2008

Direction of the Play: Suessical

Elicia Mertens

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.cwu.edu/thesis_projects

Part of the Theatre and Performance Studies Commons

Recommended Citation

This Graduate Project is brought to you for free and open access by the CWU Archival Content at ScholarWorks@CWU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Student Projects by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@CWU.
Direction of the Play/Musical: Seussical

A Project Report
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
Theatre Production

by
Ellicia M. Mertens
May, 2008
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION I: PRELIMINARY INFORMATION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy of Playscript Approval Form</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy of Committee and Option Approval Form</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy of Script</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permission of Hiring Authority at the Producing Venue</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Parameters</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Schedule</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of the Play as a Production Vehicle</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept Statement</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II</strong></td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION II: PRE-PRODUCTION TEXT ANALYSIS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Given Circumstances</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of Dialogue</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of Dramatic Action</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character Analysis (of main characters)</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas of the Play</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous Reviews</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research on the playwright, composer, and lyricist</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Goals and Student Outcomes</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III</strong></td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION III: POST-PRODUCTION MATERIALS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Journal</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis Project Chair Written Comments</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Self-Evaluation</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV WORKS CITED .......................................................... 147
V APPENDIX .............................................................. 149
Student's Name: Ellicia M. Mertens

Courses presented for the Master's degree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course No.</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Number of Credits</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Quarter Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TH 520</td>
<td>Exploring Drama in the Classroom</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>S. Robinson</td>
<td>Summer, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 580</td>
<td>Scenic Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>C. Barrigan</td>
<td>Summer, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 501</td>
<td>Intro to Grad Studies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>G. Bellah III</td>
<td>Summer, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 510</td>
<td>Study in Drama Lit</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>W. Van Tassel</td>
<td>Summer, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 539</td>
<td>Direct &amp; Teach Young Actors</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>W. Van Tassel</td>
<td>Summer, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 540</td>
<td>Grad Directing I</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>M. Smith</td>
<td>Summer, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 566</td>
<td>Makeup and Masks</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>S. Robinson</td>
<td>Summer, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 571</td>
<td>Design Methodology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>D. Lane</td>
<td>Summer, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 530</td>
<td>Playwriting Application</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>W. Van Tassel</td>
<td>Summer, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 531</td>
<td>Mime and Movement</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G. Bellah III</td>
<td>Summer, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 541</td>
<td>Grad Directing II</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>B. Hubbard</td>
<td>Summer, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 542</td>
<td>Musical Theatre Directing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>M. Smith</td>
<td>Summer, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 546</td>
<td>Teaching Shakespeare Performance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>W. Van Tassel</td>
<td>Summer, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 550</td>
<td>Theatre and Arts Management</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>S. Robinson</td>
<td>Summer, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 568</td>
<td>Lighting Techniques</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>D. Lane</td>
<td>Summer, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 584</td>
<td>Puppetry in the Classroom</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>J. Hawkins</td>
<td>Summer, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 511</td>
<td>Analysis and Criticism</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>B. Hubbard</td>
<td>Summer, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 544</td>
<td>Acting Styles</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G. Bellah III</td>
<td>Summer, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 700</td>
<td>Thesis/Proj Study/Exam</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>W. Van Tassel</td>
<td>Fall, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 700</td>
<td>Thesis/Proj Study/Exam</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>W. Van Tassel</td>
<td>Winter, 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH 700</td>
<td>Thesis/Proj Study/Exam</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>W. Van Tassel</td>
<td>Spring, 2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THESIS PRODUCTION INFORMATION
MASTER OF ARTS IN THEATRE PRODUCTION

When completed, mail to: George Bellah, Graduate Coordinator
Theatre Arts Department
Central Washington University
400 E. 8th Ave.
Ellensburg, WA 98926-7460

Name: Ellicia M. Mertens

I do not need to fill out this form as the information you have is correct and complete. N/A

I do not need to fill out this form as I do not plan to complete my degree.
Reason: N/A

Proposed Title: "Seussical" The Musical
[Remember: You must submit a Committee and Option Approval Form.]

Proposed Dates:
[Year] 2008 [Quarter] Winter [Month] Feb. March [Days] 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

Preferences for Thesis Chair: 1) Wes Van Tassel (has been assigned as chair)
2) __________________________________________
3) __________________________________________

Preferences for Thesis Committee members: 1) Michael Smith
2) Terri Brown
3) Christina Barrigan
4) George Bellah

Proposed Orals Date:
[Year] 2008 [Quarter] Spring [Month] May [Days] 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

The above information is a change/correction. N/A

The above information is new. Yes, new information.
MASTER'S THESIS PROJECT
PLAYSCRIPT APPROVAL FORM

(PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU HAVE READ THE PLAY SELECTION CRITERIA SECTION IN YOUR GRADUATE HANDBOOK)

SCRIPT TITLE: "Seussical" The Musical
Music by Stephen Flaherty
Lyrics by Lynn Ahrens
Book by Lynn Ahrens & Stephen Flaherty. Based on the works of Dr. Seuss

NUMBER OF ACTS: 2
APPROXIMATE TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 2 HOURS 30 MIN.

CAST (fill in with the appropriate numbers)
MEN 6-10 WOMEN 6-10 CHILDREN 1 OVER 40 0
*Casting can be extremely flexible
ROLES REQUIRING PEOPLE OF COLOR N/A ROLES COULD DOUBLE ~ 10 for this show.
TOTAL NUMBER OF CAST OVER 20

OTHER CASTING CONCERNS: As casting can be extremely flexible for this show, I feel confident I can find the appropriate actors for each role.

ARTISTIC STAFF (check those needed for this play or production idea)
MUSICAL DIRECTOR x DANCE CHOREOGRAPHER x
FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER DIALECT COACH SPECIALTY HIRE x (specify kind)
ORCHESTRA/BAND (specify what size) 4-piece orchestra
Will you be fulfilling any of the above? Yes If so, which? Director, Producer, Assistant Dance Choreographer (fellow teachers would fulfill the roles of musical director & orchestra conductor)
Will a guest artist be fulfilling any of the above? Yes If so, which?
Dance Choreographer, Costume Designer, Set Designer

SCENERY/PROPS (check those needed for this play or your concept of the play)
UNIT SET? YES NO (CIRCLE ONE) NUMBER OF SETTINGs 4-5
HISTORICAL PERIOD none/modern GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SET CONCERNS OR SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: My hope is to have one unit set with lighting, costumes, and specific props to differentiate the different areas of the land of Dr. Seuss
APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF PROPS ~ 30 PERIOD none/"Dr. Seuss" style
DIFFICULT OR UNUSUAL PROPS? YES NO (CIRCLE ONE) DESCRIBE: Props must have a "Dr. Seuss" feel to them and must include a Dr. Seuss hat, a clover, and "who-ville" props.
WEAPONS OR FIREARMS? NO N/A DESCRIBE: N/A

COSTUMES (CHECK THOSE NEEDED FOR THIS PLAY OR YOUR CONCEPT OF THE PLAY)
APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF COSTUMES PER CHARACTER
HISTORICAL PERIOD none/modern SEASON Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter
SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHOICE OF SCRIPT
HAVE YOU SEEN THIS SCRIPT PRODUCED? YES NO (CIRCLE ONE)
I have not seen this script produced, as of 7/25/07. However, I hope to see a production of this show within the next year.

HAVE YOU DONE THIS PLAY BEFORE? BRIEFLY DESCRIBE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE PRODUCTION:
No, I have not been involved in a production of "Seussical" before.
Seussical

Book by: Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty
Co-Conceived by: Eric Idle
Lyrics by: Lynn Ahrens
Music by: Stephen Flaherty
Co-Conceived by Lynn Ahrens, Stephen Flaherty and Eric Idle.
Based on the works of Dr. Seuss

Seussical is a compilation of many of Dr. Seuss' beloved story books. The Cat in the Hat serves as the emcee for the evening, taking the audience through the stories of Horton Hears a Who, The Butter Battle Book, The Grinch Who Stole Christmas, Oh! The Places You'll Go, and many others. All of these stories are given an intertwining story line, with Horton serving as the protagonist. Horton has to overcome two main obstacles in the play; first, he needs to save the planet of Who, and secondly, he needs to save the egg abandoned by Mayzie LaBird. The theme of standing up for what you believe in, and doing what is right, is shown through Horton's actions. No one else believes in him, but as he says many times during the play, he needs to save Who and the egg because "A person's a person no matter how small." After going through many challenges, including being put on trial for "hearing voices," Horton helps the other characters come to the realization that Horton is doing what is right and good.
GRADUATE COMMITTEE AND OPTION APPROVAL FORM
CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
(Submit the original and three copies)

Note: This form is to be completed as soon as the student has formed a committee and selected an option from the list below. Submit the original and three copies to the Office of Graduate Studies in Barge 305.

Student Name: Ellicia Mertens
Mailing Address: ____________________________
City, State, Zipcode: ________________________
Birth Date: ____________________________
Student ID: ____________________________
Date: November 7, 2007

Check option: Indicate credits to be received for the thesis or option:

☐ Written Exam*
☐ Non-Thesis Project
☐ Creative Project
☐ Studio Project
☐ Portfolio Review
☐ Thesis

TH 700 Master's Thesis
Course No. ____________________________
Title: ____________________________
MLA 6th edition
Course No. ____________________________
Title: ____________________________
Style Manual for Thesis or Project

*Students taking written exam option may omit items 1-5 below.

1. Proposed Title:
   Direction of the production "Seussical."

2. Purpose of Study:
The direction of the production "Seussical" serves as the culminating experience for the MA in Theatre Production in theatre arts graduate studies.

3. Scope of Study:
   Documentation based upon the preparation of pre-production research, post-production evaluation, and the direction of the production (including casting and rehearsal of actors, preparation of the Director's Production Book, and oral examination) will benefit students, the MA candidate, and the MA candidate's theatre arts department.

4. Procedure to be used:
   Three phases of study shall be included: pre-production research and thesis documentation in MLA format, rehearsal and direction of the production, and post-production evaluation and documentation.

5. Does the procedure involve collection of data obtained from
   Human Subjects (including use of surveys)? .......................................................... Yes** ☐ No ☑
   Use of Animals?.......................................................... Yes** ☐ No ☑

** If yes, your procedures must be approved in writing by the Human Subjects Committee or the Animal Care and Use Committee before you initiate your research.

Dr. Wesley Van Tassel
Committee Chair (typed or printed)

Professor Michael Smith
Committee Member (typed or printed)

Dr. Terri Brown
Committee Member (typed or printed)

Approved by: George Bellah
dept Chair/Designee (signature) Date

Approved by: Wayne S. Quirk
Associate VP of Graduate Studies Date

Students will be required to submit two copies of all motion picture film, film strips, sound film strips, slides, tapes, cassettes, pictures, etc. produced as part of the thesis. These are to be submitted at the time the thesis (three copies) is submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

Please note:
The signatures have been redacted due to security reasons.
Libretto/Vocal Book

Music by Stephen Flaherty
Lyrics by Lynn Ahrens
Book by Lynn Ahrens & Stephen Flaherty
Co-conceived by Lynn Ahrens, Stephen Flaherty & Eric Idle
Based on the works of Dr. Seuss

NOTICE: DO NOT DEFACE!
* Should you find it necessary to mark cues or cuts, use a soft black lead pencil only.

NOT FOR SALE
* This book is rented for the period specified in your contract. It remains the property of:

Music Theatre International
421 West 54th Street
New York NY 10019
(212) 541-4684
www.MTIShows.com

Copyright © 1998 Pen And Perseverance, Inc., and Hillsdale Music Inc.
Please Note:

Contents for the following have been redacted due to copyright restriction.


- This screen play is not open access.
- This book is available through WorldCat: [http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/629792300](http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/629792300)
THESIS PRODUCTION INFORMATION
MASTER OF ARTS IN THEATRE PRODUCTION

When completed, mail to: George Bellah, Graduate Coordinator
Theatre Arts Department
Central Washington University
400 E. 8th Ave.
Ellensburg, WA 98926-7460

Name Ellicia M. Mertens

I do not need to fill out this form as the information you have is correct and complete. N/A

I do not need to fill out this form as I do not plan to complete my degree. Reason? N/A

Proposed Title: "Seussical: The Musical"
[Remember: You must submit a Committee and Option Approval Form.]

Proposed Dates:
[Year] 2008 [Quarter] Winter [Month] Feb [March] [Days] 1, 2, 3, 4

Preferences for Thesis Chair: 1) Wes Van Tassel [has been assigned as chair]
2) 
3) 

Preferences for Thesis Committee members: 1) Michael Smith
2) Terri Brown
3) Christina Barrigan
4) George Bellah

Proposed Orals Date:
[Year] 2008 [Quarter] Spring [Month] May [Days] 1, 2, 3, 4

The above information is a change/correction. N/A

The above information is new. Yes, new information.
August 15, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Gordon Comfort and I am the principal at Richland High School. I understand that Ellicia M. Mertens, a candidate for a MA in Theatre Production at Central Washington University, will be performing “Seussical” this year as part of the requirements for her MA. The performance dates for the show have been set for February 22, 23, 29 and March 1 at 7:00PM in the Richland High School Auditorium.

I think this will be a great opportunity for the students at RHS and the community. If you have any questions please call me at 509.967.6540.

Sincerely,

Gordon Comfort
Principal
Richland High School

Please note:
This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.
Project Parameters

Performance dates for the production of *Seussical* are February 22, 23, 29 and March 1. This production will be the annual winter musical at Richland High School. The budget will be approximately $15,000. These funds will be provided through the Associated Student Body (ASB) drama account at the school. Possible additional costs will be covered by the Richland High School Theatre Arts booster club. Cast size for this show can be extremely flexible. The plan is to have a cast of approximately thirty to forty students, with a technical crew of approximately ten, and an orchestra of approximately sixteen. For the past two years, over eighty students have auditioned for the annual musical, so the expectation is enough students will audition to fill all roles, both lead and ensemble.

The orchestra will audition and rehearse through the Richland High School instrumental music program. As it gets closer to the production dates, the actors will rehearse with the orchestra during designated tutorials, and then all students will rehearse together on stage during the two tech weeks.

There is a supportive group of parent and community volunteers who will provide mentorship and some of the labor in the areas of costuming, set construction, publicity, and anything else the director may need assistance with.

The performance venue for the production will be the Richland High School auditorium. This auditorium poses some challenges, as it is a very large space, with seating for 1500 audience members. The proscenium of the stage is fifty-two feet, with ample wing space but no fly space. Over the past two years, the production staff of the musicals have adapted set designs, choreography, and blocking to use the space in the wisest way possible. The biggest concern the production staff have is bringing the audience into the world of the play within such an enormous, somewhat impersonal space. Sound design poses another concern, as the auditorium is programmed for only eight wireless mics. We have had sound difficulty the past two years in this space, with actors having to share mics, wires not working, sound feed-back, etc. Neither the theatre arts department nor the music department are
allowed to operate the sound board or the lighting program in the auditorium. These design elements are controlled by the auditorium manager. This causes concern as both of these important technical elements are out of the production staff’s hands and usually are not taken care of until the final tech week, right before the production opens to the public.

The rehearsal schedule will begin in November, and run through the end of February. Students will not have rehearsals from December 19 through January 6, due to winter break. Vocal rehearsals and reviews will be held in the choir room, and all choreography and blocking rehearsals will be held in the auditorium. The first two weeks of rehearsal will solely be vocal rehearsal. Since Seussical is almost entirely sung, it is vital the students have a strong understanding of the vocal challenges of the songs before they get on their feet and begin choreography and blocking rehearsals. After the first two weeks, rehearsals will be a combination of vocal, choreography, and blocking.

Technical work days will be held every Saturday and some evenings. All tech crew students will be required to attend these work days. All actors will be required to attend at least two Saturday work days. Technical rehearsals will begin the week of February 11, with full tech and dress rehearsals the four days leading up to the opening performance on February 22.

All performances will begin at 7:30 PM, and will run approximately two and a half hours, including intermission. All students involved with the production will be required to attend the set strike on Sunday, March 2.
Seussical Production Schedule

September 4  
Section I due

October 15 – 17  
Meet with costume designer, set designer, publicity/marketing team

November 1  
Costume designs and set design finalized

Deadline for the 5th Avenue High School Musical Theatre awards application

November 12 – 16  
Meet with production crew, including vocal director, music director, choreographer, set designer, costume designer, parent volunteers, etc. to discuss auditions, plan future meetings, and finalize rehearsal schedule.

