Study Guide
History of Musical Theatre

500 B.C.
Greek plays composed of one to three actors performed through dialogue and dance while the chorus responded in song.

DEC. 3, 1750
The Beggars Opera, New York’s first-known professional ballad opera premieres at the Nassau Street Theatre. Ballad operas used popular songs of the day with new lyrics. Comic operas, the other main style of opera, used original scores and followed a romantic plot.

SEP. 12, 1866
The first Broadway Musical, The Black Crook, premieres in New York City at Niblo’s Garden. A fire destroyed New York’s Academy of Music, leaving the promoters, Henry C. Jarrett and Harry Palmer with an unemployed Parisian ballet troupe and a shipload of handsome production sets. William Wheatley, a theatre manager and producer, was worried about this dull melodrama. When Jarret and Palmer of New York’s Academy of Music approached Wheatley about a deal, he jumped at the opportunity.

1870-1880
Burlesque and Pantomime musicals hit the Broadway stages. Burlesque musicals were lavish extravaganzas aimed towards lower class audiences that poked fun at the rich and famous. Pantomime Musicals used the silent language of gesture as clowns competed with outrageous comic situations and misunderstandings.
1879-1890
The first musical comedies hit American stages. Edward Harrigan and Tony Hart developed a routine that spoofed New York’s local militias called *The Mulligan Shows*. Musical comedies followed this example creating comedy out of characters and situations from everyday life.

1907
Florenz Ziegfeld created his legendary *Follies*. Based on Folies Bergere's, a Parisian revue composed of satirical skits. Ziegfeld Americanized this with glamorous sets and costumes along with his striking and gorgeous female chorus.

1943-1967
The Golden Age of Musical Theatre begins with Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!*. This was the first show to wholly incorporate dance into the plot line of the musical – which happened almost by accident. The Theatre Guild went bankrupt, so Rodgers and Hammerstein received full artistic control. The pair took many chances, including hiring the modern dance choreographer, Agnes de Mille. She used everyday motions to express the characters' ideas, including butter churning, rather than traditional showgirl dancing. *Oklahoma!* triggered other successes, such as Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *South Pacific* (1949), *The King and I* (1951), and *The Sound of Music* (1959), as well as Irving Berlin’s *Annie Get your Gun* (1946) and Cole Porter’s *Kiss Me, Kate* (1948).

1967-1981
The counter-culture and civil rights movements created an increase in the appearance of socially pertinent issues and themes in musical theatre. After the success of *Hair* (1967), the 1970s continued to use rock influence music in their production. *A Chorus Line* (1975), *Evita* (1979), and *Dreamgirls* (1981) are known for reflecting the changing social climate.
SWEENEY TODD

HISTORY OF MUSICAL THEATRE

1981-2000
The Era of the Mega-Musicals. These incorporated larger casts, pop-influenced scores, and an increase in the value upon special effects. Audiences were wowed with the falling of the chandelier in The Phantom of the Opera and the helicopter in Miss Saigon.

2000-PRESENT
New styles and revivals swarm Broadway. The revivals of shows provide guarantee to producers that people will see the show. The revivals of South Pacific (2008) and Grease (2007) join different generations together in one audience. Many shows hitting Broadway today are based on other sources. Legally Blonde (2007) and Shrek (2008) are both based on movies, while The Color Purple (2005) is based on the book by Alice Walker. Avenue Q (2003) and The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (2005) are examples of new shows stretching the limits of artistic expression.

Can You Name These Broadway Shows?

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**DIRECTOR:** The director controls the overall artistic vision of the show, making it come to life. A director’s job begins once they receive the script. The director’s vision guides the hiring of the cast, the design of the sets and lighting, the direction of the actors, and the telling of a cohesive story. The director will help each actor understand his or her character’s motivation, block the action, and oversee the entire production.

**CHOREOGRAPHER:** A choreographer designs dance sequences for the performers that follow the director’s vision. These dances are intricate movements that express the meaning of each song. Through the choreography, the audience should understand what each character is feeling. The choreographer works a lot at the beginning of the show process and works less and less as the dances are perfected close to the opening of the show.

**MUSIC DIRECTOR:** The music director is responsible for the music in the show. He helps the cast learn the music, and ensures that all of the music is kept to the correct tempos. The music director often doubles as the orchestra conductor. He is often in charge of recruiting the musicians for the orchestra.

**COSTUME DESIGNER:** The costume designer envisions and then creates the costumes for everyone in the show, ensuring that each piece speaks to the audience just like any other aspect of the production. As well as looking at the historical accuracy of designs, the costume designer is able to utilize details in color and trims that express the personality of that particular character or of a theme specified by the director.
SET DESIGNER: The set designer plans how the stage itself will look. As set pieces are generally seen even before the first performer, the set designer literally “sets the stage” for how the audience perceives the show’s location in space and time. The set designer also has to determine the construction and material specifications for each set piece.

LIGHTING DESIGNER: A lighting designer’s job is illuminating the stage and placing light on areas the director wants the audience to focus, such as the main character. He also has to set the tone and mood of the show by using different forms and combinations of light.

SOUND DIRECTOR: A sound director has the complex job of ensuring the performance is clearly heard. Since most of the performers onstage wear microphones, the sound designer needs to monitor the levels of each mic.

STAGE MANAGER: The stage manager is usually the unsung hero of a production. He is in charge of making sure all the elements of a show come together during each and every performance. He calls the cues for the technical aspects of the show. The stage manager is in full command of the backstage area, and once the show opens, he receives full control from the director.

PROP MASTER: The property master is responsible for the planning and execution of all props, borrowed, rented or built. The prop master is one of the only positions that is on staff during preproduction, developing the stylistic concept of the physical production, then continues on as a member of the production crew.

For Flagstaff Light Opera

Scott Tignor (Director) holds a BFA in Acting and Directing, studied Musical Theatre at the graduate level, and has appeared professionally in numerous Off-Broadway, Cabaret and Regional productions. His theatrical career spans 35 years, and selected acting credits include: Off-Broadway - Ladies in a Maze (originated the role of The Man), The Winter’s Tale (Polixenes), solo cabaret performances at Danny’s Skylight Room-NYC; Regional Theatre - The Merry Widow (Cascada), Oklahoma! (Curly), Godspell (Jesus), Camelot (Lancelot). Other selected acting and opera credits include Joseph… Dreamcoat (Joseph), La Ronde (The Poet), Three Sisters (Andrei), Torch Song Trilogy (Arnold), Evita (Eva’s Brother/Che u.s.), Hello, Dolly! (Cornelius), The Mikado (Nanki-Poo), L’amour à Trois (Ben); Film – Godzilla (with Matthew Broderick), Sedona: The Motion Picture (with Frances Fisher, Christopher Atkins, Beth Grant, Lin Shaye and Robert Shields). Selected directing credits include Miss Saigon (FLOC), Cabaret, Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, A Flea in Her Ear, Torch Song Trilogy (THEATRIKOS), Little Shop of Horrors, Steel Magnolias, Agnes of God, Nunsense, Greater Tuna, Into the Woods, The Miss Firecracker Contest. Scott is an associate member of the Society of Directors and Choreographers (SDC), the national labor union of professional stage directors and choreographers.
**Staci Dickens** *(Music Director)* studied Opera Performance at Northern Arizona University. While opera is her passion, there is a very special place in her heart for musical theater. Opera credits include: *Die Zauberflote* (Pamina), *The Rape Of Lucretia* (Female Chorus), and various opera scenes. **Operetta**: *H. M. S. Pinafore* (Chorus), *The Gondoliers* (Gianetta), *The Merry Widow* (Valencienne). Musical Theater credits include: *Miss Saigon* (Yvette/Chorus), *The Threepenny Opera* (Mrs. Peachum), *Oklahoma!* (Ellen/Chorus), *Man of La Mancha* (Housekeeper/Maria), *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* (Birgit). While attending NAU and participating in community theater, Staci also enjoys being the Music Director at Black Barts Steakhouse and Musical Revue.

