who are concerned about whether your toes are pointed properly. Then I saw the work of DV8 Physical Theatre who were visiting from London and realized that dance could be used in this incredible way that made more sense to me and could reach a wider audience. I began to work with them, at first as a production assistant and then as a performer. I came back to Australia and started to do my own work and eventually created a full-length solo show which launched my career as a choreographer.

SN - What advice would you offer to someone interested in a career as a dancer or choreographer?

KC – It's harsh and competitive and it can be very disappointing for a long time; whether you're talented or not; whether you've applied yourself or not. Some people say that it is so much to do with luck and timing. But if you're not prepared when that timing happens then that opportunity is lost. I think it's so important to have perseverance, faith in what you do, enjoyment in the very act of doing it and never thinking that you know. Never stop learning. I still think to this day that every job is an opportunity to learn something. And with constant commitment to the creative act – whether you're doing it in a small church hall or a large stage, the commitment and the energy are the same – you'll never be disappointed and will just continue to grow and be ready when that moment of luck happens because you'll already have a work ethic, a sense of commitment and a structure behind you. Every time I embark on a creative process I have this terrible feeling like I don't know anything. I think that's part of the process but what kicks in once I start the project is what I think of as a scaffolding – a history that you've gained over the years. You also have to have faith that if you're a bit of an oddball or you're doing something that's not main-stream, then that's a gift and not a mark on your back.

Discussion Life Skills



THE CLASSIC STORY ON STAGE

OBJECTIVE

Explore the meaning of trust and its impact on relationships

EXERCISE

Out of affection for Jake for having helped her through her medical emergency, Penny offers to give Marjorie and Jake dance lessons. Later, Penny tells Marjorie how Jake helped her. We discover that Marjorie, his wife of many years, knew nothing about it. She asks Jake why he hadn't told her, we realize she is hurt because he has always confided in her. Jake, a trustworthy and decent person, responds, "It's the first thing I've kept from you in twenty five years, I'm glad you know."

While Jake may have been wrong in not telling Marjorie, there are several reasons why he may have chosen not to do so. The class brainstorms the possibilities. As suggestions are made, write each on the board. Hold an open discussion of each. Afterwards ask for a show of hands as to how many students in Marjorie's position would still trust him and how many would not. Students divide into two groups based on their answer.

Have students look up the definition of compassion. Ask how the term might apply in this situation. Would compassion for Jake and his dilemma change your opinion about trusting him again? Ask for another show of hands and tell students they can change groups if they wish.

FROM THE SCRIPT

Penny gives Marjorie and Jake dance lessons. It is clear from their behaviour that they are a couple who support each other...

(Jake misses a step. Penny hurries forward but Marjorie covers with a turn and a warm smile at Jake. Marjorie touches Jake's cheek. They are clearly a couple who love and support each other. For the first time, he seems relaxed and happy.)

PENNY (To Marjorie)

Now close your eyes...Just fall back...(Penny helps Jake dip Marjorie). See how she trusts you.

(Jake's arm trembles when Penny says the words trust you—they stumble—Marjorie almost falls)

TEACHER TIPS

Think of a time when someone betrayed your trust.

How did it make you feel?

Was the person close to you?

Would you ever trust that person again, or has your opinion of them as reliable changed forever?

Experiential Life Skills



THE CLASSIC STORY ON STAGE

OBJECTIVE

Students comprehend the cost of higher education and the role of financial aid.

EXERCISE

Some of the staff at Kellerman's are college students working for the summer. They are all there to earn money to help pay for school. College, after all, is expensive. Summer jobs help. Johnny and the other entertainers also rely on their summer jobs to help them live throughout the year.

Find someone who has recently attended college or is a current student. Ask them to share their financial aid information with you. A letter details what the college is giving the student in free scholarship money, grants, as well as money they may be entitled to in the form of loans. Ask them to explain the letter. What is a Stafford Loan; a Perkins Loan; a Pell Grant? What role, if any, does Work Study play in paying the bill? Did they take summer jobs? Look at the total amount school will cost the student that year. Does the total surprise you? Would you consider taking a summer job to help pay your bill, or would you expect your parents to pay everything?

Go to the websites of one private and one state college. Both should be schools you might like to consider. Find the tuition page. How much is it? Also look at fees and other expenses that get added onto tuition, like food, books, transportation, housing. Try to estimate the yearly cost. Which school would you consider based on cost and academic programs offered?

FROM THE SCRIPT

Johnny's conversation with Baby about jobs and the ones you have to do in order to do the ones you love is interesting. Summer jobs are not always interesting, but they can help pay for something you might want to do, such as attend college. Sometimes, as in Johnny's case, his winter job helps him survive so he can do what he really loves—dance. He can't afford to offend Neil and run the risk of losing his summer job.

BABY

Why did you let him talk to you that way?

JOHNNY

What do you mean and fight the boss man?

BABY

Yeah and tell him your ideas. He's a person like everyone else and --

JOHNNY

Look, I know these people, Baby. They're rich and they're mean. They won't listen to me.

BABY

Well, then why not fight harder? Make them listen.

JOHNNY (savagely)

Because I need this goddamn job lined up for next summer. (Calming himself) My Dad calls me today with good news. He says, "Uncle Paul can finally get you into the union."

Johnny strides out and starts to head down the path.

BABY

What union?

Johnny continues down the path followed by Baby.

JOHNNY

The House Painters and Plasterers Local #179...at your service. When I don't have a dance gig, I work with my dad...he's a housepainter.

TEACHER TIPS

Have you ever had a job? Why? Why not?

If you do not, what prevents you from getting one?

Is saving money for something you want a good idea?

Do you appreciate more the things you pay for yourself? Is that statement true or not?

