THE 5TH AVENUE THEATRE’S RISING STAR PROJECT
AND THE SHERI AND LES BILLER FAMILY FOUNDATION
PROUDLY PRESENT

RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN’S

CAROUSEL

THE 5TH AVENUE THEATRE
2014 - 2015 SEASON
CURRICULUM RESOURCES

PHOTO BY LAUREN WOLBAUM
Rodgers & Hammerstein’s Carousel as a Text

Themes and Connections

Like Our Town and West Side Story, Rodgers and Hammerstein’s Carousel (1945) is regarded as a masterwork in theater. It is a vital work which reflects a human experience that is troubled, hopeful—and profoundly American.

Still, any teacher will admit that introducing a text as ‘a classic’ does little to guarantee that it will be a “hit” with our students—or even a text that engages their interests and imaginations. Though it was created in a world somewhat removed from our own, as a musical, Carousel hopefully has the novelty of song, dance, and drama to use in hooking in student interest.

When broken open, Carousel can reveal layers upon layers of teachable themes, literary devices, and potential connections to issues that elicit our students’ opinions:

- personal responsibility and adulthood
- cycles of violence and cycles of poverty
- symbolism in theatrical productions
- gender norms and nonconformity
- music and melody as “texts” and narrative
- 19th century America vs. post-WWII America vs. present-day America
- community (structure) vs. individualism (freedom)

As with Shakespeare, and Wilder, and all other dramatic texts which we introduce to our students, a work of musical theater also wants its text to not only be heard, but experienced as performed by others. We are excited for you to extend your classroom into our theater, and look forward to sharing our reading of this important work. And we are even more excited for Carousel to serve as a vehicle for analysis, discussion, and connection among your students.

Orlando Morales
Director of Rising Star Project and Internships
The 5th Avenue Theatre
The CCSS authors assert that curriculum should be comprised of a diverse array of classic and contemporary literature as well as challenging informational texts in a range of subjects. To this end, interaction with musical theater performances and dramatic texts can serve a vital role in preparing K-12 students to reach core learning objectives while introducing students to an important aspect of America’s cultural heritage.

**Theatrical Arts**

**Mise-en-scène** - The visual composition of a production involves lighting, scenic design, costuming, hair and makeup. Each visual aspect of a musical production is carefully designed to serve the telling of a story. Students can be asked to interpret the choices of the designers. Styles of analysis and inquiry can be borrowed from Visual Arts.

- How did this production use lighting to reflect the character’s emotion?
- How does this character costume reveal aspects of her character and point-of-view?

**Music** - A musical play often employs both songs and instrumental pieces to move a story forward. Students can be asked to explain the purpose or effect of music in specific parts of the play. Students can analyze melody, style, mood, and rhythm.

- Why does this character begin singing?
- Would the play be different if he continued in spoken dialogue? Does this character change her mind during the song? How do you know? Students could also be asked to consider sound effects or the use of “sound design.”

**Dramatic Text** - The words and dialogue that are used to tell the story. Some consider this to also incorporate non-verbal physical aspects of an actor’s performance. Students can be asked to analyze not only the literary aspects of a script and text, but the manner in which an actor delivers the text (incorporating communicative and public speaking learning objectives). Song lyrics can be examined for rhyme scheme, structure, and imagery; or compared to “straight” dialogue. The dramatic concepts of character objective, dramatic action, and subtext can serve as alternate ways to approach asking students to make inferences based on the text.

- How does this character change over the course of the play?

**Dance & Movement** - Stage directions, “blocking” (the intentional positioning of actors on a stage), choreography, and fight sequences can be analyzed in terms of style, purpose, and storytelling.

- How was the actor able to express sadness through movement?
- What relationship do you see between the two characters based on how they are standing? After reading this script, what direction and blocking would you give your actors?
From 1943 to 1959, Richard Rodgers (music) and Oscar Hammerstein (words) were the reigning masters of the Broadway musical. They wrote nine innovative shows, including five classics: Oklahoma!, Carousel, South Pacific, The King and I, and The Sound of Music. They also wrote a film musical, State Fair, and a musical for television, Cinderella — both of which have been successfully adapted for the stage.

