

MAMMA MIA! STUDY GUIDE

BENNY ANDERSSON & BJÖRN ULVAEUS'

MAMMA MIA!

THE SMASH HIT MUSICAL BASED ON THE SONGS OF ABBA®

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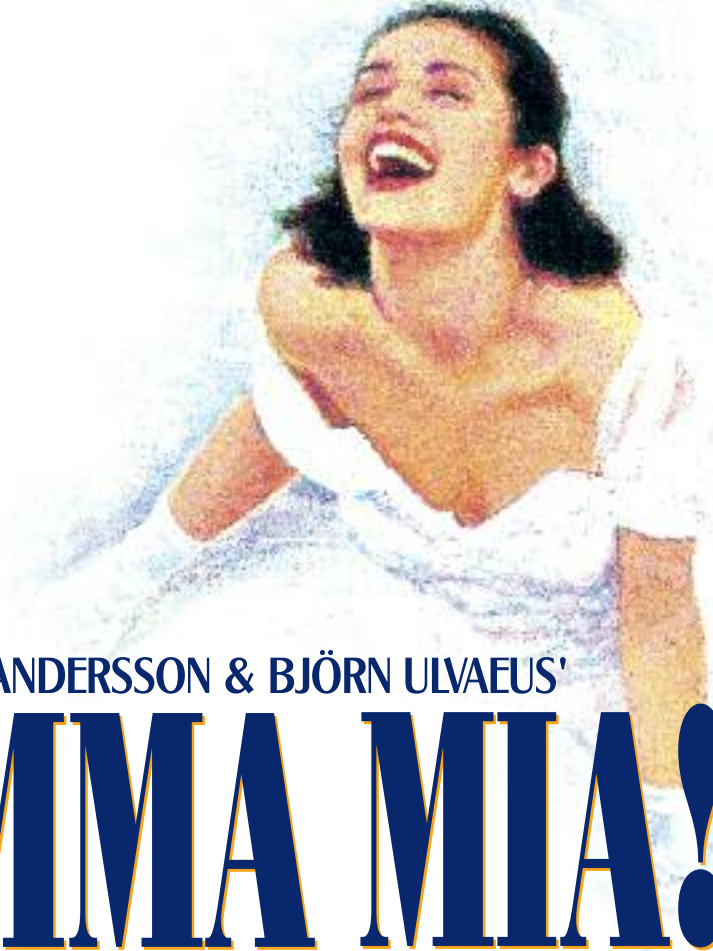
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BENNY ANDERSSON & BJÖRN ULVAEUS'

MAMMA MIA!TM

THE SMASH HIT MUSICAL BASED ON
THE SONGS OF **ABBA**[®]



WELCOME TO MAMMA MIA!

**TELL ME PLEASE, 'CAUSE I HAVE TO KNOW
I'M A CURIOUS CHILD, BEGINNING TO GROW**

**AND YOU MAKE ME TALK
AND YOU MAKE ME FEEL
AND YOU MAKE ME SHOW
WHAT I'M TRYING TO CONCEAL**

–Words and lyrics by Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus



Sophie seems to have everything going for her. She's about to get married to the man she loves. She lives on a beautiful Greek island with a mother who cares about her. Her life should be perfect, but something is missing. Although she's been raised by her loving mother, she's never met her father. In MAMMA MIA!, Sophie longs to find out the truth about who she is; with three letters in the mailbox, she hopes to create what she's never had: a traditional family. With the help of her mother and friends, she discovers that families come in many different shapes and sizes, and that love doesn't always need to follow the rules.

With its wonderful songs and magical story, MAMMA MIA! offers young people a unique opportunity: to use an exciting musical as the launching point for a wide variety of discussions, activities and lessons.

Sophie's mother, Donna, came of age during the 1970s, a turbulent time when music, culture and social norms all went through wild changes. Donna sees her daughter growing up in the present day and tries – as all parents do – to help Sophie avoid the mistakes she made in her youth. MAMMA MIA! will allow young people to explore the era of the 1970s and compare it to their own time.

This guide is written to help educators merge a trip to MAMMA MIA! with a curriculum that includes English/Language Arts, Social Studies, Theater, and Music. Each section in the guide includes lesson plans, activities and ideas for discussion, along with appropriate standards and goals. Resources for further exploration can be found on page 33.

Using this guide, educators and students will be able to make a trip to MAMMA MIA! educational, as well as fun.

STORY SUMMARY

ACT ONE

The story opens on the beach of a beautiful Greek island. Sophie, a young, hopeful woman, is about to mail three invitations. She takes a moment to think about what she's doing ("I HAVE A DREAM") then drops the letters into the mailbox.

Suddenly, two of Sophie's old friends, Ali and Lisa, appear. They are there for a very special occasion: Sophie is getting married! But even Sky, Sophie's fiancé, doesn't know the secret she now reveals to her friends: Years ago, Sophie's mother, Donna, knew three men, and one of them is Sophie's father ("HONEY, HONEY"). It is these three men, Sam Carmichael, Bill Austin and Harry Bright, that Sophie has invited to her special day. It's her dream to have her real father give her away on her wedding.



Just as Sophie is plotting with her friends, her mother, Donna, is reminiscing with her old pals, Rosie and Tanya, who have also come to the island for Sophie's wedding. Donna, Rosie and Tanya were once a pop singing group called "Donna and the Dynamos." Donna introduces her friends to Sophie's fiancé, Sky, along with Pepper and Eddie, the waiters at Donna's hotel/bar, the Taverna. After fifteen years of running the place, Donna is ready for some success ("MONEY, MONEY, MONEY").

As Donna and the girls exit, Sam, Harry and Bill arrive at the Taverna and meet Sophie. Sophie wants to keep the reason for their presence on the island a secret from Donna ("THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC"). Suddenly Donna comes in and sees the three men. All of her old feelings come bubbling to the surface ("MAMMA MIA").

Donna can't hide her emotions from Rosie and Tanya ("CHIQUITITA"). Rosie and Tanya try to comfort Donna, remembering their old days on stage ("DANCING QUEEN").

In the meantime, Sophie, too, is in turmoil at the arrival of her "three Dads." She needs Sky to comfort her ("LAY ALL YOUR LOVE ON ME").

While the boys are having Sky's bachelor party, the girls listen to "Donna and the Dynamos" sing one of their old tunes ("SUPER TROUPER"). Harry, Bill and Sam arrive at the party, only to be welcomed into the dance



STORY SUMMARY Continued...