November 26  
Section II due

November 27, 28  
Auditions in the auditorium, 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM

November 29  
Call backs, 3:00 PM to 6:30 PM

November 30  
Cast meeting. Read-through the script, sign contracts, take costume measurements, 3:00 PM to 6:30 PM

December 3 – 7  
Vocal rehearsals in the choir room, 2:45 PM to 5:30 PM

December 10 - 14  
Vocal rehearsals in the choir room, choreography rehearsals in the auditorium, 2:45 PM to 5:30 PM

December 17, 18  
Vocal rehearsals in the choir room, choreography rehearsals in the auditorium, 2:45 PM to 5:30 PM

December 19 – January 6  
No rehearsals due to winter break

January 5  
Technical work day, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

January 7 – 11  
Vocal rehearsals in the choir room, choreography rehearsals in the auditorium, 2:45 PM to 5:30 PM

January 12  
Technical work day, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
January 14 – 18  Begin blocking rehearsals. Review vocals and choreography, 2:45 PM to 5:30 PM
January 19  Technical work day, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
January 21  All day choreography review rehearsal, 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM
January 22 – 25  Blocking rehearsals. Review vocal and choreography, 2:45 PM to 5:30 PM
January 26  Technical work day, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
January 28  Begin scene run-through rehearsals, everyone off book with prompting, 2:45 PM to 5:30 PM
January 29  Scene run-through rehearsal, 2:45 PM to 5:30 PM
January 30  Scene run-through rehearsal, everyone off book without prompting, 2:45 to 5:30 PM
January 31 – February 1  Scene run-through rehearsals, 2:45 PM to 5:30 PM
February 2  Technical work day, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
February 4  Distribute posters to community organizations and businesses
February 4 – 6  Rehearse scenes that need extra work, 2:45 PM to 5:30 PM
February 7  Run through Act I, 2:45 PM to 5:30 PM
February 8  Run through Act II, 2:45 to 5:30 PM
             Program design dead-line
February 9  Technical work day, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
February 11  Run through Act I, 2:45 PM to 6:00 PM
February 12  Run through Act II, 2:45 PM to 6:00 PM
February 13 – 15  Run through the entire show, 2:45 PM to 6:00 PM
February 16  Technical work day, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 18</td>
<td>Technical set-up / work day, 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tech-dress rehearsal, 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 19–21</td>
<td>Tech-dress rehearsals, 2:45 PM to 7:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 22</td>
<td>Opening night! Call at 5:00 PM, show at 7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 23</td>
<td>Second performance. Call at 5:00 PM, show at 7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 27</td>
<td>Pick-up rehearsal, 3:00 PM to 5:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 29</td>
<td>Third performance. Call at 5:00 PM, show at 7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>Closing night! Call at 5:00 PM, show at 7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2</td>
<td>Strike set, 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 9</td>
<td>Section III (Plus Sections I and II) due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 23</td>
<td>Oral Defense at Central Washington University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation of *Seussical* as a Production Vehicle

*Seussical* was specifically chosen for the venue and community it will be performed in. This musical has never been produced in the Tri-Cities area, but is a favorite of many in the theatre community, and is a wonderful educational outreach tool for audience members both young and old. Our audience consists of elementary age students through adult, mostly from Richland, Washington, but also from the nearby towns of Pasco, Kennewick, and Benton City. The performance dates coincide with the Mid-Columbia Reading Foundation's celebration of Dr. Seuss' birthday, in which literacy is promoted through book drives, reading buses, and Dr. Seuss celebrations and activities in the local elementary and middle schools.

*Seussical* calls for a large cast and full orchestra. The student body at Richland High School is over 2000; this production, with a cast of approximately thirty to forty, a tech crew of at least ten, and an orchestra of approximately sixteen will provide many of the students who audition a chance to participate in some way. Although our auditorium poses some challenges, it also provides ample space for the cast, crew, and orchestra to perform. The auditorium can seat up to 1500 audience members. Although audiences that large are not expected, it is comforting to know that if for some reason one night the audience is larger than usual, we will have the space to seat them.

There are some challenges presented with producing *Seussical*. A major challenge in the performance venue is the size of the auditorium. The proscenium of the stage is fifty-two feet across, with ample wing space but no fly space. This causes the set designer to often go to a “Plan B” when designing the sets for the musicals performed in this space. Since the production staff has been dealing with this issue for the past two years, however, we are confident that through some creativity and brainstorming, we will figure out the best way possible to use the space the performances will take place in. Sound design and lighting design also pose some challenges, as the theatre director is not in charge of these two elements. The actual hanging of the lights and sound design are led by the
auditorium manager and his crew, and most often do not take place until a week before the performance. A meeting with the auditorium manager will hopefully take place by the beginning of February, if not sooner, to address these design concerns.

There is a concern that a few of the roles may be difficult to fill, due to the vocal demands or other specific characteristics. However, in the past, new students have always auditioned for the musical, and it is the hope of the production staff that this will once again be true this year at auditions. The past two musicals have also been demanding in many ways, but students have always shown up who could play the roles.

Coordinating all aspects of the production, from design elements, to vocal, choreography, and acting directors, to making sure the community volunteers and parents who volunteer to do a specific task get it done in time, is the primary concern at the moment. A large production such as Seussical takes a lot of people to make it work, and it is sometimes frustrating to organize due dates and times for meetings, then have volunteers either forget or not follow through with their task at hand. Keeping this in mind, two parent volunteers who have worked closely with the director before have volunteered to be production assistants and keep track of the many different jobs that need to be completed.

It is the production staff's hope that Seussical will make a strong debut in the Tri-Cities area, that the challenges listed above will be solved somehow, and that Richland High School can once again provide quality family entertainment for the audience members who support the program.
Director's Concept Statement for **Seussical**

**Seussical**, created by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty, is a compilation of many of Dr. Seuss' beloved story books. Dr. Seuss and his writings are a significant part of Americana, and there are certain expectations any time something with the name Seuss in it is produced. **Seussical** is no exception, and it is the production staff's intent to bring the stories of Dr. Seuss alive during the Richland High School production of **Seussical**.

The world of Dr. Seuss' characters will be all encompassing in this production. The show's orchestrations exude energy, character, and setting. The music will be the basis for blocking and choreography. The choreographer and director will work closely to ensure that the blocking and the choreography blend together to tell the story of the characters in the strongest, most visual way possible.

The color palette of the production will be based on the books of Dr. Seuss. Bright colors will be used throughout the show, with a definite distinction of color palette between the two main settings: the Jungle of Nool and Whoville. The Jungle of Nool's main colors will be variations of green and blue, while Whoville's color palette will include bright yellow and orange. Some of the color palette will overlap throughout the show in costumes and setting, as the characters from each world begin to interact with each other.

The scenic elements of the show will be based on the illustrations of Dr. Seuss. The attention to curved lines, shadow, and specific images in his books will be taken into sincere consideration during the design process. The ideal look of the set is to have a three-dimensional version of Dr. Seuss' illustrations on the stage. Although there may be some pieces, particularly different level platforms, that stay on the stage throughout the entire show, many of the set pieces will be mobile, as the play moves from the Jungle of Nool to Whoville back and forth quite often, and quickly. It is the hoped that many of these mobile set pieces can be used for more than one setting, depending on which way the set...
piece is facing the audience. Props will be designated for each character. Some of the props will be puppets, as the Sour Kangaroo and Horton both directly interact with puppets during the show (the young kangaroo, and the elephant bird). The Cat in the Hat is the character who will need the most props, as he is emceeing the entire show and often shows up on stage as different characters.

Lighting will support the action and color palette on the stage. Some special lighting will be needed in certain scenes, such as the numbers “Anything’s Possible” (a water effect) and “Solla Sollew” (a star effect). Spot lights with a diffusion gel may be used for solo songs. Each scene should fluidly move to the next. Therefore, black outs will be discouraged, unless it is the end of an act or a black out is needed to complete a scene.

Sound will be one of the most difficult challenges, as only eight personal microphones are available for a cast of over thirty. Lead roles, such as The Cat in the Hat and Horton the Elephant will have their own microphones. A system to share the other mics will need to be created.

Costumes will be created with the intent to show some elements of the animal characteristics, while still keeping some of the human (actor) elements as well. Each character will have some sort of animal trait or physical feature (such as the Wickersham Brothers having monkey ears and possibly a monkey tail, Gertrude wearing feathers, etc.). Puppets will also be used for certain ensemble scenes to assist with quick changing challenges, and to create the appearance of more characters being on the stage. It is hoped that some characters, such as the Grinch and Vlad Vladikoff, may be puppets operated by a puppeteer.

The orchestration for Seussical calls for a sixteen to seventeen member orchestra. Instruments include bass, cello, drums, guitar, keyboard, trombone, trumpet, viola, and violin. The orchestra will play the music from the orchestra pit at the front of the stage. The Cat in the Hat will be able to interact with the orchestra during certain parts of the show.

Choreography will need to be specific to each genre of music in the show, and should help
show specific characteristics of each character. There will be some large group numbers. If possible, The Cat in the Hat should be a triple threat, including strong dance moves to entertain the audience, and to use as part of his emcee character.

Overall, the main goal of this production of Seussical is to bring the stories of Dr. Seuss to life on the stage. This will be done by paying close attention to his books, including his illustrations, color palettes, and description of character, and incorporating those into the performances.
Given Circumstances for Seussical

Geographical Location

- Sollow Sollew (Ahrens and Flaherty 11, 43, 44, 74, 75, 76)
- “alone in your room” (12)
- small world (13)
- the planet of Who (13)
- the Jungle of Nool (13, 16, 51, 66, 69)
- a bright blue sky (15, 51, 66, 75)
- the River Walloo (15, 69)
- the Jungle of Nool, “in the heat of the day, in the cool of the pool” (16)
- the planet of Who, “on a very soft clover” (19)
- the planet of Who, “the tiniest planet in the sky” (26)
- the skies of Who are “unbearably dark” (29)
- on the other side of Who-ville, the Truffula trees were all cut down (29)
- McElligot's pool (33)
- McElligot's pool is connected to an underground river (33)
- the underground river flows under state highway two hundred and three (34)
- the river connects McElligot's pool to the sea (34)
- mountains (51, 66, 67)
- desert (52, 56)
- forest (52)
- beaches (52)
- “a great patch of clovers a hundred miles wide” (56)
- hills (56, 88)
- a nest in a tree (58)
- a "terrible storm" (60)
- cold weather with snow, sleet, and icicles (61)
- Palm Beach (61, 71, 90)
- the sea (67, 71)
- New York (68)
- the Circus McGurkus (70)
- Kalamazoo (70, 90)
- Shark River Hills (70)
- Pittsburgh (70, 90)
- Dubuque (70)
- lightning (72)
- hailstorms (72)
- snow (72, 88)
- warm breezes (75)
- fog (88)
- "choking smog" (88)
- "a soggy slope" (88)
- "a stinking bog" (88)

Date
- the fifteenth of May (16, 25)
- Christmas (28, 77, 78)
- a week (40)
- night (60)
- the winter (61)
- two weeks (67)

Economic Environment

- an auction, “Seussey's” (68)
- Horton the Elephant auctioned, with the bid starting at ten thousand dollars (68)
- each show at the circus is “ten cents a peek” (69)

Political Environment

- a General “crazy for war” (12)
- breaking the peace is against the law (24)
- the Mayor of Who (26)
- the planet of Who is on the brink of war (29)
- Who is “a troubled and a tiny land” (29)
- the Mayor of Who has just been elected (31)
- General Genghis Kahn Schmitz (37)
- military academy (37, 38)
- the military “makes a boy a man” (38, 39)
- all Whos should believe in the right of eating their bread butter side up (38)
- the Whos will go to war with those who eat their bread butter side down (39)
- the Whos enlist their boys into the military (39)
- the military is lost in the clover, but just keeps marching around (66)
- the war “makes no sense” (77)
- the military is “teaching children to fight” (77)
- there are minefields outside of Who-ville (77)
- JoJo quits the military (77)
- JoJo is killed in the minefield (78, 79, 80)
- JoJo did not want to fight in the war (80)
- a citizen's arrest (90)
- trial of the “People versus Horton the Elephant” (91)
- Judge Yertle the Turtle presides over the trial (91)
- the defendant is charged with disturbing the peace (91)
- the star witness is called forward to testify (92)
- the defendant, Horton the Elephant, is found guilty of disturbing the peace (94)

Social Environment
- Dr. Seuss is not Mother Goose (13)
- Horton the Elephant is viewed as being fat, dumb, and slow by the other jungle animals (20)
- The Cat in the Hat serves as a TV talk show host, discussing “Psychic Animals Who Hear Voices” (22)
- Gertrude McFuzz doesn't believe what the other animals say (22)
- Mayzie LaBird wants the attention to be on her (23)
- breaking the peace is against the law (24)
- the jungle animals see Horton as being wrong because he thinks differently than they do (24)
- Who-ville consists of tiny houses, grocery stores, tunnels, and streets (27)
- heaven on Earth is not heaven on Who (29)
- a part of Who-ville has been destroyed, with no more Truffula trees growing in that area (29)
- the Whos live in a troubled land on the brink of war (29)
- the Who PTA (31)
- JoJo's parents had a conference with his teachers (31)
- JoJo is suspended from school for thinking creative thoughts (31)
• Mr. and Mrs. Mayor, JoJo's parents, scold him and ask him not to think such creative thoughts (32)
• JoJo's parents want him to fit into the social norms of Who-ville (32)
• JoJo's parents feel they need to “lay down the law” (36)
• JoJo's parents are worried JoJo may hate them (36)
• Mr. and Mrs. Mayor wish they had instructions on how to raise a child (36)
• Mr. and Mrs. Mayor send JoJo to military school (37)
• General Genghis Kahn Schmitz is proud that he wears down his students so they do not hold opinions, sing in the shower, or color outside the lines (38)
• the Whos believe in eating bread “butter side up” (39)
• the Whos look down on anyone who eats bread butter side down (39)
• the military “makes a boy a man” (40)
• Gertrude McFuzz feels that if she was prettier, she'd grab Horton's attention (44, 46, 48)
• Mayzie LaBird went to a Doctor to change her physical appearance (45)
• the Doctor told Mayzie LaBird she'd be happy if she took a certain pill (45)
• Mayzie uses peer pressure to convince Gertrude to take pills as well (46)
• Gertrude decides to take the pills to become more attractive (48)
• The Cat in the Hat serves as a newscaster, informing the jungle animals of the chase between the monkeys and Horton (51)
• Gertrude has fallen in love with Horton because he has a good heart (57)
• Gertrude wants Horton to notice her physical changes (57)
• Mayzie LaBird will become a single mom (58)
• Mayzie LaBird was abandoned by Tweet McFirth, a night owl, after he had her lay an egg (59)
• Mayzie LaBird abandons her egg (60)
• Horton is sold to a man from the circus (68)
- the circus is the world's greatest show (69)
- Mayzie is bored with her free time lifestyle (72)
- JoJo does not believe in the war, and refuses to fight (77)
- JoJo wonders why the adults are teaching children to fight (77)
- JoJo is killed in the war (78, 79)
- the Whos celebrate the annual Christmas pageant, even though there is a war going on (78, 79)
- the Sour Kangaroo makes a citizen's arrest (90)
- Horton is put on trial for disturbing the peace (91)
- the jungle animals want Horton thrown in jail (93)
- Horton the Elephant is found criminally insane, and is ordered to live in the asylum (94)
- the jungle animals want to boil the planet of Who (95)
- Horton tries to convince the jury that the Whos really exist and they do not deserve to die (95)
- Horton believes “a person's a person, no matter how small” (96, 98)
- Who-ville is saved “by the smallest of all” (98)

Religious Environment

- Christmastime (28, 77, 78, 790)
- the Whos love Christmas (28, 78, 79)
- heaven (29)
- JoJo would rather have Christmas than war (77)
Previous Action for Seussical

- the Wickersham Brothers have been looking at Horton and making fun of him (Ahrens and Flaherty 20)
- Gertrude McFuzz is Horton's neighbor, and states that Horton has “never done anything crazy before” (22)
- Gertrude states Horton has always been friendly, loyal, and kind (22)
- every Christmas, the Grinch presents his Christmas tale (28)
- the planet of Who has been on the brink of war (29)
- the Truffula tree forest has been destroyed (29)
- Mr. Mayor has just been elected (31)
- Mr. and Mrs. Mayor attend a parent-teacher conference regarding JoJo's behavior (31)
- JoJo was disruptive in his classes (31)
- JoJo has been telling “outlandish tales” (32)
- JoJo has read of McElligot's Pool in books (33)
- JoJo was not in any trouble until he started having Thinks (36)
- the boys of General Schmitz's military academy used to hum in the shower, color outside the lines, and had opinions (38)
- the Whos believe in eating bread “butter side up” (39)
- Horton and JoJo have both visited Solla Sollew (43)
- Gertrude McFuzz has tried many different things to make her one-feather tail look more attractive (44)
- Mayzie LaBird used to be a plain looking bird until she visited a doctor who gave her pills to improve her physical attributes (45)
Polar Attitudes for *Seussical*

JoJo:  My Thinks always get me in trouble. (Beginning)

My Thinks can make amazing things happen. (Ending)

Horton the Elephant: I will not give in to peer pressure; I will do what I know is right. (Beginning)

Believing in myself has kept me strong throughout many ordeals, and I am now respected for being myself. (Ending)

Gertrude McFuzz: I am not happy with how I look; I'll never get Horton's attention. (Beginning)

I just need to be myself to have others love me. (Ending)

Mayzie LaBird: It's all about me. (Beginning)

I've realized my life style is not appropriate for a child, nor do I have the mentality to be a good mother. (Ending)

Sour Kangaroo: I ridicule those who don't think like I do. (Beginning)

I need to be more open-minded and accepting of others. (Ending)

General Schmitz: War is the only thing to believe in. (Beginning)

Maybe war doesn't solve our problems like I thought it did. (Ending)
Analysis of Dialogue in *Seussical*

The language in *Seussical* is that of Dr. Seuss. Wherever possible, Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty used Dr. Seuss' own words from his stories, setting them to music and using them as dialogue. In order to connect the many stories used in *Seussical*, there were times where Ahrens needed to add additional dialogue and lyrics. When she did so, she made sure her words matched those of Dr. Seuss. So alike were Ahrens words to Dr. Seuss' that his widow, Audrey Geisel, shared at a workshop in Toronto that she couldn't tell where his voice left off and where Ahrens' began (Anderman).

Dr. Seuss wrote all of his stories in rhyme, and in his earlier books, almost always in a repetitive form of verse called anapestic tetrameter (Mass). Anapestic feet consists of a metric foot made of two unstressed syllables, followed by a stressed syllable (Van Tassel). Tetrameter means there are four of these feet to each line. One of the lead characters in *Seussical*, Horton, speaks in this way as he is tries to defend the Whos: “I meant what I said, and I said what I meant. / An elephant's faithful, one hundred percent” (Ahrens and Flaherty 94).