After the unexpected triumph of Oklahoma! — their first collaboration — they knew that whatever they wrote next would be measured against it, probably unfavorably. The movie producer Sam Goldwyn called Dick Rodgers with some unsolicited advice. “You know what you should do next?” he said. “What?” asked Rodgers. “Shoot yourself.”

Instead of taking the easy way out, they searched for source material that would point them in a new direction. The Oklahoma! producers suggested an adaptation of Ferenc Molnár's 1909 play Liliom, about a lowlife carousel barker who mistreats his wife, dies during a robbery attempt, is given a second chance to redeem himself, fails, and is sent to Hell.

Well, that was certainly something different. They responded with a curt “No.” But something in the story stayed with them, and they began to see its possibilities. Of course, there would have to be major adjustments to make the story suitable for the musical stage, and to reflect Hammerstein's essentially hopeful outlook. The location was shifted from gloomy Budapest to New England in the 1870s. Billy (formerly Liliom) would be shown to be worthy of redemption. The title was changed to Carousel. And the ending was altered to add an element of hope, even inspiration.

Rodgers and Hammerstein were nervous on the day Molnár himself came to an early rehearsal, to give or withhold his approval. At the end, Molnár rushed up to the worried team and exclaimed, “What you have done is so beautiful. And you know what I like best? The ending!”

Carousel was a major hit, winning nearly unanimous critical raves. It ran 890 performances on Broadway, followed by a two-year national tour and, over the years, several Broadway revivals. In 1999, TIME Magazine named Carousel the best musical of the 20th century.

Despite many moments of high-spirited fun, Carousel is the most serious of the Rodgers & Hammerstein musicals (as well as Rodgers's personal favorite). As Stephen Sondheim famously remarked: “Oklahoma! is about a picnic; Carousel is about life and death.”

by ALBERT EVANS, Artistic and Music Associate
RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN’S CAROUSEL

SYNOPSIS

The time is 1873. The place, a small fishing village on the rocky New England coastline. Billy Bigalow, the handsome and swaggering barker for Mrs. Mullin’s carousel in the local amusement park, meets Julie Jordan, a lovely young working girl at the nearby mill, when Julie and her friend Carrie Pipperidge come to the carousel. Billy and Julie fall in love and are soon married.

Everyone, it seems is against this union – the townspeople caution Julie and Billy is warned and even threatened by his boss, Mrs. Mullin, who is jealously in love with him. Because of the marriage, Billy loses his job. Thereupon he becomes sullen and difficult, raging bitterly and bullying his wife – until Julie quietly informs Billy that he is about to become a father.

Desperately anxious to provide for the coming child, Billy is persuaded by Jigger, a shiftless sailor, to take part in a hold-up. The robbery attempt is thwarted; Jigger escapes, but Billy is caught by Mr. Bascombe, the would-be victim, who vows to hand him over to the police with the prospect of a long prison term. Cornered, disgraced and terrified for Julie and their unborn child, Billy kills himself. Julie arrives on the scene and cradles Billy as he dies in her arms.

Fifteen years pass. Billy, escorted by a Heavenly Friend, arrives in the backyard of Heaven. Here he meets The Starkeeper, who informs him that he will never get into Heaven until he redeems himself. After some argument, Billy is given a chance. He is allowed to return to Earth for one day, during which he must perform one good deed. Afforded a glimpse of Louise, his lonely and unhappy fifteen-year-old daughter, Billy steals a star to give to her at their first meeting. But back on earth, he is still the rough blunder. Louise is shy and won’t accept his gift. Unable to reach her in any other way, Billy slaps his daughter – but the sting feels miraculously like a kiss to the girl. Louise explains this to her mother, Julie, who also sees the star that Billy has left behind, and instinctively, Julie understands.

