

PORCHLIGHT
MUSIC THEATRE

PRESENTS

Disney

**FEVEREAN
FRIDAY**

A NEW MUSICAL

**SCHOOL
GUIDE**

**SUGGESTED
GRADES 6-12**

A Letter to Educators from **Porchlight Music Theatre,**

We are so saddened that we could not share our mainstage production of *Freaky Friday* with you and hear all of your thoughts and questions about the production. We're looking forward to seeing you next season, but in the meantime here is our reimagined study guide with activities for students at home as well once you're back together as a class.

At Porchlight Music Theatre, we hope that all students will enjoy a lifetime of appreciation for the arts. We believe that studying theater builds self-confidence, creative thinking, and collaboration in students; and can open us all up to be more empathetic and caring humans.

Some of the activities in this guide highlight themes from the show and explore how we build a theatrical performance. This entire guide was written with Illinois Common Core State Standards for Grades 6 - 12 in mind. Use them as written, or adapt the lessons to suit the needs of your classroom and students.

We also offer in-classroom workshops where Teaching Artists come directly to you. For more information about this opportunity, email **rebeccah@porchlightmusictheatre.org** or call **773.777.9884** today.

Porchlight Music Theatre

Psst—If you have students that might be interested, we have Summer Camps and weekend classes. Full and partial scholarships are available.

Guide written by Rebeccah Singer, Education Director
Guide design by Irina Goldman, Marketing Associate

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SUGGESTED READING

Freaky Friday (novel) by Mary Rodgers
Vice Versa: A Lesson to Fathers by F. Anstey
Be Light Like a Bird by Monika Schroder
You in Five Acts by Una LaMarche
Musical Theatre: A History by John Kenrick

INTRODUCTION

Pillars of Porchlight Music Theatre Education

TELL YOUR STORY

Every voice and experience is valuable and important. By telling—or singing—our stories we find common ground and empower others to share their stories.

OF OUR COMMUNITY

Porchlight is committed to reflecting and engaging with the community around us and telling stories with Chicago style.

AMERICAN ART FORM

Musical Theatre is a uniquely American artform. By combining the history and legacy of theater with dance and music, we can create visceral art that connects us all.

JOY

Porchlight believes in creating a shared experience of joy on our stage. We hope you leave the theater humming songs and tapping your feet.

ACCESS

Access to arts and arts education is a right. Porchlight is committed to increasing arts access—in and out of the classroom—across Chicago.

PORCHLIGHTMUSICTHEATRE.ORG

PORCHLIGHT MUSIC THEATRE

ILLINOIS CORE LEARNING STANDARDS

Onstage

SS.H.1.-4.9-12: Change, Continuity, and Context, SS.H.1.6-8.LC-MC: Change, Continuity, and Context

Decade Design

Reading Standards for Literature Gr. 6-12, Key Ideas and Details #1, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas #7 & #9, SS.IS.4.9-12: Evaluating Sources and Using Evidence

Missing Scene

Reading Standards for Literature Gr. 6-12, Key Ideas and Details #3, Writing Standards 6-12 #3 & #4

Engineering Periactoids

HS-PS2 Motion & Stability: Forces and Interactions, MS-PS2 Motion & Stability: Forces and Interactions

Discussion/Reflection

SS.H.5.9-12: Perspectives, SS.Psy.1-8.9-12: Psychology Standards, SS.IS.6.6-8.LC-MC: Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action, TH:Re7.1.6-1.III Responding



BEHIND THE FOOTLIGHTS

How Did We Make the Show You're About to See?

Before a show can be on our stage, it needs to be written, usually by a team bringing one element to the table. Those elements and artists for *Freaky Friday* are:

1 MUSIC
The melody and rhythms of the songs, used to tell the story— either by advancing the plot or highlighting a specific character.

The music in *Freaky Friday* was written by **Tom Kitt**, who also wrote *Next to Normal*, *Bring It On: The Musical*, and *If/Then*.



If you listen to his past work, can you hear any similarities?

What do your students already know? Can they define the following terms?