("GIMME, GIMME"). Sophie speaks with each of her potential Dads. Bill is very close to learning the secret ("NAME OF THE GAME"). He promises to give her away at the wedding the next day.

All the townspeople meet in the courtyard to celebrate Sophie and Sky ("VOULEZ-VOUS"). Sam takes Sophie aside to say that he would be proud to be her father. He promises to walk her down the aisle at the wedding. Then Harry meets her and promises the same thing! Sophie is stunned as the curtain falls.

ACT TWO

As the second act begins, Sophie is having a nightmare ("UNDER ATTACK"). Upon awakening, Sophie is confronted by Donna who thinks she wants to cancel the wedding. But Sophie is determined to not repeat what she sees as her mother's mistake: raising a child without a father. Donna is left with her thoughts ("ONE OF US"), until she meets Sam. They reach out to each other, but are held back by pride ("S.O.S.").

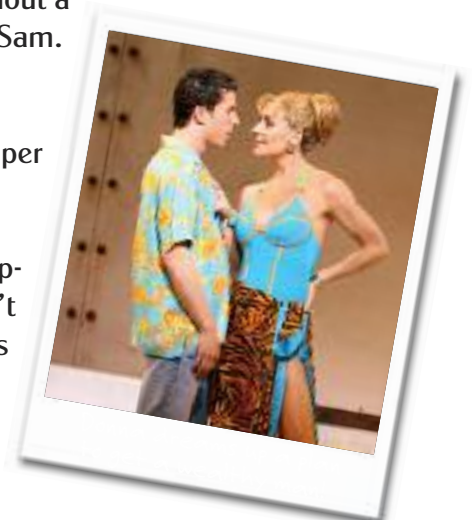
The guests begin to gather for the wedding. Tanya flirts with Pepper ("DOES YOUR MOTHER KNOW?").

Sophie finds Sky and confesses that she invited Harry, Bill and Sam, hoping that one of them would be her real father. Sky is upset that she didn't tell him the truth. Sam tells Sophie that she shouldn't get married unless it's what she really wants ("KNOWING ME, KNOWING YOU").

In Donna's room, Donna and Harry reminisce about their past ("OUR LAST SUMMER"). Sophie comes in, and although there is still tension between them, she asks Donna to help her dress for the wedding ("SLIPPING THROUGH MY FINGERS"). Sophie asks Donna to give her away at the wedding.

As Rosie puts the final touches on the wedding arrangements, she asks Bill if there is a chance for their relationship to grow ("TAKE A CHANCE").

The wedding begins. Before Sky and Sophie can take their vows, Donna breaks in, telling everyone that Sophie's real father is there. Sophie reveals that she has read Donna's diary and invited Sam, Harry and Bill. The three men agree to ALL be Sophie's dad. Sophie and Sky decide to postpone the wedding and explore the world together. But before the wedding decorations can be taken down, Sam asks Donna to marry him ("I DO, I DO, I DO, I DO, I DO").



MUSICAL HISTORY

During the 1970s, the Swedish pop group ABBA became one of the most popular musical groups in the world. With phenomenal songs like “Waterloo,” “Dancing Queen,” and, of course, “Mamma Mia,” ABBA’s sound swept the world with its optimism, joyful lyrics and infectious beat.

Today, music permeates every aspect of our lives; therefore, an investigation into the origins and importance of popular music such as ABBA’s will enrich a trip to see MAMMA MIA!



WHAT IS “POP” MUSIC?

To understand and appreciate the music of ABBA and the story of MAMMA MIA!, you need to understand what we mean by the term “popular” music.

What do you think of when you hear the word “popular”? The best? Well-liked? “Popular” is really derived from the Latin word “popularis,” or “of the people.” So “Popular Music” (or “Pop” music, as it’s come to be known) is the music loved by the people, not the music critics or professors tell us we should enjoy. And because “pop” music is the music the people love, listening to it and discussing it are interesting ways to learn about a culture: its history, its concerns, its storytelling, its desires. “Pop” music is the voice of the people, singing their story.

FOLK MUSIC

Today, we take music like ABBA’s for granted. Music is everywhere. We hear it on the radio, on CDs, on the Internet. We hear music in the background on television shows and movies. We hear music in our cars, on airplanes, even in space. We hear music when we wake up in the morning, and before we go to bed at night.

It wasn’t always this way. Before the advent of technology that made the widespread of music possible, music was seen as the forum for the talented: Those who could not play an instrument, or felt they could not sing, did not have music in their lives. Those who could make music often passed that music down, from generation to generation. Music in the oral tradition, passed down by word of mouth, is known as folk music.

How is folk music different from popular music? What we know today as popular music came about when technology made a wider dissemination of music possible. With the coming of technology designed to widely circulate information and entertainment – a “mass media” – people did not need talent or passed down tradition to appreciate and enjoy music.

In the United States, the first step in this wide spread of music was a step down a special street called Tin Pan Alley.

MUSICAL HISTORY Continued...

TIN PAN ALLEY

Imagine walking down the street in New York City at the end of the 19th century. All of a sudden you're blasted with a strange, yet somehow beautiful sound. From every open window along the street you hear the sound of pianos banging out tunes. Songwriters hold their pencils, trying to write the next big hit. The sound is raucous, gorgeous, obnoxious, great. It sounds like the clanging of tin pans together, calling the world to attention. A new way of spreading music is being born.

Tin Pan Alley was the nickname given to 28th Street between Fifth Avenue and Broadway, the strip in Manhattan where music publishers had their offices. Later, the name encompassed the entire music industry. Before radio and records, music publishers sold their songs through sheet music. Many homes had pianos, and people entertained themselves with Tin Pan Alley's simple and catchy tunes.

By meeting the public's need for sheet music, Tin Pan Alley was the world's first self-contained industry devoted exclusively to creating new songs. Tin Pan Alley music publishers hired composers and lyricists for the express purpose of writing new songs.

To get the word out about their songs, Tin Pan Alley publishers used "song pluggers" to sing on street corners, in bars and theaters. The number of copies of sheet music it sold determined a song's popularity. In the world of Tin Pan Alley, the songwriter was the star; those songwriters who sold the most copies gained money and fame. Many of America's greatest songwriters started their careers as Tin Pan Alley song pluggers and songwriters: names like Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Cole Porter and Richard Rodgers.

Later, the creation of radio allowed singing stars to become more and more popular, and singers looked to Tin Pan Alley to create songs exclusively for them. At first, Tin Pan Alley embraced the recording industry. What were records, after all, but another way to get people to buy their sheet music?