CHALLENGE N°. 1

No One's Perfect

Several characters in the show are confronted with some fairly serious problems. They make mistakes. In the end they work through them, sometimes with the help of others. They are not only better people in the end but also learn something in the process. Johnny learns that all people from the upper classes do not look down on him; Penny is surprised to learn that Baby cares about her and is willing to put her family relationships in jeopardy to help her. Even Jake learns something about judging people too quickly. He realizes Johnny is a decent man and worthy of his daughter's attention.

Everyone makes mistakes. The important thing is to learn from them. **Think about one big mistake you keep making over and over. Starting now, set a goal that you will stop doing it. It won't be easy. Create a daily chart that covers one month. Keep track of how many times you make the mistake on a daily basis. At the end of a week count the number of times you faltered. Your goal is to reduce or eliminate the weekly number by the end of the month.**

CHALLENGE N°. 2

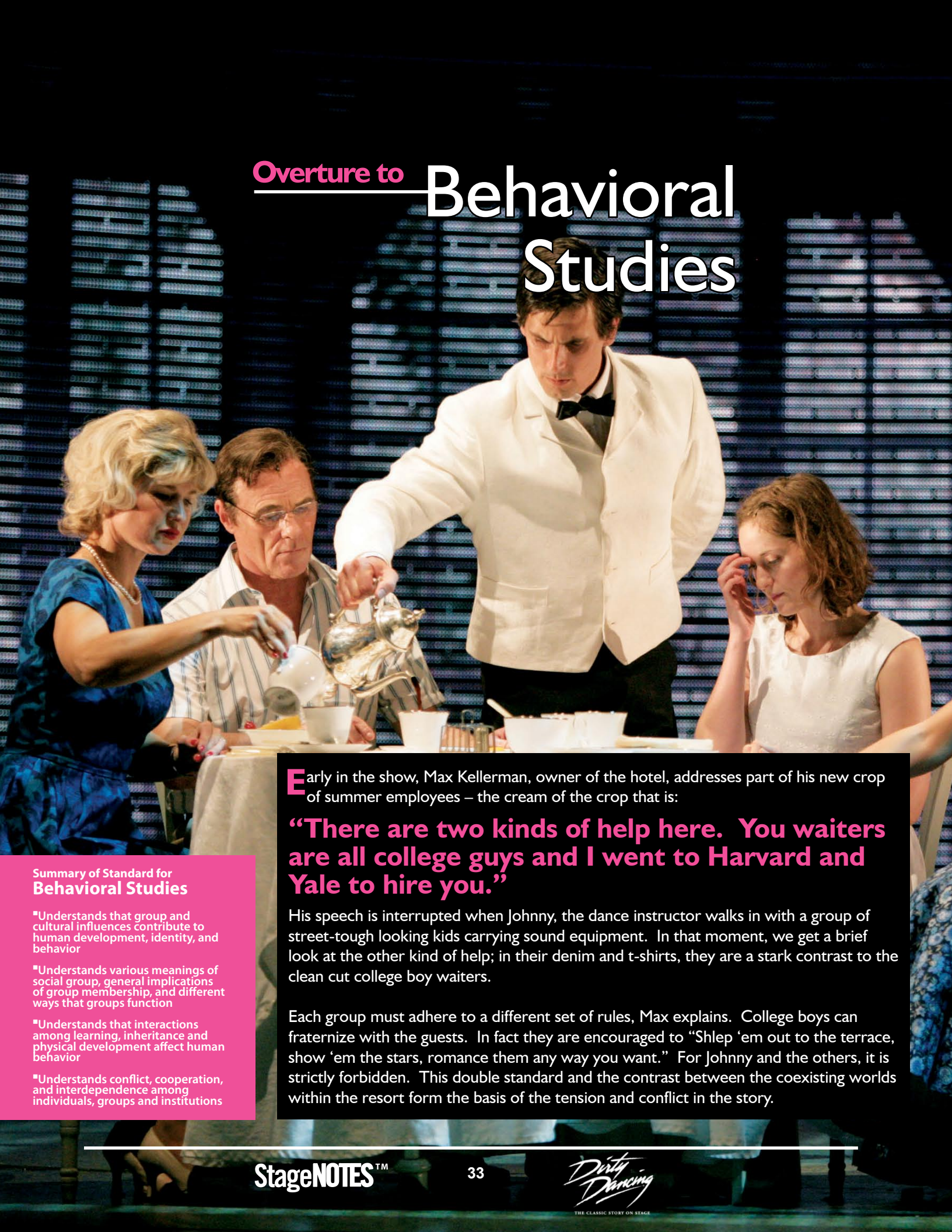
A Little Philosophy Never Hurt Anyone

Baby asks Johnny, "What do you do in winter?" He answers, "Try to keep my balance." Of course this is his way of not answering, of not giving away too much about his personal life. He pulls her onto a log over the water and they proceed to do an improvised playful dance.

Balance on logs and in life is important. "Too much of (even) a good thing," say the experts, isn't good. Think about this for a while then write several paragraphs on the saying. Say why you agree or disagree.

Gather information on the concept of "The Middle Way." How does this encourage life balance and why do Buddhists think it's a good idea?

Overture to Behavioral Studies



Early in the show, Max Kellerman, owner of the hotel, addresses part of his new crop of summer employees – the cream of the crop that is:

“There are two kinds of help here. You waiters are all college guys and I went to Harvard and Yale to hire you.”

His speech is interrupted when Johnny, the dance instructor walks in with a group of street-tough looking kids carrying sound equipment. In that moment, we get a brief look at the other kind of help; in their denim and t-shirts, they are a stark contrast to the clean cut college boy waiters.

Each group must adhere to a different set of rules, Max explains. College boys can fraternize with the guests. In fact they are encouraged to “Shlep ‘em out to the terrace, show ‘em the stars, romance them any way you want.” For Johnny and the others, it is strictly forbidden. This double standard and the contrast between the coexisting worlds within the resort form the basis of the tension and conflict in the story.

