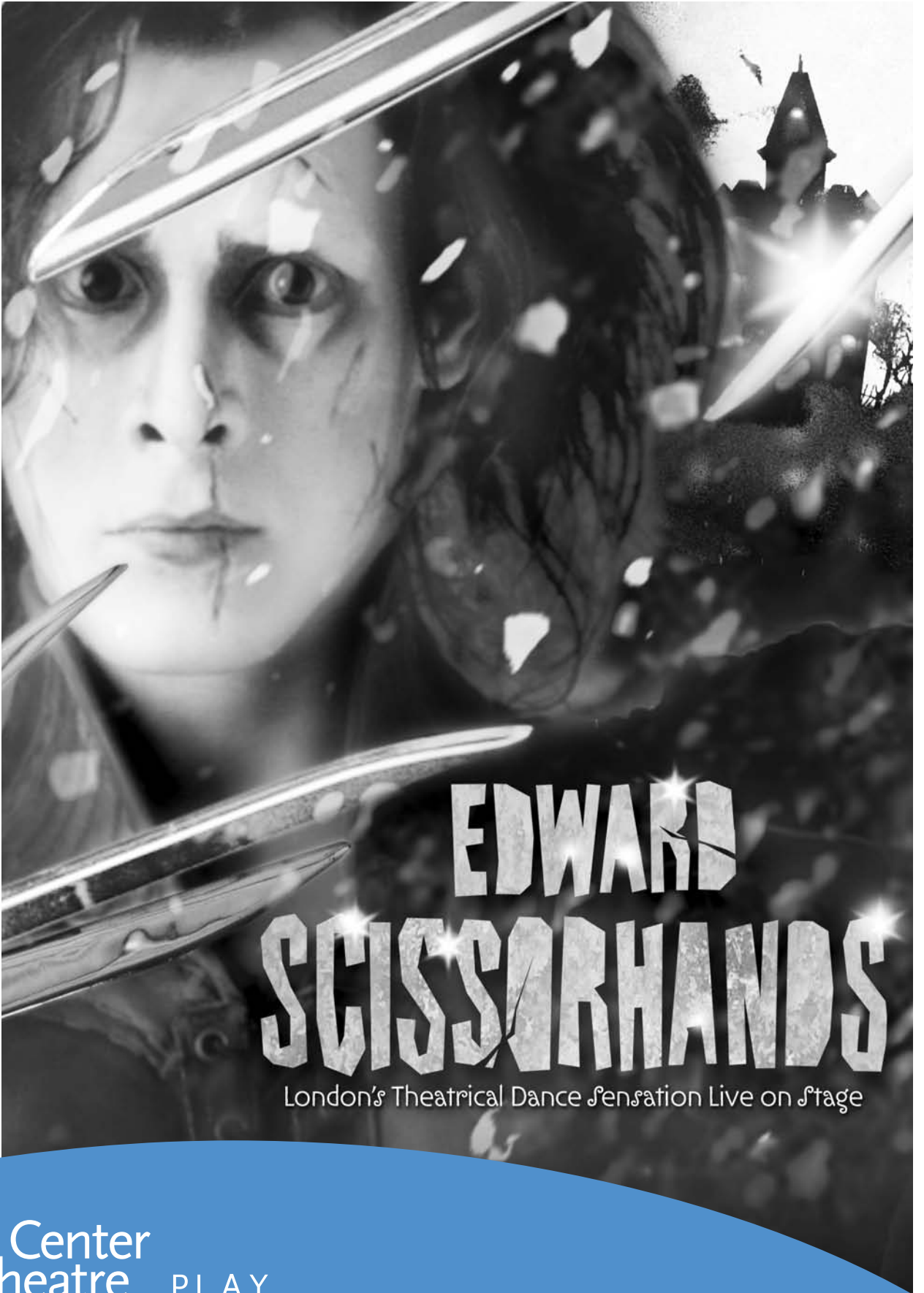


TEACHING INSTRUCTIONS



EDWARD  
SCISSORHANDS

London's Theatrical Dance Sensation Live on Stage



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


# How to Use the Discovery Guide

**HOW TO USE THIS DISCOVERY GUIDE**

This Discovery Guide is designed to help you understand and interpret the production of *Edward Scissorhands*, a work of dance theatre that provokes audiences to think about the relationship of music, gestures and other forms of non-verbal communication to storytelling. To create his version of *Edward Scissorhands*, Matthew Bourne drew from Tim Burton's film of the same title. Like the film, Bourne's production uses humor. However, it differs from the movie in that it conveys the story and emotion through movement and music rather than dialogue.

**Objectives of the Discovery Guide**

- Become acquainted with choreographer Matthew Bourne
- Critically and creatively engage with dance theatre as a form of storytelling
- Understand the process for creating dance theatre
- Create a piece of dance theatre from music that inspires you
- Write a theatre critique of *Edward Scissorhands* that you can send to P.L.A.Y.



