



Waitress

Enrichment Guide

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Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre is proud to call Manitoba home. Royal MTC is located in Winnipeg on Treaty 1, the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Anishinew, and Dakota people, and the National Homeland of the Red River Métis. We are thankful for the benefits sharing this land has afforded us, acknowledge the responsibilities of the Treaties, and embrace the opportunity to partner with Indigenous communities in the spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

The Role of the Audience

Theatre needs its audience! We are happy to have you here. Every staff person, actor, and crew member backstage plays an important part in your experience, and you also have a role in the experience of cast, crew and the people around you.

Arrive Early: Please make sure you give yourself enough time to find your seat before the performance starts. Latecomers may not be admitted to a performance. We ask schools and other groups to arrive at least 20-30 minutes before the show.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices: Please **turn off** your cell phone/mp3 player /gaming system/camera/smart watch. Texting, surfing, and gaming during performances is very distracting for the performers and other audience members. Using cameras and recording devices during a performance is **never** allowed.

Talking During the Performance: Even when you whisper, you can be heard by performers and people around you. Unless it is a relaxed performance, disruptive patrons will be removed from the theatre. Please wait until after the performance to share your words with others.

Food/Drinks: Food and outside drinks are not allowed in the theatre. When there is an intermission, snacks and drinks may be available for purchase. There is complimentary water in the lobby.

Dress: There is no dress code at the Royal MTC, but we respectfully ask you not to wear hats in the theatre. We strive to be a scent-free environment and thank all patrons for their cooperation.

Leaving During the Performance: If you leave the theatre during a performance, you will be readmitted at the discretion of Front of House staff. If readmitted, you may be placed in an empty seat at the back of the auditorium instead of your original seat.

Being Asked to Leave: The theatre staff has, and will exercise, the right to ask any member of the audience to leave if that person is being inappropriate or disruptive including (but not limited to): talking, using devices that produce light or sound, and deliberately interfering with an actor or the performance (tripping, throwing items on or near the stage, etc.).

Talkbacks: A short question and answer period with the actors takes place after student matinees, first Tuesday evening shows, and some public matinees. While watching the show, make a mental note of questions to ask the actors about the production or life in the theatre. Our artists deserve to be treated with respect! It's okay to have a negative opinion, but this is your chance to ask questions and understand the performance or process, not to criticize. If you have a concern, see the house manager after the show and they will make sure your feedback gets to the appropriate Royal MTC staff.

Enjoy the show: Laugh, cry, gasp – responding to the performance is part of the nature of theatre! As you get involved in the story, try to balance your reactions with respecting the people around you. The curtain call is part of the performance too – it gives you a chance to thank all the artists for their hard work with applause, and for them to thank you for your attention. We all appreciate when you stay at your seat and join in the applause!

Playwright Biographies

Jessie Nelson: Book

Jessie Nelson wrote the musical *Waitress* with music and lyrics by Sara Bareilles. The show played on Broadway for four years and moved to the West End in London. Sara and Jessie went on to create the show *Little Voice* which they Executive Produced with JJ Abrams for Apple TV. Jessie wrote, directed and produced *Corrina Corrina* and *I Am Sam* starring Sean Penn, who received an Academy Award nomination for his performance. Among her other directing credits are *Curb Your Enthusiasm* and *Love, the Coopers* with Diane Keaton. Her writing credits include *Step Mom* and *The Story of Us*. She produced *Fred Claus* and *Danny Collins*. In London, Jessie directed *Alice By Heart* which she co-wrote with Steven Sater with music by Duncan Sheik at the National Theater Connections Program and again at MCC in NYC. She began her career as an actress at the Public Theater working with the award-winning experimental theater *Mabou Mines* and at the New York Shakespeare Festival. She wrote the children's book *Labracadabra*. She has been the Artistic Director of the Sundance Screen Writers Lab.

Sara Bareilles: Music and Lyrics

Sara Bareilles, singer, songwriter, and pianist, was born in 1979 in California. She first achieved mainstream critical praise in 2007 with her hit "Love Song," which reached #1 in 22 countries from her debut album *Little Voice*. She has received nine Grammy nominations, which include Song of the Year and Best Female Pop Vocal Performance for "Love Song" and Album of the Year for her third album, *The Blessed Unrest* (2013). Her book *Sounds Like Me: My Life (So Far) in Song* (2015) by Simon & Schuster is a New York Times best seller. Sara composed the music and lyrics for her Broadway debut *Waitress*, for which she received her first Tony Award nomination for Best Score and a 2017 Grammy Award nomination for Best Musical Theater Album *Inside: Songs from Waitress*. She also made her Broadway acting debut in 2017 as the lead role in *Waitress*. In 2018 she co-hosted the Tony Awards, was nominated for an Emmy and Grammy for her role in *Jesus Christ Superstar Live in Concert* and was awarded the Songwriters Hall of Fame's Hal David Starlight Award. Sara also teamed up with Apple TV as an Executive Producer for *Little Voice*, a 10-episode series, for which she created the original music. She can also be seen starring in Tina Fey's series *GIRLS5EVA*.

