

COME SEE HOW THE WORLD COULD BE



THE TONY® AND GRAMMY® AWARD-WINNING BEST MUSICAL

# HADESTOWN

MUSIC, LYRICS  
& BOOK BY

**ANAÏS MITCHELL**

DEVELOPED WITH  
& DIRECTED BY

**RACHEL CHAVKIN**

**LEARNING RESOURCE PACK**



# WELCOME TO HADESTOWN LEARNING RESOURCE PACK

We are so excited to share the world of **HADESTOWN** with you, where a song truly can change your fate. We believe that the experience of this musical in live theatrical performance will appeal to, affect, and inspire your minds, hearts and spirits.

This Learning Resource Pack will help you to discuss and explore the themes and context of **HADESTOWN**. It contains information about the musical and its creation, including its intellectual and artistic origins, context and themes. The pack is designed to spark imagination and creativity through a variety of activities, exercises and discussion prompts.

The pack is structured in four parts:

**Part 1 – Overview** which gives you essential information about the production, including a synopsis, themes, character profiles and song list.

**Part 2 – From Myth to Stage** which provides information about the show's historical, literary and theatrical bases. This is for teachers and students to use in lessons.

**Part 3 – Pre-show Lessons and Activities** consisting of two lesson plans to use before going to see the show, to introduce the story and music.

**Part 4 – Post-show Lessons and Activities** consisting of four lesson plans to be used across different areas of the curriculum – music, performing arts, drama, theatre and literature. There is also an appendix of printable resources.

Did we mention that we are so excited that you are learning with **HADESTOWN**?!

# ALRIGHT? ALRIGHT!



TONY AWARD® WINNER BEST MUSICAL 2019



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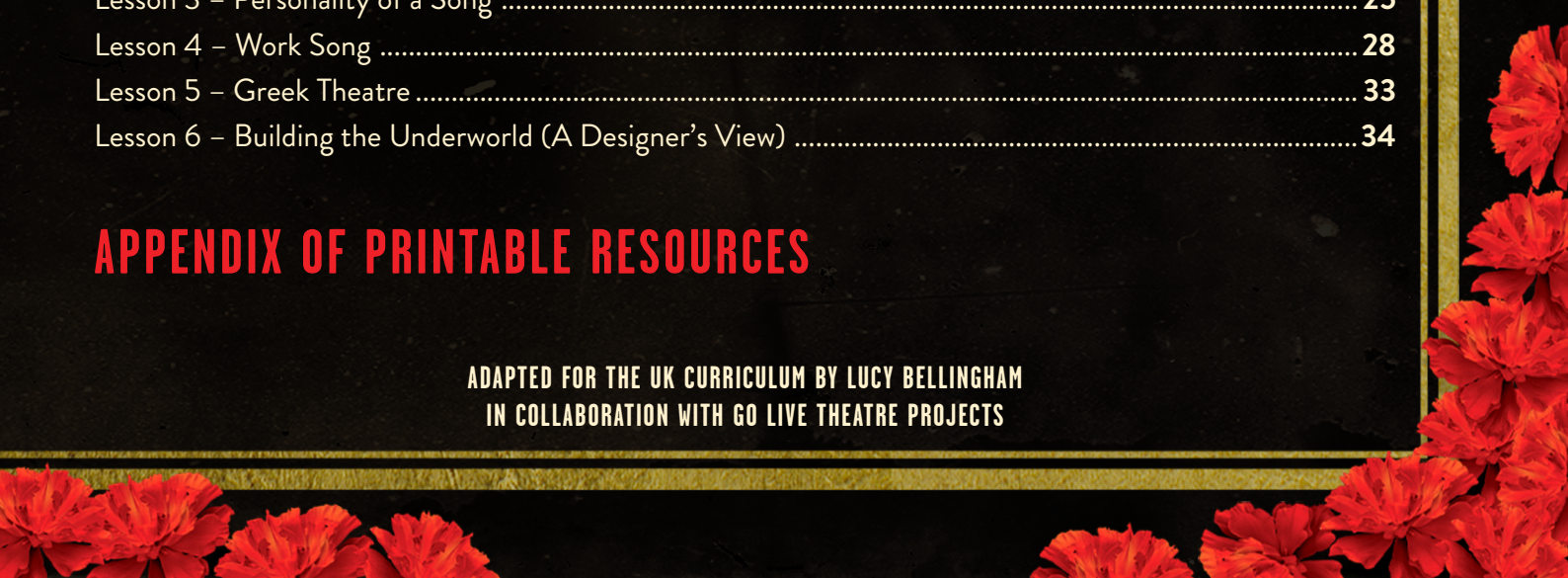
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ADAPTED FOR THE UK CURRICULUM BY LUCY BELLINGHAM  
IN COLLABORATION WITH GO LIVE THEATRE PROJECTS





# PART 1

## OVERVIEW

‘ IF YOU RIDE THAT TRAIN TO THE END OF THE LINE  
WHERE THE SUN DON’T SHINE AND IT’S ALWAYS SHADY  
IT’S THERE YOU’LL FIND THE KING OF THE MINE, ALMIGHTY MR. HADES! ’

The heart of our story takes place at the last stop on the railroad track to hell: the Underworld. Here, Hades is king and Persephone is his bride who spends half her time in Hadestown and the other half walking among the mortals above Hadestown.

As the stories of Orpheus and Eurydice, Persephone and Hades unfold, we get the sense that Hadestown (like the rest of the world) is changing. Spring is gone, the sun doesn’t shine, and it’s getting hotter and hotter, which is quite the tragedy for this industrialised underworld where the residents must keep their heads low and

work, no matter the weather. Hadestown is only industrialising more and more; it is becoming a world of oil drums and automobiles, electric grids and fossil-burning furnaces. Hades is the king of industry and Hadestown is his kingdom.

**So why would someone give their soul to such a place?**

After all, as Hermes tells us, *‘Those who go there don’t come back.’*

*Take a sneak peek of the show here...*



**‘EVERYBODY HUNGRY  
EVERYBODY TIRED  
EVERYBODY SLAVES BY THE SWEAT  
OF HIS BROW  
THE WAGE IS NOTHING AND THE  
WORK IS HARD  
IT’S A GRAVEYARD IN HADESTOWN.’**

photo credit: Marc Brenner



## ACT ONE

In an intimate New Orleans-style jazz bar, a master of ceremonies-like narrator turns to a diverse group of people surrounding him at tables and in the bandstand, and asks expectantly, “Alright?” They respond robustly, “ALRIGHT!” Music starts at his prompting, and he steps up to the microphone to begin telling what he describes as “an old song... an old tale from way back when.” Indicating to everyone around him, he offers “and we’re gonna sing it again.” He then commences with the introductions of the gods and goddesses present: The Fates; Persephone; Hades; and himself – he is Hermes.

He then introduces the mortals: A Chorus of Workers, the Band and Orpheus. He concludes his introductions with Eurydice, a hungry and homeless runaway, who enters, followed by the Fates.

Eurydice is seen by Orpheus, who is suddenly smitten with her. Hermes, who takes Orpheus under his wing, asks him if he wants to talk to Eurydice. When Orpheus replies, “Yes,” Hermes warns him not to come on too strong. Orpheus approaches Eurydice and impulsively begs her to come home with him. Taken aback, she asks him who he is, to which he replies, “The man who’s going to marry you.” He tells Eurydice that he is a

singer and a lyre player and is writing a song that, when it is complete, will fix what’s wrong with the world – something has become broken – and then spring will come again. Eurydice admits she doesn’t remember seeing spring or autumn. He affirms that’s why he’s writing his song, which will bring the world back into tune, adding that all the flowers will bloom when she becomes his wife.

Eurydice tells Hermes that Orpheus is crazy, and teases the boy, suggesting that he doesn’t have



photo credit: Marc Brenner



photo credit: Marc Brenner

the money or means to get married. She then asks Orpheus to sing his song, and when he hesitates – because it isn’t finished yet – she demands that if he wants to take her home, he must sing it. Orpheus begins singing a beautiful tune and, in the midst of his tune, a beautiful red flower appears in his hands. Eurydice, recognising the magical power of Orpheus’ song, implores him to finish it.

Hermes recognises something familiar about Orpheus’ tune and reminds him that he once told him the tale of the gods Hades and Persephone,





## ACT ONE (CONTINUED)

whose love had made the world go around. Prompted by Hermes, Orpheus recounts the story of how the king of the Underworld fell in love with Persephone, the goddess of flowers, fruit and vegetation, when he saw her walking in the world of the living gathering flowers one day. Hades took Persephone home to be his queen and they lived with and loved one another in the Underworld.

However, without Persephone's presence in the land of the living, flowers and vegetation no longer grew. Hades agreed that for half of the year

instantly becomes spring-time/summertime – the flowers bloom, the fruit ripens, the wine flows – and everyone celebrates. Resident poet, Orpheus, is called upon to toast Persephone; he acknowledges the abundance that her return has brought and thoughtfully adds that if no one takes too much, there will always be enough for all. Amid this bounty, Eurydice opens herself to Orpheus' love, confesses that with him she is no longer lonely. She asks him to promise that he will hold her forever. He pledges he will and that things between them will never change.

The train whistle blows, and Persephone expresses her upset that it hasn't been six months yet;

the train with Hades on it is early. The Fates instruct her to pack her suitcase to go back to the Underworld, also known as Hadestown. Persephone is not happy about returning. She views Hadestown as a lonely and boring place, noting that she has begun to rely on alcohol and drugs to "entertain" herself when she's down there. Hermes agrees that life and work is hard down there; everyone is tired and hungry owing to Hades' meanness and greed.