The Discovery Guide provides a range of activities that promote critical discussion about dance theatre as a form of storytelling and the role of the audience. The Discovery Guide also offers various exercises and theatrical vocabulary that will lead you through the process of creating your own dance theatre piece. Like Matthew Bourne, you will focus on music and movement to tell a story.

**DISCOVERY GUIDE CREDITS**  
What's New? The Discovery Guide is a resource for English at the University of Cambridge and is available in French, Spanish, Italian, German, Russian, Chinese, Japanese and Hindi. It is also available in Braille and large print. The Discovery Guide is a joint project of the Centre for Performance Studies, University of Cambridge, and the Centre for Performance Studies, University of Cambridge.

Rachel Dale, Managing Editor; Jane Lambton, Production; Nicola Danks, Graphic Designer

© Edward Scissorhands

How to use the Discovery Guide: Page 2

**THE EDWARD SCISSORHANDS DISCOVERY GUIDE** is designed to help you lead students through an examination of the relationship between music, movement and storytelling and help them create their own piece of dance theatre. The Guide has been carefully designed to introduce students to the variety of methods used by Matthew Bourne. Like Bourne, your students will focus on music as a launching point for creating a story and choreographing a scene of movement. The exercises in the Discovery Guide foster both creative and critical thinking about dance theatre as a non-verbal form of storytelling. Teaching Instructions offer additional ideas for projects and in-class activities that will help students further the writing begun in the Discovery Guide.

**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 content is not merely useful, but also inspirational, and that you and your students will find joy in the process of learning through the multi-faceted art of theatre.

The Discovery Guide is not designed for your students' use on their own. It is a workbook that requires instruction and active discussion between you and your students. If you are not yet familiar with Tim Burton's original film, viewing it or researching it on the Internet will help you prepare students to see the play and greatly enhance their theatre-going experience. It will also allow students a deeper engagement with the exercises in the Discovery Guide.

**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 for completion in sequence.** Introduce the vocabulary before students encounter it in the reading. The activities on pages 4 through 9 are to be completed before the students see the production of *Edward Scissorhands*. The discussion and writing prompts on pages 10 through 14 and the Internet links and books on page 15 are intended to stimulate reflection, analysis and further inquiry after students attend the play.

## THE GOALS

The Discovery Guide and the supplemental exercises in the Teaching Instructions help students to understand music and movement as the building blocks of dance theatre and their function as non-verbal forms of storytelling. As the exercises illustrate, storytelling is also informed by thinking about context (the ways a story speaks to current events and other stories) and questions of morality (the lessons a story might teach). The quotes from Matthew Bourne, combined with the vocabulary and writing exercises, show students how dance theatre critically engages audiences in various issues while also cultivating creative approaches to storytelling.

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 play’s themes. 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 Understanding	Dance theatre critically engages audiences in various issues while also cultivating creative approaches to storytelling, such as the incorporation of music and movement.	Dance theatre illustrates universal themes, such as love, friendship and alienation, while also helping audiences visually read a story and better comprehend metaphor, tone, mood and foreshadowing.
Essential Questions	<p>How does music set the tone for a story and convey mood?</p> <p>What do the visual elements of dance theatre—movement, stage set, costumes and props—reveal about character and story development?</p> <p>What does an audience learn from appearance? How does appearance convey who you are or who other people think you are?</p> <p>How does <i>Edward Scissorhands</i> compare/contrast with other works that address the figure of the outsider, such as S.E. Hinton’s novel <i>The Outsiders</i> or Francisco Jimenez’s short story “The Circuit”?</p>	<p>How are people cast in the role of the outsider?</p> <p>What happens when people do not follow the norm? Who sets the norm that defines the outsider?</p> <p>What is the transformative power of love? How does love change people?</p> <p>What are the visual metaphors in this play? How do they convey theme and/or help to foreshadow characters or events?</p>

---

## THE STANDARDS

### ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ARTS

#### **Literary Response and Analysis:**

##### *Structural Features of Literature*

3.2 Compare and contrast the presentation of a similar theme or topic across genres to explain how the selection of genre shapes the theme or topic.

##### *Narrative Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text*

3.6 Analyze the way in which authors through the centuries have used archetypes drawn from myth and tradition in literature, film, political speeches and religious writings.

#### **Writing Strategies:**

##### *Organization and Focus*

1.1 Establish a controlling impression or coherent thesis that conveys a clear and distinctive perspective on the subject and maintain a consistent tone and focus throughout the piece of writing.

1.2 Use precise language, action verbs, sensory details, appropriate modifiers and the active rather than the passive voice.