From Screen to Stage

Waitress began as a 2007 film written and directed by Adrienne Shelly. It was an indie hit, produced with a small budget of 1\$.5 million and earning over \$23 million. Shortly after the film premiered, New Jersey couple Fran and Barry Weissler, who have produced several Broadway musicals, bought the rights, choosing it because it was a story “that [would] fill audiences’ hearts.” In 2013 they announced that a musical was in the works in 2013. By this point, Adrienne Shelly had died, and writer Jessie Nelson, whose daughter loved the film, was given permission by Shelley’s husband to use some unfinished scripts as references so that Shelly’s voice was still part of this new project. Nelson had written movies before, but this was her first Broadway production. Director Diane Paulus on the other hand, was an experienced theatre artist. Paulus was attracted to the film by its quirky tone and whimsical qualities that had behind them “very serious issues and a punch to the gut emotional impact” and to her that was what made Bareilles the perfect choice – as an adaptation of an indie film, she wanted someone who wasn’t in the Broadway world. Her first choice for music and lyrics writer was Sara Bareilles, a successful pop singer-songwriter who loves musical theatre. Bareilles says she “writes autobiographically” so she found connections between herself and each character in order to tell their stories. The first song she wrote after watching the film, inspired by the character Jenna at her lowest point, was “‘She Used to be Mine,’ which is about that phenomenon of waking up and looking at yourself and realizing there’s a part of you that doesn’t recognize who you are anymore.”

After years of development including multiple readings and workshops, *Waitress* opened on Broadway in 2016. With the two writers, director, and choreographer (Lorin Lotarro) all being women, it was the first Broadway show in history to have an all-female team in the top-billed creative spots. Paulus says that this wasn’t intentional – every woman in the production got their job “because they’re at the top of their game” but that she was happy the premiere reflected that so that young people could see that it was possible.

Waitress ran on Broadway until 2020 and again in 2021, did two American tours (including a stop in Toronto), ran in London’s West End, and has been on a UK tour. A French adaptation ran in Montreal this past summer. After that long journey, Royal MTC’s production is the first time you can see the English version produced by a Canadian company! We hope you enjoy the story of empowerment and community in our unique production.

Related Resource links: Original director [Diane Paulus shares her thoughts](#) in this interview about the development of the show and its tone as well as feminism, engagement, and the nature of musicals and read more from Sara Bareilles about her role in the show in [an interview with the songwriter](#).

Content Overview

Strong language, raunchy jokes, open talk about sex. Infidelity, spousal abuse, unwanted pregnancy; abortion is not fully explored but it is mentioned by a doctor as a possibility (and quickly dismissed).

Characters

JENNA –A woman stuck in her life as an unhappily married waitress in a small town. Finds some happiness and expression through her meticulous baking of pies and her friendships with her coworkers, Dawn and Becky. Lives her life paycheck-to-paycheck, day by day, and wants nothing more than to get away and start fresh, unbeknownst to her destructive husband, Earl.

DAWN –She youngest of the waitresses. Eccentric is the nice way to say she’s slightly unusual.

BECKY –The oldest of the three waitresses. Irreverent, irascible, been there, made it back, and somehow kept her wicked sense of humor.

DR. POMATTER – Jenna’s gynecologist with whom an unexpected extramarital affair is born. Has a quirky sense of humor and a big heart.

EARL – Jenna’s husband. Peaked in high school.

OGIE – Strange, yet oddly lovable. Becomes slightly obsessed with Dawn (in a hilarious yet endearing way) after she goes on a 5-minute date with him. Quirky, incredibly persistent, and odd, yet kind.

JOE – The owner of the diner where Jenna, Dawn, Becky, and Cal work. An old, curmudgeonly man who has a soft spot for Jenna (and her pie), warm at heart. A sarcastically funny and no-nonsense guy with a keen ability to read people.

CAL – A cook at the diner. A “Salt of the Earth” guy’s guy surrounded by gals. Brash, impatient, unsentimental.

ENSEMBLE

Plot Summary

Jenna is employed at a small-town café and is known for the unique pie recipes she creates. Unfortunately, she is in an abusive marriage. She witnessed her parents’ abusive marriage as a child. Jenna names her pies after the situations she faces as they unfold. The other staff members at the café, along with one elderly customer, represent her only social connections. When Jenna realizes she is pregnant, her chances of escaping her life seem bleak until her obstetrician sparks a romance and her self-confidence. Jenna and her loyal friends and colleagues navigate friendship, love, and self-discovery. Sara Bareilles’ talented score compliments the themes of resilience, hope, and sisterhood.