**Erin Tucker** *(Orchestra Conductor)* is finishing her Bachelors in Music Education at Northern Arizona University. She has been involved in several local music ensembles including: NAU Shrine of the Ages Choir, Assistant conductor for NAU Women’s Chorale, and the Harter Memorial Handbell Choir. She was the Secretary for the American Choral Director’s Association NAU Student Chapter and the President of the NAU Swing Dance Club. She is currently a senior Choral Music Education major at NAU. This is her first production for the Flagstaff Light Opera Company.
Behind the Scenes: The Making of a Musical

PICKING THE PERFECT MUSICAL
Producers take into consideration the target audience as well as their budget. The rights to perform a show must be obtained in order to be produced.

PLANNING A BUDGET
A company must pay bills to rent the theatre, to all employees, and for general upkeep.

SECURING THE CREATIVE TEAM
Many people go into perfecting each aspect of a show. A complete production team must be hired in order to execute every detail.

PRODUCTION MEETINGS
During these meetings the overall concept of the show should be discussed with the creative team. This includes everything from set design to the logistics of props.

AUDITIONS
After the actors participate in the initial try-outs for a part in the show, callbacks are scheduled to let the director compare the best candidates.

CASTING
During this step, in addition to deciding which actors interact in the most believable fashion, the director and the actors’ agents discuss payment for the actors.

REHEARSALS
Once casting is complete, rehearsals can begin. Here, actors learn their blocking, songs, and dances. Designers prepare all costumes, props, sets, and lights. This takes weeks of work on the production team’s effort so that every detail can be finalized. During the last week of rehearsal, technicians perfect the lights and sound.

PREVIEWS
These allow technical problems to be resolved. Theatre critics usually attend previews in order to inform the public about the quality of a show.

OPENING NIGHT
Spirits run high, and good wishes of the traditional “break a leg” variety are exchanged between the cast and crew as they prepare backstage.
Theatre Etiquette

Arrive to the theatre on time:
Once the show has started you can’t just barge in!

Keep the theatre clean:
If for some reason you see trash, pick it up and throw it away. Remember, no food or drinks in the theatre!

Be considerate of others:
The people around you want to see the show just as much as you do; Do not disturb them!

Don’t distract the actors:
If you want to let them know you like what they’re doing, clap for them when appropriate!

Turn off all electronic devices:
They disturb both the actors and other patrons. This includes texting and taking photos.

Remain seated during performances:
If you stand up to see something better, you make it so that the people behind you can’t see at all!

No cameras/recordings:
These will distract the actors and recording licensed material is illegal.

Stay until the end of the show:
Clapping during the curtain call is the best way to say “thanks” to the performers for a great show.
During rehearsals, the director gives stage direction to the actors. The directions are given from the performer’s point of view (meaning “stage left” is on the performer’s left when facing the audience).

**PARTS OF A SCRIPT**

**PLOT**: refers to the skeleton of the story or the chain of events that show cause and effect.

**EXPOSITION**: the part of the play (normally in the beginning) in which the writer “exposes” the background information that the audience needs to understand the story. It is an introduction to the setting and characters.

**DIALOGUE**: the part that allows you to show your creativity. A play is carried along through conversations, called dialogue. Writing dialogue is a challenging task, but it is your chance to flaunt your artistic side.

**CONFLICT**: Many plots involve a struggle to make things interesting. This struggle or conflict can be anything from a concept in one person’s head to a battle between characters. Struggle can exist between good and evil, between one character and another.

**COMPLICATIONS**: If the story has a conflict, it should also have complications that make the conflict even more interesting. For instance, a struggle between a dog and a cat can be complicated by the fact that the dog falls in love with the cat.

**CLIMAX**: A climax is a moment of great intensity in the plot. it generally brings the conflicts to a head and leads into the conclusion.

**RESOLUTION**: How the conflict is resolved.
THE IMPORTANCE OF MUSICAL THEATRE

Musical theatre is the only genre of performance that fully utilizes acting, singing, and dancing together to further the development of the plot. This differs from traditional theatre because the story is enhanced by the addition of singing and dancing, not merely supplemented as in ‘straight’ plays. To better understand musical theatre as a whole, an audience member must understand the importance of these three elements. A musical theatre performer talented at acting, singing, and dancing, is called a triple threat due to their mastery of that triad.

Unlike other entertainment mediums, theatrical experiences not only involve the actors on stage, they engage the audience in ways that film and television cannot. There is no real barrier between the performers and the audience as in film and television. Live performances allow each audience member to become their own editor as they choose which portion of the action to watch, while movies and television provide an isolated experience.
Review Questions

The following questions are intended to help students learn the basics of musical theatre.

Checking for Understanding
1. Describe what musical theatre is in your own words.
2. How far does musical theatre trace back?
3. What was the first musical to incorporate storytelling in dance?
4. What years were the Golden Age of theatre?
5. Draw a diagram noting upstage, downstage, stage left, and stage right. Can you further divide it?

Critical Thinking
1. Do you think theatre from another time period would interest us today? Why or why not? Give an example. What about musical theatre do you find interesting? Why?
2. Extravagance and spectacle is very important in musicals today. Do you think it will continue to be important? How does technology affect this?
3. What step do you think is the most important in making a musical? The most challenging? The most fun?
4. If you were an actor onstage what audience etiquette would be most important to you?

Debate
Objective: To learn the differences between various media and develop public speaking and verbal skills.

Activity: Divide the class into pairs. Within the pairs, assign each student a form of media (stage or screen). Have the pairs debate with each other over which is best for expressing beliefs and stories. Students should leave understanding the differences between each medium.

You're the Producer
Objective: To learn the intense planning a full-scale production requires.

Activity: Give each student a “budget” with which to put on a show. Students should research local resources and plan a production to be staged in your hometown.
Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street is a 1979 musical thriller with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and libretto by Hugh Wheeler. The musical is based on the 1973 play Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street by Christopher Bond.

Sweeney Todd opened on Broadway at the Uris Theatre on March 1, 1979 and ran for 557 performances. It was directed by Harold Prince with musical staging by Larry Fuller. It starred Len Cariou as Sweeney Todd and Angela Lansbury as Mrs. Lovett.

Set in 19th century England, the musical tells the story of Benjamin Barker, alias Sweeney Todd, who returns to London after 15 years’ incarceration on trumped-up charges. When he finds out that his wife poisoned herself after being raped by the Judge who transported him, he vows revenge on the Judge and, later, the whole world. He teams up with a piemaker, Mrs. Lovett, and opens a barbershop in which he slits the throats of customers and has them baked into pies.
Stephen Sondheim

To many, Sondheim is a name synonymous with musical theater. His successes on Broadway and beyond have helped shape an industry, and his signature music and lyrics define a quality of entertainment unparalleled in the genre.