Later in his career, Seuss also wrote in trochaic tetrameter and iambic tetrameter. In *Green Eggs and Ham* (and thus in the General Ghengis Khan Schmitz scenes in *Seussical*,) Sam-I-Am speaks in trochees, and the responding character speaks in iambs (“Dr. Seuss”). Trochees are two-syllable feet with the first syllable stressed and the second syllable unstressed, while iambs are feet of two syllables, the first unstressed and the second stressed (Van Tassel).

Dr. Seuss used his rhymes (and inventive vocabulary when he couldn't think of a word to rhyme with the rest of the line,) to educate young readers with new vocabulary, and to make social comments on everything from prejudice to the destruction of the environment (Evans). His rhythmic writings sound musical when read aloud, and this crossed over smoothly to the book and score Ahrens and Flaherty created for *Seussical*. By Flaherty's calculation, more than ninety-five percent of the play, both book and music, is written in rhyme (Anderman).
Analysis of Dramatic Action for Seussical

Scene Three: “Biggest Blame Fool”

Scene Three Units

Queen of the Jungle
Honorable Defense
The Bullies Move In
Ganging Up
Day Time Talk Show
The Gossip Spreads
A True Friend

Mood Adjective or Metaphor

brash, bossy, leader of the pack
honest, caring, bullied student
teasing, insulting, kids on a playground
the town gossip
sensationalism, media circus
mocking, exaggerated, peer pressure
kind, unsure, shy
**BIRD GIRLS #1, 2, 3**

**SO, GENTLY, AND USING**
**THE GREATEST OF CARE,**
**THE ELEPHANT STRETCHED**
**HIS GREAT TRUNK THROUGH THE AIR,**
**AND HE LIFTED THE DUST SPECK**
**AND CARRIED IT OVER**
**AND PLACED IT DOWN,**

**HORTON**

*(spoken)*

**Safe!**

**BIRD GIRLS**

**ON A VERY SOFT CLOVER.**

*(THE SOUR KANGAROO makes an impressive entrance.)*

**SONG: BIGGEST BLAME FOOL**

**SOUR KANGAROO**

Humpf!...humped a voice.

'TWAS A SOUR KANGAROO.
AND THE YOUNG KANGAROO IN HER POUCH SAID:

*(THE SOUR KANGAROO reveals her child. She is also the voice of the young kangaroo.)*

"Humpf!"

**YOUNG KANGAROO**

**SOUR KANGAROO**

TOO!

Why, that speck is as small as the head of a pin.
A person on that? Why, there never has been!

*(SHE laughs derisively)*

**YOU’RE THE BIGGEST BLAME FOOL**
**IN THE JUNGLE OF NOOL**
**AND I DON’T CARE WHO I TELL.**
**THE BIGGEST BLAME FOOL**
**IN THE JUNGLE OF NOOL,**

**SOUR KANGAROO berates**

**SOUR KANGAROO judges**
YOUNG KANGAROO
AND I THINK SO AS WELL!

SOUR KANGAROO
MAYBE I'M NASTY, MAYBE I'M CRUEL
BUT YOU'RE THE BIGGEST BLAME FOOL

YOUNG KANGAROO
IN THE JUNGLE OF NOOL.

HORTON
It's true. Please believe me. I tell you sincerely,
My ears are quite keen and I heard him quite clearly.
I know there's a person down there. And what's more,
Quite likely there's two. Even three. Even four.

(The WICKERSHAM BROTHERS enter-- a trio of monkeys up to mischief)

WICKERSHAM #2
HA! LAUGHED A VOICE!

WICKERSHAM #1,3
HA! LAUGHED SOME OTHERS!

WICKERSHAM #1,2,3
HA! HA! HA!
LAUGHED THE WICKERSHAM BROTHERS!

(They dance with glee)

OH, HE'S THE BIGGEST BLAME FOOL
IN THE JUNGLE OF NOOL
AND MONKEYS LIKE US SHOULD KNOW.

SOUR KANGAROO
NO, NO, NO, NO!

WICKERSHAMS
WE'VE BEEN OUT ON A LIMB
LOOKIN' DOWN ON HIM--

AND HE'S FAT!

WICKERSHAM #1

HE'S DUMB!

WICKERSHAM #2
HE'S SLOW!

SOUR KANGAROO

UH HUH!

SOUR KANGAROO & WICKERSHAMS

ELEPHANTS AIN'T TOO SWIFT AS A RULE
BUT HE'S THE BIGGEST BLAME FOOL
IN THE JUNGLE OF NOOL.
'CAUSE HE'S TALKIN' TO A SPECK
TALKIN' TO A SPECK
TO A SPECK OF DUST

BASS WICKERSHAM

BLAME FOOL IN THE JUNGLE OF NOOL.

WICKERSHAMS, BIRD GIRLS, SOUR KANGAROO

TALKIN' TO A SPECK
TALKIN' TO A SPECK
TO A SPECK OF DUST!

BASS WICKERSHAM

BLAME FOOL IN THE JUNGLE OF NOOL

SOUR KANGAROO

R-E-S-P-E-C-K!

Oh, please! Take that speck away!

ALL

DID YOU HEAR? DID YOU HEAR?
DID YOU, DID YOU HEAR?

BIRD GIRLS

Through the jungle, the news quickly flew!

ALL

DID YOU HEAR? DID YOU HEAR?
DID YOU, DID YOU HEAR?

He talks to a dust speck!

BIRD GIRLS

It's on Channel Two!

BOY

Boy imagines
(THE BOY instantly envisions the whole scene on TV. THE CAT IN THE HAT now plays a TALK SHOW HOST of the “sympathetic” variety, ala Sally Jesse Raphael, microphone in hand.)

CAT (AS TALK SHOW HOST)

Our topic today is “Psychic Elephants Who Hear Voices.” Whaddaya think, folks. Is the elephant off his trunk?

(NOTE: THE CAT may improvise and ad lib with the audience here.)

CAT AS TALK SHOW HOST

We’ll be right back with “speck”, “clover”, “dust”, “neighbor”, “Who”…

(CAT holds the microphone to the clover for a beat)

Nothing! Stay tuned! We’ll be right back!

(The CAT now interviews GERTRUDE MCFUZZ, a plain bird with a one-feather tail)

ALL

BIGGEST BLAME FOOL

IN THE JUNGLE OF NOOL

GERTRUDE

I’m Gertrude McFuzz, and I live right next door. He’s never done anything crazy before.

ALL

BIGGEST BLAME FOOL

IN THE JUNGLE OF NOOL

GERTRUDE

He’s always been friendly and loyal and kind. I just don’t believe Horton’s out of his mind!

ALL

DID YOU HEAR? DID YOU HEAR?

DID YOU, DID YOU HEAR?

(The glamorous and flamboyant MAYZIE LA BIRD is now interviewed)

MAYZIE

I’m Mayzie La Bird

And I live in that tree.
ALL
DID YOU HEAR? DID YOU HEAR?
DID YOU, DID YOU HEAR?

MAYZIE

Enough about Horton. Let's talk about me!

MAYZIE, BIRD GIRLS
LET'S TALK ABOUT, TALK ABOUT,
TALK ABOUT, TALK ABOUT...
ME!

ALL (EXCEPT HORTON & GERTRUDE)
TALKIN' TO A SPECK
TALKIN' TO A SPECK
TO A SPECK OF DUST

WICKERSHAM #3
BLAME FOOL IN THE
JUNGLE OF NOOL

SOUR KANGAROO (riffs)
JUST A FOOL
JUST A FOOL

ALL (EXCEPT HORTON & GERTRUDE)
TALKIN' TO A SPECK
TALKIN' TO A SPECK
TO A SPECK OF DUST

WICKERSHAM #3
BLAME FOOL IN THE
JUNGLE OF NOOL

SOUR KANGAROO (riffs)
JUST A FOOL
JUST A FOOL

HORTON
I JUST HAVE TO SAVE THEM, BECAUSE AFTER ALL
A PERSON'S A PERSON NO MATTER HOW SMALL.

HORTON & GERTRUDE
A PERSON'S A PERSON NO MATTER HOW...

(Their intimate moment is interrupted by the others)

ALL (EXCEPT HORTON & GERTRUDE)
BIGGEST BLAME FOOL
IN THE JUNGLE OF NOOL!
HE'S THE WORST WE EVER SAW!

BIRD GIRLS
TELLIN' LIES, MAKIN' JOKES
WICKERSHAMS
IT'S AN ELEPHANT HOAX!

YERTLE THE TURTLE, WICKERSHAMS, BIRD GIRLS
BROTHER, THAT'S AGAINST THE LAW!

SOUR KANGAROO, BIRD GIRLS, WICKS, YERTLE, MAYZIE
BREAKIN' THE PEACE, CREATIN' A FUSS!

SOUR KANGAROO
Somebody's thinkin' different than us!

ALL (EXCEPT GERTRUDE AND HORTON)
BIGGEST BLAME FOOL
IN THE JUNGLE OF

ALL
NOOL, NOOL, NOOL!
IN THE JUNGLE OF NOOL, NOOL, NOOL!
IN THE JUNGLE OF NOOL...

SOUR KANGAROO (riffs)

(ALL exit)

CITIZENS OF THE JUNGLE
WHO WHO WAH DAH
WHO WHO
WHO WAH DAH DAH DAH
WHO WHO WAH DAH
WHO WHO
WHO WAH DAH DAH DAH
WHO WHO WAH DAH
WHO WHO
WHO WAH DAH DAH DAH
WHO WHO WAH DAH
WHO WHO
WHO WAH DAH DAH DAH
WHO WHO WAH DAH
WHO WHO
WHO WAH DAH DAH DAH
WHO WHO WAH DAH
WHO WHO
WHO WHO

WICKERSHAMS #1, 2, 3
BETTER LOOK OUT,
BETTER LOOK OUT, HORTON,
BETTER LOOK OUT

WICKERSHAM #1
OR SOMEONE'S GONNA GET YOUR CLOVER!

WICKERSHAMS #1, 2, 3
BETTER LOOK OUT,
BETTER LOOK OUT, HORTON,
BETTER LOOK OUT,
BETTER LOOK OUT!

(GERTRUDE remains behind for one moment, looking at HORTON longingly.)
GERTRUDE
ON THE FIFTEENTH OF MAY, MISS GERTRUDE McFUZZ
DISCOVERED HOW TRULY UNIQUE HORTON WAS.
BUT SHE KNEW TO APPROACH HIM
WOULD PROBABLY FAIL,
'Cause who'd notice a bird
WITH A ONE FEATHER TAIL?

(GERTRUDE exits dejectedly. HORTON is alone with the speck. He listens closely)

(Offstage, tiny, distant)
Help! Help!

Then the voice came again,
Calling over and over--

(Offstage, tiny, distant)
Help!!

So he tried to think
Who might be down on that clover.

Hello?
Is anyone there?

(MR. and MRS. MAYOR are revealed.)
Who are you?

SONG: HERE ON WHO

Well,

WE'RE WHOS HERE.
WE ARE WHOS HERE.
SMALLER THAN THE EYE CAN SEE.

IT'S TRUE, SIR.
WE'RE WHO'S WHO, SIR.
I'M A WHO
AND SO IS SHE.
Character Analysis of Lead Characters for *Seussical*

*Seussical* is an amalgamation of Dr. Seuss' most beloved stories, with the characters The Cat in the Hat, Horton the Elephant, and the Boy (JoJo) leading the way through the many adventures of this family musical. The playwrights, Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty, specifically state in their introduction of the script that even the mischievous characters, or what would be considered the antagonists, “are not bad guys.” With that being said, rather than choosing one specific protagonist and one specific antagonist to analyze, the three main characters who push the story forward will be looked at in detail.

**The Cat in the Hat**

Desire: The Cat in the Hat is the instigator of the stories that come to life on stage. His desire is to bring the boy (JoJo) into the story and to show him what he can do with his imagination. The Cat in the Hat also desires to bring the audience into the story by speaking to them directly and having them feel involved.

Will: The Cat in the Hat has a strong will of pushing through the story. He is the only one who knows what will happen, so he is very confident.

Moral stance: The Cat loves mischief, and is not afraid to put characters into uncertain situations to see how they adapt to the story. He knows the end of the story before it begins, so it is with playfulness that he manipulates the different characters, making sure everything is set right in the end.

Decorum: The Cat in the Hat is energetic and playful. Acrobatic in nature, he plays many comic cameo roles through both physical movement and vocal inflection. The Cat in *Seussical* must physically represent the Cat from the book. Lanky, with a big red bow tie, white gloves, and a red and white striped stove pipe hat physically completes his decorum.

Summary adjectives: energetic, flamboyant, mischievous
Horton the Elephant

Desire: Horton's main desire is to do what he believes is right, no matter what the consequences may be. He wants to save the planet of Who, and agrees to protect Mayzie's egg. He suffers ridicule from others due to his strong, heart-felt desire.

Will: Horton has an extremely strong will to do what is right. His inner confidence helps protect the smallest of the small in the story.

Moral Stance: “A person's a person, no matter how small.” (Ahrens and Flaherty, 18)

Decorum: Horton is an elephant, and carries the decorum of an elephant. He is larger than the other animals in the jungle, moves at a slower pace, and is sometimes clumsy. His large ears help him hear things the other animals cannot, and his patience and determination help him in times of need.

Summary Adjectives: humble, hefty, compassionate

Boy/JoJo

Desire: This character is challenging, as the boy starts off as a boy that could be from the audience, then, once thrown into the story by the Cat, becomes JoJo, the young Who boy who helps save the planet of Who. For both parts of this character, his main desire is to use his imagination without feeling judged or being told he is wrong.

Will: JoJo is determined to use his imagination, but because he is a child, his will is sometimes influenced by those around him, including his parents and General Ghengis Khan Schmitz. His determination wins out in the end, when he stands up for himself and convinces those around him his imagination is important.

Moral Stance: JoJo's moral stance is well developed for a child. Even though he is thrown into situations not in his control, he stays true to what he believes. He does not judge others, and believes in peace, not war.

Decorum: JoJo is young, spriteful, and active.
Summary Adjectives: imaginative, confident, thoughtful
Dramatic Ideas for Seussical

Main Idea

Seussical uses the beloved characters of Dr. Seuss' works to explore the topics of believing in yourself, standing up for what you believe in, using your imagination, and how society can effect the individual in both positive and negative ways. Through the story of Horton the Elephant trying to do what's right, and JoJo, a young Who boy, who's imagination keeps getting him into trouble, audience members both young and old can watch Dr. Seuss' stories being brought to life on stage. Young audiences will watch fun and exciting stories come to life, while hearing the joy of Dr. Seuss' rhyming words. Older audience members will come to the realization that Dr. Seuss is in fact making statements on war, peace, and treating each other with dignity.

Themes

The main themes come directly from the dialogue in the show. Horton the Elephant states “A person's a person no matter how small.” (Ahrens and Flaherty, 18) This belief carries Horton throughout the action of the play, helping him stay strong as he tries to save the planet of Who and protects Mayzie's egg.

The second major theme is that of imagination, “Oh, the thinks you can think!” (10) The Cat in the Hat encourages the young boy (JoJo) and the audience to use their imaginations to take themselves to wonderful places. These places come to life in the stories of Seussical.

Conflicts

The main conflict in Seussical is that of Horton the Elephant versus society. He is the only one who hears the cry of help from the planet of Who, and vows to save the planet, and the Whos living there, no matter what. This causes strife with the rest of the jungle animals. There are conflicts with self, as is shown with JoJo trying to decide what is right, listening and trying to dissect the information given to him by the adults in his life. Gertrude McFuzz is conflicted over her
physical appearance.

Metaphors

Metaphors for Seussical include a tug of war, bullying on the playground, the mouse versus the lion, and a gentle giant.

The overall metaphor of Seussical is that of a child’s toy. To an adult, these toys may be seen as cute or frivolous. But the toys help the child learn, grow, and use their imagination. Dr. Seuss' stories can be seen as crazy or imaginative, but there are lessons to be learned in each story.

Symbols

Symbols in Seussical include the juxtaposition of size between Horton and JoJo, showing how each character, whether large or small, can amount to greatness. Gertrude's tail and the pills she takes to make her tail grow symbolize the cultural pressure to fit in, and to improve physical appearances no matter what the cost. The Cat's hat symbolizes the power of imagination. The hat is the only item on the stage at the beginning of the play, and it is through this simple item that the boy is encouraged to use his imagination and create the stories on the stage.

Meaning of the Title

The musical is titled Seussical because the musical is a compilation of Dr. Seuss' beloved stories.

Philosophical Statements

“Oh the thinks you can think! Oh the thinks you can think if you're willing to try.” (10)

This statement is made by the Cat in the Hat at the beginning of the show, and throughout the action of the play. To have a Think (a Seussian idea) is an important element of the show; the character JoJo is at first in trouble for having these Thinks, but is rewarded in the end for saving the planet of Who with his amazing Thinks.

“I'll just have to save him because after all, a person's a person, no matter how small.” (18, 23,
This statement is made by Horton the Elephant. It is one of the main themes of the show; Horton hears the Whos who are trying to save their planet. Horton is the only one who can hear the Whos. He faces ridicule for trying to save people that are too small to see. Horton believes in the importance of helping others, no matter how small they may be.

“There is no one who believes a thing I say. Well, I'm fairly certain at one time or other, great thinkers all feel this way!” (41) Horton the Elephant makes this statement when he realizes he is the only one willing to save the planet of Who. He stays optimistic by reminding himself other great thinkers and leaders have felt the same way he does now.

