

BACK TO FUTURE THE MUSICAL



EDUCATION PACK

SECTION 1: BACK IN TIME
(PRE-SHOW MATERIALS)

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INTRODUCTION FOR TEACHERS

Welcome to the **Back to the Future The Musical** Educational Resources! We hope that these teaching resources allow you and your students to really engage with, and explore, this amazing show. They cover many aspects of the curriculum, from Key Stages 3-5, and are divided into four separate downloads:

SECTION 1: BACK IN TIME (PRE-SHOW MATERIALS)

SECTION 2: SCREEN TO STAGE (POST-SHOW MATERIALS)

SECTION 3: LIVE PERFORMANCE REVIEW - STUDENT NOTEBOOK

SECTION 4: PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE / ROLES IN THEATRE

There are two downloadable slide decks:

- 1) **BACK TO THE FUTURE: CONTEXT** - An introduction to contextual information from the 1950s and 1980s. Ideal to share with students before you go and see the show.

[DOWNLOAD NOW](#)

- 2) **FAILURE BEFORE SUCCESS** - This slide deck accompanies the Teacher Notes on p.2-3 of 'Section 2: Screen to Stage'.

[DOWNLOAD NOW](#)

HOW TO USE THE RESOURCES

- The whole of Sections 1 & 3 can be given directly to students as handouts.
- In sections 2 and 4, it will say either 'Student Worksheet' or 'Teacher Notes' at the top of each page.



CURRICULUM MAP

Subject Area	Level	Pages & Handouts
Drama & Performing Arts (Acting & Directing)	Key Stages 3-5	Section 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Worksheet 2 - Biff Tannen • Student Worksheet 4 - Cedric Neal Interview • Student Worksheet 5 - Lorraine Baines • Student Worksheet 6 - Rosanna Hyland Interview • Teacher Notes - Practical Exploration (Rehearsal Technique 1) • Student Worksheet 15 - Actioning & Objectives • Student Worksheet 16 - Explore Actions & Objectives • Teacher Notes - Practical Exploration (Rehearsal Techniques 2 & 3) • Student Worksheet 17 - Role on the Wall Example • Teacher Notes - Practical Exploration (Rehearsal Technique 4)
Drama & Performing Arts (Theatre Design)	Key Stages 3-5	Section 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Worksheet 12 - Set Design • Student Worksheet 13 - Lighting Design Section 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Worksheet 2 - Creating 'Sequence to '55' • Student Worksheet 3 - Who Creates 'Sequence to '55'? • Student Worksheet 4 - Production Roles Flash Cards • Student Worksheet 5 - The Role of the Producer • Student Worksheet 6 - The Role of the Production Designer • Student Worksheet 7 - The Role of the Lighting Designer • Student Worksheet 8 - The Role of the Stage Manager
Drama & Performing Arts (Live Theatre Review)	Key Stages 3-5	Section 3: Live Performance Review Notebook & Glossary
Drama & Performing Arts (Roles in Theatre/ Professional Practice)	Key Stages 4 & 5	Section 4: Roles in Theatre/Professional Practice

Subject Area	Level	Pages & Handouts
Music	Key Stages 3-5	<p>Section 1: p. 16 Listen Out for</p> <p>Section 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Worksheet 7 - Musical Themes • Student Worksheet 8 - The Secondary Theme • Student Worksheet 9 - Composition • Teacher Notes - Jim Henson • Student Worksheet 10 - Orchestra Facts
Dance	Key Stages 4 & 5	<p>Section 4:</p> <p>Student Worksheet 9 - A Day in the Life of a Performer</p> <p>Student Worksheet 10 - The Well-being of a Performer</p>
PSHE	Key Stage 3	<p>Section 1: p.9 - Themes</p> <p>Section 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Notes - Failure Before Success • Student Worksheet 1 - Failure Before Success • Student Worksheet 2 - Biff Tannen • Student Worksheet 3 - Explore Context
English	Key Stages 3 & 4	<p>Section 2:</p> <p>Student Worksheet 11 - Writing for Stage & Screen</p>
Media & Film Studies	Key Stages 4 & 5	<p>Section 2:</p> <p>Student Worksheet 11 - Writing for Stage & Screen</p>

SYNOPSIS

“THIS IS TOO GOOD A STORY.

THIS IS TOO GOOD A PROPERTY. THIS STORY MEANS SO MUCH TO SO MANY PEOPLE THAT WE HAVE TO BRING OUR BEST TO IT.”

BOB GALE, WRITER



ACT 1 - HILL VALLEY - OCTOBER 25TH 1985

Marty McFly is an ambitious teenager who yearns to be a musician. The musical starts with Marty entering Doc Brown's lab. Doc is nowhere to be seen but he listens to a message from Doc, which tells him to meet him at 1.15am at the Twin Pines Mall Car Park. Marty heads to school and we hear about his ambitions in the opening song 'Only a Matter of Time'. Marty's band 'The Pinheads' audition for the 'Annual Celebration Day' performance, but they are rejected. His girlfriend, Jessica Parker, heard about the failed audition, and they sing 'Wherever We're Going' together, which boosts Marty's self-belief and confidence. Scene 5 is set in the McFly household. We see Marty's father George McFly being belittled and bullied by Biff Tannen, his childhood 'friend'. Marty sings 'Hello - Is Anybody Home?' about George's lack of ambition and his inability to stand up to Biff.

At 1.15am Marty goes to meet Doc at Twin Pines Mall and, in a burst of light and a cloud of smoke, the DeLorean arrives. Doc tells Marty that he has invented a time machine - finally one of his inventions works! He shows Marty the 'flux capacitor', which is 'what makes time travel possible'. He also reveals that the time machine runs on plutonium. Suddenly, he realises that some plutonium has seeped through his radiation suit, onto his hands and chest. Marty jumps into the DeLorean to go to the hospital and get an ambulance. Despite Doc's warning not to drive too fast, Marty's speed reaches 88mph and he travels back in time...30 years.

HILL VALLEY - NOVEMBER 5TH 1955

Marty has arrived in 1955 and listens to the song 'Cake' about the 'idyllic' Hill Valley, which is 'a nice place to live'. For Marty, this is a 'nightmare', as he needs to get back to 1985. He goes into the café on the town square and realises he is sitting next to his father, when George was a teenager. A young Biff enters, asking why George hasn't completed his homework for him yet and ends up tipping cereal onto George's head. Goldie Wilson, who works in the café, tells George he should stand up to Biff, saying that he himself has grand ambitions to become Mayor and sings 'Gotta Start Somewhere'. Marty follows George and finds him spying on Lorraine (Marty's mum) at her home. Marty tries to talk to him, but George falls out of the tree, on top of Marty, then runs off. Marty is taken inside the house by Sam (his future grandfather) and wakes up in a bedroom of young Lorraine, who starts to fall in love with Marty, not realising it is her son!

Marty finds Doc Brown's house and manages to convince him that he is from the future, then shows him the DeLorean time machine. They realise that the way to get back to 1985 is to harness the energy from the lightning bolt which will strike the clock tower the following weekend. Marty realises that he has interfered with his parents meeting and falling in love so must get George to ask Lorraine to the school dance. In the school lunchroom, Marty does persuade George to ask her out, but she is already falling in love with Marty. Biff then enters and ends up chasing both Marty and George around the school, until he finally ends up in the bin!

ACT 2 - NOVEMBER 1955

Act 2 opens with a 'futuristic tableau', as Doc sings about the '21st Century'. Marty wakes Doc from a dream he is having about the year 2020. Lorraine turns up at the door and asks Marty if he'll take her to the 'Enchantment Under the Sea Dance' on Saturday. She says that she wouldn't let George take her because he wouldn't be able to 'stand up' for her. The 'date' is arranged for 8pm on Saturday. Doc realises how serious the situation is, telling Marty that he must teach his father to 'be a man'. Marty goes to see George in his backyard and talks him through the plan for Saturday. Marty will be in the car with Lorraine and then George will open that car door and come to her rescue when she starts to feel uncomfortable about Marty's advances. George is on board with the plan.



Back at Doc's workshop, he has discovered the video camera footage which shows the moment in Twin Pines Mall when he becomes poisoned by radiation. Marty tries to explain what will happen but Doc does not want to know about the future because he could 'endanger his own existence'. He sings a song called the 'For the Dreamers' about all of the inventors throughout history and how failure precedes success. Biff sings a song with his 'goons' about Marty and how he will 'Teach Him a Lesson', for humiliating him at school. Doc sets up his 'weather experiment' outside the clock tower and gets ready for the storm. Marty tries once again to tell Doc about the future and the radiation poisoning but he won't listen; instead Marty writes a letter to Doc telling him what will happen.

At The Enchantment Under the Sea Dance, the band Marvin Berry and the Starlighters play on stage, as couples dance. George checks his watch and realises it's time to go. Marty is in a parked car with Lorraine and is feeling increasingly uncomfortable with the situation. Lorraine leans across and kisses Marty but then feels like she's kissing her 'brother'. Biff opens the door and pulls Marty out of the car. Biff's 'goons' throw Marty in the dumpster and Biff gets into the car with Lorraine, despite her saying 'I'm not your girl!' George appears (thinking that Marty is in the car), but is told by Biff to 'walk away'. George musters the courage to stand up to Biff and punches him out cold. George asks Lorraine if she's ok and takes her inside. Marty is shouting from the dumpster and is released by Marvin Berry, who ends up injuring his hand, so Marty must play guitar instead. Lorraine and George finally kiss on the dance floor and the future is back on track! Marty heads to the clock tower to meet Doc. Once again, Marty tries to tell Doc about the radiation poisoning, but he rips up the letter, just before they realise that the cable connected to the clock tower has been dislodged. Doc manages to connect it and Marty makes it up to 88mph just in time for the lightning bolt to strike the clock tower.



It is 1985. Marty arrives back in Hill Valley and is relieved to discover that Doc read the note and was able to wear a radiation suit, which saved his life. Doc gets back into the DeLorean and says he's going to travel thirty years into the future. The next morning, in Hill Valley Town Square, there is a podium set up. Marty realises that his family all look very different and are much more confident and happier. George is now an author, and they celebrate 'George McFly Day'! Goldie Wilson has now been elected as Mayor. Marty has an opportunity to fulfil his ambition as a musician and performs for Jennifer's uncle, a record company mogul.

DID YOU KNOW?

- ✓ The plot and narrative of **Back to the Future** was originally created by Bob Gale and Robert Zemeckis when they wrote the screenplay for the film, released in 1985.
- ✓ However, the plot of the stage musical is slightly different from the original film.
- ✓ The script for the stage musical took over seven years to develop.

MEET THE CREATIVE TEAM

MEET SOME OF THE AMAZING CREATIVES INVOLVED IN **BACK TO THE FUTURE THE MUSICAL**:

Book by Bob Gale

Music and Lyrics - Alan Silvestri and Glen Ballard

Executive Producer - Colin Ingram

Designer - Tim Hatley

Director - John Rando

Musical Director - Jim Henson

Lighting Design - Tim Lutkin

Sound Designer - Gareth Owen

Video Designer - Finn Ross

Choreographer - Chris Bailey

Illusion Designer - Chris Fisher

WE ASKED THE CREATIVE TEAM WHAT THEY HAVE ENJOYED MOST ABOUT BEING PART OF **BACK TO THE FUTURE THE MUSICAL**:

“THIS, FOR ME, WAS PROBABLY THE
BEST CREATIVE EXPERIENCE I’VE EVER HAD.”

BOB GALE, WRITER

“**IT’S BEEN A GREAT TEAM.** ALL MY DESIGN COLLABORATORS HAVE BEEN GREAT TO WORK WITH, AND I’VE REALLY ENJOYED THAT.”

TIM HATLEY - DESIGNER

“JUST THE SHEER SCALE OF IT. IT’S A LARGE ORCHESTRA. IT’S A COMPLEX SCORE. IT’S A BRILLIANT STORY.”

JIM HENSON - MUSICAL DIRECTOR

MEET THE CAST

MEET SOME OF THE TALENTED CAST PERFORMING IN
BACK TO THE FUTURE THE MUSICAL:



MARTY MCFLY
BEN JOYCE



DOC BROWN
ROGER BART



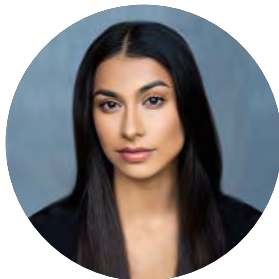
LORRAINE BAINES
AMBER DAVIES



GEORGE MCFLY
OLIVER NICHOLAS



**GOLDIE WILSON/
MARVIN BERRY**
JORDAN BENJAMIN



JENNIFER PARKER
SOPHIE NAGLIK



BIFF TANNEN
HARRY JOBSON



STRICKLAND
GARY TRAINOR



DAVE MCFLY
WILL HASWELL



LINDA MCFLY
EMMA LLOYD

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT 1

It's Only A Matter Of Time
Got No Future
Wherever We're Going
Hello – Is Anybody Home?
It Works
Cake
Got No Future (Reprise)
Gotta Start Somewhere
My Myopia
Pretty Baby
Future Boy
Hill Valley High School Fight Song
Something About That Boy

ACT 2

21st Century
Something About That Boy (Reprise)
Put Your Mind To It
For The Dreamers
Teach Him A Lesson
Only A Matter Of Time (Reprise)
Deep Divin'
Pretty Baby (Reprise)
Earth Angel
Johnny B. Goode
For The Dreamers (Reprise)
The Power Of Love
Back In Time

THEMES

AMBITION

“I BELIEVE I’VE REALISED MY DREAM ... PROOF POSITIVE THAT YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING IF YOU JUST PUT YOUR MIND TO IT!”

DOC BROWN

Marty has a youthful energy, ambition and wants to succeed. This contrasts with the rest of his family, who lack ambition and do not have the self-belief to pursue their dreams. At the start of the musical, he sees his father, George McFly, as a failure. Despite being told by the Head Teacher Mr Strickland. “you’ll never amount to anything”, Marty still believes he can succeed as a musician. In his opening song ‘Only a Matter of Time’, he sings:

“I’LL ROCK MY FUTURE, I’M A WINNER, NOT A LOSER”

MARTY MCFLY

REWRITING HISTORY

“I’M YOUR DENSITY ... I MEAN, YOUR DESTINY.”

GEORGE MCFLY

The musical explores to what extent our future is pre-determined. Once Marty has gone back to 1955, he starts to realise that every decision and action has an impact on ‘future events’. George McFly also changes his future by standing up to Biff Tannen. It is a small step towards becoming more confident and more accomplished as a writer.

COURAGE & SELF-BELIEF

“I JUST DON’T THINK I CAN TAKE THAT KIND OF REJECTION.”

GEORGE MCFLY

The story explores the challenges of being courageous and brave; the idea that, in order to be courageous, you also need to take risks and be vulnerable. George McFly overcomes his fears and is courageous when he stands up to Biff. It is Marty who helps his father to have the courage and self-belief to stand up to Biff with his positivity and belief in George.

FAILURE BEFORE SUCCESS

“I INVENTED SOMETHING WHICH ACTUALLY WORKS!”

DOC BROWN

The theme of ‘failure before success’ runs through **Back to the Future**, as many of the characters face challenges before they finally succeed. As an inventor, Doc comments on how many of his creations have not worked, even though he has succeeded in creating time travel. This theme connects with ambition, courage, and self-belief, as they are important qualities if you are going to succeed in the face of adversity.

THE POWER OF LOVE

“IF THEY DON’T KISS, THEY’LL NEVER FALL IN LOVE AND HAVE A HISTORY.”

MARTY MCFLY

Back to the Future is essentially a love story. Marty is in love with his girlfriend Jennifer in 1985 and the whole plot revolves around helping his parents to fall in love again in 1955. The character of Lorraine has an idealised view of love and what it means to be in love. This is shown in Act 1, when she sings ‘Pretty Baby’ about falling in love for the first time.



A MESSAGE FROM BOB GALE

(CREATOR AND WRITER OF **BACK TO THE FUTURE**)



SOME THOUGHTS ON ‘FAILURE BEFORE SUCCESS’

Whenever I’m asked to talk about **Back to the Future**, this is where I start:

The original movie was released in 1985 and was a gigantic hit worldwide. In America, it played in cinemas for nine months. We made two sequels, released in 1989 and 1990, and all told, corrected for inflation, the three films grossed the equivalent of two billion US dollars (over 1.5 billion UK pounds).

I came up with the idea in Summer 1980. Director Robert Zemeckis and I wrote two drafts, but during the following two years, the project was rejected by every studio, production company and producer over 40 times. We finally got it off the ground in 1984 after Zemeckis made his first hit movie, *Romancing The Stone*.

Rejection can be brutal. And painful. Every person on the planet has been rejected and has failed at some point – often, many, many times – and it never ends. In sports, this is obvious. No footballer scores a goal in every attempt – not even close – just as no goalkeeper has a 100% success rate. Failure is part of the game. Thomas Edison, who invented the light bulb, tested over 10,000 filaments before he found one that worked. 10,000! He famously said:

“I HAVE NOT FAILED 10,000 TIMES. I’VE SUCCESSFULLY FOUND 10,000 WAYS THAT WILL NOT WORK.”

THOMAS EDISON

We all face rejection, constantly, in big things and little things. We get rejected by someone we really want to go out with. Or we don’t get invited to a party – that’s rejection. We get rejected by a club we want to join or by a school we want to attend or for a job we want to get. It hurts. Rejection hurts. Failure hurts. Even now, I still get rejected and I still fail. It’s part of life. And learning how to deal with it, learning how to push through it, finding the strength to get up when you’re knocked down...that’s one of the themes of **Back to the Future**.