Stephen Joshua Sondheim was born in New York City in 1930, though soon moved to Pennsylvania, where his close neighbors, the Hammerstein’s, introduced him to music and theater. When Sondheim was a teen, Oscar Hammerstein was shaping an incredible partnership with Richard Rodgers and enjoying unprecedented success with *Oklahoma!* and *South Pacific*. Sondheim began tutoring under Hammerstein, writing scripts and scores as assignments. His first Broadway assignment was to write Lyrics for Leonard Bernstein’s *West Side Story* (directed here at the Citadel by Bob Baker in 2005), and he also contributed lyrics to *Gypsy*, but his ultimate goal was to be known as both a composer and lyricist.

This would come true in 1962 with *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. Throughout the 1960s, Sondheim was lucky to be able to choose the work he wanted, receiving royalties from film adaptations of many of the plays he had helped create.

In 1971, Sondheim had his first collaboration with director Harold Prince, on *Company*, and then again on *Follies*. His work was getting noticed, but was criticized for being too sophisticated, too intricate for wide popular success. This notion would be put to rest with *A Little Night Music*. Sondheim would receive Tony awards for the music and lyrics for all three of these shows.

Never idle and always looking for innovative and inventive material, Sondheim and Prince worked together throughout the 70s, culminating in *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* in 1979. His most complicated musical store, *Sweeney* won Sondheim another Tony award. The operatic musical would go on to worldwide success.

His collaboration with Prince would end amicably in the 1980s, when Sondheim began working with writer and director James Lapine. Their first play, *Sunday in the Park with George* was very successful and was followed by *Into the Woods* (produced here at the Citadel by Bob Baker during his first year as Artistic Director in 1999/2000).

Throughout the 70s and 80s, Sondheim had also written scores and songs for film. In 1990, Sondheim won an Oscar for Best Song for “Sooner or Later” which appeared in the film *Dick Tracy*.

During the 90s, Sondheim worked on *Assassins, Passion and Bounce*, and has since then retired. In 2008, the American Theatre Wing presented Sondheim with a special Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement, while both *Gypsy* and *Sunday in the Park with George* were playing revival runs on Broadway.

His lengthy career and a history of awards and collaborations have propelled Sondheim to the status of musical theatre legend on and off Broadway. His music not only inspired generations of future writers and composers, but his intellectuality, complexity and tone have helped re-shape the musical theatre genre.
**Sweeney Todd** is a thrilling, macabre tale that over the past one-hundred and fifty years has evolved from urban legend to popular Broadway musical and beyond. Whether Sweeney was a real man, or his story merely the elaborate exaggeration of a one-time incident, remains to be proven or disproven, but his tale of murder has fascinated generations of readers and audiences the world-over.

The story is a simple one: a Victorian-era barber and his co-conspirator, a pie-maker, use their professions to mask the murder of countless hapless victims, whose throats are slit at the barber’s and then sold in pies at a nearby meat shop. The motivation behind these murders has changed throughout the years, as has the flourish with which the tale is presented.

By most indications, the tale originates as several legends or myths. Charles Dickens writes in Martin Chuzzlewit (1843) about a man who fears the pastries in urban London, worried that the contents may be human remains. A tale from Paris of a murderous barber and his pie-making cohort can be dated back to 1824. Indeed the essay *A Modest Proposal* written by Jonathan Swift a full century earlier had at least entertained (though satirically) a cannibalistic solution to overpopulation. The truth of it is this: cannibalism may have been a last resort for some of the poorest and least powerful members of Victorian society. Tales surrounding such unfortunate circumstances may have had some validity, though were perhaps exaggerated.

The character of Sweeney Todd first appears in Thomas Peckett Prest’s periodical *The String of Pearls: A Romance*, beginning in 1846. Prest, who was best known for lampooning classic Charles Dickens tales before writing *The String of Pearls: A Romance*, is now credited as the first man to truly popularize Sweeney’s tale. Prest’s take on the legend, which was appropriately published and printed on London’s Fleet Street, was sold for a penny per issue over eighteen issues.

Prest’s tale contains many of the characters and plot devices that are present in Sondheim’s musical, including Mrs. Lovett and her meat-shop, Tobias Ragg, the crypt beneath St. Dunstan’s church and Sweeney’s revolving chair. However, in Prest’s take of the tale, Sweeney Todd’s main motivator appears to be robbery, murdering only wealthy customers for sheer greed (such as the titular string of pearls).

The most important difference in this original tale is that Sweeney is in fact the antagonist, and a young man named Colonel Jeffrey, the protagonist, seeks to find Johanna’s missing fiancé. Prest’s take on the urban legend was very popular and soon imitated and plagiarized. Rival writers and publishers soon took the original tale and expanded upon it to create a much lengthier and detailed story. By the time it reached America in mid 1850s it was known as *Sweeney Todd: or the Ruffian Barber*.

Almost immediately after Prest’s original tale reached the streets of London, the story also took to the stage, with a production at Hoxton’s Britannia Theatre as early as 1847. Further stage versions appeared, silent films of the tale were produced in 1926 and ’28, followed soon by radio plays, then eventually television dramas and even a ballet adaptation was created in 1959.

In 1973, Christopher Bond wrote the first stage adaptation of the story to show Sweeney Todd in a more sympathetic light and indeed as tragic hero instead of bloodthirsty antagonist. It was this version that Stephen Sondheim adapted into the 1979 Broadway musical so popular today.

A recent adaptation of Sondheim’s musical to film by Tim Burton has introduced the tale to a new generation and a worldwide audience, though implies rather than investigates, some of the darker and more macabre realities of the story.
It is 1846. Sweeney Todd returns to London with a young sailor, Anthony Hope. Formerly known as barber Benjamin Barker, Todd had been exiled to Australia by a lustful, corrupt local official, Judge Turpin, who coveted and raped Barker’s wife Lucy. Inquiring about his old apartment above a pie shop on Fleet Street, Todd meets Mrs. Lovett, the shop’s proprietor, who confirms that Judge Turpin had in fact poisoned Barker’s wife and is now ward to his daughter Johanna. Todd reveals to her that he was once Benjamin Barker but is now a very different, changed man, and she reveals his collection of razors, which she had kept for him over the years of his banishment. Meanwhile, Anthony meets a young girl, singing in a window. A beggar woman explains that she is Johanna, Judge Turpin’s ward. He is immediately smitten and pledges to rescue and woo her.

A contest takes place between Todd, who has re-opened his shop, and Adolfo Pirelli, a renowned Italian barber and his assistant Tobias. Beadle Bamford, Judge Turpin’s assistant and accomplice, presides over the competition and when Todd wins, he invites the beadle for a complimentary shave. While waiting for the beadle, Todd is confronted and blackmailed by Pirelli, who reveals that he is in fact Barker’s old apprentice. Todd kills him and hires Tobias as his assistant. Across town, Judge Turpin declares his intentions to marry Johanna, but she and Anthony plan on eloping.

Upon the beadle’s suggestion to better his appearance for Johanna, Judge Turpin visits Sweeney Todd’s. Before Todd can enact his revenge, Anthony arrives and announces his plans to elope with Johanna, accidentally revealing himself to the Judge. The Judge flees in anger. Todd descends into further madness and Lovett suggests stretching their vengeance to all the wealthy and greedy citizens of London. They decide to dispose of the bodies in her meat pies.

Synopsis Act I
With Mrs. Lovett’s pie shop busier and more successful than ever, the murdering spree continues. A beggar woman outside the shop warns costumers that nothing is as it seems, but the victims pay no heed to her ramblings. Johanna has disappeared, but Anthony isn’t the only one lovelorn; Mrs. Lovett reveals an unrequited love of Todd.

Anthony discovers that Johanna has been committed to Fogg’s Asylum. Plans are made to rescue the young girl, and Todd sends Turpin a letter, in the hopes of luring the judge to his shop.

