

TEACHING INSTRUCTIONS



P.L.A.Y.

PERFORMING FOR LOS ANGELES YOUTH



Thirteen, Nicole Ruddy

DISCOVERY GUIDE

13
A New Musical
Music and lyrics by
Jason Robert Brown
Book by Dan Elish
Directed by Todd Graff

Dec 22, 2006–Feb 18, 2007
Mark Taper Forum



P.L.A.Y.
Performing for Los Angeles Youth

How to Use the Discovery Guide

There is nothing worse than a 13-year-old boy. You're embarrassed by your parents, and you're trying to find your independence because, deep inside, you are so dependent on your mom.

- Ben Affleck, actor

TO THE TEACHER

The Discovery Guide for *13* has been developed as a prompt-book for a standards-based unit of study appropriate for grades six through eight. The specific learning activities in theatre arts can be readily integrated with other content areas, particularly language arts and history/social sciences, to accelerate teaching and learning.

The Discovery Guide is a starting point. Please adapt the material and extend the learning activities to meet the needs of your particular community of learners. Our hope is that the structure and content of the Guide will not be merely functional, but also inspiring - and that teachers and students will share the thrill of learning through theatre arts.

How to Use the Discovery Guide

The Discovery Guide is not designed as an independent workbook. It is a resource for learners to develop skills in storytelling, literary analysis and collaboration that are essential in theatre arts, language arts, history/social sciences and other content areas. Oral discussion and writing prompts are designed so that students may relate key ideas to their personal experiences and the world around them. Teachers are expected to adapt or extend the prompts. Teachers may choose some prompts for small group discussion and others for the whole group.

Writing Applications

Many of the prompts in the Guide are easily adaptable to match writing objectives your class might already be studying. Written responses to the prompts may range from short expository answers in complete sentences to formal, five-paragraph persuasive essays.

In any case, teachers at all grade levels are encouraged to design at least one rigorous, standards-based written performance assignment in conjunction with their unit on *13*.

Scope and Sequence of the Lessons

In order to provide a comprehensive and sequential unit of study, we suggest that students have the opportunity to explore the whole variety of lessons in the Discovery Guide.

The activities are designed to be completed in sequence. Those on pages four through 11 are to be completed before the students see the production of *13*. The discussion and writing prompts on pages 12 through 17 and the Resources section on page 18 are intended to stimulate reflection, analysis and further inquiry after students attend the play.

Vocabulary:

Introduce the key vocabulary words on each page as they occur. Help students pronounce the words correctly and provide opportunities to use the words correctly.

THE GOALS

Regardless of grade level, the unit is designed to teach **enduring understandings** that students will take with them for life. One set of these understandings is about the art of theatre. The other is drawn from the themes of the play created by composer and lyricist Jason Robert Brown and book writer Dan Elish and interpreted by director Todd Graff. Charted below are some **essential questions** that can be raised before, during and after students' experience at the performance to guide them toward the enduring understandings.

	THEATRE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS	SOCIAL AND LITERARY THEMES
Enduring Understandings	<p>Musical comedy incorporates song, dance and humor to tell a story that entertains and enlightens audiences.</p> <p>A song can tell a story with a beginning, middle and end; describe a character's decision-making process and its consequences; or define a character's personality.</p> <p>Any story can provide the inspiration for a comedy or drama in the theatre.</p>	<p>Although individual experiences may vary, everyone can find something in common with the particular experience of a 13-year-old boy.</p> <p>A "rite of passage" is an event or experience that defines a chapter in a person's life.</p> <p>Every choice – taking a risk, telling or keeping a secret, honoring or betraying a friendship – has consequences that you must face.</p>
Essential Questions	<p>What functions do songs serve in telling the story of a play?</p> <p>How do characters change over the course of a play? How can you tell that they have changed?</p> <p>How do jokes and comedic situations help define these characters and tell the story?</p> <p>What defining moments in your life could you turn into a song?</p>	<p>How has being 13 changed over the years? Did your parents and grandparents have similar experiences to yours?</p> <p>What does it mean to celebrate a bar mitzvah? What does it mean to experience a rite of passage?</p> <p>Does the play offer an accurate view of the world of most 13-year-olds and the way in which they interact with each other? How is it accurate? How does it miss the mark?</p> <p>Based on your personal experiences, do you believe that people treat those from other cultures differently than people they consider more like themselves?</p>

THE STANDARDS

Teachers should “bundle” one of the recommended theatre focus standards with a focus standard from another content area to help design their classes’ integrated units of study. For instance, you might be able to bundle one of the recommended English-Language Arts focus standards with a focus standard from theatre.

THEATRE

Artistic Perception: *Development of the Vocabulary of Theatre*

1.1 Students observe theatrical productions and respond to them, using the vocabulary and language of the theatre.

Comprehension and Analysis of the Elements of Theatre

1.2 Identify and analyze recurring themes and patterns (e.g., loyalty, bravery, revenge, redemption) in a script to make production choices in direction or design.

Creative Expression:

Development of Theatrical Skills

2.1 Create short dramatizations in selected styles of theatre, such as melodrama, vaudeville and musical theatre.

Historical & Cultural Context:

Role and Cultural Significance of Theatre

3.1 Create scripts that reflect particular historical periods or cultures.
3.1 Describe the ways in which American history and culture is reflected in theatre.

Aesthetic Valuing:

Critical Assessment of Theatre

4.1 Students develop and use criteria for judging and evaluating productions.

Connections, Relationships, Applications:

Connections and Applications

5.1 Students apply what they learn in theatre, film/video and electronic media across subject areas.

Careers and Career-Related Skills

5.2 Students learn about careers in and related to theatre.

ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ARTS

Writing Strategies:

Organization and Focus

1.1 Create compositions that establish a controlling impression, have a coherent thesis and end with a clear and well-supported conclusion.

1.2 Establish coherence within and among paragraphs through effective transitions, parallel structures and similar writing techniques.

1.3 Support theses or conclusions with analogies, paraphrases, quotations, opinions from authorities, comparisons and similar devices.

Literary Response and Analysis:

Narrative Analysis

3.2 Evaluate the structural elements of the plot (e.g., subplots, parallel episodes, climax), the plot’s development and the way in which conflicts are (or are not) addressed and resolved.

Writing Applications:

2.4 Write persuasive compositions:

- a. Include a well-defined thesis (i.e., one that makes a clear and knowledgeable judgment).
- b. Present detailed evidence, examples and reasoning to support arguments, differentiating between facts and opinion.
- c. Provide details, reasons and examples, arranging them effectively by anticipating and answering reader concerns and counterarguments.