But after World War II, the recording industry overcame the Tin Pan Alley publishers. The stars and their performances, recorded forever on vinyl records, became more important than even the music itself.

In 1954, Bill Haley and the Comets had the first international rock 'n' roll hit: "Rock Around the Clock." It was the record, not the sheet music, which sold to millions of teens around the world. Many see this as the end of Tin Pan Alley, and the birth of a little thing they called rock 'n' roll!

MUSICAL HISTORY Continued...

ROCK AND ROLL

During the 1950s, the life of the American teenager changed dramatically. World War II was over; America's economy was riding high. After the Great Depression of the 1930s and the horrors of World War II in the 1940s, parents were eager to give their kids everything they themselves had lacked. More teenagers went to college; they had more free time and were able to have more fun.

As singer Jo Stafford said in 1958, "Rock and Roll is an economic thing. Today's nine- to fourteen-year-old group is the first generation with enough money given to them by their parents to buy records in sufficient quantities to influence the market. In my youth if I asked my father for 45 cents to buy a record, he'd have thought seriously about having me committed."

This new freedom coincided with a new music and new technology for spreading it around. The music, a raucous sound influenced by bluegrass, gospel, jazz and rockabilly, became the sound of this new generation. In 1952, DJ Alan Freed was the first to call it "rock 'n' roll."

The growth of the recording industry and radio combined with a young audience eager to separate themselves from the culture of their parents, all spurred the popularity of rock 'n' roll. Songwriters like Jerry Lieber and Mike Stoller, who wrote such hits as "Hound Dog," "Yakety Yak," "Love Potion No. 9," and "Poison Ivy," and such performers as Elvis Presley, the Drifters and Ben E. King, all led the way.

Unlike the Tin Pan Alley songwriters, who only sold you the song on sheet music, the creators of rock 'n' roll's classics used the technology of recording to sell you a performance. Now singers and musicians were the stars, while the songwriters often melded into the background. As Lieber and Stoller said, "We didn't write songs, we wrote records."

MUSICAL HISTORY Continued...

IN THE BEGINNING – THERE WAS ABBA!

In 1966, two Swedish pop stars, Björn Ulvaeus and Benny Andersson, met, and later began to record together. On their second single, the backing vocals were sung by their fiancées, Agnetha Faltskog and Anni-Frid Lyngstad, the first time the group sang together. Saddled with an awkward name, “Bjorn & Benny, Agnetha & Anni-Frid,” they recorded the single “People Need Love,” which reached the top 20 in Sweden.

In April, 1974, the group, now renamed ABBA (an acronym of the members’ names), entered the Eurovision Song Contest, a yearly variety presentation showcasing acts from all over Europe. The catchy lyrics and infectious sound of their song “Waterloo” charmed the judges and they won first prize. With this recognition, ABBA became the most popular and successful acts of the 1970s.



ABBA’s win in the Eurovision Song Contest propelled them to world stardom. The song that won them the contest, “Waterloo” rose to the top of the charts in Europe, and eventually hit the No. 6 spot on the Billboard Charts in the United States. Soon the entire world was listening to ABBA. Nelson Mandela, who later became the first democratically elected president of South Africa, once declared that ABBA was his favorite pop group! And all this only a year after they began recording in English!

From there, hit singles, sold-out concerts and platinum albums followed. Although ABBA stopped recording together in 1982, their songs are still popular. In the 1990s, their album ABBA Gold topped charts all around the world. To date, ABBA has sold over 350 million recordings worldwide.

MUSICAL HISTORY Continued...

ABBA IN THE THEATER

ABBA entered the world of the theater when Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus, along with lyricist Tim Rice, wrote their first musical, *Chess*. *Chess* proved to be a cult hit around the world, producing the hit singles, “One Night In Bangkok” and “I Know Him So Well.”

It was Judy Craymer, the executive producer of *Chess*, who first recognized the inherent theatricality of ABBA’s pop songs. “The Winner Takes It All” suggested to her “the roller coaster of love and loss,” she said, “It was extraordinarily theatrical.” She slowly began to work on her idea, sitting on the floor of her apartment, she remembers, “listening to ABBA’s records late into the night.”

She commissioned award-winning playwright Catherine Johnson to create the story, insisting that the musical have an original and contemporary story, interwoven with the existing songs, rather than being simply a tribute show to ABBA.

Craymer then hired director Phyllida Lloyd. Craymer later wrote that having this trio of powerful women leading a major musical venture – an unusual thing in the world of the theater – helped to create the strong female characters of *MAMMA MIA!*

On April 6, 1999 (the anniversary of ABBA’s win at the Eurovision Song Contest 25 years earlier), *MAMMA MIA!* opened at London’s Prince Edward Theatre. “We really had no idea how it was going to be received,” said Craymer, “The audience went wild. They were literally out of their seats and singing and dancing in the aisles...”

From there, it went on to the Royal Alexandre Theatre in Toronto, Canada, and then to Broadway, to the Winter Garden Theatre in 2001, where it opened with one of the biggest advance sales in theater history.

MAMMA MIA! has gone on to become one of the most popular theater productions in history, having been seen by over 30 million people around the world. There are currently more productions of *MAMMA MIA!* playing than any other musical. Each and every night, 17,000 people around the world see ABBA’s breathtaking music come to vivid life right in front of them, live on stage.



MUSICAL HISTORY Continued...