- ◇ Lyrics
- ◇ Book
- ◇ Director
- ◇ Choreographer
- ◇ Music Director
- ◇ Theatrical Design
- ◇ Costume Design
- ◇ Sound Design
- ◇ Set Design
- ◇ Prop Design
- ◇ Stage Manager
- ◇ Adaptation
- ◇ Periactoids

2 LYRICS
The words of the songs, written in tandem with the music.



The lyrics were written by **Brian Yorkey**, who has collaborated with Tom Kitt on many past works, including *Next to Normal* and *If/Then*.

Do you notice any lyrical style shift from character to character?

3

BOOK

The scenes, including dialogue, monologues, and non-musical dramatic action of the play.

Bridget Carpenter wrote the book for *Freaky Friday* – though she often writes for film and TV (including “Parenthood” and “Friday Night Lights”).

How has she adjusted her writing style for music theater from a style like film or TV?



Once we get a script, we use the scripted materials combined with our own ideas and research to make a uniquely Porchlight show for you to see. We wish we could have shared all of what we had planned with you on stage, but here’s a peek at what was in store and how we got there.

4

DIRECTOR

Guides the entire production and makes choices about everything you see and hear when you come to the theater. Based on their concept, or vision, of the show all of the design decisions are made.



They work with a **Choreographer** to stage the scenes and dances throughout the show and a **Music Director** to make decisions about sound for the actors and instrumental musicians.

5

The Director also works with **THEATRICAL DESIGNERS** to create the world that you see and hear when you come to the show.



COSTUME DESIGN

Based on the overall idea from the Director, the Costume Designer decides what each character will wear and why. They then work with a team to buy or make each outfit.



Mrs. Ferrars
1:13
Brocade
Turban
Chiffon
Stripe
Collar, Bust
Sleeves
Bolton's
Underskirt
Organza
& dotted
Bodice
Sleeve cap
Underskirt
TBM
Add = cane



SOUND DESIGN

In a musical, the sound designer is very important. They make sure that the band, the soloists, the cast, and any special sounds can all be heard clearly. Sometimes they make sound effects from scratch and sometimes they work to make sure every sound is balanced.



SET DESIGN

Draws, plans, and helps to build the physical space the actors will perform on. Our designer for *Freaky Friday* had quite a task of creating several different settings that could change quickly and convey specific locations immediately.



PROP DESIGN

Everything the actors hold is designed or bought by a Prop Designer. They often work closely with the set designer to add the details that bring a place to life and make it look like the home, school, car, etc that the scene takes place in.



6

FINISH WITH ACTORS

The Director holds auditions and casts actors that not only can sing and act well, but who fit the concept of the show. For example, if the Director wanted the play to take place on the moon, they might look for actors who could move like they were wearing a spacesuit. Luckily, our show takes place in Chicago, so no need for that.

There are loads of other jobs in the theater, including **Stage Manager** (organizes and coordinates all aspects of rehearsals, performances, and design), **Fight Choreographer** (works with actors to make sure that any staged fights—with or without prop weapons—are safe for everyone), **Projection Designer** (designs any scenic elements that are projected onto the set), **Dialect Coach** (helps the actors speak in an accent other than their own. Ex. British, Southern, Australian).

For more information about careers in the arts, check out this [link](#) to great resources from the Art Career Project. *Freaky Friday* is licensed and produced with permission by Musical Theatre International. Bios adapted from author websites.