Written and Oral English

Language Conventions:

Sentence Structure

- 1.1 Use correct and varied sentence types and sentence openings to present a lively and effective personal style.
- 1.2 Identify and use parallelism, including similar grammatical forms, in all written discourse to present items in a series and items juxtaposed for emphasis.
- 1.3 Use subordination, coordination, apposition and other devices to indicate clearly the relationship between ideas.

Grammar:

1.4 Edit written manuscripts to ensure that correct grammar is used.

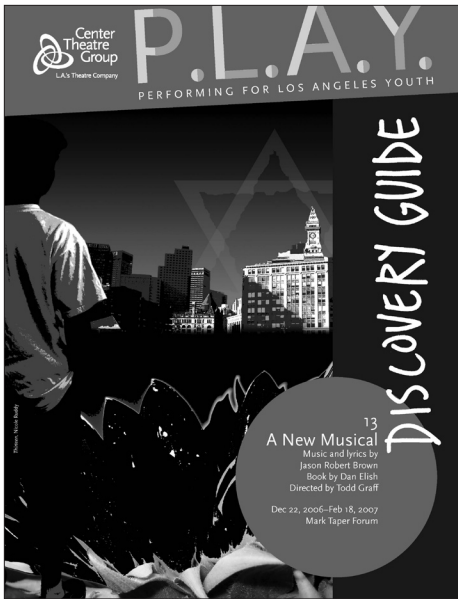
Punctuation and Capitalization

1.5 Use correct punctuation and capitalization.

Spelling:

1.6 Use correct spelling conventions.

BEFORE THE PLAY



COVER: WHAT DOES GRAPHIC DESIGN TELL YOU ABOUT THE PLAY?

Rationale:

Visual art and graphic messages help students process, analyze and respond to sensory information through language skills.

Exercise:

The cover art for the Discovery Guide was made by a student for P.L.A.Y.'s Theatre Poster Competition. Have the students describe what they see on the front cover of the Discovery Guide. Discuss the graphic elements detailed on the cover. Explore the image by asking some of the following questions.

- What type of imagery do they see?
- Do the images generate sound and movement? How and why?
- Why did the artist choose to use this particular image?
- Does the front cover make them want to see the play more? Why or why not?
- What other information is on the cover?

Optional Exercise: Revisit these illustrations after you have seen the play. Discuss how well they represent the play you saw. Ask students to create a marketing illustration of their own for the play.



FRONT AND BACK COVERS

The two runner-up images are pictured on the back cover. Discuss these as well, and compare the three illustrations. What sort of play does each image suggest?

BEFORE THE PLAY

HOW TO USE THIS DISCOVERY GUIDE?

It won't be easy to stay in your seat during 13, the rollicking new musical by Tony Award-winning composer/lyricist Jason Robert Brown and playwright Dan Elish. The story is about learning to fit in with other kids and to be yourself. But more than that, it is an opportunity to watch 13-plus talented teens sing, dance, act and make music onstage. In this musical — a story told with music — 13-year-old Evan navigates the social politics at a new school. This Discovery Guide will explain the particular creative problems in crafting a musical comedy and examine the social and cultural implications — as well as the real and perceived personal limitations — of being 13 years old today.

- Examine the social & cultural dynamics of contemporary 13-year-olds
- Explore your family history and the immediate personal experiences of childhood as useful resource material to creative writing
- Create songs based on your own experience
- Understand how comedy and songs function in musical theatre
- Celebrate the many different types of kids who emerge at 13 years of age

VOCABULARY
Vocabulary words are in bold type. Definitions are located within each section.

DISCOVERY GUIDE CREDITS
Doug Conroy, Discovery Guide Writer, is a playwright and member for young people, his musical adaptation of George Saunders' The Sky Is Broken Copped off the program at the First Stage Theatre last year. His music, including Patrick, co-written with Academy Award-winning actress Maura Tieri, was published by Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers and is being developed for the stage by the Kennedy Center.

Rachel Farr, Managing Editor, Jean Lambert, Proofreader, Melissa Smith, Julia Lee, Creative Designer

13: A New Musical

HOW TO USE THIS DISCOVERY GUIDE: Page 2

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Jason Robert Brown, at 13, (Photo of Jason Robert Brown)

When "13" composer and lyricist Jason Robert Brown was 13:

I have to sound like Mr. Pathetic, but if there were boy/girl parties when I was 13, I certainly wasn't going to be invited to them. There were cast parties for the talent shows but I tended to wander around on the periphery or sit at the piano playing minor chords all night.

13 and 13

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PAGE 2: HOW TO USE THIS DISCOVERY GUIDE

Rationale:

Students will be able to optimize their learning if they have a clear understanding of the layout of the Discovery Guide and objectives of the exercises it contains. This will help them contextualize their learning process.

Exercise: Read and discuss the objectives of the Discovery Guide with the class.

Exercise: Read and discuss the quotation on page three by Jason Robert Brown. Ask the students if they understand or identify with the statement. Ask why or why not.

Exercise: Ask the students if they have ever seen a musical play. Reinforce appropriate behavior for a musical theatre audience.

BEFORE THE PLAY

BEFORE THE PLAY

EVERYBODY WAS 13 ONCE

EXERCISE

THIRTEEN THEN Interview an adult friend about what it was like being 13 when he or she grew up. Here are some questions to get started.

NAME: _____

BEING 13 TODAY is different than it used to be – although maybe sometimes it's not. Adults are likely to respond to 13 differently than young people because they are remembering their own childhood as they watch the story unfold. What was it like being 13 in the old days? Go ask an adult!

When "13" book writer Dan Elish was 13:

My hair was very long, thick and mop-like. Very much in keeping with Rubber Soul look. I owned bell-bottoms, wide-colored shirts, and a button that said "Save the Earth." The room I shared with my brother was decorated with Peter Max and assorted black-light posters.

When 13 compared and visited Jason Robert Brown's 13 – I was a *mean* jerk. Whatever I was, I was certainly not cool. I had been shipped a grade, so I was a year younger than everyone else. I was in my class and I was doing well. My work didn't change until I was thirteen. Well, I really felt like not a human being.