Beadle Bamford finally visits Sweeney Todd’s for a free shave and once murdered, Toby discovers the truth of Mrs. Lovett’s pies. Toby flees to the catacombs beneath the shops. Meanwhile, Anthony rescues Johanna and brings her to the shop. He goes to hire a coach and Johanna hides in the shop. Judge Turpin comes to Sweeney Todd’s just as he slits the throat of the beggar woman from previous scenes. Todd assures the Judge that Johanna regrets leaving him and the Judge asks for a shave. Todd reveals his identity as Benjamin Barker, slits his throat and sends him to the cellar.

Lovett struggles and finishes off the Judge below. Todd joins her and realizes that the old beggar woman is in fact his wife Lucy. He blames Mrs. Lovett for keeping this truth from him and pushes her into the furnace.

As Todd cradles his deceased wife in his arms, Toby kills him with his own razor and the authorities arrive.
CHARACTERS

SWEENEY TODD The Demon Barber of Fleet Street was once Benjamin Barker. A skilled barber (which in Victorian England also included general dentistry), Barker’s life was ruined by the corrupt Judge Turpin, who raped his wife Lucy, took possession of his young daughter and banished him to Australia. Barker returns to London a changed man, now named Sweeney Todd, hell-bent on revenge. Together with Mrs. Lovett, they conspire to enact their vengeance on London’s wealthy, and especially Judge Turpin and his assistant Beadle Bamford.

JUDGE TURPIN is the antagonist of the play and primary target of Sweeney’s revenge. Prior to the events of the play, Turpin has raped Todd’s wife, banished him to Australia, and practically imprisoned Todd’s daughter Johanna at his estate. A truly evil and corrupt official, Judge Turpin represents the covetous, greedy and immoral upper class of Victorian England.

MRS. NELLIE LOVETT Mrs. Lovett owns a ragged, unsuccessful pie shop on Fleet Street… that is until Sweeney Todd returns to claim his old barber shop. Together she and Todd conspire to murder London’s elite and concoct the perfect ploy to dispose of the bodies – meat pies. Soon, Mrs. Lovett’s pie shop is highly successful and strong romantic feelings for Todd develop, but are ignored.

The Beadle Bamford is Judge Turpin’s deputy and confidant, carrying out his orders as both attendant and herald for the London courts.

Benjamin Barker’s daughter, orphaned at a young age, JOHANNA is taken under Judge Turpin’s custody and practically imprisoned at his estate. Turpin feels amorously towards his ward, and plans on marrying her. Johanna falls in love with a young sailor named Anthony and the two of them conspire to escape the Judge’s machinations.

TOBIAS RAGG is a young apprentice barber first under the employ of Adolfo Pirelli. Toby is soon brought to work under Sweeney Todd, when his master falls victim to Sweeney’s vengeance. Toby is largely unaware of the murders taking place where he works, but at the climax of the play he goes mad upon discovering the truth and murders Sweeney with his master’s own razor.

A young sailor who accompanies Sweeney Todd to London, ANTHONY soon falls in love with Johanna, Sweeney’s daughter, betrothed to Judge Turpin. Together they plan on eloping and escaping from the Judge, and while doing so, discover the truth behind Sweeney’s barber shop.

ADOLFO PIRELLI is introduced as a famous Italian barber on Fleet Street and main competition for Sweeney Todd. In truth, after Sweeney defeats Pirelli in a barber competition, he reveals himself as Irishman Danny O’Higgins, ex-assistant to Benjamin Barker. When Barker was banished to Australia, Danny took over the market as the primary barber in the Fleet Street area.

LUCY was Benjamin Barker’s wife, until she was raped and her husband banished to Australia. It is purported that after these events, she was poisoned by Judge Turpin and presumed dead – her daughter taken under the judge’s custody. In truth, Lucy was driven insane by the events and began living on the streets.
Victorian London

London saw an incredibly rapid population growth in the early years of the Victorian Era (1837-1901), spurred by a shift from agrarian to urban life, a result of the Industrial Revolution. Slum housing, child labor, prostitution and crime became commonplace in London, as the poor sought means to survive and eke out a living in what was, at the time, the most populated city in the world.

At the time of Sweeney Todd, the mid 1800s, poor sanitation, overpopulation and coal refineries contributed to a messy, smelly city. The Irish Potato Famine saw a massive influx of impoverished Irish seeking prosperity in London, and steam powered railroads brought in more and more people to the city from rural areas every week.

In contrast to the poor conditions the lower class suffered through, the rich continued to thrive in the wealthier, more developed parts of the city. Monuments and architecture such as the Crystal Palace and Parliament Buildings (including Big Ben’s clock tower) were a testament to British wealth. The advent of electricity and economic growth brought on by colonization, and worldwide trade, made London a very prosperous city for the lucky elite, but the widening gap between the rich and the poor made life in Victorian Era London challenging for most. As the poorer and less powerful populace sought increasingly clever ways to simply live day-to-day, they were forced to resort to theft or prostitution. Violent murder and robbery rose to shocking heights during the time of Sweeney Todd.
One can almost appreciate the solution reached by entrepreneurs Mr. Todd and Mrs. Lovett. ‘Revolting’ may be the best word to describe their ingenuity, a nod to both the macabre, sickening methods behind their work and the revolutionary message delivered by feeding the wealthy to themselves. Though based on urban legend, the fact that these characters resort to such violent immoral actions speaks to the desperation of London’s common populace at the time.

Charles Dickens is perhaps the most notorious writer to truly disseminate life in Victorian England, for better and for worse, to the rest of the world. His observations of all levels of British society, from the poorest beggars and criminals in London streets to the wealthy corrupt aristocracy, are at their most striking in *A Christmas Carol*, *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield*, *Great Expectations* and *A Tale of Two Cities*. His prolificacy was testament to his popularity, both at the time of his writing and today. There is no doubt that his work, at least in some minor part, would have influenced the wealthy, literate elite, to acknowledge the horrible living and working conditions of the lower classes. Change was inevitable.

Child labor laws would eventually be implemented in the 1870s. Major reconstruction of London’s sewers and aquatic passageways led to better health. The Metropolitan Police (named after Sir Robert ‘Bobby’ Peel) became more adept at preventing and solving crime. Towards the end of the Victorian Era, London’s population, though at a staggering 6.5 million people (exceeding Canada’s entire population in 1900), had better housing, better work conditions and generally better lives.
Revenge, Justice and Love

One of the central themes of the play, and a main motivation for its titular character, is revenge. Sweeney Todd was once a simple barber by the name of Benjamin Barker, but he has transformed from the man he once was, and gone to great lengths, crossing the oceans of the Earth, to return home. Upon arriving he finds that Judge Turpin is now in possession of his only child, and Todd decides to seek revenge not only for the rape and poisoning of his wife, but before the corrupt official can forcefully marry his own daughter. As Todd and Mrs. Lovett devise the methods of this revenge, we begin to understand how tormented and determined Sweeney is.

As an audience, we are asked to side with Mr. Todd. His actions stem from the love he once felt for his wife and the love he still feels for his daughter.

With criminal activity commonplace and general immorality the norm on the streets of Victorian England, one can almost forgive the revolting act of murdering the wealthy and serving them back to their colleagues in meat pies. It almost seems a natural conclusion for someone so wrongly done, by a system he cannot possibly change through just means. Since society around him is so unjust and corrupt (the very man he seeks to destroy is a law-breaking, greedy judge), Sweeney is left with no choice but to resort to the skills, tools and resources his profession has afforded him. Sweeney Todd uses his very work (a fitting device as a member of the lower, working class) to seek justice upon someone who is so without justice or fairness (and ironically, a respected civic judge).