“I will not give up hope. I was hooked from the start, when I noticed your kind and your powerful heart.” (57) Gertrude McFuzz says this to Horton, showing that not all of the jungle animals disrespect Horton's actions. Gertrude knows it is not what's on the outside that counts, but how someone treats others with love and respect.

“If we can find it then all will be well. Troubles there are few. Someday, we'll go to Solla Sollew.” (74) Horton sings this to the egg he has taken care of since Mayzie LaBird abandoned it. Solla Sollew is a type of heaven, somewhere where there is peace, love, and no war or fear.

“Why are you teaching children to fight?” (77) JoJo asks this of General Genghis Khan Schmitz, when he tries to convince JoJo why he should fight in the war. JoJo does not see any reason for the war, and wants the violence to stop.

“I've been foolish and vain.” (87) Gertrude McFuzz says this to the doctor, when she realizes the pills she's been taking to make her tail beautiful have not helped her achieve her goals of getting Horton to notice her.

“I meant what I said and I said what I meant: an elephant's faithful one hundred percent! You can throw me in jail, lock me up in a zoo, but I won't desert my egg and I will not abandon Who!” (94) Horton says this to the jury in court when put on trial for being crazy and speaking to dust speck. He
refuses to give in to peer pressure or society's norm, and will defend the egg and the planet of Who, no matter the cost to himself.

“And their whole world was saved by the Smallest of All!” (98) Horton says this to the court, after JoJo saves the planet of Who by yelling loud enough for everyone to hear. This statement reaffirms the theme of the play; even the smallest person is capable of great things.
Previous Reviews for Seussical

If one were to look solely at the reviews first published after the premiere of Seussical on Broadway, they might wonder why the show is such a success today. The original production of Seussical was plagued with troubles even before it moved from workshops to its home on Broadway in the Richard Rodgers Theater ("Seussical the Musical"). The director and several designers were fired, a director who was to remain officially anonymous, but eventually discovered to be Rob Marshall, was hired ("Theater Review"), and massive amounts of reconstruction occurred in an extremely short amount of time. Needless to say, when Seussical did finally open in November 2000 on the Great White Way, there was a large amount of miscommunication on what was to be expected in this amalgamation of Dr. Seuss' most beloved stories. Critics, before seeing the show but knowing the musical's creators, Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty (Tony award winners for the musical Ragtime,) hailed Seussical as the “second coming of the Lion King. Or better” ("Stripped Down"). Six months later, and after losing more than ten million dollars, Seussical closed and “went into the history books as one of Broadway's biggest disappointments” ("Stripped Down").

Ben Brantley’s New York Times review of the Broadway production made references to Mama Rose in Gypsy; Mama Rose did not have the gift of making performers relax, and the performers in Seussical had the same problem. According to Brantley, the production glared of over stimulation in color, lighting, and performance. The actors looked “as if they had just stuck their fingers in electrical sockets" ("Theater Review"). The many different designers and changing of hands in directing contributed to a finished product that was “a flavorless broth” ("Theater Review"). Thomas Burke's review of the production shared many of the same sentiments, although he was not as harsh on the design elements as Brantley. He in fact appreciated many of the colorful designs, which according to him, helped disguise “the lack of substance” ("Broadway Reviews"). Although the early reviews of the original Broadway production were mostly negative, there were small hints that the story and music of
the show was not to be blamed for the short-lived run of the production. Both Brantley and Burke were impressed with Ahrens and Flaherty's score and how Dr. Seuss' words melded with their composition. Brantley states that “you may find you can hear a happy little show that might have been beneath all the layers of fat in this production” (“Theatre Review”). This comment was proven true, as after the closing of the Broadway production, Seussical was re-worked to more closely resemble what Ahrens and Flaherty had originally intended, for a touring production in 2003 (“Stripped Down”).

The reviews for the touring production were much more positive. John Garcia saw the touring production in Dallas, Texas, and was impressed with the “revamped, redesigned, and reworked book and score” (“Seussical the Musical”). As with Brantley and Burke, they too was impressed with the score and the combination of Ahren's lyrics combined with Dr. Seuss' vocabulary. A huge difference between the original Broadway production was that of the design elements. Garcia, along with Marion Garmel from the Indianapolis Star and David Cuthbert from the New Orleans Times were incredibly impressed with the “top notch” design elements (“Seussical the Musical”) and the “electricity of the staging” (“Clever 'Seussical'”). Another difference between the Broadway production and touring production was that of the performances, greatly attributed to the improved directing and choreography. A new director, choreographer, and production team led to a show that was “so clever, colorful, tuneful and full of heart that it can't go wrong” (“Clever 'Seussical'”).

The touring production of Seussical ran from 2003 to 2004. The rights to the script were then licensed to Musical Theatre International, and after that, Seussical immediately became the most popular title in their catalog (“Stripped Down”). Three years later, Seussical is still one of the top three productions requested to be performed throughout the country.

The journey of Seussical has been long and tumultuous at times, but it now seems to be in a place that the creators, and audience members, would hope it would be. As Stephen Flaherty shared in a 2007 New York Times article “Stripped Down but Still Hatted, That Cat is Back”, “Sometimes
shows take long detours to arrive where they're supposed to be.”
Seussical the Musical: A Reflection of Theodore Geisel's Life

The musical Seussical made its Broadway debut on November 1, 2000. Written by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty, the musical is a rather complex amalgamation of many of the beloved stories of Dr. Seuss (“Seussical”). The show had a disappointing Broadway run, as many critics and audience members were expecting a production that would surpass the splendor of The Lion King. From the beginning, Ahrens and Flaherty tried to encourage the producers to keep the spectacle of the production to a minimum; this was to be a show where audience members, both young and old alike, would use their imagination, just as the many readers of Dr. Seuss' books had done for years (“Stripped Down”). Seussical closed on Broadway after only 198 performances. It was re-worked for tour to be more appealing to a younger audience and to keep the story-line more true to the original Dr. Seuss stories. Almost immediately after the show was licensed, it became the most popular title in the catalog for Musical Theatre International (“Stripped Down”). It's still one of the top three scripts requested, and as Ahrens stated at the opening for a children's theatre production of this newly revised Seussical in New York, “I think the show wants to be for kids.”

The production history of Seussical has many similarities to the life of the man who's stories and illustrations inspired the creation of this production. Ted Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, began the production of his life with people having high expectations, then losing faith in what were to be great plans for his future. It wasn't until later, when he made the decision to use his artistic talents to do what he wanted to do, keeping things simple and imaginative, that he succeeded beyond all expectations and became a beloved house-hold name. Seussical is, in essence, a conglomeration of the significant events that occurred in Ted Geisel's own life, which were then reflected in his beloved stories for children.

Dr. Seuss was born Theodor Seuss Geisel in Springfield, Massachusetts on March 2, 1904. His family included his mother, Henrietta Seuss (from which Ted received his middle name), his father,
Theodor P. Geisel, and two sisters, one of whom passed away when she was two years old. The influences for Ted's future illustrations and drawings began at an early age. His father ran the zoo located only three blocks from the local library and near the family household. When he was a young boy, Ted would spend time at the zoo while his father worked (Krull 8). He would sit outside the animal cages, watching the creatures and drawing pictures of them in his sketch book. His mother encouraged Ted and his sister to read, and would often walk them down to the library to find books. It was Henrietta's hope that her children would be the first in their family to graduate from college, and she often commented to her son how nice it would be for him to become “Dr. Geisel” (10). It was also Henrietta who taught Ted the main rhyme scheme he would eventually use in his books. His mother's father had owned a bakery, in which Henrietta worked until she was married. In order to memorize the names of all the pies, she would make up rhymes and recite them to the customers. She in turn took these same rhymes and would recite them to Ted each night before he went to bed. When adapting Dr. Seuss' books for the stage, Ahrens adopted these same rhyme schemes and incorporated them into the Seussical story.

Although Ted grew up in a nurturing and loving home environment, he went through many trials as a child that he attributed to his shyness and trying to stay away from large groups of people during the course of his life. Ted's family was German, and his father and grandfather were brew masters. With the discrimination of people with German heritage during World War I, and with the Prohibition, Ted's family background became an easy target for bullies on the playground and people in the neighborhood. Ted didn't understand why he was the target of this harassment, and at a young age developed a strong awareness of injustice. This could later be seen in the social awareness of the character Horton the Elephant, which Ahrens and Flaherty incorporated as an integral part of their plot in Seussical.

Another event which caused Ted to have stage fright for the rest of his life occurred when he
was fourteen years old. Ted was a boy scout and sold United States Liberty Bonds in support of the war. As one of the top ten scouts in bond sales in Springfield, he was to be presented a special award by former president Theodore Roosevelt. During the ceremony, Ted stood with the nine other scouts in front of thousands of people. Roosevelt distributed the medals, but when he arrived to Ted, he did not have any more medals. Instead of asking where the tenth medal was, Roosevelt bellowed out, “What's this little boy doing here?” The scoutmaster hurried on stage and asked Ted to leave. He always blamed this dread of large crowds on a bungling scoutmaster who couldn't count and an embarrassed former president of the United States (Morgan 22). This event in young Ted's life is similar to the circus master in Seussical, who tries to exploit Horton, humiliating him in front of a large audience.

Ted's learning style was not one that worked well in a classroom setting. He quit art class in high school after his teacher told him he was breaking the rules and would never succeed as an artist. Ted's English teacher was the only teacher who encouraged him to pursue a college education. He helped Ted apply to Dartmouth College, and many Springfield residents were astonished when he was accepted (Krull 27). While in college, he was admired for his creative art work and keen sense of humor. But while other students were on their way to becoming doctors and lawyers, Ted was voted by his classmates as “Least Likely to Succeed” (27). After graduating from Dartmouth, Ted became worried – he had no money, and no job prospects. To stall for time, he applied for a prestigious grant to study literature at Oxford University and led his parents to believe he was receiving it. Someone else received the grant, but the news of Ted's award had already leaked to the city paper. In order to save his son's reputation, Ted's father came up with the money to send him to Oxford anyway (28). Once again, Ted had great difficulty staying in class. While he was supposed to be studying poetry and the plays of William Shakespeare, he was doodling in his notebooks. An American woman in his class (whom he happened to have a crush on) came up behind him one day and looked at what he was drawing. She complimented him on his wonderful flying cow. Her name was Helen Marion Palmer, and she
eventually became Ted Geisel's wife (Morgan 45). A woman from a different world, similar to Gertrude McFuzz in Seussical, Helen Palmer finished her Master's degree at Oxford, while Ted ended up dropping out of school. When Helen graduated, they became engaged. Helen moved to New York, and Ted returned to Springfield.

Once in Springfield, Ted began mailing New York magazines and newspapers copies of his drawings and cartoons. His first publication was in the Saturday Evening Post. Ted began to receive more offers with other magazines and newspapers, and he took to signing these illustrations as “Dr. Seuss.” He enjoyed this pen name, as it had the title of doctor in it, giving homage to his mother's wishes, even though he never actually received his doctorate. He decided to use this pen name for his cartoons, and would save his real name for the more serious work he would do in the future (Krull 32). Ted moved to New York only months after returning from Oxford, and continued to draw cartoons, advertisements, and illustrations for the papers. His most famous advertisement was for Flit, a common insecticide at the time. His slogan, “Quick, Henry, the Flit!” became a popular catchphrase, and the unique creatures illustrated in the ad were the basis for many characters he would draw later in his books for children (“Dr. Seuss”). This ad for Flit led him to other opportunities in the ad industry, including a contract with Standard Oil. Ted often said that a clause in his Standard Oil contract prevented him from undertaking many other types of creative work, but it did not prohibit him from publishing children's books. He is quoted as saying “I would like to say I went into children's book writing because of my great understanding of children. I went in because it wasn't excluded by my Standard Oil contract” (Nel 7).

Ted began writing children's books about the same time he and Helen found out they could not have children. Throughout his life, interviewers would ask him how he, a childless person, could write so well for children. In order to prevent from venturing into sensitive territory, Ted came up with a standard answer he gave to all interviewers: “You make'em, I'll amuse'em” (7). Due to his previous
experiences in front of groups, Ted did not like giving interviews. Besides the personal question about not having children, another common question was from where did he get his ideas? Ted's standard response to that answer was quite creative. He said, with deadpan sincerity, that he got his ideas from Uber Gletch, a small hamlet in the Swiss Alps, where he went each summer to get his cuckoo clock fixed (Shulman and Goldsmith 6). His humorous and standard answers helped him get through the awkward times he had to be interviewed or be in front of a group of people, a situation characterized in Seussical at the opening of the show when the jungle animals find out Horton is talking to a speck of dust.

Ted's first published book was And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street, in 1937. Many other books followed, including Horton Hatches the Egg, McElligot's Pool, Horton Hears a Who, and If I Ran the Zoo. These books are known as Dr. Seuss' “big books,” and many reflect either experiences he had as a child or a creative way to learn from the injustices he experienced while growing up. After World War II, Ted and Helen moved to LaJolla, California. At this same time, an important development occurred which influenced Ted's later work. In 1954, Life magazine published a report entitled “Why Johnny Can't Read.” The article focused on the illiteracy among school children, with the conclusion that children were not learning to read because their books were boring (“Dr. Seuss”). William Spaulding, the textbook publisher at Houghton Mifflin, commissioned Ted to write a book that would encourage children to read. The one restriction was that he could only use 225 words out of a list of 400 that they sent him. A year and a half later, The Cat in the Hat was published, becoming an instant success, and starting the line of “beginner books” written by Dr. Seuss (Schulman and Goldsmith 118). Books in this series include such famous titles as Green Eggs and Ham, Oh Say Can You Say?, and There's a Wocket in My Pocket!. Clearly these beloved stories became the basis of Seuss popular culture and a natural source for Ahrens and Flaherty to use in Seussical.

After forty years of marriage, and after a long battle with a serious illness, Helen took her own
life in 1967. Two years later, Ted married Audrey Stone (Morgan 195). He continued writing both “big” and “beginner” books, combining both the imaginative and entertaining along with a moral message. In 1984, during the middle of the Cold War, Ted wrote *The Butter Battle Book*, artistically expressing his views against war and the possibility of a nuclear attack. Other books, including *The Lorax*, dealt with the issues of loss and consequences from poor choices. The last book published in his lifetime was *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* which has since become a best seller for people in all stages of life. This book is often given as a gift for birthdays, graduations, weddings, and other major life events.

Ted Seuss Geisel, better known to millions around the world as Dr. Seuss, passed away after a long battle with cancer on September 24, 1991 (Schulman and Goldsmith 7). His wife Audrey was placed in charge of all licensing matters. She approved of a live-action film version of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, as well as the musical *Seussical*. After the live-action film of *The Cat in the Hat* was released, she became very vocal in her dislike of the film. It is believed that she said there would be no further live-action adaptations of Seuss’ books (“Dr. Seuss”).

*Seussical* did not make it to the stage until nine years after Ted Geisel’s death. When reading the script or watching the show, however, it is clear that this musical has actually been in the making since Ted first started experiencing life events that would be used for materials in his books. The humiliating experiences of Horton the Elephant are the demeaning events Ted went through. The rhyme scheme the characters sing in is the same rhyme scheme Ted listened to at night as his mother put him to bed. The belief in the human spirit Gertrude and Horton have is the same belief Ted had for the future generations he was writing for. In essence, *Seussical* is a reflection of the stories of Dr. Seuss, which are in fact, a reflection of this great man’s life.
Musical theatre collaborators Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty have been working together for over twenty years. In that time, they have created musicals both for stage and screen, winning the Tony, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Awards for Ragtime in 1998, and the Golden Globe and Academy award for their work on the animated musical Anastasia (Krasnow). Their most current work is The Glorious Ones, a musical about a 16th century commedia dell'arte troupe (Bossler).

Lynn Ahrens graduated college with a degree in journalism, and while she appreciated musical theatre, she did not plan on making a career in that venue. Rather, she spent many years in advertising, working her way up to senior vice president at the company McCaffrey and McCall, where Schoolhouse Rock was developed (Krasnow). In 1978, she formed her own production company and created a series of educational programs for children. Four years later, on a whim, she auditioned for the BMI Musical Theater Workshop, where she met Stephen Flaherty. The two began working together one year later (Krasnow).

Unlike Ahrens, Stephen Flaherty has been involved with musical theatre his entire life, composing his own music while in high school. He was intent on being accepted into the BMI Musical Theater Workshop, and since that time, has composed music to match Ahrens lyrics.

Ahrens and Flaherty's work Seussical premiered on Broadway in 2000, after stressful workshops in Toronto and a pessimistic preview in Boston. From the get-go, they felt their show got a raw deal with how it was produced. Ahrens states in an interview with The Dramatist that she felt the show “needed . . . focusing that we never had the opportunity to do” (Bossler). Although the abrupt cancellation of the show on Broadway was extremely difficult at the time, they came out on top, with a revised script that is now one of the most performed shows in America (Bossler). Seussical has a special place in their hearts, as it can entertain and teach both the young and young at heart. They first began writing the musical by doing what their parents had done for them - reading every single Dr.
Seuss book aloud to each other. From there, they chose elements from over twenty of Dr. Seuss' books to create a book musical, with the main theme being the steadfastness of the human heart (Anderman). One of the biggest compliments of their collaboration came from Dr. Seuss' widow, Audrey Geisel. She attended a workshop for Seussical, and told Ahrens she couldn't tell “where his voice left off and where mine began” (Anderman).

Storytelling seems to be at the heart of many of the musicals Ahrens and Flaherty write for the stage. Their first play to make it on Broadway was Once On This Island, a musical based on the tradition of storytelling. Many of these elements they first created over ten years ago can be seen in Seussical. They value the magic of the theatre, how a story can be told and how people can learn from that story. They share these values with aspiring playwrights by being mentors in the Dramatists Guild Fellows Program (Bossler). They themselves were mentored by theatre greats such as Stephen Sondheim and John Kander, and they now wish to do the same.