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Original text by Greg Kotwica

1. Where were you at 13? What year was it?
2. Describe your personality. Did you fit into a category? (e.g. cool kids, freaks, greys, brains, jocks, cheerleaders, mean girls, nerds) Did your friends fit those categories?
3. Describe your hair and/or clothing style.
4. Were there boy/girl parties? What were they like?
5. What was your favorite band, book and/or movie?
6. How did you stay in touch with friends?
7. Did you have a memorably awkward moment or did something really embarrassing happen?
8. What was the latest technology?
9. What was your greatest accomplishment?
10. What did you want to be when you grew up?
11. What is the biggest secret you kept? Whose secret was it? What would happen if you told someone the secret? Did you tell?
12. Describe a risk you took to get some thing you wanted. Did it work? What were the consequences?
13. Did you do or change anything in order to fit in?

For relative the was et started.

AND 13 NOW! Ask yourself the same questions.

13 in 1968, Whittier, CA. (Courtesy of Dan Elish)

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PAGES 4–6: EVERYBODY WAS 13 ONCE

Rationale:

Young audience members and their grown-up counterparts can both relate to the characters and themes of 13 because “everybody was 13 once.” Student playgoers will acquire a complement to and appreciation for the work when they interview adults in their lives about their own experience of being 13. The interview process will provide an opportunity to accomplish the following three tasks in one exercise: 1) students will gain practical experience in information gathering; 2) students will be able to compare and contrast their own responses; and 3) students will gain insight into historical relativity and the pop culture trends of another decade.

Exercise:

Read the quotations from the creative team. Ask the students if they understand or identify with each statement. Ask why or why not.

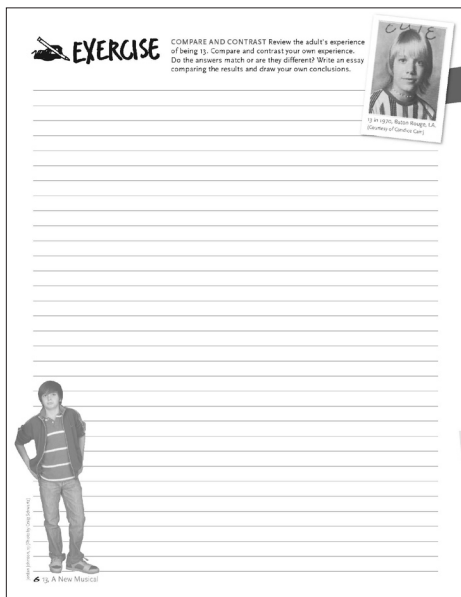
Exercise:

Briefly review the questions listed in the questionnaire under the “Thirteen Then –” exercise on page five and make sure that students understand each question. If time permits, ask students to add additional questions to the list. Have each student write a list of three or four grown-ups they could approach with their questionnaire. Ask them to identify the best candidate for their interview and to decide on the best possible time and place to stage the interview.

EVERYBODY WAS 13 ONCE: Pages 4–5

BEFORE THE PLAY

EXERCISE COMPARE AND CONTRAST Review the adult's experience of being 13. Compare and contrast your own experience. Do the answers match or are they different? Write an essay comparing the results and draw your own conclusions.



EVERYBODY WAS 13 ONCE: Page 6

PAGES 4–6: EVERYBODY WAS 13 ONCE (CONTINUED)

Exercise:

Set aside time for students to fill in the responses to their own questionnaire. Encourage short expository answers in full sentences. Use the space provided in the Discovery Guide. If time is not available, assign the completed questionnaire for homework. Encourage students to use additional paper if they need more space.

Exercise:

Page through the Discovery Guide and look at the pictures of 13-year-olds. Discuss how being 13 has or has not changed based on these images. Ask students to share some of the differences and similarities they have discovered through their interviews.

Exercise:

In class or for homework have students write a brief essay comparing and contrasting the adult's and their own responses to the questionnaire. Use the space provided in the Discovery Guide. The essay should consist of five well-reasoned and persuasive paragraphs written in full, complete sentences, utilizing specific examples from the responses to their questionnaires.

Optional Exercise:

If time and space allow, post memorable responses to the questionnaires on posterboard about the classroom. Allow students to decorate the posters with images of being 13, either hand-drawn or collected images from magazines.

BEFORE THE PLAY

SYNOPSIS OF 13

THIRTEEN YEAR-OLD EVAN GOLDMAN is transplanted from New York City to smalltown Middle America. Faced with a new school and all new friends, Evan hopes to bridge the cultural divide by bringing all the coolest kids to attend his bar mitzvah. Unfortunately, his new classmates are not familiar with Jewish culture or interested in attending the new kid's party. To complicate matters, Evan has no interest. Paradoxically, Evan is blackmailed into inviting Archie, the disabled kid who clumps around embarrassingly on crutches.

To ensure cool kids at his party, Evan convinces his mother to sneak the center undaggered group into an Israeli movie—a gross-out disaster film staged in a young love relationship. Undeterred, Evan's manipulations get him strangled in a young love triangle among Slick, the class jock, Kendra, the class hottie, and Tony, her snotty rival. When a school scandal unexpectedly erupts, the blame game turns friends into enemies, and it doesn't look like anyone will attend Evan's bar mitzvah at all.

BAR MITZVAH

TODAY, I BECOME A FOUNTAIN PEN

In Jewish culture, a boy at 13 becomes a "bar mitzvah," a "son of the commandment" and is considered a responsible adult. Bar mitzvah traditionally refers to a boy's 13th birthday, the age of maturity for girls, although Americans often celebrate when girls turn 12. At this age, Jewish children may participate in all areas of decision in life and are responsible for upholding Jewish ritual and tradition. The term "bar mitzvah" also refers to the ceremony, in which the boy recites texts from the Torah and leads parts of or in some synagogues all of the Sabbath service. The ritual is often followed by a huge celebration with family and friends and a much anticipated barrage of gifts. Traditionally, boys receive religious books, countless pen and pencil sets and cash or savings bonds intended for college education. In Western society, bar and bat mitzvah are often celebrated with large, expensive Jewish parties and food feasting in other locales. Non-Jewish kids might find cultural opportunities to the bar mitzvah in the Sweet Sixteen Party, the quinceañera in Latin culture or a Catholic "teenager's" confirmation.

VOCABULARY

Confirmation: A Roman Catholic sacrament admitting a baptized person to full participation in the Church.

Quinceañera: In Hispanic culture, a coming-of-age held for a girl's 15th birthday.

Synagogue: The place of worship for a Jewish congregation.