#### **Writing Applications:**

2.1 Write short stories

a. Relate a sequence of events and communicate the significance of the events to the audience.

b. Locate scenes and incidents in specific places.

c. Describe with concrete sensory details the sights, sounds and smells of a scene and the specific actions, movements, gestures and feelings of the characters.

d. Pace the presentation of actions to accommodate changes in time and mood.

e. Make effective use of descriptions of appearance, images, shifting perspectives and sensory details.

### THEATRE

#### **Artistic Perception:**

##### *Development of the Vocabulary of Theatre*

1.1 Use the vocabulary of theatre, such as acting values, style, genre, design and theme, to describe theatrical experiences.

#### **Historical and Cultural Context:**

##### *Role and Cultural Significance of Theatre*

3.1 Identify and compare how film, theatre, television and electronic media productions influence values and behaviors.

#### **Aesthetic Valuing:**

##### *Derivation of Meaning from Works of Theatre*

4.2 Report on how a specific actor used drama to convey meaning in his or her performances.

### DANCE

#### **Creative Expression:**

##### *Communication of Meaning in Dance*

2.4 Perform original works that employ personal artistic intent and communicate effectively.

#### **Historical and Cultural Context:**

##### *History and Function of Dance*

3.3 Explain how the works of dance by major choreographers communicate universal themes and sociopolitical issues in their cultural contexts.

#### **Aesthetic Valuing:**

##### *Description, Analysis, and Criticism of Dance*

4.1 Describe how the qualities of a theatrical production contribute to the success of a dance performance.

#### **Connection, Relationships, Applications:**

##### *Development of Life Skills*

5.4 Explain how participation in dance develops creative skills for lifelong learning and well-being that are interpersonal and intrapersonal.

# BEFORE THE PLAY Reading and Exercises

Introducing Matthew Bourne: Page 4

All of the questions posed to the individual student reader throughout this section of the Discovery Guide also provide strong material for pre-play and in-class group discussion.

## PAGE 4: INTRODUCING MATTHEW BOURNE

### Rational

The experience of dance theatre is enriched when students have an understanding of the choreographer and his sense of storytelling and are clear about the vocabulary and themes that inform the play. This work also enables students to make connections between choreography and writing through attention to common elements, such as metaphor and character development, as well as universal themes such as the figure of the outsider and the power of love.

### Exercise

Read “Introducing Matthew Bourne” with the class. Make sure students understand who Matthew Bourne is as a choreographer: a non-verbal storyteller who relies on music and movement rather than dialogue. Go over the vocabulary introduced in this section. Clarify with students the definition of dance theatre and its function as a form of non-verbal storytelling. To assist students in thinking about visual forms of storytelling, ask them to discuss the various types of non-verbal communication they encounter in their daily lives: gestures to friends from across the room, street signs, desktop icons on the computer, symbols in mathematics, images in magazine advertising.

- Related supplemental exercise: Have students bring in magazine ads and describe the story they tell. What is the story? Success in business? Enhanced love life? Financial security? Peace of mind? How do the visual images communicate this? This exercise can also be used to further discuss vocabulary terms, especially “narrative” and “theme.”

### Exercise: The Outsiders

With students, go over the concept of the outsider and the role that difference plays in defining an outsider. What are some of the things that we label as different, to the point of seeing someone—or ourselves—as an outsider? How is an outsider seen by his or her community? How do outsiders see themselves? Then, go over titles and plots of various fairytales and fables that feature an outsider. Some examples: *Rumpelstiltskin*, *Cinderella*, *Pinocchio*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Three Little Pigs*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, *The Boy Who Cried Wolf*, *The Lion and the Mouse*. Students might also be asked to brainstorm titles or offer culturally specific stories. Discuss the ways these stories portray the figure of the outsider. What are the traits that make them different? What are their talents? How is being an outsider also connected with being special?

# BEFORE THE PLAY

---

## **PAGE 4:** (cont'd)

A brief discussion that poses such questions and makes students familiar with these stories will also help to foreground the exercises on identifying a moral, message, or challenge in fairytales that follow in the Guide.

### **Variation**

The above exercise can also be adapted to film as the basis for discussion of the role of the outsider in storytelling. Especially appropriate would be film adaptations of fairytales. Other examples to consider: *Mean Girls*, *Whale Rider*, *School of Rock*, *Finding Nemo*, *Spirited Away*, *Chicken Run*, *Billy Elliott*. In discussing film, have students think about the ways visual images, as much as the words (dialogue), tell the story. To illustrate this point, if able to show film clips in class, have students view a scene with the sound off and then write down the story they see told in that scene.

