

Stage Notes™

A FIELD GUIDE FOR TEACHERS



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

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



Malcolm

Charlotte

Richie

Eddie

Kendra

Evan

Patrice

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13

a new musical

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Brett

Lucy

Archie

Cassie

Simon

Molly



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using the

guide and lessons

Camp Broadway® is pleased to bring you this *13* edition of StageNOTES®, the 30th in our series. We are proud to be affiliated with this musical that will debut on Broadway during the 2008 Season. This guide has been developed as a teaching tool to assist educators in the classroom who are introducing the story in conjunction with the stage production.

By using the *13* edition of StageNOTES®, you will explore discussion on a variety of topics including the definition of a coming of age ceremony (History), expansion of our vocabulary (Language Arts), illumination of the human condition (Behavioral Studies), self-exploration (Life Skills) and the encouragement of creative thinking and expression (The Arts).

The Camp Broadway creative team, consisting of theater educators, scholars, researchers and theater professionals, has developed a series of lesson plans that, although inspired by and based on the musical *13* can also accompany class study. To assist you in preparing your presentation of each lesson, we have included: an objective; excerpts taken directly from the script of *13*; a discussion topic; a writing assignment; and an interactive class activity. The reproducible lessons (handouts) accompany each lesson unit, which contains: an essay question; a creative exercise; and an “after hours activity” that encourages students to interact with family, friends, or the community at large.

The curriculum categories offered in the *13* study guide have been informed by the basic standards of education detailed in Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education, 2nd Edition, written by John S. Kendall and Robert J. Marzano (1997). This definitive compilation was published by Mid-Continent Regional Education Laboratory, Inc. (McREL) and the Association for Supervision and Curricular Development (ASCD) after a systematic collection, review and analysis of noteworthy national and state curricular documents in all subjects.

The *13* study guide is for you, the educator, in response to your need for a standards-compliant curriculum. We truly hope this study guide will help you incorporate the themes and content of *13* into your classroom lessons.



Lisa Poelle
CEO
Camp Broadway

13

a new musical

telling the

story

a new musical
13

As Evan Goldman gears up for his Bar Mitzvah, his parents go through an ugly divorce forcing him to move from New York City to Appleton, Indiana. With his big ceremony now taking place in the small town and far away from his friends, Evan is terrified that the only attendees will be his mother and her cousin Pam. When school starts, Evan realizes that he will need to make friends with Brett, the coolest kid in town and captain of the football team, in order to get people to come to his party. Unfortunately, this means excluding the only real friend he has made, his next door neighbor Patrice, because she is not in the cool crowd and would ruin his chances of joining the group. The intellectual and seemingly independent Patrice becomes very upset and let down by Evan and decides not to talk to him anymore.



Evan then encounters a nerdy kid named Archie who is terminally ill with a degenerative muscular disease. Archie persuades Evan to help him get a date with Kendra, the prettiest girl in school and Brett's soon-to-be girlfriend; by threatening that if he doesn't, Archie will show up and ruin Evan's Bar Mitzvah. At lunch Brett talks Evan into getting tickets for him and the rest of the cool kids, including Kendra and her jealous friend Lucy, to an R-rated movie so he can kiss Kendra (with tongue). Evan, at a loss for a plan, promises Archie that he will get him a seat next to Kendra at the movie if he will be the one to ask Evan's mother for the tickets. While they are getting ready for the movie, Lucy tells Kendra, out of pure jealousy, that if she kisses Brett, then she is a slut and a skank. Lucy manipulates Kendra to get closer to Brett herself. Evan, trying to smooth things over with Patrice invites her to come to the movie with him. She says that she "might" show up, but she is clearly excited about the date.

Evan thinks that everything is going as planned in the movie theater until Archie bursts down the aisle, elaborately dressed and equipped with flowers. Brett is finally working up the nerve to kiss Kendra, but at the last moment she pulls back, just as Archie leans in to kiss her as well and Archie plants a big kiss on Brett's mouth. Brett starts to go after Archie, who tells everyone that it was Evan's fault for setting up the date. Brett turns his anger towards Evan and this ruins his chances of being in the cool group. Patrice leaves the theater, also mad at Evan for not paying attention to her during their date. Alone in the arcade outside the movie theater, Evan makes the decision not to give up and to fight to make things right and succeed in his new life.

The next day at the football game, Brett's performance is suffering due to the fact that he keeps thinking about kissing Kendra. Lucy and Kendra, both cheering from the sidelines, sing to Brett. Lucy finally wins him over with her seductive song. They leave the game together upsetting Kendra. Brett's friends are jealous because Lucy takes up all of Brett's time and he never makes it to practice. Evan sees another opportunity to get back in their good graces and tells Brett that he can help win back Kendra. Archie, fearing for Evan's safety, sends Patrice to his side to make sure that Brett doesn't hurt him. Patrice and Evan sing a song about telling how they truly feel which reflects their relationship. Brett races to find Kendra, who is fighting with Lucy in the ladies room. After Brett takes back Kendra, Lucy starts a horrible rumor that Evan and Kendra are a little more than just friends.

The gossip travels like wild fire and before you know it, Brett hears the news and finds Kendra and Evan together. Kendra, who is only seeing Evan to thank him, tries to explain, but Brett doesn't believe her. Pushed to the breaking point, Evan realizes that Brett is just a big bully and, in a moment of bravery, tells Brett that he doesn't want him at his party anyway. Brett punches Evan in the nose and walks off with Lucy and the other 'cool' kids. Patrice and Archie comfort Evan and she forgives him. Evan feels like he should just cancel his Bar Mitzvah, as it won't be the perfect event he had wanted and Archie and Patrice teach him that the challenge in life is to accept things the way they are and not the way you want them to be. In a second moment of bravery, Evan kisses Patrice. Evan has his Bar Mitzvah. Patrice and Archie are there to support him as well as his parents. He speaks about what he has learned and the other kids from the school join him, singing about their year, admitting they all have 'a little more homework to do'.

Eddie

He's a little mafia

Don. It's as though he doesn't realize he's in a 4-foot body as he give orders, terrorizes the geeks and lives to serve Brett. He's a force to be reckoned with.

Lucy

Di-va! She's Paris Hilton and Bette Davis in the body of a 14-year old.

She's a predator. Queen of the school, she decides where people fit in this hierarchy. She stops at nothing to get what she wants, has more purses than scruples and lets no one get in her way.

Brett

The star athlete and the ring leader. He's a kid who gets by on popularity, looks and intimidation.

He's also scared the world will see he's insecure and vulnerable - a kid that sits alone and writes poems then burns them. Meanwhile, everyone wants to be him, kiss him, or hang with him.

Kendra

Dumb as a box of snakes,

her body has matured faster than her awareness of it. She has always been in Lucy's shadow. Church-going and God fearing - she walks the line between moral and mean.

Cassie

Great student, the leader of almost every club, an eye-on-the-prize kind of girl.

She's all about being the best she can be, loving her friends, keeping up on trends, and staying plugged in! She will someday run a major corporation, and is shopping for all the outfits now!

Richie

Stand back! Richie

is explosive, the class clown, the goofball. He's out there, everywhere, in perpetual motion. The girls love him, the boys love him; he's the school mascot, the one you count on to make you laugh.

Molly

She's better than

everyone at everything; the girl who everyone likes and is able to fit in anywhere. She loves life, loves school, loves animals - is just all love. She can go from cheerleader to soup kitchen volunteer without missing a beat or messing her hair.

Simon

He's the quiet,

unassuming kid that just wants to get by, yet finds himself in the middle of everything; the guy that can get the girls to flirt with him by just being himself. He's the guy in Brett's shadow on the team, but is always there as back-up. He's a tech savvy wizard and a quiet genius.

Charlotte

She's cool,

hip, confident, and also the girl that loves to gossip, loves to start a rumor, gets into everyone's business, then steps back to watch as all hell breaks loose. Totally textually active, she knows everything about everyone, and is the source of all school information.

Patrice She's quirky, offbeat, some might say geeky, and ready to begin her life - away from where her life is. Sensitive, playful, emotional, she's smarter than most, celebrates what makes her different, and just wants to be understood by someone she understands. When she hurts, she hurts hard. She's total chic-geek, dances to her own DJ, and has a lot of love to give. She sees people for who they are, rather than what she wants them to be.

Evan He is 13 going on 30. Smart, sarcastic, Superbad meets super Jew! His life as he knew it has been turned upside down, and he has decided to take control. He has that unique blend of optimism and angst. His fortitude and determination are admirable. He's funny, ironic, confident, sensitive, and almost ready to become the man he will soon be.



Malcolm This pint-sized, 'take no prisoners', side kick to a side kick brings a suburban-urban point of view to the world he orbits. In the chain of command, he is third, but in his mind, he is - okay, third. Still, this fast talking follower has an intimidating confidence and charm that fits well with his basic unawareness of the world around him. He is there for one reason - to serve, protect, and be influenced by Brett. Oh, and sing mean harmonies with Eddie!

Archie He makes un-cool, cool, and proves with every move that life is what you make it. No one knows it yet, but years from now, Archie will be the one that every kid remembers. Manipulative, quirky, charmingly Machiavellian, he's a kid who uses his afflictions to get what he needs. Never the victim, he knows his way around sarcasm, likes to get others to fight his battles, and for as slow as he goes, always manages to stay a step ahead of everyone.