Torah: The scroll of parchment containing Hebrew Scriptures, the first five books of Moses (this text also constitutes the first part of the Bible used by Christians).

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SYNOPSIS OF 13: Page 7

PAGE 7: SYNOPSIS OF 13

Rationale:

Students can better appreciate the theatrical conventions of the musical comedy if they can access their prior knowledge about the plot. Students will be able to derive more entertainment from the musical comedy if they have some familiarity with the story beforehand. It is also important for students to be able to appreciate the cultural context of the story, particularly regarding the bar mitzvah.

Exercise:

Review the synopsis

Here is a simple way to introduce the play to the students.

- The play tells the story of a 13-year-old boy from New York City transplanted to the Midwest.
- The play uses song and dance to tell the story and to keep the audience entertained.
- The characters are forced to make decisions that have consequences on their friendships.

Use the synopsis of the play in the Discovery Guide and discuss as the students read. Have students identify the main characters and supporting characters. Identify the main character's objectives and conflicts that arise in the plot.

Exercise:

The Bar Mitzvah

Have students review and discuss the sidebar titled "Today, I Become a Fountain Pen," which explores the role of the bar mitzvah in Jewish culture. Ask students to explain the joke in the title of the sidebar. Ask students whether anyone has attended or celebrated a bar mitzvah or other aspect of Jewish culture. Ask students whether they have ever attended a confirmation or a quinceañera. Describe and compare these experiences. What do the events have in common? How are they different?

BEFORE THE PLAY

MAKE 'EM LAUGH

MUSICAL COMEDIES ENTERTAIN AUDIENCES WITH SONGS, dancing and jokes. The basic components of a musical comedy are the music, the lyrics and the book. Comedy can be found in a good one-liner, a ridiculous situation or a topical reaction. It is no easy task being funny—partly because humor is completely subjective. Some people will not laugh at an offensive joke; others will not laugh because the joke is not offensive enough. **being**, **sarcasm** and **political jokes** appeal to some people while others prefer **scatological humor** (like fart jokes) or **physical slapstick**. And there always seems to be somebody who simply does not "get" jokes at all. Though comedy is not an exact science, some comedians swear by the following five elements.

EXAGGERATION LIES AND IMPOSSIBILITY If someone were to say "your mother is so fat, she got trapped in the World," that is funny because it is an exaggeration, a lie and an impossibility.

WORDPLAY Misused words - saying one word when you mean another - are funny. Ridiculous accents or silly voices can make ordinary words funny. Some words are funny all by themselves. For example, five-year-olds can't say "underwear" without laughing. Other funny words include: **Crucifixion**, **Chihuahua**, **sardines** and **krabs**.

PAIN Pain is funny if Tweety Bird sings Sylvester's. Similarly, jokes about ethnic groups, gays, overweight people or anyone "different" are funny because they are painful to the targeted group or because they are not intended to encourage inappropriate humor. Being funny does not make it right.

SURPRISE When something happens that you do not expect, that is funny. **Ashton Kutcher's** **Ford** is a great example. **Slapstick** relies on pain and surprise, like a pie in the face or someone slipping on a banana peel.

When jokes are assembled in acts of three, they are inherently funnier, more satisfying and effective than other random numbers. Typically, a joke is set up only, the setup is reinforced and an act punchline breaks the pattern (three).

When '13' choreographer Michele Lynch was 13: I was wearing my first training bra and was very self-conscious about it. In class, the boy behind me reached across his desk and gave it a big snarl. Everyone was laughing! Ouch and ouch!

THE RULE OF THREE

bah-da-bing!
bah-da-bang!
bah-da-boom!

© 13: A New Musical

MAKE 'EM LAUGH: Page 8

PAGES 8-9: MAKE 'EM LAUGH

Rationale: Humor, jokes and comedic situations are an essential element of the musical comedy. The theatre-going experience is enriched when student playgoers have a context for the quality and style of humor employed in the work.

Exercise: Review the vocabulary with the students. Discuss in particular the meaning of word "subjective" to gauge students' comprehension of the concept.

Exercise: Consider the unfinished cartoon in the exercise on page nine. Allow time to come up with an appropriately funny caption. Review the categories of comedy outlined in the Guide as a source of inspiration for students' captions (e.g., surprise, exaggeration, pain, etc.) and see the Resources section for more advice on being funny. Ask students to pick a category that describes the quality of humor utilized in each other's submissions. Time permitting, post the cartoons in the classroom and have students vote on a winning submission. Send a copy of the winner to P.L.A.Y.

EXERCISE LET'S SEE HOW DIFFICULT HUMOR REALLY IS. Write a caption to make this cartoon funny.

VOCABULARY

When '13' composer and lyricist Jason Robert Brown was 13: The list of memorably awkward moments or embarrassing things just happened when I was 13 could fill fourteen thick books. And that's only if you count the times I was much on stage for worse in my mind than anyone else's. In fact, I don't think I was ever on stage for worse in my mind than anyone else's. In fact, I don't think I was ever on stage for worse in my mind than anyone else's. In fact, I don't think I was ever on stage for worse in my mind than anyone else's.

Book: The spoken part of a musical found between the songs.

Exaggeration: To represent as greater than is actually the case; to overstate.

Impy: The use of words to express something different from and often opposite to one's literal meaning.

Lyrics: The words to a song.

Sarcasm: A cutting, often ironic remark intended to wound.

Scatological: Referring to language or literature that is considered obscene, especially that dealing humorously with excrement and bodily functions.

Slapstick: A boisterous form of comedy marked by chases, collisions and crude practical jokes.

Subjective: Particular to a certain person; personal; a perspective or reaction that occurs in a person's mind rather than a belief held in the external world at large.

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MAKE 'EM LAUGH: Page 9

Exercise: Review the five categories of humor and, time permitting, ask students to provide examples that might fit into each separate category.

Exercise: Read the quotation from choreographer Michele Lynch and discuss which category of humor it might fit into. Ask the students if they understand or identify with the statement. Ask why or why not.

BEFORE THE PLAY

BACKSTAGE SCOOP

When 13's composer and lyricist Jason Robert Brown was 13:

I wanted to be Billy Joel when I grew up, and I also really wanted to be on Cheers. I thought they should have a sit on Cheers who played the piano and told jokes. The fact that I was 13 and most bars wouldn't let a 13-year-old inside didn't occur to me. On weekends, I generally moped, fretted and wrote songs mostly declaring my undying love for Mary Beth Rogers.