### **Exercise: Who Am I?**

To help students think of ways to non-verbally communicate age, have them brainstorm three people of different ages—a baby, an adult and a senior citizen—and gesture that they need a drink of water. Next, to assist students in thinking about how to perform gender, have them discuss the different ways men

and women do the same activity, such as driving a car, sitting in a movie theater or eating pizza. How does a man sit behind the wheel of a car? How does a woman?

- Related supplemental exercise: To further students' thinking about non-verbal communication, have students shake hands to communicate their feelings in different social scenarios, such as meeting a prospective boss at a job interview, being introduced to a college professor at an admissions event, running into an old friend on the street or meeting someone to whom they have to give bad news.

### **Variations**

Drama classes can extend this exercise to produce a longer scene. English classes can adapt this into a writing exercise in which they narrate the different scenarios. A good source for this kind of writing is character descriptions and stage directions in plays. Students might also be asked to make connections to literature they are reading: how do novelists describe physical appearance and action so that their readers can visualize locations, people and events?

# BEFORE THE PLAY

**HEARING the Story**

MUSIC ENHANCES STORYTELLING! In dance theatre, music without plot or dialogue, music becomes the main vehicle for communicating the emotional life of a story. It sets the mood and directs the audience's emotional response. Think about the way the music from just under feet and rears! Music also provides a powerful way to emphasize subtle. One part of the story that may not be explicitly stated but is an essential component to the emotional truth of the performance.

A theme associated with a particular character helps audience to follow that character's journey throughout the story. As the character changes and evolves, the theme music will help to tell the story of their own. Remember you will be listening to the original music that the composer wrote for you and it something you will be listening to. The original music that the composer wrote for you and it something you will be listening to. The original music that the composer wrote for you and it something you will be listening to.

Music is also used to cue actors' and dancers' movements on stage and to emphasize the action being made. For example, various music employ sound effects to emphasize the emotional nature of physical action, like a panicle in the music director or using a hand-drum project. Consider various. Another example of how music directs action is found in the ways lighting directors use music to cue sound effects.

**Exercise: Selecting the Song**

Imagine Bourne is inspired and moved by music to create his world. What music would you choose a piece of music to tell a story of your own. Remember you will be listening to the original music that the composer wrote for you and it something you will be listening to. The original music that the composer wrote for you and it something you will be listening to. The original music that the composer wrote for you and it something you will be listening to.

What location does your music suggest? (e.g. beach or city street? A factory or laboratory?)

Who do you envision as the character(s) representing the emotion?

What is he or she (or they) doing while experiencing these emotions?

**Vocabulary**  
 Instrumental: without lyrics  
 Mood: emotional feeling  
 Subtle: A hidden form of meaning  
 Sound: vibrations that stimulate  
 Characters and substitutes of  
 language and behavior

Hearing the Story: Page 5

## PAGE 5: HEARING THE STORY

### Rationale

Exploring the features of music and the ways it shapes how dance theatre tells a story will help students exercise their analytical skills and enrich their understanding of the play.

### Exercise

Read the Bourne quote and “Hearing the Story” with the class. Next make sure students understand the term “instrumental.” Have students brainstorm various types of instrumental music and/or specific instrumental songs. Then discuss the ways music communicates emotion and mood. It would be extremely instructive to share with students different examples of instrumental music that capture a specific mood. Some examples: Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons*, Edgar Winter’s *Frankenstein*, Hot Butter’s *Popcorn*, Scott Joplin’s *The Entertainer*, The Safaris’ *Wipe Out*, The Champs’ *Tequila*. To help students think about the relationship between music and mood, ask them, what does music for a celebratory event sound like? What does music for a sad and serious occasion sound like? Have students imagine themselves as DJs for two different events and describe the kind of instrumental music they would play.

As they will do in the exercise that follows, ask students to identify what location is suggested by the music. Can they hear the wind and rain in *Four Seasons*? The sun coming out and the flowers blooming? In the Safaris’ *Wipe Out*, can they hear the surfer running into the ocean to catch a wave and his subsequent wiping out? What are the kernels doing in the pan as described in the song *Popcorn*?

To help students further develop a vocabulary to describe mood, have them discuss the mood of the songs above. Is Vivaldi mourning the loss of winter? Is he celebrating spring? What about the music indicates this? Also have students discuss the kind of music they play when they are feeling certain ways. For example, what do they play when they have had a bad day at school? How does this music capture their mood? Is it meant to enhance or change their mood?

# BEFORE THE PLAY

---

## PAGE 5: (cont'd)

### Variation

Film scores offer another great avenue for examples to share with students to aid discussion of the ways music is composed to capture specific emotional scenes on film. Play selected music from a film score and ask students to imagine what kind of scene the music is composed for. Then play the accompanying scene from the film so that students can compare their responses to the music.