Synopsis

This section contains spoilers. Adapted from Music Theatre International.

Act 1

Royal MTC's production is set in a non-specific time period around the early 2000s, in the American Midwest. We meet Jenna, a waitress, as she's engrossed in the process of making a pie at the diner where she works ("What's Inside"). Her two friends and fellow waitresses, Becky and Dawn enter as they get started with their day at work, just like they always do ("Opening Up"). Jenna is taking an order from Joe, a loveable curmudgeon, when she's overcome with nausea. She rushes to the bathroom, where Becky and Dawn follow her. Becky hands Jenna a pregnancy test and tells her that she needs to face the music and take the test ("The Negative"). The results prove Jenna's worst fear: she's pregnant. To cope with the panic, Jenna creates a recipe for Betrayed By My Eggs Pie.

Earl, Jenna's husband, enters the diner — and takes Jenna's tips, as he normally does. When Jenna tells Earl how quickly one of her pies sold out, he tells her not to get any lofty ideas and that she's "no Sara Lee". Jenna retreats into her mind to create My Husband's A Jerk Chicken Pot Pie. Earl leaves, and Becky tells Jenna that he isn't worth staying married to. Jenna explains that he's just had a tough time lately and that she can't afford to leave him anyway. Jenna gets back to work, finding an escape from her troubles through baking ("What Baking Can Do").

Jenna is in the waiting room at her doctor's office. An imaginary trio of pregnant women sing to her ("Club Knocked Up"). Jenna meets Dr. Pomatter, a young doctor who is new in town. She had expected to see Dr. Perkins, who had been her doctor her whole life. They have an awkward introduction, and as Jenna leaves the appointment, she hands him a pie she originally made for Dr. Perkins. Dr. Pomatter takes a bite and is blown away ("Pomatter Pie").

Jenna is working another day at the diner. Cal, the boss and cook, scolds all the waitresses for being late. Becky and Dawn surprise Jenna with a book for expectant mothers, and show her the suggestion in the book about writing a letter to her baby. Dawn reads her online dating profile to Becky and Jenna, who encourages her to post it that night. Dawn is worried that meeting someone will be a disaster ("When He Sees Me").

Joe enters. It's revealed that he owns the diner, Joe's Pie Diner — and many other businesses in town. Joe senses that Jenna is pregnant, and she begs him to not tell

anyone. He changes the subject to the National Pie Bake Off that's happening nearby and nudges Jenna to enter. The \$20,000 prize makes her consider it.

As Jenna waits for the bus to go home, she invents pies in her head. Dr. Pomatter shows up at the bus stop. He tells Jenna how she reminds him of another woman who worked at a bakery he loved ("It Only Takes a Taste"). This woman used to make the best pies — but Jenna's are far better. Jenna is clearly touched by his kindness and attention.

Not long after she gets home, Earl comes home with beer and a ton of rage. He was fired for constantly being late. Jenna turns down his advances and his demand that she "take my bad day away". This infuriates Earl and just as he's about to hit her, Jenna blurts out that she's pregnant. Earl is overjoyed but also makes Jenna promise that she won't love the baby more than him ("You Will Still Be Mine").

Back at the diner, Dawn has scheduled a date and is freaking out. Jenna agrees to make a Meet Your Dream Chocolate Cream Pie for the date. She tells Becky and Dawn that she's going to do the pie bake off and use the prize money to leave Earl. The three of them contemplate their dreams ("A Soft Place to Land"). Jenna starts hiding some of her tips from Earl.

Ogie, Dawn's persistent suitor, comes to the diner and insists on seeing Dawn. Dawn tells Becky and Jenna about their date and how peculiar he is. Dawn tells Ogie to leave her alone, but he declares they're meant to be together ("Never Ever Getting Rid of Me"). Dawn agrees to another date and is then impressed that he wants to take her to a reading of the Federalist Papers, and that he was in Revolutionary War re-enactments. Dawn begins falling for Ogie. Watching them, Jenna makes Almost Makes You Believe Again Pie. She calls Dr. Pomatter about some bleeding and makes an appointment.

Jenna arrives at Dr. Pomatter's office for a 7 AM appointment. Dr. Pomatter tells her that everything is fine for early pregnancy. Jenna demands to know why he had her come in early, before the office opens, to tell her that, and Dr. Pomatter can't give her a direct answer. Jenna storms out, only to come back to get her purse and kiss him. They both agree that since they're both married and Jenna's pregnant, acting on their feelings would be a "Bad Idea". They give in to temptation anyway.

Act 2

Jenna is at the diner coming up with new pies when she catches Becky and Cal kissing. Jenna asks Becky how she can cheat on her elderly husband, but Becky won't let Jenna judge and shame her, especially when she knows Jenna is sneaking around herself, and says indulging her feelings can be a good thing ("I Didn't Plan It").