ONSTAGE

About the Artform: A History of Musical Theatre in One Minute

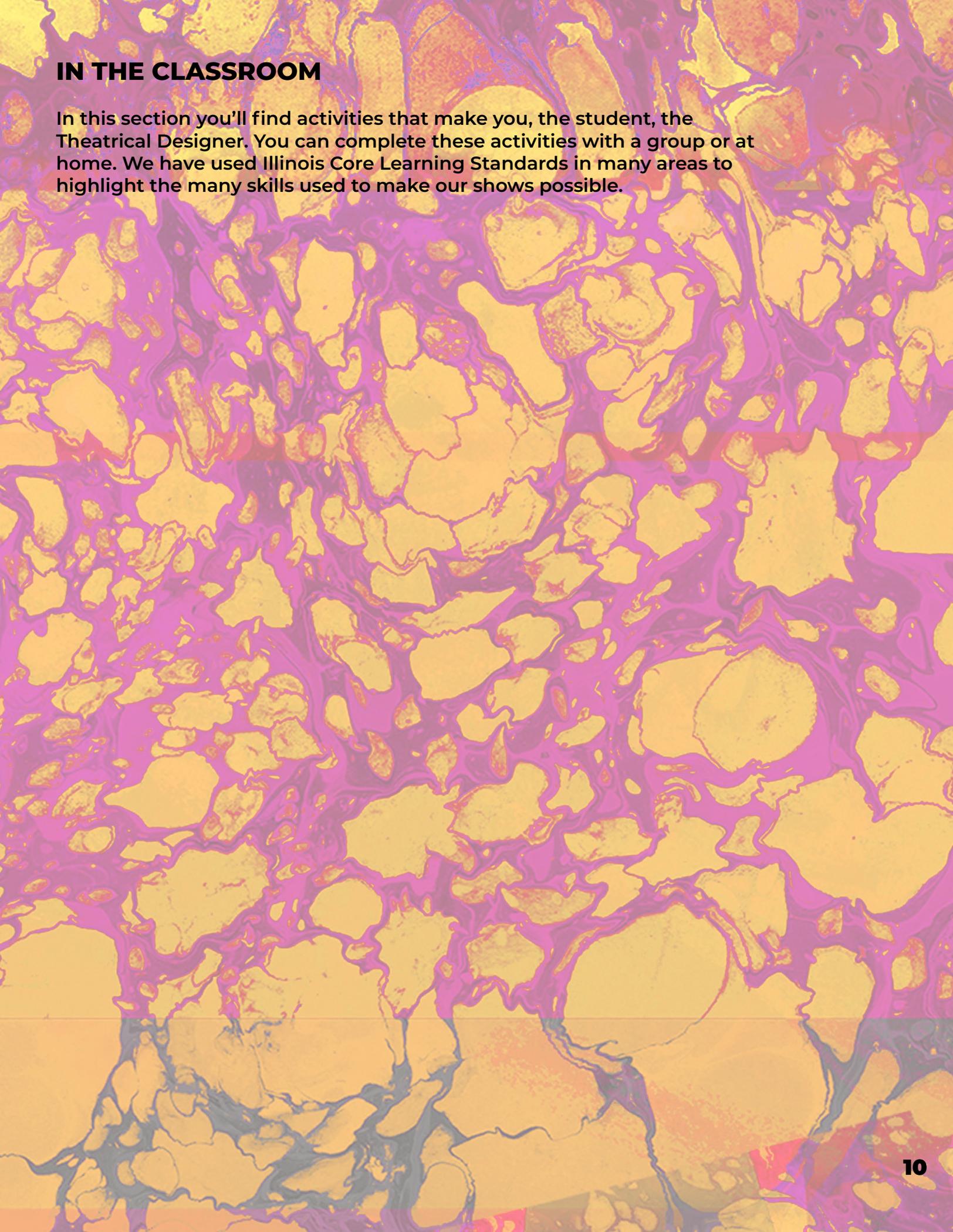
Many ancient cultures valued and practiced theater for entertainment and religious reasons, often including music. Throughout history prominent playwrights, including Shakespeare, included lyrics and music in their plays, but not as a storytelling device.

From 1910-1930 revue style shows—songs and short scenes with no story—were popular, most significantly the Ziegfeld Follies. In 1927, the musical Showboat premiered, with music by Jerome Kern and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II, and was the first piece of theatre to integrate songs and scenes into one cohesive story.

The 1940-1960s are often called “The Golden Age of Musicals” led by Rogers and Hammerstein producing such hits Oklahoma! (first show to use dance as a storytelling device and first musical to win the Pulitzer Prize), The Sound of Music, The King and I, as well as hits by Cole Porter and Irving Berlin.

Musicals continued to develop and advance, incorporating modern musical styles such as gospel and disco (The Wiz, 1974), rock (Rent, 1994), and hip hop and R&B (Hamilton, 2015). Freaky Friday features elements of classic musical theater and modern pop vocals.