Lyrics from the song 13

from **13**

EVAN

TWELVE YEARS OLD - EVERYTHING THAT USED TO BE GOOD AS GOLD STARTS TO CRUMBLE AND CRACK. PRESSURE MOUNTS: ONCE IT WAS A JOKE, NOW IT REALLY COUNTS AND THERE'S NO TURNING BACK. LIFE GOES WRONG; SUDDENLY THEY'RE YELLING 'CAUSE YOUR HAIR'S TOO LONG OR YOUR ROOM ISN'T CLEAN. ROLL ALONG: EVERY CONVERSATION IS ANOTHER LOST CAUSE OR A LIST OF MY FLAWS AND I'M JUST ABOUT TO TURN, JUST ABOUT TO TURN, GOD, I'M GONNA TURN...

EVAN and KIDS

THIRTEEN!

RICHIE

I WANT A DIRT BIKE!

KIDS

THIRTEEN!

LUCY

I WANT TO KILL MY MA.

KIDS

THIRTEEN!

EDDIE

I WANT A MUSTACHE!

ONE GROUP ANOTHER GROUP THIRTEEN! SOMETHING IS COMIN'! THIRTEEN! SOMETHING IS GOIN' UP! THIRTEEN! SOMETHING IS HUMMIN'! THIRTEEN! SOMEBODY'S GROWIN' UP!

ALL

THIRTEEN!
THIRTEEN!

(CASSIE responds)
THIRTEEN!

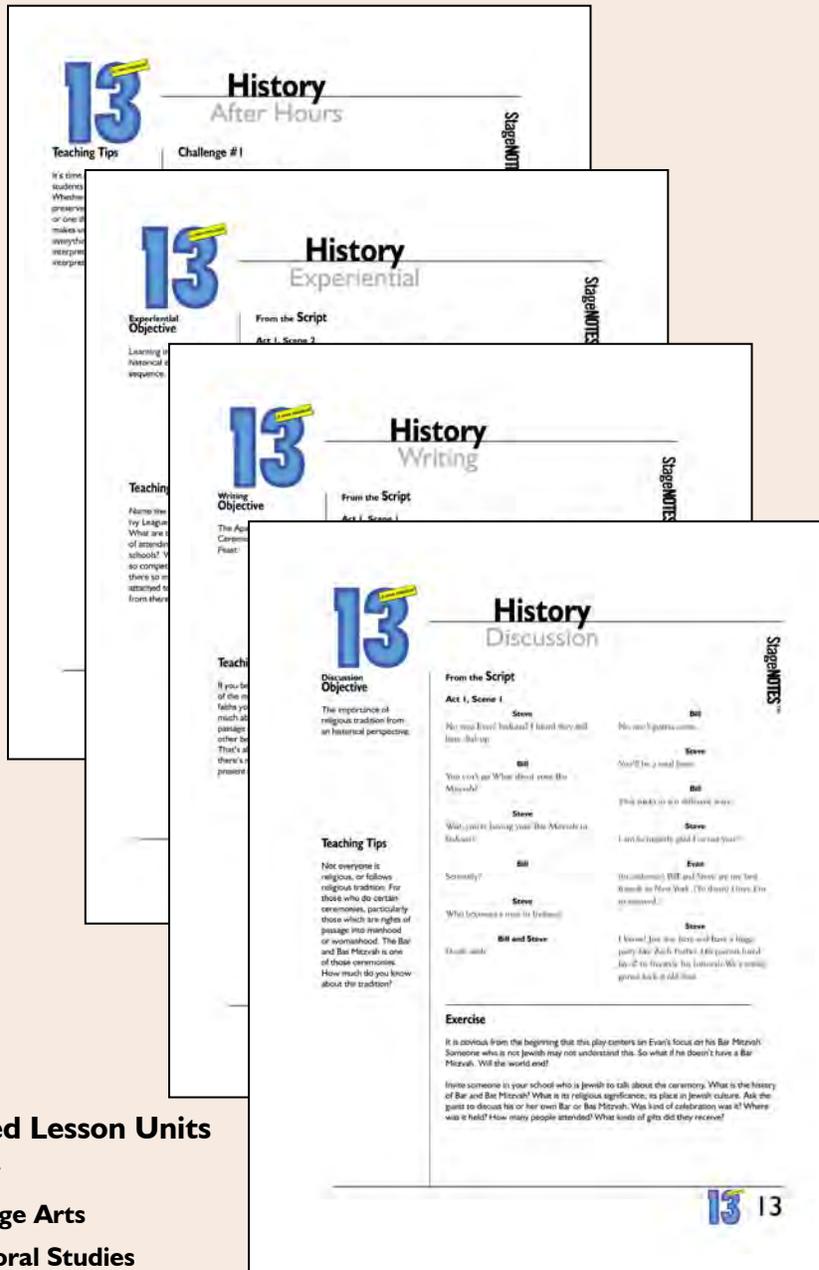
(MALCOLM adds on)
THIRTEEN!

(CHARLOTTE yells back)

THE BEST AND THE WORST AND THE MOST AND THE LEAST AND THE CRAZY AND THE SCARY AND WE'RE JUST ABOUT TO TURN THIRTEEN!

using the

lessons



Featured Lesson Units

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

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

Discussion:

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

Writing:

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

Experiential:

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

A take-home “After Hours” lesson

Each StageNOTES™ lesson generally includes the following components:

Objective:

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

From the script:

An excerpt or situation from the script of 13 to help “set the stage” for the activity that follows.

Exercise:

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

Teaching Tips:

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

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

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

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

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

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

By the 1850s, the wealthier audiences were no longer looking for a full evening's entertainment. Curtain time was pushed back to eight o'clock (for the convenience of patrons arriving from dinner); only one play would be presented, instead of four or five, freeing the audience for other social activities afterward. Matinee (afternoon) performances were not given regularly until the 1870s, allowing society

ladies, who would not have ventured out late at night, the opportunity to attend the theater.

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

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

Being a Good Audience

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

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

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

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

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



overture to

history

Coming of Age in Today's World

“The real voyage of discovery consists not of seeking new lands but in seeing with new eyes.”

Children are born. Adults are created. From the moment we come into the world, our lives are shaped through what we eat, how we are cared for and how we react to those around us. Through the situations we experience, we form a set of values that will hopefully guide us through the rest of our years. Upon achieving this knowledge, it is only then that

society extends a full cultural membership into what is known as adulthood.

ceremony, holding the belief that unfamiliar rites are suspect. For this reason, most Coming of Age ceremonies exist in religious communities.

Evan's *Bar Mitzvah* is one such ceremony. In Judaism, males celebrate their *Bar Mitzvah* at the age of 13 while girls celebrate their *Bat Mitzvah* at the age of 12. Upon reaching these ages, boys and girls are responsible for following the Jewish commandments. The *Bar Mitzvah* ceremony signifies that a boy has become a man and assumes the actions corresponding to manhood in the Jewish faith. These actions include the right to lead religious services, to be counted as a *minyan* (a quota of men needed to perform certain parts of a religious service), to form binding contracts, to testify before the religious courts and to marry.

Summary of Standard for Historical Understanding

1. Understanding and analyzing chronological relationships and patterns:

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

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

2. Understanding the historical perspective:

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

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

▪ Perceive past events with historical empathy.

▪ Evaluate credibility and authenticity of historical sources.

▪ Evaluate the validity and credibility of different historical interpretations.

Any ritual accompanying this entrance into adulthood is known as a Coming of Age ceremony. These ceremonies have existed in societies for centuries and signify a person's acceptance in to a larger universe. Presently, these rituals have become largely symbolic accompanying such milestones as graduation, marriage or death. Perhaps this is because much of modern society frowns upon



Just like Evan in 13, he must learn to chant the *haftorah* as part of his *Bar Mitzvah* ceremony. The *haftorah* is a short selection from the Prophets read on every Sabbath in a Jewish synagogue following a reading from the Torah. Although it has become common practice for a *Bar Mitzvah* to include an elaborate party, this is a modern ritual. Previously, boys who reached the age of 13 automatically became a *Bar Mitzvah* with no ceremony necessary.



Judaism is not the only religion to incorporate a rite of passage into its structure. Catholicism believes that the practice of Confirmation completes a person's initiation into the Christian community. Upon the completion of religious studies, the confirmand is blessed by a priest or bishop and accepted as a full member of the Catholic Church. A fully initiated Catholic may perform certain church duties such as a lector who reads scriptures, a minister to the sick or a Confirmation sponsor.

The females of the Apache Indians undergo a four-day ceremony known as the Apache Sunrise Ceremony or *Na'ii'ees*. Beginning on a Friday and ending on a Monday, it is considered by the Apaches as one of the most important events in a female's life signifying her entrance into Apache womanhood. The ceremony consists of painting a girls' skin with a mixture of pollen and clay, which cannot be removed until the completion of the ceremony for the girls cannot touch water. Water for drinking purposes must be sipped through a reed provided by the medicine man. Girls must pray and dance for hours, sit with their backs completely straight and conduct physically grueling activities. Taught the spirit and characteristics of the first Apache woman named White Painted Woman, the girls learn self-esteem, dignity and confidence. Completion of the ceremony includes praying towards the east at dawn and in the four cardinal directions representing the four stages of an Apache's life.



