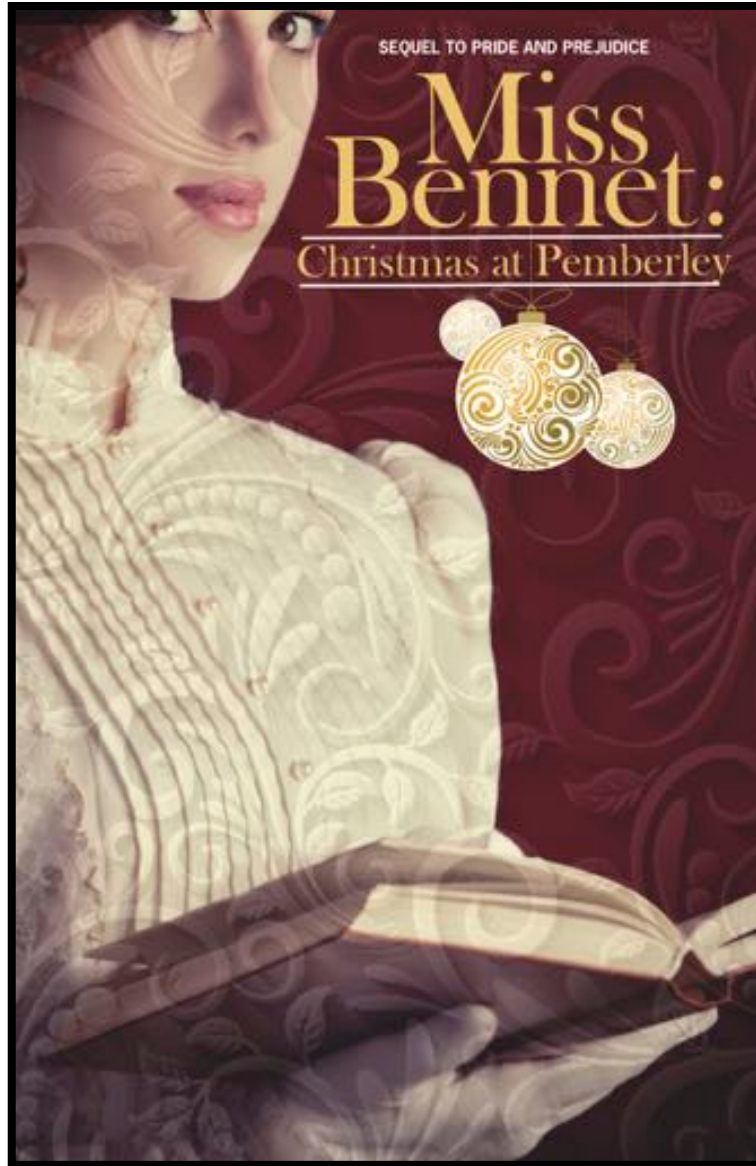


at the REP ★



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**Parts of this study guide have been researched and written by Dramaturgy Intern, Jomadlys Taveras.*

**Parts of this guide have been taken from theREP's 2012-13 Season Study Guide for 'Pride@Prejudice'.*

**This guide has been constructed for educational purposes only. theREP does not make any money from it.*

Capital Repertory Theatre's 38th Season - 2018-2019

THE ROYALE

by Marco Ramirez
SEP 21 – OCT 14, 2018

Classics On Stage

MISS BENNET: CHRISTMAS AT PEMBERLY

By Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon
NOV 23 – DEC 23, 2018

World Premier!

RED MAPLE

by David Bunce
JAN 25 – FEB 17, 2019

Classics On Stage

SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE

Adapted for the stage by Lee Hall
Based on the Screenplay by Marc Norman &
Tom Stoppard
APR 5 – MAY 12, 2019

theREP's ***ON-THE-GO!*** IN-SCHOOL TOURS *We come to YOU!*

A fully realized, portable, professional theatre production that can be performed in any space and eliminates bus costs, travel time and logistical concerns.
Cost is \$1,000. Financial assistance available.

ON-THE-GO!

SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS theREP

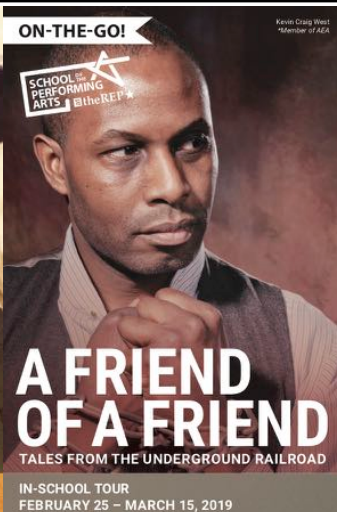


SLEEPY HOLLOW

IN-SCHOOL TOUR
OCTOBER 9 – NOVEMBER 2, 2018

ON-THE-GO!

SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS theREP



A FRIEND OF A FRIEND

TALES FROM THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

IN-SCHOOL TOUR
FEBRUARY 25 – MARCH 15, 2019

SLEEPY HOLLOW

Adapted by Maggie Mancinelli-Cahill
Music & Lyrics by Justin Friello & Lecco Morris
Directed by Margaret E. Hall
Tour dates: Oct 9 – Nov 2, 2018

With live sound effects and music, Irving's tale gets a contemporary treatment that honors the original and is sure to inspire and delight young audiences!

50 minutes with a 10 minute post-show talkback. Appropriate curriculum for grades 4+.

To book a performance visit: <http://school.proctors.org/go-order-form>; To learn more about our tours visit school.proctors.org/otg.

For more information contact: Aaron Marquise, Arts Education Manager, at amarquise@proctors.org.

A FRIEND OF A FRIEND: TALES OF THE

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

By Maggie Mancinelli-Cahill & Jill Rafferty-Weinisch
Directed by Margaret E. Hall
Tour dates: Feb 25 – Mar 15, 2019

This original docu-play used New York State archival documents to bring to life the reality of the Underground Railroad in the Capital Region.

50 minutes with a 10 minute post-show talkback. Appropriate curriculum for grades 7+.

To book a performance visit: <http://school.proctors.org/go-order-form>; To learn more about our tours visit school.proctors.org/otg.

For more information contact: Aaron Marquise, Arts Education Manager, at amarquise@proctors.org.

WINTER 2018



Dear Educator:

Welcome to Capital Repertory Theatre!

We are thrilled that you will be attending one of theREP's main stage productions this season, *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*, and hope you will find this guide to be a useful tool.