Ahrens and Flaherty continue to contribute creative musicals to the theatre world, hoping to inspire, educate, and entertain all at the same time.
Learning Goals and Student Outcomes for *Seussical*

Theatre, by its very nature, is an art that educates those involved on how to improve their perceptiveness in both the performing arts and also as a human being adapting and adjusting to real life situations. As a theatre educator, I realize that at least half of the students I work with will choose careers in life that do not directly relate to theatre. I also have students who's dream is to star on Broadway, or at least make a living by working in the theatre for the rest of their lives. The goals and learning outcomes I set for my students have to be precise enough to encourage the students to continue pursuing the theatre arts, and to have them prepared for theatre programs in college and beyond, while also preparing them for qualities they will need to succeed in other areas of their life as well.

Learning goals and outcomes:

- Students will learn new vocabulary upon what they already know by being expected to use proper terminology for blocking, acting, choreography, and technical elements while involved in this production. It will be the director's responsibility to ensure the terms are being used correctly to prepare the students for future work in the theatre.

- Students and the production team will research and take into account the life of Dr. Seuss and his writings, in order to prepare themselves for this production, and to portray it in an accurate way. Through elementary school visitations and story-time readings at Barnes and Noble, as part of the community outreach section of this production, this knowledge of Dr. Seuss and his writings will be shared with the general public.

- Students will develop a stronger sense of their bodies and how their bodies (and not just their faces) are essential acting tools. Warm-ups and exercises will be performed daily to educate and encourage students to use their entire body to portray their characters. This is especially important for this production, in which every single student will be portraying a fictional Seussian character on the stage.
- Students will learn the benefits and challenges of working in a large group to create the proper story on stage. A large part of the production will not just be how well they can act, but how well they work with others, and how to become a team player. Professionalism and positive communication will be expected at all times.

- All actors will be expected to attend at least two set construction days to assist the technical crew, and to educate themselves on the “behind the scenes” aspects of the production.

- Students will grow both in their performing and technical abilities in the theatre arts. This will be done through workshops, exercises, and guest speakers, along with tutorials and notes given by the director, vocal director, and choreographer.
**Director's Production Journal**

**Early to Mid-October 2007 (Prepping for the Show):**

My first journal entry for my thesis documentation – and already, there has been a huge crack in the plan for our musical. Our band/orchestra director at Richland High School was first put on administrative leave, then resigned, at the beginning of October. For most of the month, no one knew why. This was especially difficult, as this teacher had been a family friend of Geoff’s (my fiance) family for years. This teacher taught Geoff and his two brothers, and has been my co-worker for the past two years.

Well, today on the news, I saw film footage of this teacher being arrested at his home for having sexual relationships with students at RHS. Turns out, I know one of these students and her family pretty well. This news came a month after I found out one of my own teachers (and then co-worker) at Kennewick High School was arrested for the same thing.

The students and the school are in shock – talk about trust issues now! And of course this is all the local news wants to focus on. Nothing positive, just the dirt. I'm hoping that once Seussical rolls around, the local news media can make time to show what some really talented young people are doing in this area, rather than focussing on a few sick people who should never have become teachers. I feel deceived, devastated, in shock, and not wanting to believe any of this. All the work, meetings, plans, and such that we as a production staff have worked on now needs to be completely re-done. At this point, I don't even know who our new music director will be. And the last thing he/she will want to worry about is helping out with the theatre department's musical.

This is making me really nervous – the former teacher had been listening to the Seussical music and working on it since last spring. Now, it's like being back at square one, less than a month before we have auditions for my thesis production.

**Late October 2007 (Prepping for the Show):**

Well, we finished up our first show of the year, *The Diary of Anne Frank*. (The new adaptation by Wendy Kesselman). It was amazing! The students took what I gave them and just ran with it...and part of me wishes I had now chosen that show for my thesis. But, I was in it myself in high school, and I wanted to choose something I had not been involved with before. Either way, I was very happy with how it turned out. Now the kids are already asking me all sorts of questions about Seussical, and I want a little break before diving into the show that I know will take most of my time this year! At least they're excited about it. I hope I can get that way too sometime soon.

I'm going to take a little break to celebrate my birthday, take my students to INTAF (the Inland Northwest Theatre Arts Festival) in Spokane, and then dive in for the long haul for Seussical.

**Mid-November 2007 (Pre-Auditions):**

The students, at this point, have more enthusiasm about this show than I do. They're just jumping on board, but I've been working on this for a long time already, and I in no way feel totally prepared to continue. But then, does anybody ever feel totally prepared? The students' enthusiasm does help me
focus on why I started to do this in the first place. *Seussical* is a great show for our school to do – we will be the first school/theatre in this area to produce it, and we’ll be able to use this production as an educational outreach to our community, not only to help promote/educate Dr. Seuss’ birthday and Read Across America, but also to show the community what kind of program we have here at Richland High School. I love doing family-oriented musicals. The children who come to our shows are the best audiences we have. Their enthusiasm and willingness to come along for the ride becomes contagious for the rest of the audience.

We had our informational meeting on November 19. We had approximately seventy-five students show up...our numbers from when we have our meeting to when we have auditions usually drops by at least ten students or so. Once they find out what my expectations are, and how much work it will be, some decide it just isn't for them. And I tell them that's OK – better for them to figure this out now, rather than get involved in something that is too much for them to deal with. It's hard not being at Richland High School during the day, as anyone new who wants to get involved with the program doesn't know me, doesn't know how I work, and doesn't know my expectations.

I follow the WIAA guidelines, which means the students can't drink, do drugs, make other poor decisions, and must keep their grades up in order to be involved with the show. The first play I directed at RHS, I was naive in thinking the kids would just be responsible with all aspects of their life. Then, tech week rolled around, and I had two parents calling me asking if it would be OK if they “grounded” their kids from the show because of their grades. Yea, never doing that again. I think having these expectations shows the students I'm serious about what I do, and I need them to be serious too. Of course we'll have fun along the way, but my job as a drama teacher is to prepare them for the future – how to work as a team, act professionally, etc. Even if they don't major in theatre in college, or decide to pursue it professionally, they still need to learn these basic principles taught in drama in order to make it through life.

I distributed tentative rehearsal schedules, audition forms, and permission slips today. I also went over the story line of the show, and explained what was expected of them at auditions. For auditions, each student will need to dress in something they can dance in. They will all learn a basic sixteen count dance, and then may learn more depending on what we see. Each student needs to prepare a one-minute (or 16 bar) section of a song from a musical. They must bring their sheet music as an accompanist will be provided. I told them this song will serve both as a monologue and showing us what they can do vocally. I'm really excited to see what the students come up with. I know via the grapevine that a lot of them have actually been working on these songs for quite awhile already. I also let the students know that some of the parts, such as the Cat and JoJo, could be portrayed by either a guy or a girl. I saw some students’ eyes light up when I mentioned that, so it will be interesting to see who tries out and what roles they are gearing for.

I also announced to the students today that I am engaged! Because I know so many of these kids so well, I thought this was the best time to do it (so they’d all find out at the same time). Their reaction was priceless – I have never received such a large group hug before!

**Tuesday, November 27, 2007 (Auditions):**

I knew a lot of students were nervous about today (I was too!), so I tried to lighten up the mood by bringing in some really fun Dr. Seuss hats I bought this summer up at the Hat Shop in Leavenworth.
Suzanne Burroughs (our choreographer) and I had cool traditional “Cat in the Hat” hats. I made Greg Fryhling (our vocal director) wear the Horton hat.

The more I do auditions, the smoother they go. Things went really well today. Due to limiting auditionees' songs to a minute or less, and having all of the production crew know what the expectations/plan was, we finished right on time and saw a lot of good talent. Some students who I've worked with before really surprised me. They chose excellent songs from many different musicals (thank God for a limited amount of stuff from Andrew Lloyd Webber and Disney stuff – which was not the case two years ago). We're talking brand new shows, songs that I thought only Greg Pschirrer had heard of before, that sort of thing. A lot of students have grown both acting and singing wise since last year. A lot of new students also really impressed me – I have a feeling I will be casting some brand new students into some pretty big roles. (I'm going to confer with my vocal director first, as I think a lot of these new students are in his choir program.) However, I was disappointed in some of the auditions. Some of the performances weren't necessarily the students' fault – you could just tell they are not as musically inclined as others. They acted their hearts out, and tried to sing the best that they could. But seeing them on stage, then seeing them act, really brought my hopes up. And then when they sang, I realized that if this was a straight show, they'd be perfect for the lead, but couldn't carry it in a musical. There were also some students who I could tell had spent maybe about five minutes working on their audition piece and didn't really care. Even though I always have a “boy shortage,” there were two guys I did not call back, specifically for that reason. I feel that I cannot lower behavior expectations just to get enough guys involved in the program. I think in the long run that professional expectation will pay off.

I have a lot of options, especially for the leads. There are some students who really, really stuck out as #1 choices for Horton, Mayzie, and Gertrude. But there are also some surprises, which is nice. I don't ever try to “pre-cast.” The more I get to know the students, the more difficult it is not to assume someone would be great for a part, but I think it always helps me stay on track (and my students who are in almost every show) when someone new comes in and sort of mixes things up.

I did notice, once I got home, that David Bergsman (he played Mr. Frank in our fall show,) did not audition. He has a great voice and has good stage presence. I was hoping to see him there. I e-mailed him, and he responded saying he couldn't be in the show due to soccer. He'd miss our state competition in March, and he'd be late for call time the second weekend of performances. After thinking about it for awhile, I realized he could still be involved, and I wrote him back asking if he'd be the stage manager. He's never stage managed before, but I trust him, and he is a good leader. He could still be in the show, and do soccer. I hope he says he'll do it.

**Wednesday, November 28, 2007 (Callbacks):**

Callbacks went really well, and it was exciting to see so many of these students push themselves and grow, giving me different options in casting that I had not expected. Coming in to callbacks, there were definite stand-outs for each role, particularly the lead characters: Sam Turner as Horton, Melissa Schenter as Gertrude, Alex Gonzalez as the Cat, Hannah Stanfield as Mayzie LaBird, and Elizabeth Andrews and Cassie Bender as Thing One and Thing Two. And in the end, each of these students were cast in the above mentioned roles. But what was exciting to see were the other students who showed me they were very capable of portraying these lead roles as well. The girl who I've cast as JoJo, Maddie Howe, is brand new to the stage. She has never been in a play before. I had called back other students to read/sing for JoJo who have a lot more experience. But Maddie took this part and made it
her own, and when she and Sam sang “Alone in the Universe,” I started to cry, it was so moving. I have never cried at call-backs before, ever. Most parts really fell into place, and I was excited to see what my possibilities could be. I think this also made the students more nervous, as they saw me mix and match things I had not originally planned to do. It's important to keep them on their toes!

One of the people called back that I wasn't expecting too much from really blew us away. Justin Jonson is a great student, who tries really hard. He's been in a few plays, but he's the one I always have to remind to project, enunciate, and face out toward the audience. Well, he got up there to sing the General's song today, and he projected just fine! I didn't really have anyone in mind for the General – having a guy shortage makes casting the male roles difficult. But, after seeing what Justin did at callbacks, I think I'm going to take a gamble and cast him. He's green, and I can tell we need to be careful with his voice so he doesn't get vocal fry and stress out his voice, but I think he can do it.

Each student who was called-back had to do some more dancing, specific to the characters they were called back for. They also had to sing songs specifically from the musical. Many students were called back for more than one part, so they had a lot of work to do.

I reminded the students before they left that casting involves many different things. There was often more than one person I could have chosen per role, but you have to look at all sorts of aspects, including their schedule, musical knowledge, movement on stage, sometimes height, a certain look, etc. I reminded them they get one “grumpy day” if they find out they did not get the part they wanted. They are not allowed to put anyone else down, and once their one grumpy day is over, that's it. They need to know that if this is something they want to pursue down the road, they have to get used to the not fun part of finding out if you're cast or not.

All in all, we cast thirty-five students, some returning, many new. I've called the leads letting them know what part they have, and every single one of them has been genuinely excited and thankful. I'm looking forward to our cast meeting tomorrow.

**Thursday, November 29, 2007 (Cast Meeting):**

I always have a cast meeting for our first rehearsal, to pass out contracts, review expectations, go over the rehearsal calendar, read through the script or at least talk about it, etc. The meeting today was quite brief as it started to snow, and I decided to let the kids out earlier than planned so they could drive home safely. (A lot of people down here are not used to driving in any sort of cold weather – especially a bunch of high school kids who have possibly never driven in snow before!)

I reviewed the WIAA contract, reminding them the no drugs/drinking policy, and reminding them about keeping their grades up. We took measurements for costumes, discussed the artistic concept, and I answered any questions they had. Short, simple, to the point – we'll be singing through the show for the first time next week with our vocal director.

David showed up today and agreed to be the stage manager. I'm really happy he's on board. He's a musician, and will be able to help “translate” for me when talking to the piano players or trying to explain musical elements to the students. I think this will be a great experience for him.
Friday, November 30, 2007:

There was no rehearsal today. I'm giving myself this weekend to relax a little before rehearsals pick up next week. Plus, I have a lot of work to get done for teaching at Enterprise Middle School.

Monday, December 3, 2007:

Today we tried to sing through as much of the show as possible. As most of it is sung, we're doing as much as we can, and then finishing the rest the next day. We got through most of Act I today, stopping to discuss the story and answer questions. I did get bad news from one of my cast members however—the young man I cast as Mr. Mayor (beautiful voice, and pairs up nicely with Mrs. Mayor) needs to quit the show as he is moving back to Utah. His mother has cancer, it's getting worse, and her doctor is down in Salt Lake. So, one guy down already. (And I already had a guy shortage! Out of a cast of 35, only 1/3 are guys.) This means I have to figure out who should be Mr. Mayor. I have understudies to fill in on days when someone may be gone, but I already checked with my understudy for male Whos, and he doesn't feel comfortable singing that much. There is a student, Scott Miller, who I know can sing, but I put him in a smaller role (ensemble/Yertle the Turtle) as I'm not sure what his work ethic is like (he's a little flaky,) and I'm not sure if I could trust him with a larger role. I'll have to figure this out and let the cast know as soon as possible.

Rehearsals this week are going to end early, due to The Nutcracker moving in to the classrooms and stage this week. It's a huge production, and every day around 4:30 PM, over one hundred ballerinas invade the performing arts building. Rather than compete with that, I now know to end these rehearsals early, giving the students a little more free time before the holidays. (Plus, it's good to end early with the weather we've been having lately!)

Tuesday, December 4, 2007:

We continued singing through the show – we stopped about half way through Act II. There are some moments that already sound really, really good. I still haven't figured out what to do about Mr. Mayor yet.

Wednesday, December 5, 2007:

We finished singing through the show today. So far, so good. I'm getting scripts to everyone (those that didn't receive them at the meeting are receiving them this week – I ordered more so everyone would have their own copy.) After this week of group sing-throughs, we'll work with individual soloists next week to make sure they have a grasp as to what their songs should sound like.

Thursday, December 6, 2007:

Last day of group sing-throughs for awhile. I've asked everyone to make sure to work on their songs at home. Every show I do, I need to remind students, and teach the new ones, that they can't just use their scripts at rehearsal and then not look at them when they're home. I know most of my leads have private voice teachers, and they plan to work on their songs with them. I have also asked Scott Miller to move to the part of Mr. Mayor. I know I'm going to have to push him acting wise, since right now it's pretty obvious he doesn't really trust himself on stage. Moving Scott also meant I had to move someone to the
part of Yertle the Turtle. I asked James Bath, one of my bass sophomores, to portray Yertle, along with his other roles as the Grinch and Vlad Vladikoff. James works really hard, and hopefully portraying these roles will help him grow as an actor during this show.

For most of the vocal rehearsals, I'm there, but it's Greg who's in charge. I make sure everyone stays on task, and while they sing, I work on purchase orders, organizing future rehearsals, and doing a lot of paperwork to prepare for when things get a little crazier. The time before winter break is always a little laid back – a nice way to begin rehearsals, and something that won't be possible when we return from break.

Friday, December 7, 2007:

There was no rehearsal today. This was scheduled ahead of time due to scheduling conflicts with the auditorium and classrooms, which are being used for the Mid-Columbia Ballet's production of The Nutcracker.

Saturday, December 8, 2007 (Musical Theatre Workshop):

Today, the cast of Seussical and the cast of Hanford High School's show met for a musical theatre workshop with Terri and David Brown. It was awesome seeing them again, and I was really, really excited to have my students work with people I really look up to. Both Matt Leggett (from HHS) and myself chose two of our students to workshop a song with Terri and David. I had Melissa Schenter and Sam Turner workshop songs they were working on for future auditions. Melissa chose “Far From the Home I Love” from Fiddler on the Roof. She did well, but I was actually pretty surprised that she didn't push herself more. Terri had some really good things to say to her, but knowing what Melissa is capable of, I think she could have pushed herself a bit more. I think maybe she was nervous - not only did she have to sing in front of her fellow cast members, but she also had to sing in front of our rival high school's musical cast. Sam Turner sang “Johanna” from Sweeney Todd. It's odd, because he did what I thought Melissa would do, and vice versa. He took what Terri told him, and grew leaps and bounds in front of us. It was amazing to see Sam, my cute and awkward Horton, take on a role completely different from what he is in Seussical. He has a beautiful voice, and good stage presence, but has had to work diligently to improve his acting/character work over the past few years. It was as if something just clicked for him during this workshop – and you could tell everyone there in that room could see that as well. I'm really excited to see where he goes with this song and the information he learned from today.