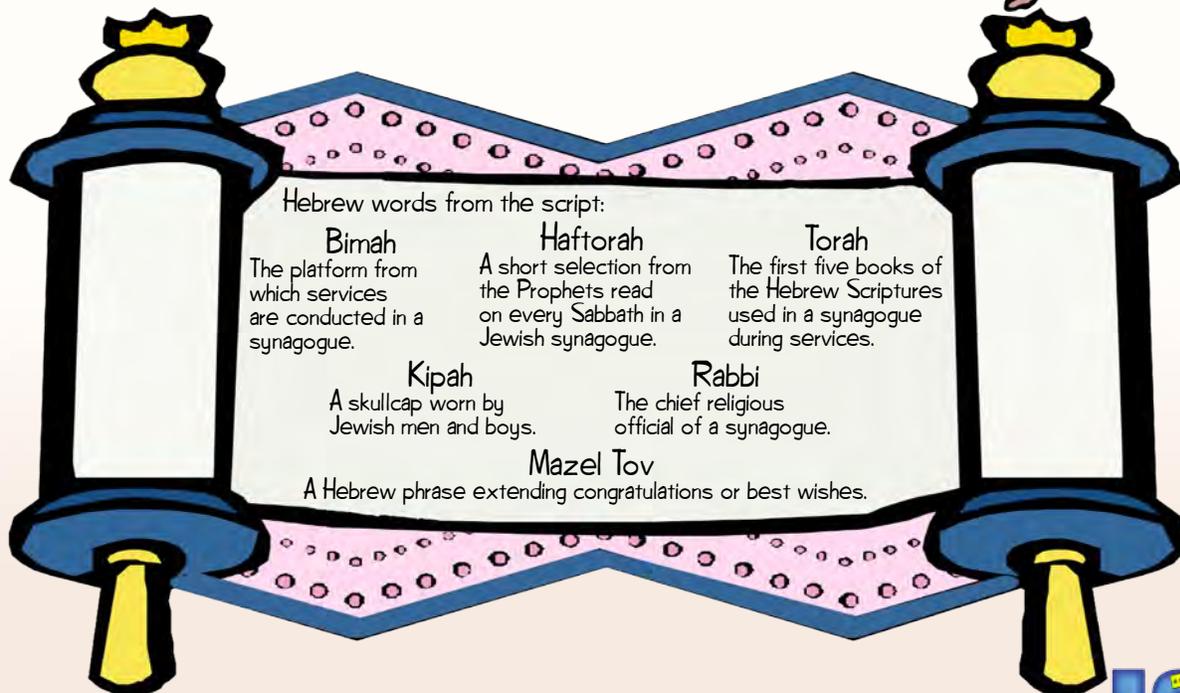
In many Spanish speaking countries the celebration of a young girl's journey from childhood to maturity is called *Quinceañera*. Similar to the Jewish *Bat Mitzvah*, the celebration begins with a religious ceremony and ends with a celebration. Among the many rituals performed during the celebration includes the Changing of the Shoes. During this observance, the father of the girl or her favorite male relative symbolically changes her shoes from flats to high heels signifying her transformation from little girl to young lady.



Boys and girls of the Amish community experience *Rumspringa*. Derived from the Pennsylvania Dutch word for "running around", Amish children turning 16 years of age are free to experience life beyond their community. After years of seclusion, they are allowed to live outside of the strict ethics code normally carried out by the Amish and conduct activities like shopping at a mall, watching television and going to unsupervised parties. It is hoped by the Amish elders that after sampling life outside of the Amish culture, they will happily return to the church. Some return while others do not. Those that do not return are shunned by the Amish community and never spoken to again.



In secular societies, the majority of existing rites of passage such as birthday celebrations or retirement are mainly ceremonial. While ceremonies provide the illusion of adulthood, it isn't one or a series of rituals that creates an adult. Adulthood is achieved through a variety of life experiences. It's not the parties that determine adulthood but more the life experiences combined with age that truly determine whether an individual has achieved adulthood.



Discussion Objective

The importance of religious tradition from an historical perspective.

Teaching Tips

Not everyone is religious, or follows religious tradition. For those who do certain ceremonies, particularly those which are rights of passage into manhood or womanhood. The Bar and Bat Mitzvah is one of those ceremonies. How much do you know about the tradition?

History

Discussion

From the Script

Act I, Scene I

Boy 1

Hey Evan, you've got to have a major party!

Boy 2

Oh! Like Zach Farber!

Boy 1

I heard his dad is hiring Jay-Z to free style over his Haftorah. We iz totally gonna kick it old shul!

Evan

I don't care how much my parents hate each other. If they don't cash in a 401K, and hire Israeli fighter jets to sky write "Mazel tov, Evan!" across the Upper West Side, my life is totally ruined!

Exercise

It is obvious from the beginning that this play centers on Evan's focus on his Bar Mitzvah. Someone who is not Jewish may not understand this. So what if he doesn't have a Bar Mitzvah. Will the world end?

Invite someone in your school who is Jewish to talk about the ceremony. What is the history of Bar and Bat Mitzvah? What is its religious significance; its place in Jewish culture? Ask the guest to discuss his or her own Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Was kind of celebration was it? Where was it held? How many people attended? What kinds of gifts did they receive?

Writing Objective

The Apache Sunrise Ceremony—A Moveable Feast

Teaching Tips

If you belong to one of the more traditional faiths you may not know much about rites of passage connected to other belief systems. That's all right. However, there's no time like the present to learn.

History Writing

From the Script

Act I, Scene I

Steve and Bill keep harping on the fact he can not have his Bar Mitzvah in Indiana.

Evan

The thing is, my mom's all alone. My Dad's got the stewardess, "U.S. Airhead," but mom's got me, so I had to move here. Or, as she put it: "it's your decision", which is Jewish for "you're coming with me!" Now I have to have the Bar Mitzvah I've been planning forever, in Appleton, Indiana!!

Patrice

If it's so awful, just don't have it.

Evan

You don't understand. This is the one amazing day in your life when everything gets to be happy and perfect.

Patrice

See, Catholics don't have that day. It would be against everything we believe in.

Evan

How hot your party is sets up your entire social standing. Who you'll hang with, and won't. So I need this part to be the best! The best DJ in the best ballroom at the best hotel....

Patrice

...which is the Best Western

Evan

Really? That's my only option?

Patrice

Oh wait, I know the perfect place!

Evan

Where?

Patrice

New York.

Exercise

Evan is devastated about having his Bar Mitzvah in Indiana. His friends Steve and Bill find it all unfathomable—impossible. Yet in other traditions, location is not important. It's the ceremony that counts. Apaches, for instance, hold their Apache Sunrise Ceremony anywhere they happen to be—even on reservations. One might think a reservation, a symbol of their subjugation, would be unacceptable. But they have it there nonetheless.

Research the Apache Sunrise Ceremony online. Be sure to visit all of the sites featuring information on the ceremonies conducted in various places. Keep a cultural log. Divide the log into sections for each individual ceremony that you found. Begin the log with a general description of the Sunrise Ceremony and its historical significance to the tribe. Then begin filling out the sections with information on the various ceremonies conducted. Include quotes, details and as much information as you can find. If possible, explain why the ceremony was held in that particular location.

Experiential Objective

Attend a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, Confirmation, or other religious rite of passage ceremony

Teaching Tips

Discussing a ceremony that has been around for centuries is one thing. To actually participate in it gives us an understanding beyond simple explanation. Participation requires emotional response. Emotion is at the core of most religious ceremonies.

History

Experiential

From the Script

All the KIDS open their invitations, but can't figure out how to read "Bar Mitzvah".

Brett

A bra what?

Eddie

Like, okay, so, what is a Barf Matzah anyway?

Lucy

It's this weird Jewish thing where they make you talk backwards and everyone gets circumcised.

Exercise

The above excerpt is an extreme example of ignorance of the faiths and practices of others. Attending a religious ceremony can be a very enlightening and interesting experience.

Ask around to see who may be participating in a rite of passage ceremony. Without being rude, invite yourself. Take someone with you who is familiar with the rite and can explain things as you go along. Take particular note of historical implications and significance relevant to the religion.

Teaching Tips

It's time to allow students to question. Whether it's an ideal preserved by generations or one that simply makes us feel good, everything is subject to interpretation. Let them interpret.

History

After Hours

Challenge #1

American as Apple Pie

The musical does not present Appleton, Indiana as a very attractive place. It is portrayed as “flat and brown” with narrow-minded people, only interested in sports, cheerleading and going around with the popular people. Characters are petty and, while friendly at first, do not seem to gel with the image of idyllic middle-American towns as welcoming places with Fourth of July parades and good old-fashioned values. The “real” America, as some prefer to see it--is the kind of town featured in Thornton Wilder’s *Our Town*, and in the paintings of Norman Rockwell.

Watch the play *Our Town* on DVD. Look up the paintings of Norman Rockwell online. Now get your own impression. Adopt a small town anywhere with less than 10,000 in population. Research its history. Start at its very beginnings through today. Get all the information you can. Call the town hall. See if you can find a local historian. Interview them by e-mail. Talk to local officials, to the police. Gather all the information you can from holiday festivals to crime statistics. What do you think about this town? Does it meet your standards as the perfect All-American community?

Challenge #2

How About This For An Idea?

Choose a right of passage ceremony other than the ones mentioned in the lessons. Write an essay on your choice. Include opinions on how you feel about right of passage in general. Do you think it is a silly custom or a tradition worth preserving? How important is it to define exactly when a person is considered a man or a woman? From your research on your choice, say how you think this whole idea got started.

At the end, propose a new rite of passage ceremony for your generation.

overture to

language arts

Gossip Girl and Gossip Boy

There's no way around it! We love to gossip and whether we admit it or not, we all do it. It feels powerful to be the first to know a piece of information about a person or thing and control how the information is being used and where it will go. Rumors are often incorporated into gossip and although similar in nature, the fact is that gossip and rumor are different. Rumor is

defined as a piece of unconfirmed information circulating from person to person from no known reliable source pertaining to an object, event, or issue in public concern. Gossip, on the other hand, is talk circulated about the personal and private affairs of a particular person. In both instances, information is generally unsubstantiated.