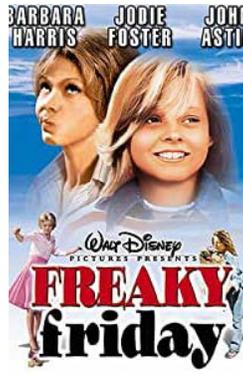
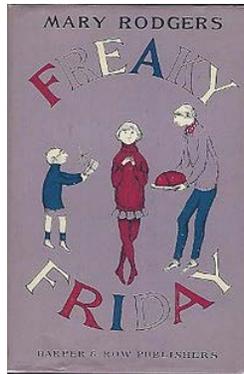
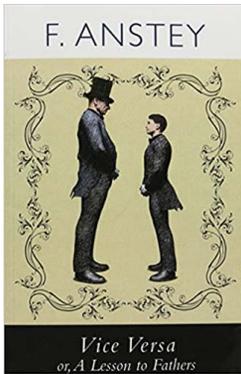
IN THE CLASSROOM

In this section you'll find activities that make you, the student, the Theatrical Designer. You can complete these activities with a group or at home. We have used Illinois Core Learning Standards in many areas to highlight the many skills used to make our shows possible.

Decade Design

Compare/Contrast Past Versions of Freaky Friday

The musical *Freaky Friday* is the latest in a long line of adaptations (reimagining of a basic story to suit a new medium (ex. book to stage play)). The original story comes from a 1972 book of the same title by Mary Rodgers, which was itself based on an 1882 novel *Vice Versa: A Lesson to Fathers* by F. Anstey. A movie adaptation starring Jodie Foster premiered in 1976 followed by a remake in 2003 starring Lindsay Lohan and Jamie Lee Curtis.



How are each of these adaptations a product of the time they were made? What would the costumes look like if any of these versions were adapted into a stage musical? Remember to base your costume ideas in research.

For this activity use the blank actor worksheet on page 13.

Engineering Periactoids

The set pieces designed for *Freaky Friday* are called Periactoids—a three sided set piece with a different setting on each side that can be rotated quickly to move between scene locations.

Design a three dimensional set piece that requires movement. Does its motion rely on engineering to function? Ex. A pulley, air pressure, friction/inertia, etc.

For this activity use the empty stage worksheet on page 14.

Missing Scene

Throughout the process of writing *Freaky Friday*, songs and scenes are written that were cut from the final production. Unlike a novel, a scene is written as individual lines with action italicised.

For example:

Ellie: Mom, seriously, there's this thing tonight—

Katherine: As in the rehearsal dinner tonight? That tonight?

Ellie: But—

Katherine: I want the whole family rested for the big day tomorrow.

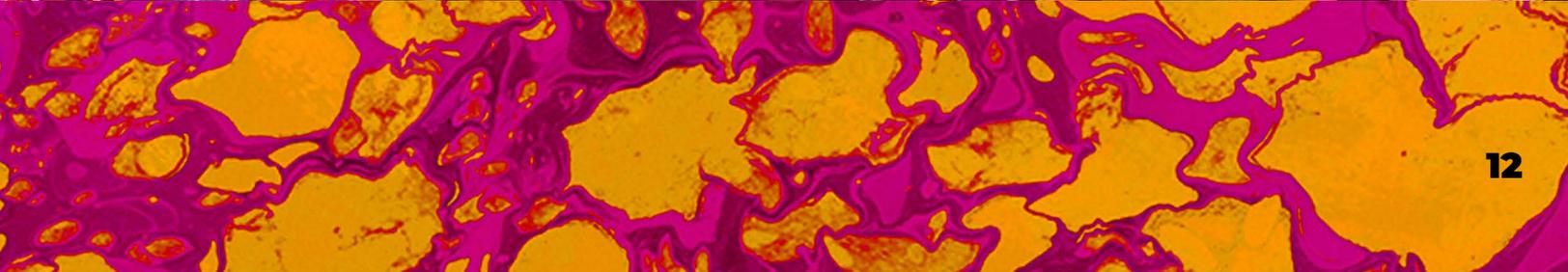
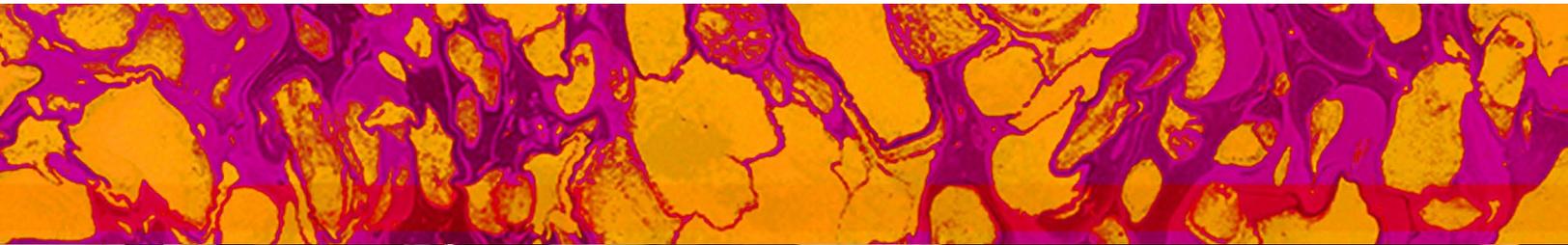
Ellie: (*under her breath*) Your big day.