Jenna goes to Dr. Pomatter's office a month after their kiss. He asks her to not spend a month without contacting him again. They kiss again, and their affair continues ("Bad Idea – Reprise"). At the diner, Joe immediately can tell Jenna is having an affair and lectures her on why it's not a good idea. Meanwhile, Dawn is having a passionate relationship with Ogie.

Jenna goes in for a doctor's appointment, only to learn he had to leave town with his wife for a wedding. Jenna listens to her baby's heartbeat and imagines her letter to her baby. Later, Dr. Pomatter surprises Jenna at work. She tells him she can't live with herself if they keep seeing each other. He surprises her with a golden pie plate and asks her to make a pie with him. As they do, he tells Jenna about the impact she's had on him ("You Matter to Me").

At Ogie and Dawn's wedding, Ogie composes a poem on the spot ("I Love You Like a Table"). At the reception, Joe dances with Jenna and gives her advice about going for what she wants in life ("Take It From an Old Man"). Earl enters in a fury and makes Jenna leave. He brings her home and shows her that he's found all the money she's hidden. Jenna lies, telling him that she was saving it to buy a crib and toys for the baby. Earl takes all the money. Jenna, crushed, imagines another letter to the baby ("Dear Baby") and explains she won't be able to make it to the pie bake-off. Jenna thinks about the kind of person she once was and how her life has disappointed her ("She Used to Be Mine"). Jenna begins to go into labor ("Contraction Ballet").

In the hospital, Jenna is in agony. Joe is wheeled into her room. He's about to have surgery but wanted to hand her a card first. Earl enters, ready to film the baby's birth. A group of hospital residents come to observe and one of them introduces herself as Francine, Dr. Pomatter's wife. Jenna is mortified. The residents leave, and Jenna gives birth to a girl. Jenna holds her daughter for the first time and is immediately in love ("What's Inside – Reprise"). She tells Earl she's leaving him and to get out. He leaves, and she is free ("Everything Changes – Part I"). Dr. Pomatter checks in on her, and Jenna tells him that meeting his wife has made her realize that the affair needs to end now. He agrees, and they thank each other for changing their lives.

Jenna marvels at her daughter and names her Lulu ("Everything Changes – Part II"). Jenna opens the card Joe gave her and learns that she is inheriting the diner. She realizes he hadn't expected to survive the surgery. In the note, he asked her to name a pie after him.

Years pass. We're back at the diner where tons and tons of pies are being boxed up for orders. Lulu is now a little girl, and Jenna is running a business with the support of her diner family. The day is starting at the re-named diner, Lulu's Pies, and everyone's lives are moving forward ("Opening Up – Finale").

Context and Related Resources

Domestic Violence

The intertwining setting for the musical is a home with domestic abuse. The United Nations defines domestic abuse as “a pattern of behaviour in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner.

<https://www.un.org/en/coronavirus/what-is-domestic-abuse> Jenna witnesses her father abuse her mother, who takes refuge in baking as an escape. Jenna marries Earl and perpetuates the cycle of abuse. We must assume she has no education and, therefore, fewer options to escape her marriage. The National Library of Medicine supports this assumption. They report, “ Lower education levels correlate with more likely domestic violence. Childhood abuse is commonly associated with becoming a perpetrator of domestic violence as an adult. Perpetrators of domestic violence commonly repeat acts of violence with new partners. Drug and alcohol abuse greatly increases the incidence of domestic violence. “Females who witness domestic violence as children are more likely to be victimized by their spouses.”

A common question in the discussion of domestic abuse is “why stay?” The cycle of abuse is a term coined by Lenore Walker. The diagram of a wheel is used to explain how an abuser keeps their partner in the relationship. “The inside of the wheel makes up subtle, continual behaviours over time, while the outer ring represents physical and sexual violence. Thus, abusive actions like those depicted in the outer ring reinforce the regular use of other, more subtle methods found in the inner ring.



In *Waitress*, Jenna's support system of colleagues, medical staff, and her regular customer help her move on with her life to a positive, safer future.

Related Resources: A list of supports for relationship-based violence is on page 17.

What Baking Can Do (and Music Too!)

Jenna uses her pie creation as a means of making sense of her life. Outside the musical, many people also turn to baking as a form of therapy. Any form of creative work, including coming up with an amazing pie, has mental health benefits – studies have shown that partaking in creative activity leads to higher positivity and flourishing in various aspects of life. Mixing and kneading dough might allow you to physically take out some of your frustrations, and also reduce stress hormones like cortisol – which can also lead to better sleep and immune system function! Baking also uniquely engages many senses: sight, smell, touch, and taste. The fact that it requires focus and staying present in the moment give similar effects to practicing mindfulness. Culinary Art Therapy has been suggested to help limit complications that come from grieving, to increase self esteem, enhance brain development, and build connection. Therapist Julie Ohana says “I believe that focusing on a specific task or skill, forcing someone to ‘get out of their own head’... can really be helpful to quiet one’s inner dialogue where the anxiety stems from.”