If you take nothing else from this study experience, it’s that you should understand that EVERYBODY gets rejected sometimes, everybody fails sometimes. It hurts, but we can all help one another deal with that pain, just by showing a little kindness to somebody in that situation, just as you would appreciate that from somebody else, just as our characters do in **Back to the Future**, and to see it as an opportunity to learn and to do better.

MEET MARTY & DOC



MARTY MCFLY - TEENAGER (16/17 YEARS), WANTS TO SUCCEED AND BECOME A MUSICIAN, HILL VALLEY (1985)

DOC BROWN - 65-70 YEARS, SCIENTIST/INVENTOR, HILL VALLEY (1985)

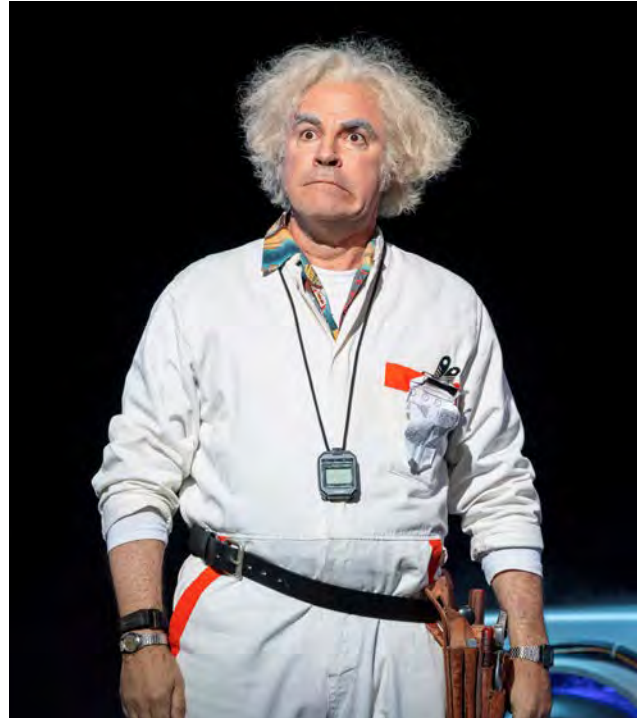
Marty McFly and Doc Emmett Brown are the main characters in **Back to the Future The Musical**. Even though Doc is significantly older than Marty, they have a very special friendship. This was created and developed during the **Back to the Future** film trilogy and has now been translated onto the stage. Look out (and listen out) for the following in the show:

- ✓ Moments of comedy between them.
- ✓ Doc Brown's amazing facial expressions (especially when he realises that Marty's mom has fallen in love with him!).
- ✓ The musical motifs which are used in relation to Doc.

MARTY'S COURAGE & SELF-BELIEF

"YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING IF YOU JUST PUT YOUR MIND TO IT!"
DOC BROWN, ACT 1

Marty faces many challenges throughout the show and needs to have a huge amount of self-belief, courage, and determination to succeed. He is told by his schoolteacher, Strickland, that he's a 'slacker' and 'will never amount to anything'. However, Doc Brown helps him every step of the way and instils him with confidence.



DOC BROWN - THE OUTSIDER?

MARTY

"I'M LOOKING FOR DOCTOR EMMETT L. BROWN. DO YOU KNOW HIM?"

SAM

"THE LUNATIC OF RIVERSIDE DRIVE? WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO SEE HIM?"

DISCUSSION: IN WHAT WAY IS DOC SEEN AS SOMEONE LIVING OUTSIDE OF CONVENTIONAL SOCIETY? WHY ARE PEOPLE SUSPICIOUS OF HIM?

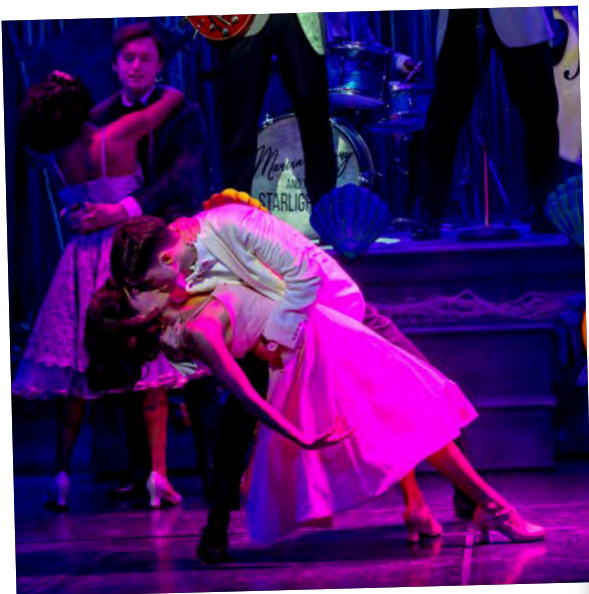
DID YOU KNOW?

BOB GALE TALKING ABOUT THE CHARACTER DOC BROWN:

"WHEN THE SCRIPT WAS WRITTEN IN THE 1980s, THE AUTHORS REFERRED TO 'DOC' AS 'BROWN' AND THAT'S WHAT YOU'LL SEE HERE. IN EARLIER DRAFTS, HE WAS ORIGINALLY KNOWN AS 'PROFESSOR BROWN' BUT IT WAS LATER DECIDED THAT SOUNDED TOO STUFFY AND FORMAL. SO THE AUTHORS CHANGED IT TO 'DOC BROWN'. WHEN THEY WROTE THE SEQUELS, HE IS REFERRED TO AS 'DOC', JUST AS HE IS IN THE BOOK."

LOOK OUT FOR...

FROM THE MOMENT YOU WALK INTO THE THEATRE, EVERYTHING YOU SEE AND HEAR HAS BEEN CAREFULLY CONSIDERED BY THE CREATIVE TEAM. HOW MANY OF THE FOLLOWING EIGHT FEATURES AND DRAMATIC TECHNIQUES CAN YOU SPOT WHEN YOU'RE WATCHING THE SHOW?



- 1 A STAGE 'REVOLVE'
- 2 A REFERENCE TO THE FILM STAR WARS
- 3 TWO MOMENTS OF TIME-TRAVEL
- 4 A STILL IMAGE
- 5 A MOMENT OF 'CROSS-CUTTING'
- 6 MOMENTS OF PHYSICAL COMEDY
- 7 ACTORS MULTI-ROLLING
- 8 THESE FAMOUS INVENTORS



Original London Cast



Original London Cast



LISTEN OUT FOR...

MUSICAL DIRECTOR JIM HENSON IS IN CHARGE OF THE MUSIC SIDE OF BACK TO THE FUTURE THE MUSICAL. HE ALSO CONDUCTS THE BAND THROUGHOUT THE SHOW AND PLAYS THE PIANO! HE SAYS:

“THE THING THAT’S UNIQUE ABOUT THIS SHOW IS WE HAVE THREE VERY DISTINCT STYLES. THEY’RE THREE KINDS OF QUITE DIFFERENT WORLDS.”

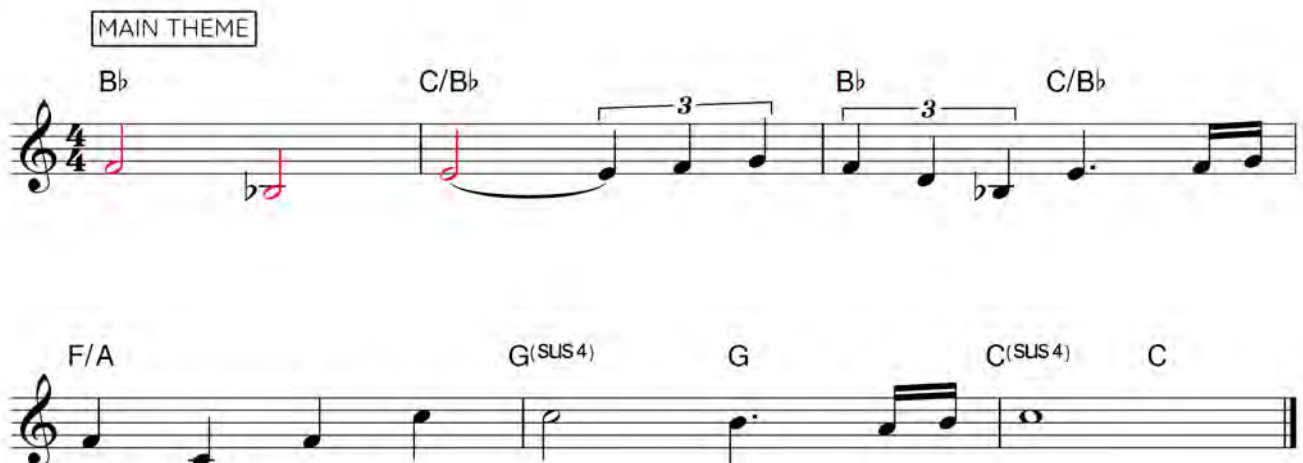
So....listen out for music and sounds from the **eighties**, the **fifties** and the **film score music**, created by Alan Silvestri.

THEMES AND MOTIFS

Here are some specific themes and motifs to listen out for throughout the show.

- Where and when do you hear them?
- What does the theme convey about the characters?
- How do the themes change at certain moments?

THE MAIN THEME



MAIN THEME WITH VARIATION MOTIF



Can you also listen out for motifs which convey:

- ✓ Danger
- ✓ Discovery
- ✓ Time-travel

KEY VOCAB IN FOCUS

LEITMOTIF - Commonly used within film music. Leitmotifs are intentionally repeated, recurring aural themes associated with a particular person, idea, or action. For example, when Alan Silvestri composed the original film score for **Back to the Future**, he gave the character of Doc Brown his own set of musical characteristics. Listen out for a more staccato rhythmic feel. These represent his manic brain activity and 'quirky' thought processes.

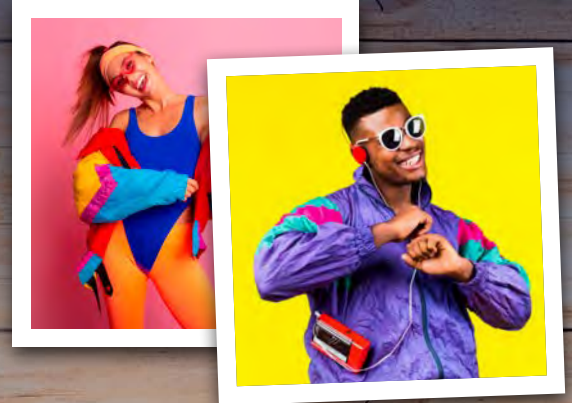


BACK TO THE EIGHTIES

80s CULTURE



80s FASHION



80s TECHNOLOGY



80s POLITICS

America's President in the 1980s was Ronald Reagan. When Marty tells Doc that Ronald Reagan is president in 1985, he doesn't believe him, because in 1955, Reagan was a Hollywood film actor.

80s YOUTH CULTURE & MUSIC

In both the UK and the USA, teenagers and young people engaged with all sorts of new music and media. Advancements in technology led to electronic music emerging and young people able to create and record their own music at home. Movies and TV had their golden era and **Back to the Future** the movie was a huge part of that!

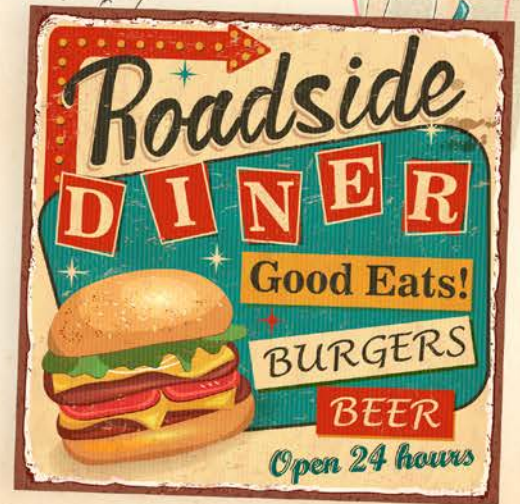


Back to the Fifties



GENDER ROLES - DID YOU KNOW?

- The gender roles for men and women were clearly defined in 1950s America.
- Couples wed early. In the late 1950s, American women got married at the average age of 20.
- Generally, women were the 'homemakers' and stayed at home, whilst men went out to work. These expected gender roles were reinforced through print and television advertising.



YOUTH CULTURE & 50s MUSIC

The fifties saw the emergence of youth culture and rock 'n' roll, which originated from black American music such as gospel, jump blues, boogie woogie, rhythm and blues, as well as country music. The genre acquired its name in 1954 and was pioneered by artists such as Chuck Berry. (Look out for Marvin Berry, Chuck Berry's cousin, who appears in **Back to the Future**!)



BACK TO FUTURE THE MUSICAL



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Commissioned by
Mousetrap Theatre Projects
www.mousetrap.org.uk



WE TEACH DRAMA

Written by
Lucy Bellingham
info@weteachdrama.com

DESIGNED BY **DEWYNTERS**

BACK TO FUTURE THE MUSICAL



EDUCATION PACK

SECTION 2: SCREEN TO STAGE
(POST-SHOW MATERIALS)

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TURNING A FILM INTO A THEATRICAL MUSICAL

BY BOB GALE



“We didn’t want everything in the movie to be there, because otherwise you could just stay home and watch the movie. We wanted it to be completely a theatre experience, so that you say, ‘Yeah, I’ve seen the movie, but, wait, you got to go see it on stage because they do some things that are just going to blow your mind...’”

Throughout history, the theatrical stage has turned to source material of many types. With **Back to the Future**, we knew that many people would see the musical without having seen the movie, so it was very important that they could still fully understand the show. There are things in the musical that are especially enjoyable for those who have seen the movie, but it was important to us that EVERYONE have a fully entertaining and understandable experience no matter what. In writing the book and creating the show, we always kept that in mind.

But these are two very different mediums. A movie has an almost unlimited scope. Thanks to visual effects, almost anything that can be imagined can be put on screen. In theatre, we are limited by what can practically and safely be done on a stage with live performers. We can’t do a car chase on stage. We can’t even splash water on someone because the puddle it makes could cause someone to slip and get hurt. Scenery and props must be stored in the wings of the theatre between scenes, so those items have to be designed with limited storage space in mind. Actors need time to change their wardrobe between scenes, so the show must be written to allow for this. And in both movies and theatre, there never seems to be enough money in the budget to do everything we want.

“The process of translating any story to the stage or the screen always becomes an exercise in creative problem solving.”

A good analogy is creating a painting. In a movie, we can choose from a vast array of colours. Our ‘paint box’ includes wide angle exterior scenes, close-ups, the ability to immediately cut from one scene to another, and to intercut two or three scenes that are taking place simultaneously. In musical theatre, we don’t have those ‘colours’, but we have others that are not available in a movie, such as song and dance, stage lighting, and live performers who can actually talk to the audience. So, the process is to understand what colours (tools) we have and how to use them to their best effect. If we were going to paint a landscape and had every colour except green, we might paint a desert or ocean scene, but we wouldn’t try to paint a jungle or a golf course. We shouldn’t remind people of the colours we don’t have. Instead, we want them to appreciate the colours that we do have. Simply put, it’s better to find a substitute for a particular element than to present that element poorly.



TEACHER NOTES

FAILURE BEFORE SUCCESS

LEARNING TIME (1 HOUR)

LESSON OBJECTIVE: TO UNDERSTAND THE THEME OF 'FAILURE BEFORE SUCCESS' AND HOW THIS CAN BE APPLIED TO PRESENT DAY ROLE MODELS.



RESOURCES

- ✓ Slide Deck 1 [DOWNLOAD SLIDE DECK](#)
- ✓ Student Worksheet 1 - Failure Before Success
- ✓ Post-it Notes

INTRODUCTION (10 MINS)

Project the following question (**Slide 2**):



In the production, Doc Brown says:

**"YOU KNOW HOW MANY TRIES IT TOOK EDISON TO GET THE LIGHT BULB RIGHT?"
How many do you think it was?**

When students have had time to guess and discuss how many times. Project **Slide 3**:

"We have the scene in the show where Doc Brown says,

'YOU KNOW HOW MANY TRIES IT TOOK EDISON TO GET THE LIGHT BULB RIGHT?' IT WAS LIKE 10,000, I BELIEVE, 10,000 EXPERIMENTS WITH DIFFERENT FILAMENTS UNTIL HE FOUND THE RIGHT ONE THAT WORKED. FAILURE IS REALLY IMPORTANT TO GET TO SUCCESS, AND I THINK THAT'S A LESSON THAT ISN'T TAUGHT WELL ENOUGH."

BOB GALE, WRITER

DISCUSSION:

Are you surprised by this? If not, why? Do you agree that failure is important to succeed?

MAIN ACTIVITY 1 - THE DREAMERS (20 MINS)

Hand out Student Worksheet 1 - Failure Before Success and project Slide 5. Give students five minutes to complete Tasks 1 & 2: Highlight the challenges and moments of failure in their lives, which ultimately led to success and a favourite quote from a modern 'hero'. Take five minutes to share ideas.



DISCUSSION

Discuss the following questions on **Slide 5**:

- 1) Why are the scientists important role models for Doc?
- 2) How is Doc viewed by society, as someone who is trying to create something innovative, new or deemed 'impossible'?
- 3) Have you ever failed before finally succeeding? Share ideas.
- 4) Is it failure or is it just problem solving?