Sweeney Todd falls under the classic theatre archetype of the tragic hero. His flawed vengeance, leads to his own fateful demise at the end of the play. His swift wrath and remorseless acts lead him to even kill his own wife, whom he believed to be dead. Ultimately his assistant Toby murders him with his own razor, the very symbol of Sweeney’s destructive power.

The final passages of the play contain a warning, as the chorus points out to the audience. We are all potential Sweeney Todds, and that “To seek revenge may lead to hell, but everyone does it, and seldom as well.” The play serves as a reminder that under dire circumstances even a simple barber can be turned towards terrible madness and vice.
Urban legends are our contemporary folktales. They are often bizarre, seemingly unreal stories that we believe to be true. These stories are often quite frightening and feature someone dying a terrible death. Our contemporary culture is fascinated by urban legends, the horror movie industry thrives on our enjoyment of being frightened. The macabre story of Sweeney Todd seems to be an urban legend that continues to consistently reappear in our culture. What are some other urban legends that are continually recycled by our culture?

Activities:

- Research your favorite urban legend. How has it changed over time? Compare and contrast different versions of the story.
- Research the difference between urban legends and traditional folktales.
- Brainstorm with students the themes of different urban legends. Do the more popular stories have similar or different themes?
- Write a contemporary urban legend. Where would it be set? How would the characters dress? What would be the moral of your story?

Mrs. Lovett and Sweeney Todd
**PLAY REVIEW**

Play reviews are written for two primary reasons: to tell other people what you thought of the production and to tell people interested in the production if they should come and see it.

- Unless you are sitting in the front row of the theatre, take in a pen and paper so you can jot down ideas while you watch the play.

- Read the play or story **BEFORE** you go to see the production.

**Taking notes for your play review**

- During the play try to write down moments that strike you.

- Right after the play, before talking to anyone take a moment to record your initial response to the work. How did it make you feel? What did it make you think?

- Try to describe the concept of the play in a few sentences. What ideas do you think the playwright and director are trying to communicate to you? Did the concept enhance or detract from the play text? Don’t forget to record the ‘why’ behind your comments.

- Was the play staged in the way that you expected it to be? Were you surprised? How and/or by what?

- Who were your favorite characters? Why were your drawn to them? Record specific moments from the performance to support your opinion. Make sure to also include the actor’s names in your review.

- Write a description of the physical world of the play. What kind of atmosphere did the designer create? How/why did it change throughout the play? Do the set pieces/lighting/costumes have symbolic or metaphorical meaning for the action and/or characters?

- Read over your notes. What is your overall opinion of the play? Would you recommend to others? Critically think about why you liked or disliked the play.
WRITING THE PLAY REVIEW

Task Overview:
Your review should be 2-4 pages long. The goal of the assignment is for you to provide detailed description and analysis of the production that supports your overall opinion of the performance. Writing a review is similar to writing an essay: your thesis statement must be clear and specific (avoid general statements like “the show was good”), and each supporting paragraph should be focused on one moment/aspect of the performance with specific examples from the production to support your analysis.

Assignment Structure:

- Using your note scaffold, try to come up with a specific take on the performance (this usually focuses on the message or idea that you took away from the play).

- In the opening paragraph, be sure to include:
  - Play title
  - Playwright
  - Director
  - Date you saw the production
  - Location of the production

- Then in your second paragraph create an exciting lead line that grabs attention.

- In a few sentences give a very brief plot summary to draw in your readers.

- **Evaluation & Analysis**: Develop your review around the key moments that made an impression on you. This should follow your “thesis” while filling in your reader on the ways in which the production continued to hold (or not hold) your interest. Be sure to give specific examples. You need to clearly express your opinion of both the technical and performance aspects of the production and ultimately decide how successful the production was overall.

- Develop a powerful conclusion reaffirming your opinion and making a clear recommendation to potential spectators.
Discussion Questions

Pre-show Discussion Questions

1. Introduce students to the concepts of urban legends. As a class brainstorm examples of these.
2. As a class discuss the role that morals play in Canadian society. How do they influence our day to day interactions? How do they influence the law? Government? Art?
3. How do you define justice? What role does the legal system play in justice? How do we see justice in our daily lives?
4. Art is a cultural product that reveals a great deal about the people and times that are its subject. Stephen Sondheim sets *Sweeney Todd* in nineteenth century London at a time of significant socio-political transition in the United Kingdom. The production that you are coming to see vividly represents Victorian England. Develop a visual presentation on one of the following topics.
   - Queen Victoria
   - Convict transportation
   - The working class
   - The wealthy upper class
   - The industrial revolution
   - Slums
   - Workhouses
   - Legal system (judges) and rights of the working class
   - Sanitation problems in London
   - Colonization

After students have chosen a topic they need to collect the following items for the visual presentation:

- 3-4 images of paintings or drawings which capture a component of their topic.
- A short piece of writing on the topic from the Victorian time period (poem, prose, historical account etc.)
- Gather written resources to prepare their oral presentation.

Discuss with students the play review note taking handout (page 23). Flag elements of the production that you’d like them to notice.

The visual presentation:

Students should have 3-5 minutes to share their findings with the class. The presentation should center on their visual resources as they explain the significance of each item to the class.
Post—Show Discussion Questions

Post-Show Discussion Questions and Activities

1. Have students write a play review using the scaffold from the pre-show activities.

2. Referencing the production of *Sweeney Todd* discuss with students what they perceive to be the premise of the director. How did the staging of the show lead them to this conclusion?

3. What is a tragedy and is *Sweeney Todd* a tragic play? How does the play differ and/or compare to classic Greek tragedy?

4. Debate the question “Is Sweeney Todd a tragic hero or a villain?” Are his and Mrs. Lovett’s actions justified given the circumstances?

5. Design plays a crucial role in theatrical productions. Have students research the styles of clothing that would have been worn by the working class in Victorian England. Compare and contrast their findings with the costumes used in the production of *Sweeney Todd*. How has the costume designer utilized historical elements in the designs? How/why do these elements affect you as an audience member?

6. Imagine that you’re living in Victorian England and have been convicted of a crime. Write a letter pleading your case to avoid transportation.
**Dramatic Structure of Sweeney Todd**

- Tell the story of *Sweeney Todd* in one sentence.
- Select one verb that best describes the central action of *Sweeney Todd*.
- Identify the theme of *Sweeney Todd* in one sentence.
- When did the action of *Sweeney Todd* grab your attention? Where did you start to be interested, start to care, start to become excited, thrilled or delighted?
- What is at stake for the major characters in *Sweeney Todd*.

**Assignments: Writing and Research Prompts**

- Tell the story of *Sweeney Todd* in one brief paragraph. Include all the main characters.
- How is foreshadowing used in *Sweeney Todd*? Make a list of everything in the script that helps to prepare you for something that happens later.
- Trace the action in *Sweeney Todd*. How does one event lead to another? Relate the story in bold action strokes: i.e., Character A does this, which makes this happen. Then Character B does this, which causes this. And so on.
- Explain how we are given information relative to the theme of *Sweeney Todd* and the attitude we are supposed to have towards the theme.