Katherine: The answer is no.

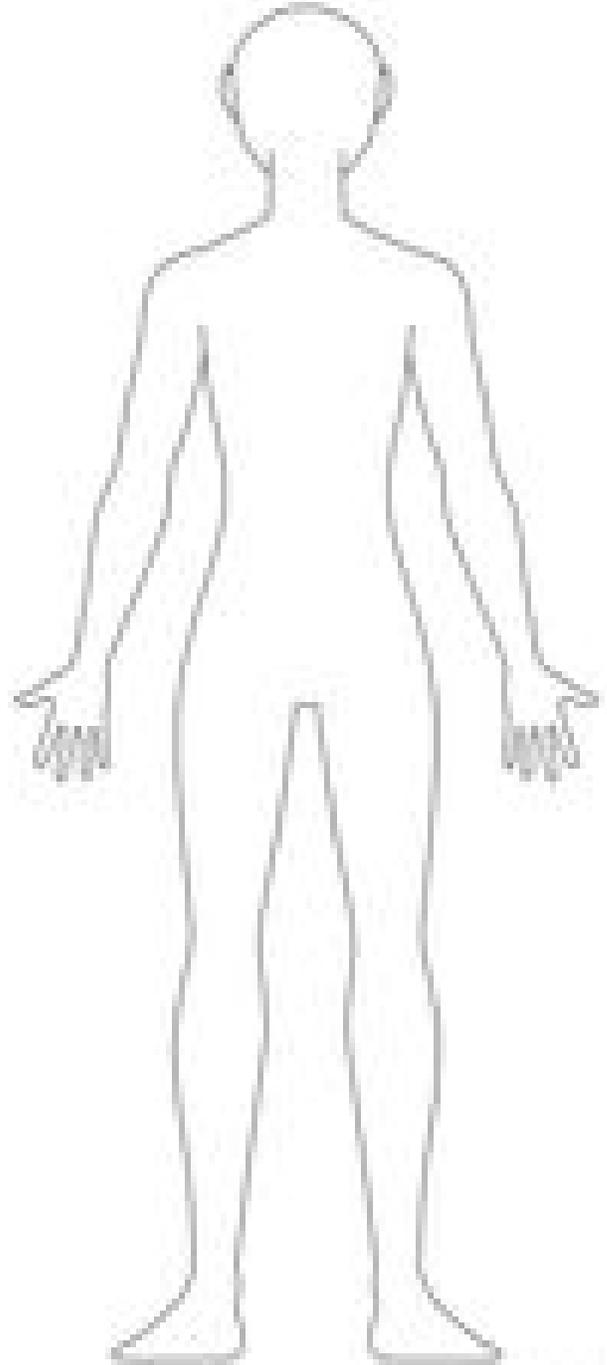
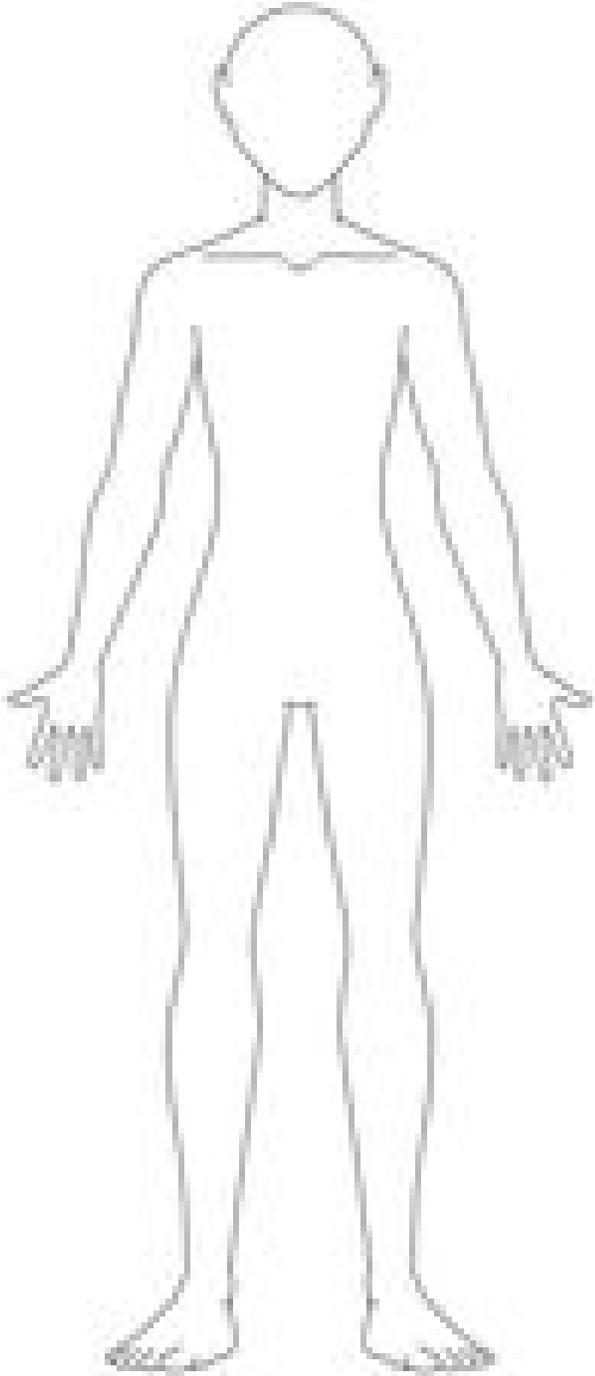
Notice that this style of writing does not need to be in full sentences and can use elements like dashes to indicate that someone has been cut off.

Imagine a scene between Ellie and Katherine Blake that was cut from the musical. What do each of the characters want and how do they try to get it?