When Hades appears, Persephone scolds him for being early. He excuses himself, saying that he missed her. The Fates temptingly tell Eurydice about Hades' great wealth, noting that he owns everything in Hadestown. Eurydice wonders what life in Hadestown might be like. Hades takes note of Eurydice, before he, Persephone and the Workers

depart to the Underworld. The moment they leave it turns suddenly cold. Orpheus expresses his great concern that Hades came for Persephone too soon; this is not the way things are supposed to be. Eurydice replies that until someone brings the world back into tune, this is how they hear Eurydice's growing concern that they have no food nor firewood. She begins to look for them herself, while Orpheus' thoughts become completely occupied by his songwriting.

Persephone would stay with him below and for the other half, she would live above – which is where the seasons come from. Hermes reflects that, for a long time, Hades and Persephone sang the song of love, and the worlds above and below were in harmony. But recently something has changed: both spring and Persephone are late and they don't stay around for very long.

A train whistle is heard, and Persephone arrives. It



photo credit: Marc Brenner





photo credit: Marc Brenner

## ACT ONE (CONTINUED)

Down in HadesTown, the Workers return to their work, and Persephone, who isn't happy to be back, complains to Hades about the shocking conditions in HadesTown – it is unnaturally hot and bright and overindustrialised. Hades shares with Persephone how lonely he's been without her and shows her all of the things that he's accomplished – for her, he says – while she's been away, including building a foundry to make steel and laying a power grid to electrify the city. She remains unimpressed by his passion projects and tells him that she doesn't even recognise him any more. Feeling rejected, Hades decides that if Persephone doesn't appreciate him or want his love, he will find someone that does. He ascends to the land of the living and encounters the frantic and hungry Eurydice. Approaching her seductively, Hades offers Eurydice one coin and tells her that it's her ticket to HadesTown. The choice is between staying with Orpheus or coming to the Underworld, where she will be fed and

sheltered. Though her heart aches for Orpheus, Eurydice is overcome by hunger and she chooses to descend with Hades. She gives the coin to Hermes and leaves as the train whistle blows.

Not long after Eurydice has gone, Orpheus approaches Hermes and asks where Eurydice is. He is shocked when Hermes tells him that she has gone down to HadesTown and he vows to go there himself. Hermes tells him that without a ticket he will have to take the long way down. After Hermes provides him with detailed instructions, Orpheus sets out.

In the Underworld, Hades stages a public celebration of a wall he has made the Workers build to keep HadesTown safe from “the enemy” – which he explains is poverty. In a moment of dramatic irony, the impoverished Eurydice arrives in HadesTown. Hades sees her and commands that she step into his office, which she does while being observed by Persephone.



## ACT TWO

When Eurydice steps out of Hades' office, she is confronted by the Fates. She tells them that she's signed a deal with Hades, and they tell her to join the work line. Eurydice joins the other Workers and when she tries to introduce herself to them, they don't respond. The Fates tell her that although the Workers can hear and see her, they no longer care and won't respond – this is what it looks like to forget who you are and where you are from. They assure her the same will happen to her. With this new understanding, Eurydice tell the Fates she has to go, but when they ask her who she is and where she wants to go, she suddenly can't remember. Eurydice tries to hold tight to a few remnants of her memory, including that she once walked in the sun with someone by her side, while woefully regretting the choice she has made.

Orpheus arrives in Hadestown and finds Eurydice, who still recognises him. She is amazed that he has come for her and asks how he made it beyond the wall. As he is telling Eurydice that he is there to take her home, Orpheus is confronted by an angry Hades. Persephone recognises Orpheus but is told

by Hades not to interfere. Orpheus bravely stands up to Hades, announcing he is taking Eurydice home. Hades informs Orpheus that he owns everything in Hadestown, including Eurydice who has sold herself to him. Orpheus doesn't believe him, but Eurydice sorrowfully admits that it is true. Orpheus is crushed by Eurydice's admission. The Fates advise him that what's done is done and there is nothing he can do to change it. Disillusioned, he turns to leave, continuing to question aloud the circumstances of the situation: "Is this how the world is? If it's true what they say, then I'll be on my way. But who are they to say what the truth is anyway?" The Workers hear him, stop their working and stand to listen to him. Encouraged, he speaks a new truth: That where there is a will there is a way and that when people stand together, they are stronger than they know.

As the Workers band around Orpheus, Persephone confronts Hades and stands up for the boy's love for Eurydice – a love that she and Hades once had for one another. Hades assures Persephone that Eurydice means nothing to him. Persephone counters that Eurydice means everything to Orpheus, and she tells Hades to let her go.



photo credit: Marc Brenner



# SPOILER

## IF YOU DON'T WISH TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENS AT THE CLIMAX AND ENDING OF THE STORY OF HADESTOWN, READ NO FURTHER!

Wanting to save face and to preserve his power over his Workers, who are now demanding freedom, Hades says that Orpheus and Eurydice can leave, but under one condition: Orpheus must walk in front of Eurydice on the journey home – if he turns to look behind him for any reason, she must return to HADESTOWN for ever. Orpheus calls the arrangement a trap, but Hermes tells him to consider it a trial. He asks Orpheus and Eurydice if they trust one another and themselves. They both say yes.

As the young lovers leave HADESTOWN, Persephone questions Hades as to whether he thinks they'll make it home. He says he doesn't know. She then asks him about their own relationship; will they try again? He tells her that it is time for spring and that they will try again in the autumn. Persephone asks Hades to wait for her. He says he will.

As Orpheus, Eurydice and the Workers walk out of the Underworld, the Fates undermine Orpheus' confidence with questions, as voices in the back of his mind: "Who do you think you are? Who are you to lead her? Who are you to lead them?" Hermes counsels him not to succumb to mind games, as Eurydice, Persephone and the Workers speak only

words of encouragement and assurance that they are with him.

Despite their support, doubt begins to overwhelm Orpheus. In a moment of uncertainty, believing Eurydice is no longer with him, he turns around.

Orpheus finds Eurydice standing there right behind him. She gasps and then begins to descend and disappear. Everything stops. Everyone is crushed. And then, out of the silence, Hermes says with a withered spirit, "Alright..."

After a moment, he explains solemnly that this is how the old song, the old story ends; that it is a tragedy. And he says that even though they know how the story ends, they tell it anyway; perhaps with the thought that it might turn out right in this telling, this time. Orpheus leaves.

And then Hermes begins the story again. Eurydice enters, as she did before. Persephone returns, bringing spring with her. And Orpheus enters, sees Eurydice, is smitten with her once again.

Persephone, Eurydice and the HADESTOWN company sing a toast to Orpheus and to all of us.

## END OF SHOW

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## ACT ONE

'Road To Hell'	Hermes, Company
'Any Way the Wind Blows'	Eurydice, Fates, Orpheus, Eurydice
'Come Home With Me'	Hermes, Workers
'Wedding Song'	Orpheus, Eurydice, Workers
'Epic I'	Orpheus, Hermes, Persephone, Hermes
'Livin' It Up On Top'	Orpheus, Company
'All I've Ever Known'	Eurydice, Orpheus
'Way Down HADESTOWN'	Company
'A Gathering Storm'	Orpheus, Eurydice, Fates
'Epic II'	Orpheus, Workers
'Chant'	Company
'Hey Little Songbird'	Hades, Eurydice
'When the Chips Are Down'	Fates, Eurydice
'Gone, I'm Gone'	Eurydice, Fates
'Wait For Me'	Hermes, Orpheus, Fates, Workers
'Why We Build the Wall'	Hades, Company

## ACT TWO

'Our Lady of the Underground'	Persephone, Hermes, Fates
'Way Down HADESTOWN (reprise)'	Eurydice, Workers
'Flowers'	Eurydice
'Come Home With Me (reprise)'	Orpheus, Eurydice
'Papers'	Hades, Company
'Nothing Changes'	Fates
'If It's True'	Orpheus, Hermes, Workers
'How Long?'	Persephone, Hades
'Chant (reprise)'	Company
'Epic III'	Orpheus, Company
'Promises'	Eurydice, Orpheus, Workers
'Word to the Wise'	Fates
'His Kiss, The Riot'	Hades
'Wait For Me (reprise)'	Hermes, Company
'Doubt Comes In'	Orpheus, Eurydice, Fates, Workers
'Road to Hell (reprise)'	Hermes, Company
'We Raise Our Cups'	Persephone, Eurydice, Company

LISTEN TO THE FULL SOUNDTRACK HERE





## HERMES [HUR'-MEEZ]

In Greek mythology, fleet-footed guide, messenger of the gods, and conductor of souls to the Underworld. In some versions, it was Hermes who taught Orpheus to play the lyre. In this version, he is a worldly wise narrator, master-of-ceremonies, and friend and mentor to Orpheus.

**“AND ON THE ROAD TO HELL THERE WAS  
A RAILROAD STATION**

[MMMM...]

**AND A MAN WITH FEATHERS ON HIS FEET**

[MMMM...]

**WHO COULD HELP YOU TO YOUR FINAL  
DESTINATION**

**MR HERMES, THAT'S ME!”**



photo credit: Marc Brenner

## FATES [FEYTS]

Three goddesses who together determined the destinies of mortals, measuring their lifespans and apportioning their suffering. In this story, they follow, fluster, niggle and cast doubt and uncertainty in the minds of some.