Summary of Standard for Behavioral Studies

“Understands that group and cultural influences contribute to human development, identity, and behavior

“Understands various meanings of social group, general implications of group membership, and different ways that groups function

“Understands that interactions among learning, inheritance and physical development affect human behavior

“Understands conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among individuals, groups and institutions

By 1963, the 1950s rise of the middle class had left a distinct gap between those who were sharing in the nation's new prosperity and the working class. The tensions and prejudices between them in the outside world were present, and perhaps intensified, in the self-contained resort environment. In these neighborhoods, unrest and resentment bubbled up even as suspicion and fear looked back from the privileged vantage point of suburbia. At Kellerman's summer resort, the two worlds collide.



Robbie and the other employees who come from upwardly mobile, lower middle class families, are on their way to elite colleges, which will guarantee them acceptance to the middle class. They need to earn money to enable them to meet their college expenses. Meanwhile, the young people from working class families, like Johnny, work at these jobs to make a living. With no prospects for higher education, their futures are anything but certain. The staff kids find a release valve after hours, in socializing and, in particular, in dancing: a new, sensual way of moving to the new and sensual music that has yet to reach the mainstream.



“...Baby has good stuff.”

Baby is the exception among the guests and employees. She learns some of the realities of working class life and of class in America from Johnny. Middle class liberals of the era were more likely to be sensitive to racial discrimination than class discrimination. She challenges the outdated social prejudices at the resort and, through her words, actions and love, forms a bridge that is ultimately crossed by others. She is our window to the outside world where class, racial and sexual barriers are under fire. There is civil unrest among African-Americans and whites. The country is on the brink of war and the looming draft threatens to be a great leveler, making no one invulnerable. President Kennedy has created the Peace Corps as a way of bringing some of the country's enormous wealth and resources to those less fortunate. Women are beginning to assert their independence. The baby boom has created a huge youth population that will have a lot to say about it all; and a cultural revolution is in the air. In other words, the world is beginning to have a social conscience and Baby brings that conscience with her into the resort.

Just as single acts of courage and dissension are drawing attention to injustice and stirring social movement in the world, Baby's courage becomes a catalyst for change, beginning a chain reaction that impacts the entire resort community. Her example inspires Johnny to stand up for himself. His transformation climaxes in a final celebratory dance in which everyone participates: young, old, staff and guests. Seeing this microcosm of integration at work, Neil is inspired to join the Freedom Riders after all.

In the end, when Baby and Johnny are reunited, she wonders about their future and the obstacles they will face.

Baby

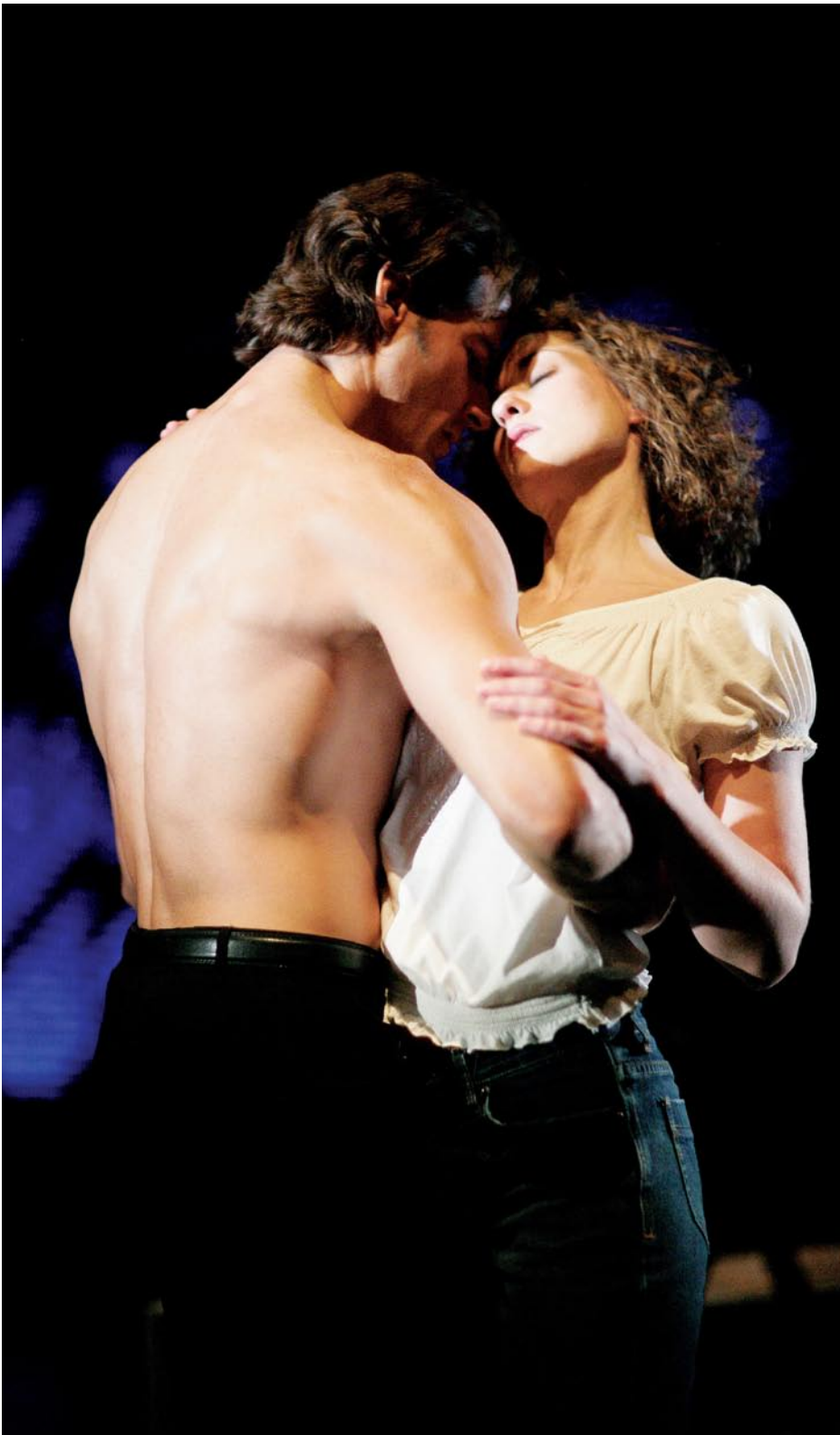
“You know they'll try to beat us down. . . They'll say we're too young to know what we feel and suppose we start believing them? Then everybody will be against us - even us. And what'll we do then, Johnny?”