JAMIE EBLEN
Drummer

"Jamie"

Describe your hair and/or clothing style.
From 6th to 8th grade I grew a giant afro, that was at its fullest in eighth grade, but when I was 13 my afro was in the middle stage so it black straight up, it wasn't short, but it wasn't long. I was extremely strange looking. I always wore pants and a shirt, I was never that stylish.

What were boy/girl parties like?
The dances were never that great because there was a major change between regular dancing and "freak" dancing. No one really knew what dance to do because they didn't want to look stupid in front of their peers.

How did you stay in touch with friends?
IMing was the main way of communication between me and my friends. I didn't have a cell phone until after my bar mitzvah, when I was finally a man.

Describe a risk you took to get something you wanted.
I tried to let my best friend and his girlfriend meet up at my house because their parents wouldn't let them hang out at their own houses. It didn't work and my mom got extremely upset with me because she'd damaged the reputation of my house going down. I got grounded because of that.

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BACKSTAGE SCOOP: Page 10

SARA NIEMIETZ
"Patrice"

Describe your personality. Did you fit into a category? I don't know if exactly fit into any kind of music group or style. I didn't want to be a copy of anyone else. I wasn't the most popular, or anything, but I had the best friends... My friends were all different from each other. I guess you could say I hung out with people from all kinds of cliques.

What was your favorite band, book and/or movie?
My favorite band was definitely Fall Out Boy. Their concert was one of the best days ever for me. I also really loved Imagine Dragons, Christina Aguilera, Paramore, The Disco, Maroon 5, The Hush Sound, Hawthorne Heights, Hologobots, lots of alternative stuff, oldies like The Beatles, The Eagles, Chicago, Boston, The Who, Aretha Franklin and way more. Music = life. *Galaxy in the Eye and Animal Farm* were my favorite two books. *The Sandlot* was my favorite movie. I could still watch that all day.

What did you want to be when you grew up? I wanted to be a singer and actress (and still do).

EXERCISE

Consider how your own life might be different if you were a professional performer in a play or on a pro team or in a full-time job. Write a narrative paragraph that answers the following questions: Are there activities you would have to sacrifice? What sort of new expectations might be placed on you? Would people treat you differently? Would it change your personality? Make you more confident? Or more stressed? What could you accomplish?

VOCABULARY

Blocking: A theatre term referring to the precise movement and positioning of actors on a stage in order to create a performance.

Choreography: A compilation of movements which make up a dance or dance routine.

Ensemble: A group of musicians, singers, dancers or actors who perform together.

Lines: A theatre term for the words that make up the dialogue or spoken words of a play.

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BACKSTAGE SCOOP: Page 11

PAGES 10-11: BACKSTAGE SCOOP

Rationale:

Students will appreciate the theatre experience more if they have a context for the backstage effort that went into realizing the production. Students will also be curious as to the experience of the contemporary teenagers who comprise the cast and crew of 13.

Exercise:

Review the brief essay on page 10 concerning the production demands of building a musical with a cast of teenagers. Review the vocabulary. Allow students to share their own backstage experiences in school or community productions. Ask students to compare the experiences of 13 cast members Jamie Eblen and Sara Niemiets with their own. Are they very different?

Exercise:

Read the quotations from the creative team members. Ask the students if they understand or identify with the statement. Ask why or why not.

Exercise:

Read the quotation from silent film star Mary Pickford. Ask the students if they know any kids who feel an obligation to help support their family. Ask how they might accomplish that goal.

Exercise:

Provide classroom time or create a homework assignment to complete the written exercise. Ask students to write a narrative paragraph identifying the challenges, obstacles and benefits of taking on a full-time professional commitment that relies on a personal performance, either sports or arts-related. Use the space provided in the Discovery Guide.

Optional Exercise:

Profiles of "Ordinary Thirteens with Extraordinary Achievements" – both historical and contemporary – are included at the end of these Teaching Instructions. Have students read the profiles aloud in class. Discuss what is extraordinary about each. What do these teens have in common? Is there something about being 13 that contributes to these achievements? Are the merged qualities of childhood and pending maturity in 13-year-olds remarkable in some way?

AFTER THE PLAY

THE FUNNY PART

DID YOU FIND IT FUNNY? WHAT MADE YOU LAUGH? In the theatre, laughter is not limited to jokes and funny lines in dialogue or songs. It can also come from surprising situations, outrageous costumes, silly movements or an actor's reactions. Since comedy is subjective, only one person in the audience might laugh out loud at something. Other times, the entire audience might laugh at the exact same thing. Was there something that struck you as funny that nobody else "got"? Was there something that did not strike you as funny when the rest of the audience was laughing? Or, was there something that made everyone laugh?

EXERCISE

Review the different attacks on comedy outlined on page 8: **EXAGGERATION, LIES AND IMPOSSIBILITY, WORDPLAY, PAIRN SURPRISE, and THE RULE OF THREE.** Now think of a funny thing that happened in 13 that you might have told a friend about after the show. Determine the category(ies) in which it fits. Did something occur three times? Maybe you heard a word that was particularly funny. Was something ridiculously exaggerated? Write a paragraph explaining what happened in the play and why it was funny.

When 13 book writer Dawn Eisk was 13:
I have to admit that at age 13 I was a so-called cool kid. I went to one of all-boy's schools and was one of the kids who actually knew girls, and - yes, there were heartflutters - after the parents left, "The Best of Best" would go on the screen, and we'd play spin-the-bottle and other assorted kissing games. By high school, my stock had plummeted from popular to outcast.

When 13 actor Dan Bickel is 13:
I was in a play called "The Boy Who Sailed to the Moon" and I was the only boy in the cast. I was the only boy in the cast.

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THE FUNNY PART: Page 13

UTES OF PASSAGE

A "RITE OF PASSAGE" MARKS A TIME when a person enters a new and significant stage of life or passes an important milestone. Almost every society holds ceremonies or rites to recognize rites of passage among its young people, ranging from a birthday party or graduation to more culturally specific events like a bar mitzvah. Rites of passage can be informal too - like learning to shave, a first kiss or first friend made.

EXERCISE

Other than a bar mitzvah, what rites of passage occur in the play? _____

What rites of passage have you experienced in your own life? _____

VOCABULARY

Rite: A customary observance or practice

When 13 composer and lyricist Jason Robert Brown was 13:
The list of memorably awkward moments or embarrassing things that happens when I was 13 could fill fourteen study guides. And they all were far worse in my mind than in anyone else's. In fact, I don't think I was much on people's radar screens, but my vast need to feel important made me think that everyone was watching me at every moment and completely judging me to be inadequate in every way.