**“LIFE AIN'T EASY LIFE AIN'T FAIR  
A GIRL'S GOTTA FIGHT FOR A RIGHTFUL  
SHARE  
WHAT YOU GONNA DO WHEN THE CHIPS  
ARE DOWN?  
HELP YOURSELF, TO HELL WITH THE REST  
EVEN THE ONE WHO LOVES YOU BEST  
WHAT YOU GONNA DO WHEN THE CHIPS  
ARE DOWN?”**



photo credit: Marc Brenner





photo credit: Marc Brenner

## EURYDICE [YOO-RID'-UH-SEE]

A dryad, or tree nymph, engaged to marry Orpheus. On the day of their wedding, she was bitten by a poisonous snake, died and descended into the Underworld. The Eurydice of this version is a runaway who has experienced much hardship in her young life, which makes it hard for her to trust others.

**“PEOPLE TURN ON YOU JUST LIKE THE WIND, EVERYBODY IS A FAIRWEATHER FRIEND**

**IN THE END YOU’RE BETTER OFF ALONE ANY WAY THE WIND BLOWS, YOU WOULD DO ANYTHING JUST TO FILL YOUR BELLY FULL OF FOOD, FIND A BED THAT YOU COULD FALL INTO, WHERE THE WEATHER WOULDN’T FOLLOW YOU”**

## ORPHEUS [AWR'-FEE- UH S]

Son of the muse of epic poetry, engaged to marry Eurydice. With his golden voice and lyre, Orpheus charmed all living things, even rocks and stones. This modernised account features an Orpheus on a musical mission beyond his love for Eurydice.

**“THAT’S WHAT I’M WORKING ON, A SONG TO FIX WHAT’S WRONG TAKE WHAT IS BROKEN, MAKE IT WHOLE A SONG SO BEAUTIFUL IT BRINGS THE WORLD BACK INTO TUNE BACK INTO TIME AND ALL THE FLOWERS WILL BLOOM”**



photo credit: Marc Brenner





## PERSEPHONE [PER-SEF'-UH-NEE]

Goddess of the seasons, flowers, fruit, and grain. By arrangement, she spent half the year with Hades in the Underworld, causing autumn and winter above. The other half she returned to her mother, bringing spring and summer with her. In this modern version, she plays the good-time party girl to dull her disenchantment with her situation and other problems in her marriage.

**“NOW SOME MAY SAY THE WEATHER AIN'T THE WAY IT USED TO BE  
BUT LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING THAT MY MAMA SAID TO ME:  
YOU TAKE WHAT YOU CAN GET AND YOU MAKE THE MOST OF IT SO RIGHT NOW WE'RE LIVING IT LIVIN' IT—LIVIN' IT UP BROTHER RIGHT HERE WE'RE LIVIN' IT LIVIN' IT UP ON TOP!”**



photo credit: Marc Brenner

## HADES [HEY'-DEEZ]

God of the dead, ruler of the Underworld, sometimes called “the Wealthy One.” He fell in love with and married Persephone. Her mother, Demeter, the goddess of the harvest, refused to bless the earth while Persephone was below. In this version of the story, he is a greedy and zealous industrialist.

**“HERE I FASHIONED THINGS OF STEEL OIL DRUMS AND AUTOMOBILES  
THEN I KEPT THAT FURNACE FED WITH THE FOSSILS OF THE DEAD  
LOVER WHEN YOU FEEL THAT FIRE  
THINK OF IT AS MY DESIRE FOR YOU”**



photo credit: Marc Brenner

## WORKERS CHORUS

In ancient Greek theatre, the chorus sang, spoke, and danced in unison. Often representing the voice of citizens, the chorus commented on the actions of characters and served as an emotional conduit for the audience.

**“OH, KEEP YOUR HEAD, KEEP YOUR HEAD LOW (KKH)\ OH, YOU GOTTA KEEP YOUR HEAD LOW (KKH)  
IF YOU WANNA KEEP YOUR HEAD (HUH,  
OH, YOU GOTTA KEEP YOUR HEAD LOW”**



photo credit: Marc Brenner







**ORPHEUS**  
DÓNAL FINN



**EURDYCE**  
GRACE HODGETT  
YOUNG



**HADES**  
ZACHARY JAMES



**HERMES**  
MELANIE LA BARRIE



**PERSEPHONE**  
GLORIA ONITIRI



**FATE**  
BELLA BROWN



**FATE**  
MADELINE  
CHARLEMAGNE



**FATE**  
ALLIE DANIEL



**WORKER**  
LAUREN AZANIA



**WORKER**  
TIAGO DHONDT  
BAMBERGER



**WORKER**  
BETH  
HINTON-LEVER



**WORKER**  
WAYLON JACOBS



**WORKER**  
CHRISTOPHER  
SHORT



**SWING**  
LUCINDA BUCKLEY



**SWING**  
WINNY HERBERT



**SWING**  
RYESHA HIGGS



**SWING**  
MIRIAM NYARKO



**SWING**  
SIMON OSKARSSON





# PART 2

## FROM MYTH TO STAGE

(FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS)

### ON MYTH AND ITS POWER

“The first idea of [Hadestown] came a bit mysteriously; some lyrics popped into my head and they seemed to be about the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. From there, I got excited about following the idea of the myth and exploring telling the story through song.”

Anaïs Mitchell

Singer-songwriter and creator of Hadestown



*Orpheus and Eurydice by Edward Poynter, 1862*

### MYTH

‘...a story, presented as having actually occurred in a previous age, explaining the cosmological and supernatural traditions of a people, their gods, heroes, cultural traits, religious beliefs, etc. The purpose of myth is to explain, and, as Sir G.L. Gomme said, myths explain matters in “the science of a pre-scientific age.’

‘Myths tell of the creation of man, of animals, of landmarks; they tell why a certain animal has its characteristics (e.g. why the bat is blind or flies only at night), why or how certain natural phenomena came to be (e.g. why the rainbow appears or how the constellation Orion got into the sky), how and why rituals and ceremonies began and why they continue.’

Source: Jerome Fried and Maria Leach in Funk & Wagnall’s Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend. (Harper & Row Publishers, 1984): 788.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF MYTHS

- Myths are not the creation of a single author.
- Myths evolve and develop over time as they are told and retold and passed from storyteller to storyteller – the result can be multiple versions of the same story.
- In addition to attempting to explain the mysteries and wonders of the world and – cosmos such as the creation of the world and the universe and the development of humanity – myths also attempt to address the fundamental and ancient questions of the meaning of life and purpose of human existence.
- Myths are religious stories and are sacred to the cultures that create them. The deities – gods, goddesses, demigods, and other supernatural beings depicted – are worshipped and revered.

Source: Kathleen Sears, *Mythology* 101. (Adams Media, 2014): 10.



## GREEK TRAGIC THEATRE

The City Dionysia, or Great Dionysia, was an annual Greek festival held in March in Athens to honour Dionysus, the ancient Greek god of fertility, revelry, and wine. One feature of the festival was a play competition in which three tragic plays – based upon a well-known myth or historical subject – were written, performed before the citizens of Athens, and judged for poetic merit, as well as for creative interpretation of and invention within the story (e.g., details of characterisation, motivation). The prize was awarded to the best dramatist.

The stories of Greek tragedies typically focus on characters who are good and moral individuals—



*An ancient theatre at Epidaurus*

sometimes of high or royal birth, though not always—who make errors in judgement or accidental mistakes (including making the wrong choice) that lead to a reversal of their circumstances from good to bad.

The Greek tragic form developed out of choral hymns dedicated to Dionysus that were sung and danced. Tragedies performed at the City Dionysia featured a mostly fixed structure: a prologue, which presented the subject or topic of the play in a monologue or dialogue; the entrance of the chorus and the first of a number of danced choral odes or poems set to music, which provided information on all that had happened before the play began; a series of dramatic episodes or scenes that developed the main dramatic action of the story and were separated by additional danced choral odes; and the final scene of the play, or exodus, which saw the departure of the characters and chorus.

These ancient musical theatre productions were staged in an open-air space—known as an amphitheatre—that was built into the cliff-face of the Acropolis. It featured a round, flat orchestra or “dancing place,” where the play was enacted and the chorus danced. The orchestra was surrounded on nearly three sides by a tiered theatre or “seeing place”; here the audience sat to watch, were always visible to the performers and in relatively close proximity.



*Theatre of Dionysus Eleuthereus*



*Set Designer Rachel Hauck's scenic design for HADESTOWN (photo Matthew Murphy)*



## ARISTOTLE AND THE TRAGIC EFFECT

Aristotle (384–322 BCE) was a Greek philosopher of the Classical period in Ancient Greece and became one of the most influential people who ever lived. His teacher was the similarly influential Plato, whose philosophical writings *The Republic* espoused his beliefs on what he thought did and did not belong in the ideal city-state. According to Plato, anything that was imitation, including tragic plays or any kind of theatre was dangerous and morally harmful, because it stirred human passions and fostered irrationality and excessive emotion. In his final analysis, tragedy did not belong in the ideal city-state and “the poets” who create tragedies should be banished; though, he conceded that if anyone could come up with a good argument for why poets should be allowed, he would permit them back into the state.

So, what do you do if you are the student of Plato and you really love reading tragic plays and going to the theatre? You take up your teacher’s challenge – you prove him wrong! This is just what Aristotle did in his writings (or possibly lecture notes), which we know as the *Poetics*. In *Poetics*, Aristotle employs the scientific approach to describe and defend the utility and importance of poetry in general and tragedy specifically. He also defends imitation (or mimesis)

itself, noting that humans are naturally imitative – we learn by imitating, delight in imitating, and delight in watching an imitation. In Aristotle’s all important sixth chapter, he describes the tragic form, and in his description, includes what he views as its usefulness and value to the state:

*Tragedy, then, is the imitation of a good action, which is complete and of a certain length, by means of language made pleasing for each part separately; it relies in its various elements not on narrative but on acting; through pity and fear it achieves the purgation [catharsis] of such emotions.*

Aristotle agreed that Plato was right; tragedy did stir up in its audience excessive emotion – specifically pity and fear – but it also allowed for the catharsis or purging or cleansing of these negative emotions. To Aristotle, experiencing a tragic play doesn’t encourage the passions, but instead rids or relieves the audience member of them. He argues that it is healthy to be purged of any excess of emotion, and, therefore, tragedy and the tragic poets or playwrights are beneficial to and belong in the ideal state!