Finally, Jenna also shares her baking, which strengthens her relationships. Social connections to friends, family, and community help build that “chosen family” that is important to good mental health.

Social connections are also built in live theatre and music experiences where a large group of people live through something together that is unique to that moment and will never be exactly the same again! Seeing situations presented through theatre builds empathy as we experience a story that may be different from our own. There are also connections between audience members: a 2017 study found that audience members’ heartbeats sped up and slowed down at the same times while watching a show; their hearts were beating in sync. Synchrony shows that people are reacting emotionally to the music, and in a similar way. The power of music may also be part of social bonding and emotional connection.

Musical Theatre Songs

By Dr. Meg Upton, provided by Victorian Opera

In musical theatre the key to successful songs is how well lyrics and music work together. Songs may function dramatically in several ways, a primary one being to define character. Within the genre of musical theatre such character songs serve a number of functions.

Character songs

“I am” songs: Because musicals are by nature “presentational,” characters may introduce themselves directly to the audience through “I am” songs. “I am” songs can also allow characters to express freely how they are feeling at that moment (for example “I Feel Pretty” in *West Side Story*), and sometimes characters discover something about themselves in an “I am” song. Besides defining oneself and providing moments of self-revelation through these types of songs, characters may also assert themselves against a challenge.

“I want” songs: Where ‘I am’ songs describe a present state, “I want” songs suggest a course of action for the future. Characters often express their goals and dreams through these types of songs. For example, in *Fiddler on the Roof*, Tevye dreams of wealth in “If I Were a Rich Man”. Some characters may also use these songs to say what they don’t want.

Reprises: Often a song will occur again in the musical as a reprise which can be used effectively to reveal how a character has developed during the story. An effective reprise which functions dramatically reveals the development of character since the last time it was sung. The lyrics may reflect a change in the character’s attitude or self-awareness, or they may indicate a change in situation. In *West Side Story* Tony and Maria reprise their romantic ballad “Tonight”, but now it is the night of the gang’s street fight and it takes on a new meaning.

Emotional climax songs: When characters reach a point in the drama where they can’t help but explode with feelings or love or success or simply the joy of life, music serves to amplify these emotions to a level above mere words. Emotional climax songs are exuberant, celebratory and infectious, allowing the audience to share the character’s passion and excitement.

Songs that tell the story

Exposition songs: Because songs take up time reserved for dialogue in the play, musicals must move quickly to establish the dramatic situation, introduce the main characters, and give audiences some reason to care about them. Exposition songs inform an audience what has happened and what may have brought the characters to this point in the action. They may also preview the themes of the story.

Conflict songs: At the heart of every drama lies conflict. Some of the most interesting and exciting songs in Musical Theatre involve conflict, when characters struggle.

Narration songs: Narration songs describe events that we otherwise may not see – what has happened off-stage for instance.

Summary songs: Similar to narration songs, summary songs compress lengthy amounts of time into one song.

Songs with special functions

Comment songs: A character not in the dramatic scene may step to one side and sing about events on stage. Stephen Sondheim uses this device in several of his musicals including *Company* and *A Little Night Music*.

Musical metaphors: These songs take advantage of the unique qualities of musical theatre to portray a situation in presentational, non-literal fashion. Much of *Into the Woods* acts metaphorically, especially with regard to wishes and desires.

Cameo songs: Cameo songs feature a minor character in a memorable number, someone who otherwise might be forgotten. A good cameo song defines a minor character quickly and effectively as well as giving a performer in a small role time in the spotlight.

Parodies: These rely on an audience's familiarity with music that is not in the show they are watching, but is used to evoke an appropriate mood.

Explore More: Recommended Library Reading List

Explore More friendship and Characters starting afresh

The Last Garden in England Explore the lives of five women across three eras and their connection to Highbury House and its gardens. Following strong female characters overcoming adversity, this novel touches on love, loss, friendship, and family and allows the garden to be a carrier of memory.

FICTION KELLY

Welcome to the Hyunam-dong Bookshop Deemed “healing fiction” in Korea, this character driven novel shares themes with *Waitress*. Yeongju takes a leap of faith divorcing her husband and quitting her job to open a bookshop. Here she makes new friends and creates a safe space for her customers to rest and write their own stories.

FICTION HWANG

Explore More pies that impress

Sugar, butter, flour : the waitress pie book Check out the cookbook based on *Waitress*, filled with pies made opulent to mirror the musical. The pies in *Sugar, butter, flour* have unique hidden flavours to surprise your taste buds and something for every occasion—even to help mend a broken heart.