CITIES WHERE MAMMA MIA! HAS PLAYED

** current permanent productions*

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Adelaide, Australia | East Lansing, MI | Madison, WI | San Jose, CA |
| Akron, OH | Edinburgh, Scotland, UK | Madrid, Spain | Sarasota, FL |
| Albuquerque, NM | Edmonton, Alberta | Manchester, UK | Schenectady, NY |
| Antwerp, Belgium | Erfurt, Germany | Melbourne, Australia | Scranton, PA |
| Appleton, WI | Essen, Germany* | Melbourne, FL | Seattle, WA |
| Atlanta, GA | Eugene, OR | Memphis, TN | Seongnam, Korea |
| Auckland, New Zealand | Evansville, IN | Mexico City, Mexico | Seoul, South Korea* |
| Austin, TX | Fayetteville, AR | Miami, FL | Shanghai, China |
| Bakersfield, CA | Fort Lauderdale, FL | Milwaukee, WI | Singapore |
| Baltimore, MD | Fort Worth, TX | Monterrey, Mexico | Sioux City, IA |
| Barcelona, Spain* | Frankfurt, Germany | Montreal, Quebec – Canada | South Bend, IN |
| Beijing, China | Fresno, CA | Moscow, Russia* | Spokane, WA |
| Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK | Ft. Myers, FL | Munich, Germany | Springfield, IL |
| Berlin, Germany* | Ft. Wayne, IN | Nagoya, Japan* | Springfield, MO |
| Birmingham, AL | Fukuoka, Japan | Nashville, TN | St. Louis, MO |
| Bloomington, IN | Gainsville, FL | New Orleans, LA | Stockholm, Sweden |
| Boise, ID | Gothenburg, Sweden | New York, NY* | Stuttgart, Germany |
| Boston, MA | Grand Rapids, MI | Norfolk, VA | Sydney, Australia |
| Bratislava, Slovakia | Greenville, SC | N. Charleston, SC | Syracuse, NY |
| Brisbane, Australia | Guadalajara, Mexico | Oberhausen, Germany | Taipei, Taiwan |
| Bristol, UK | Hamburg, Germany | Oklahoma City, OK | Tallinn, Estonia |
| Brussels, Belgium | Hamilton, Ontario - Canada | Omaha, NE | Tampa, FL |
| Buffalo, NY | Hartford, CT | Orlando, FL | Tel Aviv, Israel |
| Calgary, Alberta | Helsinki, Finland | Osaka, Japan | Tempe, AZ |
| Cape Town, South Africa | Hershey, PA | Ottawa, Ontario – Canada | Thousand Oaks, CA |
| Charlotte, NC | Hong Kong, China | Paris, France | Tokyo, Japan |
| Chicago, IL | Horsens, Denmark | Pasadena, CA | Toledo, OH |
| Cincinnati, OH | Houston, TX | Peoria, IL | Toronto, Ontario - Canada |
| Clearwater, FL | Huntsville, AL | Perth, Australia | Tucson, AZ |
| Cleveland, OH | Indianapolis, IN | Philadelphia, PA | Tulsa, OK |
| Cologne, Germany | Iowa City, IA | Pittsburgh, PA | University Park, PA |
| Colorado City, CO | Jacksonville, FL | Portland, OR | Utrecht, The Netherlands |
| Columbia, SC | Johannesburg, South Africa | Prague, Czech Republic | Vancouver, British Columbia |
| Columbus, OH | Kalamazoo, MI | Pretoria, South Africa | – Canada |
| Copenhagen, Denmark | Kansas City, MO | Providence, RI | Vienna, Austria |
| Costa Mesa, CA | Knoxville, TN | Raleigh, NC | Vilnius, Lithuania |
| Daegu, South Korea | Las Vegas, NV* | Regina, Saskatchewan | Washington, D.C. |
| Dallas, TX | Leipzig, Germany | Richmond, VA | West Palm Beach, FL |
| Dayton, OH | Lincoln, NE | Riga, Latvia | Wilmington, DE |
| Denver, CO | Lisbon, Portugal | Rochester, NY | Winnipeg, Manitoba |
| Des Moines, IA | Little Rock, AR | Sacramento, CA | Wichita, KS |
| Detroit, MI | London, UK* | Salt Lake City, UT | Zurich, Switzerland |
| Doha, Qatar | London, Ontario - Canada | San Antonio, TX | |
| Dubai, UAE | Long Beach, CA | San Bernadino, CA | |
| Dublin, Republic of Ireland | Los Angeles, CA | San Diego, CA | |
| Durban, South Africa | Louisville, KY | San Francisco, CA | |

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

I HAVE A DREAM
A SONG TO SING
TO HELP ME COPE
WITH ANYTHING
IF YOU SEE THE WONDER
OF A FAIRY TALE
YOU CAN TAKE THE FUTURE
EVEN IF YOU FAIL

–Words and lyrics by Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus



LANGUAGE ARTS GOALS

STUDENTS WILL:

- Use a variety of prewriting strategies (e.g. develops a focus, plans a sequence of ideas, uses structured overviews, uses speed writing (brainstorming))
- Understand writing techniques used to influence the reader and accomplish an author's purpose (e.g. organizational patterns, such as cause-and-effect or chronological order; imagery; personification; figures of speech; sounds in poetry; literary and technical language; formal and informal language; point of view; characterization; irony; narrator)
- Understand the philosophical assumptions and basic beliefs underlying an author's work (e.g. point of view, attitude, and values conveyed by specific language; clarity and consistency of political assumptions)
- Write fictional narrative compositions
- Understand how style and content of spoken language varies in different contexts

ACTIVITY

MUSIC IN MIND

When creating the story of MAMMA MIA!, the show's creative team started with the music. ABBA's songs, well known throughout the world, were used as an inspiration and as a launching point to create Sophie and Donna's story.

How can music inspire the creation of the characters, emotions and plot lines needed to make a story? Before seeing MAMMA MIA! brainstorm with your classmates using the songs of ABBA as inspiration.

STEP ONE

Split your class into three smaller groups. Each group will be assigned one aspect of the storytelling process: CHARACTERS, EMOTIONS and PLOT.

STEP TWO

Each group will choose a different ABBA song and listen to it together.

STEP THREE

After listening closely to your song, brainstorm with your teammates. Groups should collectively create a character, emotions, and potential plot lines inspired by the music of ABBA. Below, find some "brain-sparking" questions to ignite your discussions:

CHARACTER

- What sort of person would sing the song you've chosen?
- Describe the personality of the person who might sing your song?
- What job or profession might a person have who sings your song?

EMOTIONS

- What emotions come to mind when listening to your song?
- What colors come to mind?
- Smells? Sensations?

STORIES

- What stories come to mind when listening to your song?
- Why is the singer singing your song? What has happened to them to make the song necessary?

Record your brainstorming sessions. After seeing MAMMA MIA!, compare your ideas on character, emotions and story to the characters, emotions and plot line of MAMMA MIA!

ACTIVITY



CHANGING PERSPECTIVES

In MAMMA MIA!, characters learn to see the world in new ways. Parents and children begin the story seeing the world from one perspective, then events force them to see things in a new light.

Write two or three sentences describing how these characters change their viewpoints, focusing especially on the events that make them change their minds:

How does Donna see Sophie at the beginning of the story?

How does Donna see Sophie at the end of the story?

What sets off this change in Donna's viewpoint?

How does Sophie see Donna at the beginning of the story?