### Exercise: Selecting the Song

For this exercise, students will need to choose an instrumental piece of music that they find inspiring or engaging. Make sure students understand the difference between instrumental and lyric music and that they have chosen an instrumental song as the basis for their Discovery Guide exercise. Encourage students to consider various styles of music. To help them understand the importance of listening to something more than once, play a piece of music once and then have students write a quick description of the music. Then play the music a second time and have students take additional notes. What did they hear upon the second listening that they did not catch the first time they heard the song? (Note: often there are elements heard over earphones that are not easily heard via speakers;

for example, piano players humming along with the keyboard.) To further assist students with describing how music communicates emotion, have them note additional terms to those already listed in the Discovery Guide exercise (aggressive rhythm, crying violins, etc.).

After students select and describe the song they have chosen, they will need to describe the location, emotions and characters they hear suggested by the song. For example, does the rhythm remind them of crashing waves or a flying bumble bee—what location is suggested by this? Once they have determined the location, students should close their eyes and let their imaginations wander. What do they see? Who is in the scene and what is happening?



# BEFORE THE PLAY

**Synopsis of EDWARD SCISSORHANDS**

THE PLAY **EDWARD SCISSORHANDS** Tim Burton movie Edward Scissorhands, you have a strong sense of the plot Matthew Bourne adapted to create his Edward Scissorhands piece of the same title. Bourne's Edward Scissorhands diverges from the film in several ways. The play begins with the image of a boy lit by lightning while playing outside with scissors. His great-grandfather, an inventor, creates a new boy he calls Edward. He then gives the boy hands made from scissors. The object he is loved by grows with Scott after considering Edward. His invention can intelligently thought and create Edward scissorhands. When looking for food, he is discovered by Mrs. Big Right, who warmly welcomes him into her home. When Edward was a child of their beautiful daughter, Eve, he falls deeply in love. In his new suburban home, Edward sees his reflection in the mirror for the first time and only then realizes his difference from others. While he craves acceptance from the community, he must long for their genuine love and inclusion.

Edward's scissorhands serve as a **metaphor** for his physical and emotional isolation. While the community treats Edward as an outcast, they are also the very people that makes him special, an outcast, an outcast, an outcast. Edward can never be employed and each necessary detail is usually, he is accepted by members of the community continue to learn more about him. But when Eve's jealous boyfriend plots a prison sentence, the resulting events soon separate Edward.

**Exercise**

Edward Scissorhands is a fable that evokes powerful emotions, such as desire to belong, or fear of those who are different. It challenges us to explore the ways in which we do—and do not—accept people we think are different from us. It asks us to consider how we define and value those differences. For each of the stories below, identify a moral, message or challenge in the story. Then describe what the story tells us about difference and why.

Copy on lines: Moral/Message/Challenge

Who feels different and why?

**Cinderella** Moral/Message/Challenge: \_\_\_\_\_

Who feels different and why? \_\_\_\_\_

**Pinocchio** Moral/Message/Challenge: \_\_\_\_\_

Who feels different and why? \_\_\_\_\_

**Lilo and Stitch** Moral/Message/Challenge: \_\_\_\_\_

Who feels different and why? \_\_\_\_\_

**Home and Good** Moral/Message/Challenge: \_\_\_\_\_

Who feels different and why? \_\_\_\_\_

**Beauty and the Beast** Moral/Message/Challenge: \_\_\_\_\_

Who feels different and why? \_\_\_\_\_

**Vocabulary**

Metaphor: Something is used to represent something else. A symbol.

Plot: The sequence of a story, the incidents and events that direct a character's journey.

Synopsis of Edward Scissorhands: Page 6

## PAGE 6-7: SYNOPSIS OF EDWARD SCISSORHANDS

### Rationale

The literary concept of metaphor will help students build on what they already know about fairytales and fables to more fully understand the themes of love and the outsider that run throughout the play. Students can also be motivated to use skills and knowledge gained from *Edward Scissorhands* to extend their learning in other curricular areas.

### Exercise

Read the synopsis with students, making sure they have a clear understanding of the play's focus on Edward, his journey as an outsider and the ways Bourne has adapted Tim Burton's film of the same title. Go over the vocabulary introduced in this section, and discuss the ways Edward's scissorhands serve as a metaphor for the inability to emotionally and physically connect with the world; the scissors visually represent his feelings of being cut off from other people. Ask students to brainstorm possible metaphors from their own lives. For example, what images or objects represent their own sense of self? How does this object communicate their feelings to others? Also discuss the ways that metaphor enhances non-verbal storytelling; for example, how it provides a

visual image to communicate things that are central to both the character and the story. Edward's scissorhands are a metaphor; they present him with challenges, and they communicate the moral of the story: the very things that make us different also make us special.