Nevertheless, Billy has not yet performed his good deed, and the slap should have been his final straw. But Billy persuades the Starkeeper to give him one last chance. Unseen, Billy watched Louise at her high school graduation. He observes his daughter’s self-doubts, her insecurities. Invisibly, spiritually, Billy reaches out to her; he urges her to believe in herself, and he is filled with pride as he watches his daughter blossom with confidence. Turning to Julie, Billy says simply, “I love you, Julie. Know that I love you.” And Julie, somehow, hears him. She joins Louise and the rest of the townsfolk in singing “You’ll Never Walk Alone”…as Billy heads towards heaven.


RISING STAR PROJECT STUDENTS IN REHEARSAL FOR CAROUSEL

PHOTO BY LAUREN WOLBAUM
Billy Bigelow
A barker for a carousel. *In the past, a barker was person whose primary job was to attract customers by calling out to people passing by.*

Julie Jordan
A millworker, in love with Billy

Carrie Pipperidge
A millworker and friend of Julie’s, in love with Enoch Snow

Enoch Snow
A fisherman, in love with Carrie Pipperidge

Nettie Fowler
Julie’s cousin and owner of a small seaside spa

Jigger Craigin
A disreputable whaler, Billy’s friend

Louise Bigelow
Billy and Julie’s daughter

Mrs. Mullin
Owner of the carousel and Billy’s employer

David Bascombe
Owner of the town mill and Julie’s employer

The Starkeeper
A bureaucrat who inhabits the afterlife

Writers will choose character names very carefully—and often, in a way that will reveal something about a character before he or she is even introduced. Sometimes, a character’s name will have poetic meaning, or will reflect a character’s personality in the way it sounds.

What can you infer from any of these character names? For each character, what kind of impression does his or her name leave with you?
Please do...

* Silence or turn off your cellphone
* Clap after songs or when there is a blackout
* Laugh or cry at appropriate times
* Stay until the end of the show

Please do not...

* Use or talk on your cellphone or any other electronic device during the show
* Put your feet up on the seat in front of you
* Eat or drink during the performance
* Whisper, talk, or sing/hum during the show

CONTENT ADVISORIES

Sexual References: The song “June is Bustin’ Out All Over” celebrates spring courtship rituals: Nettie observes that “all the rams that chase the ewe sheep/Are determined there’ll be new sheep/And the ewe sheep aren’t even keepin’ score!” In addition, she sings, “From Pennobscot to Augusty/All the boys are feelin’ lusty,’ And the girls ain’t even puttin’ up a fight.”

It is implied that Billy has had a relationships with his former employer, Mrs. Mullin. She tries to get Billy to come back to his job as a barker for her carousel; however, she only wants him if he agrees to leave Julie, and Billy says, “I know what you want.”

Violence: Billy threatens to hit Mrs. Mullin and threatens Carrie and Julie as well (for looking as if they are sorry for him).

After she and Billy are married, Julie confides in Carrie:

Julie: Last Monday he hit me.

Carrie: Did you hit him back?
Julie: No.
Carrie: Whyn’t you leave him?
Julie: I don’t want to. Y’see, he’s unhappy ‘cause he ain’t workin’. That’s really why he hit me on Monday.
Carrie: Fine reason fer hittin’ you. Beats his wife ‘cause he ain’t workin’.

During the first act, a robbery goes wrong. The intended victim disarms one of the robbers, who runs; he then pulls a gun on the other perpetrator, who stabs himself (onstage) to avoid surrendering to the police.

During the second act, a father argues with his daughter and then hits her.

Adult Language: The language is very mild, consisting of a couple of “hells”, “damns,” and exclamations of “God!”

Drugs/Alcohol: Billy suggests he and Julie go for a glass of beer.
The fictional events of Carousel occur in the year 1873 in a coastal community in Maine. Initially, Rodgers and Hammerstein considered setting the story in a Louisiana Creole community.

1873 - The fictional events of Carousel occur in the year 1873 in a coastal community in Maine. Initially, Rodgers and Hammerstein considered setting the story in a Louisiana Creole community.

1909 - The play Liliom by Ferenc Molnár premieres in Budapest.

1940 - An English translation of Liliom plays in New York City and is seen by both Oscar Hammerstein and Richard Rodgers.