I'm very happy most of my cast had the chance to work with professionals in musical theatre. The things Terri and Dave taught them today are things I want them to learn, but always seem to not have enough time for during regular rehearsals. I'm hoping the students take the breathing techniques and acting notes to heart, and use this information to grow as musical theatre artists during Seussical.

Monday, December 10, 2007:

I was sick today. I always seem to get sick just a little bit before winter break, right around the time I have just cast a show. I'm still trying to figure out why that happens! We're still doing vocal rehearsals only at this point, so hopefully everything went well, and work got done. Greg is a great guy to work with, but very disorganized, and sometimes a bit too laid back. I guess I'll find out how it went when I get back.
Tuesday, December 11, 2007:

Still sick. Ugh. No clue how rehearsal went today (or yesterday).

Wednesday, December 12, 2007:

I was required to stay at Enterprise Middle School for a staff meeting after school today, so Greg had to lead rehearsal for the third time this week. Since we're still doing only vocal rehearsals, that's fine. But I do miss being there, and it's important for the kids to hear my feedback as well. Today Greg was working with the Wickersham Brothers, and he said everything went well.

Thursday, December 13, 2007:

I was finally at rehearsal this week! Nothing too eventful happened — we once again had vocal rehearsal for the leads. Greg and I worked with Gertrude, Horton, JoJo, and the Cat today. They sang through their solos and duets, and we worked on sound quality plus acting. Things went well, and we ended rehearsal a little early, right around 5:00 PM.

Friday, December 14, 2007:

We did not have rehearsal for Seussical today. Instead, I had a brief informational meeting about the upcoming Mono/Duo competition at Hanford High School. Last year, this competition was in March, and we had a lot more time to plan for it. This year, it's January 19, which doesn't give the students much time to prepare something.

This is yet another disadvantage of not being at RHS during the day. The other schools that compete take time in their drama classes during the day to prep for this. Not only can I not do this with my students during the day, but we need to find time on top of regular rehearsals for Seussical to work on these things. The students have to be really self-motivated, as a lot of this work will need to be done on their own time. I wish I could give more time to this, but it's literally just not possible.

I had about thirty students sign up originally, and about twelve showed up for the meeting. I know this number will drop even a bit more by the time we return from winter break. The kids who are left will really want to work on this, so that's fine with me. Over break, they are supposed to find monologues/scenes/songs, etc. and e-mail me if they have any questions or need help in finding something.

Monday, December 17, 2007:

This was our second to last rehearsal before break. The entire cast took time today to review chorus numbers, really hammering out the notes and working on any parts they were unsure of. We spent time on sections today, so we can be prepared to sing through the entire show one more time tomorrow, before winter break.

I'm still nervous about a few students' voices, including Justin (our General). When we warm up and coach them on using their voice the right way, they do fine. Then the adrenaline hits when they sing their song, and everything seems to fly out the window. I've asked Greg to work with him one-on-one. I'm hoping that helps Justin out.
The kids are so good. The only negative thing, which is a common occurrence for every show I do, is they are too darn social. They LOVE to talk and visit with each other, and it's a common struggle to get them to be quiet. Some of the younger or less experienced kids seem to think that if they are not singing at the moment, that gives them the right to talk. I'm the noise disciplinarian while Greg is working with the ones who sing. I'm thankful for some of my seniors who have really become great leaders this year. They (for the most part,) are helping remind everyone they need to stay focused.

Tuesday, December 18, 2007:

This was our last day of rehearsal, due to scheduled choir concerts (which almost my entire cast is involved with,) trying to wrap presents at Barnes and Noble for a theatre arts fundraiser, and winter break coming up at the end of the week.

We had the entire cast sing through the show. It's sounding pretty good, although there are some parts (such as “Havin' a Hunch”) where there is still some difficulty. Something I'm very thankful for is that most of my students are involved with the vocal music program here at RHS, which makes teaching them the music a lot less stressful. I just hope they remember everything they've learned and don't forget it over winter break! I don't schedule any rehearsals during that time, as I want all of us to have that time off to relax and to spend with families.


I worked on some Seussical stuff over break, but for the most part, I took this time to work on planning my wedding, as I know once I get back from break, I will not have much time to do that, while working on the show. Every once in awhile, Geoff and I will discuss some design concepts, and I've met with my awesome parent volunteers to discuss when props, costumes, etc. should be finished, but besides that, I've been resting and taking a break. (It's a little frustrating when you're on a break, and all anyone wants to talk about is the show. But at least people are excited!)

Saturday, January 5, 2008:

Today was our first work day for set construction. It's still technically winter break, and school doesn't resume until Monday. However, we had over a dozen students to show up. They were very excited to find out what the set design was, and they wanted to get started building the set pieces. We don't have a theatre tech program at RHS, so the majority of the students who work on the set are also the actors. The cast is required to attend at least two Saturday work days to help with the set, but the majority of the casts we have usually show up every single weekend if at all possible. I think it really helps them stay invested in the show, and I know it will help them later in life – they are already team players, instead of expecting the set to just magically appear before them.

Monday, January 7, 2008:

Today was our first rehearsal after winter break. I was really worried that the kids might have forgotten a lot of the music we had worked on before break, but for the most part, everything sounded pretty good today. Now I'm trying to deal with the choreographer (Suzanne), who for some reason keeps forgetting the notes, concepts, and other information Geoff and I had discussed with her over a month ago. She keeps listening to the CD instead of looking at the libretto that I gave her, and it's gotten to the point where I told her if she needed to hear the music to choreograph to, she should come to a vocal
rehearsal. She's now asking my vocal director to record all these songs for her to use – we're going to try to accommodate her as best we can, but Greg and I only have so many hours in the day. She had told me a month ago that her husband (a musician) could help her with the music, but that obviously isn't happening yet.

Tomorrow is the first day of choreography rehearsal – the past two years, when we've been adjudicated by the 5th Avenue Theatre, they comment on our lack of dancing in our shows. However, the shows I choose (Into the Woods, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, and now Seussical) aren't huge dance shows. They are mostly music/story driven. But I still want some movement and dance in them. I told Suzanne that this year we needed to put more dance (rather than marching, jazz squares, etc.) into our production, and I also tried to explain to her the elements of musical theatre I've learned in grad school, so the movement doesn't seem random. I want the movement character driven. Now with the miscommunication or lack of paying attention, I'm nervous as to what she will, or will not, have the kids do. I guess I'll find out tomorrow.

Tuesday, January 8, 2008:

Today, the entire cast worked on vocals for the first half hour, to warm up and review, and then moved in to the auditorium for choreography. The kids are really excited to be finally moving around on the stage we'll be performing on. They love to move around and learn new things, so they are pretty darn excited to learn the choreography.

We started choreographing at 3:30, and had two hours to learn part of “Oh, the Thinks You Can Think.” (We'll learn the second half tomorrow.) And, at first, it went well. Suzanne warmed the kids up, she put them in their opening places (which I had created for our opening/intro), and went from there. Everything was fine until the part where the Cat is describing to the Boy/JoJo what is going to happen – he's explaining the two different worlds that will appear, one in which JoJo will be involved, and the other in which Horton lives. We get to the line “And the largest of all,” which is said by Horton, and she doesn't have him on stage! She has him peeking out of a corner, up stage left, where no one is going to even know he's there. I stop, talk to her, and let her know he is one of the lead characters – the audience has to be introduced to him right away. I finally come up with a solution to our problem, which will not interfere with the next big movement – marching (great), and which won't freak Suzanne out. This year, she has been much more defensive of her choices, where it sometimes gets to a point where I have to wait to question her, as she'll get frustrated right in front of the kids. We fixed that problem, she had them march in (this movement doesn't match the song – I'm going to try to figure something out,) and that took the rest of the time. Marching – it took over an hour to teach these kids how to march on stage. And once they were on stage, by the way she had them organized, all the leads were in the very back row. I told her this, and we are going to be fixing it tomorrow.

Wednesday, January 9, 2008:

Vocal rehearsal for the first half hour, once again. Then we moved to the auditorium. We kept working on the opening number, fixing the lines the kids end up in after they march on to the stage. Now the leads (most of them, anyway) are in the front. This helps for two reasons – first, the attention is drawn to them which is important in introducing them at the beginning of the show, and secondly, they are my most talented dancers/movers/whatever you want to call them. There strong stage presence spreads across the stage, if we can see them in the front.
I should mention we have something new this year that has already helped us out a lot. I have two community members who we have hired (with a stipend) to play piano for us at rehearsals. I knew this would be a good thing for the students, as I in no way wanted them to rehearse with the CD when learning their choreography, but it's also helping Suzanne understand the music. I have difficulty explaining to her why something is the way it is, but with my piano players, and my musically talented stage manager, they are helping her understand what is happening in the music.

We had a work night tonight. I've discovered more of the dads can come help out if we have work nights during the week from about 6 PM to 8 PM. This also helps us from having way too much to accomplish on the weekends. We'll have another work night tomorrow night as well.

**Thursday, January 10, 2008:**
Once again, we sang for the first half hour of rehearsal, then moved to the auditorium to continue choreography. Today, we only called the jungle animals, and worked with them on their songs, and taught them the choreography to “Biggest Blame Fool.” I'll be taking care of the blocking for “Horton Hears a Who” and Suzanne choreographed the jazzier part of the opening number, “Biggest Blame Fool.” I'm really excited to see this number when it's completed. I found some things that I thought would work for this number, and showed them to Suzanne quite awhile ago. I'm glad that she took my ideas and used them, as I think they help show the characterizations of each actor during this number. I'm going to have to work with most of my animal ensemble, since they are having more difficulty moving with the music, and tend to have blank stares on their faces when they enter. I have a cast where half of them totally understand what getting into character means, and the other half who have never been taught how to do this. I'm going to use our Friday rehearsals to work on basic acting skills so everyone in the cast can be on the same page. I'll also be using Fridays for blocking. It will be nice to have a day each week where it's just me and my kids, and we can work on some (hopefully) really cool stuff which will help them grow.

**Friday, January 11, 2008:**
Today was me and the kids, beginning blocking for “Horton Hears a Who” and doing some character work. Not everyone was called today, so I'm going to wait to do the big group activities until next week. Everything went pretty smoothly – my more experienced actors are also really good leaders, and have been helping others out.

I ended the blocking part of the rehearsal around 4:45 PM, so I could work with the mono/duo kids for awhile. About half of the kids had stuff to work on. The other half did not. I think they could tell I was disappointed. I reminded them we didn't need to do this, and they had to have something prepared to show me when we next meet, which will be on Tuesday after our Seussical rehearsal.

**Saturday, January 12, 2008:**
Another work day – and a good group of kids showed up to help. Right now, we're working on cutting out the moveable pieces of the scenery, such as Horton's tree and his pool. Because this play takes place in so many different settings, we'll have some permanent pieces that will help frame the stage, and then a lot of moveable pieces to help the scene changes go smoothly and quickly. I wish our stage wasn't so big, but I am really excited to see how the periaktoi and false proscenium work out.

Tonight we had a cast social activity – we all went to the local skating rink! I haven't skated since I was
fourteen. That's a long time ago! And I wasn't good back then! So for me, it was a very humbling experience. I want my fish dancers for “McElligot's Pool” to have some sort of wheel movement when the come in, to make it look like they are in water. I thought roller skates might work, which is one reason why we went to the skate rink. While we were there, I realized that even though all my fish dancers could skate, only one knew how to stop. This could be a problem. My volunteers and I are going to brainstorm this week to try to figure out how to make this work. The skate party was awesome, we had a really good time, and I think it was a good thing for everyone to hang out and socialize for awhile.

Monday, January 14, 2008:

We continued on with our “regular” schedule today – vocal rehearsal for the first half hour, and then choreography in the auditorium (we're still working on “Horton Hears a Who” and “Biggest Blame Fool”). Greg and I are working on schedule so those who are not called for dance that day can work with him in the choir room. Greg informed me last week that even though he had told me he could rehearse with the kids on Fridays for awhile, he now was wondering if he could have Fridays off. He just got married, and his wife is ... well, she likes to organize and be in charge of things. And I guess she wants him to have Fridays off, just in case they decide to go somewhere. That's partly why I decided to do the character work and blocking on Fridays. It's just frustrating when someone tells you they'll do something, and then they back out of it. But, we'll make it work.

Tuesday, January 15, 2008:

Today we worked with the Whos for the first time! It was a lot of fun, and I was very pleasantly surprised with how quickly they learned their choreography. Actually, they're learning their moves a lot quicker than the jungle animals, which I did not expect. Most of my Whos are pretty green when it comes to acting and dancing, but we have some really good leaders in the group who are really helping things move along. While the Whos practiced on stage, the Bird Girls worked on their harmonies in the choir room.

We won't be having any work nights this week, as I have to make extra time to work with my students who are participating in the mono/duo festival this weekend. We had another rehearsal today, after Seussical rehearsal, and thankfully this time most everyone was prepared. Britton, however, was not. He's what I call my “wild card.” He's used to getting his own way at home, and he doesn't have the work ethic to match his ego, if that makes sense. He's performing a piece from Parade this weekend (not an easy endeavor,) and still doesn't have his lyrics memorized. I hope he is humbled at some point so he can realize he can't just try to BS something and get away with it.

Wednesday, January 16, 2008:

We worked on “Here on Who” with the Whos again. It looks great! They are really picking up this dance number, and I'm really excited to see what it looks like with the costumes and set. We had originally planned to begin “It's Possible,” but have to wait for two reasons. First, I need to figure out how to make the fish dancers look like they're under water, and (once again,) Suzanne choreographed the dance to the music on the CD, which is different. I had told her there were additional measures in the song, but she forgot, so we're putting this song off for now. I just hope we find time to do it later on, as it was scheduled to be done this week.
Tonight, after rehearsal, I went over to Hanford High School to help the drama teachers from Hanford High School and Pasco High School organize the mono/duo festival. It was nice visiting with other drama teachers and working together, but it ended up being a really late night. I didn't get home until 10:30...and that should be my teacher bed time!

Thursday, January 17, 2008:

I talked to Greg today about what I'm trying to do for “It's Possible,” and he told me to look up *The Little Mermaid* on Broadway on YouTube. They use Heelies for their underwater dancing, and I love how it looks! You still get that rolling look that you would get from roller skates, but they are much quieter, plus much easier to stop. I'm going to ask my fish dancers tomorrow if any of them would be willing to buy a pair of Heelies for that dance number. If we do this right, it will look really cool!

We reviewed all three numbers (“Horton Hears a Who,” “Biggest Blame Fool,” and “Here on Who”) today. The students were able to show each other what they had been learning. I think it was fun for them to have an audience.

Our last mono/duo rehearsal will be tomorrow after *Seussical* rehearsal. I need a break tonight – I'm exhausted. And I need to make sure I don't fall behind in my lesson plans for my day job. It is so challenging during a show to juggle both, especially when it's two totally different schools.

Friday, January 18, 2008:

Greg came down from Spokane today to spend time with my cast at rehearsal, and to also be an adjudicator at tomorrow's mono/duo festival tomorrow at HHS. I'm really glad he was here today. He brought some much needed energy and a different vibe to the rehearsal process. My kids are awesome – they work really hard and (usually) do what I ask them to do, but it's nice for them to have break from the “usual” at times. Greg did some fun, new warm-up games with them, and helped them review stage directions (because believe it or not, about half of my cast didn't know where stage left and stage right were just a few weeks ago,) while I set up for the second half of rehearsal.

I'm trying to do some basic acting work with my cast on Fridays, as I've quickly realized a lot of them are not familiar with basic terminology and basic acting skills. I understand this situation for those who have never been in a play or taken a drama class. But about eight students put on their audition form they have taken Drama I at RHS this year, and they still didn't know stage directions, what subtext was, and a few other things I would expect them to learn in a beginning drama class. So today, we reviewed stage directions and talked about objectives and acting verbs. I wish I had more time to work with them on these sorts of things! I feel like even though I took the time to make handouts, do some activities with them, and talk them through it, I still didn't have enough time to go through everything I wanted to with them. A lot of the basics they'll have to learn through osmosis as they rehearse this show.

Saturday, January 19, 2008:

Today, I arrived at Hanford High School to assist Matt Leggett with the regional Mono/Duo theatre festival, which is actually a politically correct title for a theatre competition, or as close to a competition that you can get in the theatre arts. Every year, students in Washington state are invited to perform in different categories, such as monologue, duo scene, musical solo, etc., and be adjudicated twice during the day by different theatre professionals. There was a mono/duo festival on the west side
of the state last weekend, and this weekend, three schools from this area participated. Eleven of my students involved in *Seussical* participated, and four made it to the next round, meaning they can audition at the state festival to perform in the state showcase. So, all in all, a pretty good day. We once again missed helping out at the work party for the set. But by the time this event finished, I was too exhausted to operate power tools anyway.

**Monday, January 21, 2008 (all day rehearsal on Martin Luther King Jr. day):**

I'm absolutely exhausted. So much so, that this morning, I somehow had the idea that our all-day rehearsal started at 9:30 AM instead of 9:00 AM. I started receiving phone calls from numbers I didn't recognize this morning starting around 9:10, and finally got a call from a parent asking me where I was. On the calendar, I had put the rehearsal would start at 9:00 AM...and somehow, in my mind, that equated to 9:30 AM. So, after arriving late, I apologized, we played “catch up,” and were able to get through almost everything we had planned for today.

