



THEATRE UNDER THE STARS

2019/20 SEASON

ELF CURRICULUM GUIDE

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Key to Subjects

Subject area icons show what curricular topics each activity addresses.

Theatre



English Language Arts



Social Studies



Visual Arts



Theatre Icons

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Social Studies, Art, English Language Arts Icons

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ABOUT ELF



THOMAS MEEHAN

Thomas Meehan received the Tony Award® for co-writing the book for *The Producers* in 2001 and in 2003 for co-writing the book for *Hairspray*. He received his first Tony Award in 1977 for writing the book of *Annie*, which was his first Broadway show he has written the books for the musicals *Rocky*, *Elf - The Musical*, *Cry-Baby*, *Young Frankenstein*, *Chaplin*, *Bombay Dreams*, *I Remember Mama*, *Ain't Broadway Grand* and *Annie Warbucks*. Additionally, he was a long-time contributor of humor to *The New Yorker*, an Emmy-Award-winning writer of television comedy, and a collaborator on a number of screenplays, including Mel Brooks' *Spaceballs* and *To Be Or Not To Be*.



BOB MARTIN

Bob Martin has been working as an actor and writer in Canadian theater, film, and television for over three decades. He is a co-creator of *The Drowsy Chaperone*. Bob has won a number of awards for his work, including an L.A. Drama Critics Circle Award, an L.A. Stage Alliance Ovation Award, a Drama Desk Award, a Theatre World Award, and a Tony Award. He is also co-creator of the critically acclaimed dramatic series "*Slings & Arrows*." Bob reunited with *Elf* collaborators Matthew Sklar and Chad Beguelin to create the new musical *The Prom*, now playing on Broadway at the Longacre Theatre.



MATTHEW SKLAR & CHAD BEGUELIN

Matthew Sklar and Chad Beguelin have been writing musicals together for over 20 years. The Tony Award-nominated team wrote the scores for the Broadway musicals *Elf* and *The Wedding Singer*. Their upcoming projects include *The Prom* and *Gotta Dance*. Other credits include *The Rhythm Club*, *Judas and Me* and *Wicked City*. They are the recipients of The Jonathan Larson Performing Arts Foundation Award, The Edward Kleban Award, the Gilman & Gonzalez-Fall Musical Theater Award, and ASCAP Foundation Richard Rodgers New Horizons Award.

PRODUCTION STATS

Composer

Matthew Sklar and Chad Beguelin

Lyricist/Librettist

Bob Martin and Thomas Meehan, adapted from the 2003 film written by David Berenbaum

Runtime

Opened: November 14, 2010.

Closed: January 2, 2011.

Number of Performances

57

YOU SHOULD KNOW

Elf - The Musical is based on 2003 film, starring Will Ferrell and Zooey Deschanel.

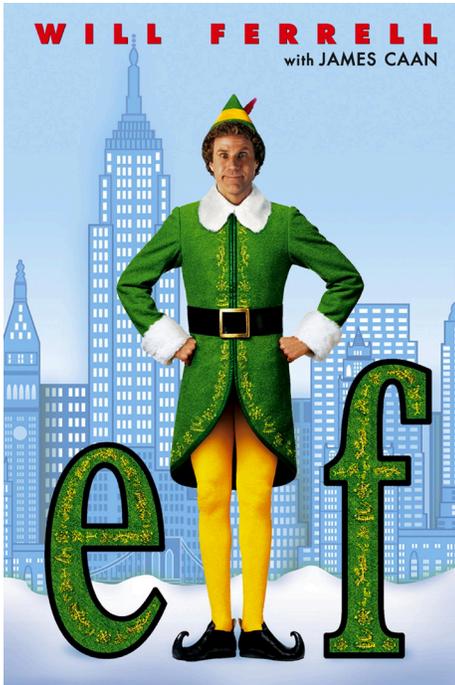
It played on Broadway for two Christmas Seasons 2010-11 and 2012-13, and also toured the U.S. in 2012. A new tour launched in 2014.

