

MISS BENNET: CHRISTMAS AT PEMBERLEY

Conceived by **Lauren Gunderson & Margot Melcon** | Directed by **Kimberly Senior**
November 13 - December 16, 2018 | Quadracci Powerhouse

TEACHER'S GUIDE

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SUGGESTED TEACHING & CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

- 1.) Adapting and Modernizing a Play
- 2.) Researching Regency England
- 3.) Using Voice in Letter Writing

This Teacher's Guide is designed to be used in the classroom along with The Rep's Play Guide for *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*. These are some suggested activities for your classroom. The Play Guide is available online at <https://www.milwaukeekeerep.com/Tickets-Events/201819-Season/Miss-Bennet-Christmas-At-Pemberley/Miss-Bennet-Christmas-At-Pemberley-PlayGuide/>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Should finding love be an ultimate goal in life? Why or why not? What other things are important to have a "successful" life?
2. What expectations should families have for each other? How much should one's family help dictate their choices?
3. What expectations do you feel society, family, your peers, etc. place on you because of your gender? What are your thoughts about these expectations?
4. Have you ever had an experience that changed the way you viewed the world or your life? What was it and how did it change your perception of yourself and others?
5. What is the correlation between wealth and opportunity in life? Is wealth necessary to have opportunities? Why or why not?



AUSTEN'S LANGUAGE

Before attending the play, either read the book or a passage from *Pride and Prejudice* aloud to the class. Discuss Austen's use of language. Do you notice any patterns or rhythms to the speech of the characters? How is the dialogue different than how we speak today? How would you characterize the people in this story? What might we expect when we see the play?

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE IN POP CULTURE

Many adaptations and pieces inspired by *Pride and Prejudice* have been made throughout the years, including *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*. View one of these adaptations as a class after reading *Pride and Prejudice* or the synopsis in the PlayGuide (see Play Guide for some suggestions of films to view). Have students create a compare and contrast chart between the world created by Austen, the world created by the filmmakers/television producers, and the world created by the playwrights. How does the story that Austen created 200 years ago translate to a different context? How true to the style of Austen do the playwrights of *Miss Bennet* stay? Compare the play, the novel, and the adaptation you've examined.

HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

In *Christmas at Pemberley*, Elizabeth introduces a Christmas tree into the family celebrations, a tradition that had not yet come into widespread fashion throughout England. Students can research the origin of one of their favorite holiday traditions (any holiday is fine!). Where did the tradition originate? Why? How has it changed over time and place?

After students have finished their research, have them complete a visual aid and an oral presentation to share with the class. Explore the various traditions together, and learn more about each other's families and backgrounds!

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LETTER WRITING

Letters and letter writing is important in the play, and lead to some misunderstandings and mishaps between the characters. Have students write a letter in the voice of one of the characters in the play. To whom are they writing? What are they writing about? What might the outcome be? Once students have written their letters, have them share with a partner or the class in their best oral interpretation of the character they have chosen!