How does Sophie see Donna at the end of the story?

What sets off this change in Sophie's viewpoint?

LESSON PLAN

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN LYRICS, POETRY & LITERATURE

WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT:

Students will read and listen to lyrics separate from music, seeing lyrics as source material equal to literature or poetry.

OBJECTIVES:

The student will be able to:

1. Read/listen for understanding
2. Recognize language elements which give clues to meaning
3. Understand different interpretations of a work of art
4. Make connections between song lyrics and events in their own lives

MATERIALS:

Lyrics to ABBA songs – these can be found here: <http://www.lyricsmode.com/lyrics/a/abba/>

TIME FRAME:

One class period, plus follow-ups.

PROCEDURES:

Educators may want to have students read or listen to the lyrics.

1. Choose an ABBA song.
2. Students will either read the lyrics to themselves or listen as the teacher reads them aloud.
3. In discussion or written form, answer the following questions about the lyrics:
 - Who is the main character in the song's story?
 - What is the main event?
 - What is the problem or conflict?
 - Is there a cause-and-effect relationship in the events of the story?
 - What is the time period the story is set?
 - Pinpoint the use of these language elements: metaphor, imagery, perspective, similes, personification, hyperbole, allusion, inference. How does the use of these elements create the song's story?
 - Can you make a connection between the song's story and a poem or novel you are reading in class?
 - Can you make a connection between the song's story and your own life?

What sets off this change in Sophie's viewpoint?

DISCUSSION/ACTIVITY

WHAT IS A FAMILY?

As the story of MAMMA MIA! begins, Sophie longs for a traditional family: a father, a mother and children. But as Sophie learns, the definition of a family is a subjective concept: each of us has a different definition of what “family” means. In MAMMA MIA!, each character is “related” to one another as either a blood relative, through binding friendships or by romantic involvement.

- What does “family” mean to you? Brainstorm your own definition of family. Is it only those related to you by blood? How about beyond your relatives? Do you have friends or teachers you might consider “family” members? How about actors, musicians, politicians or activists who you don’t know personally but whose work you respect enough to call “family”? Write a brief paragraph description of your definition of “family.”

- Speak to members of your own family. How do THEY define family? How is their definition different from yours?

- Use your brainstorming to create your own family tree. Go as far back as you can in your own family, then add any “family members” beyond your relatives.



HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES

**SLIPPING THROUGH MY FINGERS
ALL THE TIME
I TRY TO CAPTURE
EVERY MINUTE
THE FEELING IN IT
SLIPPING THROUGH MY FINGERS
ALL THE TIME**

-Words and lyrics by Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus



HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES GOALS

STUDENTS WILL:

- Use a variety of prewriting strategies (e.g. develops a focus, plans a sequence of ideas, uses structured overviews, uses speed writing (brainstorming))
- Understand writing techniques used to influence the reader and accomplish an author's purpose (e.g. organizational patterns, such as cause-and-effect or chronological order; imagery; personification; figures of speech; sounds in poetry; literary and technical language; formal and informal language; point of view; characterization; irony; narrator)
- Understand the philosophical assumptions and basic beliefs underlying an author's work (e.g. point of view, attitude and values conveyed by specific language; clarity and consistency of political assumptions)
- Write fictional narrative compositions
- Understand how style and content of spoken language varies in different contexts

THE 1970s

THOSE CRAZY YEARS THAT WAS THE TIME OF THE FLOWER-POWER BUT UNDERNEATH WE HAD A FEAR OF FLYING

–Words and lyrics by Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus



History books can only tell us so much: the facts, the figures and the hard data of a time period. A fictional story like MAMMA MIA! can help us learn how people felt during a period of time.

MAMMA MIA! really takes place during TWO time periods: the present day and the era of the 1970s, when Donna met Sam, Harry and Bill and sang with “Donna and the Dominos.” The 1970s was a time of extraordinary change, a pivotal era in American and world history. Events of the decade changed how we saw our leaders, our place in the world, and ourselves. The war in Vietnam led to large scale protests and distrust in government and authority, which was only compounded by the allegations of corruption at the highest levels in the Watergate scandal. Inflation and high unemployment ravaged the economy, while an energy crisis caused long lines at the gas stations.

Many turned away from the government and looked to themselves for change. During the 1960s, environmentalists such as Rachel Carson had warned against the dangers of pollution; the 1970s saw the beginning of the environmental movement: a concentrated, public-driven desire to conserve and protect our world. With the fiftieth anniversary of Female Suffrage (the right to vote) in the United States, the 1970s also saw the growth of the feminist movement to gain equal rights for women in all parts of life. The proportion of women in state legislatures tripled during the 1970s, and by 1979, women surpassed men in college enrollment.

Along with social strides, the 1970s saw advances in science. The development of semiconductor silicon chips revolutionized the electronics industry; handheld calculators, digital watches, and video games like Pong and Pac Man became commonplace.

The nuclear family (a family unit consisting of one father, one mother, and children), which had been so strong during the 1940s and 1950s, began to lose its importance during the 1970s. Divorce rates were on the rise and women began to believe that they could raise children on their own.

Since World War II, the United States had been in the forefront of political, economic, and social history. Now we were losing ground, and there was a sense – a nameless fear - that something was going wrong. In the 1970s, we saw our limits.

But through it all, satirical television shows like “All in the Family” and “Saturday Night Live” made fun of these changes, never letting us take ourselves too seriously!

1970s TIMELINE

1970

Richard M. Nixon is the President of the United States, having won in 1968 against Democratic nominee Hubert Humphrey. His Vice President is Spiro T. Agnew.

The population of the U.S. is 205 million.

Peace talks continue in Paris as public pressure builds around the world to end the Vietnam War.

April 22: The first Earth Day.

May 4: After the ROTC building was burned down by students at Kent State University, Ohio governor James Rhodes calls in the National Guard. The Guard opens fire on student demonstrators – 4 are killed and 11 wounded.

448 universities and colleges throughout the U.S. are closed or on strike due to anti-war protests.

May 9: Over 100,000 students march on Washington, D.C. to protest Kent State and our involvement in Vietnam.

Apollo 13 cancels its moon landing in mid-flight as an oxygen line breaks. The three astronauts return to Earth safely using the life support system on the Lunar Module. Even in the wake of this dangerous situation, the 1970s see more space exploration than ever before.

In New York City, the North Tower of the World Trade Center is completed.

The Beatles, the world's most popular rock group, disbands.