The first run was a huge success, taking in more than \$1.4 million in one week, a record for the AI Hirschfield Theater where it debuted.

The New York Times called it, "A splashy, peppy, sugar-sprinkled holiday entertainment."

It was adapted into a TV Animated Special in 2014, featuring Jim Parsons as Buddy.

WORLD OF ELF



Elf the Movie, Warner Bros

ELF THE MOVIE (2003)

The movie *Elf* was mostly written in 2002 and released in 2003. Pop culture, the media, and most of our lives in these years were being filled with post-9/11 messages. 2001 marked the beginning of a new society that Americans were facing. New York, a city synonymous with fast-paced business, growing culture, and a hub for art was now also tainted with tragedy. The world could scarcely hear the city's name without also granting it a moment of silence. This was a perfect time for a little magic. New York had a rich history and energy that needed to be celebrated again. *Elf*, for the most part, takes place in Manhattan, and revolves around the novelty of fast-paced city life. Moviegoers were reminded of a pre-9/11 New York, bedecked with light and merriment, and full of spirit. It is a beautiful reminder of the resiliency of the city and its residents.



Elf the Musical, Playbill

ELF THE MUSICAL (2010)

The musical, starring Sebastian Arcelus, Matthew Gumley, Mark Jacoby, Amy Spanger, and Beth Leavel, has a few differences from the original film. Many songs were added to the show including the joyful "Sparkle Jolly Twinkle Jingly," show-stopping, jazzy "Never Fall in Love with an Elf," and who could forget the ridiculous, yet loveable, "Nobody Cares about Santa." The concept of the fake Santa from the Gimbels scene is expanded to include a hilarious song and dance at a Chinese restaurant on Christmas Eve. This leaves audiences of all ages rolling in laughter. Screenwriter Rex McGee



Elf the Animated Special, Warner Bros

ELF THE ANIMATED SPECIAL (2014)

Elf: Buddy's Musical Christmas is part of a long history of animated Christmas shows made for television, such as the timeless *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* (1964), which continues to air annually. *Elf: Buddy's Musical Christmas* was directed by Mark Caballero and Seamus Walsh, and written by Aaron Horvath, Michael Jelenic, Bob Martin, and Thomas Meehan. Santa narrates the story of Buddy's travels to New York City to meet his father. It starred Jim Parsons, Mark Hamill, Kate Micucci, Ed Asner, and Rachael MacFarlane and added a brand new song, "Freezy the Snowman."

LESSON 1: Sparkle twinkle jolly - what?



ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How can we describe certain emotions and situations with our imagination and word play?

Do you ever get that feeling, and there just isn't a word for it?

Buddy comes into Macy's Department Store and tells the manager that he is feeling "Sparkle Jolly Twinkle Jingly." The manager, of course, has no idea what he is talking about. Buddy says that is a happy magical feeling, a Christmas feeling. They then dance to express the emotion.

Much like Dr. Seuss, the writers of *Elf the Musical* used words that we all know and understand, and put them together to create a new word that sounds similar to what it feels like. We will now use our understandings of words, phrases, and onomatopoeia to create new words to describe a feeling or situation.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Use the imagination to create a new word, therefore expanding the knowledge of words already understood and sharing knowledge with others through movement.

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Students may work individually or in small groups, depending on class size.
2. Have the students talk about times in their life that an emotion was so strong that normal words didn't begin to cover it. EXAMPLES: The time I got a new puppy. The time I was super confused in math class.
4. Facilitate exploration of words until students have a new word that describes the feelings from their chosen experience.
5. Have them write the word down and start to play with movements that express the new word. EXAMPLE: If it's a sad feeling, have the kids move slowly and heavily or, if the word is extremely happy, lots of jumps and fast hands are appropriate.
6. Have students present their movement with the class.
7. Ask the rest of the class to copy the movement for themselves try to guess the word.
8. Reflect with the class. How did the movements make the class feel? Did the word match the movement? How difficult was it to attach a movement to a feeling?.

GO DEEPER

Have students trade their words with another student.

Have the students create a dictionary entry for their new word.