1941 - United States joins World War II.

1943, March - The musical Oklahoma! by Rodgers and Hammerstein opens on Broadway in New York City. It will run for 2,212 performances (closing in 1948).

1943, October - Rodgers and Hammerstein obtain the rights to adapt Liliom.

1945, April - Carousel opens on Broadway.

1945, May-August - World War II subsides and ends.

1947 - Carousel closes on Broadway after 890 performances.

1956 - A film version of Carousel is made, starring Gordon MacRae and Shirley Jones (popular actors at the time).
A historical map of coastal Maine
The 5th Avenue Theatre produces shows from the ground up. These shows are made just for you. Every element is created for 5th Avenue audiences and is hand-crafted, one of a kind, labor intensive and unique to the production. Designers have made deliberate choices about what the show will look like, how it will feel, and how an audience will see and experience it. The creative process is remarkable and quite beautiful in and of itself, and also bears the fruit of the extraordinary shows on the magnificent 5th Avenue stage. As RENT and Little Shop of Horrors costume designer Pete Rush described, “The role as a designer is as a storyteller. As a designer I have my piece of it. How can my work illuminate the story? It’s a joy to take a story and write the hidden chapter.”

I sat down with some of Seattle’s best theater designers to find out more about their work.

**Scenic Designers**

One of the challenges in scenic design is creating a set that will house multiple scenes in different locations. As Grease scenic designer Christopher Mumaw explains, “You’re trying to find similarities in dissimilar things. At looking at vastly different places—what’s similar to all of them to tie them together.” The nice thing about theater is that it can be abstract. “I try not to mimic life too much because it doesn’t leave room for the imagination,” says Mumaw. “It’s amazing what your mind will see when you put shapes in an empty space. What is that going to read as to an audience? We’re not trying to describe everything. It’s about what’s not there sometimes.” Carousel scenic designer Martin Christoffel takes it further saying, “The beauty of theater is that a chair doesn’t have to be a chair. It can be a crate, a stool, maybe even an actor.” Beyond creating a believable, engaging space that will set the place of the story, the scenic designer needs to decide how the actors will live in the space. Where will they enter and exit? What pathways will there be around sets and props on the stage for the performers to travel around? Scenic and lighting designer (Oliver! and Pirates of Penzance) Tom Sturge explains that, “the scenic designer’s role is to block the show and create traffic patterns that can be used in the show. Making the basic layout where actors can go. Where they can get off and on stage.” It’s a delicate balance that Grey Gardens and Oklahoma scenic designer Matthew Smucker articulates, “Design needs to be both a surprise and inevitable at the same time. It’s a paradox of sorts, seeming effortless, yet also the only unique solution. It’s a good thing when you don’t think of the designer.”
Lighting Designers
As Tom Sturge explains, “Beyond the basic job of illumination and visibility, the lighting designer plays the role that a cinematographer would in a film. You can’t zoom in, but through lighting, you can create a sense of a close up and focus on specific things.” He went on to explain how the job of a lighting designer is to create the environment and specific time of day. For example, in *Pirates of Penzance*, Act 1 is set in the day and Act 2 takes place at night. The lighting designer has to make that work—creating the sense of day and night, all the while maintaining good visibility. In Shakespeare, tragedies are set at night, and comedies are set during the day. This is all taken into consideration in the lighting, clueing the audience into when the events are occurring. “Theater as an art form is so vital. To be able to create an environment on stage—getting people to believe they’re somewhere they’re not and becoming a part of it,” Sturge explains, “Getting to create this is awesome. I feel honored to have been doing this for 30 years.” It’s not as simple as setting up lights and walking away, Sturge explained that, “every minute of a show that you see takes at least an hour of work.”

