



# MAMMA MIA!

## CONTENT GUIDE

## THEATRE UNDER THE STARS

2018-2019 SEASON TEXAS ESSENTIAL  
KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS DOCUMENT

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### MAMMA MIA!

**Show Dates:** February 19 - March 3, 2019

Music and Lyrics by Benny Andersson & Bjorn Ulvaeus  
and some songs with Stig Anderson

Book by Catherine Johnson

Originally conceived by Judy Craymer

Inspired by and featuring the songs of ABBA

**Curricular tie-ins provided for grades:** 10 - 12

#### **TEKS:**

##### **Fine Arts**

[Fine Arts - High School](#)

##### **English Language Arts**

[ELA - High School](#)

##### **Social Studies**

[Social Studies - High School](#)

##### **Health**

[Health - High School](#)

*The highlighted TEKS can be met by seeing the show, completing discussions, creating artwork and participating in the activities.*

# ABOUT THE SHOW

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Sophie seems to have everything going for her. She's about to get married to the man she loves. She lives on a beautiful island with a mother who cares about her. Her life should be perfect--but something is missing.

Although she's been raised by her loving mother, she's never met her father. In *Mamma Mia!*, Sophie longs to find out the truth about who she is; with three letters in the mailbox, she hopes to create what she's never had: a traditional family. With the help of her mother and friends, she discovers that families come in many different shapes and sizes, and that love doesn't always need to follow the rules.

With its wonderful songs and magical story, *Mamma Mia!* offers young people a unique opportunity: to use an exciting musical as the launching point for a wide variety of discussions, activities and lessons. Sophie's mother, Donna, came of age during the 1970s, a turbulent time when music, culture and social norms all went through wild changes. Donna sees her daughter growing up in the present day and tries - as all parents do - to help Sophie avoid the mistakes she made in her youth.

(Description from *Mamma Mia!* Study Guide: [www.mamma-mia.com](http://www.mamma-mia.com))

Audiences in more than 400 cities world-wide have danced in the aisles over our next production, *Mamma Mia!*. This raucous, hilarious musical about a wedding on a Greek island tells the sweet story of love and heartbreak.

*Mamma Mia!* is a juke box featuring all the hits you know and love from ABBA. Written by British playwright, Catherine Johnson, with music and lyrics by Benny Anderson and Bjorn Ulvaeus, *Mamma Mia!* is the ninth longest running show on Broadway, and the longest running jukebox musical in Broadway history. The Broadway production ran at the Winter Garden Theatre from October 2001 through October 2013 before transferring to The Broadhurst where it ran from November 2013 until September 2015.

*Mamma Mia!* is about family - both the one you're born to, the one you adopt and the family who adopts you along the way.

**Disclaimers:** *Mamma Mia!* makes references to sexuality and the existence of sex, and has strong language. It also has music you love to sing along to, moments of self-discovery, personal acceptance, and love, as well as fierce bell-bottom pants.

# GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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**Below are some general discussion questions that will get students thinking about the production they've just seen!**

## **FAMILY DYNAMICS**

### **Pre-Show Questions:**

- Have you ever wondered about your parents life before you were born?
  - What questions would you like to have your parents answer about their lives when they were your age?
- Think about how you communicate with your parents or trusted adult in your life. Are you close? Do you share with each other? Do you want to?
  - How do you think the way you communicate with your parents affects your relationship?
  - How could you communicate better?

### **Post Show Questions:**

- Was Sophie right to send the letters? If you were her, would you have done the same thing? Why or why not?
- Was Donna right to keep her secret? If you were Donna, how would you feel about this situation? How would it make you feel about your daughter? Your friends? Yourself?
- Donna avoided sharing her past with Sophie, Sophie avoid telling Donna about her interest in knowing who her father was and then sending the letters.
- How did their communication affect their relationship? How could they have communicated better.

- What evidence does Sophie gather to determine which one of the men is her father? Based on the evidence did you guess which one was her father? Were you correct?

## **JUKEBOX MUSICALS!**

### **Pre-Show Questions:**

- The show you're about to see is what is called a Jukebox musical, which means that the music was taken from a specific time period or artist, and the story was constructed around it.
  - Why do you think it is called a Jukebox musical?
  - Why do you think this type of storytelling is popular? Do you think you will enjoy seeing a jukebox musical?

### **Post Show Questions:**

- This musical uses popular music from the band ABBA from the 1970s.
  - If you could choose your favorite musical artist and use their music to tell one story what story would you create? How would the choice of music affect the mood/time period/characters?
    - Why did you choose that artist? Is there someone else's music that you feel might create a better story structure?
    - Who would you market your show to? Who would you want to come see it? Why?

## THOSE CRAZY YEARS

### Pre-Show Questions:

- Mamma Mia! is written to be an homage to the 1970s and its popular music.

As a group, brainstorm what you know about the 1970s as a decade.

- Do research about the time period. What was happening in:
  - Politics and world events?
  - Pop culture?
  - Technology and communication?

### Post Show Questions:

- How did the time period that Donna came of age differ from the time period that Sophie came of age? How did that affect their relationship and influence who they are?
  - What current events happened when your parents were your age that helped to shape who they are?
  - What current events are happening now that will help to shape who you are?
  - How does that affect your relationship and communication with each other?