Summary of Standard for Language Arts

Writing

- Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies of the writing process
- Demonstrates competence in rewriting, drafting and revising, editing and publishing
- Demonstrates competence in the stylistic and rhetorical aspects of writing
- Uses grammatical and mechanical conventions in written compositions
- Gathers and uses information for research purposes

Reading

- Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies of the reading process
- Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies for reading a variety of literary texts
- Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies for reading a variety of informational texts

Listening and Speaking

- Demonstrates competence in speaking and listening as tools for learning

The term gossip, in spite of its inherently negative connotation, has played a key part in the evolution of human intelligence and social life. Gossip allows those that participate in it to establish a bond within a particular social circle. This group shares a common interest through the subject being discussed. Gossip can serve as a road map for how to behave socially. It clarifies life's unwritten rules because it discusses topics and information one wouldn't normally discuss or read about. The very act of gossiping allows inclusion into a larger group eliminating isolation. Gossiping helps us to establish, develop and maintain relationships; to bond with other members of our social circle; to assess and manage reputations; to resolve conflicts; to win friends and influence people.

The negatives of gossip far outweigh the positives. Gossip, in its purest form, involves spreading lies and half-truths that can have a life altering impact on an individual. Those who spread gossip are generally insecure. They are often jealous individuals who find satisfaction in spreading stories that will give them an appearance of being "in the know".

As is the case with Lucy in *13*, gossip plays a key role in her effort to win back Brett. Lucy uses the act of gossip as a weapon to drive a wedge between Kendra and Brett by telling her friends that Kendra and Evan seem as though they are a lot more than just friends. Furiously she makes phone calls to the other girls spreading the tale and changing the origins of the gossip. Soon the story takes on a life of its own allowing Lucy to continue her manipulation of the situation.

The gossip circulates through both the boys and the girls of Dan Quayle Junior High School equally. Studies have shown that both males and females enjoy gossip. While gossip regarding women tends to focus on looks, gossip about men centers more on wealth and status.

It takes a strong individual to hold fast to the decision to not be involved with gossip. By steering clear of gossip and the circles it involves, a clear message is sent to the gossipers that what they are doing is unacceptable. In refraining from taking part in furthering gossip, the gossipers' audience is diminished reducing the effects of his or her story. The best retaliation against gossip is silence for once the gossipers lose his or her power, the gossip loses its power as well.



13 a new musical

Discussion Objective

Gossip and Rumor—
The destructive power of words.

Teaching Tips

We read gossip columns and see it as innocent fun. What are our favorite stars up to? Who's doing what? Gossip writers make a lot of money exposing the private lives of others. But is this right?

Language Arts

Discussion

StagenOTES™

From the Script

Students at the school react to the rumor that Evan and Kendra are a couple and wonder what Brett, Kendra's boyfriend would do if he found out.

Cassie, Charlotte and Molly

HOLY MACK-A-ROLY, OH, IT CAN'T BE TRUE!
NO, YOU CAN'T REPEAT A SINGLE WORD I'M TELLING YOU!
AND OH, CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT BRETT WOULD DO
IF HE HEARD THAT KIND OF A RUMOR?

Exercise

Lucy, who has a crush on Brett, starts a rumor that Evan is meeting secretly with Kendra. She does this so that Brett will become angry, break up with Kendra and become her boyfriend.

People who want to believe things often do. Some people find the spreading of such stories exciting, especially in places where there's not much going on in the first place—places like Appleton, Indiana. Gossip and rumors in such an environment can be a form of entertainment. However, what we say, true or not, can hurt others.

Ask students to think of a time when someone has spread a rumor about them. Or think of a situation they know of when someone has spread a rumor about a friend or someone they know. Without naming names or specifics, what were the results? Did someone get hurt? Should people check on the facts before telling others. What about not telling others at all, even if the rumor is true? Think of all the reasons why that would be a better option.

Writing Objective

Write a ballad.

Language Arts

Writing

From the Script

Evan tells the audience about his life and woes at 13.

Evan

JUST ANOTHER COOL KID IN N.Y.C.,
NEAR THE PARK AND THE MET.
LIFE IS SWEET:
YANKEES IN THE BRONX, PRETZELS ON THE STREET –
JUST HOW GOOD CAN IT GET?
WHO'D HAVE GUESSED
DAD WOULD MEET A STEWARDESS?
MOM'S DEPRESSED,
AND HER LAWYERS ARE MEAN.
NOW I'M STRESSED –
MOM JUST STARTED PACKING
AND SHE SAID WE'VE GOTTA GO.
LEAVING EVERYONE I KNOW,
AND I'M JUST ABOUT TO TURN,
JUST ABOUT TO TURN,
JUST ABOUT TO TURN...

Evan and Kids

THIRTEEN!

Exercise

A ballad is a poem usually set to music. When you find out about ballads, you will see that the excerpt printed above falls into that category.

In the old days, ballads (known as broadsheet ballads) were printed and sold on the streets of England from the 16th century. Topical and often humorous, they sang about the exploits of heroes such as Robin Hood and the trials of everyday people. New ballads told the tale of fires and catastrophic events making them the forerunners of newspapers.

Go online and study as many ballads as you can. One modern ballad recommended is by the country singer, Johnny Cash, called "Ballad of a Teenage Queen". This a good example of a modern ballad.

First write a paper on the history of the ballad. Then write your own ballad on becoming 13.

13 a new musical

Experiential Objective

Having fun with derogatory repartee.

Teaching Tips

We'll play this one for fun, while hopefully learning a lesson or two about repartee and how the author uses it in *13*.

Language Arts

Experiential

From the Script

Kendra and Lucy confront each other about who Brett really cares about.

Lucy
We're not friends now Kendra so I can be honest. Brett's over you.

Kendra
You're Lying!

Lucy
It's what he told me when his tongue was in my ear.

Kendra
Are you sure he wasn't trying to push you away?

Lucy
I won. You lost. I'm hotter.

Kendra
I'm going to get even with you, Lucy.

Lucy
Yeah? How?

Kendra
Oh no. Don't try to confuse me with trick questions.

Lucy
Brett's mine! Deal with it!

Kendra
You'd climb over anyone to get what you wanted.

Lucy
And you'd climb over a glass wall to see what was on the other side!

Kendra
I'm gonna pray for you. Slut!

Lucy
Virgin Slut!

Kendra
Fugly!

Lucy
Skankly!

Exercise

Repartee—(noun)

a quick, witty reply; conversation full of such replies; skill in making such replies

Listening to this immature repartee between Kendra and Lucy is reminiscent of an old Jerry Lewis movie from the 1950s. In it, he confronts another character. Frustrated, he sings the song with these comical lyrics: *You crumb, you scum, you vaaa-cu-um*.

Repartee, however, does not have to involve negative comments such as those in the excerpt. It can simply be a quick witty back and forth between two people who are, as they say, quick on their feet when it comes to responses.

Make sure the class reads the excerpt above before beginning the exercise.

Divide the class into pairs. Have each pair think of a topic which they can discuss back and forth in short responses. The pair decides who will begin. After the first statement, the other person has a minute to come up with a witty retort until one or the other fails to think of one. When the exercise is over, ask the class if they think repartee between two people is a difficult activity.



Teaching Tips

Stories can be told in many different ways. Ballads are just one of them. We don't hear much about ballads these days, probably because we now get our news about events in other ways. Ballads, however, are a much more literate and creative way to see that stories get told.

Language Arts

After Hours

Challenge #1

That's An Odd Way To Say That!

In Evan's lament on becoming 13 the characters tell him to "Hold Your Horses."

The term is an idiom, an expression whose meaning makes no literal sense based on the words used. Kick the Bucket is another example. There are hundreds more.

How many can you think of?

Idioms can be the most daunting part of learning another language. Research ten widely-used idioms in French, Spanish and German. Share them with your class. Make sure you read them first in the other language, then translate.

Challenge #2

That's An Odd Way To Say That!

One or more toasts are often a central part of the ceremonial meal that follows the Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Go online and find some funny ones. Pick the one you like best and read it to your family at dinner or to a gathering of your friends.

overture to

life skills

Teens Making A Difference In Our World

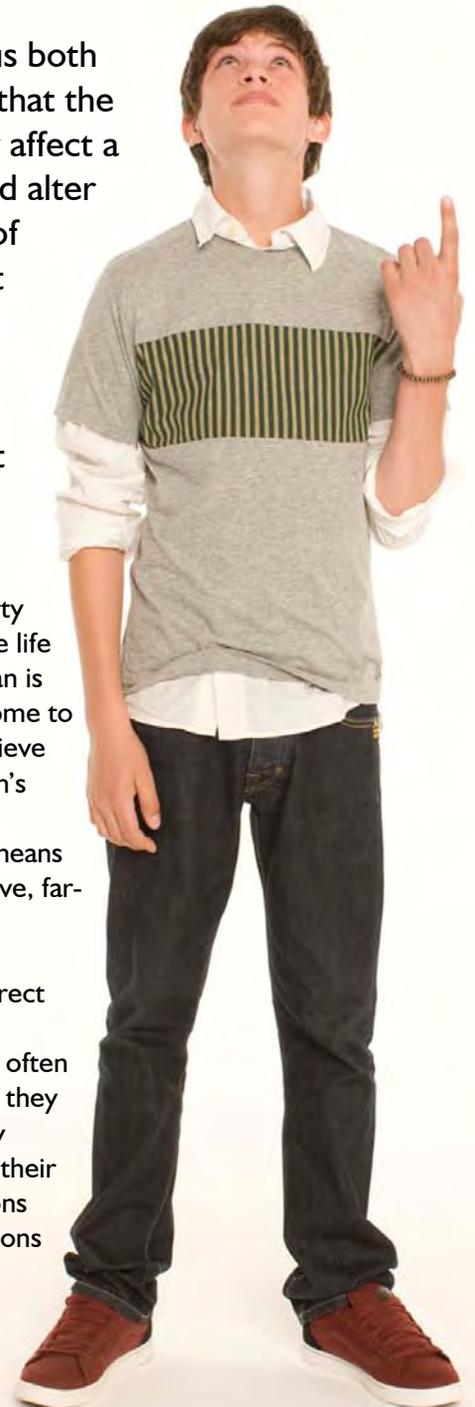


One's actions can have a ripple effect on those around us both positively and negatively. The Butterfly Effect suggests that the minuscule act of a butterfly's wings flapping can possibly affect a

change in the atmosphere that could alter weather patterns such as the path of a tornado or maybe even prevent it altogether. The consideration that a chain of events can take place stemming from one small action is staggering. The outcome can affect the world.