The first woman general, Anna Mae Hays – is commissioned in the U.S. army.

Inventions this year: the floppy disk, bar codes.

1971

The Pentagon Papers – a series of reports describing how different Presidents had been complicit in falsehoods involving the Vietnam War – are released to newspapers.

Cigarette ads are banned from television.

Attica State Prison in Buffalo, New York is the scene of a horrific riot. 1200 inmates take 30 guards and other employees hostage with the hope of gaining reforms. 29 inmates and 9 guards are killed in the ensuing bloodbath.

The 26th amendment, lowering the voting age to 18, is ratified.

The Supreme Court rules that hiring practices must be equal between men and women.

1972

Attempts at a peace deal in Vietnam fail.

Israeli athletes are taken hostage at the Munich Olympics by Palestinian guerrillas. Two coaches and nine athletes are killed. The terrorists are killed as they try to leave the country.

President Richard Nixon visits China in February, and later in the year visits the Soviet Union (Russia).

June 17: Five burglars are arrested while breaking into the Democratic Headquarters at the Watergate Hotel in Washington, D.C. One of the burglars, James McCord is a security employee for Nixon's Committee to Re-Elect the President (CREEP). Democrats accuse President Nixon's campaign of orchestrating the burglary. Two reporters from the Washington Post, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein publish stories on the case, uncovering secret funds and "dirty tricks" by campaign workers.

Richard Nixon is re-elected President.

1970s TIMELINE *Continued...*

Eugene Cernan on the Apollo 17 mission becomes the last man to walk on the moon.

Film producer Irwin Allen produces *The Poseidon Adventure*, the first of many “disaster films” of the 1970s.

1973

Oil producing countries announce that they will no longer ship oil to nations who support Israel in its conflict with Syria and Egypt. The price of oil increases greatly over the next year. The scarcity of gas causes long lines at gas stations and gas rationing throughout the United States.

The Watergate scandal heats up. A Senate committee holds televised hearings. Former White House counsel John W. Dean III admits to playing a major role in the coverup. He testifies that Nixon knew of all events. Seven Watergate defendants are sentenced to prison.

Roe V. Wade is decided by the Supreme Court, legalizing first and second trimester abortions.

Vice President Spiro Agnew resigns, pleading no contest to tax evasion charges. Gerald Ford becomes Vice President.

President Nixon takes the last troops out of Vietnam.

Recordings this year: Billy Joel (“Piano Man”), Bruce Springsteen (“Greetings From Asbury Park”), Elton John (“Yellow Brick Road”).

1974

Dogged by tapes which tie him to the Watergate coverup, President Nixon becomes the first President to resign. Soon after, he is pardoned by President Gerald Ford.

Speed limits are reduced to 55 mph on highways.

Inventions: The Heimlich maneuver.

President Ford grants limited amnesty to those who dodged the Vietnam draft.

Pocket calculators become widespread.

1975

In answer to President Ford’s inaction in New York’s fiscal crisis, *The Daily News* headline reads, “Ford to New York City: Drop Dead.”

Bill Gates founds Microsoft.

Apollo-Soyuz: In July, a U.S. Apollo spacecraft docks with a Russian Soyuz spaceship in orbit. This is the first time spacecraft from different nations dock while in space. Many hope this is a beginning to greater cooperation between the two superpowers.

27-year-old Steven Spielberg directs the movie *Jaws*.

1976

Apple Computer is launched.

VCRs are released.

Mao Tse-tung, leader of Communist China, dies.

The United States celebrates its 200th year, or its bicentennial.

The Viking Probe sets down on Mars and begins to send back photos.

Jimmy Carter, former Governor of Georgia, is elected President.

1970s TIMELINE *Continued...*

The movie Rocky, starring Sylvester Stallone, is released.

The Disco Revolution is in full swing: The Bee Gees release “You Should Be Dancing.” ABBA releases “Dancing Queen” and KC & The Sunshine Band show us how to “Shake, Shake, Shake.”

1977

President Anwar El Sadat of Egypt becomes the first Arab leader to visit and acknowledge Israel’s right to exist.

For the first time, Magnetic Resonance Imaging or MRI is used to explore the inner workings of the human body.

The Nuclear-Proliferation Pact, designed to curb the spread of nuclear bombs, is signed by 15 countries, including the US and USSR.

Elvis Presley, the classic rock and roller who originates such hit songs as “Love Me Tender” and “Jailhouse Rock” dies.

Star Wars is released.

1978

July 25 – Birth of Louise Joy Brown, the first “test tube baby,” conceived in a glass dish and implanted in her mother’s womb.

Representatives of Egypt, Israel and the United States meet at Camp David to create a Middle East Peace Agreement.

Ultrasound is first used to map out the interior of the human body.

1979

The Shah, the leader of Iran, flees the country. In his place, the Ayatollah Khomeini introduces strict Islamic law.

Iranian students storm the US Embassy and hold 52 hostages for 444 days.

Margaret Thatcher becomes the first female Prime Minister of England.

The Soviet Union invades Afghanistan.

A series of errors causes a near meltdown of the reactor in one of the nuclear power plants in Three Mile Island, Pennsylvania.

Alicia Bridges sings, “I Love the Nightlife,” and Michael Jackson begins his solo career with the album “Off The Wall,” produced by Quincy Jones. Although disco music continues to be popular, another type of music was beginning as The Sugarhill Gang releases, “Rapper’s Delight,” beginning the Rap music movement.

ACTIVITY

“THOSE CRAZY YEARS”

Using the Internet and library resources, research your community during the 1970s.

Interview your parents, grandparents or teachers. Where were they during the 1970s? How old were they? What music did they enjoy? What did they think about the important events of that time?

How does history affect culture? Look at the events of the 1970s, and you may see many grim and fearful events. Why do you think joyful music like the songs of ABBA emerged from the events of the 1970s?



ACTIVITY

MOTHERHOOD IN THE 1970s

Donna was a young single mother in the late 1970s/early 1980s, a time when single-parenthood was not as socially acceptable as it is today. Her mother disowned her, and she chose to start a new life for herself and her child in Greece. In what ways do you think Donna was groundbreaking in her life choices?

STEP ONE

Using Internet and library resources, research the role of women, mothers and the role of the family during the late 1970s.

STEP TWO

Using what you know about MAMMA MIA! and your research into the role of women and mother in the 1970s, write three journal entries from Donna's viewpoint. How did she feel about these important events in her life?

