

GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

How to Use a Study Guide

Preparing

Consider the interests and needs of your students.

- How much do they know about playgoing and theater?
- What are their genders, ages, backgrounds and life experiences?
- How can you tap into the mission of your school to focus students on key themes and topics?
- Review your school's field trip procedures, and communicate with lead teacher or administrator.

Review the Study Guide on your own to acquaint yourself with the synopsis and setting and to identify themes and topics that might be of interest to students.

Select, adapt or come up with your own questions to prompt discussions.

- The goals in Pre-Show Sessions: to provide a context for what playgoers will be seeing and to help them **make personal connections** to the themes and topics of the play.
- Depending on the type of session (PRE or POST), review the DISCUSSION POINT and POST-SHOW DISCUSSION questions. Think up your own!

Guiding Pre-Show Discussions

Read the synopsis and setting aloud as the group reads along silently. Have group members identify the characters and what they've learned about each from the synopsis. Have them summarize what happens in the play. (Note: To avoid revealing important plot points, synopses in study guides do not describe whole storylines.)

Invite students to focus on specific themes and topics. Depending on the amount of time you have, and which sections you are going to skip, skim, or explore in depth, you can

- Summarize the key points of the guide and have the group discuss 1-2 points
- Ask them to read a section on their own and identify and discuss main ideas
- Read a paragraph from a theme/topic aloud as they read along and have them discuss the ideas in depth.

Pose selected questions.

- If students are not used to engaging in group conversations, invite them to share their thoughts with a partner then ask for volunteers to share with the large group.
- Remember to create a climate of respect, paraphrase, ask follow up questions to elicit details, weave common threads together for the students, and encourage all to share.

Audience Etiquette: If this is the first time group members are attending a play, be sure to share and discuss information on *Audience Etiquette* in the study guide.

Guiding Post-Show Discussions

The purpose of Post-Show sessions is to help students clarify, deepen, and share what they experienced while attending the play.

Ask everyone to come up with a word or phrase that comes to mind when they think of the play.

- This allows everyone to speak and reinforces how we all have individual and equally valid responses to works of art such as plays.

Use selected questions to elicit responses to the play from the POST-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS in the study guide, or your own.

If relevant, invite students to focus on specific themes and topics in the Study Guide and respond to DISCUSSION POINT questions.

Remember to create a climate of respect, paraphrase, ask follow up questions to elicit details, weave common threads together for the students, and encourage all to share.