You have permission to reproduce materials within this guide for use in your classroom. It is designed to introduce the cultural and historical context of the play as well as provide resources and ideas for integrating the theatre experience with your curriculum.

Productions by theREP are likely to generate questions and opinions among your students. Our hope is that you will join us for a talkback with the cast following the performance where you and your students can share your questions and reactions with the performers.

The arts provide young imaginations with stimulation, points of reference, and intellectual resources for the mind and spirit. Our goal is to make live theatre attendance possible for all students in the Capital Region. Over 14,500 Capital Region students attended student matinees and theREP's On-the-Go! in-school tour performances last season. We hope to continue to grow and serve the needs of the Capital Region education community.

Let us know how you are using theatre in the classroom! Your success stories help us to keep the program funded. We love to receive copies of lesson plans, student work related to our performances and your letters. These are important testimonials to the value of the arts in education.

And finally, please fill **Out the Teacher Evaluation** at the back of this study guide. Completing the evaluation form will help us to continue to provide programs that serve the needs of Capital Region students.

We look forward to hearing from you!

With deepest gratitude,

Margaret E. Hall
Assistant Artistic Director
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at the REP ★



ABOUT US

Capital Repertory Theatre (theREP) is a non-profit professional producing theatre. In its 35-year history, theREP has produced more than 5,000 performances for the people of the Capital Region.

A member of LORT (League of Resident Theatres), theREP strives to bring quality work that explores the essence of the human condition through the stories of people, events, and phenomena that shape our contemporary lives. Theatre, at its best, entertains, cajoles and inspires by engaging the heart and mind through its most powerful ally – the imagination.

There are two basic types of theatre companies: producing and presenting. theREP is a producing theatre. The theatre hires a director and designers for the set, costumes, lights, and sound. The Theatre's Artistic Director and the director select appropriate actors for all the roles in the play. Then they all come to Albany, where the play is built and rehearsed.

In addition to the theatre space, theREP has a scene shop where sets are built, a costume shop where costumes are constructed and cared for, offices where the administrative staff works, a rehearsal hall where the shows are rehearsed, and housing facilities for actors. The resident staff of the theatre works with visiting artists to put the production together.

In contrast, presenting theatres host shows that have been designed, built, and rehearsed elsewhere. A theatre company at many different theatres frequently presents shows of this kind regionally, nationally or even internationally over an extended period of time. What you will see at theREP or with our On-The-Go! tours is unique to theREP where it was built. No one from anywhere else will see this production just as you see it!

ATTENDING A PERFORMANCE

Being a member of an audience is an important job. Live theatre couldn't exist without you! That job carries with it some responsibilities. Follow these suggestions in order to have the best theatre experience possible!

BRING WITH YOU

- ◆ ideas, imagination, an open mind, observation skills and a sense of wonder.

LEAVE BEHIND

- ◆ cell phones, pagers, pen lights, food and drink and anything else that might distract you, the performers or other members of the audience.

THINGS TO DO BEFORE A PERFORMANCE

- ◆ learn about the show you are going to see, arrive on time, find your seat, visit the restroom.

DURING A PERFORMANCE

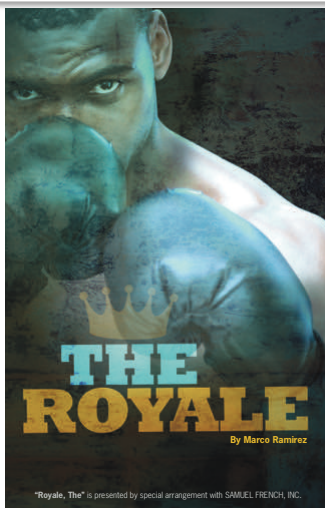
PLEASE DO

- ◆ applaud, laugh, pay attention and notice little details, think about questions you would like to have answered by the actors after the show, stay in your seat until intermission and the end of the show.

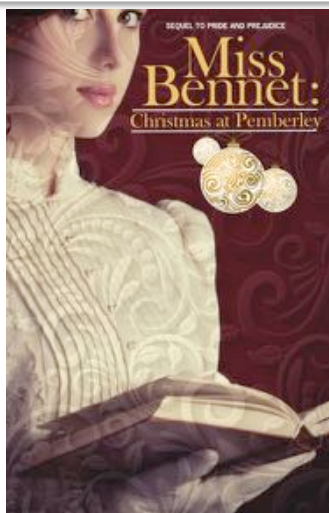
PLEASE DON'T

- ◆ talk, sleep, eat or drink, distract others, exit the theatre during the performance.

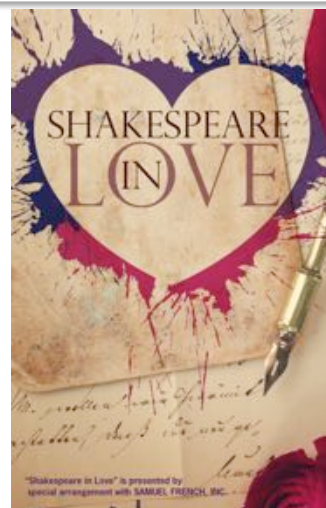
2018-2019 EDUCATION SEASON



OCT 11
10:30am



NOV 29, DEC 7, 13 & 18
10:30 am



APR 11, MAY 1, 3 & 8
10:30am

STUDENT MATINEES | Performance at the REP at 10:30am

PRICE \$12 a student

CHAPERONES For every 15 students, one complimentary adult ticket is provided.

LOCATION 111 North Pearl Street, Albany, NY 12207

RESERVATIONS Call Group Sales at 518-382-3884 x139

SCHOLARSHIPS Visit www.capitalrep.org for information and applications.

ABOUT THE PLAY

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley is considered “the” sequel to Jane Austen’s novel, *Pride and Prejudice*. It takes place at Christmas, two years after the end of Austen’s novel, and the story’s focus is on the middle Bennet sister Mary, rather than Elizabeth. It’s December 1815 and the ever-dependable Mary Bennet is growing tired of her role as the dutiful middle sister. When the family visits the Darcy’s at their Pemberley Estate for Christmas, an unexpected guest sparks Mary’s hopes for independence, an intellectual match – and possibly even love.

Pride and Prejudice: Jane Austen’s romantic novel, written in the 19th century, tells about a young woman’s experience finding love. The novel centers around one of five sisters, Elizabeth Bennet, and tells of the experiences young maidens encounter at that time in history. Class, family, reputation, pride, womanhood, and love are all central themes in the novel - most of which overlap as themes in *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHTS

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley was co-written by Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon.