641.8652 HUNTERSON 2017

Dessert person : recipes and guidance for baking with confidence Claire Saffitz charms with her twists on sweet and savory pies and desserts. With her practical fixes, helpful tips, and skill level gauge, you'll be churning out something delicious for the holidays in no time.

641.86 SAFFITZ 2020

Pie is messy : recipes from the Pie Hole Make 100 perfect imperfect pies with *Pie is messy*. From classics to new-school pies like the Drunken Plum Frangipane Tart, there is something delectable for everyone.

641.8652 GRASLEY 2023

Explore More musical theatre

Musical theatre songs of the 2010s [music] : 37 songs from 33 shows and films : vocal, piano.

Explore more modern musical theatre classics from the 2010s like *Kinky Boots*, *Hamilton*, and *The Book of Mormon* with this score for voice and piano with bonus guitar chords.

SCORE 782.140263 MUSICAL 2020

Waitress [DVD videorecording] : the musical

Loved *Waitress*? Watch it at home after the show with this DVD as Sara Bareilles herself embodies Jenna, the part she wrote and composed.

DVD FILM/TV WAITRESS



There are 1.4 million books, movies, audiobooks, eBooks and more at the Winnipeg Public Library, and all you need to borrow them is your library card. There are 20 locations throughout the city and there's an online catalogue for requesting items for pick-up at your library of convenience. An e-Library has thousands of eBooks, eAudiobooks and more! All free with your card. Visit us at Winnipeg.ca/library

Glossary and Mentions

Amorous – firmly moved by love and especially sexual love

Apprehensively – viewing the future with anxiety or alarm

Asphyxiation – deprivation of oxygen that can result in unconsciousness and often death

Brusque – blunt in manner or speech, often to the point of ungracious harshness

Curmudgeon – a crusty, ill-tempered, usually old man

Doula – a person trained to provide advice, information, emotional support, and physical comfort to a mother before, during, and just after childbirth

Estrogen – various natural steroids that stimulate the development of female secondary sex characteristics and promote the growth and maintenance of the female reproductive system

Gynecology – a branch of medicine that deals with diseases and routine physical care of the reproductive system of women

Irascible – marked by a hot temper and easily provoked anger

Jubilation – an act of rejoicing

Leptin – a peptide hormone that is produced by fat cells and plays a role in

body weight regulation

Meticulously – marked by extreme or excessive care in the consideration or treatment of details

Muse – a source of inspiration

Parasite – an organism living in, on, or with another organism to obtain nutrients, grow, or multiply often in a state that directly or indirectly harms the host

Philanthropical – dispensing or receiving aid from funds set aside for humanitarian purposes

Psychopath – a mentally unstable person, especially a person having a selfish and antisocial personality marked by a lack of remorse for one's actions, an absence of empathy for others, and often criminal tendencies

Reverie – the condition of being lost in thought

Sorority – from Latin “sisterhood,” a women's student organization formed chiefly for social and networking purposes, and having a name consisting of Greek letters

Soulful – full of or expressing feeling or emotion

Surreally – marked by the intense irrational reality of a dream

Discussion Prompts

Pre- or Post-Show:

- When you are stuck in a bad situation, what does it take to change it?
- Who makes up your support system?
- What do you know about *Waitress*? What are your expectations of this musical?

Post-Show:

- Diane Paulus, who originally directed *Waitress* on Broadway, said about the original film “I loved the quirky tone and the fact that it was filmed with humor and whimsy and had a fairytale like quality to it, but behind all of that were very serious issues and a punch to the gut emotional impact.” What were the issues and emotional impact that you got from this musical? Do you think the production effectively conveyed these qualities that Paulus saw in the film?
- Data and stories about violence are prevalent in our world. How has the portrayal of these themes through theatre clarified your understanding?
- Why do you think this show is necessary for audiences to see now?
- When writing for a musical, Sara Barielles said that she asks herself “am I helping the audience understand the heart and soul of this character?”
 - How do the song lyrics contribute to the narrative of *Waitress*? Analyse and evaluate the narrative or story of a song. Whose story is told? What does the song reveal? What comment does it make? (lyrics are available in several places online, including allmusicals.com)
 - How does music help build the world of *Waitress*? How does it contribute to themes and ideas in the production?
 - How does music connect with characters?
 - How does music help depict Jenna and Earl’s relationship? What is the role of music in portraying abuse on stage? Do you think it makes the subject matter more impactful?

Suggested Classroom Activities

- What kind of pie is your current life? Describe the flavours or “recipe” in writing, visually, or through music. Students can brainstorm together certain characteristics, and how those might translate into ingredients (boldness represented by cinnamon, for example). Students could do this activity for themselves or a partner; the class could also guess which pie goes with which student.
- Consider the “ingredients” of your future plans and create the pie for your successful future. Represent in writing, visually, or through music.