Being disowned

Giving birth to Sophie

Building the Taverna

MUSIC

THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC
THE SONGS I'M SINGING
THANKS FOR ALL THE JOY
THEY'RE BRINGING
WHO CAN LIVE WITHOUT IT?

-Words and lyrics by Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus

MUSIC/HISTORY GOALS

STUDENTS WILL:

- Understand how the past affects our private lives and society in general.
- Know sources of American music genres.
- Know cultural and historical influences on American theater and musical theater.
- Knows specific criteria that affect the quality and effectiveness of music arrangements and improvisations.
- Understand the relationship between music, history and culture.



ACTIVITY

WHO'S WHO in 1970s POP MUSIC

ABBA was one of many groups and musicians that redefined music during the 1970s.

Break your class or group into smaller groups and with your teammates choose one person or group who was important in the creation of popular music during the 1970s. Each group will research the lives, achievements and innovations of the person or group you have chosen, and present a brief report on their findings.

These reports, along with all photos, images, newspaper clippings and especially sound recordings you find on your subject, will be placed in one book, your Who's Who of 1970s Pop Music!

Here are some suggestions of possible additions to your book:

Simon and Garfunkel

Elton John

James Taylor

Don McLean

Stevie Wonder

Sly and the Family Stone

Deep Purple

Neil Young

Lou Reed

Joni Mitchell

Queen

The Eagles

Fleetwood Mac

Funkadelic

ACTIVITY

MUSICAL TIMELINE

Create a musical timeline of the 1970s. You can do this in two ways:

Choose music from each year of the decade, either through recordings or sheet music. Using the historical timeline of the 1970s beginning on page 18, write a paragraph for each piece of music describing why that music reflects the events and feelings of that year.

Or use ABBA's music from MAMMA MIA! Choose pieces that reflect the events and the feelings of each year in the 1970s. Using the historical timeline of the 1970s on page beginning on page 18, write a paragraph for each piece of music describing why that music reflects the events and feelings of that year.

Use your musical timeline and the historical timeline beginning on page 18 as the foundation for discussion: where do they meet? What cultural events were influenced by history? What historical events were influenced by artistic achievements?

LESSON PLAN

THE WALL OF “POP”

WHAT IT’S ALL ABOUT:

Students will create an interactive wall chart detailing the history of America and American popular music, decade by decade.

OBJECTIVES:

The students will be able to:

1. Understand the relationships between music and history.
2. Understand how their favorite songs fit in to the timeline of music history in America.
3. See history and culture interlinking in a concrete format.

MATERIALS:

Large bulletin board or wall; signs marking off the decades (1900, 1910, 1920, etc.) appropriate source material such as photos, pictures, newspaper clippings, charts, maps, tables, lyric clippings, quotations, etc.

TIME FRAME:

Several class periods, plus follow-ups.

PROCEDURES:

1. The class will be broken into several groups. Each group will be assigned to research a decade in the 20th century, investigating the history and popular music of that ten-year period.
2. Each group will begin their research by generating a list of questions about their decade, such as: What were five major events of your decade? What were the major popular songs of your decade? Who were the major musicians/songwriters of your period? Were the songs of your period influenced by the history of your decade? Was the history of your period influenced by the music of your decade?
3. In and out of class, students will answer the questions from above by gathering information about their decade, collecting concrete elements for the Wall of “Pop,” such as: photos, pictures, newspaper clippings, charts, maps, tables, lyric clippings, quotations, etc.
4. Using the questions from above as a foundation, each group will write a paragraph about their decade, describing both the music and history and how they touched on each other.
5. The Wall of “Pop” is divided into 10 sections, each with a sign designating a different decade. That section will hold the concrete material gathered by the students and the written paragraph.

ACTIVITY

WHAT CAN MUSIC TELL US?

In MAMMA MIA!, the songs of ABBA are the driving force behind the story and the characters. The songs tell us about the characters' inner thoughts and desires as well as moving the story forward. Use the chart below as you are listening to the music from MAMMA MIA!, either to the soundtrack or while you are watching the show. For each selection, write down any insights the song may give us about the character. Also, for each song, write down three describing words. Hint: Try not to use words that refer to a statement of fact, i.e. "loud" or "soft." What you're looking for are words that evoke the feeling behind the song. Does the music evoke an emotion? Textures? Tastes? Smells?

| SONGS | DESCRIBING WORDS | INSIGHTS |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. "I HAVE A DREAM" | _____ _____ _____ | _____ _____ _____ |
| 2. "HONEY, HONEY" | _____ _____ _____ | _____ _____ _____ |
| 3. "MONEY, MONEY, MONEY" | _____ _____ _____ | _____ _____ _____ |
| 4. "THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC" | _____ _____ _____ | _____ _____ _____ |
| 5. "MAMMA MIA!" | _____ _____ _____ | _____ _____ _____ |
| 6. "CHIQUITITA" | _____ _____ _____ | _____ _____ _____ |
| 7. "DANCING QUEEN" | _____ _____ _____ | _____ _____ _____ |

SONGS

DESCRIBING WORDS

INSIGHTS

8. "LAY ALL YOUR LOVE ON ME"

9. "GIMME, GIMME"

10. "NAME OF THE GAME"

11. "UNDER ATTACK"

12. "ONE OF US"

13. "S.O.S."

14. "DOES YOUR MOTHER KNOW"

15. "KNOWING ME, KNOWING YOU"

16. "OUR LAST SUMMER"

17. "WINNER TAKES IT ALL"

18. "TAKE A CHANCE ON ME"

ACTIVITY

CREATE YOUR OWN SOUNDTRACK

MAMMA MIA! is an example of musical theater, an art form in which the songs and music give us insight into the characters and move the story forward. For most musicals, the songs and music are written for the story, but in the case of MAMMA MIA!, the creative team was working with songs that already existed. They had to find the right songs for each emotional moment and turning point in the story.

Now it's your turn! Choose five songs you listen to every day on the radio, CDs, MP3s or the Internet, and join them together into a story. Remember - you can't choose songs just because you like them; the songs in your show need to bring us into the characters' heads and help to tell a story.

As you're choosing your songs, think about what the songs are about. Do they tell a story, or just set a mood or emotion?

List your songs below; choose one word to describe the feelings or emotion evoked in the song and write one sentence describing what the song is about. Then use the space below to describe the story you'll be telling with these five songs.

| SONG | WORD/EMOTION | WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT? |
|----------|--------------|----------------------|
| 1. _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. _____ | _____ | _____ |

MY MUSICAL STORY

MEET THE CHARACTERS

DONNA

Sophie's fiercely independent and hard-working mother, Donna is the owner of a taverna (a small restaurant) on a beautiful Greek island. She is the former lead singer of "Donna and the Dynamos."