We had six plus numbers to get through, and thankfully, our first group to learn their dance consisted of my few trained dancers I have in the show. They learned the dance quickly and it looks really cute (“Amazayng Mayzie”). However, I'm realizing more and more that my choreographer does not pay attention to the information I give her, nor does she take the time to read her script, and this is causing more and more tension at rehearsals. We met with her over a month and a half ago, explaining my artistic vision and Geoff's designs for the set. I gave her a script over a month ago as well, hoping she'd read through it, and assuming (maybe I shouldn't have) that her musician husband would help her understand whatever music she was having a challenge with. It seems, however, that she only relies on the CD and the lyrics from the CD instead of using the materials I gave her. At least three times today, she would comment on “this is nothing like the CD” - yes, I know. I've told you this many, many times. She has confused things such as what side someone enters from, or doesn't seem to understand why some characters need to be at certain places of the stage at certain times. This makes me nervous, as I know the choices she makes also reflect on me, and I'm trying to communicate that to her in a calm, rationale manner. She did a great job with *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Coat* last year – I have no clue why this year things seem so difficult. David was a huge help with this situation. He could tell I was getting frustrated, and went up and talked to Suzanne, explaining some musical elements to her and talking her through it. I'm very thankful he's here to, at times, keep the peace, and translate “musician speak” for us non-musicians.

The students did a great job today, especially Alex Gonzalez, my Cat in the Hat. He was an absolute work-horse today, not only portraying the Cat, but also standing in for one of the monkeys (Britton) who was sick. I found out this evening Britton is currently in surgery for appendicitis, and won't be back for awhile. I'm sure everything will be OK – he'll just need to practice and catch on quickly when he returns.

I left and locked up by 6 PM, then came home, and still am behind on organizing all of my materials. I've never been this disorganized this far into a play before. I just can't seem to play catch up enough, and I think that's adding to my stress levels.

Although a tiring day, we did get a lot done, and I'm very thankful for that.
Tuesday, January 22, 2008:

I am thankful...

Today was so stressful, I finally went to the store and bought beer, not caring if I screwed up my Weight Watcher points for the day, and, honestly, not caring if I got a little buzz going on or not. Thankfully, Geoff came home in time to give me hugs and finish my beer for me...it has been so long since I've been so stressed that I can feel the anger coming out of my eyes. For some reason this year, especially with this current show, I feel like I have such little time left to get everything done. And I'm having major issues with some of the choices being made by other people in the show. I distributed scripts before choreography rehearsals began, but for some reason, some people (i.e. the choreographer) don't find it necessary to read the script, understand what is going on, and realize that I am the director, I know what I'm doing, it's my damn thesis, and I need to know what is going on.

Which leads to the subject of this journal. I am thankful, and (thankfully) have taken most of the evening to calm down and take a little bit of time for me. I turned my phone off, purposely did not look at my work e-mail, and watched a TV show. I said "screw it" tonight to everything I had to get done, and focussed on calming myself down. And so, before I go to bed, I will journal as I used to do when my life was chaotic for all sorts of reasons. I would make an "I'm Thankful" list to help me put things in perspective, and to show myself that I can get through anything.

I'm Thankful:

For Geoff, who knows me so well, he knows when to talk to me, when to listen, when to give me a hug, or when to get out of the way and let me blow off some steam. Knowing that he wants to be married to me for the rest of our lives is something I'm eternally thankful for.

For my kids. For working hard, for being at rehearsals, for respecting me, and for being an amazing source of support. Even today, when they could tell something was a little "off" with how I was feeling, they were calm, patient, and supportive.

My parent volunteers. Who make the musical possible. There is no way we'd get this show done without them.

For my bestie, Greg (Pschirrer). I have a "bitch for free" pass with him, where I can call him up, vent about this unique situation we are both in, and know he's right there with me.

For my life right now. Four years ago, when I thought everything was over, those close to me promised me things would get better. I'm so glad they had faith in me, because for a long time, I didn't have faith in myself. But now, looking at where I'm at, where I work, where I live, and who I have in my life, I'm so happy my loved ones were right, and I was wrong.

I'm thankful for my education, and for the fact that the end is in sight. It's the ending sprint that right now is trying to kill me, but I'll accomplish it. I'll have my MA by June, a pay raise by next year, and I'll know I'm on the right track, teaching my kiddos what they need to know to be good artists and better people.

I'm thankful for finally knowing who I am - both the good and the bad, but finally knowing at age 28
that this is me, and I'm OK! :)

I'm thankful for the basic necessities, some of which I didn't have four years ago - food, a home, a car, clothes, money to pay the bills, money to help others out, a good job, etc.

And with that, I'm thankful for sleep, which I hope to be experiencing in the next half hour or so.

Good night!

Wednesday, January 23, 2008:

Today was better. We reviewed all of the Act I dance numbers that have been taught so far. It's looking pretty good so far, but I'm worried about the lack of singing that is happening when the students are dancing. They know how to sing, they sound great in the choir room, but out here in our mutantly large auditorium, their sound disappears. A lot of them aren't used to singing and dancing at the same time, and I think that's part of the problem.

We reviewed the breathing exercises Terri and Dave taught them, and refocused on the breathing aspect. Hopefully this will help for the other rehearsals.

Tonight was another work night. We're still working on cutting out and constructing all the pieces. We'll start the painting once the main pieces are built.

Thursday, January 24, 2008:

Today was a short rehearsal – tried to get out by 5 PM to give the students some extra time to study for their finals tomorrow. They are all a little loopy. Most of them are really good students, and tend to stress themselves out (like someone else I know,) with school work. They rehearsed vocal music for a half hour before I arrived, then we reviewed choreography from Act I once again. We added on the finale of Act I – it feels more like filming a movie right now than rehearsing a play, as for the moment, some of it is out of order. We are starting to add in blocking, so hopefully all the sections we're doing will make more sense.

Rehearsal went well, but when I returned home, I received an e-mail from the activities director at RHS, asking me to meet with him regarding ticket sales. This has been an on-going issue the past few years, and it's gotten to a point where I have a parent volunteer (who I've been told can be tough if need be,) be in charge of organizing this. I just don't have the time, but to not pre-sell tickets to our musical would be absolutely stupid.

The first year I was at RHS, I was told I didn't need to pre-sell tickets, that we wouldn't get more than 250 people at the most at each of our shows. Well, that year with the one weekend they allowed me to have, we had between 600 and 800 people each night. Last year, we did Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, and I knew we'd have to pre-sell for this well-known show. We pre-sold 500 tickets per night, after convincing the activities director we needed to do this. We followed their directions specifically, but my parent volunteers still got bitched at, because after the fact, the activities office/book-keeper told them they did it wrong. (This is an ongoing trend at RHS -we're told to do it one way, then afterwards, they change their mind.) If we hadn't sold 500 tickets per show, there would have been no way to have the show start on time, as we had an average of 900 people at our show per
night, with over 1000 on closing night.

So, this year, I knew we should pre-sell again, but my parent volunteers who did it last year told me that they'd help me out whatever way they could, except for doing pre-sale tickets. They suggested I ask one mom who's a lawyer and can stand up for our program. She's been meeting with the activities director, and things seemed to be going well, until a day or so ago. The activities director told her that they'll pre-sell tickets, as long as we use the RHS tickets they use for sporting events and other activities. These tickets look like the small tickets you buy for a raffle, with no information on it, except for a raffle number. They told my mom volunteer these tickets could be used any night, for any show. And this brought up many red flags. Based on our numbers last year, there is a very good chance we might sell out. I also have to keep in mind royalty costs. Plus, I have never seen a theatre ticket anywhere that doesn't have the show information on it, let alone one that is good for "any night of the show"...I won't even go into all the different situations I tried to explain to the office about what could happen...it's obvious they don't understand and don't really care to. So now I have to find time between teaching at EMS and trying to use my rehearsal time to actually rehearse with my kids (hey—there's an idea!) to meet with the activities director because he doesn't understand my concerns.

I have no problem doing theatre work that benefits my program and especially benefits my students. I do not have the time, especially this year, to try to explain to people that don't even care about our program why we should be treated with the same respect as the other activities (aka sports) at this school.

Friday, January 25, 2008:

Rehearsal began at 2:15 PM today, due to the students getting out early after their final exams were over. They sang with Greg (our vocal director) until 3 PM, at which time I was supposed to be at the auditorium to go over more characterization work with them, and to do some more blocking.

However, we lost a lot of time due to me having to meet with the school's activities directors, and trying to explain to them why we needed to pre-sell tickets. Things went OK after they got that fact, but they honestly did not understand why pre-selling tickets was important. By the time the meeting was over, it was 3:30 PM, a half hour later than I had told my kids.

When I got to the auditorium, they were all there, and thankfully a lot of them were using this time to stretch or to go over their dance numbers. We kept working on our characterization work we began last Friday. Each student was to share a biography of their character, and we got through about half of the characters before I realized we were going to run out of time. So, I told everyone that those who didn't share today would share next Friday, and I distributed open scenes for them to go over for next week as well. I randomly assigned pairs of students together for the open scene assignment, and they are to have the scene rehearsed and ready to go by next week. Each student is to use their character they've developed for Seussical for their open scene. We'll see how it goes...trying to make sure everyone is caught up with basic acting skills is a challenge in any show due to time restraints, but is especially difficult during a musical when the cast size is at least three times larger than a straight play.

Saturday, January 26, 2008:

Today was a "normal" work day, meaning I was there, along with a lot of the students, to help Geoff and the other adult volunteers with the set. It's been difficult, and will continue to be with this show, as many of our public appearances or extra workshops, competitions, etc. are scheduled for Saturdays. I'm
usually not absent from this many work days, and I don't like that. But I also have to be where my kids are, and support these other activities we as a drama department are participating in. I'm trying really hard to get the word out there as much as I can about this show, since we're the first school/theatre to do this musical in the Tri-Cities. The more we get the word out there, show up in our costumes, and help the community make the connection between this show and Dr. Seuss, the better chance we have people showing up to our shows.

Monday, January 28, 2008:

Our scheduled all-day rehearsal at Mid-Columbia Ballet was canceled due to the awful weather we've been having. Well, awful for the Tri-Cities, since no one here knows how to drive in the snow, nor do the snow plows show up in a timely manner to make the roads safe. I decided to cancel rehearsal as I did not want the students driving in the nine (or more) inches of snow we received over-night. Today was a “semester day” (no school) anyway, designed for teachers to get their report cards ready. Good thing I worked on mine last week! Still, I'm disappointed and a little worried about losing so much valuable time in which we could have rehearsed. At least I'm not in Spokane – poor Greg hasn't had rehearsal for awhile due to snow, and he's not even sure when he'll be at school again.

Tuesday, January 29, 2008:

I had to cancel rehearsal today as well. Today was a snow day in the district, which means we'll need to make it up in May. I'm now quite concerned about how much we're behind, due to missing the all-day rehearsal yesterday, and three hours of rehearsal time today.

Wednesday, January 30, 2008:

We will now be making up the all-day rehearsal (approximately eight hours) this coming Saturday (with only four hours available) at the Mid-Columbia Ballet dance studio. I called the owner earlier this week, offering to pay rent if need be to give my kids some time in front of the mirrors so they could see what they look like. (We were originally planned to be there Monday, but couldn't make it due to the weather.) Joel, the owner, is awesome and is letting us practice there in the morning, even though he has classes later that day. I'm hoping to work the kids hard and get as much done as we can so we don't fall too far behind. While we're all at the dance studio, Geoff will be at the auditorium with volunteers working on our set. A lot of the students plan on being there helping when they're not scheduled to dance.

Today I worked with Sam and Maddie on their solos, “Alone in the Universe” and “Solla Sollew.” I also worked with Sam and Melissa on the Horton and Gertrude scenes. I love working in small groups -that's when I feel we can really expand on the acting and character work. While I was doing this, Suzanne was working with the Cadets in the auditorium. I watched what they learned today at the end of rehearsal. Most of the cadets are very new, and/or don't have a lot of experience with movement. Most of them are doing OK, but of course Suzanne put the least coordinated mover of the group in the center of the stage. I'll wait to see if it gets better. If it doesn't, I may need to fix it.

Thursday, January 31, 2008:

Today was a crazy, all-over day. We had kids in the choir room, then kids rehearsing with the orchestra for the first time in the band room, kids learning choreography in the auditorium, and me working with
small groups in the lobby. I think we got a lot done. It's hard to keep track of everything while working with students as well. But I'm getting better at it. The fish dancers started learning “It's Possible.” Four of the eight girls are willing to buy Heelies, and the other four will have ballet slippers. What they've worked on so far looks really cool – I just need to remind the girls to order their Heelies so they can start practicing in them ASAP!

Friday, February 1, 2008:

Today, the students finished sharing their character bios and performed their open scenes. The biographies were pretty in depth. You could tell about 95% of the cast worked really hard on these. The open scenes, for the most part, went well. I was extremely impressed with some of my more shy cast members – they really opened up and got creative in their open scenes. They were supposed to use the physicalization of their character from Seussical for their scenes. About half of them actually remembered to do that. It makes me happy to have students who follow directions and push themselves artistically. That may sound somewhat simplistic, but in the teaching field, you recognize early on that students actually giving 100% is the exception rather than the norm. What's so fun about working with my kids after school is they really want to be there, and they try as hard as they can.

I reminded everyone about our (once again) re-vamped rehearsal schedule. Due to snow and canceled rehearsals, we're trying to make up the dance rehearsals we've missed. Thankfully, the Mid-Columbia Ballet Studio owners have offered their space for us to rehearse in tomorrow. It's a crazy, concise schedule, trying to get as much crammed in there as we can. I'm really excited to have us rehearse there, as that means the students will be able to rehearse in front of mirrors – an almost unheard of thing down here in the Tri-Cities (due to lack of rehearsal venues, etc.)

Saturday, February 2, 2008:

Work day at RHS, dance rehearsal at the dance studio, me running back and forth! I spent most of my time at the dance studio later in the morning/early afternoon, and had the time to work with my students one on one with their choreography. Suzanne couldn't make it due to a previous commitment, and that actually helped things move along. I had the time (and quiet) to give my students notes pertaining to their characterizations and how they moved physically on stage – and how this effected/was connected to (or should be connected to,) their dance moves. I think we went through seven or eight different numbers, which was awesome. Because the studio let us use three different rooms, after awhile, I was able to separate the students into different dance groups and have them go rehearse on their own. This helped save a lot of time.

Pieces of the set look so cool! But the more we do, the more we need to get done. I know that everything set wise will work out, it always does. But the last two years, tech week has been extremely exhausting since we have no way to work on the set during the day. I'm really hoping that somehow we can get most of the set done before tech week this year, like we did with our fall show. I can hope, right?

Sunday, February 3, 2008:

We have now started our Sunday work days. These are not required for anyone, as I have a lot of church-going students, and I want to respect their family time on Sundays. Even though I don't make it required, quite a few kids show up. We are always grateful for their help and company!
For work days, I try to physically help out as much as I can, but often, I end up supervising, running from one place to another making sure everyone is staying safe, having fun, and getting work done.

Monday, February 4, 2008:

We are now at the point where we are running through sections of the show. I took both Act I and Act II, dividing them into sections, and gave each student a “scene breakdown” so they know what sections they are in. This way, we don't have to do baby-steps anymore, but I'm not throwing all of Act I or Act II at them at one time.

Today we ran through the first part of Act II. Oh, Act II. I'm not a fan of Act II's in musicals for the most part, and I've had difficulty with this Act II specifically ever since I began researching Seussical. My biggest fear is that it will drag, and bring the audience down with it. I let the kids know right away today we have to have a strong, steady pace with no “mac trucks” (a term used by George Bellah in my undergrad work).

Tuesday, February 5, 2008:

Reading over my previous entries, they’re either really mundane, or quite “vent filled.” I really do like everyone I work with. It’s a challenge to learn and grow, just like the students, learning how to be collaborative and communicate with those I’m working with. Thankfully, my personality has mellowed considerably since I was younger, making it possible for me to stay calm and listen to other frustrations or deal with them rationally (and then vent about it in my journal!)

Our new music director, Nate Simmons, is young and talented. He’s had a really difficult job this year, coming in mid-November, teaching students who were deceived by the previous instructor who they had totally trusted. So with that being said, we’re all trying to be really supportive and flexible when working with him.

We had originally planned to rehearse with the orchestra quite a few times this week, but due to lack of communication on Nate’s part (he’s one of those guys that does not respond to his e-mails,) Greg and I had to re-schedule what we were going to do. Is it a bit frustrating? Yea. But we’re trying to make it work. Nate’s never conducted a pit orchestra before, so I understand part of this is him learning along the way. Ergh. It’s no one’s fault (well, no one who is here right now,) but it does add some extra work and stress to the equation.

After talking with Greg and Nate, we’ve rescheduled orchestra rehearsals for this Thursday and Friday. It’s really important for the actors to hear what the music will sound like on the stage. What I’ve heard from the orchestra so far sounds pretty good. I think it will be OK.

Besides that, today was another review day. I’m taking notes on any blocking that isn’t strong enough; we’re running through it again, making things look sharp. A pretty regular day.

Wednesday, February 6, 2008:

We’ve been ending rehearsals at 6:30 PM now the last couple days. I increase rehearsal times every few weeks, to make sure we have enough time to get stuff done, and so tech week isn’t such a shock on the system. I’m really proud with how I manage my time. For the most part, students are released from
rehearsal at the scheduled time. Sometimes, we run a few minutes over, but if we are ever more than ten minutes behind, I give the students the option of leaving and/or calling their parents to let them know. The students are almost willing to stay, and because I keep the communication open, the parents are pretty supportive.

I took mental notes when I was a high school student on how stressed my friends and I became at late rehearsals, and how angry my parents got when the director kept us over. And I’m not talking a few minutes. I’m talking a few hours. It sounds like this is still the case at some schools. Fellow teachers chat with me about how their kids go to rehearsal with an “open-ended” time. It is expected for the parents to be on call and pick up their children when they’re done, which sometimes during tech week is as late as 11:00 PM!