**Do you agree? How does the experience of a tragic play effect you?**

**Source:** Translation of Aristotle by G.M.A. Grube from Michael J. Sidnell’s *Sources of Dramatic Theory 1: Plato to Congreve*. Cambridge, 1994, 41–43.

## GLOSSARY

**ARCHETYPE** in literature, a typical character that seems to represent common aspects or universal patterns of human nature; eg, the hero, the villain, the mentor, the mother figure, the innocent.

**DRAMATIC IRONY** a literary technique, originally used in Greek tragedy, by which the full significance of a character’s words or actions are clear to the audience, yet unknown to the character.

**LYRE** a stringed instrument like a small u-shaped harp with strings fixed to a crossbar, used especially in Ancient Greece.

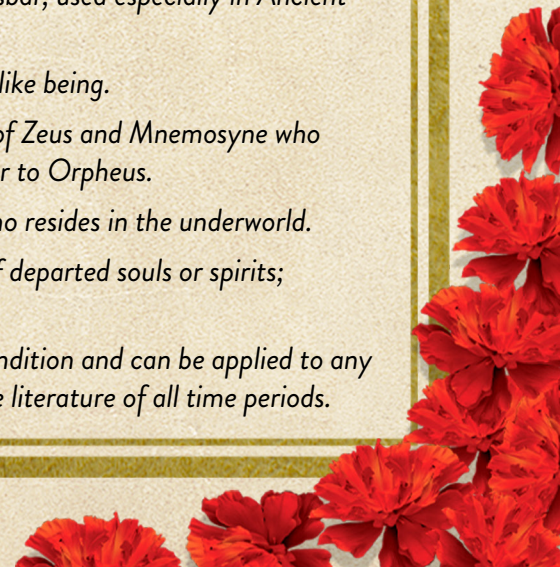
**MORTAL** a human being subject to death, often contrasted with a divine or god-like being.

**MUSE** in Classical mythology, any number of sister goddesses, all the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne who presided over the various arts; e.g., Calliope, the goddess of epic poetry and mother to Orpheus.

**SHADE** in literature and poetry, a shade is the spirit or ghost of a dead person who resides in the underworld.

**UNDERWORLD** the regions below the earth’s surface, imagined as the home of departed souls or spirits; sometimes referred to as Hades.

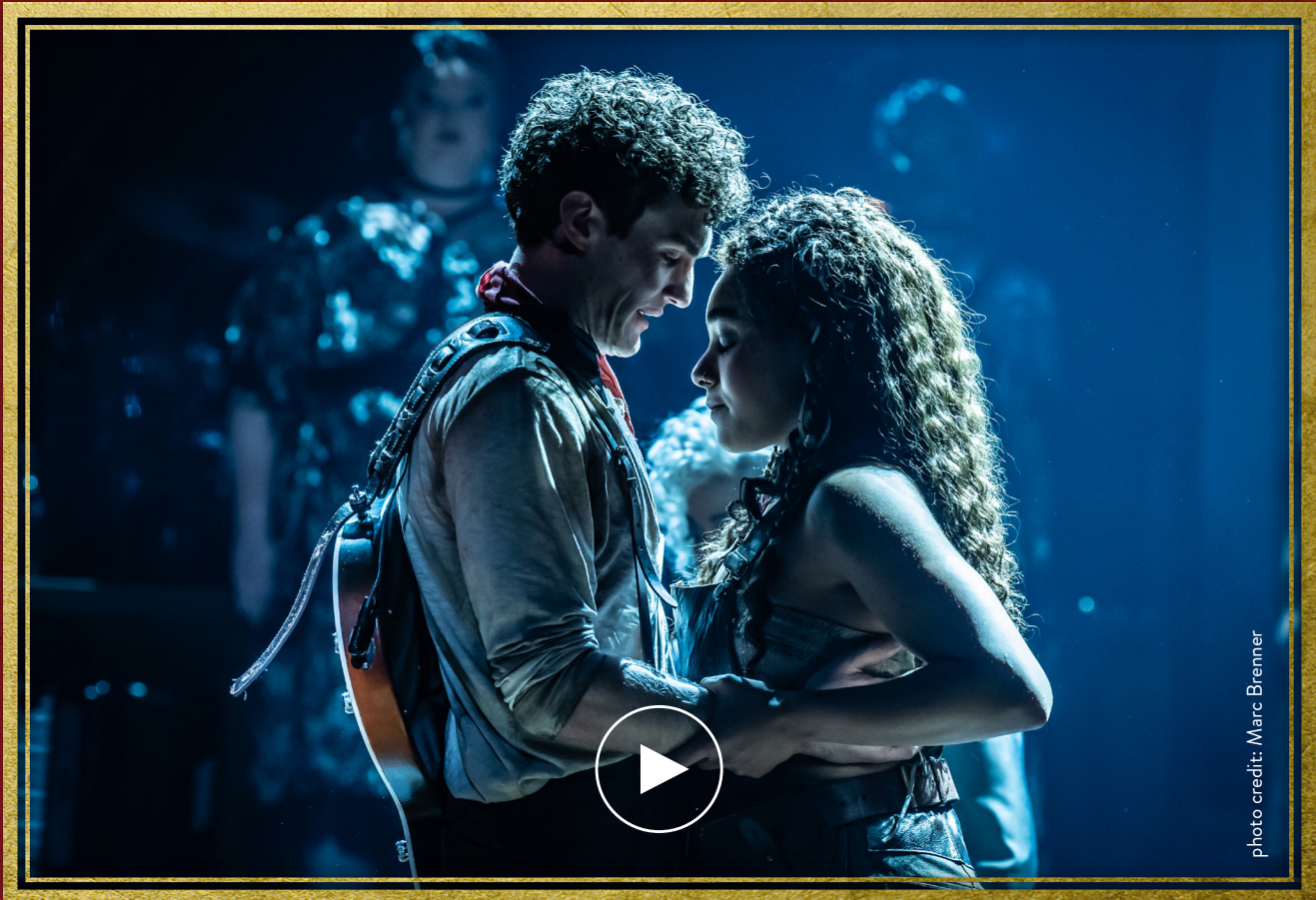
**UNIVERSAL THEME** an idea that is central to human nature or the human condition and can be applied to any one regardless of cultural differences or geographic location; found throughout the literature of all time periods.





# THE ARTISTIC JOURNEY OF HADESTOWN

Watch the following National Theatre video about the development of  
**HADESTOWN** as a musical:



## Discussion points:

- What is unique about the original performance of the show?
- Summarise how HADESTOWN developed into the West End show which exists today.

## Further reading

The following article provides detailed information about the development of the show.  
Read '[HADESTOWN- How it ended up on Broadway](#)'



TONY AWARD® WINNER BEST MUSICAL 2019





Photography by Name of Photographer

## ANAÏS MITCHELL MUSIC, LYRICS, AND BOOK

“I play the guitar, so I write my songs on the guitar. I think a different kind of song comes out of the guitar, than the piano, and I am certainly influenced by folk music and American blues music.”

“The very first sort of inkling of the story in this show came out of nowhere. I was driving in my car and these lyrics came into my head that went, ‘Wait for me. I’m coming in my garters and pearls. With what melody did you barter me from the wicked underworld?’ And those lines never made it into any version of the show, but the melody, is the melody of ‘Wait for Me,’ which is obviously still in the show.”

“It’s been really important for both Rachel [Chavkin] and I to find the place where this show can exist, that is somewhere between a concert and a theatre show. There is a logic operating that goes beyond the story.”

“From very early on, the instrumentation had this prominently featured trombone and then these two twin-strings counter-line parts, and then just a really fatty rhythm section. And so, from early on, a lot of people were identifying the music as sounding like it was a big-band New Orleans jazz music.”

“A big part of the storytelling is this decaying marriage between Hades, the king of industry, and his wife Persephone, the queen of nature and the seasons, and there are a lot of themes of climate change based on industrial practices. And New Orleans has all of that as well, because of Katrina and the subsequent hurricanes that have happened there. It feels like all of our themes can be found in that part of the country.”

## RACHEL CHAVKIN DIRECTOR

“The first thing that Anaïs ever said too me... was, ‘This is a poetry piece; not a prose piece.’ And I think what maybe was initially meant by that is that it all was going to rhyme. But also, I think more than anything, a poem is like the most essentialised amount of language for the densest amount of meaning.”

“My inspirations while making the show: I thought a lot about a tree and gathering around a tree in the old times to hear a story I looked at images of oil refineries and steel mills and places of really heavy labour and construction.”

“Louisiana became a really frequent touchstone for us in multiple ways. On the set, there’s the filigree of wrought iron and age and compression. Preservation Hall [historic New Orleans music venue] is a big source of research for us, because we talked about, ‘Where do you want to hear this story?’ So, Rachel Hauck, our set designer, and I have talked a lot about Louisiana, both the music aspect of it, and, of course New Orleans, but also the drilling and oil industries that are all through that state. And so, hopefully, it feels like show kind of begins – you think that you’re in Preservation Hall – and then actually there’s this quite extraordinary transformative moment, scenically, where you realise, ‘Oh my gosh, I’m in an oil drum... and maybe I’m at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean.”