Ask students to include definitions of the word, examples of the word used in sentences, pictures of the word, and possible antonyms.

Create a class dictionary full of entries.

VOCABULARY WORDS

Emotion
Expression
Onomatopoeia
Wordplay

KEY SUBJECTS

English Language Arts
Theater Arts

LESSON 2: Me? An elf?



ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How can we use costume design as a form of expression and character development?

In theater, a character is enhanced by the actor's costume. Throughout history, there have been many versions of elves, especially Christmas elves. We have seen them in paintings, live-action movies, and countless cartoons. In *Elf - The Musical* there are a variety of elf costumes: Macy's elves, North Pole elves, and the humans in the North Pole at the end of the show. They are all different takes on an elf costume. Now it is your turn.

Costumes can help us understand a character's personality. A character wearing all white symbolizes innocence or goodness. A character in bright colors and loud patterns tends to have a big personality, and those in plain dark clothes tend to be withdrawn. It is a quick way to understand more about a character visually.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To consider your personal attributes through self-reflection and express them through costume.
- To explore various costume designs and make adaptations to design your own.

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

1. First, circulate representations of elves throughout history. Let each student look and share the things they notice about each design. Help them to assign a word to describe each elf design. (See images on page)
2. Pass out blank paper and drawing materials.
3. Ask students to make a list of adjectives that describe themselves.
4. Have the student draw themselves as an elf, incorporating their list of adjectives into their costume design.
5. Share drawings with the class explaining why they chose the colors and design that they did. How do those things describe their character?

GO DEEPER

Have the students create a character sheet for their elf.

Each character sheet should include these details: Name, favorite food, favorite color, favorite song, what they like to do for fun, where they live, their age, and a description of their family.

Have each student then become their character and interact with each other in an elf community, paying special attention to how they walk and speak.

OPTIONAL: Students can then write stories and poems about their elves for an extended ELA component.

VOCABULARY WORDS

- Adaptation
- Adjective
- Design
- Self-Reflection

KEY SUBJECTS

- Social Studies
- Theater Arts
- Visual Arts



LESSON 3: My culture



ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What is my tradition and how can I explore another culture's tradition?

When we stay within our own groups, we miss out on the beauty of other cultures.

Buddy identified himself as an elf for most of his life. Then he discovers that he is, in fact, a human. Everything about his life and world is changed. At this point, Buddy has a choice: stay in the North Pole and embrace this new identity, or venture out to learn more about where he comes from. He chose to venture off and explore the world of humans. He was met with many challenges about assimilating into a new culture. He didn't understand the food, professional roles, or even the emotions of the humans living in New York City. Others helped him navigate this strange land and adapt to a new culture. And Buddy shared his own elf culture with them, as well, spreading an innocent joy to everyone he encountered.

Traditions are opportunities to celebrate an occasion and share moments with those around us. Does your family have any traditions around a winter holiday? How can we share those with others right now?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

To identify your culture and traditions.

To express your cultural traditions through mime.

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Have students pair off in groups of two.
2. Each student must choose a tradition that they share with their family around a winter holiday. EXAMPLES: Twelve days of gifts with your family; making a snowman with your father; making holiday cookies with your grandmother.
3. Ask students to write a short reflection about their tradition.
4. Have students mime their tradition to each other. Then they switch traditions and mime each other's movement. EXAMPLES: Handing out gifts, making a snowman, baking cookies.
5. Have students go to a new partner and repeat the earlier steps.
6. Have the students rotate until they have seen at least three different traditions.
7. As the students experience each new tradition, have them write down the details of the action that is being performed.

REFLECTION

Was it hard to identify your traditions?

Did you have a hard time translating your tradition into movement?

How did you feel sharing it with others?

Did you enjoy seeing others share your traditions?

Will you add one of these traditions to your family?

How does sharing traditions help the world we live in?

VOCABULARY WORDS

Culture

Mime

Share

Tradition

KEY SUBJECTS

Social Studies

Theater Arts

TEKS

Lesson 1 “Sparkle twinkle jolly - what?”