Costume Designers
“You see a lot of information immediately when an actor walks on stage. Based off of what they’re wearing, you can tell more about who they are, where they’re coming from, where they’re going, what they’re doing,” explains Pete Rush. *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well & Living in Paris* costume designer Harmony Arnold explains the magic of costume, “Clothes carry a kind of personal history, memory and emotion. The frayed edges of Grandpa’s flannel? Magical.” Beyond the magic in the details of costumes, there are some physical and practical implications. Arnold goes on to explain, “My medium is a living, breathing, sweating human being. Being aware of an actor’s high arch or back issue are all considerations.” It’s important to realize these costumes just don’t appear. *Oliver!* and *Carousel* costume designer Sarah Nash Gates explains, “The average person doesn’t realize how much research goes on. We aim to use authentic pattern shape and fabric. You can’t just buy this stuff. The designer has a vision, and a lot of talented people create it.” She went on to tell me that at The 5th, “100 costumes is nothing. 150 to 200 costumes is normal. Think about how many times the chorus changes!” Pete Rush explains further, “It takes a couple of weeks to build one dress, and for every one garment, chances are we’ve tried four others. Not to mention, every single item on stage has been in my hands at least five times—stockings, gloves, everything. It takes an extraordinary amount of time.”

Process and Collaboration
As 5th Avenue Producing Artistic Director, Bill Berry says, “the friend of creativity is time.” So, at The 5th, the creative team is selected and hired a year before the production begins. This allows time for percolation of ideas. Each one of the designers I talked with spoke to the importance of research and taking time for ideas to grow and develop. Harmony Arnold takes an unstructured approach. “People are so overscheduled,” she says, “Unstructured time gives freedom to be creative. So, I like to secure myself some wandering time. The idea is not to get inspiration, just to wander. I go to antique stores, the Frye Art Museum, troll along Madison Valley. I’m usually out and about and off the internet.” Martin Christoffel says, “I prefer to read fiction than non-fiction for my research. It exercises the imagination.” Collaboration is also key in the process. Christoffel explains, “Collaboration goes beyond director and designer. Scenic designers have to work with the lighting designer and costume designer. They all need to live in the same world with the same colors and influences, or at least play well together.”

By Heidi Staub, PR and Communications Associate
Martin Christoffel’s scenic design and Sarah Nash Gates’ costume design for the upcoming production of Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *Carousel.*
We first see Julie Jordan at the carousel, plainly transfixed by the handsome barker. She’s there with Carrie, her friend from work. They are an odd pair. Carrie is giddy, outgoing, and excited by the colors, the lights, the carnival atmosphere. But Julie is—as Carrie puts it—a “queer one,” quiet, inward, not much given to talk. That may be why Billy notices her—standing apart is her way of standing out.

We learn little about her. She is apparently parentless; she has an older cousin, Nettie, who runs a waterfront restaurant; she weaves fabric in a textile mill where she relieves the monotony by daydreaming; she has little experience with the opposite sex and little chance of gaining it—the mill girls must abide by a strict curfew.

Julie, when we meet her, is naïve. But (like all Rodgers & Hammerstein heroines) she is also strong and resilient and eager to take on the world. The first night she meets Billy she makes the dangerous decision to cast her lot with him, knowing this will separate her from the community. But her desire overrules her common sense. As she later sings, “What’s the use of wonderin’ if the ending will be sad . . . He’s your feller and you love him—that’s all there is to that.”

Her marriage to Billy will be troubled, and troubling. Modern audiences flinch from the abuse she endures, though it’s never seen, only reported, and she makes it clear to her friends and to him that she is not afraid of Billy. It’s also clear that Hammerstein strongly disapproves of her husband’s behavior: one bad choice after another. In fact, the central question of the show concerns Billy’s doubtful redemption: can he make amends to Julie and their daughter, stop the cycle of violence, step off the carousel?

Julie, alone, never wavers. She sees the end from the beginning, makes her choice, and accepts her hard life. Her story invites us to consider issues that confront women and men in our own time, eternal questions of human relationships and the consequences of blindly repeating the mistakes of previous generations.

“One of the most frequent questions I am asked is: ‘WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE OF ALL YOUR MUSICALS?’

MY ANSWER IS CAROUSEL...
Cat and a fantasy. It's also a morality play — the important action takes place within the souls of its troubled characters. Billy's conflict is wrenching: the struggle to free his good, true self from the evil rising from his narcissistic self-image, a mask which keeps him from loving Julie honestly. He's still a boy, and a dangerous one, solving all conflicts with sexuality and charm, and if those fail, violence.