MAIN ACTIVITY 2 - CREATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING (20 MINS)

Share **Slide 6**. Ask students to brainstorm ideas about how translating the film, **Back to the Future**, onto the stage would have involved 'failing' and overcoming challenges:



Slide 6: All the creatives involved with the show loved how challenging **Back to the Future** was, and how much problem-solving was involved. How do you think they had to work, to overcome these challenges? What qualities and skills do they need?

Divide your class into groups and allocate one of the following moments in the production to each group:

- The DeLorean driving to 88mph
- Time-travel sequences
- The DeLorean flying
- Doc climbing up the clock tower
- Biff chasing Marty through the school (end of Act 1)

Feedback and discuss ideas.

Share **Slide 7: Qualities**. Why are the following qualities important when creating theatre:

- Resilience
- Perseverance
- Self-belief
- Determination
- Aspiration

Share **Slide 8**: What the creatives said about working on the show.

FINISHER (10 MINS)

Share **Slide 9**: Your Future Self. The final task is for students to focus on something they want to achieve in the future and picture themselves achieving it. As their future self, looking back, what advice would they give to your younger self about 'failure before success'?



Post ideas as 'exit tickets' or create a collage on the wall to share final thoughts and reflections.

STUDENT WORKSHEET 1

FAILURE BEFORE SUCCESS

“THESE VISIONARIES, MY HEROES, ALL HAD DREAMS
AND THEY NEVER STOPPED BELIEVING IN THEM.”

DOC BROWN

TASK 1

Read through the following information and highlight the challenges and moments of failure in their lives, which ultimately led to success.

ALBERT EINSTEIN (1879-1955)

Einstein was an extraordinary physicist, whose ideas about space and time changed the world. He left school at the age of 15, as he struggled with the discipline but still wrote his first scholarly paper at the age of 16, in which he discussed the force of magnetism. He failed to find work as a maths and physics teachers so decided to pursue a PHD instead. He then went on to develop his ‘theory of relativity’, which he developed over ten years, and was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1921, an award for major scientific accomplishments.

MARIE CURIE

Maria Skłodowska was born in Warsaw, Poland in 1867, as the youngest of five children. Her family was poor, and she lost her mother at a young age but was undeterred in terms of her focus and determination to study and learn. She studied physics and mathematics at university and then met Pierre Curie, whom she married in 1895. Her research work was physically demanding and often dangerous, but she persevered over many years and is now remembered for her discovery of radium and polonium, and her huge contribution to finding treatments for cancer. In 1903 she was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics.

STEPHEN HAWKING

Stephen Hawking is one of the most influential scientists of our time. He went to study at Oxford University aged 17. At the age of 21, he was diagnosed with motor neurone disease (MND) and told that he only had two years to live. He defied doctors and lived to the age of 76. He developed theories about how the world began and wrote the book ‘A Brief History of Time’ selling over 10 million copies!

TASK 2

Highlight your favourite quote from a modern hero about the importance of failure. Share it with the class and talk about why you chose it.

“THE REAL TEST IS NOT WHETHER YOU AVOID THIS FAILURE, BECAUSE YOU WON’T. IT’S WHETHER YOU LET IT HARDEN OR SHAME YOU INTO INACTION, OR WHETHER YOU LEARN FROM IT: WHETHER YOU CHOOSE TO PERSEVERE.”

BARACK OBAMA

“FAILURE IS ANOTHER STEPPING STONE TO GREATNESS.”

OPRAH WINFREY

“IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO LIVE WITHOUT FAILING AT SOMETHING, UNLESS YOU LIVE SO CAUTIOUSLY THAT YOU MIGHT AS WELL NOT HAVE LIVED AT ALL - IN WHICH CASE, YOU FAIL BY DEFAULT.”

J.K. ROWLING

“I’VE MISSED MORE THAN 9,000 SHOTS IN MY CAREER. I’VE LOST ALMOST 300 GAMES. 26 TIMES, I’VE BEEN TRUSTED TO TAKE THE GAME WINNING SHOT AND MISSED. I’VE FAILED OVER AND OVER AND OVER AGAIN IN MY LIFE. AND THAT IS WHY I SUCCEED.”

MICHAEL JORDAN, BASKETBALL PLAYER

STUDENT WORKSHEET 2

BIFF TANNEN

Biff Tannen plays a key role in both the film of **Back to the Future** and the stage musical. He bullies George, challenges Marty, and makes unwanted advances towards Lorraine.



KEY VOCAB IN FOCUS - THE ANTAGONIST

The antagonist within a narrative or story actively opposes, or is hostile towards, the main character, known as the protagonist (Marty). This helps to create conflict within the story or play.

DID YOU KNOW?

When the stage production of **Back to the Future** was being developed, a song was written all about Biff, which explored his upbringing and family. This was not used in the final production but helped to develop his backstory.

TASK 1

In this exercise you are going to explore Biff's backstory and what led him to become the antagonist. In groups or pairs, draw an outline of Biff on a piece of paper, which represents him as a ten-year-old boy. On the inside, write ideas about how he is feeling and, on the outside, the external factors which impact on his life - for example, his family, how he is treated by his peers, his family, at school etc.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY:

Can you create a timeline of the specific events in Biff's life, from childhood to adulthood?

DISCUSSION:

To what extent does someone's 'backstory' affect them in later life?

Task 2: Biff is a complex role as he is not merely the stereotypical 'villain'. As the genre and style of the production is musical comedy, there are also lighter, funnier moments. If you were directing the actor playing Biff, how would you strike a balance between communicating both elements?

Here are some sentences to get you started:

- ✓ I would direct the actor playing Biff to...
- ✓ If I were directing Biff, I would....
- ✓ When directing the actor playing Biff, I would want to portray / communicate / convey to the audience....

STUDENT WORKSHEET 3

EXPLORE CONTEXT

ACT 1, SCENE 9 - 1955, THE CAFÉ

GOLDIE

YEAH, I'M - MAYOR! NOW THAT'S A GOOD IDEA...
I COULD RUN FOR MAYOR..!

LOU

A COLORED MAYOR. THAT'LL BE THE DAY.

GOLDIE

YOU WAIT AND SEE, MISTER CARRUTHERS!
I WILL BE MAYOR! I'LL BE THE MOST POWERFUL MAN IN
HILL VALLEY AND I'M GONNA CLEAN UP THIS TOWN!

MAYOR GOLDIE WILSON

We first meet Goldie Wilson in 1955, when he is only 25-years-old and working in the café where Marty meets George for the first time. He is an aspirational character, singing the song 'Gotta Start Somewhere', all about how he is going to work hard to achieve his dreams. When Marty returns to 1985, he has been elected as Mayor of Hill Valley!

CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

The Civil Rights Movement started in the mid-fifties and was a political campaign to abolish racial segregation and discrimination in the United States. This involved sit-ins and marches which lasted for well over a decade. Rosa Parks became known as the 'Mother of the Civil Rights Movement', when she refused to give up her bus seat for a white passenger. This key event took place in December 1955.

WHAT IS THE AMERICAN DREAM?

"You can accomplish anything if you just put your mind to it" - George McFly

The American dream is the belief that anyone, regardless of where they were born or what class they were born into, can attain their own version of success in a society in which upward mobility is possible for everyone.

CREATIVE PRESENTATION TASK

Imagine you are Goldie Wilson in 1955. Create a manifesto for your Mayoral campaign. What issues will you need to address? How might this differ from a manifesto in 1985 or 2022?

DEBATING TASK

How do you feel about The American Dream today? Is it possible and realistic? What recent events have impacted on your opinions and ideas?

STUDENT WORKSHEET 4

CEDRIC NEAL - INTERVIEW



“PEOPLE WILL GET TO KNOW GOLDIE WILSON’S JOURNEY. BECAUSE IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT, GOLDIE WILSON’S CHARACTER IS THE EPITOME OF THE AMERICAN DREAM. THAT IF YOU WORK HARD ENOUGH, IF YOU PUT YOUR MIND TO IT, YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING.”

CEDRIC NEAL

Cedric Neal originated two key roles in **Back to the Future The Musical** - Goldie Wilson and Marvin Berry. The character of Goldie Wilson only appears briefly in the film, but he plays more of a central role in the stage musical. We interviewed him during his time working with the show about playing the role:

Q. HOW DID GOLDIE WILSON’S CHARACTER DEVELOP?

The song that I do, ‘Gotta Start Somewhere’, is actually the first time that the George McFly character hears the term ‘If you put your mind to it, you can accomplish anything.’ But during the first workshop, that song ‘Gotta Start Somewhere’ was exactly 90 seconds long of a development of the workshop. Nick Finlow, our musical supervisor, and John Rando, our director, along with Colin Ingram in the workshop presentation, said that there’s something to this. There’s something to this song. There’s something to Cedric doing the song. So we need to expand it.

It’s now a five-minute production number with four key changes that involves everybody in Hill Valley. So that’s how that character came to grow. I just think it was Bob Gale’s way of saying the story of Martin McFly and George McFly and **Back to the Future** is the epitome of the American dream. There’s no other character in the show that epitomizes or manifests the American dream like Goldie Wilson does.

Q. WHAT HAVE YOU ENJOYED MOST ABOUT PLAYING THE TWO CHARACTERS - GOLDIE WILSON & MARVIN BERRY?

The thing that I’ve enjoyed most about playing Goldie Wilson and Marvin Berry is that it’s representation of a black American man who’s not traumatized. Who’s not tokened. Who’s not, ‘Yes sir, master. No sir, master.’ The thing I’ve enjoyed about Goldie and Marvin Berry is both of those characters only bring joy when on stage. Joy in different ways. It’s just I cannot leave the stage when I’m in Act One being Goldie Wilson without a smile on my face, because I know, this may sound conceited, may sound puffed up, but I promise you, that’s not where it’s coming from: I know that when that Goldie Wilson character leaves that stage after ‘Gotta Start Somewhere’, somebody in the audience that wasn’t smiling before is smiling now.

And that I get to be the character to say, ‘Look, yeah, I’m working in a diner right now. Yeah. I have to go to night school, because I haven’t had the best education, but that’s not going to stop me.’ That’s almost identical to Cedric’s story in that I’m from the hood in Dallas, Texas. Where we vary is I had a very good education. I went to one of the top performing arts high schools in the United States. But being from the hood, I used to want to be a classical opera singer.

It was at an early age, my mother and my father taught me that I could be anything I wanted to be. Just because we were in the hood didn't mean that I had to stay there and that my dreams couldn't surpass being a basketball player or a rapper. So that's what I enjoy about Goldie and Marvin Berry. Marvin Berry is just the coolest ... I think Goldie Wilson is on 10 all the time. He's trying to make it happen, trying to fight the system and be that mayor. Whereas Marvin Berry is chill. He's a cool man. He's a ladies man.

"Both those characters just bring me so much joy."

Q. HOW DO YOU DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE CHARACTERS IN TERMS OF YOUR CHARACTERISATION?

They're coming from two different backgrounds. They both had struggles in different manners. Goldie's struggles led him to be in the diner, dropping out of school with the aspirations of going back to school. So that's what drives Goldie. Goldie is soulful, determined. Whereas Marvin Berry has probably been playing music his entire life. It's in his bones. Chuck Berry's cousin. It's in their family. He doesn't get excited about much like Goldie Wilson.

"Marvin Berry is just cool. He doesn't go above a seven. Goldie Wilson is a mover, animated when he talks, when he sings through song. Marvin Berry is just chilled. Goldie's heightened. Marvin is grounded."

Q. HOW DID THE FILM INFLUENCE YOU IN TERMS OF YOUR RESEARCH AND THE WAY IT'S INFORMED YOUR PERFORMANCES, DO YOU THINK?

Greatly. Goldie is in the movie for, I think, 45 seconds. But having said that, whenever I say to anybody that I play Goldie Wilson in **Back to the Future**, they immediately quote all of Goldie's lines. The same inflections that Donny Fullilove does them in the movie. So I knew going into rehearsals that that diner scene, because the lines in the diner in the movie are the same lines in the diner in the show. So I have to deliver them exactly like Donald Fullilove in the movie. When we were in Manchester, I wore my diner hat on straight. Then I went back and looked at the movie after we closed, and I noticed in the movie that he has it tilted to the side. So for the London run, my hat is shifted now. I've developed a relationship with Donald Fullilove, who was the original Goldie. We're social media friends. He's handed the baton to me and told me how much people love this character. He's just been so supportive. Then with the Marvin Berry character, the only thing that I really took from the movie was that they were party-goers and that he was from a cool background. But you don't cross him.

Q. WHAT DO YOU THINK HAVE BEEN THE REAL CHALLENGES OF WORKING ON THE SHOW OR MAYBE PLAYING THE TWO CHARACTERS?

The most challenging thing was back in the workshops. We did six workshops. I've hit on this a little bit, but making sure that there was a distinction between this one black man playing these two black characters. It still happens to this day. People give more attention to the Goldie Wilson character because he's in the show more, but less to Marvin Berry's. I'm offended when people say that I only play Goldie Wilson. I play Goldie Wilson and Marvin Berry. So I wanted to make sure that Marvin got as much notice as Goldie. Even though Goldie's numbers are flashier and his character's flashier; but they're flip sides of the same coin. I just wanted both characters to be distinct. So that was the main challenge.

"I want to make sure that people know that black people did exist in 1955 and 1985 US. It was still a socially divisive place, and it still is to this day. But that there were black people in Hill Valley, California. I want both of those characters to be respectable, absent of trauma and clearly distinctly two different African American men."

STUDENT WORKSHEET 5

ROSANNA HYLAND - INTERVIEW



“GETTING TO SEE THESE CHARACTERS COME TO LIFE HAS JUST BEEN... I MEAN, THE WORK THAT THE OTHER ACTORS ARE DOING IS JUST INCREDIBLE. IT WAS SO EXCITING AND A TOTAL JOY AND A TOTAL PRIVILEGE TO JUST GET TO BE IN HILL VALLEY WITH THEM, TO GET TO PLAY WITH THEM ON STAGE. IT WAS LIKE BEING IN THE WORLD’S MOST EXCITING SANDPIT. IT’S JUST SO MUCH FUN!”

Rosanna Hyland originated the role of Lorraine Baines in **Back to the Future The Musical**. We asked her how she found playing the role in three different ways, at different ages. Here’s what she said:

PLAYING LORRAINE AT THE START OF THE SHOW (1985)

So, for 1985 Lorraine, the first version you see of her, things haven’t gone so well for her. She’s had a harder life. She doesn’t take care of her health. She drinks a lot. She’s shuffling and heavy and tired and resigned and a little nostalgic, and it’s been more about bringing those qualities rather than an age.

PLAYING LORRAINE AT THE END OF THE SHOW (1985)

For Lorraine (at the end of the production) life has turned out better for her. Her family are thriving. She has a successful career. She takes care of her health. She’s looking forward to her future still. She’s more self-possessed and engaged and confident and there’s spring in her step. It’s more about those qualities for her. At the end of the production, even though she’s the same age as she was when the first time you see her, she feels younger. It’s actually an interesting exercise in you think playing a certain age is important, but actually it’s more about that character’s life journey because you can be a really youthful 47 or you can be a very old 47.

The first time you see her, it’s like life’s really taken a toll. And then, the second time you see her, she’s a bit more of like how you might see a 47-year-old today, a bit more millennial. She dresses more fashionably, and she’s taken better care of herself and she’s maintained a bit more youth. I hate to say it that way, but there’s a lightness to her.

PLAYING LORRAINE IN 1955, WHEN SHE IS 17

And then, for 17-year-old Lorraine, I’ve tried to lighten up her voice a little and make her less grounded and a little bit more highly strung, but really just focusing on the qualities of her being very fixated on Marty McFly and just totally head over heels. She’s really keyed up and hot and bothered and really excited.

“For me, it’s just been about trying to play the characters as a product of their circumstances, rather than getting hung up on an age.”

HOW THE COSTUMES HELPED HER TO DEVELOP HER CHARACTER:

A really good actor will probably try and get their shoes on as quick as they can. If you can get hold of your show shoes, what your character’s actual shoes, it can change your gait and the way you walk and your entire posture. And so, as much as costumes are important, shoes tend to be, for a lot of actors, really important.

STUDENT WORKSHEET 6

LORRAINE BAINES

The role of Lorraine Baines in **Back to the Future The Musical** is a complex one, which requires the actor playing the part to interpret Lorraine in three very different ways.

TASK 1

Read Rosanna's interview on p.10 and complete the following table, with ideas about how the actor you saw interpreted and performed the role to create three distinct characterisations. Include the following drama terms:

- ✓ Physicality
- ✓ Gait
- ✓ Voice
- ✓ Vocal tone
- ✓ Posture

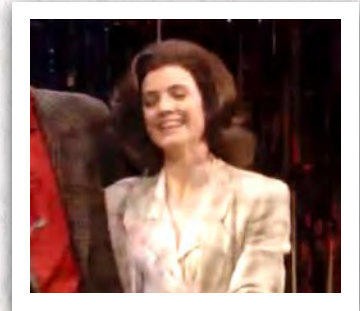
**LORRAINE,
47-YEARS-OLD IN 1985
(ACT 1)**



**LORRAINE,
17-YEARS-OLD IN 1955
(ACTS 1 & 2)**



**LORRAINE,
47-YEARS-OLD IN 1985
(ACT 2)**

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue lines, resembling notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

KEY VOCAB IN FOCUS - GAIT

A person or character's manner of walking. For example, 'he entered the stage with an awkward, heavy gait, which portrayed...'

TASK 2

Write a paragraph about the actor's performance of Lorraine Baines, focusing on her movement and vocal choices. You must include:

- ✓ Key drama terms
- ✓ Evaluative, rather than descriptive language.