When 13 actor Michael Lynch was 13:
In 8th grade, my friends and I were model girls, the category of the nice kids, the mean kids were the popular ones. When I got to high school I made a vow to become popular and joined the cheerleading squad.

14 is A New Musical

UTES OF PASSAGE: Page 14

PAGE 13: THE FUNNY PART

Rationale:

Students' theatre-going experience will be enhanced when they apply their understanding of the function of humor in musical comedy to the actual event. They will also benefit by reflecting on the substance of what they saw – the plot, characters and themes – and connecting it to their own personal experience.

Exercise:

Review the categories of humor identified on page nine. Review in particular the concept of "subjective." Ask the students to identify a particular joke from the performance of 13 and see if it fits into one of the five categories. Ask students to write a persuasive paragraph of at least five sentences, explaining which category(ies) the joke fits into and why.

Exercise:

Read the quotations from the members of the creative team. Ask the students if they understand or identify with each statement. Ask why or why not.

PAGE 14: UTES OF PASSAGE

Exercise:

Review the brief essay and engage students in a dialogue on comparable "coming of age" experiences in their own lives. Note that many rites of passage are small everyday events while others are marked by ceremony and celebration. Apart from the formal bar mitzvah, what other rites of passage occurred in the play? Have students brainstorm on their own before reviewing answers as a class. Examples: first kiss, first R-rated movie, first secret, first boy-girl party, first betrayal, first encounter with someone from another culture or another background. Ask students to consider the rites of passage in their own lives, both formal and informal.

AFTER THE PLAY

SECRETS & RISKS

EXERCISE RISKS

List two risks taken by characters in 13. What is the risk and who took it? What is the result? What are the consequences?

1. _____
2. _____

When "13" was over and finished, Jane Peab? Began was 13.

I think I had a Commodore C-100 (the other kids had a C-64), and in school I got to use an Apple IIe. Microwaves and VCRs were sort of new and hip. I remember right after we got the VCR, the first movie we rented was Annie Hall, which I immediately left in love with for the rest of my life.

EXERCISE SECRETS

List two secrets kept by characters in 13. What are the consequences of keeping or revealing the secrets?

1. _____
2. _____

What is the worst thing that could happen if someone exposed one of your secrets?

PAGE 15: SECRETS & RISKS

Exercise:

Review the brief essay. Engage in a discussion with students on secrets kept by characters in the plot of 13. Ask students to consider the risks taken by characters in 13. Open the discussion to include the role of secrets and risks in their own lives and the consequences of broken secrets and unfortunate risks. Students can reflect on their answers to pertinent questions contained in the interview questionnaire on page five.

Exercise:

Ask students to choose two secrets kept by characters in 13 and to identify those secrets and their consequences in the space provided. Next, students should write a speculative paragraph about what the consequences might be if one of their own secrets were revealed.

Exercise:

Similarly, ask students to choose two risks taken by characters in the play and describe their outcomes.

SECRETS & RISKS: Page 15

AFTER THE PLAY

Who's 13 best writer? Dan Elick was 13. My favorite band was (and is) the Beatles. My favorite books were The Lord of the Rings. My favorite movie was Ruth Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.

SING A SONG

FOR MANY YEARS, MUSICAL THEATRE DIDN'T TELL STORIES. People went to see showgirls dance and countertenors sing solos. The songs—known as “show tunes”—were simply interesting and “humorous” with no particular connection to the story or characters. After Jerome Kern’s *Southern*, the musical theatre form was reinvented as the “book musical,” in which each song serves to develop a character and/or move the story forward.

Each song in 13 follows this form. It might be a transition song in which a character goes through a change (like “I’ll Be There” from 13), a realization song in which a character reaches a new understanding (“Being a Geek”), or a decision song in which a character makes up his or her mind (“I’ll Be There”). It might be a song in which a character makes up his or her mind (“I’ll Be There”), or an “I Am” song, or an “I Wish” song (like “This is what I want”), or an “Uh-Oh” song (like “What is happening here?”), “Thirteen” is both an “I Am” and an “I Wish” song.

EXERCISE

Choose three songs from 13 and describe what purpose each has in the play. How does the song move the story along? What does the song teach you about a character or the story? How does the song incorporate humor to make its point?

- _____
- _____
- _____

Who's 13's director? Todd Graff was 13. We were just one class year away from *Strucks*, but Pong was very big.

16 13: A New Musical

SING A SONG: Page 16

PAGE 16: SING A SONG

Rationale:

As with the humor exercises, the students' appreciation for musical theatre will be enhanced when they understand how songs function in the storytelling aspect of musical theatre and reflect on that understanding as it relates to the performance experience of 13.

Exercise:

Review the brief essay on the different functions of songs in musical theatre: the transition song, a realization song, a decision song, an “I Am” song, an “I Wish” song, or an “Uh-Oh” song. Consider examples from other musical works familiar to the students; Disney’s animated musicals are the most likely source.

Transition songs might include:

“Hakuna Matata” from *The Lion King*

Realization songs might include:

“Can You Feel the Love Tonight?” from *The Lion King*

Decision songs might include:

“Kiss the Girl” from *The Little Mermaid*

“I Am” songs might include:

“One Jump Ahead” and

“Friend Like Me” from *Aladdin*

“I Wish” songs might include:

“Part of Your World”

from *The Little Mermaid* and

“I Just Can’t Wait To Be King”

from *The Lion King*

“Uh-Oh” songs might include:

“Poor Unfortunate Souls” from *The Little Mermaid*.

Exercise:

Ask students to categorize three songs from the score of 13 and explain the function of each song in the space provided.

Musical Numbers in 13

“Thirteen!”

Evan & Company

“All The Cool Kids”

Brett, Malcolm, Eddie & Company

“Get Me What I Need”

Archie & Company

“What It Means To Be A Friend”

Patrice

“Getting Ready”

Archie, Evan, Brett, Kendra,

Lucy & Company

“The Bloodmaster”

Cassie, Molly, Charlotte,

Simon, Richie & Company

“Being A Geek”

Evan, Rabbi & Boys

“Angry Boy”

Brett, Malcolm, Kendra,

Lucy & Company

“Tell Her”

Evan & Patrice

“It Can’t Be True”

Lucy & Company

“Getting Over It”

Evan

“My Name is Archie”

Archie

“Brand New You”

Kendra, Patrice & Company

As of this printing, 13 is still in rehearsal and the musical numbers are subject to change.