**Exposition: The Prologue of Sweeney Todd**

**Questions: Discussion and Writing Prompts**

- Look at the prologue of *Sweeney Todd*. How is it structured? List what occurs in the opening. What does each section of the prologue accomplish? What do we learn about the characters and their past histories? What does it tell us to expect from the show ahead?
- What does the term “exposition” mean? List all the forms of exposition you find in the prologue and first scene of *Sweeney Todd*.
- Look back at the opening of the show. When the show was over, did the show deliver what the opening promised?
- Imagine you have been given the task of creating a new opening for *Sweeney Todd*. Describe your opening. Explain why you have chosen it.
Sweeney Todd as Musical Theatre

In musical theatre the music, along with the dialogue and lyrics, helps tell the story. Music can add to our understanding of the characters, or it can tell us more about the time and place of the story, or it can help us understand the theme of the show.

Questions and Discussion Prompts

- Composter/lyricist Stephen Sondheim chose to underscore Sweeney Todd with almost continuous music in the style of a suspenseful and frightening film. In what recent suspenseful films has music been a major factor in conveying a sense of fright to the audience and manipulating their emotions? How did music manipulate your emotions in Sweeney Todd?

- Each main character of Sweeney Todd has a musical theme — try to identify them. Find the moment when these themes collide at the end of the work. A musical motif representing Todd’s wife Lucy was planted early in Act I and repeated later as a clue to her identity. Can you find it?

- The music in Sweeney Todd is often romantic when the meaning of the song suggests other emotions. For example, Todd and Judge Turpin sing “Pretty Women” as the barber is about to murder the Judge. Todd sings “My Friends” while adoring his razor as a potential instrument of death and revenge. What is the impact of this juxtaposition?

- What is double entendre? How is it used in the song “A Little Priest?” Write a paragraph or a few verses of a poem or song lyrics using double entendre.

- What is internal rhyme? What is alliteration? What is assonance? Find examples of all three in the lyrics of Sweeney Todd.

- What is an epiphany? Why do think the song Sweeney sings after Anthony has destroyed his opportunity to kill the Judge is called “Epiphany?” What happens to Todd during this song? Think of an epiphanic moment for a character in literature. Write a prose outline of the character’s breakdown and/or realization. Try to turn it into a song lyric.

- The “Dies Irae” or Day of Doom, a solemn medieval chant describing the Last Judgment, occurs at the high point of the Catholic funeral service, or Requiem Mass. It is quoted in the opening chorus of “The Ballad of Sweeney Todd” (on the lyrics “Swing your razor high, Sweeney”) and it is employed throughout the work. The “Dies Irae” is usually associated with death and the fear of death, and has been quoted by many composers, including Mozart, Hector Berlioz and Giuseppe Verdi. What message does this chant carry in Sweeney Todd?

- Choose one of the songs from Sweeney Todd. Summarize the contents of the segment. Discuss:
  - What do we learn about the character or characters and their personal philosophies from the lyrics and the music?
  - What do we learn about the larger themes of the show from the lyrics and the music?
CHARACTERS IN Sweeney Todd

When playwrights create characters, they often invent “character maps” for their characters before they begin to write. Reverse this process and create a character map for Sweeney Todd, Mrs. Lovett, Anthony, Johanna, the Beggar Woman, Tobias, the Judge and the Beadle. In your map describe their physical and emotional characteristics in great detail. Describe a typical day in each of their lives.

Assignments: Writing Prompts

• Write an inner monologue (a speech that a character gives to her or himself) revealing what you think the character might have been thinking in one of these situations:

Sweeney Todd, the night before he arrived in London after his return from exile.

Sweeney Todd, immediately after he hears Mrs. Lovett’s Act One explanation of the fate of his wife and daughter and rediscover his razors.

Anthony, after he has fallen in love with Johanna and seen the Beadle strangle the bird.

Mrs. Lovett, after Anthony asks permission to bring Johanna to Sweeney’s shop.

Judge Turpin, after he hears Anthony speak of his plan to elope with Johanna.

Tobias, when he is resting in the kitchen after a busy night of serving meat pies in Mrs. Lovett’s establishment.

Johanna, as she sits in the Asylum.

The Beadle, when he is sitting in the parlor, waiting for Mrs. Lovett.

The Beggar Woman, when she re-enters the barbershop immediately before Sweeney kills her.

Tobias, when he is alone in the basement with the evidence of the crimes being committed by Sweeney.

Mrs. Lovett, when she realizes Sweeney has killed the Beggar Woman.

Sweeney, when he realizes he has inadvertently murdered his wife.
The Theme of Revenge in Sweeney Todd

Questions and Discussion Prompts

- Sweeney Todd is portrayed as an example of a good, simple man who is assaulted by a corrupt social order. What are some other examples of main characters in this situation in literature, plays and film? What are some examples of real-life parallels?
- Is Sweeney’s desire for revenge justified? Is revenge ever justified? How else should he have sought retribution?
- At the end of Sweeney Todd the actors point at the audience, suggesting the desire for revenge is universal. Do you agree?

Writing and Research Prompts

- Discuss in writing the corrosive effects of societal corruption and indifference on individual behavior in America today.
- Using the character of Sweeney Todd as a departure point, write an essay addressing the following question: “How full of rage does a man have to become before life means nothing?”

Humor and Tragedy in Sweeney Todd

Questions and Discussion Prompts

- How does humor help the audience deal with the difficult issues (like cannibalism) in Sweeney Todd?
- Often in spoofs and satires, a character, event or theme actually represents another much darker reality. What does the “man eating man” image represented by the meat pies actually represent on a deeper level?

Assignments: Writing and Research Prompts

- Write a spoof of a serious issue in your school or community. Write a serious essay about the same issue. Which is more effective? Why?
- What other books, plays or films have addressed the issue of cannibalism? Compare them to Sweeney Todd in terms of style and approach to the subject matter.
The term “Industrial Revolution” was first used to describe a major period of technological and economic change in Britain during the late 18th and 19th centuries. During the years from 1760 to 1850 the steam engine came into widespread use and provided the power for many new machines that replaced human workers.

Questions and Discussion Prompts

- Do you think the characters in *Sweeney Todd* could have been influenced by the Industrial Revolution and the social consequences that accompanied it?
- In what ways are the sounds of the mechanized age present?

Assignments: Writing and Research Prompts

- Investigate conditions that affected workers’ lives outside the factory during the Industrial Revolution.
- Why must Mrs. Lovett turn to human flesh as a food source? Was fresh affordable meat available in London in the 1850s?
- Investigate what was happening in London during the period in which *Sweeney Todd* was set. Who was the monarch? What was happening in religion and the arts?
- How did the rich live during this period? Discuss the external decorum of Victorian manners in relation to the ugliness they attempted to hide.
- Why were prisoners sent to Australia?
- Investigate the powers of judges like Judge Turpin in the 19th century English legal system. Who appointed these judges? What were their qualifications to serve on the bench? How long did they serve? Who reviewed or had the power to reverse their decisions? Compare what you learn about the criminal justice system in 19th century London to our current system.
- Sweeney’s wife was left alone after he had been sent to prison. What was the lot of women left to care for themselves and their families? In what ways did she become vulnerable after he was sent away? How does her predicament compare with the circumstances in which a single mother might find herself in America today?
- *Sweeney Todd* presents differing views of London. Discuss these differences.
- Do you consider it ironic that to many people technological advances pull mankind further and further from harmony, humanity and nature even as those advances heighten “standards of living?”
Sweeney Todd as Grand Guignol

Grand Guignol is a theatrical form that flourished in Paris at the end of the 19th century. It was a sensational type of entertainment which included heavy doses of violence, madness, suicide, revenge, suspense, sensational revelations, suffering and tricks.