Here's an example:

The actor's brilliant, nuanced performance effectively communicated the changing character of Lorraine Baines throughout the production. Her portrayal of the downtrodden, resigned, and tired version of Lorraine at the start of the production was convincingly communicated using a low centre of gravity, slightly slumped posture, and a weary facial expression. A clear contrast in her characterisation was evident during the '1955' scenes when she is 17. The actor used a much lighter, more excited, breathy vocal tone and a repeated gesture of clutching her school folder, which clearly conveyed her youthfulness and constant pining for Marty.



STUDENT WORKSHEET 7

MUSICAL THEMES

“FOR ME, ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING THINGS HAS BEEN HEARING THE SCORE COME TO LIFE LIVE EVERY NIGHT. IF ONLY EVERYONE COULD HAVE BEEN IN THE ROOM THE FIRST TIME THE CAST GOT TO HEAR THE BAND, THE ORCHESTRA PLAYING, ALAN SILVESTRI’S SCORE. I’LL JUST NEVER FORGET IT.”

ROSANNA HYLAND (LORRAINE BAINES – ORIGINAL LONDON CAST)

Back to the Future the Musical has three distinct musical styles - **the fifties**, **the eighties** and the **film score** composed by Alan Silvestri. Let’s use our skills in listening, performing, and composing to explore and understand the music from the show in more detail, with the help of Musical Director Jim Henson.

THE MAIN THEME

TASK 1

Look at the following notation of the Main Musical Theme, composed by Alan Silvestri and play it several times on the keyboard.

MAIN THEME

The musical notation for the Main Theme is as follows:

Staff 1: B \flat | C/B \flat | $\text{triplet } \text{B}\flat, \text{A}, \text{G}$ | $\text{triplet } \text{B}\flat, \text{A}, \text{G}$ | C/B \flat

Staff 2: F/A | G(sus4) | G | C(sus4) | C

TASK 2

Now play just the first three notes, highlighted in RED. These are called the tritone.

KEY VOCAB IN FOCUS - THE TRITONE

The interval encompassed by three consecutive whole steps. For example, from F to B (the whole steps F-G, G-A, and A-B).

Q1. WHAT DOES THIS THEME CONVEY FOR AN AUDIENCE, IN TERMS OF MOOD AND ATMOSPHERE?



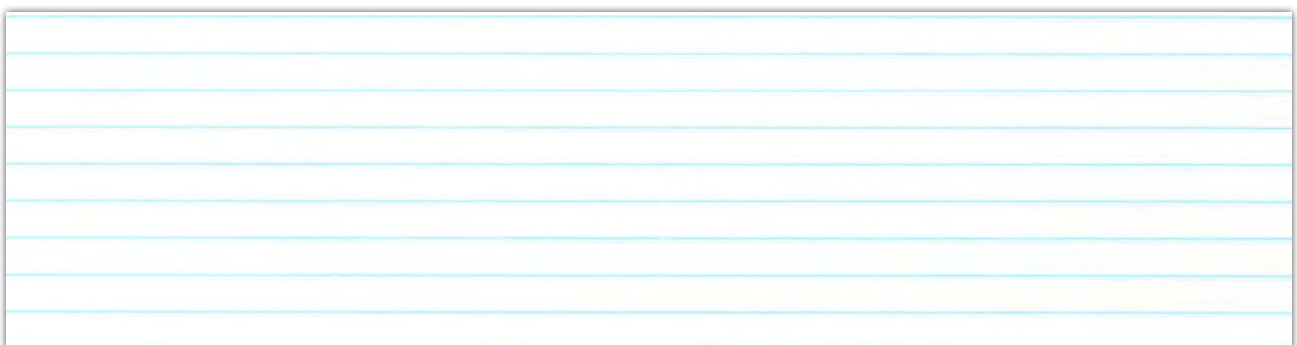
Q2. CAN YOU THINK OF A MOMENT WHEN YOU HEARD IT IN THE PRODUCTION?



TASK 3

Now play the Main Theme Variation Motif. How does it differ from the Main Theme?

MAIN THEME VARIATION MOTIF



TASK 4

Can you play the Tritone again but drop down one interval to create a perfect fourth? (see below)

KEY VOCAB IN FOCUS - DIATONIC

The music theory term “diatonic” is usually intended to mean “of the scale”. For example, if you’re playing in the key of C major and you’re using C major scale notes, then you would say that the notes you’re using are *diatonic*.

THEME VARIATION - DIATONIC

The image displays three staves of musical notation, each consisting of a treble and bass clef staff. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#), indicating the key of D major. The melody in the treble staff starts on D4, moves to E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, and then descends through A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The bass staff provides a simple accompaniment. The second staff continues the melody, featuring a tritone interval (B4 to F#5) and a perfect fourth (F#5 to B5). The third staff concludes the variation with a triplet of eighth notes in the treble staff and a sustained bass line.

Q. WHAT EFFECT IS CREATED BY THIS?

A large rectangular area with ten horizontal blue lines, intended for a student to write their answer to the question.

EXPLORE
MUSIC

STUDENT WORKSHEET 8

THE SECONDARY THEME

The Secondary Theme is often heard in conjunction with the main theme when played in its entirety.

TASK 1

You are now going to focus on the Secondary Theme and follow the notation. What instruments do you hear?

SECONDARY THEME

Chords: Ebm7, Db/F, Ab(sus4), Ab/Bb, Gb/Cb, Db, Eb(sus4), Eb/F, Gbmaj9, Fm7, Fbmaj9, Ebm7, B, B/A.

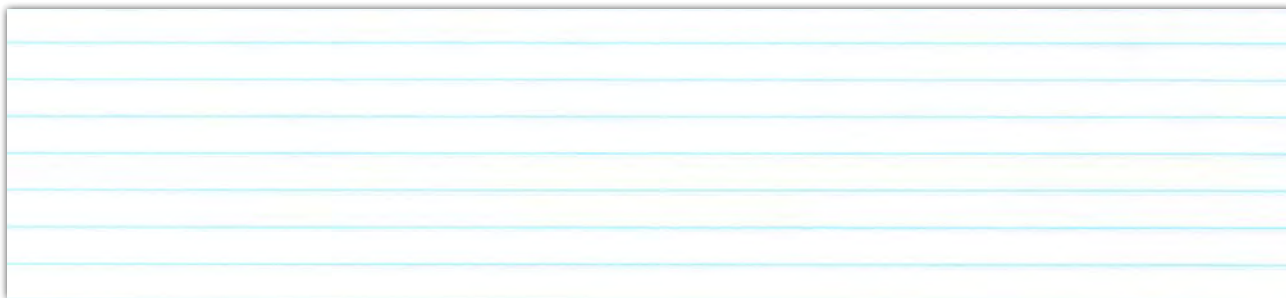
You will have heard this theme throughout the show at various moments. Can you evaluate the effect created for the audience in the following two key moments, when this theme is used?

- 1) When Marty successfully travels back to 1985 at the end of the show and full brass in the orchestra is used.

“This created the effect of....”

2) When George reunites with Lorraine after rescuing her from Biff. Orchestrated with strings and with woodwind taking the lead, it is played at a slower tempo.

"This created the effect of..."



STUDENT WORKSHEET 9

COMPOSITION

"THERE ARE SEVERAL MINOR MOTIFS WHICH YOU HEAR THROUGHOUT THE SHOW. THIS ONE IS USED TO REPRESENT SOME FORM OF **DANGER** TO THE CHARACTERS AND OFTEN HEARD IN THE BASS SECTION OF THE ORCHESTRA DURING DRAMATIC MOMENTS, SUCH AS THE FIGHT AT THE END OF ACT ONE."

JIM HENSON, MUSICAL DIRECTOR

MOTIF - Danger



KEY VOCAB IN FOCUS - CELESTE

The celeste, also called a bell-piano, is a struck idiophone operated by a keyboard. It looks like an upright piano but has smaller keys and a much smaller cabinet.

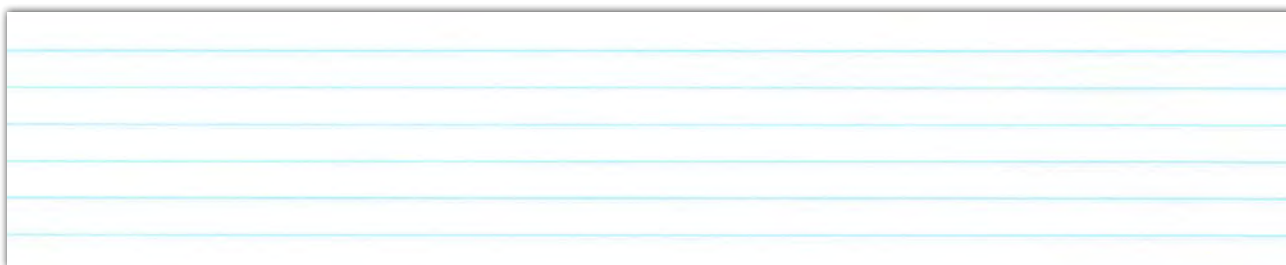
TASK 1

Create your own motif which conveys 'danger'. Your success criteria should be:

- 2 to 4 bars in length
- Fast tempo

TASK 2

Can you adapt the motif so it can be played on another instrument? Can you transpose it? Can you change the tempo? What is the effect?



TASK 3

Doc has his own little set of musical characteristics in Alan's score.

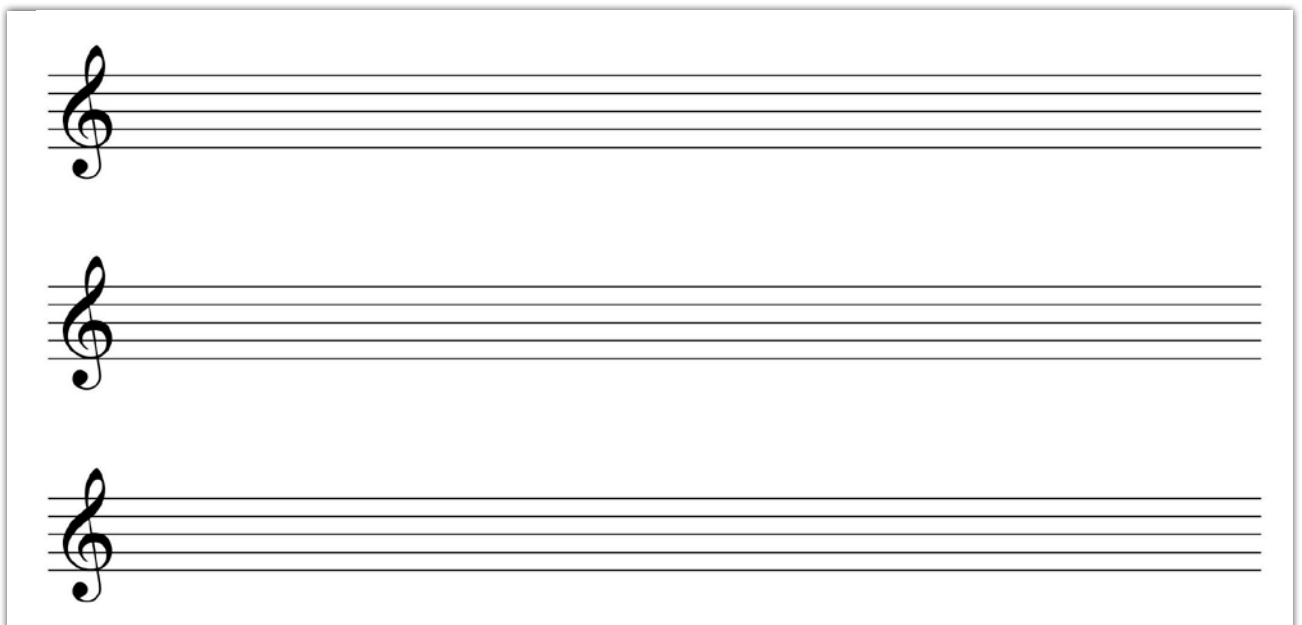
Listen to or play the following theme and discuss how this theme communicates Doc's character:



TASK 4

Select one of the following characters from **Back to the Future** and create a motif which communicates their character:

- George McFly
- Biff
- Jennifer Parker
- Goldie Wilson



TEACHER NOTES

JIM HENSON

Here are Musical Director Jim Henson's personal reflections on the main themes from the production:

THE MAIN THEME

This theme makes strong use of the tritone, as marked above. This naturally creates some tension and adds to the drama of the theme. It has a strong sense of adventure about it.

Alan Silvestri uses the first two bars of the theme as a mini motif throughout the score and also uses the tritone interval to create some smaller motifs, using this tension to highlight the perils of time travel (e.g. heard on flute as Marty writes a letter to Doc explaining about his future death).

THE SECONDARY THEME

This theme crops up at many places and is often used with differing orchestrations to provide a variety of dramatic effects. When played with full brass section and up tempo, it sounds triumphant and victorious, (e.g. when Marty successfully travels back to 1985) and when orchestrated with strings and woodwind taking the lead, and played at a slower tempo, it underscores some of the more romantic moments when characters come together (e.g. when George reunites with Lorraine after rescuing her from Biff in the car).

THEME VARIATION - DIATONIC

By taking the tritone of the main theme and dropping that interval to make a perfect fourth, Alan Silvestri makes a more diatonic theme variation. This theme has a warmer more reflective feel to it, and often underscores moments where the characters are more introspective. (e.g. when Doc and Marty discuss their time together in 1955 in the diner before they attempt their plan to send Marty back to the future).

MOTIF - DANGER

There are several minor motifs which you hear throughout the show. This one is used to represent some form of **danger** to the characters and often heard in the bass section of the orchestra during dramatic moments, such as the fight at the end of Act One. It is also played on a high celeste and can be heard in the background when Doc describes to Marty that his brother is in danger of disappearing due to Marty's interference with the time-continuum.

MOTIF - Danger



THE DISCOVERY MOTIF

Alan uses chords that are related with the tritone interval to create other little motifs. This motif is used to represent a discovery moment for characters and appears often in muted trumpets (e.g. when Doc is learning that his inventions will actually work after Marty has travelled back to 1955).



THE TIME-TRAVEL MOTIF

This one illustrates moments relating to time-travel, along with other falling motifs with a dissonant characteristic. These uneasy tonal relationships illustrate the dangers and pit falls of time-travel (e.g. when Marty looks at the photo of his siblings and sees them fading away).



MOTIFS FOR DOC

Doc has his own little set of musical characteristics in Alan's score. Listen out for a more staccato rhythmic feel, and again, built on chords related through the tritone. These represent his manic brain activity and quirky thought processes. For example, it is heard when Doc is working out how to send Marty back to 1985 during the underscore for the song 'Future Boy'.



STUDENT WORKSHEET 10

ORCHESTRA FACTS

THE SHOW BAND FOR **BACK TO THE FUTURE THE MUSICAL** CONSISTS OF 14 PLAYERS:

JIM HENSON – MUSICAL DIRECTOR / KEYS 1

STEVE HOLNESS – ASSISTANT MUSICAL DIRECTOR / KEYS 2

ROB ECKLAND – KEYBOARD

MARK COLLINS – KEYBOARD COVER

DUNCAN FLOYD – GUITAR 1

OLLIE HANNIFAN – GUITAR 2

MIKE PORTER – DRUMS

JESS WOOD – PERCUSSION

LAUREN WEAVERS – OBOE / COR ANGLAIS

SIMON MARSH – ALTO SAX / TENOR SAX / FLUTE / CLARINET

RICHARD ASHTON – FRENCH HORN

PABLO MENDELSSOHN – TRUMPET / FLUGEL

GRAHAM JUSTIN – TRUMPET / FLUGEL

SIMON MINSHALL – TROMBONE / BASS TROMBONE

DID YOU KNOW?

One percussionist plays a wide variety of percussion, including tuned percussion: timpanis, vibes, xylophone, glockenspiel, tubular bells, crotales and also congas, tambourines, snare-drum, shakers, triangle, bell tree, cymbals and a vibraslap!

There are 44 music cues in the show (compared to 36 in the concert version of the film score), with approximately 2900 bars of music in total.



Here's a still from the MD Camera which the band, DSM and cast watch to see Musical Director Jim Henson conducting, throughout the show.

STUDENT WORKSHEET 11

WRITING FOR STAGE AND SCREEN

One of the early scenes in the stage musical, in Act 1, is when Marty meets Doc Brown in Twin Pines Mall Car Park. In this scene, he reveals the DeLorean Time Machine for the first time, and this leads to Marty travelling back in time to 1955.

In the following activities, you are going to explore how the Twin Pines Mall sequence was adapted and translated from the film version of **Back to the Future**, onto the stage.

KEY VOCAB IN FOCUS - SIGHTLINES

A key consideration in theatre is sightlines. Sightlines means always taking into consideration the view of the audience, to ensure that they can see the actors, the main action and the set pieces at all times, regardless of where they are sitting in the auditorium.

TASK 1

In the Twin Pines Mall scene from the film, Doc explains how to operate the time circuits to Marty. This dialogue takes place inside the DeLorean, with Doc sitting in the driver's seat and Marty filming.

Watch the same scene in the stage production:



DISCUSSION:

1. Why does this scene need to be written and staged differently, compared to film?
2. Why are sightlines important to consider here?

TASK 2

A script for a film is called a **'screenplay'**, whereas the script for the musical is known as the **'book'**. Bob Gale wrote both the screenplay and the book for the stage musical. Look carefully at the following extract from the screenplay, when Doc is showing Marty the time circuits for the first time. How do you think it differs from the book for the stage musical, in terms of content and format?