Now ready to meet the world and all its challenges on his own terms, Johnny replies:

“We'll fight harder, Frances. That's what we'll do.”



Baby and Johnny are not the first couple to face class differences. Here are some other famous lovers from opposite sides of the tracks:



Princess Leia and Han Solo from *Star Wars*



Danny Zuko and Sandy Dumbrowski from *Grease*



Prince Charming and Cinderella



Rose DeWitt Bukater and Jack Dawson from *Titanic*

Discussion Behavioral Studies



OBJECTIVE

The role of integrity in the formation of character

EXERCISE

The intent of some characters in the play is clear. They know who they are and what they believe. They react to situations accordingly unlike some people you might know who are opportunists—people who say and do things based on what benefits them at a particular time and particular situations.

Discuss the behavior of various characters in relationship to the statements above. Which characters show integrity; give examples. Suggest to students that sticking to your principles can be difficult. Have them look at situations in the play. Ask whether a character who stuck to their principles had problems because of it. Students brainstorm why integrity is important.

FROM THE SCRIPT

When the staff suggests washing whipped cream off in the pool after a food fight Neil refuses to go along. He wants to be one of the guys, but realizes in his role as management he has to stop them. Later he talks to Baby about his decision. While it's obvious he's trying to impress her, he understands the importance of his decision in terms of his integrity.

NEIL

Baby. Something very important happened to me today.

BABY

It did?

NEIL

I was with the guys and they were about to do something that wasn't in the best interests of Kellerman's. As you know, I've always prided myself on being one of the guys, but I thought of the pool system and the chlorine content of Kellerman's pipes—Baby, the thing is, I've got to stop kidding myself. I realize today—Baby, I'm management.

TEACHER TIPS

“To thine own self be true” says William Shakespeare.

What do you think he meant by that?

Do you practice this in your own life, or do you behave as expected, depending upon the situation?

Writing Behavioral Studies



OBJECTIVE

To see behavior as affecting others

EXERCISE

In *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage*, the characters' behavior, runs the gamut. Jake risks losing his medical license to help Penny and Marjorie questions his actions and the consequences. Jake could lose his medical license; however, Marjorie acknowledges his actions as the actions of a great man of honor.

No "Man" is an Island

Choose any three main characters in the play. Study their behavior in at least two different scenes. Prepare an analysis piece. Describe how you see their behavior and how it affects the lives of one or more characters in either a positive or negative way.

FROM THE SCRIPT

Penny bursts into tears and Marjorie, cradling her in her arms, learns for the first time how Jake helped her. She walks off toward the driving range to confront Jake.

MARJORIE

...Why didn't you tell me about the other night?

JAKE

It's the first thing I've kept from you in twenty five years, I'm glad you know.

MARJORIE

She calls, you go, you put your whole life on the line, your whole family.

JAKE

What could I do?

MARJORIE

So you hand over two hundred and fifty dollars?

JAKE

It's only money

MARJORIE

It's your medical license!

JAKE

Someone was --

MARJORIE

In trouble. You helped her because you're a great man and that's why I love you, but Baby's got to learn her actions have consequences...

TEACHER TIPS

What were you thinking?

Certainly you've been asked that question, particularly by parents and other adults in your life. Problem is, sometimes you have no answer, because apparently you weren't thinking anything. This can be a problem, since our behavior ultimately impacts other people.

Experiential Behavioral Studies



OBJECTIVE

The role of integrity in the formation of character

TEACHER TIPS

Be honest.

How much do you care about what other people think?

Do you care little, some, or a lot?

If enough people did not support something you were doing would you give up trying, or keep at it. Why? Why not?

EXERCISE

When Jake suggests they leave Kellerman's before the talent show Lisa begs him to stay. She runs after him, asking him what song she should sing: "I Feel Pretty" or "What Do the Simple Folks Do?" What do you think, Daddy?" Is Lisa seeking her father's attention and approval?

Check Your Approval Rating

TEACHER NOTE

This exercise requires a good deal of independent thinking.

Students think of something to show at least twenty adults for the purpose of conducting an approval study. Some suggestions are a paper with a good grade, a piece of art work they've done, something, anything they have accomplished that can be shown. They do not reveal they are conducting a study. After each adult looks at whatever they show them, students rate the adult's response on an approval scale of one to ten. Tell them to jot down a few notes on their overall reaction. Encourage a choice of subjects from various areas: family, teachers, neighbors...keep it a mixed group. The results will be more interesting.

After rating each response students calculate an average approval rating. Ask yourself: Which people were more enthusiastic in their approval? How did the approval rating affect your attitude toward what you've done? How did it make you feel? What does this say about your need for approval versus personal pride in yourself and what you do? Volunteers report their findings to the class.

CHALLENGE N°. 1

Stop That Now!

Face it. The title of this show is *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage*. Dirty Dancing is a term of art - what a certain specific style of dancing, originating in working class milieus, was called from the 50's onward. To a lot of people, the title is befitting, since the choreography is decidedly suggestive. The author indicates the new daring dance moves as symbolic of radical sexual, social and political changes occurring in the country in the 1960s. Some school officials are less analytical. They've prohibited such moves at school dances and instituted penalties for those who disobey. Write an essay on the pros and cons of this decision.