English Language Arts	Elementary	ELA.K.B1C&D, ELA.1.B1D, ELA.2.B1D, ELA.2.B3B, ELA.3.B1D, ELA.3.B3B, ELA.3.1B12A, ELA.4.B1C, ELA.4.B3B&C, ELA.4.B12A, ELA.5.B1C&D, ELA.5.B10F, ELA.5.B12
	Middle	ELA.6.B2A, ELA.6.B2B, ELA.6.B28, ELA.7.B2A, ELA.7.B2B, ELA.8.B2A, ELA.8.B2B
Theatre	Elementary	THEATRE K.B2A&D, THEATRE 1.B2A, THEATRE 2.B2A, THEATRE 3.B2A, THEATRE 4.B2A, THEATRE 5.B2A

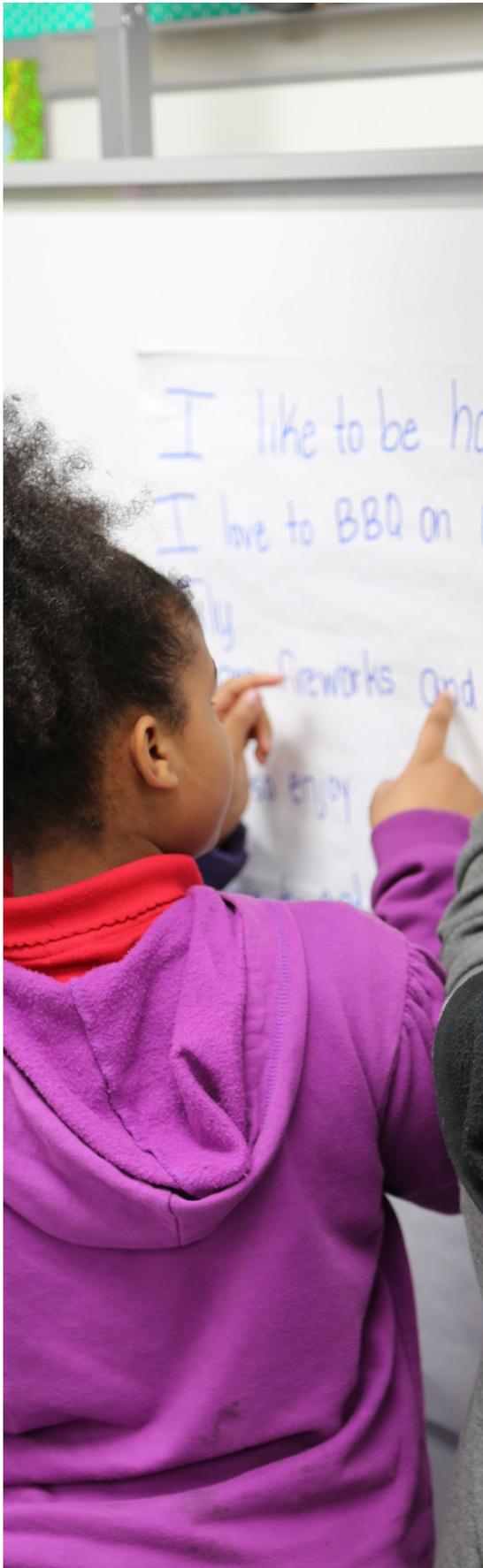
Lesson 2 “Me? An elf?”

English Language Arts	Elementary	ELA.K.B3B, ELA.K.B8A, ELA.1.B3B, ELA.1.B6E, ELA.1.B7E, ELA.2.B3B, ELA.2.B6D&E, ELA.3.B3B, ELA.3.B6D&E, ELA.3.B7E, ELA.4.B3B, ELA.4.B6D&E, ELA.4.B7E, ELA.5.B3B, ELA.5.B6D&E, ELA.5.B7E, ELA.5.B10C
	Middle	ELA.6.B2A, ELA.6.B2B, ELA.6.B28, ELA.7.B2A, ELA.7.B2B, ELA.8.B2A, ELA.8.B2B
	High	ELA.I.B2C, ELA.I.B8, ELA.I.B12A, ELA.II.B2C, ELA.II.B8, ELA.III.B2B, ELA.IV.B8
Art	Elementary	ART.K.B2A&C, ART.K.B3B, ART.1.B2B, ART.2.B2B, ART.2.B3A, ART.3.B3A&c, ART.4.B2A&C, ART.4.B3A, ART.5.B2A&C