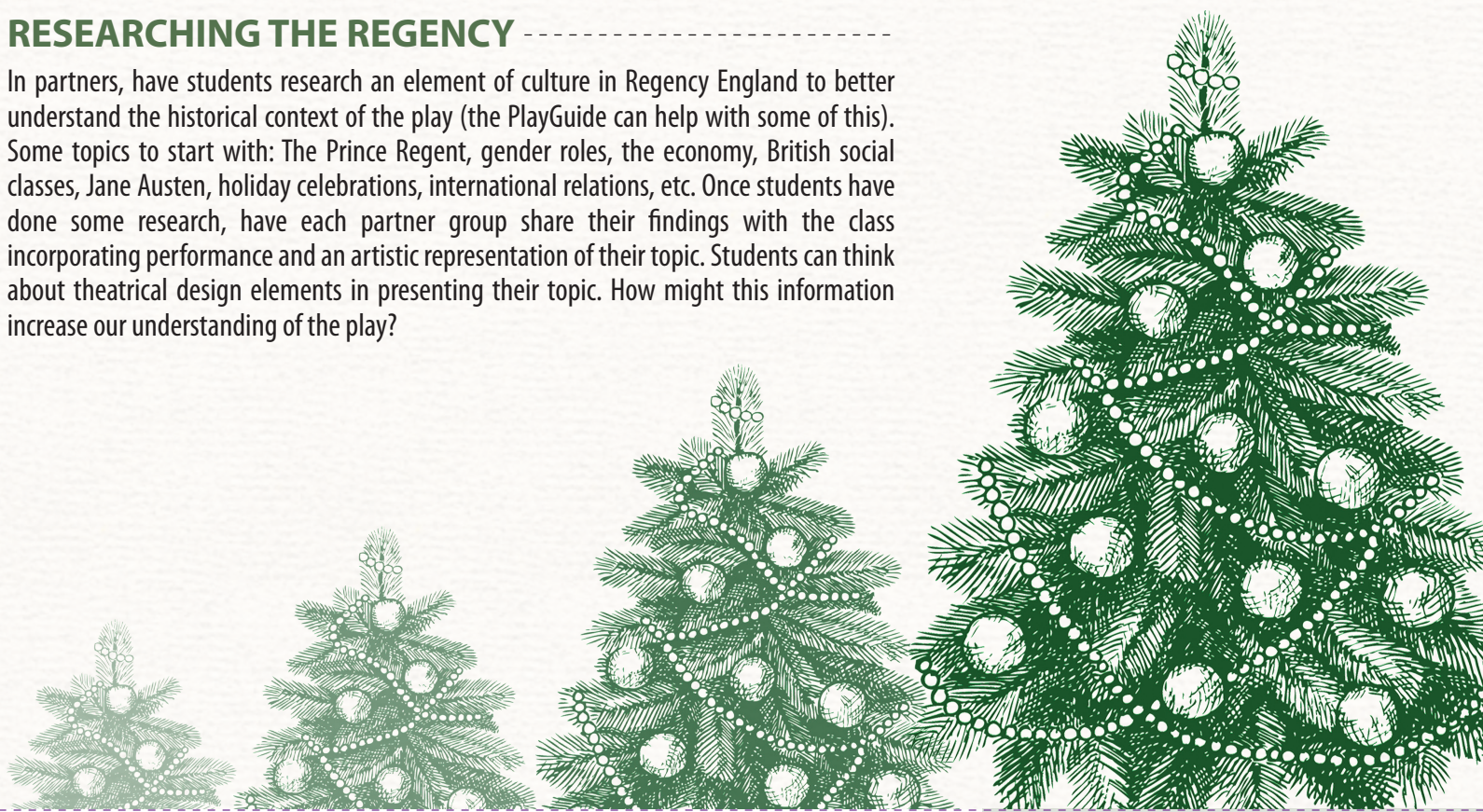
TRY YOUR HAND AT ADAPTING

Have students review one of the scenes from the play as a class. Then break students into small writing groups. In their groups, students should rewrite the scene, bringing it into a contemporary context.

After students have rewritten the scene, they should rehearse and then share their scene with the class. Discuss each scene after it is presented. Which elements of the scene were important to keep? How did the group modernize the scene for our time? What was most effective in modernizing the scene? What themes or ideas resonate with the audience in the new scene?

RESEARCHING THE REGENCY

In partners, have students research an element of culture in Regency England to better understand the historical context of the play (the PlayGuide can help with some of this). Some topics to start with: The Prince Regent, gender roles, the economy, British social classes, Jane Austen, holiday celebrations, international relations, etc. Once students have done some research, have each partner group share their findings with the class incorporating performance and an artistic representation of their topic. Students can think about theatrical design elements in presenting their topic. How might this information increase our understanding of the play?



Contact Us:

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MILWAUKEE REP EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The Education Department offers backstage tours, pre- and post-show workshops and classroom residencies.

For questions or to schedule a workshop, please contact:

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Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.3 Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.6 Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.9 Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).

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