Gunderson is a playwright, screenwriter, and short story author. She has built a strong reputation for creating works that center around women’s stories. Gunderson earned her Bachelor of Arts in Creative Writing from Emory University in 2004, and her Master of Fine Arts in Dramatic Writing from New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts in 2009, where she was also a Reynolds Fellow in Social Entrepreneurship. She’s touted as ‘the most produced playwright in America.’

Melcon, making her debut as a playwright with *Miss Bennet*, is an author, former literary manager and dramaturg.

The idea for *Miss Bennet* arose when Melcon posed the question: “What is theatre missing?” to her good friend Lauren. This question, mingled with the knowledge Gunderson had, theatres are always asking for a Christmas play (they are fairly well known money makers, but how many times does one theatre want to do *A Christmas Carol*...?!), and the sequel of a well-known – and loved – novel, set during the Christmas holiday, was born.

As an experienced playwright, Gunderson took to writing the script, while Melcon’s knowledge of England’s Regency Era proved integral and invaluable to the development of the piece, as did her strength as an analyst of structure. Gunderson’s ability to create strong dialogue and Melcon’s familiarity of Jane Austen’s writing style made them the ideal writing team and ‘the’ duo to complete a sequel to *Pride and Prejudice*, thus *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* was born.



Gunderson and Melcon

Some of Gunderson’s Plays:

I AND YOU

BY AND BY

THE BOOK OF WILL

ADA AND THE ENGINE

EMILIE: La Marquise du Châtelet Defends Her Life Tonight

To name a few...

ABOUT JANE AUSTEN

Jane Austen was born in Steventon, Hampshire on December 16, 1775. The seventh of eight children in a middle-class clergyman's family, she led a comfortable if modest life. The Austen children – in birth order: James, Edward, Henry, Cassandra, Francis, George, Jane and Charles. Though she was largely a self-taught writer, Jane would learn a lot from her father's extensive library and through her families engaging in home-based theatre productions (of both existing and family created plays).



- **1783**, at the age of 8, Jane was sent off to boarding school for their formal education. Her studies included foreign language (mainly French), music and dancing – the appropriate teachings for women of the time.
- **1787** Jane started taking more interest in generating her own works - keeping notebooks filled with short stories and poems.
- **1789** Austen completed a dark, satirical comedy, *Love and Friendship*.
- **1795** She met the one true love of her life, Tom Lefroy, whose family did not approve of the relationship and did everything they could to keep the two apart.
- **1799** Austen completed her first work titled *First Impressions*. This would become her most popular and enduring piece of writing and later be re-titled *Pride and Prejudice*.
- **1800** the Austen family, upon Mr. Austen's retiring from the clergy, moved to Bath, England.
- **1802** Jane declined her one and only offer of marriage.
 - Though initially accepting the proposal to a Mr. Bigg-Wither, her lack of being in love with him caused her to revoke the proposal the following day.
 - One day she wrote to her niece, Fanny Knight, on the matter of proposals saying: "having written so much on one side of the question, I shall now turn around and entreat you not to commit yourself farther, and not to think of accepting him unless you really do like him. Anything is to be preferred or endured rather than marrying without affection."
- **1803** Jane's brother Henry sold Jane's work *Susan* to a publisher in London by the name of Benjamin Crosby for £10 – though a tug of war over copyright would go on for some time before the piece was actually published.
- **1805** her father passed away, entrusting the care of their mother, as well as Jane and her sister Cassandra (neither of whom married) to the Austen brothers.
 - The women moved to Chawton cottage, offered to them by Frank Austen, and it was there that Jane crafted some of her most successful works.
- **1811** Henry succeeds in making a deal with London publisher Thomas Egerton and *Sense and Sensibility* is published.
 - The work is reviewed favorably and is a financial success – the first edition completely selling out by 1813.
- **1813** Egerton took the manuscript of *Pride and Prejudice* and published it, followed by *Mansfield Park*.
 - Austen changed publishers in the hopes of bringing even greater success to her works, and it is under John Murray that *Emma*, *Northanger Abbey*, and *Persuasion* are all published. Though the later two wouldn't be published until after her death.
- **1816** Jane's health began to decline – she had consumption (tuberculosis)
- **1817** Jane Austen passed away on July 18, 1817

After her death, her brother Henry worked to get *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* published as a set through John Murray. Within this work he penned an account of the author who had remained nameless up to this point. He connected her to her works and unveiled her to the world as Jane Austen.

Sir Walter Scott once observed, “That young lady (Jane Austen) has a talent for describing the involvements of feelings and character of ordinary life which is to me the most wonderful I ever met with.”

In her novels, Austen employs a narrator and free indirect speech so that we understand both the actual language of the character as well as the intentions and motivations that lie behind it. And as such, it has become a model for adaptations, both literary and dramatic/cinematic that have followed through the years.



Sir Walter Scott

Regency England's Societal Hierarchy

English society, during Jane Austen's time, revolved around social hierarchy where one's rank/title (or lack thereof) largely determined their social status. Here is a basic hierarchy of the time.

Royalty (called 'your Majesty' or 'your Highness'): King, Queen, Prince or Princess

Nobility (called 'Lord/Lady'): Duke, Marquis, Earl, Viscount or Baron

Commoners (called 'Sir/Lady' or 'Mister/Mrs.'): Baronet, Knight, or Landed gentry (land-owners)

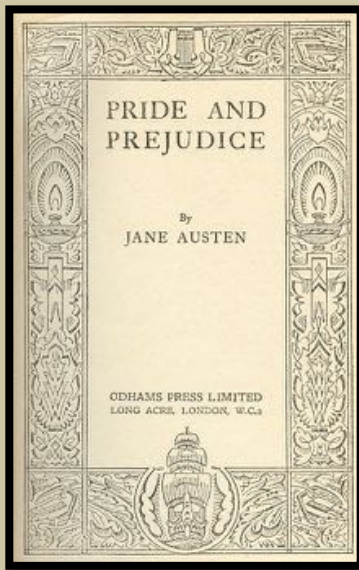
**To distinguish a noble Lady (i.e. daughter of an earl) and a non-noble Lady (i.e. wife of a knight) the first name of a noble woman was used with her title.*

Other Gentlemen (called 'Mister' or rank title 'Captain, Colonel, etc.'): Affluent businessmen, Navy/Army Officers, or Clergymen

A SYNOPSIS OF PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

Pride and Prejudice is a story that addresses a common reality in early 19th century England, 'that a woman lacking a good fortune needed to marry well!'