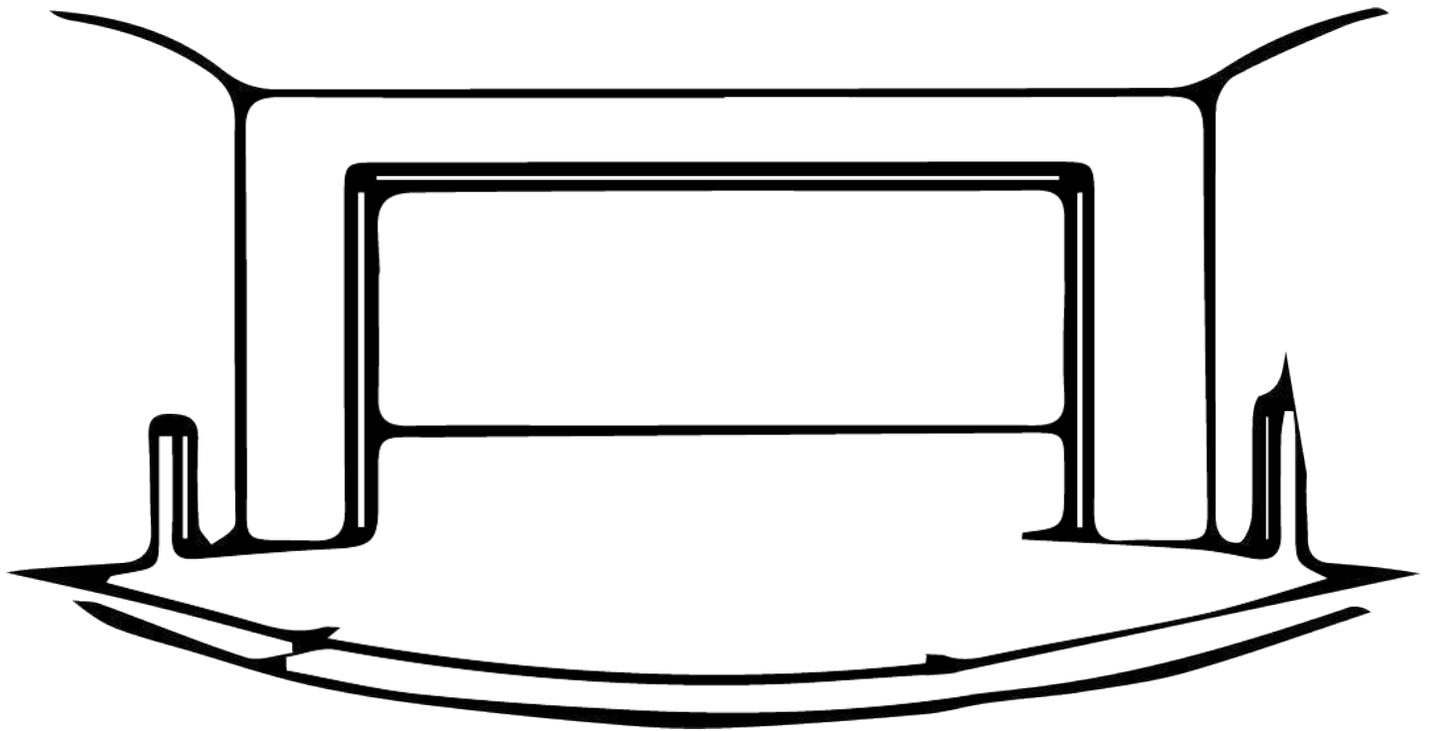
For this activity use the scene worksheet on page 15.



Use this worksheet for: *Decade Design*



Use this worksheet for: *Engineering Periactoids*



DISCUSSION/REFLECTION

Discussion Questions:

- If you were to switch bodies with a parent or adult in your life, what can you imagine you might learn about them? What would they learn about you if they walked a day in your shoes?
- Why do characters in musicals sing instead of just speaking? Were there any places that you felt there should be a song and there wasn't, or any songs that felt were in excess?
- Why is *Freaky Friday* about a mother and daughter who switch bodies and not a father and son?
- Were there any characters who identified with more than others— Ex. Ellie, Katherine, Savannah, Mike? Why do you think you understood them? Conversely, were there any characters you didn't understand? Why?

Reflecting on the performance and sharing their thoughts and takeaways is an important part of the theater going experience. We'd love to hear any takeaways from your students' experience by email or snail mail. If you have questions for specific designers or actors, we can pass those on as well.

Via email— Rebeccah@porchlightmusictheatre.org
Via Snail Mail— Porchlight Music Theatre
Rebeccah Singer- Education
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PARTNER WITH PORCHLIGHT

Porchlight offers workshops in your classroom to supplement your curriculum and enhance the theater going experience! We'll send a Teaching Artist into your classroom to lead students in exercises to write their own original theatrical work and get up and bring their stories to life.

We offer pre and post show workshops to complete a trip to see one of our mainstage productions, or we can build our custom literacy residency, Sing Out!, to support a book or area of curriculum.

For more information reach out to Rebeccah Singer, Education Director at rebeccah@porchlightmusictheatre.org



PORCHLIGHT
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Use this worksheet for: *Writing a Letter to Porchlight*



Name _____

Date _____

Dear _____,

Sincerely, _____