CHALLENGE N°. 2

Play the Psychologist

The dictionary defines behavior as "observable activity in a human or animal." As we've explored, there's plenty of that going on in *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage*. As humans we're a pretty interesting bunch when it comes to how we deal with things. **Start an amateur psychologist's notebook. Observe the characters in a variety of situations. Some observations will make you laugh. Others will seem more serious—even destructive. Most will defy category and seem, well, just plain behavior—a human doing his or her thing. When finished observing, place the person in one of the four basic personality categories listed below.**

Four primary behavior styles:

- ① D type: Dominant Direct Decisive. Strong-willed people love challenge; take action; want immediate results.
- ② I type: Optimistic Outgoing. Like people; participate on teams; share ideas; energize and entertain others.
- ③ S type: Sympathetic Cooperative. Help people; likes working behind the scenes; predictable; consistent; good listeners.
- ④ C type: Concerned Correct. Sticklers for quality; like planning ahead; employ systematic approaches; regimented; check and re-check for accuracy.



Overture to The Arts

Summary of Standard for The Arts

Art Connections

- Understands connections among the various art forms and other disciplines

Music

- Sings, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music
- Performs on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music
- Improvises melodies, variations, and accompaniments
- Composes and arranges music within specified guidelines
- Reads and notates music
- Knows and applies appropriate criteria to music and music performances
- Understands the relationship between music history and culture

Theater

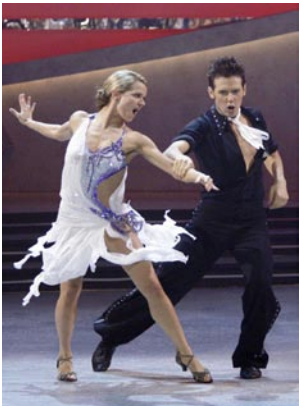
- Demonstrates competence in writing scripts
- Uses acting skills
- Designs and produces informal and formal productions
- Directs scenes and productions
- Understands how informal and formal theater, film, television, and electronic media productions create and communicate meaning
- Understands the context in which theater, film, television, and electronic media are performed today as well as in the past

Visual Arts

- Understands and applies media, techniques and processes related to the visual arts
- Knows how to use the structures (e.g., sensory qualities, organizational principles, expressive features) and functions of art
- Knows a range of subject matter, symbols, and potential ideas in the visual arts
- Understands the visual arts in relation to history and cultures
- Understands the characteristics and merits of one's own artwork and the artwork of others

Dance is the vehicle that carries us through the story of *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* – illustrating character, emotion, conflict and resolution through a range of styles, partners and skill. During the show we see a variety of genres in a variety of settings: from Penny's attempts to teach the Merengue to a group of resort guests, to the informal sensual dancing of the employees after hours as they move to the new sounds of Rock and Roll and Rhythm and Blues, to the beautifully executed, more formal Latin ballroom styles that Johnny and Penny excel at.

Mambo



Of those Latin styles, the Mambo is most prominently featured. This is the close, sensual, partner-dancing that provides the framework for the show's central romance between Johnny and Baby.

The Mambo originated in Cuba, a fortuitous intersection of Afro-Cuban and American Jazz (specifically Swing)

influences that exploded into a post-war, celebratory dance phenomenon. "Mambo" is the Bantu name for an African percussion instrument used in sacred ceremonies and means "conversation with the gods." Another account claims that the dance takes its name from a Haitian, Voodoo priestess. Cuba has populations with roots in Africa and Haiti (as well as Spain) so either explanation seems plausible, but however it was baptized, its irresistible, syncopated rhythm caught on and spread to America and Europe like wildfire.

Ironically its earliest roots can be traced to Europe. The late 17th Century English country dances spread through European nobility to the French court and to Spain, eventually reaching the Caribbean as "contredansa." By the end of the 19th Century, these courtly dances, originally danced in groups, lost much of their formality and became more sensual when combined with the African rhythms of the Caribbean and, perhaps even more significantly, when altered to become a dance for couples.

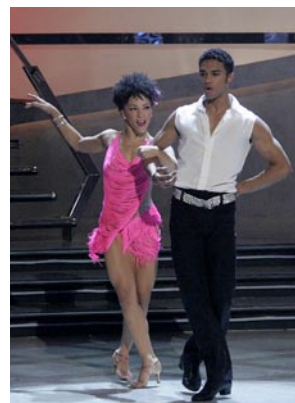
By the 1930s, Afro-Cuban music and the accompanying dance forms had evolved into an early version of Mambo. Cuban band leader, Perez Prado, is credited with officially introducing the dance in 1943 while performing at the Tropicana night club in Havana. The unique Mambo rhythm - a variation on the Rhumba, an earlier, also sensual Cuban form with African roots and sometimes considered to be the essence of Latin American music and dance - features an emphasis on the 2 and 4 beats in 4/4 time.

Arriving in New York City nightclubs by the late 1940s, the Mambo soon became hugely popular reaching its peak by the mid 1950s. Everyone wanted to learn the new moves; and dance studios and resort hotels began teaching a version of the Mambo suitable for non-professionals. In its original form, the dance was quite athletic and pyrotechnic

demonstrations by the very skilled at clubs such as New York's Palladium, known as the "temple of Mambo," fueled the craze. Even the popularized version, by all accounts is one of the more difficult Ballroom styles to master.

The Mambo mania persisted through the 1950s and enthusiasts were dubbed "Mambonicks." By 1963, the dance would certainly have had some ongoing popularity at places outside the city such as Kellerman's resort, but this was really the end of the great Ballroom era.

Cha Cha (Cha)



An important legacy of the Mambo is the Cha Cha (originally known as the Cha Cha Cha), created in 1954 by Cuban violinist, Enrique Jorin. A simpler form of Mambo, the Cha Cha is easier to dance and therefore gained widespread popularity. Again, with a 4/4 beat, and picking up on a particular sound within the Mambo rhythm, sometimes

called the "triple Mambo", the basic Cha Cha sequence begins with two slow steps followed by a small skip or "hiccup" (cha cha) on the 3rd beat.