Questions and Discussion Prompts
- In what ways is Sweeney Todd in the Grand Guignol tradition?
- What elements of Grand Guignol does Sweeney Todd have in common with a film like Psycho?
- Why are people so fascinated with horror films, plays and books?

Assignments: Writing and Research Prompts
- Find other examples of works in the Grand Guignol tradition.
- Write an original story in the Grand Guignol tradition.

Sweeney Todd and the Contemporary World

Questions and Discussion Prompts
- What warnings are there for our society in the tale of Sweeney Todd?
- What are the dangers of a society’s remaining complacent in the face of increasing brutality? What are some of the causes of such complacency?
- How might the level of violence experienced by watching films and television affect our ability to react to the violence around us? Does media violence have a role in causing societal violence?

Assignments: Writing and Research Prompts
- Sweeney Todd is a parable. What is a parable? Write a parable of a circumstance in modern life which concerns you.
- Several different characters relate the same events in Sweeney Todd, each from his or her own point of view. Write a three-part story about a contemporary event in which you have three participants each describing the same situation.
- Imagine you have been given the task of adapting the tale of Sweeney Todd. How would you make your adaptation original, faithful to your own vision, and a reflection of the times in which you live? Would your adaptation be a live theatre piece or a film? A play or a musical? What musical style would you choose? Why? When would the show or film be set? What would it look like?
Word Search

Sweeney Todd

OWCHPASJYIDFCJITKROLRAPYYBMJ
TEQLYRICKRIAHCLSEYVILLAINLMOA
ZXQENLUYTEICOSARAPXRLSQZNNHTV
DNMAOSDALLABHINDUSTRIALSCOAUZB
YSVMNWWPLOEARDNVNUSTIHWORNREWC
VMDTRAGEDYVOHEIQPKEXTSRNNRIADB
QORHAARKEESETCBBYRVLFROAIGDRUE
NTQOHIGNINTDAVAUISUSTNSLITYW
UIINPJHGOMEIJTLEQTCPKCSCEASEUND
MFRYQSWTELMYEAIALARTSUAEIERIGW
AKELIXIRBBEXPOSITIONUAWTNEOBMJ
LOPTETRAUQAMNYMLOPROLOGUEDAMOP
DKIPPERSPJTNYYPNEPIPHANYVRATUT
EREBRABFSCEOVHOBAVALJUDGEUIMAH
BQSDPHQIOWVLNERTENNIRWRMIXWR

ALLITERATION ANTHONY ASSONANCE AUSTRALIA BALLAD
BARBER BEADLE BEDLAM BEGGAR BRITISH
CANNIBALISM CHAIR CORRUPTION ELIXIR ENTENDRE
EPIPHANY EXPOSITION GUIGNOL HARMONY HUMOR
INDUSTRIAL JOHANNA JUDGE KIPPERS LAVABO
LINNET LONDON LOVE LOVETT LYRICS
MADNESS MEAT MELODRAMA MOTIF MURDER
MUSLIN PARABLE PARLOR PIES PIRELLI
POMADE PRISONER PROLOGUE QUARTET RAZOR
RETICULE REVENGE RHYME SHAVE SOCIETY
SONDHEIM SWEENEY TOBIAS TONSORIAL TRAGEDY
VICTIM VICTORIAN VILLAIN WHITSUN WIGS
**Glossary of Terms**

**Bank Holiday:** Bank holidays are public holidays in the United Kingdom and Ireland which are not associated with any religious observations. They are so named after the Bank of England’s list of holidays established in the early 1800s. Most non-essential service workers receive bank holidays. There are two modern bank holidays, occurring in August and October. The exact dates of bank holidays are determined by royal proclamation each year.

**Beadle:** From as early as the 1500s, a beadle was a minor church official whose duties included ushering and preserving order at services. While originally a religious role, the term beadle was later applied to judiciary, law-enforcement and educational officers in the 1700s and 1800s.

**Botany Bay:** A city in the south-eastern suburbs of Sydney, Australia, Botany Bay was the site of a major British penal colony established in the late 1700s. The area is so named for its variety of exotic plant life, first documented by Sir Joseph Banks during initial European settlement. During colonization, Botany Bay became known for its large population of expatriated British convicts, a stigma now lost to history, as the area now serves as industrial, commercial and airport hub for Sydney’s greater metropolitan area.

**Canterbury:** An English coastal city, southeast of London, with a very rapid population growth during the 1800s, nearly doubling in size.

**Esplanade:** A long, open-air, raised, level area, built along a coastline or beach. The Victoria Embankment in London is an example of an Esplanade, reclaiming marsh land along the River Thames in the late 1800s for development. Also a boardwalk or waterside promenade.

**Fleet Street:** Located on the West end of the City of London near the border of Westminster, Fleet Street was once renowned as the publishing and journalistic hub of London, and is now known for its law offices. The area is named after the River Fleet, the largest of London’s now subterranean rivers feeding into the Thames.

**Kippers:** Herring, usually split, salted or smoked and eaten whole at breakfast, high tea or supper by the inland and urban working classes of the United Kingdom.

**Lavabo:** The forerunner of the modern sink, a lavabo is a small appliance used for washing hands.
**Glossary of Terms**

**Muslin:** A finely-woven cotton fabric, introduced to Europe during the 1600s of Mid- and Far-East origin. Muslin also once referred to women or femininity, in old English slang.

**Plymouth:** Located in Devon, Plymouth is a major port city south-west of London. A launch pad for colonization in the New World, home to extensive dockyards, a naval hospital and fortifications at the mouth of the harbor, Plymouth has been a very important part of English history.

**Pomade:** A waxy and greasy substance used to style hair. Pomade has historically contained a variety of substances, including crushed apples, bear fat, beeswax and petroleum jelly.

**Reticule:** A women’s mesh purse, handbag or satchel, often with a drawstring.

**St. Swithin’s:** St. Swithin’s Church was a 13th century Anglican Church located at the very heart of London, in Cannon Street. Heavy damage dealt during World War II bombings eventually led to St. Swithin’s complete demolition in 1962.

**Tonsorial Parlor:** A barber shop. The word ‘tonsorial’ is derived from the Latin for ‘to shear’ or ‘to shave’.

**Vespers:** A religious service of the late afternoon or early evening, often at 6 or 7 o’clock. A vesper bell would toll to mark the time or the start of service.

**Wapping:** An eastern borough of old London, at the banks of the Thames. Prior to the 1800s, Wapping was known for its maritime flavor, being a major harbor for the city. This changed dramatically in 1805, when the London Docks were built to accommodate an increase in vessels, removing and displacing 60% of its population.

**Whitsun:** The seventh Sunday after Easter on the Christian calendar. The term is the shortened form of White Sunday, which refers to white baptismal garments.