The novel focuses on the Bennet's and their five daughters who are all of marriageable age: Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, Kitty and Lydia. The family lives on the Longbourn Estate and fall "victim" to Mrs. Bennet's driving purpose to marry each of her daughters to a wealthy man with high social status. This is of particular importance as there is an entailment on the estate and, with no male heirs, Mrs. Bennet and her daughters will be evicted from their home upon the death of her husband, Mr. Bennet.



Shortly after we meet the Bennet's we learn that a very wealthy, handsome and amiable man has rented the nearby Netherfield Estate. Mrs. Bennet becomes wildly excited when he shows interest in Jane. (Mrs. Bennet's overt actions tend to cause extreme discomfort to her family and others).

Bingley arrives with his fashionable sister Caroline and his good friend, Mr. Darcy. A short time after they've settled in, Bingley hosts a party where he is well received by the community. Darcy, however, begins his acquaintance with the community with smug condescension and a proud distaste for "country" people. A rather insufferably proud and haughty individual, Darcy believes the Bennets are beneath him in social stature. Darcy is so disagreeable, particularly to Elizabeth, that when Bingley suggests he ask her to dance, his reply is that she isn't "pretty enough" – a conversation that is within earshot of Elizabeth (a rather proud and stubborn individual herself).

Despite Mrs. Bennet's embarrassing actions, and Caroline's social superiority, it's quite clear that Bingley and Jane have fallen in love. When he invites Jane to dinner at Netherfield, and she falls ill after riding in the rain, Elizabeth is sent for. She goes to care for Jane while she recovers, and while at Netherfield, finds herself, despite still being stung by Darcy's rejection of her at the dance, engaging with him in some witty banter. Darcy, astonished, finds himself attracted to Elizabeth – who mistakenly perceives his 'constant starrng' to be nothing more than the actions of a rude man.

Meanwhile, Mr. Collins (a recently ordained clergyman employed by the wealthy Lady Catherine de Bourgh, and Mr. Bennet's closest male relative – who will inherit the estate after Mr. Bennet's death) makes an unexpected visit to Longbourn. His intentions are honorable, having come to the estate to take a wife (one of the Bennet sisters), and thereby keep Longbourn in the Bennet family. At first he pursues Jane; however, when Mrs. Bennet mentions she is involved with Mr. Bingley, he turns his attention to Elizabeth. Mr. Collins quickly proposes to Elizabeth who promptly refuses (much to her mother's distress). He recovers from Elizabeth's refusal and proposes to her close friend, Charlotte Lucas, who immediately accepts him.

Around this time in the novel, the militia has arrived in town, and the two youngest Bennet girls (Kitty & Lydia) are ready to throw themselves at any officer that might wander by. Enter Mr. Wickham – an officer who has a history with Darcy. Elizabeth begins a friendship with Wickham who informs her that Lady Catherine is Darcy's Aunt. Wickham also tells a tale about how Darcy mistreated him, information Elizabeth readily believes.

Another ball is held at Netherfield where nothing goes right...Bingley, on the verge of proposing to Jane, doesn't. Wickham stands Elizabeth up. Mrs. Bennet forces her daughter Mary to showoff her "musical talent," embarrassing her, while Lydia and Kitty are embarrassingly flirtatious with the militia officers.

Shortly after the ball, Jane receives a letter from Caroline that the entire Bingley group has left for London, and implies that Mr. Bingley is really in love with Darcy's sister. Jane, despite being left heartbroken and confused, accompanies her aunt to London with the hopes of winning Bingley back. Elizabeth, however, is convinced that Caroline conspired with Darcy to separate Jane and Bingley.

While Jane is in London Elizabeth pays a visit to her good friend Charlotte where she receives a dinner invitation from Lady Catherine. At dinner she is subjected to the third degree and informed that Darcy will soon be paying a visit. Some polite banter between Elizabeth and Darcy ensues until she learns of Darcy's involvement in breaking up Bingley and Jane. It's just about then that Darcy chooses to propose to Elizabeth, who rejects him saying that he is no gentleman and cites both Wickham's story and Jane's broken heart as the two primary reasons for her anger.

The next day Darcy gives Elizabeth a letter containing the true story regarding Wickham – that he is a liar, a gambler and tried to elope with Darcy's underage sister; as well as the full story behind his involvement in breaking up Bingley and Jane. Darcy believed that Jane (who is very reserved with her emotions) was only after Bingley's money, believing she never truly loved his friend.

Elizabeth pays a visit, with her aunt and uncle (the Gardiner's) to Derbyshire – which is, incidentally, where Darcy lives. Of course they run into him, and he is surprisingly polite to her and her family, and asks that Elizabeth meet his sister.

Lydia winds up in trouble at the hands of Wickham. However, it appears to all that Mr. Gardiner saves the day – and the Bennet Family reputation – by finding and requiring the two to marry. Lydia tells Elizabeth that Darcy was at their wedding and learns that it was actually Darcy who saved the family's honor by tracking down the couple and paying off Wickham's massive debts in exchange for his marrying Lydia.

Some time later, Darcy and Bingley arrive at Longbourn: Elizabeth and Darcy are not granted an opportunity to talk but it appears that Darcy did talk to Bingley about Jane because he – finally – proposes to her, and she accepts. Shortly thereafter, Lady Catherine arrives at Longbourn and tries to stronghold Elizabeth into promising that she will never accept a marriage proposal from Darcy – which of course infuriates Elizabeth as she does not believe anyone should control her actions save herself. Finally, Darcy and Elizabeth take a walk, they talk, they apologize, they state their feelings, he proposes, she accepts and everyone lives happily ever after.

ACTIVITY: WRITE!

Pride and Prejudice was originally titled *First Impressions*.

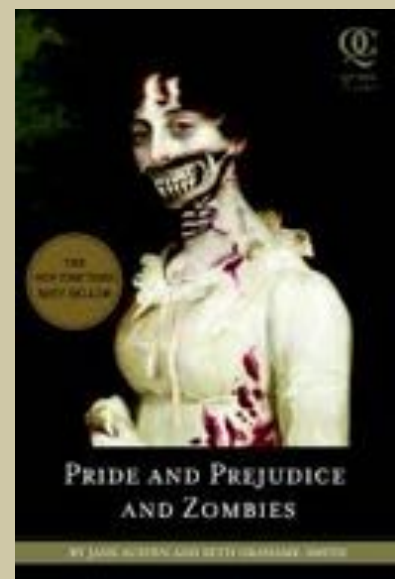
Explain why this title would have also been appropriate. Next, see if you can create another, equally justifiable, title for the novel.

ACTIVITY: WRITE!