Merengue



When the idea that Baby could stand in for Penny as Johnny's partner first arises, she protests that she "can't even do the Merengue." From this, we would naturally assume that the Merengue must be relatively simple to master. And, by most accounts, unlike the more daunting Mambo, the Merengue moves are easy for most to learn.

The Merengue, perhaps the oldest of all the well-known Latin dances today, is often referred to as the national dance of the Dominican Republic. Like the Mambo, the Merengue has its roots in the imported European "contredanse" which then

evolved through various Caribbean influences into the fast, couples dancing we think of today.

There is controversy around the origins of the Merengue and just what those “various Caribbean influences,” were. There is a connection with Cuban musical development due to the large numbers of Haitian slaves who left the island of Hispanola with their French and Spanish masters during the slave revolt of 1791. But it isn’t clear whether the Haitian slaves brought Merengue to Cuba, or whether they brought Cuban music home with them when they began to return to the island 20 years later, thereby influencing the development of Merengue.

The dance itself has two well-known stories associated with its origins. In one version, the basic step, which is a side step followed by a “dragging” of the other leg, pulling it in to meet the other, is derived from the movements of slaves as they worked, chained together, on sugar cane plantations. The other story tells of a revolutionary hero who returned home wounded, dragging one leg. In a show of respect and appreciation, the celebrants, imitated his movements, creating the signature Merengue step.

At the root of these contrasting stories is the history of a divided island and the racial and class conflicts that have shaped that history. While many proudly claim the Merengue as part of their cultural heritage, there was a time when some wished to distance themselves from the

new dance, associating the sensual movement with the lower classes. Today, it is a staple part of the Latin music and dance vocabulary and legacy like the Mambo, Cha Cha and Tango, all born of mixed racial and cultural influences. It is apt that these Latin dance styles are used so poignantly to tell a story that is about crossing social barriers.

Dirty Dancing



Dirty Dancing is a term of art referring to a style of dance developed in the 1950s but the term “dirty dancing” was first coined in 1914. Harry Fox, a well-known vaudevillian, invented the Fox-Trot, the first social dance to feature very close proximity of the dancers’ bodies. By today’s standards, the Fox-Trot would seem quite

harmless, but in the pre-Jazz age era in which it appeared, it was scandalous enough to call it “dirty dancing.” As a precursor to Mambo and other forms of Ballroom dance, the Fox-Trot passed on the term to those forms as well. In the context of the show, with all kinds of “dirty dancing” on display, some considered more “scandalous” than others, the title suggests a broader definition.



Arthur Murray

Johnny tells Baby that he got his dance training at an Arthur Murray studio. So did much of America or at least anyone who had an interest in learning Ballroom dancing styles.

Born Moses Teichmann in 1895 in Austria-Hungary, Murray officially changed his name to something less German-sounding due to anti-German sentiment in this country during WWI.

A student of Business Administration as well as dance, Murray, who began with a fledgling mail-order business providing dance instruction by providing cut-out “footprints” for aspiring dancers to follow – would become the hugely successful proprietor of the world’s most famous, franchised dance instruction. The first of many Arthur Murray Dance Studios opened in Minneapolis in 1938.

His business boomed in the late 40’s and 50’s with the popularity of Latin dance styles and he often taught and broadcast in Cuba, the birthplace of the Mambo, during that time. From 1950 to 1960, he and his wife had a dance television show called “The Arthur Murray Party”.

The disco craze of the 1970s brought another wave of interest in social, partners dancing. By that time, there were over 3500 Arthur Murray studios. Today, there are still over 200 in operation. *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* author Eleanor Bergstein was once an instructor.



Q & A with *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* author, Eleanor Bergstein

StageNotes had the opportunity to pose some questions to Eleanor Bergstein, author of the original screenplay as well as the stage version of *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage*. We asked her about the creative journey of a show that has transcended time periods and transitioned from one medium to another as well as about the creative journey of a young writer.

StageNOTES - In 1987 (or thereabout), you chose to look back at 1963 – a year charged with social unrest - and place your love story there. How does that setting inform the story?

Eleanor Bergstein – I don't believe the story could happen in the way it did any other year. I call it the last summer of liberalism. It was when the world had one foot in either camp. Radical action had not yet come.

The Cuban Missile crisis was the year before, when teenagers thought the world was going to end before they'd had a chance to have sex. Kennedy held out the promise of youth and glamour, but then a few months after our story, he was assassinated. A few months later the Beatles came to America, and shortly after that, radical action began. Rhythm and blues music, which had been below ground mainly in working class neighborhoods, was suddenly everywhere. The story couldn't have happened the year before because the seeds of class rebellion were not yet developed. And the following year it had all exploded, and the downstairs dancing would have already been taking place upstairs at Kellerman's.

SN - The story clearly struck a chord because the film was hugely popular. You'd be hard pressed to find someone who lived through the 80's, especially anyone who was coming of age at that time, who doesn't know the film and remember the story well. Why do you think this story situated in 1963 had such resonance in 1987?

EB – Actually the film has more viewers who know it well now, than it did when it came out in 1987. I think the themes remain – leaving your parents' world to forge your own, parents seeing their children bloom out of reach, young men and women taking moral and sexual responsibility for growing up in a complicated world, young people seeing their friends go off to a war they need to take responsibility for supporting or ending. Things are coming around again.

SN - Why was dance the right vehicle to tell this story?

EB – I think everyone has a secret dancer inside them that connects them to the world, and our characters learn to connect themselves to the physical world through dance. Wallace Stevens' lines, "The greatest poverty is not to live/ In a physical world, to feel that one's desire/Is too difficult to tell from despair" were very much on my mind. I feel Baby moves from outside to inside the physical world in this story – and she does it through dance.