“I think HADESTOWN offers a really unique experience...I think, you’re going to hear music that is pretty much unlike anything you’ll hear past or present. It’s actually deeply warm and just beautiful in a way that is quite literally spiritually moving. I want everyone singing HADESTOWN. I mean, this is a show that cracks my rib cage open every time I see it. So, I want that in people’s hearts.”



Photography by Name of Photographer





Photography by Name of Photographer

## RACHEL HAUCK SCENIC DESIGNER

### RACHEL HAUCK AND RACHEL CHAVKIN ON DESIGNING HADESTOWN

**Rachel Hauck:** I would describe [the set] as the best New Orleans hybrid bar-music joint you could find. It's a hybrid between Preservation Hall and the Greek amphitheatre. It's like the cosiest, most intimate place to hear some music and the story just takes over.

**Rachel Chavkin:** The thing that we both strongly agreed upon were actually the back walls – you think the show has begun in this bar and actually you realise the whole time the bar was maybe in the bottom of an oil drum. It's basically steel plating and rusted and awful.

**Rachel Hauck:** When this world pulls apart, it feels like you've gone to the centre of the earth or something. You are so far underground, and there are lots and lots of little things we did to make it feel that way, but mostly it's when the set moves, you just get kind of kicked in the chest by it. It's a beautiful moment.

**Rachel Chavkin:** HADESTOWN the show requires a way to journey down to the Underworld and a way to journey back. It felt like the answer was a treadmill of some kind. Rachel's first impulse when we were at New York Theatre Workshop was a circle, and I think that is very tied to the fact that we are telling an extremely ancient story, and circles are pretty old, and, thus, we have a lot of turntables.

**Source:** This content is excerpted and transcribed from *Theatremania.com's Take a Tour Way Down HADESTOWN with Rachel Hauck and Rachel Chavkin* video interview, 4 June 2019.



Exterior of Preservation Hall, 2008



Entrance to Preservation Hall, 2010



Interior of Preservation Hall, 2008



TONY AWARD® WINNER BEST SCENIC DESIGN OF A MUSICAL, RACHEL HAUCK 2019





# PART 3

# PRE-SHOW LESSONS AND ACTIVITIES

(FOR TEACHERS)

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## Teacher Notes

Share with your students the handouts found in the second section of this study guide to provide them with a thematic, historical and creative context for Anaïs Mitchell's HADESTOWN, developed with and directed by Rachel Chavkin. Reading aloud the interviews and investigating the various resources will not only ignite their interest, but it may also spark and fuel full-class and small-group discussion before coming to the theatre.

*Note: The HADESTOWN character profiles (p.11–13) and synopsis (p.5–9) provide a fundamental basis for pre-performance preparation and are used in conjunction with most of the activities and assignments outlined below.*

## Synopsis and 'Spoiler Alert'

This synopsis whoosh activity is intended to get your students up on their feet to embody and voice the characters as the story of HADESTOWN is told. The standard synopsis, found on p. 5–9, can also be used purely as a reading or listening text.

Note: The synopsis includes a 'spoiler alert', in case you do not wish to reveal the climax and final resolution of the story to your students before they experience the show in performance. You may also opt to read only the Act One portion of the synopsis to foster anticipation and poll students on what they think will happen in Act Two.

## Lesson 1 – Introduction to Plot and Story

**Length of Lesson** – 60 mins

**Suitable for Key Stages** 4–5 (14–19 years) English, Drama and Theatre, Music, Classics

**Lesson Objective** – Students will know key moments in the plot of HADESTOWN and will have thought about how key themes are explored in the production.

**Prior Learning** – Prior to getting students up on their feet and into a circle to begin the synopsis whoosh activity, you may want to share the character profiles with students so that they have more familiarity with and insight into the characters.



**ACTIVITY 1 – SYNOPSIS WHOOSH** (20 mins)

Read aloud the synopsis on p.5–9, and as you are reading it, students become the characters, objects and setting, which are part of the story.

At the end of each paragraph say ‘Whoosh’ and the space is cleared. A little bit of preparation is needed from the teacher prior to this. It is a good idea to underline objects / settings and bold characters before you start so that you are more prepared and know when new characters enter etc. Some classes will be able to respond spontaneously to this but you may need to assign roles to students as you go through it, if they are doing the exercise for the first time. This is a fast-paced way to act out the narrative and helps students to grasp the main plot points quickly.

**ACTIVITY 2 – SYNOPSIS – REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION** (15 mins)

- Who are the characters in the story?
- What are they like?
- What is the setting of the story?
- What happens in the story?

***If students explore the entire synopsis (including the ending):***

- What is the lesson or message of the story? What is the story trying to explain?
- What two or three things especially struck you or stood out to you about the plot, characters, relationships, or themes of HADESTOWN? What did you find especially compelling, interesting, surprising, confusing, or meaningful?
- Were any of the characters already familiar to you from other stories you’ve read? If so, where have you previously encountered them? Was there anything different about their portrayals in this story?
- Is there any moment from the story that you are most excited or eager to see portrayed on stage as part of the musical theatre performance?

**ACTIVITY 3 – PLOT POINT TABLEAU** (25 mins)

Ask students as a group to recount the essential story of HADESTOWN in seven or eight bulleted points written on the board.

Then split the students up into teams of four or five, assign each team two of the plot points on the board, and ask the teams to get up on their feet to create the tableaux for their assigned plot points. [There may be overlap in terms of plot points, but the comparison of tableaux might be fun and instructive.]

***Make sure students are clear on the definition and characteristics of a tableau.***

- “Tableau” is the French word for “picture”. Tableaux are used in the theatre and the classroom to create frozen pictures of important scenes or moments in a story.
- Characters and their personalities (or objects) are fully and boldly embodied through facial expression, body position, and gesture – though they remain silent and still.
- Good tableaux typically have:
  - A focal point – characters are looking purposefully at someone or somewhere.
  - A variety of levels – some figures standing, others crouching or sitting, and others close to the ground.

Students should work collaboratively in their teams to determine who will embody which character and what the overall frozen picture should look like.



Each team should work for 5 minutes on the staging of each of their tableaux.

Then, starting at the top of the story, each plot point tableau should be shared out in order.

Instruct students not creating a given tableau to keep their eyes closed (“lights down”) as each tableau team get into position. Then call out “lights up” for students to open their eyes to take in the frozen picture.

Ask students to provide feedback: What do you love about this tableau? Do you find anything confusing?

If you want to “activate” a tableau at any point, you can tap a student on the shoulder, so they improvise the thoughts of their character in the moment.

Ask students to talk about the “plot point” they are most eager to see played out on stage during the performance of HADESTOWN.

## Lesson 2 – Introduction to the Music of Hadestown

**Length of Lesson** – 60 mins

**Suitable for Key Stages** 4 – 5 (14 – 19 years) Drama and Theatre, Music

**Lesson Objective** – Students will be introduced to two key songs from the show and gain an understanding of style and genre.

**Prior Learning** – Ideally students will already know the plot / story (lesson 1).

### ACTIVITY ONE – ALL I’VE EVER KNOWN (30 mins)

Read out or write the following lyric on the board: “All I’ve ever known is how to hold my own.”

Share with your students that the idea for HADESTOWN began with a lyric that expressed itself in singer-songwriter Anais Mitchell’s head, inspired by the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. This grew into a series of songs and eventually became a folk-opera ‘concept album’ (i.e. a musical recording unified by some theme/story). The album was then developed by Anais Mitchell and director Rachel Chavkin, into an almost entirely sung musical theatre experience.

Give the students the opportunity to explore two songs from HADESTOWN – ‘All I’ve Ever Known’ and ‘Way Down Hadestown’

**The lyrics to “All I’ve Ever Known” are included in the appendix on p.36–38 as a printer-friendly version for study.**

**Ask student to examine the lyrics, and consider the following:**

- How would you characterise this song? What sort of song is it?
- What feeling or mood does the song evoke?
- What do you notice about the overall imagery in the song? What one image or line especially stood out to you?
- Thinking of the lyrics of the song as dialogue, what are the characters expressing to one another? What does each character seem to want in the song?
- What does Eurydice mean when she says, “All I’ve ever known is how to hold my own”?
- What does the song reveal about the individual characters in terms of their personalities/temperaments and/or back-stories?
- Does anything change in the course of the song or is anything achieved by its end?
- What do you think this song’s purpose or point in the overall story of the musical HADESTOWN might be?

Then, have students listen to Anais Mitchell’s performance of the song at the National Theatre available on



YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5Zqd9fQjoY> and ask them to consider:

- How did hearing the music with the lyrics make you feel?
- What type of music is it, and did the music fit the lyrics to the song?
- Did hearing the song sung make you aware of something you didn't consider before?

If students haven't already read the quotation by Anais Mitchell on the development of "All I've Ever Known" on p.19, now would be a great opportunity to share it with them.

## ACTIVITY 2 – WAY DOWN HADESTOWN (30 mins)

Now share the song "Way Down Hadestown" from the original Broadway cast recording with your students – it is available on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u-aSMoAEmtU>.

Prompt students that you will have them listen to it twice: First, for a general understanding of the song (characters, topic/subject, story), an appreciation of it musically, and for comparison with "All I've Ever Known"; and second, for background information for the HADESTOWN design collage project immediately below.

### FIRST LISTEN

**These are all aspects of the song they might consider taking notes on as they listen to it the first time.**

**[Note: A lyric sheet for "Way Down Hadestown" is available in the appendix, pp.36 – 38]**

Following their first listening experience, ask students:

- How would you characterise this song? What sort of song is it? What type of music is it?
- What feeling or mood does the song evoke?
- What characters were you able to distinguish as singers of the song?
- What does the song reveal about the individual characters in terms of their personalities/temperaments/and/or wants?
- What is the song about? Does it tell a story? What's the story?
- What do you notice about the overall imagery in the song? Were there any images or lyrics that especially stood out to you?
- Where there any surprises in the song for you?
- How is "Way Down Hadestown" different from "All I've Ever Known" both musically and functionally? Does it have a different dramatic purpose or goal as a song?