In *13*, Evan's Bar Mitzvah looms in his future. He must deal with the possibility that the party that he has been looking forward to his entire life may not turn out the way he had hoped. Evan is determined to convince the "cool" kids to come to his party and will do whatever it takes to achieve this. Through the course of the musical, Evan's actions move him closer to his goal. What he doesn't realize is that to achieve this dream means doing things that could ultimately have negative, far-reaching effects on those around him.

The realization that our actions can have a direct effect on the world around us is one that can happen at any age. Although adults are most often equipped to affect positive change for causes they believe in, age isn't always a hindrance. Many teenagers and pre-teens seeing a problem in their world have been able to establish organizations that offer assistance and solutions. Their actions may have originally been designed to fill a specific need in a particular community but some have taken their efforts beyond their community's borders to help an even larger population.



Summary of Standard for Life Skills

Thinking and Reasoning

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

Working With Others

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

Self-Regulation

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

Life Work

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



Dan and Betsy Nally

In 1996, Dan and Betsy Nally, ages 9 and 6 respectively, were moved by a television news story regarding the Greater Boston Food Bank and its need for an additional 5,000 turkeys for Thanksgiving. Believing that no family should be without a turkey for Thanksgiving, the brother and sister team set out to find stores and businesses that would be willing to donate turkeys to the cause. They were able to deliver 36 turkeys to the Greater Boston Food Bank. Since the first year, the Nallys have received national media attention greatly increasing the donations received each year. Enlisting the help of such corporations as Perdue Farms, Inc. and BJ's Wholesale Club, their national organization called Turkeys 4 America continues to provide families in need with a turkey for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Mimi Ausland

Mimi Ausland, age 12 wanted to help and feed the dogs living at her local animal shelter. Upon securing a corporate sponsor, Mimi created freekibble.com. The web site features a canine question of the day. Visitors to the site can answer the question and whether their answer is correct or incorrect, 20 pieces of kibble are automatically donated to the Humane Society of Central Oregon. In the first five weeks since going live on April 1, 2008, freekibble.com generated over 210,000 pieces of kibble providing a single day's food for 560 dogs. Donations have reached two and a half million with no signs of stopping. Efforts continue to further the reach of freekibble.com to include shelters in other states.



Craig Kielburger

At only 12 years old, Craig Kielburger read an article in his local paper concerning a young boy from Pakistan being held captive and used as slave labor. Realizing that there were children in the world who were being exploited, Craig and eleven of his friends set out to fight child labor practices creating the organization Free the Children. Only a year later, Craig made a trip to South Asia to learn about the epidemic of global child rights abuses and brought the issue of child labor to a global stage. Today, Free the Children thrives as a global organization that provides education for children in need creating empowered individuals and assisting in breaking the cycle of poverty that many live in, day to day.

Alex Scott

At the young age of 4, Alexandra "Alex" Scott was diagnosed with cancer. Alex decided to do something that would help to raise money for cancer research. She opened her first lemonade stand in July of 2000 donating the money she collected to what she referred to as "her hospital". Despite her increasingly poor health, Alex continued to open her lemonade stand in her front yard annually until her death in 2004 at the age of 8. In 4 years, she managed to raise over \$1 million for cancer research. Her legacy continues in the Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, which has raised over \$20 million for childhood cancer research throughout the country.



The extraordinary young people mentioned achieved life-changing results stemming from a basic idea. Although their achievements may be considered extreme examples of what can be accomplished by teens and pre-teens, the Butterfly Effect can be felt from actions on a far lesser scale. Whether it's volunteering at a nursing home or giving time to a local organization, people of any age can affect change that not only benefits the greater community but also instills a sense of pride and accomplishment in the person providing their time. The smallest of efforts can often create the largest of changes.

13 a new musical

Discussion Objective

Does adapting mean giving up your principles?

Teaching Tips

What do you know or think you know about being a parent? Should people who want to become parents be required to take classes? Does having children necessarily mean you will be a good parent? The answer is obvious. No! We see evidence of that all around us.

Life Skills

Discussion

From the Script

Evan and the kids sing about being 13.

Evan and Kids

EVERYTHING TURNS AROUND. THIRTEEN!
END UP IN STITCHES, THIRTEEN!
HIDE AWAY UNDERGROUND. THIRTEEN!
CAN I GET THROUGH IT? THIRTEEN!
LIFE HAS CHANGED OVERNIGHT! THIRTEEN!
HOW DO I DO IT? THIRTEEN!
I BETTER GET IT RIGHT!

Evan and Kids

THE BEST AND THE WORST
AND THE MOST AND THE LEAST
AND THE CRAZY AND THE SCARY
AND I'M STANDING ON THE EDGE!...

YES, THIS PLACE IS FLAT AND BROWN,
BUT I COULD LEARN TO LIKE THIS TOWN!
I'VE GOT A FEELING
I'M GONNA BE JUST FINE.

Exercise

At some time in our lives all of us must adapt to new or changing situations. The famous Darwinian quote insists, "Adapt or die." While hopefully we'll never be faced with that dire option, it is to our benefit and ultimate happiness in life to adjust to changing circumstances.

Evan must adapt to his new living situation. He does so pretty well. Unfortunately, he also finds himself in a constant state of trying to adapt to the whims of others in the interests of making and keeping friends.

Tell the class to place themselves in Evan's situation. Discuss how they might handle the pressures of not only adapting to a completely new living environment, but also to the pressures of negotiating a new social group whose expectations are unknown.

Have students new to your district share with the class their experiences in adapting to their new environment. You can also ask any students who has ever moved to share theirs as well.

Writing Objective

Making life's hard choices.

Teaching Tips

Choices are just that. They are the opportunities to do one thing or another. What we decide to do often depends on what we see as a positive outcome. Sometimes, however, a choice we may see as the right one does not produce the desired effect. These choices can be difficult.

Life Skills

Writing

From the Script

The group says they'll go to Evan's Bar Mitzvah. When they find out Patrice is invited they tell him if she goes, they won't.

Lucy

Hold on. Is she coming?

Malcolm

And if we don't go... we don't go. Get it?

Evan

Patrice?

Brett

Well, which is it? Us, or her...

Lucy

Cause if she goes, we're so snubbing.

Evan

I'VE GOT ONE DAY IN OCTOBER
AND IF I DON'T GET IT DOWN,
THEN IT'S ONE MORE HUGE DISASTER,
LIKE MY PARENTS, LIKE THIS TOWN.
I'VE GOT ONE DAY IN OCTOBER...
I CAN MAKE IT TO OCTOBER...
BUT IT'S REALLY GOTTA BE THE
PERFECT PARTY.
THE PERFECT PARTY!

Evan

Come on. What's wrong with Patrice?...

Lucy

...If God wanted me to hang out with losers, he would have made me ugly.

Eddie

And if they don't go. We don't go. Get it?

Exercise

Evan has a choice. Do the "right" thing and invite Patrice to his party, no matter what, or don't invite her and keep his new-found friends. What to do?

Life is full of hard choices. This time Evan made his, and it is not in Patrice's favor. Later he regrets his choice and fixes things with Patrice. But for now, he rips up her invitation and she runs off, hurt.

We can say he made a wrong choice but that is not for us to judge. We can say he simply made a choice.

Tell students to write Evan a letter as if they were an old friend from New York City who was responding to a letter he had sent telling them about what happened. Discuss his choice. Include personal statements regarding the fact that they understand the choice was a hard one given his need to fit in. Tell them to reserve harsh judgments and focus on positive ways they might get him to look differently at what he did. Suggest ways in which he could have handled things differently. Point out how not giving in might have gained him respect in the end.

Experiential Objective

Living on your own terms.

Teaching Tips

We can't always do what everyone else wants us to; or be what they want us to be. We must have our own vision of how to survive and how to be happy and fulfilled. To accomplish that we must, to some extent, live life in a way that makes sense for us, not someone else.

Life Skills

Experiential

From the Script

Archie, a disabled outsider in the group, explains his life philosophy

Archie

IF THAT'S WHAT IT IS,
 THEN THAT'S WHAT IT IS.
 THOUGH THAT'S NOT THE WAY I CHOOSE TO SEE IT.
 I HAVE MY OWN VIEW THAT WORKS
 WITH ALL THESE JERKS
 AND UNENLIGHTENED FOOLS.
 I MAKE MY OWN RULES.
 I DO WHAT I CAN.
 IF I HIT THE WALL,
 WELL, MAYBE IT'S ALL JUST PART OF THE PLAN.
 TOMORROW WILL COME,
 TODAY WILL BE GONE:
 AND SO I PUT ONE FOOT IN FRONT OF THE OTHER,
 ONE FOOT IN FRONT OF THE OTHER
 AND JUST KEEP WALKING ON

Exercise

It isn't easy to live life on your own terms the way Archie does. Everything, every day tells us to go along with the crowd; fit in; don't make waves.

Disabled people, such as Archie, often find it hard to fit in. Most have a strong sense of independence as a result. They must take life by the tail, as they say, and force it to give them what they need. Like Archie.

Go to an organization for the disabled in your community. Ask if they can supply a speaker. Before the speaker comes, students should develop questions about what living their life on their own terms means to them. In what way have they done that? What recommendations might they have for the rest of us?