SN - Twenty years later, the stage version has nostalgic appeal to older audiences. Do you think it also has the resonance with younger audiences that the film had?

EB – The stage version is having remarkable success with young audiences. But in fact our most passionate audiences have been of all ages and sexes. This is the sweetest pleasure of all for us.

SN - Live theatre conveys story very differently from the way film

does. Why do you think *Dirty Dancing* is such a good candidate for this crossover? What have been the challenges? What are the opportunities afforded by the theatre?

EB – I think people saw the film over and over again because they wanted to "be there" while the story was happening, step through the screen and be at Kellerman's. This means live theater is its natural form. And then of course, live dancing in all its glory is always an extraordinary exciting thing that cannot be duplicated any other way.

SN - You say in your introduction to the stage text that the story takes place "during a time when you couldn't separate a song lyric or a popular melody from what was happening in your head and in your heart." Today, with iPod earbuds in every ear, life seems to have a constant soundtrack. Is that a good thing? Do you think we have time to listen to what's in our heads and hearts?

EB – That's a very interesting question that I've never thought about before. Actually, I expect it does change things. People now put in the forefront what they are saying to someone on a cell phone or listening to on an iPod. The sounds that used to soundtrack our lives -- from a song played on someone else's phonograph or the grass rustling -- the incidental music that was there while your personal story was happening -- are now inside out. In your ear is music you've chosen or a conversation you're having on the phone rather than in person, which drowns out music in the street or rustling grass or traffic or buzz of other life. So yes, I think something is lost and the soundtrack is inside out, now.

SN - You had written another screenplay that was made into a film before *Dirty Dancing*. It is so difficult for writers of plays and screenplays to get their work noticed. How did you get that first break?

EB – That first break came only after I had gotten used to picking myself up off the floor every time someone slammed a door in my face. And again, after the first break, you need to start picking yourself up again. It gets marginally easier, but it's never easy. And that, I fear, is the secret between getting your work made and not. Be indefatigable and unstoppable insofar as you can.

SN - . What creative guidance or advice would you offer to young people who want to tell stories through the medium of film or theatre?

EB – Only write the film or play (or novel) that you would most want to see. Something that you look for when you go through a movie listing or bookstore and isn't there. And if you feel someone else could do it better than you can -- don't do it. Don't make another version of what someone else has done before, even if it was "successful." That was then and somebody else. It has to be something you feel only you can write and understand and is necessary for other people. And avoid making it general for an elusive "wide" audience. If you are specific, you may have the greatest privilege of all -- an audience composed of individuals each connected in their own personal and private way.

Discussion **The Arts**



THE CLASSIC STORY ON STAGE

OBJECTIVE

Dance and other art forms as integral to the culture

EXERCISE

The dance staff at Kellerman's in 1963 do not make a lot of money. Johnny has to paint houses in the winter to get by, Penny does not have enough money to pay for a 'doctor'. Johnny offers what's left of his summer salary to Penny but she refuses because it is not enough. Dancers, after all, are not very highly paid for their skills

Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage producers, creative team, cast, crew and friends all believe that the Arts are essential. Arts and entertainment are key to our culture and our way of life. Music, dance and drama allow us to dream, everyone is creative and has some form of creativity to give to the world. We firmly believe that all schools should teach music, drama and dance and that the government should spend more money providing this type of education. We encourage you to go to a concert, play or dance recital and support the industry and your fellow artists and perhaps this might inspire you to pick up an instrument or dance a mambo and unleash your own creativity.

Hold an open class discussion on the issue as presented above. Ask students to read about the Endowment and other articles on government funding, or lack of it, for the arts. Guide the discussion by presenting food for thought. Why is it that other countries fully subsidize the arts and we don't? Should people who do not appreciate the arts pay for it with their tax money? Do you think money wasted by the government could be better spent on the arts? Why? Should poor people be assured access to the arts? Picture a world without dance, art, film, theatre.

FROM THE SCRIPT

Penny is pregnant and Johnny offers to help her out financially.

JOHNNY

What did you think you were doing? You're in trouble, you talk to me. I'll take care of you. You should've come to me in the first place.

PENNY

Forget it, Johnny. I'm not taking what's left of your salary...

JOHNNY

That's my business

PENNY

And besides, it wouldn't be enough

TEACHER TIPS

Consider that art includes dance, painting and other visual arts, literature, film and theatre. Aside from "movie stars" and those who make it big, artists in general are poorly paid.

What do you think about that?

Do you think it's fair?

Are we doing enough to support the arts?



THE CLASSIC STORY ON STAGE

OBJECTIVE

Explore the history of ballroom dancing

EXERCISE

Obviously Johnny had an inclination for dancing before he ever went to the Arthur Murray Dance Studio. Many average people in that time took lessons at Murray's studios throughout the country. People who admired others on the dance floor wanted to be there too. Arthur Murray was an icon of American ballroom dancing and was so popular he often appeared on major television shows with partner to demonstrate various dances.

Page 43 of this study guide talks about Arthur Murray. Continue the research on him from one of the following perspectives: the life of Arthur Murray; the success of his studios; his role in promoting the art of dance to the average person. Write a paper focusing on one of these topics.

Compare the differences between ballroom dancing now to that of the 1960s. How do they differ?

FROM THE SCRIPT

Johnny is on his half of the log doing jumps, turns, holding out his arms for balance.

BABY

Where'd you learn to be a dancer?

JOHNNY

Well, this guy came into this luncheonette one day and you know we were all sittin' around doin' nothin'... and he said that Arthur Murray was givin' a test for instructors... so if you passed they'd teach you all these different kinds of dances, show you how to break 'em down, how to teach 'em, you know.

TEACHER TIPS

Are you comfortable on the dance floor or are you a "wallflower?"

Most people think they could be a better dancer with some training – do you think this applies to you?

Why do you think people who are not professional dancers take lessons?

Most people think that they have it inside of them to dance, how do you feel when you dance alone and with someone?