AFTER THE PLAY

SING YOUR OWN SONG

MOST SONGS follow a strict formula of verses alternating with a chorus. Typically, verses tell the story—who, what, where, when and why—and the chorus expresses the emotion. For example, the verse in “Jingle Bells” describes the sleigh ride (“Dashing through the snow...”) while the chorus describes what people feel (“Oh what fun it is to ride...”).

Review your responses to the questions on being 13, “Stress of Passage” and “Secrets & Sins.” Assemble the words you have already written into an “I Wish,” “I Am” or “Oh-Oh” song. Each verse should bring a new development to the story. The chorus should describe how the story makes you feel. If you are feeling ambitious, try incorporating one or more humor techniques into your song.

EXERCISE

Verse One: Choose FOUR sentences that tell the beginning of the story.

Chorus: Choose FOUR sentences that describe how the event makes you feel.

Verse Two: Choose FOUR sentences that tell the middle of the story.

Repeat the Chorus. And – Verse Three: Choose FOUR sentences that describe how the story ended.

Repeat the Chorus.

COME UP WITH YOUR OWN MELODY. Using rhythm and pitch – or try singing your lyrics to a melody you remember from the songs Dr. J & F or rap a song you know from the radio. Or your favorite. Refer to these songs. Start from the start! If you can't come up with a melody, try to rap it.

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SING YOUR OWN SONG: Page 17

PAGE 17: SING YOUR OWN SONG

Rationale:

Encourage students to view their own lives as a rich and valuable resource for generating song material. Identify popular singers who reference their own lives and personal issues in their songs (e.g., Eminem, John Legend, Alicia Keys, etc.). When students apply their own creativity to a song that describes their own experience of being 13 or almost 13, they will be applying language arts, theatre arts and social sciences all at the same time.

Exercise:

Review the brief essay explaining song structure – and the difference between the chorus and the verse. Encourage students to “sample” words and phrases already utilized in response to the other exercises in the Discovery Guide, as well as answers to the questionnaire on page five. Reinforce narrative structure so that the storytelling aspect of their lyrics includes a “beginning, middle and an end.”

[NOTE: It is not necessary that the words rhyme. It is better to make a strong, powerful statement than to force the words into a clumsy rhyme. If students are gifted at rhyming, they should be encouraged, but many successful songs do not rhyme in the least.]

Exercise:

Students may be adept at creating melody for their own songs. If ideas don't spring to mind however, students could always employ the melody of a popular contemporary song. If melodic ideas are not at all available, students should be able to rap their own words.

Optional Exercise:


Students perform their songs in class. Song presentations could be spread over the course of a week. If students are performance-shy, they might be able to record their own songs into the school computer or a classroom laptop. Enterprising students could enlist other students to sing “back-up” on their songs.

AFTER THE PLAY

CONCLUDING REMARKS

WE HOPE THIS GUIDE HAS ENHANCED your experience of 13 by exploring the dynamics of today's 13 year olds and by tapping personal stories to demonstrate how seemingly ordinary events can make for big dramas on stage. Just as musical theatre incorporates storytelling, comedy and songs to create entertainment, we can review our own lives and find memorable stories, good laughs and great songs.

Who's 13? director: Todd Greff was 13
 I had no style,
 I was a dirty ruffless boy,
 Honestly I still have no style,
 And now I have no haz eibez.



D. H. LAL, Cleveland, OH
 Director of Theatre 13

RESOURCES

Websites:

www.fair.org/bernitz.htm
 Everything you ever wanted to know about bar mitzvahs

www.tinkworks.com/fairy
www.comicpedia.org/wiki/How_To_Be_Funny_And_Not_Just_Stupid
 Advice on being funny

www.musicradio.com/history.htm
 A detailed timeline guide and history of American musical theatre in stage, film and television

www.teen.com
 Excellent resource for notable 13-year-olds and other distinguished individuals

Books:

Thirteen and a Day: The Bar and Bar Mitzvah across America by Mark Oppenheimer (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2005)
 An excellent overview of the bar and bar mitzvahs in America

Bar Mitzvah Disco by Roger Bernatt, Nick Kroll and Julie Sibel (Simon Publishing, 2005)
 A photographic chronicle of some pretty goofy and outrageous Bar Mitzvahs from the '70s and '80s

MitzvahChic: A New Approach to Having a Bar or Bar Mitzvah That is Meaningful, Hip, Relevant, Fun & Drop-Dead Gorgeous by Gail Anthony Greenberg (MitzvahChic, LLC, 2003) A guide to throwing the best party possible without sacrificing tradition Film & Television: *High School Musical* directed by Kenny Ortega (Buena Vista Home Entertainment/Dolby, 2006) *The Charlatans Club* directed by Oz Scott (Walt Disney Home Entertainment, 2005) *The Charlatan Club* directed by Kenny Ortega (Walt Disney Home Entertainment, 2005) Huge musical Disney Channel musical that covers similar high school turf *Frags and Creaks* created by Paul Feig (Episodic Productions/DreamWorks SKG, 1993) *Malcolm in the Middle* created by Linwood Boomer (20th Century Fox, 2005) *Saved by the Bell* created by Sam Bobrick (Lions Gate, 2005, 2004, 2003) Successful television comedy/drama series were also inspired by teenage angst




Photo: Peter Dinklage/Photo Bank

CONCLUDING REMARKS, RESOURCES AND ABOUT P.L.A.Y.: Page 18

PAGE 18: CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RESOURCES

Rationale:

Students can be motivated to use skills and knowledge gained from 13 to extend their learning in other curricular areas.

Exercise:

Beyond the Performance

- Read the passage: "We hope this guide has enhanced ..." aloud to the class.
- Encourage students to list moments of identifiable "truths" in 13. Post the list on the board.
- Encourage students to consider aspects of being 13 that have not yet been addressed. Post the list on the board.

Optional Exercise:

After the students have seen the play, have them write a letter using one or more of the following elements of writing: narrative, descriptive, expository, response to literature or persuasive. Mail their letters to P.L.A.Y.

Optional Exercise:

Students can do research on topics using the Resources section on page 18 and present short oral reports on various topics. Examples: *My Best Friend's Bar Mitzvah*; *My First Musical Comedy*.

I was a thirteen-year-old boy for thirty years.