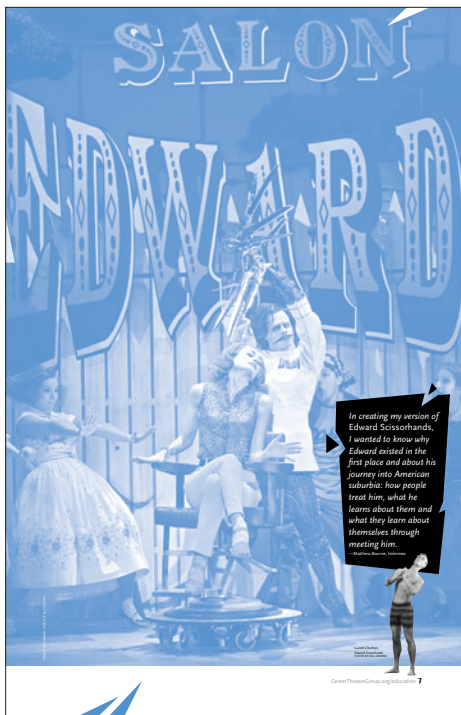
### Exercise

Discuss with students the fairytales listed in the Discovery Guide. Have students briefly state the moral, message or challenge of these stories. For example, one moral from *Cinderella* is: Persevere and you will be rewarded. However, the story could also be viewed as a challenge: How will you treat those less powerful than yourself?

- Related supplemental exercise: What symbol or metaphor best represents the outsider in each story? How can this symbol be used to further the narrative?
- Related supplemental exercise: This exercise also provides an opportunity to further discuss the terms *difference*, *tolerance*, *acceptance* and *inclusion*. Have students discuss what it means to label someone as different. Does a sense of community always depend on defining people outside the group? What are the distinctions between tolerance, acceptance and inclusion?

# BEFORE THE PLAY

---



Synopsis of *Edward Scissorhands*: Page 7

## PAGE 6–7: (cont'd)

### Variation

This exercise can be varied to include a focus on fables. Have students briefly state the moral of the following Aesop fables: *The Boy Who Cried Wolf*, *The Fox and the Grapes*, *The Crow and the Pitcher*, *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse*, *The Lion and the Mouse*.

Information to share with students:

- **Fable:** A brief story that exemplifies a moral thesis or principle of human behavior
- Aesop was a wise and physically disabled Greek slave who told fables to his master and others in his community. Most of his fables feature animals as their main characters but are always focused on the ways individuals feel and act. Versions of these stories are found in folklore all over the world.

# AFTER THE PLAY Exercises

**AFTER the Play**

## From the Outside Inside: THE CREATIVE HISTORY OF MATTHEW BOURNE

**REVISITS ALL OF HIS DANCE THEATRE PIECES**, Bourne explores how his adaptation might be different if he had only had time to see the original movie, new eyes, or choreographed dance. Interestingly, that Bourne means well, new eyes, or choreographed dance. Interestingly, that Bourne means well, new eyes, or choreographed dance. Interestingly, that Bourne means well, new eyes, or choreographed dance.

**Exercise: Getting the Story**

**Vocabulary**

Edward Scissorhands

From the Outside Inside: The Creativity of Matthew Bourne: Page 8

Overall, these exercises will further assist students in advancing skills of critical observation and creative thinking. Exercises also suggest ways to use critical engagement to develop various creative and research projects. The goal of this section is to help students work through the Discovery Guide exercises to further draft their dance theatre scene. The following exercises also assist students in furthering their thinking about the relationship between music, movement and storytelling.

## PAGE 8–9: FROM THE OUTSIDE INSIDE: THE CREATIVITY OF MATTHEW BOURNE

### Rationale

By creating a story drawn from a piece of music, students will learn how to incorporate listening skills into their own storytelling. By incorporating music and movement into their writing of stories, students will gain a better understanding of narrative and the various ways the senses inform the creation of a story.

### Exercise

Direct the students’ attention to the key elements of Bourne’s creative process: his focus on getting audiences to see an old story with fresh eyes or hear familiar music with new ears, and his use of choreography to encourage new thinking about a story as well as a deeper critical understanding and emotional connection. Working from the information shared about *Swan Lake*, return to a discussion of the ways that difference is often used to define someone as an outsider. What makes Bourne an outsider? What makes him a visionary?