- Jenna's friends are a large part of her success. Reflect on a situation where you have been a good friend and/or where someone has been a good friend to you.
- Research the cycle of abuse. Note the circumstances in the play that lead to Jenna being in an abusive relationship. What are Earl's red flags?
- Interview an employee at a resource centre for abused persons.

Before and After: Production and Artistic Elements. Everything that you see on the stage is there because of a choice. Use Royal MTC's [Theatre People library](#) to get an overview of the job of the director, music director, choreographer, and set, costume, and lighting designers.

- Before the show: read the Plot Summary in this guide (or, if you're okay with spoilers, the full plot synopsis). Have students, individually or in groups, consider what choices they would make in the above roles. This can be a discussion, in writing, or involve visual creation for the design aspects. What would your overall directing concept be – setting, time period, themes, etcetera – and how would you communicate that to the audience?
 - How could a set enable multiple locations needed in the play?
 - As a designer, what kinds of colour palettes would you use for the set and lighting of the environment?
 - What colours do you associate with certain characters for their costumes? Use any media to create a colour palette for the set and characters. (Who blends in, who stands out? Who matches someone else, who contrasts?)
 - What other features do you think the main characters' costumes could incorporate? For example, whose costume is simple vs elaborate, whose might be tight instead of loose, whose is well-maintained or ragged?
- After the show, discuss whether the choices made were the same as yours.
 - Can you identify the director's concept? What was emphasized about the themes and messages, and how?
 - Why do you think the particular actors were chosen for these roles?
 - Was the design realistic or more abstract?
 - Did you notice any visual patterns (eg use of colour or shape) in the designs?
 - How did the set enable multiple locations, and many entrances and exits?
 - Did the lighting convey certain feelings or moods? How?
 - How did the costumes enhance each character and give you an idea of their personality, class, or status?
 - How did the costumes affect movement, and vice versa?
 - What else did you notice about movement and choreography?

Domestic Abuse and Mental Health Resources

Emergency Police Service: 911

KLINIC Crisis Line: Winnipeg 204-786-8686; toll-free Manitoba 1-888-322-3019 24/7

KLINIC Sexual Assault Line: 204-786-8631

Winnipeg Police Non-Emergency – 204-986-6222

Toll-Free Province-Wide Domestic Abuse Crisis Line: 1-877-977-0007 (24/7)

Victim Services: 204-945-6851

Winnipeg Crisis Stabilization Unit: 204-940-3633 24/7

Winnipeg Mobile Crisis Service: 204-940-1781 24/7

Winnipeg Youth Mobile Crisis Team: 204-949-4777, 1-888-383-2776

Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868 or text 686868 24/7

Manitoba Moon Voices has contact information for an extensive list of counselling services and emergency housing resources across the province:

<https://www.manitobamoonvoices.com/domestic-violence-resources-in-manitoba/>

DomesticShelters.org has contact information for shelters across the province as well as a quick-exit button to take you to an innocuous website if you are not safe.

<https://www.domesticshelters.org/help/mb>

Winnipeg Police Service resources for domestic violence:

<https://www.winnipeg.ca/police/crime-prevention/domestic-violence>

Manitoba Association of Women's Shelters (MAWS) - <https://maws.mb.ca/>

A collective of interpersonal and family violence shelters that provides information if you or someone you know is abused as well as training and education.

First Nations Shelters - <https://firstnationshelters.ca/>

Serving areas north of Winnipeg

Survivor's Hope - <https://survivors-hope.ca/about-us/>

offers education, support through police interviews after reports of sexual assault, and free counselling in the Eastern Interlake Region. 204-753-5353

Manitoba regional contacts and mental health services by region -

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/mh/mh/crisis.html> Crisis and non-crisis services

KLINIC Community Health - <http://klinik.mb.ca>

Provides a range of supports from primary care to sexual assault; health care, counselling, and education as well as a crisis line for people of every age, background,

ethnicity, gender identity, and socio-economic circumstance. Klinik's crisis line (number above) is open to people of all ages, genders and backgrounds. You do not have to be in crisis or suicidal to call Klinik; this can be a good place to start when trying to sort out a problem. Klinik can also refer you to other services or programs.

Hope for Wellness Helpline is a mental health resource available to all Indigenous people across Canada. Experienced and culturally competent counsellors are reachable by telephone and online chat 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Both telephone and online chat services are available in English and French. Telephone support is also available upon request in: Cree; Ojibway (Anishinaabemowin) and Inuktitut. <https://www.hopeforwellness.ca/>

MB Farm, Rural and Northern Support Services besides the 24/7 number 1-866-367-3276, offers free, confidential, non-judgemental counselling and resources for anyone living on a Manitoba farm or in a rural or northern community. Live chat and resources online at <https://supportline.ca>

Curriculum Connections

Attending Royal MTC's production of *Waitress* and discussing it, or participating in some of the suggested or similar activities, will fit into the Manitoba curricula in the following ways.