Write the above excerpt on the wall and ask them to interpret Archie's words in terms of their own disability and life philosophy.

Teaching Tips

One of Evan's greatest fears of moving to Indiana is how he will make new friends. He does so without too much effort, but in the end he finds out that maintaining friendships can be harder than making them.

Life Skills

After Hours

Challenge #1

Making Friends and Influencing People

There's a book called *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie. It's a worthwhile read. We never know when some time in future, or maybe even now, we may be in market to make a new friend or two. Most adolescents and even many adults say this is the hardest life skill to acquire. Making new friends is never easy. The only way to get better at it is to do it.

Commit to making one new friend over the next several weeks.

Challenge #2

And Now For The Hard Part

Difficult as it can be to make friends, maintaining friendships can be a full time job, as Evan finds out. One minute you have friends, the next that person is your bitter enemy, committed to bringing you down. There are jealousies, disagreements, conflicts of every order that the young person must negotiate.

Commit to making a new friend. Perhaps it is someone who you have thought about approaching, but for one reason or another, have not. Work on the friendship for a while. Keep a daily diary on how things are coming along. Do you see any warning signs that might mean things aren't going so well? Identify them and make plans to deal with them so the friendship doesn't fade.

overture to

behavioral studies

Cliques and Peer Pressure

Upon Evan's arrival in Appleton, Indiana, Archie clearly describes the many social groups that reside at Dan Quayle Junior High School. Some coexist while others do not. Evan appears to be accepted by a variety of groups simply because he's the "new kid in town" and preconceived stereotypes have not been applied to him. Meanwhile, other long-time residents like Archie fight a daily battle against ridicule and teasing hoping and praying that the day will come when they will no longer be outcasts.

THERE'S THE COOL KIDS –
THERE'S THE PREPS
AND THERE'S THE SKATE PUNKS
AND THE JOCKS –
AND THEN THERE'S ME.
THERE'S THE LOSERS –
THERE'S THE NERDS
AND THERE'S THE STONERS
AND THE GOTHS –
AND THEN THERE'S ME.

Summary of Standard for Behavioral Studies

- Understands that group and cultural influences contribute to human development, identity, and behavior
- Understands various meanings of social group, general implications of group membership, and different ways that groups function
- Understands that interactions among learning, inheritance and physical development affect human behavior
- Understands conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among individuals, groups and institutions



For a small town like Appleton, a great many tight groups or “cliques” exist. Members of these cliques, despite different self-interests, typically all share one unifying trait. There are usually hierarchies of cliques among teens ranging from the “in-crowd” to the “losers” and everything in-between.

Virtually everyone is part of a group during their teenage years. Even those who are considered “loners”, such as Archie and Patrice, tend to be grouped together by observers into an individual group. Clique memberships are often controlled by a small group of leaders. These overseers have the power to include or exclude any given individual. Once entrance has been given, members feel like that they have found a place where they can be themselves, peculiarities and all.

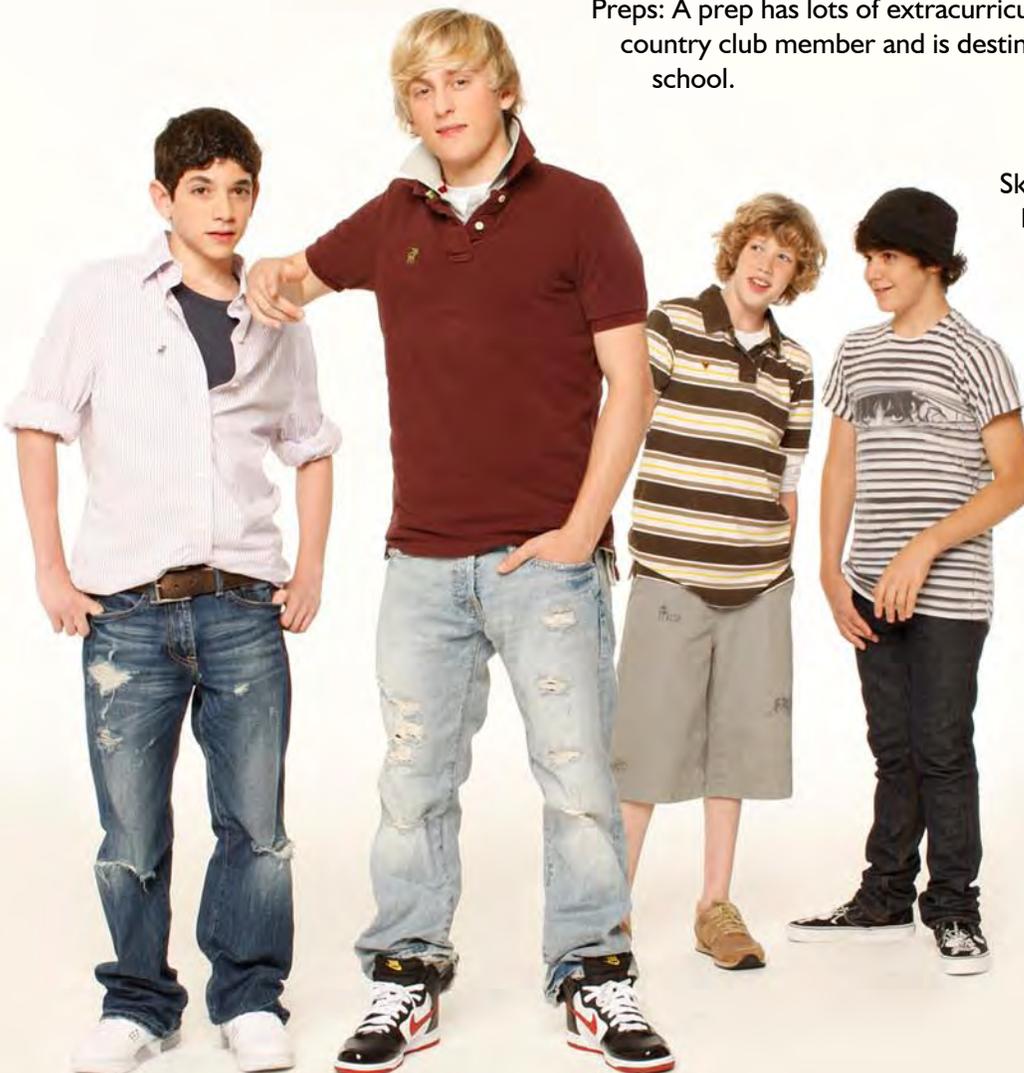
Much like in *13*, a wide variety of cliques exist throughout the secondary schools of the United States. Just some of the many groups and their perceived traits include:

Popular: The cool group considered to be the most attractive by other students.

Goths: This group is dressed from head to toe in black with eyeliner and a zombie-like appearance. Goths can be loners and prefer to live life outside of societal norms.

Nerds: Seen as intellectual and computer savvy, often socially awkward around others.

Preps: A prep has lots of extracurricular activities, may be a country club member and is destined for a top Ivy League school.



Skate Punks: The clothes worn by skate punks includes Acid Jeans, trucker hats and a baseball cap with the bill flipped up. A skate punk’s attire is often strewn with holes and rips due to the hazards of skating.

Entry into a clique isn’t guaranteed even if a person possesses all of the characteristics of a given group. Personality and confidence may appear threatening to the already established chain of command. If a new member is perceived as more of a leader than a follower, membership may be denied.

It isn't always a perfect existence for those already in the clique. Most members follow the established leader not out of true friendship but more so to keep their position in the group. The leader on the other hand, may worry as much as the members about maintaining popularity and control. Manipulation, pressure and humiliation are often used to preserve stature.

Peer pressure is another tool used by those in command. The definition of peer pressure is the social pressure put on somebody to adopt a type of behavior, dress or attitude in order to be accepted as part of a group. Peer pressure exists in all school settings and Dan Quayle Junior High is no exception. The type of peer pressure Evan experiences makes him choose to adopt actions that aren't normal for him. Social acceptance is his ultimate goal. Evan agrees to Archie's request to help get him a date with Kendra in exchange for Archie repairing the rift in Evan and Patrice's friendship. Later in the musical, Evan agrees to find a way to get tickets to an R rated movie after Brett promises that the football jocks will come to his Bar Mitzvah. In both instances, Evan compromises his values solely to gain acceptance.

Peer pressure and cliques aren't necessarily all bad. In the proper setting, cliques can form friendships that reflect positive peer influence. Peers that are committed to doing well in school or sports can be a welcomed inspiration manifesting the adoption of similar traits in others. Cliques can provide valuable feedback and advice when it comes time to trying out new ideas or exploring new settings. Through the building of lasting bonds and the conveyance of moral support, cliques have the potential to carry an individual through the rockiest of times.



13 a new musical

Discussion Objective

The concept of impulsive behavior.

Teaching Tips

Think before you act.
Please.

Behavioral Studies

Discussion

StagenOTES™

From the Script

Evan explains to his friend what's going on in his household.

Evan

My mom's making me go. My dad's ruined our lives and she's a mess. She went around the house yesterday cutting his head out of all our photos.

Exercise

Evan's dad has left his mother for a stewardess. It's understandable that Evan would be upset. After all, they'd obviously been married for some time, Evan is 13. So Evan, too, has lost something. His mother is acting as if she is the only one who has been hurt by his father's decision.

Evan's mom is not thinking of Evan as she goes around the house cutting the father's picture out of all their photos. She is not thinking about how this makes Evan feel. She is making a bad situation worse. The last thing Evan needs now is to feel that his father, whom we're sure he loves, will be permanently gone from his life. It's bad enough that he has to move away from his friends and the city he loves to a strange place where he has to make new friends and adapt to a new environment. That also seems like a fairly impulsive decision on his mother's part. Is she thinking of Evan? Has she asked him how he feels about moving?