SOPHIE

Donna's headstrong 20-year-old daughter, Sophie is determined to have what her mother never had: a traditional family.

SKY

Sophie's fiancé is a former stockbroker who got tired of the cutthroat world of Wall Street.

TANYA

One of Donna's oldest and best friends, Tanya has married several millionaires, but has never found the right man. Wild and sensual, she catches Pepper's eye.

ROSIE

Another of Donna's old friends, Rosie is an author of cookbooks.

ALI & LISA

Two of Sophie's friends who have come for the wedding.

PEPPER & EDDIE

Donna's employees, these two are the bar-staff, waiters, boatmen and general help around the Taverna. Both are relaxed and good-natured.

SAM CARMICHAEL

An architect, Sam has regretted leaving Donna all his life.

HARRY BRIGHT

Although he was known as the wild "Head Banger" when he first knew Donna, today Harry is a respected banker.

BILL AUSTIN

A well-known travel writer, Bill has visited the far reaches of the earth, but is afraid of making a commitment.

FATHER ALEXANDRIOS

The minister of the island.



THEATER

**YOUR SMILE AND THE SOUND OF YOUR VOICE
AND THE WAY YOU SEE THROUGH ME
GOT A FEELING, YOU GIVE ME NO CHOICE
AND IT MEANS A LOT TO ME
SO I WANNA KNOW
WHAT'S THE NAME OF THE GAME?**

-Words and lyrics by Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus



THEATER GOALS

STUDENTS WILL:

- Invent character behaviors based on the observation of interactions, ethical choices and emotional responses of people.
- Understand how descriptions, dialogue and actions are used to discover, articulate and justify character motivation.
- Know cultural and historical influences on American theater and musical theater.
- Understand the perceived effectiveness of artistic choices found in dramatic performances.

LESSON PLAN

CREATING A SCENE BASED ON ABBA SONGS

WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT:

Students will use the lyrics of ABBA songs as the foundation for creating scenes. This lesson can be used in an integrated fashion with the Language Arts questions from Lesson One.

OBJECTIVES:

The students will be able to:

1. Understand the connections between the arts.
2. Use imagination and source material to create an informal production.
3. Understand the cooperative nature of the theater.

MATERIALS:

1. Lyrics from ABBA songs
2. Appropriate props and costumes, as chosen by the students.

TIME FRAME:

Several class periods.

PROCEDURES:

1. Students will choose one of the lyrics to an ABBA song.
2. Breaking up into groups, students will discuss the following question: What story and setting do the lyrics they have chosen suggest? Using the answers to the questions from Lesson One, create character, setting, conflict, dialogue and action.
3. From your discussions, write a small scene using the lyrics as a foundation. Include dialogue prompts and stage directions. The scene can be written in committee or one playwright can be chosen.
4. Within each group, select actors, a director, a prop person, a costume designer and a stage manager who will be in charge of rehearsal. Rehearse the written scenes and present them for an audience of classmates.



ACTIVITY

PARENT AND CHILD SCENES

On page 13, you explored how the perspectives of children and parents can change over time, and how these different perspectives can create conflict. Now take that conflict and bring it to life on stage. With a partner, write a scene that illustrates a conflict between a child and a parent/guardian.

STEP ONE

With your partner, brainstorm a typical conflict between a parent and child. For best results, choose an everyday conflict that your audience will understand. Write a brief summary of your conflict here:

STEP TWO

A playwright needs to see the story from the perspective of each character. Now that you have your conflict in mind, see it from the perspective of both the parent and the child. With your partner, brainstorm responses to the conflict, and write a brief summary here:

CHILD:

PARENT:

STEP THREE

Using what you have learned in brainstorming, improvise your conflict in front of the class or group, with each person taking turns acting as the adult and child. Discuss the possible resolutions to the conflict. How does the relationship between this adult and child compare with that of Donna and Sophie? How do you think Donna and Sophie learned to respect each other's differences?

RESOURCES

TEXTS

From ABBA to MAMMA MIA!: The Official Book by Anders Hanser and Carl Magnus Palm (Watson-Guption Publications, 2000)
The Poets of Tin Pan Alley by Philip Furia (Oxford University Press, 1990)
American Popular Song: The Great Innovators, 1900 – 1950 by Alec Wilder, James T. Maher and Graham Lees (Oxford University Press, 1990)
Rockin' in Time: A Social History of Rock and Roll by David P. Szatmary (Prentice Hall College Division 4th Edition, 1999)

WEB SITES

Check out the official MAMMA MIA! web site at www.mamma-mia.com
The official site for ABBA can be found here: www.abbasite.com

RECORDINGS

ABBA: Forever Gold (Polydor, 1996)
Thank You For the Music (Polydor, 1995)
More ABBA Gold (Polydor, 1993)
ABBA Gold – Greatest Hits (Polydor, 1992)
ABBA Live (Atlantic, 1986)
I Love ABBA (Atlantic, 1984)
From ABBA, With Love (Polydor, 1983)
The ABBA Special (Atlantic, 1983)
The Love Songs (Pickwick, 1982)
The Singles – The First Ten Years (Atlantic, 1982)
ABBA International (Polydor, 1982)
The Visitors (Atlantic, 1981)
Super Trouper (Atlantic, 1980)
Voulez-Vous (Polygram, 1979)
Greatest Hits, Vol. 2 (Atlantic, 1979)
Les Plus Grands Succes (RCA, 1978)
ABBA Sampler (Atlantic, 1978)
The Album (Atlantic, 1978)
Arrival (Atlantic, 1977)
Golden Decade (Vogue, 1977)
Greatest Hits (Atlantic, 1976)
Very Best of ABBA (Polydor, 1976)
The Best of ABBA (Polydor, 1975)
Greatest Hits (Vogue, 1975)
Waterloo (Atlantic, 1974)

VIDEO/DVD

The Winner Takes it All – The Abba Story (Polydor, 2002)
ABBA The Movie (Polydor, 2006)
ABBA in Concert (Polydor, 1979)

SHEET MUSIC

MAMMA MIA! Official Songbook (Warner Bros. Publications, 2002)
The music of ABBA is available for digital download purchases at www.MusicNotes.com (U.S. & Canada) and www.sheetmusicdirect.com

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