THE CLASSIC STORY ON STAGE

OBJECTIVE

Study various dances and their role as artistic, social and political expression.

EXERCISE

Depending upon who you ask the word means different things to different people. Even in *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* the characters all have their own reasons for wanting to dance. From primitive movements about the fire to the great stage of the Bolshoi Ballet, humans use movement as an expression of emotions, to tell stories, drive away spirits, make political statements, seduce partners and yes, like Johnny, to make a living.

Divide the class into groups. Each group chooses a dance or dance form (technically, classical ballet in artistic terms is a dance form.) *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* features all different types of Ballroom and Latin dances like the Mambo, Merengue Tango, Waltz, Samba and Rumba. Tell the groups to research the history and background of their dances. Have them learn the movements as best they can. Each group makes an oral presentation to the class and gives a practical demonstration. As Johnny does in the Script Excerpt, they explain the movements as they dance.

FROM THE SCRIPT

It is a new day. BABY and JOHNNY are alone in the studio.

JOHNNY

It's not just an and one, that's not the mambo. It's a feeling... a heartbeat. Ga gunk... ga gunk... ga gunk... Don't try so hard... (He takes BABY'S hand and places it on his heart.)
Ga gunk, ga gunk... close your eyes.

MUSIC: HUNGRY EYES

JOHNNY

(JOHNNY leads BABY in the basic steps, her hand still on his heart.)

Two, three, four... breathe, two, three, four...

Head up. Lock your frame. Lock it...lock it. Look, spaghetti arms. (Points) This is my dance space. This is your dance space. I don't go into yours. You don't go into mine. You gotta hold the frame. Frame. Again.

Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage writer Eleanor Bergstein says that "everyone has a secret dancer inside them." *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage* aims to have the audience aspire to dance in the show, they want the audience to feel the joy of dancing and believe that they, too, could dance on stage.

Contact a local dance company and invite a dancer to come speak to the class. Find out what it takes to be a dancer and how one goes about getting into a dance company.

TEACHER TIPS

What do you consider dance?

Why do you think people dance – is it for entertainment or are their other reasons like the joy of dancing and not just watching but being involved?

What does a choreographer do?

Some guests at Kellerman's are people with social conscience. In short, they care. They gather around the campfire and sing the song that appears below. The composer, Woody Guthrie, is one of America's most noted folk singers. He was also the idol of folk singer, Bob Dylan, probably the most famous of all American singers in that musical genre. Dylan has received international acclaim and remains an icon of American music to many throughout the world.

CHALLENGE N°. I

Know Your Folk Singers

In a recent film several major stars, men and women, portray Bob Dylan. The movie and one of its stars was nominated for 2008 Academy Awards. Rent the movie *I'm Not There* and see what the 60's folk music mania was all about. See if the song below exists online and give it a listen.

This Land was Made for You and Me

by Woody Guthrie

Chorus:

This land is your land, this land is my land
From California, to the New York Island
From the redwood forest, to the gulf stream waters
This land was made for you and me

As I was walking a ribbon of highway
I saw above me an endless skyway
I saw below me a golden valley
This land was made for you and me

Chorus

I've roamed and rambled and I've followed my footsteps
To the sparkling sands of her diamond deserts
And all around me a voice was sounding
This land was made for you and me

Chorus

The sun comes shining as I was strolling
The wheat fields waving and the dust clouds rolling
The fog was lifting a voice come chanting
This land was made for you and me

Chorus

As I was walkin' - I saw a sign there
And that sign said - no tress passin'
But on the other side it didn't say nothin!
Now that side was made for you and me!

Chorus

In the squares of the city - In the shadow of the steeple
Near the relief office - I see my people
And some are grumblin' and some are wonderin'
If this land's still made for you and me.

Chorus (2x)

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CHALLENGE N°. I

The Song and the Era

The song below came to define the civil rights era and the work of Dr. Martin Luther King. Find it online and listen carefully. Place this music in a specific category—folk, spiritual, political protest. In a brief essay defend your decision.

We Shall Overcome

Music and lyrical adaptation by Zilphia Horton/Frank Hamilton/Guy Carawan/Pete Seeger. Inspired by African American Gospel Singing, members of the Food and Tobacco Workers Union, Charleston, SC and the southern civil rights movement.

We shall overcome, we shall overcome,
We shall overcome someday;
Oh, deep in my heart, i do believe,
We shall overcome someday.

The lord will see us through, the lord will see us through,
The lord will see us through someday;
Oh, deep in my heart, i do believe,
We shall overcome someday.

We're on to victory, we're on to victory,
We're on to victory someday;
Oh, deep in my heart, i do believe,
We're on to victory someday.

We'll walk hand in hand, we'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand someday;
Oh, deep in my heart, i do believe,
We'll walk hand in hand someday.

We are not afraid, we are not afraid,
We are not afraid today;
Oh, deep in my heart, i do believe,
We are not afraid today.

The truth shall make us free, the truth shall make us free,
The truth shall make us free someday;
Oh, deep in my heart, i do believe,
The truth shall make us free someday.

We shall live in peace, we shall live in peace,
We shall live in peace someday;
Oh, deep in my heart, i do believe,
We shall live in peace someday.

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THE CLASSIC STORY ON STAGE

Resources

Websites

www.dirtydancingonstage.com

The official website for *Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story On Stage*

www.ehow.com

www.nea.gov/

<http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~richard5/vietnam.html>

<http://www.equalrightsamendment.org/>

<http://www.centralhome.com/Ballroomcountry/history.htm>

<http://www.nytimes.com/pages/national/class/>

Books

Freedom Riders: The Struggle for Racial Justice, (Pivotal Moments in American History, Raymond Arsenault, Oxford University Press, 2005

When the Children Marched: The Birmingham Civil Rights Movement, Robert H. Mayer, Enslow Publishing, 2008

StageNOTES™

A FIELD GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

A Camp Broadway, LLC Publication

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