### SECOND LISTEN

Students should listen to the song again. This is a chance to refine the notes they've already taken. And this time they should focus specifically on clues about HADESTOWN itself: What is it like? What words and images are used to describe it? What ideas and images are evoked in the students from the song itself?

After they listen to the song again, ask them if they discovered anything new they would like to share.



# PART 4 –

# SHOW LESSONS AND

# ACTIVITIES

(FOR TEACHERS)

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## Lesson 3 - Personality of a Song

**Length of Lesson** – 75 mins

**Suitable for Key Stages** 4–5 (14–19 years) Drama and Music

**Lesson Objective** – Students will explore all the ways they can use their voice to invoke a character. Students will create a new character and explore their vocal range.

### Lesson Overview

Persephone is the queen of the Underworld and Greek goddess of the seasons. She is free spirited, and though she loves Hades, her relationship with him has declined and they are often fighting.

In the original Broadway cast recording of HADESTOWN, the character of Persephone is portrayed by Amber Gray who uses her voice in many unique ways to help us imagine the many challenges she faces, including being married to Hades. Amber uses vocal effects such as growling, scooping and bending notes to paint the picture of Persephone's personality and character.

In this lesson plan, students will explore Gray's vocal choices and techniques to gain a deeper understanding of performance and the voice as an expressive instrument. Students will use that understanding to imagine their own characters that might be brought to life through compelling vocal expression.

### ACTIVITY 1 – THE PERFORMER'S VOICE

(30 mins)

**Step One: Exploring Personality** Invite your students to speak the following phrase.

**“Persephone, Our Lady of the Underground”\***

Gather your class in a circle and take turns saying this phrase, one by one. Encourage students to change the way they say the phrase as it gets passed from one student to another. Encourage students to change the speed, tone, accents and pauses within the phrase (eg 'Per-sef-oh-nee...').

- What are all the ways you can say this phrase?
- How can you change the speed or tone?
- How can you change the pacing? Where can you add pauses?
- How can you change the inflection or accentuate specific syllables?
- How does changing the way you speak this phrase affect the meaning?
- What type of character do you imagine Persephone to be?



Look at the following list of words with your students and write some on the board:


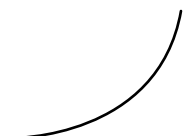
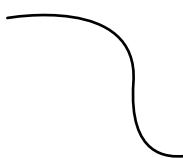


- Contempt
- Jealousy
- Exasperation
- Grouchiness
- Panic
- Nervousness
- Bliss
- Euphoria
- Jolliness
- Contentment
- Enthusiasm
- Amazement
- Curiosity

Go around the circle a few more times, each time choosing a new emotion from the list above for students to express while saying the phrase. In other words, all the students will get a shot at saying “Persephone, Our Lady of the Underground” in a jealous way, blissful way, etc.

- What did you do physically with your voice to make these sounds?
- How did you change your demeanour when you were making these sounds?
- Which emotion is the most believable?

### Step 2: Exploring Vocal Effects

Lead your students in an exploration of vocal sounds using the following prompts and images. Encourage your students to exaggerate each sound and model as necessary. Gather ideas from your students on how each of these vocal sounds are made.

Growl	Scoop	Fall	Shake	Bend
				

Once students are familiar, invite them to add these vocal effects to any of the words in the phrase **“Persephone, Our Lady of the Underground”**.

- How do these vocal effects change the tone of the phrase?
- How do they add energy and intention to the phrase?
- What other vocal effects could you add?

### Step 3: Exploring Lyrics

Invite a student volunteer to speak the following lyrics:

**I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BOYS  
 BUT IF YOU'RE LIKE ME THEN HANGING AROUND  
 THIS OLD MANHOLE IS BRINGING YOU DOWN  
 SIX-FEET-UNDER GETTING UNDER YOUR SKIN  
 CABIN FEVER IS A-SETTING IN.  
 YOU'RE STIR CRAZY! YOU'RE STUCK IN A RUT!  
 OR YOU COULD USE A LITTLE PICK-ME-UP  
 I CAN GIVE YOU WHAT IT IS YOU CRAVE  
 A LITTLE SOMETHING FROM THE GOOD OLD DAYS**



- What are these lyrics all about? Who is the speaker?
- What kind of tone do you think they have in their voice?
- What type of emotions is the character expressing here?
- Can you imagine what type of melody might fit these lyrics?

In small groups, or as a class, have your students learn with these lyrics. Add at least one scoop, growl, fall, bend or shake on any of the words from this text. Model as necessary for your students and encourage your students to annotate the text as they wish using the symbols in step 2.

## ACTIVITY 2 – CREATING A CHARACTER (30 mins)

Show your students this list of positive and negative character traits

Positive Traits	Negative Traits
Brave	Abrasive
Honest	Impatient
Compassionate	Compulsive
Courageous	Cruel
Unselfish	Callous
Responsible	Fanatical
Loyal	Greedy
Hard-working	Insecure
Independent	Macho
Considerate	Reckless
Self-confident	Vain
Humble	Tactless

Ask your students to imagine that they are inventing a main character for a story or play they are writing. This new character is either a hero or villain and it's up to them to choose which they are.

Use the above list of character traits to brainstorm what your hero or villain is all about. Invent a name for your hero or villain that is worthy of their character and state their job or character description.

A good example is one from our previous steps, "Persephone, Our Lady of the Underground".

Once students have created their hero or villain's name and description, invite them to practise speaking or singing this as a phrase. Encourage students to add vocal effects such as growls, scoops, fall, bends, shakes and any other sound that helps bring out their character. Advanced students may wish to add a melody to this phrase and compose additional lyrics to support this character.

**What type of vocal sound effects help bring out the character of this hero / villain?**

**What does this hero or villain look like?**

**What does their voice sound like?**



**ACTIVITY 3: REFLECTION** (15 mins)

Play the following excerpt for your students of Persephone, performed by Amber Gray, singing “Our Lady of the Underground”

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_t4GDQ5R9pY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_t4GDQ5R9pY) (0:00 – 3:40)

**Reflect with your students:**

- What types of vocal sounds do you hear Amber using?
- What do her vocal choices tell you about the character or Persephone?
- Is Persephone a villain or a hero? Why?
- How do you think Persephone moves on stage?

Bonus activity: Give each student a turn to “perform” (vocal inflections and all) the phrase, “Persephone, Our Lady of the Underground” using movement as well this time.

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## Lesson 4 – Work Song

**Length of Lesson** – 80 mins

**Suitable for Key Stages** 4–5 (14–19 years) Drama, Dance and Music

**Lesson Objective** – Students will:

- Explore work songs and their importance as a tool for self-expression.
- Make connections with movement, music, and sound.
- Listen and engage with examples of work songs from HADESTOWN and imagine how life might be like for workers in the underground world of Hades.

**Lesson Overview**

A work song is often associated with labour that is demeaning, difficult and sometimes forced or unpaid. In the mythical world of HADESTOWN, Hades commands his workers to toil and build his empire. The workers move in sync with each other as they sing this song.

**“LOW, KEEP YOUR HEAD, KEEP YOUR HEAD LOW  
OH, YOU GOTTA KEEP YOUR HEAD LOW, IF YOU WANNA KEEP YOUR HEAD  
OH, YOU GOTTA KEEP YOUR HEAD LOW”**

The work song is repetitive and keeps the workers in sync as they perform difficult, laborious tasks as forced workers in HADESTOWN. The work song here includes choreography that symbolises the physicality of the work that must be done to appease Hades. The chant-like lyrics and vocal sound effects describe the emotional state and demanding job these workers must do.

Before diving into the lesson on the next page, teachers should listen to the first 30 seconds of ‘Chant’ (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5W-t9QECBQ>) from HADESTOWN. Pay special attention to the driving rhythm, the lyrics and vocal sound effects used by the worker chorus.



Then, as a comparison, listen to this example of real-world prison work song, ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zsiYfk5RV\\_Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zsiYfk5RV_Q)) recorded in the 1950s at a penitentiary in Texas.

- What do you notice about each of these work songs?
- What musical elements do you hear in each piece?
- How do you imagine the workers feel when they sing this song?
- Why would a worker want to sing a work song?

## ACTIVITY 1 - CREATING THE RHYTHM OF WORK (50 mins)

### Step 1: Embodying the movement of work

Show your students the following list of action words. Ask them to work on their own or with a partner to create a single movement for each of the action words below. Encourage students to use just their hands and arms first. Then instruct students to expand the movement to use their full body.

Chop	Toss
Slice	Carry
Push	Lift
Pull	Hammer

Ask students to repeat one movement many times in a steady pulse, as if driven by a motor, eventually experimenting with the size and speed for each of these movements.

#### Reflect:

- How does it feel to repeat one movement many times?
- Do you imagine this movement to be difficult or easy? How?
- If you had to make this move for a long period of time, how would that feel in your body?

With your students, brainstorm a list of tasks that might be tedious, difficult, and possibly dangerous. Examples can vary and might include: doing the dishes, mining coal, driving a truck.

#### Reflect:

What are some feelings that you might have if you were performing some of the tasks on your list? Make a list.

Your list should be similar to the one below. Feel free to skip the brainstorming and use this list:

Stress	Strength
Exhaustion	Pressure
Frustration	Mindlessness
Tension	

#### Reflect:

- How does emotion and feeling affect the way you move your body?
- How can you refine the movements developed earlier to reflect one of these emotions?