Billy resents any and all authority figures: his boss, the police, the courts, the community, Julie, and finally God. For Billy, respectability is a trap, a job is a cage.

How did he get this way? We don't know. We know even less about Billy's past than Julie's. She's rooted in the community; he arrives with the carnival. From his behavior, we might guess that he comes from a violent home, a tough neighborhood, maybe he struck out on his own (or was pushed out) while very young—but that's all speculation. When we meet him, he's an attractive thug who takes his pick of the pretty girls he lifts on and off the carousel.

One evening he meets a young mill worker, Julie. They will spend the night together, forfeiting their jobs. Billy smugly forces Julie to make the first move, asking what she wants from him. Her reply: "I don't want you to be alone." No girl has ever said anything like that to the great Billy Bigelow, and instead of falling into bed, they fall into conversation—about anything, everything.

This is the first time Billy and Julie have revealed to anyone, however cautiously, their inner thoughts. Billy shows himself to be unexpectedly reflective and vulnerable ("Two little people, you and I—we don't count at all.") Later, he takes this new self-exploration further when he imagines being a father to a son, though even then he can't break away from his narcissism; he sings not "I wonder what he'll be like?" but instead, "I wonder what he'll think of me?"

Billy and Julie are evenly matched. They're both stubborn, rebellious, deeply in love, yet afraid to say "I love you." How their relationship plays out—from the rocky coast of Maine to the starry reaches of Heaven—makes for one of the most affecting, disturbing, and glorious stories in the musical theater canon.
THE CHARACTER BEAT

In a scene, a **character beat** is the smallest unit of action or motivation. Beats can be long or short—but a new beat is understood to begin when something shifts in a character’s state of mind. Analyzing a scene, beat by beat, is fundamental to the work of being an actor.

In a musical, play, or film, a “scene” is made out of a series of character beats. An “act” is made out of a series of scenes.

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A character beat can be verbal or non-verbal, so we can’t always identify a beat from just dialogue. An actor can create a new beat through facial expressions or body language.

When trying to identify a character beat, there are three dimensions that theater artists consider. Thinking about these dimensions will help you determine if a shift has happened:

**THE THREE DIMENSIONS OF A CHARACTER BEAT**

1) **Objective**: The specific, limited thing that a character is trying to accomplish at this moment in the play. What the character wants right now.

2) **Obstacle**: The specific, limited thing, at this moment in the play, that prevents the character from getting what he or she wants.

3) **Action**: The tactic the character takes, or the strategy the character uses to overcome his or her obstacle. Most often, it is the means by which the character tries to manipulate other characters into removing the obstacle to his or her objective.

**Character beat changes:**
One way to identify the end of a beat is to look for when a character changes his or her action. He or she may change because either the objective or the obstacle has changed, or because the previous action has been unsuccessful; either way, the character chooses a new action and a new beat begins. Sometimes this is called a change in tactics or a new tactic.

**CHARACTER THROUGH-LINE:**
The definition of a character for the entire length of the play. It is the explanation for each of the character’s actions throughout the play; or, the thing that each action apparently has in common. This is also known as a...

**SUPER-OBJECTIVE:**
The thing a character wants for the entire play; a desire that underlies and explains everything the character does in the play.

*Characters also usually have a main obstacle and a main action. The main obstacle and the main action also last the entire length of the play.*
GUIDED SCENE ANALYSIS
Read the excerpt from the “Bench Scene” in Carousel. Identify the character beats that happen in the text. Mark each beat change with a pencil.

Pick one specific character beat and describe the following using specific examples:

1) The character’s objective

2) The character’s obstacle

2) The character’s action

BE THE DIRECTOR
After analyzing this scene, what direction and guidance would you give an actor before he or she reads or performs the text? Write a supported paragraph describing some of your specific choices as a director.
SYMBOLISM

**SYMBOL** – an object, animate or inanimate, that represents or stands for something else.

**SYMBOLISM, SYMBOLIZE** – the use of symbols to represent an idea or meaning.

Musical theater, like so many other art forms, relies on symbolism to communicate ideas and help tell the story. *Every* element of a musical has the potential to be symbolic: *Words that are spoken, colors, set elements, props, melodies, costumes, lighting, sound effects*—every aspect of a musical is designed to help tell the story and communicate specific ideas.