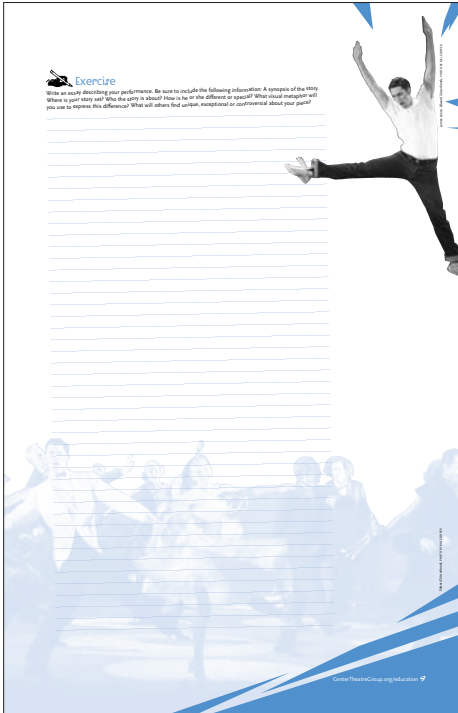
Discuss the performance of *Edward Scissorhands*. How does the story diverge from the movie? What do you learn in the dance theatre version—about the characters, the setting, the mood

—that you do not get from the movie? What do you lose or gain through adaptation? How is Edward’s outsidersness communicated through the music? Ask students for examples of specific moments in the play when the music told the story.

### Exercise: Listening to Music to Find Story

In his presentation at the educational conference, Dr. Vorris Nunley illustrated how narrative/meaning is implicit in the distinction between “noise” and “music.” Meaning in music results from our sense of story (narrative), the arrangement of notes and the very physicality of sounds. For example, in his presentation, he played John Coltrane’s *My Favorite Things* and Rimskij-Korsakov’s *The Flight of the Bumblebee* and discussed the ways the instruments and sounds are performed and arranged to direct our sense of what a composition/song means. Working from points in Dr. Nunley’s presentation, play a selected piece of instrumental music and direct students to think about the various ways they hear a story unfold when they listen to music. Here, you can build from work in previous exercises on music and mood.

# AFTER THE PLAY



From the Outside Inside: The Creativity of Matthew Bourne: Page 9

## PAGE 8–9: (cont'd)

### Exercise: Setting the Story

Have students return to the music they chose in the exercise “Selecting the Song.” Direct students to write the story they hear when they listen to the song. Have them draw on previous writing about the mood, emotion and location suggested by the music. Depending on the music, it may be an entire story or just a single episode or even a moment from a longer story. If the music is only a portion of the story, instruct students to write down the whole story and note which part the music represents.

Ask students to think about the ways Bourne uses adaptation to tell his own story. Have students reread the synopsis and discuss what about the original story he used in his own version and what about the original story he changed. Direct students to listen to their music again and review their notes from “Selecting the Song.” Ask them also to review their discussion of fairytales (and/or fables) and explore possible stories they might want to adapt into their own. Encourage students to feel free to borrow plot points, names of characters and other elements from fairytales, fables and movies, along with experiences from their own lives and imaginations. Have students review the synopsis for

*Edward Scissorhands* and use it as a template for creating a synopsis of their own story. Ask students to consider the ways their character will be special or different, the metaphors they might use to communicate this and possible audience responses to their story.

Additional questions to help students plan their adaptation:

- From which character’s point of view will you tell your story?
- What are some of the ways the story you have chosen for adaptation has been interpreted? For example, how has the story been told as a children’s book? How has it been translated into animation? How has it been adapted into film, theatre or dance?
- What idea in the original story do you want to emphasize, change or further develop in your adaptation?

### Additional Research

The above exercises might be used as a launching point for further research on the work of Matthew Bourne, dance theatre and/or adaptation.

# AFTER THE PLAY

**Music in MOTION**

CLASSIC THEATRE IS A FORM OF COMMUNICATION, AND, COMBINED WITH MUSIC, HELPS US EXPERIENCE THE WORLD IN A NEW WAY. MUSIC IS A LANGUAGE, AND, LIKE ALL LANGUAGES, IT CAN BE USED TO EXPRESS A RANGE OF FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS. THE FORM OF MUSIC IS AS IMPORTANT AS THE MESSAGE IT CARRIES. MUSIC IS A LANGUAGE, AND, LIKE ALL LANGUAGES, IT CAN BE USED TO EXPRESS A RANGE OF FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS. THE FORM OF MUSIC IS AS IMPORTANT AS THE MESSAGE IT CARRIES.

**Exercise: A play without words; choreographing your scene.**  
Choreograph a moment from the play in a scene that you have selected and where it fits in the play (e.g. opening, climax, conclusion).

What is the character doing in this scene in the story (e.g. surprise, shock, outrage, fear, excitement, joy)?

How does the location you have chosen for your adaptation influence the kind of movement you think you will use?

Describe the physicality that will communicate the situation to the audience.

How does the music and movement work together? For example, what part of the music will play as the actor makes a particular gesture?

**Class: 45–60 minutes of choreography. Share your dance theatre with the class.**

**Vocabulary**  
Class: The words and phrases that lead to change or growth in a character.  
Movement vocabulary: The gestures and actions appropriate for the mood, location, characters and mood of a particular work.