- Mickey Rooney, actor

EVALUATION

Please let us know how successful we were in designing the Discovery Guide and these Teaching Instructions. Which parts worked for your class and which didn't? We hope these activities will help to expand the theatre-going experience for you and your students. Send comments along with student responses to:

P.L.A.Y.

Center Theatre Group
 601 West Temple Street
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

Ordinary Thirteens with Extraordinary Achievements

JOAN OF ARC

When JOAN OF ARC was 13 in 1425, she heard angelic voices summon her to save France from collapse. At age 17, she became a national hero by leading French troops to significant victories in the Hundred Years War against England. Two years later, she was burned at the stake as a heretic against the Roman Catholic Church. Joan was found innocent after her death and, in 1920, she was named a saint for her steadfast piety.

ANNE FRANK

When ANNE FRANK was 13 in 1942, she received a diary for her birthday. That same year, Anne's family hid in the attic of her father's office building in Amsterdam to escape the Nazi persecution of Jews. Eventually, the family was seized. Anne died in a concentration camp in 1945. Her diary has become one of the world's most widely read and beloved books.

NADIA COMANECI

When NADIA COMANECI was 13 in 1975, she became the youngest woman to win all the major awards in the European Gymnastics Championships. *The Associated Press* named her "Athlete of the Year." At the 1976 Olympics, Nadia won three gold medals, two silvers and one bronze, scoring a perfect 10 in two separate events, a feat no one had ever achieved.

BOBBY FISCHER

When BOBBY FISCHER was 13 in 1956, he stunned the chess world by winning the U.S. Junior Chess Championship in a celebrated match known as the "Game of the Century." At six, Bobby learned to play on a chess set that his sister bought at a candy store. As an adult, he became the only U.S.-born chess player to win the World Chess Championship.

RYAN WHITE

When RYAN WHITE was 13 in 1984, he was diagnosed with AIDS. Ryan contracted HIV through a blood transfusion used to treat his hemophilia. Ryan wasn't allowed to return to school and his family fought the decision in court. Ryan made numerous media appearances to champion his cause and put a public face on an epidemic shrouded in fear and ignorance.

IQBAL MASIH

When IQBAL MASIH was 13 in 1995, he was murdered, purportedly by the carpet "mafia" in Pakistan. At age four, Iqbal was sold to a carpet factory, chained to a loom for 14 hours a day. At ten, Iqbal ran away to become a highly vocal activist for exploited children around the world. By 13, Iqbal had traveled the globe, making speeches and receiving awards for his courage.

NICHOLAS CIARELLI

When NICHOLAS CIARELLI was 13 in 1998, he was something of a computer geek and published insider news about Apple Computer Inc. on his own website. At 16, he scooped the national media with the story of Apple's updated PowerBook laptop series. At 19, Ciarelli predicted Apple's latest sub-\$500 computer and got slapped with a lawsuit claiming that he stole trade secrets.

RUDY GARCIA-TOLSON

When RUDY GARCIA-TOLSON was 13 in 2002, he ran the Olympic flame through the streets of San Francisco. Rudy is a born athlete, but he was born with severe physical deformities. He was fitted with specially designed prosthetic legs to realize his athletic ambitions to run, jump and swim. Rudy now competes in triathlons.

BETHANY HAMILTON

When BETHANY HAMILTON was 13 in 2003, she lost her left arm in a tiger shark attack while surfing off Hawaii. Bethany went on to realize her dream of becoming a professional surfer and was named the 2005 National Scholastic Surfing Association Explorer Women's Champion.



13, A New Musical

The following titles encompass a number of the themes from the musical comedy *13*. They include rites of passage, taking risks, secrets and their consequences, being different, so called “cool kids” and “nerds,” and general teen angst issues. These books can be found in the Los Angeles Public Library system.

Allen, M.E.

Gotta Get Some Bish Bash Bosh

After getting dumped by his girlfriend, a 14-year-old boy attempts to change his image.

Avrech, Robert

Hebrew Kid and the Apache Maiden

Ariel Isaacson, having migrated westward with his family following the Civil War, is determined to have his Bar Mitzvah, while he also forms a deep friendship with Lozen, an Apache warrior girl.

Castelluci, Cecil

The Queen of Cool

Bored with her life, popular high school junior Libby signs up for an internship at the zoo and discovers that the “science nerds” she meets there may have a few things to teach her about friendship and life.

Hogan, Mary

The Serious Kiss

Relates the angst-ridden life of 14-year-old Libby Madrigal as she tries to deal with her unhappily married alcoholic father and overreacting mother, moving to a new town, and finding the perfect boy to “seriously” kiss.

Jones, Patrick

Nailed

An outcast in a school full of jocks, 16-year-old Bret struggles to keep his individuality through his interest in drama and music, while trying to reconnect with his father.

Korman, Gordon

Jake, Reinvented

Rick becomes friends with the popular new boy, Jake Garrett, football player and host of superlative parties, and in the process discovers the true nature of his schoolmates and uncovers the mystery of Jake’s past.

Levithan, David

Boy Meets Boy

This is a happy-meaningful romantic comedy about finding love, losing love, and doing what it takes to get love back in a crazy-wonderful world.

Lynch, Chris

Extreme Elvin

As he enters high school, 14-year-old Elvin continues to deal with his weight problem as he tries to find his place among his peers.

Schorr, Melissa

Goy Crazy

Rachel Lowenstein can’t help it--she’s got a crush on a goy, Luke Christiansen, the gorgeous star of the basketball team at St. Joseph’s Prep. Should she follow her heart and turn her back on her faith, or follow her friends’ and family’s advice?

Spinelli, Jerry

Stargirl

From the day she arrives at quiet Mica High in a burst of color and sound, the hallways hum with the murmur of “Stargirl, Stargirl.” The students of Mica High are enchanted. At first. Then they turn on her. Stargirl is suddenly shunned for everything that makes her different. Her boyfriend, Leo, urges her to become “normal,” the very thing that can destroy her.

Vizzini, Ned

Be More Chill

Badly in need of self-confidence and a change of image, high school nerd Jeremy Heere swallows a pill-sized super computer that is supposed to help him get whatever he wants.

Yee, Lisa

Stanford Wong Flunks Big Time

After flunking sixth-grade English, basketball prodigy Stanford Wong must struggle to pass his summer-school class, keep his failure a secret from his friends, and satisfy his academically demanding father.

List compiled by Albert Johnson, Senior Librarian, Young Adult Services, Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL), with contributions from Virginia Loe, Dora Ho and Cathy Kawahara.