**Step 2: The Movement of Work**

Brainstorm with your students, examples of a task that is familiar to them that they would label as a physical work or chore. Some examples might include, washing the dishes or taking out the garbage. Choose one task or chore as a class to focus on. Either as a class or in groups, follow these steps to create a movement sequence that represents this task:

1. Choose three movements that represent the task.
2. Create a single clear movement for each step of the task.
3. Perform the sequence in several repetitions.
4. Add in a steady pulse to keep everyone in rhythm.
5. Practise until the entire class or small group has the movement sequence memorised.

For students and classes that need assistance with pulse, a steady drum loop or metronome may be helpful.

**NB** There are no wrong answers here, this should be a playful and enjoyable exploration. Please take care to make sure the movements are accessible to everyone in your classroom.

**As students are working reflect:**

- How would you put a steady beat or rhythm to this movement sequence?
- Can you imagine what type of sound there might be for each movement?
- When do you listen to music to get difficult tasks done?

**Step 3: Connecting sound and movement**

Invite students to imagine a non-verbal sound for each movement. The non-verbal sound can be any sound that doesn't use vocabulary. The sound can be representative of the actual work or the emotion and feeling behind the movement.

Here are some examples:

Hiss  
Chick  
Psst  
Argh  
Click  
Huh

For students and classes that need assistance with pulse, a steady drum loop or metronome may be helpful.

Here are some guidelines for their performance:

- Repeat the full sequence a minimum of 4 times.
- The movement sequence should have a steady pulse.
- Each body motor movement should be accompanied by at least one sound.
- Only non-verbal sounds are allowed. Multiple sounds are encouraged.



## Reflect with your students:

- How does keeping a steady pulse make the work feel?
- How does adding sound create more drama and increase the energy?
- Are you more inspired to complete this task when it is with a large group? What if you had to do this task on your own?
- What are some social / emotional issues that might arise if you had to do this task for hours each day?
- How does music support you in a difficult task?

Once students are comfortable, perform a final version of the movement sequence.

## Development

- Break students up into small groups or pairs to create their own chore / movement sequence. Invite each group to perform their sequence for each other.
  - Invite different groups of students layer multiple work / movement / sound sequences at the same time.
  - Music students could choose to add percussion instruments or pitched instruments to layer the song.
-





photo credit: Marc Brenner



photo credit: Marc Brenner



photo credit: Marc Brenner



photo credit: Marc Brenner

## ACTIVITY 2 – INTRODUCING HADESTOWN WORK SONG (30 mins)

Show your students the images above from the Workers in HADESTOWN.

Reflect:

- What do you notice about the Workers' poses and action steps?
- What kind of work do you imagine they are doing?
- How would you describe their emotional state?

Listen twice to the following excerpt from HADESTOWN.

### AUDIO ONLY 00:00 – 00:30 'CHANT'

- What do you notice about the lyrics?
- What do you imagine is happening in the story?
- What other sounds do you notice besides the singing?

Listen to a longer excerpt from 'Chant'. In this longer excerpt you will hear the Worker' chorus enter and exit

while Persephone, Hades, Eurydice and Orpheus sing their song.

### AUDIO ONLY 00:00 – 01:55 'CHANT'

- What role does the Workers' chorus play in the story?
- How does the music change whenever we hear the Workers' chorus?

Listen to 'Chant (Reprise)'. In this version the Workers have a more direct role in the story throughout.

### AUDIO ONLY 00:00 – End 'CHANT (REPRISE)'

- What kinds of questions do the Workers ask?
- How do the Workers start to rise up?
- How does this chant and the movements pictured above relate to the movements and chants you all created? What similarities and differences do you see?



## Lesson 5 – Greek Theatre

**Length of lesson** – 75 mins

**Suitable for Key Stages** 4-5 (14-19 years) English, Drama and Theatre, Classics

### Lesson Objective

- Comprehend and use the conventions of ancient Greek drama through a hands-on, collaborative approach.
- Use HADESTOWN as a model for creating relevant, socially conscious work while pulling stories and theatrical modes from the ancient Greek tradition.
- Explore the idea of catharsis by creating original work inspired by HADESTOWN and Greek tragedy.

### Lesson Overview

In this series of activities students will use HADESTOWN as an example of a modern and engaging story that takes influence from some ancient Greek stories and dramatic forms in order to explore and comprehend the classical conventions of ancient Greek tragedy. Students will create their own work that riffs on the story of HADESTOWN while employing classical conventions innovated by Greek tragedians all in an attempt to create catharsis for lived modern-day experiences through art.

Contemporary western theatre can attribute many of its roots to ancient Greek drama. Whether we're talking about the persisting use of a narrator character to help convey narratives or the many iterations of the ancient Greek amphitheatre, the influence is everywhere.

### ACTIVITY 1 – WHAT IS GREEK TRAGEDY?

(15 mins)

- What themes and ideas come to mind when you think of Greek tragedy? Come up with a list together.
- Watch this video providing an introduction to Greek tragedy by the National Theatre: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSr6mP-zxUc>
- Explain that HADESTOWN is a new play that borrows a lot from ancient Greek tragedy and mythology. In fact, the whole story is based

on the ancient Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, as well as the story of the gods Hades and Persephone. Does watching that clip and knowing that information change what you think of Greek tragedy? How so?

### ACTIVITY 2 – TELLING NEW STORIES

(60 mins)

#### Step 1: What is Catharsis?

- Project or write out the definition of Catharsis.
- Ask students if they have ever seen a play, film, TV show etc that made them feel like they have released some emotion. If you've seen the play, did HADESTOWN feel cathartic? How so? How did they achieve this?
- Discuss: Why do we make art that helps us release or come to terms with our emotions?

#### Step Two: Creating Catharsis?

- What experiences have we or others had that might need catharsis? As a class, come up with a list together.
- Can we use Greek tragedy to create theatre that provides catharsis for issues / individuals / groups / experiences relevant to our modern times?
- In small groups, students will create short plays using the Greek tragic structure (prologue, choral ode, dramatic episodes, and final exodus – see below!) that attempt to create catharsis for a specific experience.
- Each play should attempt to follow the classical structure of Greek tragedy, which is outlined in the **Greek tragedy module** and reiterated here:
  - Prologue** – Introduction into the world of the play. What happened to these characters before the play started? Who are they? What does the audience need to know? This can be communicated by an individual narrator from the chorus, many characters, or through musical number, to give a few examples.
  - Choral Ode** – This refers to the entrance of the chorus. In ancient Greece, they would enter with a song, but be as creative as you want! The chorus can enter dancing or talking or whatever you can imagine.
  - Dramatic Episodes** – The events of the play.
  - Final Exodus** – At the end of the play the chorus exits while basically reiterating the moral story of the play through song, speech, etc.



- Here is a recommended structure to help guide students in this process:
    1. Identify your subject matter. What kind of catharsis do you want to create? With that in mind, what will your short play be about? Who are the characters? Where are they? What happens to them?
    2. Identify three core dramatic episodes that will be the heart of your play: First, Then, and Finally.
    3. What do you want to communicate to your audience in the prologue? What do they need to know before watching the play?
    4. How will the choral ode create the mood of your story? Will you use song? Dance? Spoken word?
    5. What are the moral lessons revisited in the final exodus?
    6. Are there theatrical conventions (costumes, props, music, masks, set, etc.) you want to use that could help bring your story to life?
    7. Cast and rehearse your play. Everyone should have a role in some way!
  - Students will perform their plays for each other.
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## Lesson 6 – Building the Underworld (A Designer’s View)

**Length of lesson** – 60 mins

**Suitable for Key Stages** 4–5 (14–19 years) Drama and Theatre

### Lesson Objective

Students will explore the role of the production designer and will develop design ideas for the Underworld.

### Lesson Overview

This lesson enables students to start to explore design elements within HADESTOWN, such as set, costume, colours, textures, mood and atmosphere. Students will work in groups to research images to inspire their design ideas for the Underworld and then will work individually and collaboratively to design the world of the musical, using a range of materials.

### ACTIVITY 1: CREATING MEANING (20 mins)

- Place three large pieces of poster paper on opposite sides of the room and label them, ‘Costumes’, ‘Sets, Props, and Lights’ and ‘Scenes and Songs’. Quickly review these terms with the group, for any students who might need a refresher.
- With markers, ask students to fill the posters by listing as many specific details as they can remember about HADESTOWN. Students may ‘second’ the responses of their peers by placing ticks next to their responses.
- After each student has written (or drawn!) their response, take a tour of the posters with your students. At this time, the class may continue adding to the posters or the facilitator might simply note what has been included, especially items with lots of ticks.

NOTE: If your class has not seen HADESTOWN, this exercise can still be done. Just watch the following clips of HADESTOWN performances together and use them as the occasion for student response:

**At the Tony Awards.**

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=MWtjGIV1sMQ>

**On the Today Show**

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=TZ6bih9esxY>



**ACTIVITY 2: BUILDING WORLDS – THE DESIGNER’S ROLE** (40 mins)**Step 1: Analyse and Interpret**

- Divide the students into groups of 4-5.
- Based on their adaptation outline, give each group five minutes to discuss how they would like to represent the Underworld. Does it look the same as our world or very different? How is their version of the underworld different from our world? What is life like in the underworld? How do people dress in the underworld? What does it look and feel like?
- They should find / research the following. They can present them in a PowerPoint / slide deck or as a design collage:

Find 5 images of industry / factories.

Find 5 images of a post-apocalyptic world.

Find five images of clothes which are ‘other worldly’.