Exterior location (outside) *Scene heading - describes location* *Time of day*

EXT. TWIN PINES MALL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Brown motions Marty toward the DeLorean. ——— *Action - always written in the present tense*

BROWN ——— *Character name*

C'mon, I'll show you how it works. ——— *Dialogue*

Marty is a bit skeptical, uneasy. Brown is like a kid who wants to show off a new toy. Marty continues videotaping as Brown sits in the driver's seat, explaining.

BROWN (CONT'D)

First, you turn the time circuits on.

Brown turns a handle on the console. An array of indicator lights go on inside.

INSERT - TIME DISPLAYS ——— *An extreme close-up which can be filmed later*

Three colored time displays show the month, day, year and time.

Action described

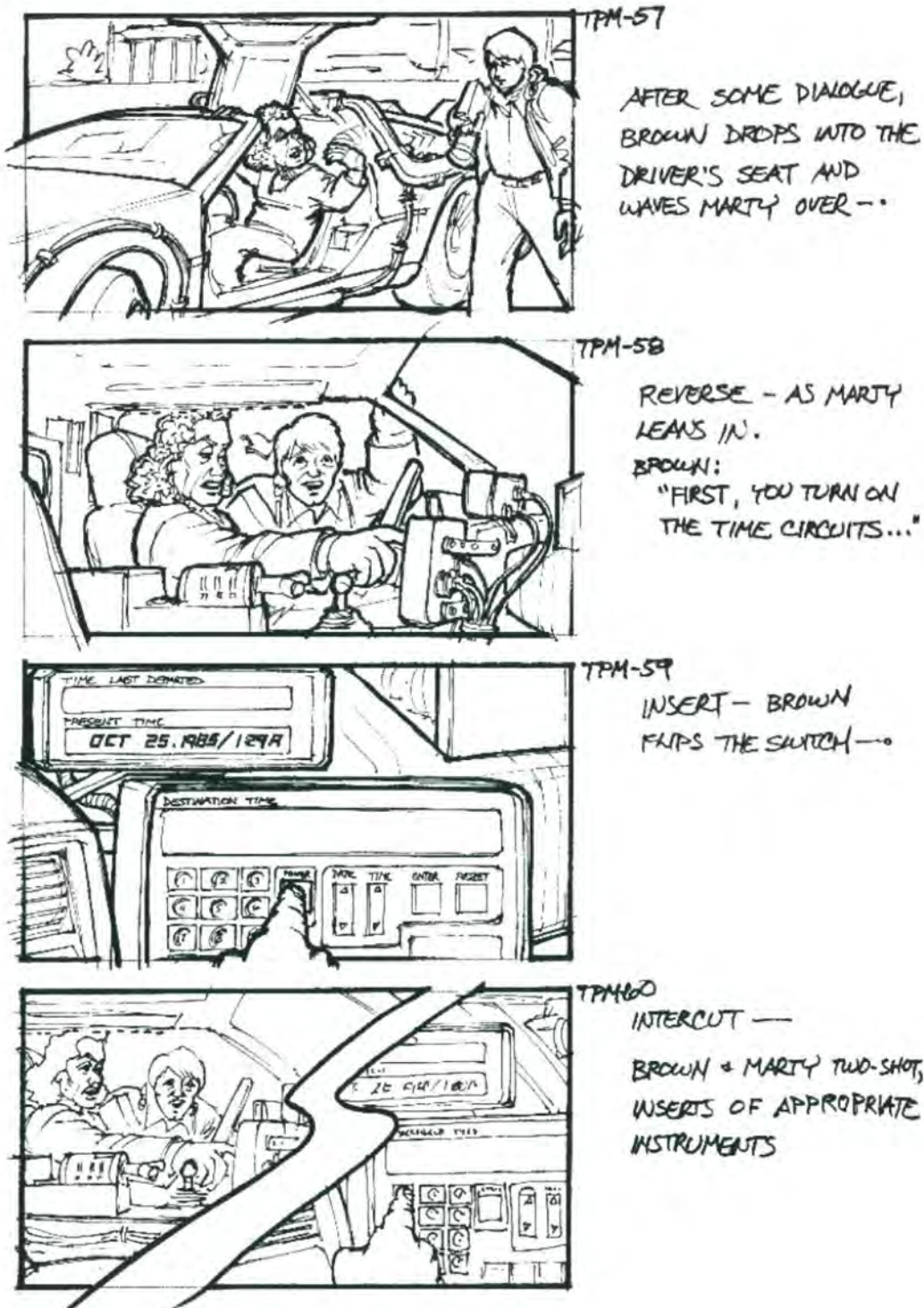


KEY VOCAB IN FOCUS - STORYBOARDS

"Storyboards are a way to present the screenplay visually and are particularly important in complicated sequences with lots of action. They're a way for everyone working on the movie to see what the director has in mind. They can also help in the budgeting process. Simple dialogue scenes are rarely storyboarded. Because the storyboards are drawn in advance of knowing what the location or set will look like, they may not look exactly like the finished film. That's why one of the panels is blank with the description, 'Camera Angles to be determined at location.'"

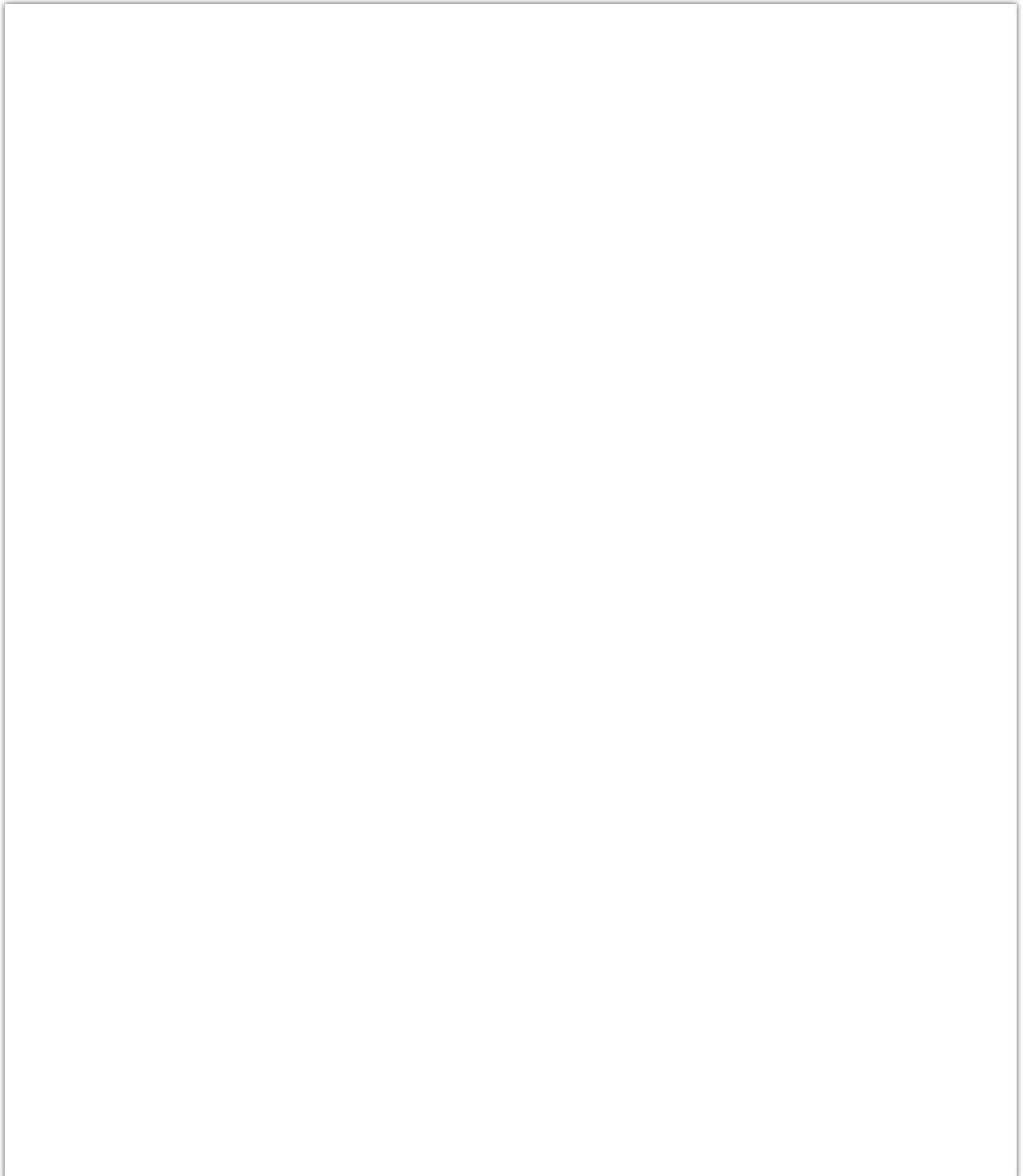
BOB GALE

Here's one of the original storyboards from **Back to the Future**:



TASK 3: WRITE A SCREENPLAY

1. Select a key moment from a play or novel you have studied.
2. Create a six-frame storyboard of the scene, with annotations.
3. Finally, create a one-page screenplay version of the scene. Ensure that you include all of the necessary details of a screenplay: Scene Heading, INT/EXT, Character Names, Dialogue, Action & INSERTs.
4. 'Pitch' your screenplay to your class and use your storyboard to present your ideas.
5. Work with actors to film your screenplay you have created!

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin grey border, intended for students to create a storyboard or write a screenplay. It occupies the majority of the page below the instructions.

STUDENT WORKSHEET 12

SET DESIGN

There are multiple settings in **Back to the Future** in two different time periods. Production Designer Tim Hatley, who was responsible for designing all the costumes, props and set, faced a huge challenge. However, this is something which he says he loved most about working in the production - the challenges and problem-solving involved to create such a ground-breaking theatrical experience!

One location or setting which you saw multiple times throughout the production was Doc's Workshop. This featured in the opening scene, in 1985. Then in Act 1, when Marty goes back in time, we see Doc's workshop in 1955.



AN 'IN ONE' SCENE

Doc's workshop is positioned downstage (near to the audience). There are a few reasons for this. Firstly, the audience can see the detail in the set, with all the props and items, which tell us so much about Doc as a character and whether it's set in 1985 or 1955. Tim Hatley explains why this detail is so important:

"That's why we've crammed it with all those props and things, and a lot of those things are influenced by the film and the choices. And they're all real things, and we found them, and I think it's quite important that things feel real. When you're zooming in like that on something that's right at the front of the stage, I think it's really important to get the detail in."

However, Tim Hatley highlights a much more practical reason why it needs to be downstage:

“It became quite clear to me that it needed to be what we would call an ‘in one’ scene, where it comes in at the front, so therefore, we can be changing and preparing a following scene behind it.”

TASK 1

Look closely at the following image of Doc’s Workshop in 1955. Annotate both of the images with ideas for how the set and props convey:

1. Setting and time period - how do we know the scene is set in 1955?
2. Character & Personality - what does this setting tell us about the character of Doc Brown?
3. Mood and Atmosphere - what is the mood and / or atmosphere communicated through the set design?



MINI-PROJECT - CREATE A SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

“I’VE ALWAYS MADE THINGS OUT OF OLD BITS OF CARDBOARD, AND I STILL DO. FOR ME, THAT’S NEVER CHANGED. THAT’S ALWAYS THE WAY I’VE BUILT A SET.”

TIM HATLEY

A key feature of Doc’s Workshop is all the found and re-purposed objects. He keeps and re-uses everything!

TASK 2

Read the following definition of 'sustainable design' and discuss why you feel it is important when designing set, props, and costumes.

WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE DESIGN?

Within the context of theatre, this means focusing on sets, costumes, and props with a minimal carbon footprint, which may include using objects and materials which have been recycled or re-purposed.

TASK 3

Now, you've explored the amazing set design from **Back to the Future** you are going to create your own set model or costume. However, it must be 'sustainable'.

Create a set design for one of the scenes in the show or design a costume for a futuristic Doc Brown.

Possible Resources: A shoebox, cereal boxes, toilet roll tubes, off-cuts of material, old garments, newspaper, found objects, foil.

TASK 4

Share your design creatively through a costume parade or a set model-box presentation.

STUDENT WORKSHEET 13

LIGHTING DESIGN

Tim Lutkin's sophisticated lighting design for **Back to the Future The Musical** utilises a range of lanterns, colours and special effects. We asked him what the considerations were for translating such an iconic film onto the stage. He spoke to us about creating 'black art illusions':

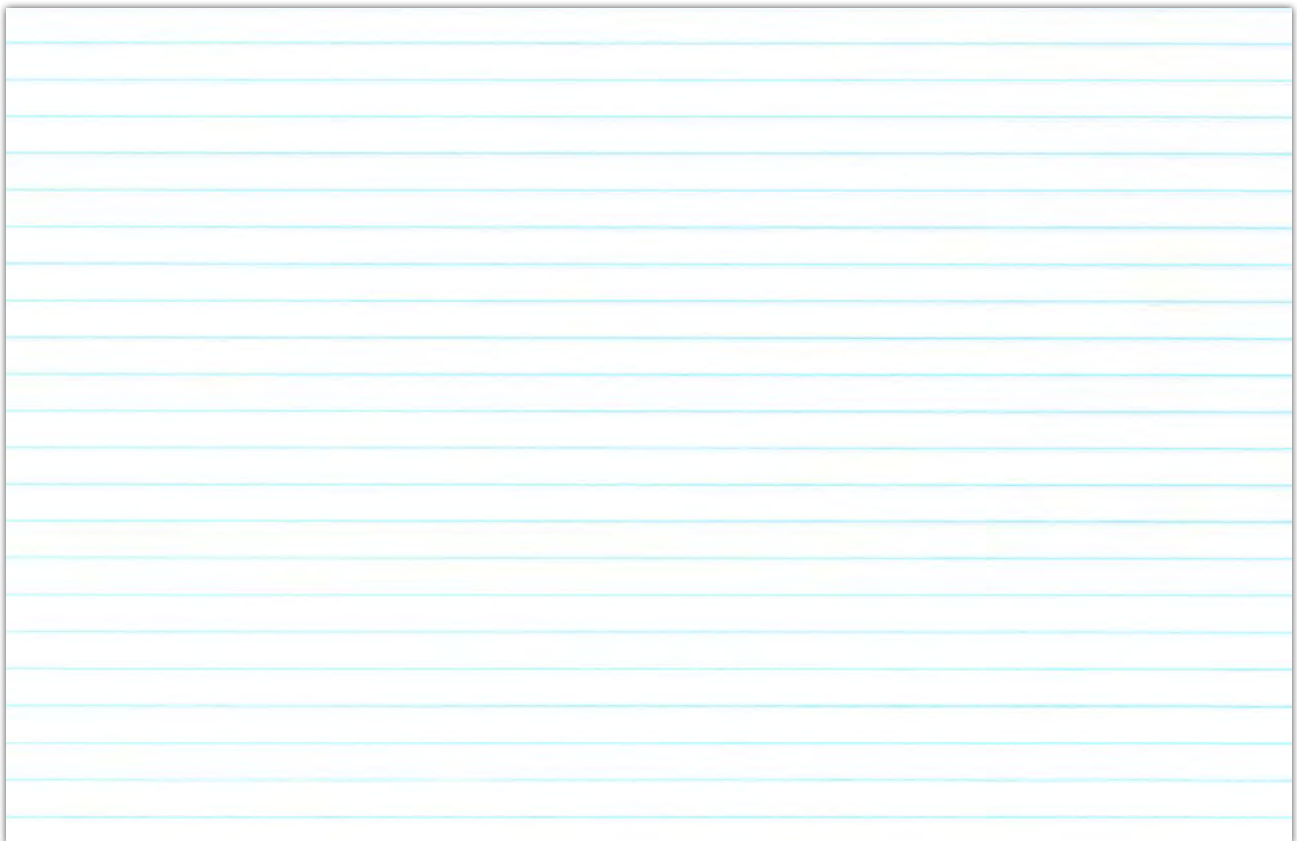
"The overall design vision for the lighting on the show developed from me and Tim Hatley talking about 'how do you deliver iconic film moments in a box space?' And one of the big things we do with illusions is called 'black art illusions'. This is, basically, where everything is covered in black velvet. And then you can get away with pretty much anything because you only light the object you want to see or the person you want to see.

"When you define a space around it, which we call 'framing', and the black box space has been framed with the edges of the LED portals."

"You've essentially got black floor, black wings, and a black video wall. And then we control the whole levels of light and video within that box to give you what we'd call negative space, which is all the black space. So then, we frame it with those LED lights. And then you add some content on the video wall, and you add the skeletal bits of scenery. And then suddenly, you've got a toolbox to be able to deliver all these visuals inside it."

"So, we decided that was the concept. We're going to deliver all these iconic moments within this black box."

Brainstorm: Which moments in the show do you think were created using 'black art illusions'?



KEY VOCAB IN FOCUS - LEDS

Stage lights known as 'LEDs' use light-emitting diodes as a light source whereas traditional stage lighting often use halogen lamps. LEDs have high light output but a lower power consumption. There are three main types of LEDs: PAR Cans, strip lights and moving heads. All three of these LEDs are used in **Back to the Future The Musical**.