Austen delved into her family's heritage and lives for much of the material in her novels; in fact, Jane and Elizabeth Bennet owe a great deal to her own relationship with her sister Cassandra. Consider the people and situations in your life. Write a short story that draws on one of multiple facets of your life.

ACTIVITY: READ!

Give *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* a try... →



HISTORICAL CONTEXT: The Regency Time Period



Sandwiched between the Georgian and Victorian time periods, the Regency Era was a short-lived time in which England flourished unlike any other. From the glittering streets of London lined to the magnificent country estates built to display a family's wealth and power. No one in England was spared an insatiable appetite for pleasure and indulgence.

The term REGENCY is a commentary on Britain's unstable rulers of the time. 'Regency' means that the current ruler is incapable of performing his royal duties, and a 'Regent' (a person who exercises the ruling power in a kingdom during the minority, absence, or disability of the sovereign) must be appointed to govern. In 1811, when it was clear that George III was incapable, his son and heir to the throne, The Prince of Wales, was appointed Regent. It was under these two rulers that the Regency Era takes place.

An average Regency gentleman spent all of his time relieving boredom. He did not work, but rather made money by gambling on cards, horses or which raindrop would reach the bottom of a windowpane first. The period is defined by its frivolous actions. Though England was at war, and Napoleon had crowned himself Emperor after the French Revolution, a gentleman and his lady were not at all concerned. They attended parties, balls, musical events, the theatre, the opera and country house parties. Gentlemen also spent endless hours in exclusive gentlemen's clubs with their high-born friends.

The most important thing to a Regency woman was to marry a gentleman that could bring wealth and prestige to her family. In the Regency Era, women held all the power in courtship. The mother would decide which men could call on her daughter; though the daughter could request that her mother invite a gentlemen whom she had met at a dinner or dance. There were many reasons that a man and a woman might marry. Some married for love or physical attraction, others married for convenience of having a spouse or financial reasons. Finding a husband who was involved in the military or public office was particularly desirable because of the wealth and social status that was associated with such men.

During this era, the ballroom was the most common place for women to meet gentlemen and much of the courting process took place on the dance floor. Dances were a place to mingle, and for the most part, all dancers were young and unmarried. A girl who was not "out" (at this time in history meaning eligible for marriage) could not attend a dance until she had been presented to society. Married women could dance, but usually did so with their husbands, or to make up numbers when there were not enough on the floor.

Dancing offered a man and a woman the opportunity, not only to touch each other (which was otherwise not permitted), but also to communicate in other ways. The speaking glance, degree of proximity to one another, and pressure of hand upon hand could convey a preference for a certain dancer with a subtlety that everyone could understand.

The suitor would come to the home of the woman who had invited him, if he sought her to be his wife. He brought gifts, sat and listened to her play piano or sing – all under the watchful eye of her

parents, especially her mother. After some time, the man would ask her father if he could marry her, and if agreed, they would walk down the aisle together. Though choosing a husband for one's daughter was not an easy task, weddings were mostly small and private affairs. Even fashionable weddings at the popular church for the day were sparingly attended. And while Regency women married for status, wealth and a secure economic future, Regency gentlemen typically married on a whim and rarely stayed interested in their wives for very long.

The Prince Regent Becomes King George IV

The Regency Period officially began when the Prince of Wales assumed the role of Prince Regent after his father, King George III, was declared unfit to rule in 1811. For nine years he wielded the power of a king without actually being a king – as his father was still alive. During this time he indulged in excesses, spent ludicrous amounts of money on building projects and lavish parties. He was a great patron of the arts and literature. He was extravagant in fashion and indulgent in food. Upon his father's death in 1820 the Prince Regent assumed the throne as King George IV and ruled for ten years. He died in 1830 and left such a legacy as to have a period of time named after him.

Rules and Conduct

“The Top 10 Ways to Be Vulgar in Regency England”

10. Broadcast your knowledge and opinions as widely as you can.
9. Remember: what happens in Scotland stays in Scotland. This neighboring country was the place of choice for hasty marriages and elopements.
8. Be cutting edge with your fashions. Put some plums on your bonnet, even if no one else is doing it!
7. Carry on a conversation with someone to whom you have not been introduced.
6. Have a prominent or affluent relative, and be sure to spread the word so everyone knows of your influence in society.
5. Gossip! And use slang when you do.
4. Hey fellas! Do ya fancy a special lady? Take her for a ride in your carriage...without an escort!
3. Laugh. Loudly! And as often as you can. It really doesn't matter what you're laughing at.
2. Touch a member of the opposite sex anywhere but their hand in public.
1. As a woman, write and publish a novel, **AND** take credit for your work!

ACTIVITY! Create a similar 'Top 10' regarding rules and conduct for today's society.

FUN FACT:

Though Queen Victoria is credited with the rise of fashion in white dresses, Regency women started the trend of the white wedding dress. As weddings were small and private, the dress made was beautiful, but not expensive or elaborate. These dresses were made of white muslin, a cheap and widely available fabric at the time. Since then, the white wedding dress has become the traditional wedding attire across the western world, representing a symbol of purity and beauty.



REGENCY CLASS STRUCTURE

The social ladder had a fixed, inflexible hierarchy within the nobility and an almost equally rigid class structure within the rest of the population. Class was defined primarily by birth, title, wealth, property and occupation – and there were many distinctions (some subtle, others obvious) within each level of society.

THE ARISTOCRACY

Simply put, the aristocracy was made up of ‘powerful’ or political men whose titles were earned or given to win their loyalty, as well as their discretion of the sovereign, to create new peers. In other words, royalty handed out titles (created new peers) to gain loyalty from that person.

- A peer could have more than one title, however they would be addressed by their highest rank.
- The son or daughter of a high-ranking aristocrat would maintain the second highest title in his/her name, until he/she was appointed a higher title later in life.
- A Duke or Duchess were the highest rank one could achieve outside the royal family and is given by the sovereign as gratitude for service to the Crown. The title included ‘of’ a location that holds value and relevance to that person’s life.
- The rank of peerage in men: Duke, Marquis, Earl, Viscount, Baron
- The rank of peerage in women: Duchess, Marchioness, Countess, Viscountess, Baroness

THE GENTRY

A less easily defined class, as many within the Gentry did not necessarily hold a title.