Impulsive behavior is something people do without thinking. This behavior can really hurt people without you intending it to do so. It's a selfish behavior. It makes you feel better for the moment. Open a class discussion about impulsive behavior; about doing things spontaneously without much thought. Let the discussion flow in whatever direction it takes. A lot of ideas, feelings and personal insights may come out in the process. All of it will be cathartic for students, and hopefully, in the end, get them to realize they must think before they act.

Writing Objective

Explore the nature of special interest groups and lobbyists.

Teaching Tips

Start with a discussion of cliques and lead students toward the reality that cliques are not only found in school. They are not merely social groups. They are groups with similar ideas and goals that can buy government favors that may or may not be in the interests of the general population

From the Script

Evan tells the clique about his Bar Mitzvah. They say they'll go, but not if Patrice goes. It's an exclusive group. They don't like "losers." Lucy sees Patrice holding the invite.

Hold the phone. Is she going?
Lucy

Patrice?
Evan

Cause if she goes, we're so snubbing.
Lucy

Come on. What's wrong with Patrice?
Evan

She'll be there.
Brett

And if God wanted me to hang out with losers, he would have made me ugly.
Lucy

And if they don't go. We don't go. Get it?
Eddie

And if we don't go... we don't go. Get it?
Malcolm

Exercise

Much of what we hear in the dialogue of *13* tells us Evan is dealing with a very well established clique which he must break into if he is to be popular in Appleton, Indiana. At least that's the way he sees it. As students, most of us have experienced the power of cliques.

But there are other, even more powerful cliques at work in our country. They are not called cliques. They are called special interest groups who, through lobbying our government officials, often get special favors for their group.

Research a particular special interest group (clique). Hundreds of articles exist that will help you in your research. In a well-developed and cited paper, expose one of these special interest groups, how they lobby the government and what special favors they have obtained. Is it in the best interests of the American people?

Behavioral Studies

Experiential

Experiential Objective

Recognize and cope with peer pressure.

Teaching Tips

Even people who are your friends can push you into doing things you don't want to do. We've all experienced it. Trick is to recognize when they're doing this and find ways to deal with it. There's nothing worse than doing something you know is not right for you. Giving in to peer pressure also gives people power over you they should not have.

From the Script

Kendra and Lucy are vying for Brett's attention. Lucy taunts Kendra, who doesn't want to act in an inappropriate way, with threats that if she doesn't give Brett the kiss he wants then she will.

Lucy

No, Brett invited you because he wants to do the tongue!

Kendra

The tongue?

Lucy

The Tongue!

Kendra

No way!

Lucy

So way! My God, Kendra wake up and smell the double soy decaf chai non-fat latte'. Brett totally knows "The Rule".

Kendra

'The Rule?'

Lucy

'The Rule!' Seriously, Kendra, are your parents siblings? If you haven't done the tongue, you're not officially going out. That's 'The Rule'.

Exercise

Kendra is in a quandary about whether to do something she really doesn't want to—something she believes is not the right thing to do. Teens are especially vulnerable to pressure from peers, although adults, too, can often find themselves in these types of situations.

Ask students to think of a time when peer pressure was tempting them to do something they didn't want to. Ask them to write an anonymous account of the situation, how they felt and how they handled it. Did they give in or stand firm and do the right thing? Thinking it over, would they now handle the situation in a different way?

Tell students to hand in their accounts. Because they are anonymous, no one will know who wrote the account.

Teaching Tips

Feeling strong and powerful is a good feeling. Feeling powerless is not. Be strong. Acquire the tools to defend yourself. You will like the way you feel.

Challenge #1

Defend Yourself (for the women)

Lucy

Hey, keep your hands to yourselves. Either one of you guys put so much as a finger near me, you'll be pulling back a stump.

This is tough talk on the part of Lucy and she means it. No one is taking advantage of her.

Find a self-defense course for women in your area. Take it.

Write a paragraph or two on "The New Powerful Me." Put it on the wall above your desk or in a place where you often sit to work.

Challenge #2

Defend Yourself (for the men)

Evan

Man, you're such a jerk.

The crowd all gasps and takes a step back.

Brett

Did you just call me a jerk?

Evan

I can't believe it took me so long to figure it out, but yeah: you're a jerk.

Brett

Oh, right, coming from Mr. "Everyone Come to My Little Lame Birthday Party."

Evan

Forget it, all right, I don't want you there anyway.

Now we have, for the first time, some tough talk from Evan. He is sick and tired of Brett's bullying and has had enough.

If you've had enough of a peer telling you what to do, and essentially trying to bully you about, find a good self-help book for teens on bullying. Read it and apply the techniques.

Write a paragraph or two on "The New Powerful Me." Put it on the wall above your desk or in a place where you often sit to work.

overture to

the arts

Talking with Jason Robert Brown

Composer and Lyricist of *13*

Jason Robert Brown is the award winning composer and lyricist of *13*. He received the 1999 Tony Award for Best Original Musical Score for his work on *Parade*. StageNOTES recently sat down with him to discuss the creative process that went on behind the scenes for *13* and how creating a musical featuring a teenage cast and band created a different set of challenges.



Stage NOTES: After having such success with *The Last Five Years* and *Parade* what drew you to *13*?

Jason Robert Brown: It's hard for me to know the specific spiritual genesis of any of my works. I originally came up with the story and the concept of *13* for utterly commercial reasons – a publishing company had asked me to propose a teen-oriented book series. But the piece has obviously grown well away from that initial impulse, and in doing so has pushed some very personal and emotional buttons for me. I have to assume that those spiritual connections were hiding in there all along. Goodness knows I never felt like my own teenage years were “resolved” on a lot of levels, and writing this piece has come to feel like closing that circle. Certainly watching Evan, Archie and Patrice navigate their way through the thickets of adolescence is very gratifying to me; it feels like they're taking me along with them.

SN: Is the subject of *13* based on any real life situation that happened to either you or someone you knew?

JRB: Not in any literal way. My parents never got divorced, I never lived in the Midwest, my Bar Mitzvah wasn't even a particularly traumatic

Summary of Standard for The Arts

Art Connections

- Understands connections among the various art forms and other disciplines

Theater

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

Music

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

Visual Arts

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

occasion for me. That having been said, a girl with whom I went to high school saw the show in Connecticut, and said she clearly recognized little pieces of lots of people we knew back then. I drew on a lot of very specific memories when drawing these characters, but I think Patrice and Lucy and Brett and the other kids are sufficiently iconic that everyone will recognize them from their junior high school hierarchies.

SN: The lyrics of your songs are very sophisticated. Were you ever afraid that although the target audience is teens and pre-teens that the words may go over their heads?

JRB: I don't know that my target audience is teens and pre-teens, but I never really know who's going to "get" what I do anyway. The fact is that a surprising (to me, at least) number of my fans are teenagers, and they don't seem to have any trouble parsing the lyrics or the emotions of *The Last Five Years* or *Songs for a New World*, both of which are rather complicated and layered pieces. I went into the process of writing this show with one thing in mind: don't underestimate what teenagers can do; that applies both to the astonishing work that the actors pull off and the rather challenging listening that the audience has to do. I don't think teenagers need to be fed a constant diet of cotton candy, and I'm always a little depressed that grownups seem to desire little more than that for themselves or their kids when it comes to musical theater. What differentiates *13* from any number of "youth-oriented" shows and movies is that even though the situations are comic and somewhat over-the-top, the emotions are, I think, genuine and complex, like the kids themselves.

SN: Was it difficult to put yourself back into the mindset of a teenager in order to create the score?

JRB: The verbal language has been more of a challenge than the musical language. There are certain words that are part of my everyday vocabulary that just wouldn't sound right in the mouth of a 13-year-old; and vice versa. I never wanted the show to seem overly "slangy," but I did have to respect the fact that kids' vocabularies are eminently fungible quantities. The real teenagers who make up this cast

neologize and idiomatize (that can't be a real word) almost reflexively, and I did feel it was important for the book and score to reflect that without drawing too much attention to it. But the musical language, frankly, was a piece of cake: after I had written a couple of numbers, I realized that I was drawing almost exclusively (and entirely subconsciously) on sounds I would have heard on the radio in 1983, when I was 13. Once I acknowledged that as the template, everything else dictated itself from there. There are plenty of current pop styles in the show, but what generated all of the musical material was whatever radio personality Casey Kasem played on a random week twenty-five years ago.



SN: Was there any character, in particular, that you identified with?

JRB: Everyone insists that Evan is an autobiographical creation, but in fact, other than being Jewish and neurotic, he and I don't have much in common. (Secretly, I've often imagined that Evan grows up to be Dan Elish, and I've written a lot of his songs with that in mind.) What I'm surprised no one has picked up on is that my real alter-ego is Archie, who determines not to let his outsider status diminish his ambitions. But there's a lot of me in Patrice as well, and my writing technique is such that all of the characters in the show bubbled up from somewhere very genuine in me, regardless of how unlike me they may seem on the surface.

SN: Other than the teens that appear in the production, the band is comprised of teenage musicians. What are some of the differences in working with teenage musicians rather than adults?

JRB: They complain less and practice more.

SN: As the composer and lyricist, were you involved in the audition process and in the eventual casting?

JRB: Oh, sure. Since I've been involved with this project the longest, I've seen more kids than anyone else, probably well into the thousands. What's always been true about this show is that some kids walk in the door and are just "right" for it. We've seen lots of awesomely talented actors

over the five years I've been working on *13*, and often, no matter how gifted a certain performer is, he or she just doesn't seem to fit into the world of this show. And then someone else will come in, and without even singing two notes, all of us will think, "That's perfect!" Casting gets more mysterious as I get older, not less so. All of my shows are hard to cast because the vocal demands and the acting requirements are so intense, but I've never had a harder time casting a show than I did this one.