Lesson 3 “My culture”

Theatre	Elementary	THEATRE.K.B4A, THEATRE.1.B2B, THEATRE.1.B3D, THEATRE.1.B5A, THEATRE.2.B1D, THEATRE.2.B2B, THEATRE.2.B4A, THEATRE.3.B1D, THEATRE.3B2B, THEATRE.3.B5A, THEATRE.4.B1E&G, THEATRE.4.B2A, THEATRE.5.B1E
Social Studies	Elementary	SS.K.B11B, SS.K.B12A&B, SS.1.B15A, SS.1.B18A, SS.2.B16A&B, SS.2B19A, SS.3.B13A&B, SS.3.B18A, SS.4.B19A&B, SS.4.B22C, SS.5.22A&B, SS.5.B25C
	Middle	SS.6.15A-F, SS.6.19A-B

TUTS EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



TUTS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Theatre Under the Stars School-Based Programming runs the spectrum of arts-based learning, challenging students to discover their world through the art of musical theatre.

Looking to bring a theatre artist into your classroom?

Drama and Discovery: Arts Integration Residencies: Bring curriculum to life by combining drama, dance, and musical techniques with core subjects, students have the opportunity to experience learning in a variety of ways, therefore deepening their understanding, emphasizing innovative thinking and building confidence.

Looking to make your theatre production shine?

Musical Theatre Artists in Residence: With the guidance of professional musical theatre artists and educators, students will sing, dance, and act, their way to a better understanding of creativity collaboration, and confidence. This program allows Teaching Artists and Classroom or Fine Arts Teachers to work together to create a musical theatre production.

Looking for Professional Development?

Great Ideas for Teachers (G.I.F.T.): TUTS' Teaching Artists work with school faculty to introduce innovative tools and skills that will incorporate the arts into their classroom-team building, adding arts to core curriculum, career skills for students and more!

For more information please contact community@tuts.com or call **713-558-8803**

TUTS NO BOUNDARIES

Looking for information regarding Accessibility programs and services?

No Boundaries: Theatre Under the Stars is committed to creating an environment where musical theatre can be fully enjoyed by all of our patrons. Through our No Boundaries program, we offer special events tied into each show such as Workshops and touch Tours. Working in tandem with the Hobby Center we are able to offer a variety of accessibility services and programming to our patrons.

For more information please contact Elizabeth England elizabeth@tuts.com or visit tuts.com/accessibility

TUTS THE RIVER PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS CENTER

Looking to bring an artist into your special education classroom?

Community Arts Residencies: Primarily for special education students or for combining general and special education classes together. These semester long TEKS based residencies available are available in ART, DANCE, MUSICAL, THEATRE, MUSIC & MME and MUSIC. These disciplines engage students through active learning, critical thinking and innovative problem solving. Each semester concludes with a demonstration and/or performance showcasing what students have learned over the course of the residency.

For more information please contact Eileen Edmonds eileen@tuts.com or call **713-558-8812**

2019/20 SEASON: STUDENT MATINÉES

At Theatre Under The Stars, the Musicals for Young Audiences Program is just one of the many ways we have to introduce the magic theatre to new audiences each season.



September 18, 2019 @ 10:00 AM
Recommended for grades 6-12



February 26, 2020 @ 10:00 AM
Recommended for grades 6-12



SPECIAL EVENING PERFORMANCE!
October 8, 2019 @ 7:30 PM
Recommended for grades 11-12

School groups are also eligible for \$30 seats for other performances.
For details please contact Courtney Wilson at courtney@tuts.com



April 22, 2020 @ 10:00 AM
Recommended for grades 6-12



December 18, 2019 @ 10:00 AM
Recommended for grades 3-12