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**Ingredients for the Meat Filling:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/2 lb. lean hamburger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 medium onion, ground</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 c. flour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 1/2 c. water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/8 tsp. garlic powder or 3 cloves garlic, minced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 1/4 tsp. salt (or to taste)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4 tsp. pepper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/8 tsp. oregano</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/8 tsp. thyme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You will also need glasses or jars, approximately 3-3½ inches (7.5-8.5cm) in diameter</td>
<td>to shape the pies, or clean tuna cans lined with parchment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ingredients for the Hot Water Pastry:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 pound (500g or four cups) plain flour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 ounces (175g or ¾ cup) lard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 fluid ounces (225ml or ¾ cup) approximately of water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinch of salt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk for glazing</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Method:**

Create the filling by mixing the minced (ground) meat, spice and seasoning. Cook mixture 1 1/2 hours on low heat until very tender. Make the pastry by sifting the flour and salt into a warm bowl. Make a well in the centre of the flour. Melt the lard in a scant measure of water and, when it is bubbling, add to the flour and mix thoroughly. Take a small amount (remember the mixture should make 8/10 pies, with their tops) and form into a ball and keep the rest warm while making each pastry case. This is done by rolling a suitable amount for each pie and shaping the crust round the base of a glass or jar approximately 3-3½ inches (7.5-8.5cm) in diameter. Make sure there are no cracks in the pastry - you can trim round the top of the case to make it even. As the pastry cools and gets cool, remove the glass and continue until you have about a quarter of the pastry left to make the lids. (Clean tuna cans make great meat pie molds! Line with parchment before adding pastry. Fill the cases with the filling mixture. Roll the remaining pastry and use the glass to cut the lids. Wet the edges of the lids, place over the meat and press down lightly over the filling. Pinch the edges and trim. Cut a small hole or vent in the centre of the lid (to allow the steam to escape). Glaze with milk and bake for about 25-35 minutes at 375F. If the pies are not eaten immediately, they can be stored in the ‘fridge but always ensure they are properly reheated before being eaten.

**Mrs. Lovett's Meat Pie Recipe**

**Scottish Meat Pies**

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Mrs. Lovett's Meat Pie Recipe

In Scotland, there are several variations of meat pies. One of the most popular is the Scottish Meat Pie. These pies are usually made with a combination of meat, potatoes, and vegetables. The pastry is typically made from scratch, and the filling is rich and hearty, perfect for a cold autumn day.

**Ingredients:**

- 1 pound (500g or 4 cups) plain flour
- 6 ounces (175g or ¾ cup) lard
- 6 fluid ounces (225ml or ¾ cup) water
- Pinch of salt
- Milk for glazing

**Method:**

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C).
2. In a medium mixing bowl, combine the flour and salt. Make a well in the center of the flour.
3. Add the lard and water, and mix until a dough forms. Knead the dough until smooth.
4. Roll out the dough to a thickness of about 1/8 inch (3mm).
5. Line a pie dish with the dough, leaving a small overhang.
6. Fill the pie with a combination of meat, potatoes, and vegetables. Sprinkle with salt.
7. Cover the pie with the remaining dough, sealing the edges together. Cut a small vent in the top of the pie.
8. Bake for about 30 minutes, or until the crust is golden brown.
9. Serve hot, with a side of gravy if desired.

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Mrs. Lovett’s Meat Pie Recipe

In England, the traditional meat pie is a comfort food that has been enjoyed for centuries. Mrs. Lovett’s Meat Pie recipe is a classic example of this dish, with its rich filling and flaky pastry. This recipe is perfect for a special occasion or a cozy weeknight dinner.

**Ingredients:**

- 1 lb. lean beef or pork
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1/4 tsp paprika
- 1/2 cup beef broth
- 1/2 cup red wine

**Method:**

1. In a large saucepan, heat the oil over medium heat.
2. Add the onion, carrots, beef, and pork, and cook until browned.
3. Add the flour, water, salt, pepper, nutmeg, paprika, and beef broth.
4. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes.
5. Add the red wine and continue to simmer for another 30 minutes, or until the meat is tender.
6. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C).
7. Line a pie dish with pastry, leaving a small overhang. 
8. Fill the pie with the meat mixture.
9. Cover with the remaining pastry, sealing the edges together. Cut a small vent in the top of the pie.
10. Bake for about 45 minutes, or until the crust is golden brown.
11. Serve hot, with a side of mashed potatoes or gravy if desired.
THE COMPANY OF SWEENEY TODD

Sweeney Todd .......................................................... Jamey Hasapis
Mrs. Nellie Lovett ..................................................... Staci Dickens
Anthony Hope ......................................................... Travis VanderMale
Beggar Woman ......................................................... Michele Ralston
Judge Turpin ............................................................ Josh Savrin
The Beadle Bamford .................................................. Randon Macias
Johanna Barker ........................................................ Emma Hoover
Tobias Ragg ............................................................. Taylor Johnson
Adolfo Pirelli ............................................................ Devon Battilega
Jonas Fogg ............................................................... Bear Vash

Male Ensemble
Ryan Bauer
Brian McDonald
Randy Beaumont
Jordan Hakes
Jaron Druyon

Female Ensemble
Hannah V. Holt
Jessie Del Quadro
Nicole Thurston
Chloe Howe
Kacie Beagen
Kirstin Nelson
Jessica Martinez

Behind-the-Scenes:
Director ................................................................. Scott Tignor
Assistant Director/Music Director ............................... Staci Dickens
Orchestra Conductor ................................................. Erin Tucker
Stage Managers ....................................................... Dani Knight, Amanda McDonald
Lighting Design ....................................................... Kristi Long
Board Operator ....................................................... Devin Dahlke
Costume Design ...................................................... Kyon Semallie
Rehearsal Pianist ..................................................... Sarah Nelson
ACT I

Prelude ......................................................................................................................... Orchestra
The Ballad of Sweeney Todd .............................................................................................. Company
No Place Like London ........................................................................................................ Anthony, Beggar Woman
The Barber and His Wife .................................................................................................... Sweeney Todd
The Worst Pies in London ................................................................................................... Mrs. Lovett
Poor Thing ........................................................................................................................ Mrs. Lovett
My Friends ....................................................................................................................... Sweeney Todd, Mrs. Lovett
Green Finch and Linnet Bird .............................................................................................. Johanna
Ah, Miss .......................................................................................................................... Anthony, Beggar Woman
Johanna ................................................................................................................................ Anthony
Pirelli’s Miracle Elixir ........................................................................................................ Tobias, Sweeney Todd, Mrs. Lovett, Company
The Contest ....................................................................................................................... Pirelli
Wait .................................................................................................................................... Mrs. Lovett
Kiss Me .............................................................................................................................. Johanna, Anthony
Ladies in their Sensitivities .............................................................................................. The Beadle
Kiss Me .............................................................................................................................. Johanna, Anthony, The Beadle, Judge Turpin
Pretty Women .................................................................................................................... Sweeney Todd, Judge Turpin
Epiphany ........................................................................................................................... Sweeney Todd
A Little Priest ..................................................................................................................... Sweeney Todd, Mrs. Lovett

ACT II

God, That’s Good …… Tobias, Mrs. Lovett, Sweeney Todd, Beggar Woman, Customers
Johanna ............................................................................................................................... Anthony, Sweeney Todd, Johanna, Beggar Woman
By The Sea .......................................................................................................................... Mrs. Lovett
Wigmaker Sequence ........................................................................................................... Sweeney Todd, Anthony, Quintet
The Letter ............................................................................................................................. Sweeney Todd, Quintet
Not While I’m Around ........................................................................................................ Tobias, Mrs. Lovett
Parlor Songs ....................................................................................................................... The Beadle, Mrs. Lovett, Tobias
City On Fire ........................................................................................................................ Lunatics, Johanna, Anthony
Searching .......................................................................................................................... Mrs. Lovett, Sweeney Todd, Beggar Woman, Anthony, Johanna
Final Sequence ................................................................................................................... Mrs. Lovett, Sweeney Todd, Beggar Woman, Judge Turpin
The Ballad of Sweeney Todd .............................................................................................. Company
Resources


The String of Pearls Penny Dreadful (e-text): http://www.victorianlondon.org/mysteries/sweeney_todd-01.htm

**On Victorian London**


**On Sondheim and The Theatre**


Green, Stanley. *The World of Musical Comedy*. A.S. Barnes