CREATING THE EFFECT OF A ROCK CONCERT USING LIGHTING

Tim says that one of the first decisions he made as a lighting designer was choosing the 'rig'. The lighting 'rig' is the structure, often suspended above the stage, that holds the lights. The lights on the rig can then be focused on the actors and scenery on stage to create specific effects. Tim chose a rig which enabled him to create the effect of a rock concert:

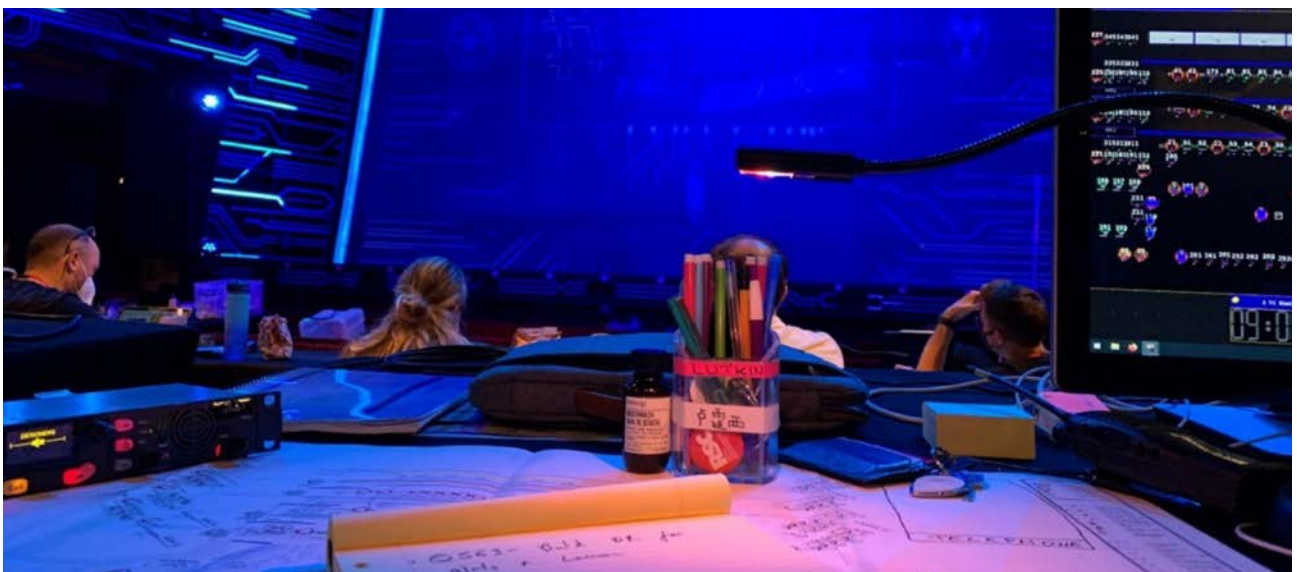
"The show has this rock concert drive all the way through."

"So in the lighting rig, we decided to create a complete concert lighting rig. So it's just rows of moving lights that we can fly in and create a big old concert, moving lights around, blast a load of smoke on. But it also provides us all the tools we need to recreate everything inside the black box. And that is what's quite unique about the show, that the lighting rig is very much geared towards the concert. But obviously the other thing to say that might be useful for students, is that as technology's moved on in the last 10 years, especially LED technology... most of our rig is LED. Not all of it, but most of it."

"A theatre rig is now looking more like a concert rig anyway. They're all moving lights. So that's a big design choice that we went on. And that means that we've essentially got an extremely flexible lighting rig."

KEY VOCAB IN FOCUS - INTELLIGENT LIGHTS

When Tim refers to 'moving lights', these are also known as 'moving heads' or 'intelligent lights'. A new generation of fixtures called 'intelligent lights' can move to different focus points, as well as changing their beam size and edge hardness.



Tim Lutkin watching the Technical Rehearsal

CREATING AN INTIMATE SPACE USING LIGHTING

Much of the show has a 'concert' feel to it, with bold colours and moving lights. However, there are more intimate moments in the show, for example, the scene in Act 1, when Marty wakes up in Lorraine's bedroom. We asked Tim Lutkin how he chose to light this scene:



"In the bedroom scene, you've got a small scene with two cast members that need to deliver this intimate moment where Marty's realizing that he's actually got these feelings for his mother, and she's got feelings for him, but you're in a 1000 plus-seat auditorium. And Tim (Hatley's) got this beautiful little house truck. And then to define the space from upstairs, we only light the area downstage of the truck, to keep it intimate. And then another layer that works with theatre lighting, to hone in even further, is actually adding a layer of blue, deep blue. There's a deep blue island around the house truck, and the (LED) portals glow a little bit, and there's a tree piece that flies in that's got deep blue lighting on it.

"And it's the same whenever we want to define a small space on stage, is we define the area that they're going to play it in, and then add a surround in a deeper, saturated colour.

"It does two things. It gives you a different energy in the space and creates a tone for the scene. But it also helps your eye be less distracted by the light that's bouncing from the space because it fills it in with a saturated colour. So that's a product of doing things in a black box space, because you're able to do that.

"It acts as a blank canvas and a general thought for students is, the blank canvas for a lighting designer, as opposed to a white canvas for an artist, is the blackout. And you've got to think about building a lighting state from black."

KEY VOCAB IN FOCUS - SATURATED

A measure of how intense, rich or vivid a colour is. A lighting state which is described as 'saturated' is made of deep and powerful colours, rather than light tones or white light. In contrast, a lighting state described as 'de-saturated' is one which combines different colours and is therefore 'muted'.

TEACHER NOTES

PRACTICAL EXPLORATION

The show **Back to the Future The Musical** was developed over many years. The performers were able to explore their roles with the Director John Rando in the rehearsal room, to develop detailed characterisations. Here is a selection of rehearsal techniques which you can use with your students, to explore the characters of Doc and Marty:

REHEARSAL TECHNIQUE 1

EXPLORE ACTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

The character's objective is their conscious desire for a scene. In any given scene, a character must always be actively pursuing their objective. A handy trick to ensure that actors are always actively playing their objectives (rather than passively playing the emotion) in any given scene is to use a technique called **actioning**. Actioning the scene is when an actor takes their character's lines and applies an action (a verb or doing word) to each line to help guide their vocal delivery. With actioning you are always specifying how your line is affecting someone else. (Helpful Hint – if it's not doing anything to the person you are talking to then the line is not active!)

A) Divide your class into pairs and label them A and B. A's will play Doc Brown and B's will play Marty Mcfly. Hand out **Student Worksheet 14 - Actioning and Objectives**. Students can practically explore playing the 'objectives' and 'actioning the text', using the ideas in brackets.

REFLECTION

See how this affects their vocal choices. The actions which they choose should inform their use of pitch, pace, pause, volume and tone and ensure it is varied from line to line.

B) Handout **Student Worksheet 15 - Explore Actions and Objectives**. Students can practically explore this section of text and jot down ideas for the objectives and actioning in the scene.



STUDENT WORKSHEET 14

ACTIONING AND OBJECTIVES

SCENE XII: INT. DOC'S LAB – NIGHT, 1955

UNIT 1 (EXAMPLE)

Doc's objective: **I want to try out my latest invention.**

Marty's objective: **I want to make Doc understand that I have come from the future.**

Suddenly, getting an idea, Doc puts a strange geodesic contraption on his head.
Doc opens the door and a frantic Marty enters.

MARTY (I ALERT you)

Doc!! Doc!! Thank God you're here! I need your help!!

DOC (I HALT you)
Don't say a word!

(I IMPRESS you)
I'm going to read your thoughts! Hold that right there...

DOC slaps a suction cup onto Marty's forehead. It's wired to a tall machine full of tubes and dials. Doc twists some dials, then concentrates.

DOC (I MYSTIFY you)
I perceive...that you've come...from a great distance...

MARTY (I ADMIRE you)
Yes!

DOC (I INTERRUPT you)
Wait -- don't tell me!

(I PROBE you)
You're... collecting donations for the coast guard youth auxiliary!

MARTY (I OPPOSE you)
No!

DOC (I ACCUSE you)
You want me to buy a prefabricated nuclear bomb shelter!

MARTY (I EDUCATE you)
My name is Marty McFly and I'm from the future.

(I INFORM you)
I came here in a time machine that YOU invented.

(I COMMAND you)
And now I need your help to get back to the year 1985.

DOC (I WARN you)
My God! Do you know what this means?
It means...

(I DISILLUSION you)
This damn thing doesn't work at all!

(I RILE you)
Six months of labor down the drain!

Doc removes it in frustration and paces. Marty goes to him.

STUDENT WORKSHEET 15

EXPLORE ACTIONS & OBJECTIVES

Doc's objective.....

Marty's objective.....

MARTY

(I you)

Stop! Wait, I can prove I'm from the future!

(I you)

See? My drivers license. I haven't even been born yet!

DOC

(I you)

Fake I.D. I've got three of 'em.

MARTY

(I you)

And a photo of my brother and sister and me.
Look at her sweatshirt. Hill Valley Class of 1984!

Doc takes the photo and puts it into an opaque projector. The image appears on a screen so the audience can see it, a vacation photo with Marty flanked by his siblings, all full figure. But Dave is a bit out of focus.

DOC

(I you)

Pretty mediocre photographic fakery.

(I you)

Look - your brother's out of focus!

MARTY

(I you)

Doc, ya gotta believe me. I'm not making this up!

DOC

(I you)

Then tell me, "Future Boy," who's president of the United States in 1985?

MARTY

(I you)

Ronald Reagan.

DOC

(I you)

The actor? Then who's vice president - Daffy Duck?

(I you)

I've got better things to do than play games with you, kid.

(I you)

Good night, future boy.

TEACHER NOTES

REHEARSAL TECHNIQUE 2

TASK 1 – DISCUSS WITH STUDENTS:

Q. What are the factors which may affect a character's physicality?

Q. How would you describe the physicality of Doc?

TASK 2

Ask the students to walk around the space and tell them that you are going to call out different body parts and that they have to 'lead' with that body part as they walk around the space. Get them to really exaggerate the leading part at first (this should not look naturalistic) and then work on scaling it back so that the leading body part is more subtle. Some examples to use are to lead with –

- The tip of your nose
- Your heart
- Your pelvis
- Your right shoulder
- Your left big toe
- Your belly button

Let the students have fun with this and see how far they can take the physicality before scaling it back.

TASK 3

In their pairs, ask the students to experiment with performing the scene whilst also leading with a specific body part. Again, they should exaggerate this at first and then do the scene again but this time making the leading part more subtle. Ask them to explore which body parts they think work best for their characters. For example, young and confident Marty might lead with his pelvis resulting in a confident strut. In contrast the older and more cerebral Doc Brown may lead with his nose or head, resulting in a slight stoop of the shoulders.

REHEARSAL TECHNIQUE 3

ROLE ON THE WALL

TASK

Students to create a 'Role-on-the-wall' for either Marty or Doc. Here is a modelled example for Marty. They should include details of: family, hobbies, beliefs and given circumstances.

STUDENT WORKSHEET 16

ROLE ON THE WALL EXAMPLE



CURIOUS

17 YEARS OLD

"MY NAME IS MARTY MCFLY AND I'M FROM THE FUTURE. I CAME HERE IN A TIME MACHINE THAT YOU INVENTED. AND NOW I NEED YOUR HELP TO GET BACK TO THE YEAR 1985"

STANDS UP FOR THE PEOPLE HE CARES ABOUT

PLAYFUL

LIVES IN HILL VALLEY

LOYAL

A LEADER

OPEN MINDED

SKATEBOARDER

IS OFTEN LATE

CONFIDENT

CAN DRIVE

HAS A DAD CALLED GEORGE MCFLY

SHORTER THAN BIFF

FAVOURITE SONG - JOHNNY B GOODE

HAS AN OLDER SISTER CALLED LINDA MCFLY

HAS AN OLDER BROTHER CALLED DAVE MCFLY

DOESN'T LIKE REJECTION OR BEING UNDERESTIMATED

FAVOURITE COLOUR - RED

WEARS AN ORANGE VEST AND SPORTS SHOES

LIGHT-HEARTED

LOVES JENNIFER

A RISK TAKER

AMBITIOUS

HAS A MUM CALLED LORRAINE MCFLY (FORMERLY BAINES)

HAS A GIRLFRIEND CALLED JENNIFER PARKER

NEEDS TO GET BACK TO 1985

PLAYS GUITAR AND SINGS IN A BAND CALLED THE PINHEADS

LIKES MEATBALLS AND SPAGHETTI, THE SMELL OF SPRING, AND LUCKY CHARMS

DOESN'T LIKE ALLIGATORS, READING ASSIGNMENTS AND BULLIES

WEARS CALVIN KLEIN PANTS

ADVENTUROUS

NEEDS TO GET HIS DAD TO KISS HIS MUM AT THE ENCHANTMENT UNDER THE SEA DANCE IN ORDER TO SURVIVE

GRANDPARENTS ARE CALLED STELLA AND SAM BAINES

IS THE YOUNGEST OF THREE SIBLINGS

CARES ABOUT DOC BROWN, WANTS TO SAVE HIM

ATTENDS HILL VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

HAS BEEN GOING OUT WITH JENNIFER FOR SEVEN MONTHS

DOESN'T LIKE REJECTION OR BEING UNDERESTIMATED

FAVOURITE SUBJECT AT SCHOOL - MUSIC

KEY

GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES (FACTS ABOUT THE CHARACTER GIVEN IN THE TEXT)
CHARACTERISTICS THAT ARE IMPLIED IN THE TEXT
IMAGINED TRAITS TO HELP BUILD MY CHARACTER
KEY QUOTE FROM CHOSEN SCENE

TEACHER NOTES - REHEARSAL TECHNIQUE 4

EXPLORE STAGE SPACE & POSITIONING

The relationship between Doc and Marty is totally unique and there is so much chemistry between the two actors playing Doc and Marty. John Rando, the Director, would certainly have worked with the actors to develop this on stage chemistry and how they stage each scene. When looking at staging we must not only explore how the characters move in relation to the space, set and props around them but also how they move in relation to each other and how this conveys relationship, status and individual objectives.

TASK 1

Ask the students to get into pairs, with one person playing Doc Brown and the other playing Marty McFly. The students are going to perform the following extract but tell them they are only allowed to make three movement choices throughout:

- A step towards the person they are talking to
- A step away from the person they are talking to, or
- A definite choice to remain where they are.

Students can only make their move when they are speaking, taking it in turns like pieces on a chess board. (Top Tip – have the students begin the exercise standing four paces apart from each other if the space allows to prevent any collisions mid scene.)

Important – tell the students to let their character's lines influence their choice of movement. So, taking the chosen extract the movement could look something like this –

MARTY (step forward)
Doc!! Doc!! Thank God you're here! I need your help!!

DOC (remain still)
Don't say a word!

(step forward)
I'm going to read your thoughts! Hold that right there...

(step forward)
I perceive...that you've come...from a great distance...

MARTY (step forward)
Yes!

DOC (remain still)
Wait -- don't tell me!

(step back)
You're... collecting donations for the coast guard youth auxiliary!

MARTY (step back)
No!

Although the movements back, forth and still should be definite and over-emphasised (this should not look naturalistic) the students may find that their chosen movements convey the relationship between Doc and Marty well and when scaled down could form effective blocking for the scene. This exercise is great at helping students understand how space and proxemics can be used to define relationships and status, and it also helps students move with purpose on stage, avoiding the trap of meaningless wandering or wooden stillness.

STUDENT WORKSHEET 17

EXPLORE STAGING AND STAGE POSITIONING

CHOSEN EXTRACT IS SCENE XII

Suddenly, getting an idea, he puts a strange geodesic contraption on his head. He opens the door and a frantic Marty enters.

MARTY

Doc!! Doc!! Thank God you're here!
I need your help!!

DOC

Don't say a word!
I'm going to read your thoughts!
(Hold that right there...)

DOC slaps a suction cup onto Marty's forehead. It's wired to a tall machine full of tubes and dials. Doc twists some dials, then concentrates.

DOC

I perceive...that you've come...from a great distance...

MARTY

Yes!

DOC

Wait -- don't tell me! You're... collecting donations
for the coast guard youth auxiliary!

MARTY

No!

DOC

You want me to buy a prefabricated nuclear bomb shelter!

MARTY

(yanks off the suction cup, intense)
My name is Marty McFly and I'm from the future.
I came here in a time machine that YOU invented.
And now I need your help to get back to the year 1985.

DOC

My God! Do you know what this means?
It means...

(indicates the headgear)

This damn thing doesn't work at all!
Six months of labor down the drain!

Doc removes it in frustration and paces. Marty goes to him.



MARTY

Stop! Wait, I can prove I'm from the future!
See? My drivers license. I haven't even been born yet!

DOC

Fake I.D. I've got three of 'em.

MARTY

And a photo of my brother and sister and me.
Look at her sweatshirt. Hill Valley Class of 1984!

Doc takes the photo and puts it into an opaque projector. The image appears on a screen so the audience can see it, a vacation photo with Marty flanked by his siblings, all full figure. But Dave is a bit out of focus.

DOC

Pretty mediocre photographic fakery.
Look - your brother's out of focus!

MARTY

Doc, ya gotta believe me. I'm not making this up!

DOC

Then tell me, "Future Boy," who's president
of the United States in 1985?

MARTY

Ronald Reagan.

DOC

(snickers)

The actor? Then who's vice president - Daffy Duck?
I've got better things to do than play games with you, kid.
Good night, future boy.