Music in Motion: Page 10

## PAGE 10: MUSIC IN MOTION

### Rationale

Students can extend their engagement with the play by exploring the connections they see between music and movement. This will also help students to think about the many ways to visually and aurally read a story, i.e. the ways that music sets tone and movement conveys character development as well as thoughts and actions.

### Exercise

This exercise is designed to help students create choreography for their story. Discuss with students the notion of dance as a moving canvas for a story. A written story paints a picture with words. Dance paints the picture through physical gestures. Go over the vocabulary and be sure that students understand the definition of “movement vocabulary.” Read the paragraph about Bourne’s adaptation of *The Car Man* and use it to discuss with students the role environment plays in choreographing movement and how the nature of the movement helps to define the characters. Note that in choreographing the swans in *Swan Lake*, Bourne studied the movement of real swans to create his movement vocabulary. Emphasize that the movement itself can represent a place, a feeling, a person, an animal, a relationship.

Discuss the movement in *Edward Scissorhands*. Compare Edward’s movement to that of the other characters—how is it different? What does that tell them about Edward? How does the movement change throughout the play? How did Bourne use movement to express emotion and character? Can the students identify a movement vocabulary in *Edward Scissorhands*? On what might it be based?

Ask students to think about the ways they could physically express different environments. What sort of movement is native to the ocean? How would a person who loves the ocean, or whose character/personality is like the ocean, move? Think about a person who likes or is like soccer (or baseball or any other sport). Does he or she move like the ball? The players? The fans? The field/court? How does the energy/nature of the sport translate into movement? What does it look like?

What environments are the students familiar with? What characteristics does a person have who is associated with these? What movements convey the environment and the characteristics of the person? Ask students: What movement is native to the location and character in your story? How will you communicate who the character is and the feelings he or she is experiencing?

# AFTER THE PLAY

---

## **PAGE 10:** (cont'd)

To help students better understand how music cues movement, have them discuss the ways music is used at sporting events to elicit crowd support. (Examples from your high school sports teams would be most apropos.) Return to the musical selection you played in the earlier exercise, “Hearing the Story.” Ask students to think about the kind of body language that communicates the different emotions they associated with the music. How do people move at a celebratory event? How do they move at a sad and serious occasion? Have students then listen to the music again and describe the movements they hear cued throughout the song. For example, what movements do the first few seconds of the song bring to mind? What movements should conclude the end of the song?

### **Optional Exercise**

Try this exercise to sharpen students’ description of movement. Ask students to visualize a simple but specific physical movement. Have each student write a description of the movement he or she has imagined. Trade descriptions around the class. Each student will perform the movement as described. If the result is not as the author imagined, he or she

should amend the written description and have the performer try again.

### **Optional Exercise**

Silent films and cartoons also offer great vehicles for helping students to understand the ways music is used to cue actors’ and dancers’ movements. Have students view a scene and discuss the ways the music cues the action on screen. Ask students to describe the music and action being made. How does the sound of the music fit with the action? Examples: Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin films, Bugs Bunny cartoons and Disney’s *Fantasia*.

### **Exercise**

#### **A Play Without Words: Choreographing Your Scene**

Direct students to write a description of the physical movement appropriate for their story while keeping their music in mind. Suggest they focus on a single character and the action taking place at that point in the story. What is this character feeling and what physical movements will communicate this? Ask students to consider how the music and movement will work together.

# AFTER THE PLAY

---

## PAGE 10: (cont'd)

### Variations

Drama classes can further this exercise by having students create choreography for longer scenes or an entire story. English classes might vary this exercise to discuss narrative. Examine the description of physical movement in third person narration. How does the description of movement convey emotion and character? Look at language choices: vocabulary, tone, rhythm. Instruct students to create a narrative of the choreographed movement, using descriptive language about the movement to express the personality and emotion of the character.

### Research Projects

History classes might consider using Bourne's work as an entry point for research on the ways artists and writers have used adaptation in times of strife. How have fairytale stories, musicals or dance theatre been used to lift the public spirit? How have artists and writers used adaptation to create social commentary (i.e. the story as a metaphor or allegory)? Drama and English classes can expand the exercises on adaptation into longer research projects designed to focus students' attention on Bourne as a storyteller.

### Optional Exercises

- Examine the history of non-verbal theatre forms: pantomime,

mime, ballet, clowning/circus, dance theatre.

- Research theatre reviews published in newspapers, Guides or books and use them as a model for their own critique of *Edward Scissorhands*.
- Refer to a specific scene from the play and discuss how it stages difference, outsiderhood, or artistic talent.
- List the ways the play can be read as a modern fairytale or fable. What is its moral or message?

### Exercise

Assist students in making detailed notes and observations about the play that they can then use to create a formally written theatre critique.

### 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