Manitoba Health Curriculum

- K.4.S1.B.2a Identify communication skills and strategies that promote team/group dynamics (e.g., listen actively, encourage others, be assertive in acceptable ways, show self-control, stay with the group until completion of the task, develop group consensus...).
- K.4.S1.B.3b Examine effects of conflicts (e.g., broken trust, hurt feelings, equity issues...) and the importance of seeing diverse sides of issues in developing meaningful personal and/or team relationships (e.g., seek understanding, accept differences...).
- K.4.S1.B.4 Identify examples of potentially dangerous situations (e.g., physical abuse, verbal abuse, use of harmful substances, peer pressure...) and effective strategies for avoidance/refusal.
- K.4.S2.B.2a Evaluate the benefits of effective communication skills (e.g., listen actively, paraphrase, show appreciation, criticize ideas, not people...) for getting along with family, friends, and peers in school, community, and/or the workplace.

- K.4.S2.B.2b Identify potential adult roles (e.g., parent, partner, spouse...) and ways to prevent potential problems (e.g., domestic conflict, abuse...) in developing meaningful relationships.
- K.4.S2.C.1a Describe the behaviours necessary for providing others with support (e.g., listen to a friend in difficulty...) and promoting emotional health and well-being.
- K.4.S2.C.1b Show an understanding of ways to support others (e.g., show empathy, be available, provide comfort, join a support organization...) who are dealing with the loss of a friend or family member.

Manitoba English Curriculum

https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/ela/framework/full_doc.pdf

General Outcome 4: Students will listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent to enhance the clarity and artistry of communication.

General Outcome 5: Students will listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent to celebrate and to build community

Manitoba Drama Curriculum

- | | |
|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| DR-M2 | The learner learns to use and is exposed to a variety of elements of drama and theatre |
| DR-M3 | The learner learns to use and is exposed to dramatic forms and styles |
| DR-R3 | The learner analyzes and interprets drama/ theatre experiences. |
| DR-C1 | The learner develops understandings about people and practices in the dramatic arts. |
| DR-C2 | The learner develops understandings about the influence and impact of the dramatic arts. |
| DR-C3 | The learner develops understandings about the roles, purposes, and meanings of the dramatic arts. |

Manitoba Music Curriculum

Connecting (C)

- | | |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| M-C1 | The learner develops understandings about people & practices in music. |
| M-C2 | The learner develops understandings about music's influence & impact. |
| M-C3 | The learner develops understandings about the roles, purposes, and meanings of music. |
| M-R1 | The learner generates initial reactions to music experiences. |
| M-R2 | The learner critically listens to, observes, & describes music experiences. |
| M-R3 | The learner analyzes and interprets music experiences. |

Sources

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<https://www.northernhealthcare.org.uk/news-resources/the-mental-health-benefits-of-baking/>
https://www.huffpost.com/entry/baking-for-others-psychology_n_58dd0b85e4b0e6ac7092aaf8
<https://sites.bu.edu/daniellerousseau/2017/04/24/baking-therapy/>
<https://theviolinchannel.com/new-study-reveals-audience-heartbeats-synchronize-during-classical-music-concert/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CResearch%20reveals%20that%20our%20physiological,together%2C%E2%80%9D%20the%20study%20explained.>
<https://www.mtishows.com/waitress>
<https://tourstoyou.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Waitress-Broadway-Toolkit-Study-Guide-8177fc8fd2.pdf>
<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/waitress-is-making-broadway-history-with-its-all-female-creative-team/>
<https://www.theintervalny.com/interviews/2016/05/an-interview-with-diane-paulus/>
<https://arvadacenter.org/blog/adapting-waitress--from-screen-to-stage>
Definitions from Merriam-Webster

Enrichment Guide Creator

Lori Tully is a teacher, wife, mother, and horse enthusiast who lives on a family farm. She recently retired after 38 years as a public school teacher specializing in Special Education. One of the highlights of her career was being the teacher facilitator, bringing students to MTC. In the small high school where she taught, the MTC Club levelled the playing field socially for students with special needs. She currently volunteers for the Interlake FASD Committee and Interlake Sexual Exploitation Educators. Her favourite musical is *The Sound of Music*. She fondly remembers watching Julie Andrews on television with her mother and sisters. It was rewarding to share the experience with students in a live theatre experience at MTC. To see students from a rural area embrace the theatre and learn history through a musical was one of the most fulfilling experiences as a teacher.