BACK TO FUTURE THE MUSICAL



mousetrap
theatreprojects

Commissioned by
Mousetrap Theatre Projects
www.mousetrap.org.uk



WE TEACH DRAMA

Written by
Lucy Bellingham
info@weteachdrama.com

DESIGNED BY **DEWYNTERS**

BACK TO FUTURE THE MUSICAL



EDUCATION PACK

SECTION 4: ROLES IN THEATRE
(PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE)



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STUDENT WORKSHEET 1

BOB GALE ON COLLABORATION

In this section, you are going to learn about all of the roles and skills which were involved to create **Back to the Future The Musical**. Here is Bob Gale talking about how collaborative the show was, and how everyone had to work together to face the challenges posed by the production:

“Theatre and movies are collaborative arts. It takes a lot of people doing different things to create the final product. (Books and paintings are examples of art created by a single individual.) Although directors are generally in charge of what ultimately ends up on the stage, one of their most important duties is to inspire everyone on the show to use their knowledge, experience, skills, and imagination toward creative problem-solving in a team effort. We had regular production meetings to discuss our challenges, and the solutions always involved combinations of various elements.

“The illusion of the car going 88 miles per hour required a car that could lift off the stage a few centimetres so that its wheels could actually turn, a physical turntable on the stage so that the vehicle could ‘turn’, a moving video background, a foreground video screen, stage lighting, sound effects, and music to make it more exciting. This was a collaboration between production designer Tim Hatley, video designer Finn Ross, lighting designer Tim Lutkin, special effects designer Chris Fisher, sound designer Gareth Owen and composer Alan Silvestri. The movie gave everyone the common understanding of what we were trying to achieve. When there is no movie as a reference point, drawings, illustrations, and models are used instead because the words on the script page can only go so far.

“In the lunchroom chase (at the end of Act 1), the early versions of the book had the entire sequence taking place only in the lunchroom with just a few ‘gags’ described. I kept it simple because I was ignorant of some of the things that could be created via clever stagecraft. But thanks to the knowledge, experience, creativity, and collaboration of the director with Tim Hatley, and the stunt coordinator, the special effects supervisor, the choreographer and the video supervisor, the chase occurs in a much bigger environment with many more ‘gags’.”

STUDENT DISCUSSION TASK

What is the most collaborative project you have been involved with? How did you work together to overcome problems? What were the challenges? How did you work through these problems?

Write down three ways how to work most effectively in groups:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

STUDENT WORKSHEET 2

CREATING 'SEQUENCE TO '55'

"There are so many cogs in the machine backstage that need to all line up"

TIM LUTKIN (LIGHTING DESIGNER)

If you were asked who is key to telling the story of **Back to The Future the Musical**, you might say: the performers – the talented actors, singers and dancers that we see on stage and who we applaud at the end for a job well done. The performers do, of course, play an important role but there are countless talented people behind the scenes who help to create such an awe-inspiring show. Each one of these roles are different and have their own unique set of skills. They must work together to create a cohesive story-telling experience.

During the 'Sequence to '55' in Act 1, Marty travels to 1955 in the DeLorean. The behind-the-scenes team must find ways for the iconic DeLorean to appear as though it is travelling at 88 miles per hour across different locations and time zones on stage.

All these different, very technical elements must work together in harmony. To do this, the design team must work collaboratively, using the problem-solving abilities unique to their craft to create an illusion that will effectively and efficiently tell the story of Marty McFly's drive to 1955.

Task 1 - look at Student Worksheet 3, showing the moment when the DeLorean is driving on stage in Act 1. Select three key roles which are integral to making this moment happen and brainstorm some ideas about what each role involves:

Production Role	What did they contribute to creating this theatrical moment?
1)	
2)	
3)	

TASK 2

Now, select one of the 'Production Roles Flash cards' on Student Worksheet 4 and present ideas to your class about the role and how it contributed to creating 'Sequence to '55' on stage.

STUDENT WORKSHEET 3

WHO CREATES 'SEQUENCE TO '55'?

STAGE
MANAGER

DEPUTY
STAGE
MANAGER

ASSISTANT
STAGE
MANAGER

DIRECTOR

HEAD OF
EFFECTS

PROPS
SUPERVISOR

PRODUCTION
DESIGNER

LIGHTING
DESIGNER

PRODUCER

ILLUSION
DESIGNER

SOUND
DESIGNER

VIDEO
DESIGNER

HEAD OF
AUTOMATION

COMPANY
MANAGER

PERFORMERS

HEALTH
AND SAFETY
MANAGER

MUSICAL
DIRECTOR

WRITERS

MUSICIANS

WIGS, HAIR,
MAKE-UP



STUDENT WORKSHEET 4

PRODUCTION ROLES FLASH CARDS

PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Working closely with the lighting designer, sound designer, video designer, illusion designer and director, Production Designer Tim Hatley is responsible for the visual concept for the show. He oversees all of the design and creative decision-making related to costume, set and props. Tim Hatley did a lot of visual research into the fifties and eighties to ensure that his designs, props, and costumes were historically accurate. He was always mindful of the design fundamentals such as scale, colour palette, texture, scale and materials. The production designer often leads the collaborative process and makes sure everyone is using their unique skills to enhance each other's work and the show as a whole. He says:

“THE ART OF CREATING A DESIGN FOR A MUSICAL, ESPECIALLY ONE THAT MOVES AROUND AND IS SO FLUID, IS ABOUT THE WHOLE PICTURE.”

TIM HATLEY (PRODUCTION DESIGNER)

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Working closely with the production designer, sound designer, video designer, illusion designer, director and technical operator, the lighting designer decides which lights are used and when to light the show in a way that best tells the story. The lighting director has a lot of power; they control what and who the audience see (or don't see) and when. This is especially true in a show like **Back to the Future**, which uses a lot of illusions and relies on complex lighting plans.

“LIGHTING IS THIS LAYER THAT NEEDS TO BRING OUT THE BEST IN EVERYBODY'S WORK... IT SHOULD ABSOLUTELY BE FUSED WITH THE REST OF THE WORK.”

TIM LUTKIN (LIGHTING DESIGNER)

The key elements of lighting which Tim Lutkin used to create his designs are direction, intensity, colour and movement.

SOUND DESIGNER

Working closely with the production designer, lighting designer, video designer, and director, the sound designer finds or creates the appropriate sound effects needed to help to tell the story. The sound designer Gareth Owen must make decisions about the source and direction of sound, types of sound (live or recorded), volume and levels and how sounds are manipulated or edited. Think of all the exciting sound effects used in the 'Sequence to '55': the screeching tyres, the heavy rain, the sound of the car crashing into the hay bales... The sound designer is responsible for all of these and more!

VIDEO DESIGNER

Working closely with the production designer, lighting designer, sound designer and director, the video designer creates and incorporates recorded media into the live show to enhance the storytelling. **Back to The Future The Musical** relies heavily on the use of projection and moving graphics to help with its time travelling scenes, created by Video Designer Finn Ross. Think about how the moving projection behind the stationary car in the 'Sequence to '55' scene helps to make it look like the DeLorean really is accelerating to 88 miles per hour! This all thanks to the video designer and their collaboration with the other behind the scenes roles.

ILLUSION DESIGNER

Not every show needs an illusion designer but this one certainly does! Did you know **Back to the Future** Illusion Designer Chris Fisher is a member of The Magic Circle? He has also worked as International Illusions & Magic Associate for Harry Potter & The Cursed Child. Working closely with the production designer, lighting designer and director, the Illusion Designer is often a member of the magic circle and cleverly uses light, sound and projection to create spectacular illusions live on stage, for example the flying DeLorean in the final moments.

STAGE MANAGER

Working as a bridge between the creative and technical departments, the stage manager is in charge of coordinating the production, making sure every performance runs smoothly. This includes ensuring that the actors, props, set and costumes are all exactly where they need to be at the correct moments and calling all the technical cues (light, sound or video changes) on time. The list of responsibilities for a stage manager is always long but for a show like **Back to the Future**, with its complex design and many technical aspects, the stage manager certainly has their hands full!

DEPUTY STAGE MANAGER

Working closely with the Stage Manager and the Assistant Stage Managers (ASMs), the Deputy Stage Manager (DSM) plays a key role during rehearsals, technical rehearsals, and the show. They keep an accurate record of key decisions made by the directors and actors during rehearsal. The DSM will instruct or 'cue' the technicians, sound and lighting box to start the performance. Then, during the show, will cue any lighting changes, sound effects and music. For example, in **Back to the Future The Musical**, they would 'cue' the scrim or gauze to come down at the front of the stage, for the start of the final storm scene.

HEAD OF EFFECTS

Working alongside the production designer and stage manager, the Head of Effects plays a huge part in the smooth execution of the many live effects used throughout the show. They are an integral cog in the backstage machine and must be on hand during every performance. A key responsibility for the head of effects is cueing all of the explosions, flashes, smoke, flames and fireworks – otherwise known as pyrotechnics – that are used during the many jaw-dropping moments in the show, such as the moment when Marty goes back to 1985 and tracks of fire are created on stage. In the case of shows that make use of complex illusions like this one, the Head of Effects will also work closely alongside the illusion designer to help ensure that the show's many impressive illusions run smoothly and that the secrets to those illusions are kept safely under wraps.

STUDENT WORKSHEET 5

THE ROLE OF THE PRODUCER

COLIN INGRAM IS THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER FOR **BACK TO THE FUTURE** AND HAS WORKED IN THE THEATRE INDUSTRY FOR 23 YEARS WITH SOME OF THE WORLD'S LEADING PRODUCERS, DIRECTORS, DESIGNERS, AND WRITERS. HE HAS PREVIOUSLY PRODUCED SHOWS SUCH AS *GHOST: THE MUSICAL* AND *GREASE*, AND IS CURRENTLY DEVELOPING A STAGE MUSICAL OF *THE TIME TRAVELLER'S WIFE*, BASED ON THE BEST-SELLING NOVEL.

Q. HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED IN BACK TO THE FUTURE?

I was brought into it very early in 2012, actually, when I worked with Glenn Ballard on *Ghost*, which we were doing on Broadway at the time. And Glenn said to me, 'I'm talking to Bob Gale, Bob Zemeckis and Alan Silvestri about making **Back to the Future** a musical,' and I instantly went 'well... I'd love to do that. That's amazing. I love that film!'

Colin had previously translated the film Ghost onto the West End Stage, which he says also involved a lot of 'technology and spectacle', so he was the ideal Producer to bring on board.

Q. WHAT DOES YOUR ROLE AS PRODUCER INVOLVE?

In terms of my role and the show, as a producer, you put the creative team together, you put the money together, you hire the theatres, you hire the casting director. You get all these things parked together and, a big part of this, the marketing of course as well. So, there's a lot of things going on with it. But on **Back to the Future**, it was really putting it all together.

Q. WHAT IS A COMMERCIAL PRODUCING?

I guess the difference is a commercial production is a show that is completely driven by profit, where the money comes from investors who expect to have their money back and a profit. And the producer takes a split of the profit when it's been recouped.

So, all the surplus of a show will go back to the investors to recoup their initial money. When you get to recoupment, you then split according to the terms you've agreed. If they put a lot of money in, they'll have a higher split because they're taking a higher risk. If they have a smaller amount of money, then it's a lower split.

"There's no subsidy from the government or any Arts Council money."

When you go into the theatre, it is what they call a 'four-wall deal', which means they are renting the theatre to you. They're not helping you in any other way apart from, 'here's the theatre.'

But essentially, you're not going into a non-for-profit house where they've got a whole marketing department and they've got a set building area and a box office... you're not going into something which is being managed. You are managing everything.

Q. WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE ADELPHI THEATRE FOR BACK TO THE FUTURE?

There really aren't many theatres for this show. We were pretty fussy about where we went to. We didn't want to go in too big because it's a comedy and you'd lose the comedy. Being small, it wouldn't have worked financially. So, yeah, there are plenty of 1500-seaters on Broadway, but we don't have many. The problem with the West End is there's a lot of big theatres and lots of small theatres. And there's really not many in the middle. So, the Victoria Palace and the Adelphi are probably the best.

Q. WHAT SKILLS ARE INVOLVED IN BEING A PRODUCER?

"I think when you're a producer, you have to kind of will something to work. You've got to be optimistic."

Tenacity, optimism. Your interpersonal skills are absolutely critical because you're not just dealing with investors, you're dealing with a director, a writer. When you go into the theatre, you have to deal with actors. So, you have to deal with everybody. You probably have to have a bit of an ego because otherwise, you've really got to have a belief in what you're doing. I know that you got to believe you're right. I do think you do have to listen to people. And I think you have to be willing to take advice.

There's two types of producers, of course. There's a creative producer who's there to create the show and put the team together and get the rights and put it on. That's what I do. And then there's the money producer who just raises the money.

So, you can do both things. You could be a money producer and that's just a case of raising money and getting to know who the investors are out there and how to present your work. And you've got to put a pack together. You've got to show the numbers. You've got to have a story to selling it. It's a cliché, but you've got to say why you're passionate about it, how it's come about, why is it going to be successful?

Q. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE SOMEONE WITH ASPIRATIONS TO BECOME A THEATRE PRODUCER?

Work for a big organisation because I think with a big organisation, you're going to get a lot more experiences. You can have a good turnover of shows. You don't want to be working on just one show. You're there to train and to learn, a sort of apprenticeship.

"See a lot of shows. I don't think you can see too many shows."

I think that's really important. Good shows, bad shows, see lots of shows in the West End. See smaller shows. And what I used to do is I used to write down in the programme who I liked and where I thought the lighting was good, the sound was good. And I sort of kept this big bundle of programmes with lots of notes on them, according to what I saw. And then you start to learn, the same people start to come up because it's a pretty small business really. And then you start to get a feel. You'll know the creative teams who are good. You'll know the actors who are good and the directors.

TASK

- ✓ Can you find the names of any other West End Producers?

STUDENT WORKSHEET 6

THE ROLE OF THE PRODUCTION DESIGNER

TIM HATLEY IS AN AWARD-WINNING PRODUCTION DESIGNER FOR FILM AND THEATRE. HE IS THE WINNER OF THE TONY AWARD FOR BEST SET DESIGN AND BEST COSTUME DESIGN FOR NOËL COWARD'S PRIVATE LIVES AND SHREK THE MUSICAL. WE ASKED TIM ABOUT HIS ROLE AS A PRODUCTION DESIGNER ON **BACK TO THE FUTURE** AND WHAT IT REALLY INVOLVES. HE SAID:

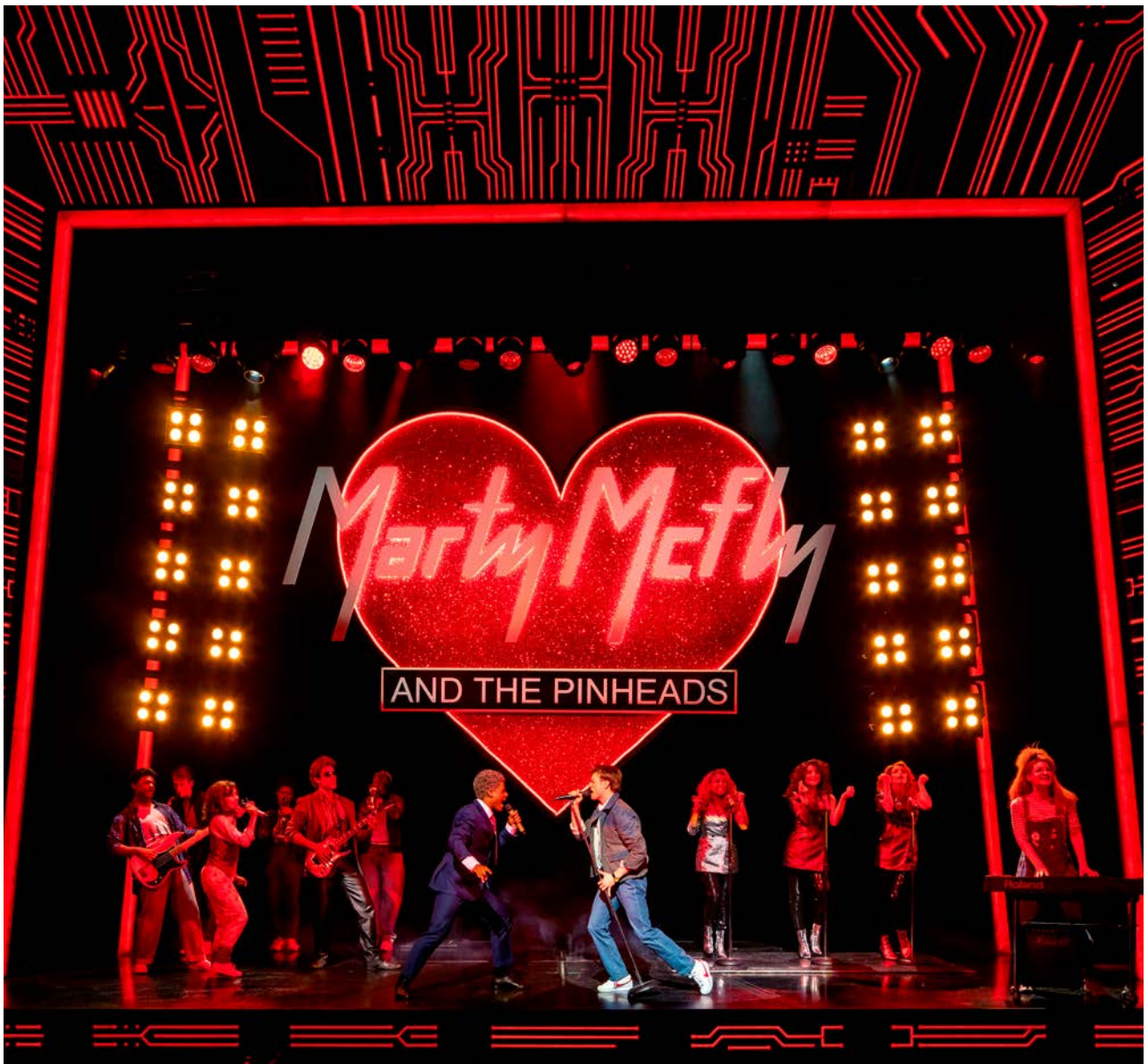
"Ultimately, I'm responsible for the set, the props and the costumes. However, a production designer on a big show like this does more than that, because of the way you have to pull everyone together. So, as the production designer you're designing the set, but as I said, the other designers can't work with you until they know what you've done, so you have to kind of give them a pointer and a head start. So the whole video sequence at the end, we designed that, but then Finn Ross (Video Designer) made it better.