- Members of the Gentry included: wealthy landowners who held not title, baronets, knights, esquires, and gentlemen.
- Baronet is the 6th ranking peerage of the aristocracy, essentially meaning that the title came from a hereditary line, and allowed the beholder to call himself ‘Sir’ and his wife ‘Lady’.
- Knighthood enabled the same permissions of ‘Sir’ and ‘Lady,’ however slightly lower than a Baronet in rank. Originally, the medieval rank was for chivalry, however during the Regency Period, knighthood could be bestowed for a wide variety of services to the Crown.
- Esquire used to be equivalent to knighthood in rank during its creating in the medieval times, however, many men outside the gentry attached the title to their names to add higher respectability. For example, when writing a letter, a man named John Smith would sign-off, John Smith, Esq. However, in speech, he would be Mr. Smith.
- A Gentleman was applied to those who were clearly ‘genteel’ but held no rank or title. During the Regency period, **a gentleman was any man who did not have to work for a living**. Same as an Esquire, the gentleman could style his pen name, John Smith, gentleman. But in speech, he would be addressed as Mr. Smith.

Most of the characters in *Pride and Prejudice*, specifically the Bennets and Lucases, fall within this category.



ACTIVITY!

Much of the action of *Pride and Prejudice* centers around one character ‘making a call’ to another.

Ask students to research the rules for “making calls” (visiting/calling on your neighbors or acquaintances) in Regency England. Each student is then asked to create a **“Rules for Making Calls and Leaving Cards”** pamphlet and sample calling card.

How does this system differ from “calling” on friends today?

Christmas in the 19th Century

It was during the 19th century that the Christmas, as we know it today, really took form. Prior to the 19th century the holiday wasn't considered to be especially important. In fact, it was merely treated as 'just another one' of the many festivals celebrated throughout the year.

While the Christmas tree was already a known decoration for the holiday, it became even more popular in the 19th century when this (to the right) widely circulated illustration of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, which was featured in a magazine.

Audience members will note a fairly constant mention of Christmas trees (and what they're for) in *Miss Bennet* – not to mention that they'll see one as part of the set – the plot point being to let audience members understand that it was still a new symbol (or decoration) used to celebrate Christmas.

The Victorians invented the Christmas card and the Christmas cracker.



Examples of Victorian Christmas Cards



ACTIVITY: Create!

Students are asked to design a Christmas card in the "Victorian" style. They should research Victorian cards before completing their design.



HOLIDAY CHEER!

Experience Christmas Crackers as a class. Teachers can provide, or ask students to bring them in, Christmas Crackers. (Relatively inexpensive ones can be purchased on line or in stores like 'The Christmas Tree Shop.'



Open them and see what's inside!

History and Society Inform ‘Our’ Thoughts

- *Pride and Prejudice* was written in 1797 and published in 1813.
- 1811 The Regency Era Began.
- 1814 The steam printer was adopted; which meant 1100-sheets could be printed every hour, as opposed to the limited 200-sheets per hour before.
- 1815 is when the story line of *Miss Bennet* takes place (2-years after the novels publication).
 - During this era there was great social, political and economic change.
 - The population of Britain increased from one million in 1801, to one and a quarter million in 1820.
 - Demand and production of novels increased. This meant that fashionable novels, whose pages disclosed stories and rumors of the aristocracy’s lifestyle, gave those from a lower economic status a closer look into the world they weren’t able to attain themselves.
 - Middle Class women went to school and learned music, sewing, drawing, or any skill that would make the home they resided in more entertaining and beautiful.
 - Attaining these skills made a woman more marriageable
 - If a woman was still unwed, and in her thirties, she was seen as a spinster and a burden on her family
 - Women had two choices: marry well or become a governess and attend to wealthy children. Both options put the women “in service” to someone else. (The only form of employment for a woman was in ‘service.’)
- Economic roles were clearly divided in the 19th century.
 - First were the aristocrats – those with money and land. They did not have to work on the daily, because they gained money from investments they made, and their land. They spent their days celebrating their wealth attending various functions and sporting events.
 - Next came the Middle Class – which was divided into two parts: upper middle class and lower middle class. The only thing separating the middle class from the aristocrats was one’s birth and or occupation. The middle class participated in clean work, nothing physically demanding.
 - Then came the lower class – also divided into two parts. The working class – which makes up roughly 80% of the population at this time. The working class did all of societies manual labor. The poor – the poor were the second “group” of the lower class. They did not work and accepted charitable handouts in order to survive.
 - It was frowned upon to marry outside of your social class – in fact, almost unthinkable.
- Jane Austen took all of the customs and norms of the 19th century, and developed her stories around them. Through her own experience, being a part of the upper middle class, and close observations of the people/classes around her, she was able to create a world filled with real problems and questions. So real that people of all classes could relate to her writing.
- Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon used Austen’s ideas from *Pride and Prejudice* and expanded upon them to create a similar story (indeed, even using many of Austen’s characters) with similar ideas, themes, and historical context. *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*.

LITERARY CONTEXT

Character (*noun*) – the aggregate of features and traits that form the individual nature of some person or thing; (*adjective*) – [of an actor or actress] acting or specializing in such roles; (*verb* – used with object) – to portray or describe.

Characters in *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*

Mary Bennet – Finally coming in to her own, she is no longer the plain, boring girl she once was. She has a fire in her now. She is intelligent, curious, and lively, but her family only sees her as a future spinster. She does not suffer fools. She wants to live.

Arthur de Bourgh – A studious, unsociable only child who has never been around women or large families. He is a loner who prefers books to people. He has recently inherited a large estate and has no idea what to do next.

Elizabeth Darcy (née Bennet) – Married to Mr. Darcy. Confident, charming, and witty. She makes a fun and surprising lady of the house. She is best friends with her sister Jane.

Fitzwilliam Darcy – A loving, generous, and smart (if a slightly stiff) husband. He is quiet and vigilant and thus sees what others often miss. He knows what being lovelorn is like.

Jane Bingley (née Bennet) – Married to Mr. Bingley. She is seven months pregnant with her first child and is sweet and optimistic as ever. The kindest heart in the house.

Charles Bingley – Gracious, happy, and ever focused on the love of his life, Jane. A good friend and always ready with a smile.

Lydia Wickham – Flirtatious, youthful, self-centered. Her marriage to Mr. Wickham is a sham but she will not admit this. She is the person you want to have at your party: energetic, engaging, unstoppable.

Anne de Bourgh – Only daughter of the late Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Lived in her mother's very large shadow, never having to ask for anything or speak for herself her entire life. Judgmental and impatient, just like her mother.

ACTIVITY! Write!

Students are asked to consider their own sequel to *Pride and Prejudice*. After reading the novel (or reading about it/the characters online), students are asked to write a short story about what they think happens next for the characters.