Theater artists strive to make every instance of symbolism intentional—regardless of whether or not every symbol will be consciously “read” by an audience. Often, symbols are layered on top of each other:

The script for *Carousel* describes a moment of *magical realism* when Billy steals a star from “Up There” (heaven). As a symbol, stars are very common in our culture—yet still very evocative. **List examples of things that stars can represent:**

In The 5th Avenue Theatre’s production of *Carousel*, stars are represented by incandescent light bulbs. (Coincidentally, light bulbs were being developed during the same historical time period when *Carousel* is set, 1870s). **List examples of things that the light bulb represents in our culture:**

Why would a theater designer choose to use light bulbs when a script describes “stars”?
FOR TEACHERS: CONNECTING TO THE TEXT

SYMBOLISM IN CAROUSEL
DISCUSSION FRAMEWORK

A. Describe the characteristics of a carousel

PROMPT: Brainstorm a list of things that a carousel can symbolize. Try to also think beyond what a carousel looks like, and also consider how a carousel functions.

TARGET RESPONSES:
Cycles, infinity
Fate, inevitability
Leisure, amusement, fantasy, escape
Motion, freedom
Wealth, prosperity
Danger, exoticism
The past, old times, outdated forms of entertainment

B. Big Ideas: In musical theater, symbols are intentionally crafted; symbols often have layers of meaning or represent multiple ideas simultaneously

PROMPT: Why is a carousel the central symbol of this play?

TARGET CONNECTIONS:

In many ways, Billy tries to escape from the self-destructive cycles that have defined his life

Similarly, many characters seek the carousel to escape inevitable aspects of their own lives

C. Connection to personal experience / Assessment

PROMPT: If the story of your life was adapted into a film or a musical full of symbolism, what symbol would become most significant? Explain why using specific examples.
RISING STAR PROJECT is a tuition-free program that gives students the chance to experience what it is like to produce and perform a show on the 5th Avenue Theatre mainstage. This year's production of Rodgers and Hammerstein’s Carousel will be entirely student-performed and run by a student technical crew trained and mentored by a team of dedicated theater professionals. The students use the sets and costumes from the 5th Avenue production and recreate the show while learning the ins and outs of theater production at the professional level. The production is coordinated, marketed, developed and produced by a student administrative team with coaching from the 5th Avenue Theatre staff.

The Rising Star Project is made possible through a generous grant from the Sheri and Les Biller Family Foundation.

RISING STAR PROJECT MISSION

The Rising Star Project uses the resources and professional knowledge that exist at The 5th Avenue Theatre to help every young person achieve a fulfilling career, a stronger sense of self, and confidence in their ability to inspire positive change in the world.

Within this mission, we endeavor to:

1) take a proactive role in creating a theater community which is inclusive and representative of our region;

2) provide students with direct mentorship from working theater professionals, introducing them to the diversity of viable careers in the theater industry;

3) create a collaborative and authentic learning environment in regard to professional practices and expectations;

4) connect students to American musicals not only as vehicles for self-expression, but also as significant artistic achievements, rich texts, and unique expressions of our nation’s history and heritage; and

5) support classroom learning by providing quality arts-based education experiences for students—both at The 5th and in-residence throughout the community and in areas where opportunities for arts education are limited.

All Washington state students ages 14 to 18 are eligible to apply for the Rising Star Project. Applications for the 2016 project will be available in May 2015. Please visit www.5thavenue.org/education/youth for more information.
We continually strive to develop school programs that enrich classroom learning in all subject areas. We always welcome your comments, suggestions, and concerns.

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We continually strive to develop school programs that enrich classroom learning in all subject areas. We always welcome your comments, suggestions, and concerns.