"You're the production designer. You're responsible for what people are looking at, whether it's a video, whether it's a curtain, whether it's a bit of painted scenery, whether it's 15 actors all stood on top of each other."

"You're the designer, so you've got to know what that is going to look like. It might then go into other departments to make that better, but you don't just design a box and a floor and walls and say, 'That's my job done'. So that's why 'production designer' is actually more accurate, because it is broader than just doing set and costumes. Not the same for necessarily every single play."

So, Tim Hatley played a key creative role as the Production Designer for **Back to the Future**. His designs communicated to the audience a sense of time, plot, location, along with the character's actions and feelings. Here are just a few more aspects to his role:

- ✓ Creator and writer of **Back to the Future** Bob Gale shared visual research with Tim from the original film, and advertising images from the fifties and eighties, which informed Tim's designs.
- ✓ He worked closely with Lighting Designer Tim Lutkin and Video Designer Finn Ross to create the effect of the DeLorean travelling through time.
- ✓ He collaborated with the Illusion Designer Chris Fisher (and many others) to create the effect of the DeLorean flying at the end of the show.
- ✓ Supervising and managing the building of the set and set pieces, including how the DeLorean moves on the revolve.
- ✓ Creating costume designs for all the characters and ensemble performers, which are historically accurate and stay faithful to aspects of the film.
- ✓ Whilst developing the show, he was always mindful of sightlines in the theatre and would ensure that all of the actors and set pieces could be seen from every seat in the theatre.



STUDENT WORKSHEET 7

TIM LUTKIN ON BEING A SUPPORTIVE LEADER

“LIGHTING IS THIS LAYER THAT NEEDS TO BRING OUT THE BEST IN EVERYBODY’S WORK.”

TIM LUTKIN

TIM LUTKIN IS AN OLIVIER AWARD-WINNING LIGHTING DESIGNER, WHO HAS WORKED ON MANY SHOWS IN LONDON’S WEST END AND THROUGHOUT THE UK. COMPANIES TIM HAS DESIGNED FOR INCLUDE THE NATIONAL THEATRE, THE ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY AND THE OLD VIC. WE SPOKE TO HIM ABOUT HIS ROLE AS THE LIGHTING DESIGNER ON **BACK TO THE FUTURE THE MUSICAL**.

As the lighting designer on the show, Tim Lutkin has the overall responsibility for creating and delivering the design. However, a large part of Tim's role is also supervising a whole department of lighting specialists which includes:

- ✓ The associate lighting designer (associate LD) assists the lighting designer in creating and executing the lighting design. This might include assisting the lighting designer in creating the lighting plot and sketches.
- ✓ The assistant lighting designer (assistant LD) assists both the lighting designer and the associate lighting designer. The main difference between the lighting associate and the assistant is that the associate is generally authorized to speak on behalf of the LD and can make creative and design decisions when needed, whereas the assistant is not.
- ✓ Lighting supervisors, whose responsibility it is to look after the lighting night after night, when the show is up and running.

We asked Tim what this management role involves, now the show is open. He said:

"I go and see the show every few weeks... Maybe once a month basically, to check it looks good. Usually a surprise visit, or I'll tell them an hour before.

"I'd say that my role very much becomes a maintenance role, visually maintaining the show. But there's another side to it, which I do believe is really important."

"And it's important for anybody in any job, and it's important for students to understand when they go into lighting design, which is to be a supportive leader. And Monday I was in there with our two lighting supervisors who look after the show... Whose specific job is only to look after the lighting on the show.

"And I do feel that it's partly my role to support them. Both with anything they might need practically, but also to go in there and support them and tell them what they're doing right. And actually enjoy being there with them, and make them feel that we're part of a team. Because a very old-fashioned way of working, and some of the older designers still do this, is they operate on a fear basis and that's not the way of the world today. So I do believe that it's my duty, and my role as the lighting designer now, to not only maintain the visual look of the show, but to support those people. Even just to go in there, and show a bit of interest, and tell them where it's going right. And when you do that as a person, everybody's happier."

"You actually can get down to solving problems easier because there's less conflict in that world."

If you want to read more about the Tim Lutkin's lighting designs in the show, look at **Student Worksheet 13** in **Section 2: Screen to Stage**.

STUDENT WORKSHEET 8

THE ROLE OF THE STAGE MANAGER

GARY WALL IS THE STAGE MANAGER FOR **BACK TO THE FUTURE THE MUSICAL**. WE ASKED HIM WHAT HIS ROLE INVOLVES:

“I suppose that the bottom line is that I run the show, day to day.”

I look after a team of five, including myself. So that's my stage management team. I have a DSM (Deputy Stage Manager), two ASM (Assistant Stage Managers) book covers, and one ASM swing who covers all the tracks. So I suppose my routine would be the setting up of the show, in the first place, just on a normal show day. So there'll be a whole rig check session, a preset. And I just oversee that. And sort of with that, I'll set all the paperwork up for the day, so the show report, the covering, which gets passed down to me from the company manager and I just filter that into the show report for the day. I do all the band lists, as well. So that's kind of the short part of the day. And then the sort of bigger pictures that I look after the, obviously, the technical side.

When it comes to pre-show, we have warmup and we have a fight call, which we supervise, and then we do a note session. So, we go around a big circle and then every HOD (Head of Department), basically, will give their notes for that day or, if there's any previous problems from the night before, then we discuss that. And then, yeah, that's kind of my show day. When we get to 7:30, that's when we kind of fire into the show. So, from the whole kind of first LX cue to the last LX cue or auto cue, that's basically me, obviously, in that whole process.

Q. WHAT IS UNIQUE ABOUT WORKING ON BACK TO THE FUTURE FOR YOU?

We've got a car on stage, for a start. I think that's probably the extra cast member, if you want to say. It's got its own personality, it's got its own problems.

When it works, it works and it's great. And 99.9% of the time, it's absolutely fine. When it doesn't work....it's the most difficult part of the set and the most easy part of the set, at the same time, if that makes sense, because it's just one thing that's moving on stage.

Q. WHAT ARE THE SKILLS YOU NEED TO BE A STAGE MANAGER?

I think first and foremost is communication. You've got to be able to communicate at the highest level as a stage manager. It's just key to everything you do.

Sometimes, you want to change your name because everyone is just asking for you all the time. It's not a bad thing. It's just how it goes, but yeah, you communicate with so many people and so many departments. Obviously, it's all in our ear (through the 'cans' or headphones) and you have to be able to filter all of that stuff in your ear whilst people are actually talking to you, face-to-face. So the cast, they don't hear what's going on on their headset. So sometimes, they'll be talking to you and you might be having three or four different conversations.

Delegation, as well, is key. It's just that ability to stay calm, as well. I think it's funny because a lot of people say to me, 'How do you stay so calm when things go wrong?' I say, 'Well, the answer is you have to because, if you don't, if people see you panic, then that's when they panic.'

“If you see me panic - then we've got a problem!”

I think attention to detail is, obviously, a big thing of mine. I was always taught that. That makes a difference, I think, with being good and being great, is your attention to detail because I guarantee that, if you don't pick up those little details, someone else will. And my kind of goal is to make sure that they don't pick them up for me, especially directors and creators.

Q. HOW DID YOU TRAIN TO BECOME A STAGE MANAGER?

"I had a bit of an unconventional journey into theatre."

When I left school, I joined the Air Force. I was in the Air Force for four years and left when I was 21 and actually started as a stagehand as an apprentice up in Manchester. And then I trained as I was working. I was very fortunate. I think, back in those days, you could network quite easily. If you really wanted to get around, you could just jump into little things here and there. So I kind of did that. I was really, really lucky. I worked for Live Nation for a good five years. So I did a lot of apprenticeships and a lot of management training through them. When I transitioned into stage management, I was actually working in the West End. I did all my training as I was working.

Q. WHAT HAVE YOU ENJOYED MOST ABOUT WORKING ON BACK TO THE FUTURE?

"I mean, theatre, for me, is all about the people you work with."

I think the show, itself, is just such an amazing production and the heart and soul that's gone into it from people like Bob (Gale) and John (Rando) and Tim (Hatley). I mean, I love Tim (Hatley). I've worked with Tim before. His designs are always really great fun to work on, almost like a bit of a playground, **Back to the Future**, I think, especially for the techies. We've got so many gadgets and things. And no one's ever done this kind of thing before. I mean, there's plenty of shows that have got amazing technical aspects, but I think this one, it's just got so many cool things. It's full of surprises, this show.

I think the illusions, for me, are the standout because they're so simple. They're so simple and people always say, 'How did you do that?' Obviously, we're not going to tell you, but I think, yeah, that's the best thing for me. I don't know. There's so many things. I've got to be honest, the last 20 minutes of the show are probably the most frightening 20 minutes.

"I get the same feeling in that last 20 minutes, 89 shows in, that I did on the first preview."

STUDENT WORKSHEET 9

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A PERFORMER

Being a performer is an aspirational and exciting job. But have you ever wondered what it takes to stay mentally and physically healthy enough to ‘wow’ audiences day after day? We were lucky enough to speak to two of the incredibly talented members of the original London cast of **Back to the Future The Musical** to get their personal insights, top tips, and to take a deep dive into a day in the life of a professional performer.



ENSEMBLE MEMBER **RHIANNE ALLEYNE** OPENED UP ABOUT THE REALITIES OF WORKING A TWO-SHOW DAY AND TALKED ABOUT HOW SHE FOCUSES ON HER WELL-BEING SO THAT SHE CAN PERFORM TO THE BEST OF HER ABILITY.

7.30AM – 8AM GET UP & EAT BREAKFAST

“I always make sure I have a really good breakfast. I try and have my biggest meal in the morning because it sets you up. It fuels you. You’re ready to go!” And Rhianne’s right, a good breakfast boosts your energy levels and alertness, while also providing other essential nutrients required for a healthy mind and body.

8.30AM – 11.00 AM – LEISURE TIME

After having breakfast, Rhianne stresses the importance of doing non-work-related activities to keep a healthy work / life balance. (I know singing and dancing every day may not seem like work but it takes a huge amount of physical and mental energy!) Rhianne told me that she finds taking her dog out for a walk, watching a film, or simply doing tasks around the house helps her to stay grounded before a long day of performances.

11AM – THE COMMUTE BEGINS

Rhianne told me that her day starts a little earlier than some of her other fellow cast members as she lives outside of London, giving her a commute of almost two hours! That’s dedication.

12.30PM – ARRIVE AT THE THEATRE

In the half an hour before the warm-up, Rhianne takes the time to settle herself into her dressing room which she shares with four other members of the cast, telling me, “we have a lovely, friendly atmosphere.”

1PM – PHYSICAL WARM UP

This takes place on stage and is led by the company dance captain. It’s important for the performers to maintain a high level of fitness as their day-to-day work is so physically demanding. Warm-ups not only prepare your body for the task ahead, but they also help to prevent the risk of injury and muscle soreness.

1.10PM – VOCAL WARM UP

Just like the physical warm up, vocal warm ups are an essential part of a performer’s day. Vocal warm ups help with breath support, range and vocal stamina whilst preventing the risk of any future damage.

1.20PM – CAST AND CREW CIRCLE

An hour before curtain up the entire cast and crew will gather to check in. This happens every day but Rhianne tells me about a special practice that the cast and crew engage in on weekly check ins which is always sure to keep morale high: “We like to do a ‘company member of the week’: you can nominate someone throughout the week if you feel like they’ve done a great job... There’s something really special about the company of **Back to the Future the Musical**. We all have this love for each other, respect for each other and we all really enjoy each other’s company.”

1.25PM – FIGHT CALL

Rhianne tells me, “Because there’s a fight sequence in our show, a fight call has to be done every single warm up.” A fight call gives the performers a chance to practise any fight sequences that occur in the show so that they are well prepared when it comes to doing the fight in front of a live audience.

1.35PM – HEAD BACK TO DRESSING ROOMS

During this time performers can continue to get ready for the upcoming show. Rhianne told me how taking pride in her hair and make-up as she prepares for a show is a fun way to take care of her mental wellbeing. “One of my ballet teachers at college told me that if you feel like you look good, it makes you feel good.”

1.55PM – HALF HOUR CALL

This is the call given to the actors and company half an hour before they will be called for the beginning of a performance. Contrary to its name it’s actually given not 30 but 35 minutes before curtain up! The half is the performers’ last chance to get show-ready. Microphones are left outside the performers’ dressing rooms ready to be collected, costumes are put on, make-up finished, and any other final touches are carried out. After this the performers get their quarter hour call at 2.10pm and their five minute call at 2.20pm.

FUN FACT – EACH PERFORMER IS GIVEN A SPECIFIC TIME SLOT TO HEAD TO THE WIG ROOM WHERE THEY WILL BE ASSISTED WITH PUTTING ON THEIR ELABORATE WIGS!

2.25PM – BEGINNERS’ CALL

This is the call for all performers and crew who are involved in the opening of the show to make their way to their starting positions. Curtain will soon be up!

2.30PM – CURTAIN UP SHOW NUMBER 1 BEGINS!

With show number 1 finishing after five o clock, Rhianne and her fellow cast mates must then get ready to do it all again at 7.30pm – talk about stamina! As Rhianne says, “You do live a perpetual groundhog day. It’s a groundhog day you’ve chosen to live through so it’s okay because it’s amazing and I love my job. I wouldn’t have it any other way.”

6.30PM – GET READY FOR EVENING SHOW

“After we’ve had a short break, we start to get into costume, to do it all over again!”

7.30PM – CURTAIN UP FOR EVENING SHOW

10.30PM – LEAVE THE THEATRE AND TRAVEL HOME.

STUDENT WORKSHEET 10

THE WELL-BEING OF A PERFORMER



CAMERON MCALLISTER IS AN ENSEMBLE MEMBER AND FIGHT CAPTAIN IN **BACK TO THE FUTURE THE MUSICAL**. WE ASKED HIM ABOUT HIS PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND HOW HE LOOKS AFTER HIMSELF PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY ON A DAILY BASIS. THESE WERE HIS TOP TIPS:

1. NUTRITION IS KEY

The most important part is how you look after yourself in regards to diet. Everyone does it in different ways but what's really important is that you eat a lot. Because the amount of calories you're burning off throughout [each show] is pretty considerable... I have a massive breakfast, porridge, raspberries, strawberries, loads of fruit and on a typical show day I would have a big dinner before the show and a big dinner after the show so I have basically two whole dinners!

2. GIVE YOURSELF A BREAK

As a performer it's about looking after yourself and making sure you're not doing too much outside of work. Because if we're doing all that cardio and all that physical work [in the show] it's actually about looking after yourself and making sure that on your days off you're giving yourself a bit of a break, because if you don't that's where you start to fall. And if you aren't looking after yourself outside the building that where it's really going to catch up with you.

3. UNPLUG

I recently took three days off and I got massive FOMO. My phone was still on and I messaged my assistant fight captain... I was messaging her 'what's going on? What am I missing out on? Tell me what I'm missing out on.' I found it really difficult. And I eventually managed to relax but it took some time and in all honesty it wasn't nice. So the next time I take my holiday I need to really make sure I turn that phone off, take some time to myself and really look after myself.

4. GET A CHANGE OF SCENERY

I love working in London. The big metropolis of London is incredible, I think it has probably the best atmosphere of any city I've ever been to, it's quite incredible. But on my day off it's nice to get outside of that for a single day. For that one day it's nice to get outside, get into a nice quiet area and detox for the day.

5. OPEN UP

It's just really important that you talk things through and don't bottle things up. Just make sure you talk about what's going on because it makes it much easier. If you're having a bad day speak to your dressing room pals because no one's judging you... Everyone has a bad day and it's really important that as a company - and I think this company does it so well - is that we all really look after each other.

STUDENT WORKSHEET 11

ROLES IN THEATRE MINI-PROJECT

READ THROUGH THE INFORMATION ABOUT ROLES IN THEATRE ON P. 4-15. SELECT ONE OF THE PROFESSIONALS TO FOCUS ON AND CREATE A PROJECT ABOUT ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING ROLES:

- ✓ Producer - Colin Ingram
- ✓ Stage Manager - Gary Wall
- ✓ Production Manager - Tim Hatley
- ✓ Lighting Designer - Tim Lutkin
- ✓ Ensemble Performer - Rhianne Alleyne
- ✓ Fight Captain - Cameron McAllister

You can create a:

- ✓ Podcast Documentary
- ✓ Presentation to Peers
- ✓ E-Book
- ✓ Written Case study
- ✓ A 'Day in the Life' Profile

In terms of content, you should include:

- ✓ Details of their role whilst working on **Back to the Future The Musical**
- ✓ Main responsibilities
- ✓ Skills required
- ✓ Challenges of working on this particular show
- ✓ Who they collaborate and work closely with on the show



BACK TO FUTURE THE MUSICAL



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WE TEACH DRAMA

Written by
Lucy Bellingham
info@weteachdrama.com

DESIGNED BY **DEWYNTERS**