**Step 2: Interpret and Create**

- Give each group a large piece of poster paper and a collection of art resources.
- NOTE: The instructions will assume something very simple, like markers but facilitators may include things like magazine clippings, glitter, paint, etc.
- Ask students to gather in a circle around their poster paper and, using the portion of the poster directly in front of them, begin drawing Hadestown.
- NOTE: Ask students to work quietly and independently. We recommend playing a little instrumental music or even the HADESTOWN cast recording as you facilitate this portion.
- After five minutes, ask the students to stand exactly where they are, and then rotate one spot to their left so that everyone is now in front of their neighbour’s drawing.
- Without talking, ask everyone to consider the artwork in front of them, and what their neighbour was beginning to create. Then ask them to begin adding onto the work of their classmates.
- Repeat until the posters have filled up or time runs out. Ask each group to share their adaptation outlines with the class!



# “ALL I’VE EVER KNOWN”

(BY ANAÏS MITCHELL FROM HADESTOWN)

## EURYDICE

I WAS ALONE SO LONG  
 I DIDN’T EVEN KNOW THAT I WAS LONELY  
 OUT IN THE COLD SO LONG  
 I DIDN’T EVEN KNOW THAT I WAS COLD  
 TURN MY COLLAR TO THE WIND  
 THIS IS HOW IT’S ALWAYS BEEN  
 ALL I’VE EVER KNOWN IS HOW TO HOLD MY  
 OWN  
 ALL I’VE EVER KNOWN IS HOW TO HOLD MY  
 OWN  
 BUT NOW I WANNA HOLD YOU TOO  
 -Interlude-  
 YOU TAKE ME IN YOUR ARMS  
 AND SUDDENLY THERE’S SUNLIGHT ALL  
 AROUND ME  
 EVERYTHING BRIGHT AND WARM  
 AND SHINING LIKE IT NEVER DID BEFORE  
 AND FOR A MOMENT I FORGET  
 JUST HOW DARK AND COLD IT GETS  
 ALL I’VE EVER KNOWN IS HOW TO HOLD MY  
 OWN  
 ALL I’VE EVER KNOWN IS HOW TO HOLD MY  
 OWN  
 BUT NOW I WANNA HOLD YOU  
 NOW I WANNA HOLD YOU  
 HOLD YOU CLOSE  
 I DON’T WANNA EVER HAVE TO LET YOU GO  
 NOW I WANNA HOLD YOU  
 HOLD YOU TIGHT  
 I DON’T WANNA GO BACK TO THE LONELY LIFE

## ORPHEUS

I DON’T KNOW HOW OR WHY  
 OR WHO AM I THAT I SHOULD GET TO HOLD  
 YOU BUT WHEN I SAW YOU ALL ALONE  
 AGAINST THE SKY  
 IT’S LIKE I’D KNOWN YOU ALL ALONG  
 I KNEW YOU BEFORE WE MET  
 AND I DON’T EVEN KNOW YOU YET  
 ALL I KNOW’S YOU’RE SOMEONE I HAVE  
 ALWAYS KNOWN

## ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

ALL I KNOW’S YOU’RE SOMEONE I HAVE  
 ALWAYS KNOWN  
 AND I DON’T EVEN KNOW YOU  
 NOW I WANNA HOLD YOU – HOLD YOU  
 CLOSE I DON’T WANNA EVER HAVE TO LET  
 YOU GO

## EURYDICE

SUDDENLY THERE’S SUNLIGHT BRIGHT AND  
 WARM

## ORPHEUS

SUDDENLY I’M HOLDING THE WORLD IN MY  
 ARMS

-Interlude-

## EURYDICE

SAY THAT YOU’LL HOLD ME FOREVER  
 SAY THAT THE WIND WON’T CHANGE ON US  
 SAY THAT WE’LL STAY WITH EACH OTHER  
 AND IT WILL ALWAYS BE LIKE THIS

## ORPHEUS

I’M GONNA HOLD YOU FOREVER  
 THE WIND WILL NEVER CHANGE ON US  
 LONG AS WE STAY WITH EACH OTHER

## ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

THEN IT WILL ALWAYS BE LIKE THIS



# “WAY DOWN HADESTOWN”

(BY ANAÏS MITCHELL FROM HADESTOWN)

**HERMES**

ON THE ROAD TO HELL, THERE WAS A  
RAILROAD TRACK

**PERSEPHONE**

Oh, come on!

**HERMES**

THERE WAS A TRAIN COMIN' UP FROM WAY  
DOWN BELOW

**PERSEPHONE**

That was not six months!

**FATES**

BETTER GO AND GET YOUR SUITCASE PACKED  
GUESS IT'S TIME TO GO

**HERMES**

SHE'S GONNA RIDE THAT TRAIN

**COMPANY**

RIDE THAT TRAIN...

**HERMES**

SHE'S GONNA RIDE THAT TRAIN

**COMPANY**

RIDE THAT TRAIN...

**HERMES**

SHE'S GONNA RIDE THAT TRAIN 'TIL THE END  
OF THE LINE

'CAUSE THE KING OF THE MINE IS COMING TO  
CALL

DID YOU EVER WONDER WHAT IT'S LIKE ON  
THE UNDERSIDE?

**COMPANY**

WAY DOWN UNDER

**HERMES**

ON THE YONDER SIDE?

**COMPANY**

WAY DOWN YONDER

**HERMES**

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF HIS WALL  
FOLLOW THAT DOLLAR FOR A LONG WAY  
DOWN

FAR AWAY FROM THE POORHOUSE DOOR  
YOU EITHER GET TO HELL OR TO HADESTOWN  
AIN'T NO DIFFERENCE ANYMORE!

WAY DOWN HADESTOWN

WAY DOWN UNDER THE GROUND

HOUND DOG HOWL AND THE WHISTLE BLOW  
TRAIN COME A-ROLLIN, CLICKETY-CLACK  
EVERYBODY TRYIN' TO GET A TICKET TO GO

BUT THOSE WHO GO THEY DON'T COME BACK  
THEY GOIN'...

**HERMES AND COMPANY**

WAY DOWN HADESTOWN WAY DOWN UNDER  
THE GROUND

**HERMES**

Ha!

**PERSEPHONE**

WINTER'S NIGH AND SUMMER'S O'ER HEAR  
THAT HIGH, LONESOME SOUND  
OF MY HUSBAND COMING FOR  
TO BRING ME HOME TO HADESTOWN

**COMPANY**

WAY DOWN HADESTOWN WAY DOWN UNDER  
THE GROUND

**PERSEPHONE**

DOWN THERE, IT'S A BUNCH OF STIFFS  
BROTHER, I'LL BE BORED TO DEATH  
GONNA HAVE TO IMPORT SOME STUFF JUST  
TO ENTERTAIN MYSELF

GIVE ME MORPHINE IN A TIN

GIVE ME A CRATE OF THE FRUIT OF THE VINE  
TAKES A LOT OF MEDICINE

TO MAKE IT THROUGH THE WINTERTIME

**COMPANY**

WAY DOWN HADESTOWN WAY DOWN UNDER  
THE GROUND

**FATES**

EVERY LITTLE PENNY IN THE WISHING WELL  
EVERY LITTLE NICKEL ON THE DRUM

**COMPANY**

ON THE DRUM!

**FATES**

ALL THEM SHINY LITTLE HEADS AND TAILS  
WHERE DO YOU THINK THEY COME FROM?  
THEY COME FROM

**COMPANY**

WAY DOWN HADESTOWN WAY DOWN UNDER  
THE GROUND

**HERMES**

EVERYBODY HUNGRY EVERYBODY TIRED  
EVERYBODY SLAVES BY THE SWEAT OF HIS  
BROW THE WAGE IS NOTHING AND THE  
WORK IS HARD

IT'S A GRAVEYARD IN HADESTOWN



**COMPANY**

WAY DOWN HADESTOWN WAY DOWN  
UNDER THE GROUND

**HERMES**

MR HADES IS A MEAN OLD BOSS

**PERSEPHONE**

WITH A SILVER WHISTLE AND A GOLDEN  
SCALE

**COMPANY**

AN EYE FOR AN EYE!

**HERMES**

AND HE WEIGHS THE COST

**COMPANY**

A LIE FOR A LIE!

**HERMES**

AND YOUR SOUL FOR SALE

**COMPANY**

SOLD!

**PERSEPHONE**

TO THE KING ON THE CHROMIUM THRONE

**COMPANY**

THROWN!

**PERSEPHONE**

TO THE BOTTOM OF A SING SING CELL

**HERMES**

WHERE THE LITTLE WHEEL SQUEALS AND THE  
BIG WHEEL GROANS

**PERSEPHONE**

AND YOU BETTER FORGET ABOUT YOUR  
WISHING WELL

**COMPANY**

WAY DOWN HADESTOWN  
WAY DOWN UNDER THE GROUND

**HERMES**

On the Road to Hell, there was a railroad car  
And the car door opened and a man stepped out  
Everybody looked and everybody saw  
It was the same man they'd been singin' about

**PERSEPHONE**

You're early.

**HADES**

I missed ya.

**FATES**

MR HADES IS A MIGHTY KING  
MUST BE MAKING SOME MIGHTY BIG DEALS  
SEEMS LIKE HE OWNS EVERYTHING

**EURYDICE**

KIND OF MAKES YOU WONDER HOW IT  
FEELS...

**HERMES**

All aboard!

A-ONE, A-TWO

A-ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR

**COMPANY**

WAY DOWN HADESTOWN WAY DOWN  
UNDER THE GROUND

WAY DOWN HADESTOWN WAY DOWN  
UNDER THE GROUND

WAY DOWN UNDER THE GROUND WAY  
DOWN UNDER THE GROUND!