*If this activity is done before students see *Miss Bennet*, a follow up discussion on the similarities/ differences of their “sequel” to Lauren Gunderson & Margot Melcon's could take place.

Synopsis/character breakdowns for *Pride and Prejudice* can be found online, via any number of websites – like: <http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/pride/characters/>.

THEMES

PRIDE || As said in the words of Mary Bennet, at the beginning of the novel, “human nature is particularly prone to [pride]” (Volume I, Chapter 5). In the novel, pride prevents the characters from seeing the truth of a situation and from achieving happiness in life, and it is, in fact, one of the main barriers to Elizabeth and Darcy’s union.

Discuss: Darcy’s pride in his position in society and his scorn of those outside his social circle and how Elizabeth’s vanity clouds her judgment of Darcy and Wickham. What helps these characters overcome their vain, prideful thoughts and actions?

PREJUDICE || Pride and prejudice are intimately related in Austen’s novel. Critic A. Walton Litz said, “one cannot equate Darcy with pride, or Elizabeth with prejudice; Darcy’s pride of place is founded on social prejudice, while Elizabeth’s initial prejudice against him is rooted in pride of her own quick perceptions.”

Discuss: 1.) Darcy must learn to overcome his prejudice in order to really see Elizabeth. At the novels start, having been brought up in such a way that he scorns all those outside his social circle, Darcy is unable to see that Elizabeth would be a good wife for him. An example of his overcoming his pride is demonstrated when he treats the Gardiners, Elizabeth’s family, with great civility. 2.) From the start, Elizabeth prides herself on her keen ability for perception, yet her supposed ability is often lacking. Discuss how it is lacking in her initial judgments of both Darcy and Wickham.

FAMILY || Austen portrays ‘the family’ as being primarily responsible for the intellectual and moral education of children.

Discuss: 1.) Though, as girls, Austen and her sister Cassandra attended a boarding school, the Bennet sisters’ education derives solely from their home life. Consider what that would be like, if it was on ones parents to complete a child’s education? Doctors would be the only parents who could teach new doctors. 2.) How Anne de Bourgh is portrayed, growing and “learning” at the hands of Lady Catherine.

WOMEN & MARRIAGE || Austen is critical of the gender injustices present in 19th century English society, specifically that women can only attain social and economic security through marriage. Clearly, Austen believes that women are at least as intelligent and capable as men, and considers their inferior status in society to be unjust.

Discuss: Jane Austen went against convention by remaining single and earning a living as a novelist. She also “advised” family and friends – in her letters to them – only to marry for love, which also went against the grain.

SOCIETY/CLASS || Considerations of class – social standings – are omnipresent in the novel. Austen has characters on every rung of society who portray the good and the bad traits associated with their social standing. While the novel does not call for the leveling of all social classes, it does criticize an over-emphasis on class and a person’s status based upon that societal ladder.

Discuss: 1.) Bingley’s falling in love with Jane despite her low social status, while his sister Caroline does all she can to get her brother away from a person of such low class. 2.) The comic formality of Mr. Collins and his obsequious relationship with Lady Catherine, which serves as a satire of class-consciousness and social formalities. 3.) Darcy’s inordinate pride, based solely on his extreme class-consciousness.

INDIVIDUAL & SOCIETY || Austen's novel portrays a world in which society takes an interest in the private virtue of its members. While she is critical of society's ability to judge properly, she does believe that society has a crucial role in promoting virtue. Austen has a profound sense that individuals are social beings and that their happiness is found through relationships with others.

Discuss: 1.) When Lydia elopes with Wickham there is a scandal and it affects the whole society, even if the main injury is to the Bennet family. 2.) Darcy considers his failure to expose the wickedness of Wickham's character to be a breach of his social duty because if Wickham's character had been known, others would not have been so easily deceived by him.

VIRTUE || Austen's novels unite Aristotelian and Christian conceptions of virtue. She sees human life as purposeful and believes that human beings must guide their appetites and desires through their use of reason. Human happiness is found by living a life in accordance with human dignity, which is a life in accordance with virtue. Self-knowledge has a central place in the acquisition of virtue, as it is a prerequisite for moral improvement.

Discuss: 1.) Elizabeth's folly in her misjudgments of Darcy and Wickham is that her vanity has prevented her from objective reasoning. 2.) Lydia seems almost completely devoid of virtue. It appears she has never trained herself to discipline her passions, or formed her judgment such that she is capable of making sound moral decisions. 3.) Darcy and Elizabeth are only freed of their pride and prejudice when their dealings with one another help them to see their faults, and spur them to improve themselves.

WHAT DO I READ NEXT?

- *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte
- *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte
- *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens
- *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott
- *Sense and Sensibility and Sea Monsters* by Jane Austen and Ben H. Winters
- *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* by Jane Austen and Seth Grahame-Smith
- *Jane Austen's Guide to Good Manners: Compliments, Charades and Horrible Blunders* by Josephine Ross

Explore!

Jane Austen's writing reflects much of her personal and family life - in fact, it became a source of inspiration for her novels. Ask students to choose a favorite book, movie or TV show. Who wrote it? Find out how they got the idea for the story. Share your findings with the class.

i.e.: A Christmas Story, written by Jean Sheppard tells stories of his childhood.

i.e.: In a People magazine article, *'Black-ish'* TV series creator Kenya Barris, said: "The seed of the show came from my own family, I looked around and saw that my kids were not like little black kids that I remember growing up... The world is changing, and that's being reflected by the Johnsons (the family in the show)."

Who's Who: In the Production

Director: Maggie Mancinelli-Cahill

Actors

(in alphabetical order)

TBA

Production Team: TBA

Stage Manager:

Costume Designer:

Set Designer:

Sound Designer:

Prop Master: Mariya Sudarska



**Denotes a member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers of the United States*



+Denotes a member of United Scenic Artists

Ideas for Curriculum Integration

Social customs and rules are central to the world of *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* and Austen's novel, *Pride and Prejudice*