SN: Since teens are still in their "growing years", do changes in height or voice determine how long a particular actor stays in a role?



JRB: Since the show's only been done in short-term runs up to now, we've never had to replace an actor because he or she aged out of a role, but it's my earnest hope that this show will run long enough that we have to fire every single person. As far as determining whether any kid is still right for the show, I think that's a combination of factors: voice and physical development. But I suspect that really it'll just be a feeling – there comes a point at which an actor is no longer believable as a 13-year-old, particularly in a cast of other 13-year-olds. I also suspect some of the actors will decide on their own that they don't really belong anymore; no matter how young you may look, a 17-year-old isn't really going to want to hang out with a bunch of 13-year-olds all the time.

SN: The show was previously performed in California to very positive reviews. Have there been any major changes in script or score during its move to Broadway?

JRB: Everything, everything, everything. I think of the Broadway version as "*13* Version 2.0," though it's actually probably Version 2.4 at this point. The major difference between the L.A. script and the NY script is that the show in L.A. was really more about the people around Evan than it was about Evan itself. Evan narrated the events of the show and facilitated a lot of the plot, but mostly he was a

fairly passive presence; that's all changed for New York. Now Evan is very much the protagonist of the piece, and getting that to happen required innumerable changes in the script and the score. The most obvious change is that the version of the show that premiered at the Mark Taper Forum last winter was one act, 75 minutes, and had thirteen

songs. This two-act, two-hour version of the show has many more songs, and more than half of the original score was replaced along the way. Another fairly obvious change has been the addition of Robert Horn to the team; Dan Elish and I felt that, after four years, we needed someone else to push us up the last hill, and Robert has lifted the show to a whole new

thrilling level with his work.

SN: What do you hope that audiences will take away after seeing a performance? Do you feel the message is different for teens as opposed to adults?

JRB: There are so many things I wish I could have figured out when I was younger, but chief among them is that I'm happiest when I'm not trying to be something other than what I am. I'm smart, I'm ambitious, I'm talented, and I don't swim along in the mainstream; those four things almost entirely define my personality. I've spent so much of my life regretting that I wasn't more typical, more normal, more "cool," and that's often kept me from enjoying the very real benefits of being whatever I am. I didn't know until alarmingly recently that the really cool kids are the ones who don't think about whether they're cool or not; they accept themselves for precisely who they are, and some people are just drawn to them because of it. When I look back, I see that I've always drawn people to me, and I feel silly that I didn't appreciate that enough at the time. "Cool," I guess, is inside all of us but it's not the same for everyone, and no one is going to be everybody's friend. Instead of trying to appropriate someone else's idea of who we should be, if we could just recognize and stake our claim to our own version of "cool," I think we would all be much happier.

Discussion Objective

Violence in films

Teaching Tips

Graphic violence in many of today's films has reached the heights of goriness. We are becoming so used to it that many psychologists believe we are becoming desensitized to violence. Do you believe this and do you think violence in movies has gone too far.

The Arts

Discussion

From the Script

Brett is describing what he sees on screen in Bloodmaster.

Brett

SOMEONE GOT HIS EYELIDS TORN OFF,
AND I'M SITTING HERE,
AND I SHOULD BE DOING SOMETHING.
THAT GUY GOT AN AXE IN HIS THROAT
AND SHE'S SITTING THERE,
AND I DON'T KNOW WHY I'M WAITING,
BUT OH, ANY MINUTE,
I'LL BE GETTING CLOSER.
I'LL BE WHERE I WANT TO BE...
ANY MINUTE.

Exercise

Movie ratings are supposed to keep younger teens from seeing movies that are too violent. R-Rated movies, like the musical's fictional movie, *Bloodmaster*, are restricted unless the teen is accompanied by an adult.

Have an honest open discussion about violence in films. Does the rating system work? Is this censorship? Do you believe that violent films promote violent behavior? Has violence in film gone too far?

(See The Arts/Writing Lesson)

Writing Objective

Defend or condemn violence in film.

Teaching Tips

In The Discussion lesson for The Arts, we gave our opinion about violence in film. In this lesson we will try to prove in writing whether violence in film warps the minds of teen viewers.

The Arts

Writing

From the Script

In the Discussion lesson, Brett goes on about what he sees on the screen. In this excerpt, it's Kendra. The violence she's watching on the screen doesn't seem to have any effect on her. She's thinking more about Brett.

Kendra

SOMEONE GOT HIS SKULL CHOPPED IN HALF,
AND HE'S SITTING THERE,
AND MAYBE HE DOESN'T WANT ME.
MAYBE IT WAS SOMETHING I SAID.
OR MAYBE MY BREATH.
WHY DID I EAT THOSE PEANUTS?
'CAUSE OH, ANY MINUTE
HE COULD TURN AND KISS ME.
AND WE'LL BE WHERE WE OUGHT TO BE...
ANY MINUTE...

Exercise

One of the most condemning raps on violence in films is that it desensitizes young viewers. If we look at the excerpt above that seems to be true of Kendra. This desensitizing, some say, promotes violent behavior.

There is a wealth of information to support and other information to discredit the notion. Research the topic through studies that have been done. Write an argumentative piece either defending or rejecting the charge. Include specifics and please keep your paper and information focused on violence in teens.



Experiential Objective

Exhibiting adolescent art.

Teaching Tips

Strong emotions, a part of adolescence, are often exposed in the art of students of that age. However, most art of young students is never seen except by parents who either hang it on the fridge or don't hang it up at all. That is too bad. In this lesson we will try to rectify that.

The Arts

Experiential

StagenOTES™

From the Script

Evan's angst about having to leave New York to live in a small town in the mid-west comes to a head: "I'm standing on the edge."

Evan and Kids

EVERYTHING TURNS AROUND. THIRTEEN!
END UP IN STITCHES, THIRTEEN!
HIDE AWAY UNDERGROUND. THIRTEEN!
CAN I GET THROUGH IT? THIRTEEN!
LIFE HAS CHANGED OVERNIGHT! THIRTEEN!
HOW DO I DO IT? THIRTEEN!
I BETTER GET IT RIGHT!
THE BEST AND THE WORST
AND THE MOST AND THE LEAST
AND THE CRAZY AND THE SCARY
AND I'M STANDING ON THE EDGE!

Exercise

Evan expresses his anguish at having to leave his home to go to a strange place populated by strange people. This has to be an upsetting time for him. Is anyone really listening to his doleful cry? Songs like art are a way of expressing yourself.

Students using these lessons may be 13 or thereabouts, or they may be older or younger. It doesn't matter.

If they are 13, tell them to collect art from their own art classes—as many pieces as possible. If they are older, or younger, tell them to go to art classes of students around that age and do the collecting.

When all pieces are collected, present an art show for the entire school called, "13." Try to have as many artists as possible there to explain their work. Painting, drawings and other art work may be sold if the artists wish to do so.

13 a new musical

Teaching Tips

Students today live generally in a narrow musical realm of tastes. As teachers, we like to expand that realm as we expand their knowledge in other areas. These challenges are designed to do just that. It is about discovery.

The Arts

After Hours

Challenge #1

The Music Man

JASON ROBERT BROWN has been hailed as “one of Broadway’s smartest and most sophisticated songwriters since Stephen Sondheim (Philadelphia Inquirer). Jason is the composer and lyricist of the *The Last Five Years*, cited as one of Time Magazine’s 10 Best of 2001 and won Drama Desk Awards for Best Music and Best Lyrics. Jason won a 1999 Tony Award for his score to *Parade* and won the Drama Desk and New York Drama Critics’ Circle Awards for Best New Musical. His first musical, *Songs for a New World*, a theatrical song cycle directed by Daisy Prince, played Off-Broadway at the WPA Theatre in the fall of 1995, and has since been seen in more than two hundred productions around the world. His newest musical, *13*, opens on Broadway in the fall of 2008. He has a solo album, “Wearing Someone Else’s Clothes.” It features his band, The Caucasian Rhythm Kings.

The above biography lists just a few of the author and composer of *13*’s musical accomplishments. If you’d like to know more, visit his website at www.jasonrobertbrown.com.

Go to the following website and listen to the music of Jason Robert Brown.
<http://www.last.fm/music/Jason+Robert+Brown>

Challenge #2

Stephen Sondheim

Jason Robert Brown is compared to one of Broadway’s most illustrious composers, Stephen Sondheim. How much do you know about Sondheim’s work? One of his more famous works is the score for *Sunday in the Park with George*. Do a bit of research. Who is the George of the title and what is the reference to the Park? Hint: When you find out, write a brief piece on a famous work now hanging in the Art Institute of Chicago.

Websites:

www.13themusical.com
The official website for *13*

<http://www.theapple.com/training/articles/559-the-cool-vs-the-uncool-battling-cliques-a-painful-challenge>

<http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/friend/cliq.html>

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www.turkeys4america.com

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www.myjewishlearning.com/lifecycle/Bar_Bat_Mitzvah/History/HistoryBarMitzvah.htm

http://www.lyricsdomain.com/10/johnny_cash/ballad_of_a_teenage_queen.html

<http://www.omniglot.com/language/idioms/rain.php>

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/related/topic/Special+Interest+Groups>

http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/problems/cliq.html

<http://www.last.fm/music/Jason+Robert+Brown>

Books

Sticks and Stones by Youth Communication

Examining Pop Culture: Violence in Film and TV by James D. Torr

Life Strategies for Teens by Jay McGraw

Adolescent Rites of Passage by William D. DeFoore, Phd (Audio CD 2006)

Life Events and Rites of Passage by Jeff Hill and Peggy Daniels

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StageNOTES™

A FIELD GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

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