1. **Gender Roles Then & Today:** During the Regency Era, society had very distinct gender roles. Divide students into small groups and have them discuss contemporary social expectations of gender roles in the U.S., and compare it with another area of the world. Each group should create a chart to outline what they've discussed.
2. **WRITE!** Communication has greatly changed since the 19th century. Have students imagine that they are composing a letter during the Regency Era: What type of language would they need to use? What register (or level of formality) would they write it in? How would they need to address the letter?
 - a. Ask students to compose an email to a friend that tells of an exciting event that has occurred in their life. Then they are to "translate" their message into the language necessary for writing a formal letter in the Regency Era.
 - b. Have students read their contrasting messages out loud to the class.
3. **19th Century Courtship** was an elaborate process that entailed a strict code of conduct. Divide the class into two groups and have them brainstorm a list of contemporary courtship rules one group from the perspective of women and the other of men. Have a discussion comparing and contrasting their rules for "today" with the rules from the Regency Era.
 - a. Consider addressing the presence and ability to be "out" of the LGBTQ community during the Regency Era and today.
4. **Social Satire:** Austen's novel is often interpreted as a social satire of the Regency era. (*Satire is a literary/dramatic strategy that uses humor, irony, exaggeration or ridicule to expose and criticize an issue, institution, group or individual.*) Have students discuss which elements of the novel could be classified as satire.
 - a. What issues are satirized in *Miss Bennet*?
 - b. What solutions are offered to the problems in the novel/play? (Often satire exposes problems but also offers solutions to them.)
 - c. Are there specific characters that seem to be especially satirical?
 - d. What effect does satire have on you as a spectator? Does it change the way you think/feel about a given issue?
 - e. Ask students what other books, plays, films, etc., do they know utilize this form of literary/dramatic strategy?
5. **Marriage then and today:** have students discuss, as a class or in small groups, their ideas about marriage. In Regency England, it was acceptable to marry just for money and social status and not for love. Does that apply to today's world? Are there people who still marry solely for wealth? What factors do your students think will make a good marriage? How important will marriage be to their lives? What are some social or political issues concerning marriage that have developed in recent years (and or at other times in history)?

6. **Caricature** is a representation of someone or something in a drawing or painting that exaggerates parts of their character or appearance in a noticeable, odd or amusing manner. Due to the absurdity of Regency fashion and social customs, caricatures became a prominent style of art and social critique at the time.

- Have students find and examine some period fashion caricatures.
- Discuss other fashions that they find bizarre and could be turned into caricatures.
- Discuss modern day caricatures.
- Have students create a caricature of themselves (fashion or other...), and make an art exhibit of them.



7. **WRITE!** Write a review of the play. Critical thinking. Ask students to write a review of theREP's production of *Miss Bennet*. Things to consider:
- What was the most compelling or intriguing aspect of the production?
 - How did the set, lights, costumes, sound and props add (or take away) from the production?
 - What did you think of the stage movement?
 - Both blocking (where and when the actors moved) and any choreography (dancing) in the production?
 - What did you think of the direction of the piece?
 - What questions arose for you, about the production? Was anything confusing?
 - Would you recommend this production to others?
 - Can you make any connections between the play and other plays that you have seen? (What about TV or films?)
 - Can you make any connections from the play to your own life?



Holiday Dance in the Regency Era

8. **Dating then and now...**compare and contrast dating then and now. How have things changed over the decades? Do you think that there are any benefits in using ideas from the past? Do you think it is harder or easier to date now? Why do you think so?

9. **Write!** Postal service was rapidly increasing in speed and regularity in Jane Austen's time. It is a major part of the lives of her characters. Write an undiscovered letter in the voice of one of her characters from *Pride and Prejudice*. i.e. Write a letter from Mr. Bingley to Jane. Or, in the case of *Miss Bennet*, write a letter from Arthur to Mary.

Resources Consulted

Websites:

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Other:

Capital Repertory Theatre’s 2012-2013 Study Guide for *Pride@Prejudice*.

*****This guide has been constructed for educational purposes only. theREP, which is a non-profit organization, does not make any money from the guide.*****

TEACHER EVALUATION: *Miss Bennet*

Your feedback is **vital** to the growth and continued success of theREP's educational programming. It helps us to constantly improve and attract additional underwriting. Please take a moment to fill out this form.

We encourage you to make multiple copies so that all of the teachers in your group may respond.

1. Name: _____ School: _____

2.

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

3. How would you rate the quality of today's performance?

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

4. Did attending the performance assist you in addressing classroom curriculum?

Very Much

Somewhat

Not At All

N/A

5. Were the on-line study materials useful in preparing students and deepening their experience?

Very Much

Somewhat

Not At All

N/A

6. Please check all that apply:

____ Today's performance price was affordable for my school.

____ My school required a subsidy in order to afford today's performance.

____ My school would provide performances for more students, more often, if additional funds were available.

7. Any additional information / comments welcome:

The completed form may be submitted by email to amarquise@proctors.org or by mail to: Aaron Marquise, Arts Education Manager, 432 State Street, Schenectady, NY 12305.

theREP/Capital Repertory Theatre's Mission In Action!

Creating an authentic link to the community we serve...

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH are key components of theREP's mission, "to create an authentic link to the community we serve." Through a wide range of programs, theREP strives "to provide the Capital Region with theatre programming which inspires a greater understanding of the human condition" and helps "to develop future audiences by instilling the notion that theatre is a vital part of the cultural life of all vibrant cities."

PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS

Student Matinees (Classics on Stage) Performances of most of the theatre's professional productions are scheduled during the school day with dramatically discounted prices for area students to allow for greater accessibility. Each season, at least one play is designated as Classics on Stage, for its direct connections with curriculum.

On-The-Go! in-School Tour Specially adapted professional productions designed to play to students on-site in schools. Last season, theREP's OTG program reached more than 13,000 students.

Young Playwright Contest Providing students, ages 13-19, with the opportunity to submit their work to be produced on the Capital Rep stage. In addition, the winning playwrights are given a mentorship – prior to the production of the play – with a professional playwright.

Summer Stage Young Acting Company Providing young actors the opportunity to work together, with leading professionals in the field, on a production that will take place on the Capital Rep stage. Company Members hone their acting skills while rehearsing and then performing the Young Playwright Contest-winning plays.

Acting Intensive I & II provide teens, ages 12-17, the opportunity to hone their acting skills by providing these week-long comprehensive workshops.

CAST (Cultivating Arts & Students Together) provides students with the opportunity to volunteer at the theatre and earn community service credits at the same time. Teens get an in-depth learning experience that satisfies their passion while fulfilling their needs.

Artist In Residency Programs theREP works in conjunction with school educators to bring highly trained teaching artists to work in extended residency within the classroom. Opportunities to embed the theatrical experience into the curriculum are available for teachers and students for every work in our 2016-17 Education Season.

Career Development theREP is dedicated to helping to build the next generation of theatre professionals with programs like the **Professional Apprenticeship Program** which provides year-long or summer-long paid apprenticeships, and **Internship Program** provides college students internships in many disciplines of theatre. These programs are specifically for young people beginning a career in the performing arts and arts education.

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