For my own sanity, I can’t do that. Giving myself parameters, and deadlines, really helps push things along, and keeps everyone on track. I don’t want to wear my kids out, especially as the show gets closer. (Thankfully this year, our show is later, so the “flu season” that usually hits us the last weekend of performances is hitting us right now. Although this doesn’t help rehearsals much, at least we’re getting it out of our systems right now.)

We got most of our puppets today! They look amazing! They're made by the same parent who made our camel for Joseph last year. James Bath plays both the Grinch (I decided to make that character a puppet since he's so universally known, and is on stage for such a short amount of time,) and Vlad Vladikoff. I was afraid I was going to have to spend a lot of time on teaching the kids how to manipulate the puppets, but they're catching on fast. The Who hand puppets are adorable - they're actually stealing the Who scene right now (that will be fixed when the set/puppet stages are complete). I'm really excited to use these puppets for our public appearances and to see people's reactions to them when we perform the show.

**Thursday, February 7, 2008:**

Today we worked with the orchestra for the first hour. Nate had been apologizing all week for what we would hear today, but I thought it sounded great! Oh my gosh - both “The Thinks You Can Think” and “Biggest Blame Fool” really rock! I could see the energy level just rising by leaps and bounds today, as the entire cast sang with the orchestra for the first time. Yea, there were quite a few moments we needed to work on, but you can tell everyone can finally see this entire thing coming together, and the new rush of energy is a good thing.

The second half of rehearsal we reviewed Act II. We also quickly discussed a public appearance we’ll be doing on Saturday, at Barnes and Noble. I’m hoping to work with the specific students who are volunteering their time a little bit more tomorrow.

**Friday, February 8, 2008:**

We sang through the show with the orchestra again today. The segue between the first song and the jungle scene is a bit awkward. Nate is waiting for the actors to cue him, and my actors are waiting for his cue. So, we’re working on that. In years past, we always told the students they were cued by the conductor. Now we have a conductor who isn’t used to that. Greg is helping Nate out a lot (Greg has his MA in Conducting from CWU,) so I think that will help as well.
After singing through, I met with my lead actors and went over my expectations for tomorrow’s public appearance. We’ll be reading Dr. Seuss stories in the children’s section of Barnes and Noble tomorrow, and the tech crew will be doing face painting. While this is going on, Barnes and Noble will have a “book fair,” where a certain percentage of everything bought that day will go toward our new drama booster program.

Fridays for me, during a show, are quite odd. I don’t mind working on the weekends – we need to do that to get work done. But it’s weird when everyone at work is telling you to “have a good weekend” or “have a good break!” when you know that you’ll be busy the entire time. Oh well. (I am taking a quick break and going out to dinner for my fiancé’s 30th birthday, so that will be nice.)

Saturday, February 9, 2008:

I’m EXHAUSTED!!! But I had so much fun today!

I went to RHS this morning to open up the auditorium for the tech crew and students who would be working on the set. I helped out a bit, and then worked with my students who were going to Barnes and Noble in the afternoon. We spent over an hour practicing reading stories to little kids, which surprisingly a lot of my students had never done before. I pretended to be all sorts of children they could come in contact with, and their responses were pretty funny. They kept telling me “Mizzle (their nickname for me,) it won’t be that bad!” Ok, we’ll see...

All the actors who were going to be in costume drove to Val’s (our costumers) to change and then drive to the mall. I have to admit, these high schoolers are troupers. I don’t think I would have been willing to drive to the mall dressed up as Horton the Elephant or a Who, then walk through the mall to get to Barnes and Noble when I was their age. But they had no problem with it. We all met at Barnes and Noble at 2:00 PM, and got going. Stories were read, kids who weren’t reading at the time walked around the store distributing Dr. Seuss pencils, and some of my tech crew did face painting. The children who visited even got to have their photo taken with their favorite Dr. Seuss characters! It was a lot of fun, and I could see my students warming up to the idea of performing for children as the day continued. This is good, as we have more educational outreach performances planned for the future.

We stayed until 4:00 PM, then cleaned up and left. I actually stayed and shopped for an hour – which may sound like no big deal, but I haven’t had time to shop for a really long time! I bought some Dr. Seuss books including *Dr. Seuss Goes to War,* and then walked around the mall for a little bit on my own. It was a nice break.

Sunday, February 10, 2008:

Another Sunday work day. Nothing too eventful happened. We finished early so Geoff could celebrate his birthday with his family before some of them had to fly back home. The set is getting there – most of the jungle pieces are cut out. Now we need to start working on the Who set.

Monday, February 11, 2008:

Happy 30th Birthday, Geoff! Since he’s known me, my fiancé has not had time to have a “normal birthday” celebration due to us always being right in the middle of a show at this point. At least it’s not tech week, like it’s been the past two years.
We ran Act II. Things are going pretty well, except for my Wickersham Brothers. Everything else is really running smoothly, which is nice at this point. But, with Britton being gone for having his appendix out, and then his lack of effort to catch up and learn what he missed, the Wickersham numbers are really sticking out like a sore thumb. Their big dance “number” isn’t in Act II, but it’s still obvious the monkeys are not meshing. I’ve asked my assistant choreographer, Alex (a junior at RHS) to work with the monkeys. He’s told me when he tries to work with them, Britton just refuses to do anything. I’m secretly thankful that he’s a senior – he’s a good kid, but used to getting his way. His mom is the closest I have to a stage mom within this group, and even though I know there will be more students like this down the road, it’s something that I’m not too hip on dealing with. I’ll try talking to Britton again before we run through Act I tomorrow.

Tuesday, February 12, 2008:

Happy anniversary to me and Geoff! Yep – this week is one big wanna be shin-dig, if we didn’t have rehearsals. But, again, at least it’s not tech week this year. This one week has Geoff’s birthday, our anniversary, and Valentine’s Day in it. We’ve been spending the evenings working on the set, working with the students and our volunteers. I am so thankful for everything Geoff provides to our program. It really wouldn’t be complete if he wasn’t here to advise and work on the technical aspect. I think working on these projects together has really shown us we can be in stressful situations and work well together.

I spoke with Britton today. I have to admit, he has a pretty good excuse if he wants to milk it for what it’s worth. He had his appendix out last month, and as his director, I don’t want him to push it and hurt himself, but at the same time, I need him to keep working. He’s the kind of wild card that would do crazy crap just to do it, so when I spoke with him today and he told me he wasn’t dancing because he “wanted to be careful,” I had mixed feelings about that. My gut is saying not to trust what he says. What my gut is telling me is he is burned out. He already knows he’s graduating early and moving to BYU Hawaii by April. I just want him to realize there is an entire group of students, his team, that depends on him, and he can’t flake out now just because he may be tired.

Tomorrow we have rehearsal, and a costume parade. I already know we probably won’t get through all of Act II due to the costume parade, but it’s really important for the production staff and the students to see how things are coming along. Some of the students already saw their costumes during the photo shoot we had what seems like ages ago for publicity purposes. Some also had the chance to wear their costumes on Saturday at Barnes and Noble. But this is the first time everyone will be in their costumes at one time.

Wednesday, February 13, 2008:

Everyone seems grumpier this year. Specifically my costumer and choreographer. And I know my personality hasn’t changed so drastically that I’m the cause for it. This year, some people are more on edge. And I’m trying to figure out how to work through that. I specifically chose people who I’ve worked with before, who I like to work with, to be on the production team. So when they show up, and don’t act like they did before, that throws me for a loop.

Our costumer, Val, is amazingly talented. We rented costumes from her last year for Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, and things went really, really well. My parent volunteers who are my production assistants, think she may be more stressed out this year because rather than just renting the
costumes, she’s constructing every single one.

The costume parade went pretty well, with the occasional stressful moment as a dozen volunteers and Val were trying to discuss notes and figure out what to fix. There is one parent volunteer specifically who is adding to the stress level. She has helped us in the past, but really got involved in our fall show. (To be honest, we would not have had the set for our fall show, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, if he hadn’t been for her.) She volunteered to design and create the props needed for *Seussical*, but she now seems to think she can contribute and/or be in charge of other aspects as well. So far, we’ve all been able to keep our cool. But I’m not sure how much longer that will last. I would hope she realizes how she’s coming across, but who knows. I hate confrontations, even civil ones, so I’m hoping it doesn’t get to that point. She sat right next to Val all during the costume parade, giving her two cents worth, and I could tell that was starting to get on Val’s nerves.

The kids were amazing and patient. Wow. I’m at times so impressed with how they can be the most mature ones in the theatre. (Not always, but sometimes.) I appreciate their hard work and patience as we get closer to opening.

We finally started running through Act II around 5 PM. We didn’t get through the entire thing, but we got close. The good news is we got a lot done today.

**Thursday, February 14, 2008:**

Happy Valentine’s Day! I put together little Dr. Seuss valentine’s for the cast. I found this awesome web page called Seussland.com, which I fear may become an expensive find for me if I’m not careful. I ordered *One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish* valentine cards, and *Cat in the Hat* pencils. It was fun presenting these to the kids. I had written each of them a little “pick me up” note to personalize it. As I called each student up to get their valentine, everyone else cheered very loudly for them. I have very supportive kids, and it’s always nice to be reminded, among all the chaos, why I’m doing what I’m doing.

We warmed up, and ran through the show. Whew! Because we worked on sections, and then individual acts, today actually went pretty smoothly. I feel pretty good about the performance of the piece. (I’m still not happy with a few things, such as the Wickerson dance number, and some of Act II, but overall, it’s strong.) I am getting extremely nervous about the technical elements. It’s Thursday, a week before we open, and we still don’t have lights designed (we have ideas, but haven’t come up with a final design because our auditorium staff haven’t shown up yet to discuss the show), because the lights haven’t been designed yet, the auditorium staff haven’t hung the lights (we are not allowed to do either sound or lights), we won’t have sound until tomorrow, and the orchestra has backed out of some of the rehearsals we had scheduled with them. Usually by this point, I feel a little more confident about the production overall than I do right now.

**Friday, February 15, 2008:**

Every Friday in the Tri-City Herald, there is an “Arts and Entertainment” section. In this section of the paper, dates, times, and ticket information is listed for the plays performing in the community. Our play was listed, but no information was given about tickets available for pre-sale. I wrote the entertainment reporter who is in charge of this information, and she said she’ll make sure the information is in the paper for next week, our opening night.
Today we had the first full run through with costumes and orchestra. A note on this – we (the production staff,) had scheduled this at the very beginning of the rehearsal process. I spoke with Nate, and he was on board. Val specifically requested to have the students rehearse in costumes before tech week so she could watch and see if there was anything she needed to fix. Today, she asked me if the students have to rehearse in costumes every day next week (tech week). Um, yea. I told her, yes, it’s tech week, that’s the plan. She told me she was really worried about the costumes lasting that long. Part of me understands her protective nature for her costumes, but part of me is wondering, “You’re a costume designer – you need to make these costumes sturdy enough to be worn on stage!” Ugh. I compromised with her that next week they will need to wear their costumes every day, but we’ll only have them wear their wigs on Tuesday and Thursday. Just trying to keep everyone calm, happy, and on task while I’m directing my thesis.

One of the auditorium guys showed up to put mics on the actors. We have fourteen mics, but I am once again being told that if we use any more than eight, it will sound bad. We have three auditorium staff members who help us out. Jeff is the manager, and really knows his stuff. His brother, Scott, is a couple years out of high school and is still learning the ropes. David is the third one, and he’s really good with sound. I was hoping we would have David to help us out. But for some reason, Jeff is having him work the bagpipe concert at a local middle school (no mics required,) and is having Scott work mics for our show. I don’t know sound, but at times, I can at least tell if a mic isn’t working due to a low battery, frequency, or what not. Scott’s be all answer is “there are too many mics.” But now I’m being told two things – Jeff telling us we can have up to twelve mics without a problem, and Scott saying any more than eight will not work. I have exactly twelve kid who need mics, and only two or three that can actually share due to who is on stage when. As of right now, only two of my three bird girls have mics, and their harmonies are lost. Greg knows sound really well, too, and is trying to get Scott to move the receivers closer to the stage (since we have the colossal auditorium of cement – not the best place to perform acoustically). Scott isn’t moving them though – he says “everything will be OK.” I hope everything will work by next week.

So the actors (some of them,) got mics, and we went through the show with the orchestra. Nate is so nervous about screwing up, that he kept stopping and starting to review things with the actors. I spoke with the actors earlier, reminding them to stay focused, ready to stop and start to work with the orchestra. But I didn’t think he was going to stop and start this much! We had to skip through a few solo numbers they had already worked on earlier in order to get through the entire thing by 7:00 PM. To complicate matters, we won’t have the orchestra here on Monday, due to a state-wide music conference in Yakima. That give us three more days to run through the show with the orchestra before we open. Nervous? Yes, I’m becoming more and more nervous as we get closer. And more nervous than I’ve been for past shows, with not nearly as much rehearsal time with the orchestra or for technical elements as I would like to have.

But, “the show will go on,” right?

Saturday, February 16, 2008:

Our last Saturday work day before we open! We painted for most of the day, and came to the unfortunate realization that our false prosenium, the huge piece needed to bring the size of our stage in, won’t be finished until tech week itself. My parent volunteer who is driving everyone nuts has offered to help with the false prosenium…I need to gamble on this one, as I need her help, and I hope that as long as she just mostly works with Geoff and I, things will be OK.
Sunday, February 17, 2008:

Our last full work day before we only have the evenings after tech rehearsals to finish things up. The false prosceniums are now painted – they need to dry, and the auditorium managers can hang them on Monday. The top part of the proscenium won’t be done for a few days. Geoff and I still want to try to hang some jungle leaves from the false fly system we’re trying to use (we borrowed this from Mid-Columbia Ballet). The same parent volunteer (mentioned above,) is also volunteering to do this. I’m to the point where I’m willing to cut things to save time and sanity. The jungle leaves may be one of the things I make an executive decision on.

Monday, February 18, 2008:

Today was President’s Day. The past two years, we had finished our show by this time. Usually, Geoff and I would run away for a vacation over the three day weekend. I don’t have any of my musical directors, instrumental or vocal today, so I’m not sure exactly sure how we’ll do a tech/dress later, but we’ll figure it out. This morning we had a “cue to cue” rehearsal – minus the light cues. So, does that really count? The lights still aren’t hung yet. I’m getting really nervous about that. And, we had to find extra techies at the last minute. Due to no tech class, many students who sign up to do tech decide not to do it once they see how much work it is. I just really wish the students wouldn’t decide this during actual tech week. One student sought me out way at the beginning of rehearsals, asking to do tech. He showed up, and didn’t want to “just move the set.” Well, I’m sorry, but that’s what we need you to do. Geoff and I talked about it, and we came to the conclusion that if he really didn’t want to be here, it wouldn’t help the rest of the cast and crew. So we let him go, and found a friend of some of the cast members to jump in last minute. His name is Josh, and I don’t know if he talks! (Very, very shy.) As long as he can move a periactoi when cued, we’ll be OK.

Our first dress rehearsal! With no orchestra! Ugh. Costumes, hair, and makeup looked good. The kids got ready in time, the performance ran pretty smoothly. We had no sound due to no orchestra, and we had no lights, once again. So, performance wise, I feel OK. Tech wise, I’m very, very nervous.

And after the cue to cue in the morning, and the pseudo tech/dress in the afternoon, we once again worked on the set. The cast and crew left at 7:30 PM. Geoff, me, and some volunteers didn’t leave until 10:30 PM. I have to find another way to do tech weeks. No matter how hard we try, we always have late nights during tech week. And these late nights really kick my butt during the day when I’m trying to teach middle schoolers. I just hope I can make it through the rest of this week.

Tuesday, February 19, 2008:

We open this Friday. And for the first time since I’ve been at RHS, I don’t feel ready for the show. I always have things organized by this point where I know that things will be OK - and right now, with three rehearsals left, we don’t have lights yet, we’ve rehearsed with the orchestra once, and I’m so exhausted that I’ve had to take two sick days these past two weeks just to make sure I can get all the work done I need to get done without passing out or just having my body stop working.

I know everyone will tell me "Everything will be OK," and it will. Somehow or other, we’ll have a show, and the audience will enjoy it. But for me, it’s more than that -and I feel that due to this being my thesis, I’ve actually in a way cheated my students out of important things I want them to have - like my time. I won’t list all the stuff that’s stressing me here right now, because I’m sure by next week those
things won't seem nearly as big of a deal. But for right now, they are all weighing heavily on my mind.

**Wednesday, February 20, 2008:**

Full tech/dress (minus wigs), with the orchestra. Geoff and I finally had to talk to the parent volunteer that was driving everyone nuts. (Can you tell the kids are doing OK? I rarely vent about them. Hmm.) We tried to be as calm and constructive as possible – but we told her she can't be backstage during the show. She's back there, yelling at the kids for breaking "her" props, telling them how to wear their costumes, saying things that she has no liberty to say. She came to me and said the kids were just being careless with the props and breaking them. Now, I know my kids can be klutzy, and maybe some of the new ones I don't know very well could act careless (although I haven't seen that,) but I know for a fact most of the kids would never break a prop on purpose. There is a difference between trying to be careful, and being accusatory. Do not accuse my kids or put them down for something they aren't doing. A large part of the problem with the props is they are so incredibly fragile. And yes, the parent volunteer made them (and did an excellent job,) but she keeps calling them "her" props. Once you donate them to the show, they belong to the show. And I will make sure we're careful with them, but you need to let them be used for the purpose they were made for.

Well, after our calm, rationale talk that Geoff and I thought went really well, I found out she's really upset. Hopefully she'll calm down. That's all I can hope. I can't make everyone happy. I need to make sure this show gets done the right way. We open the day after tomorrow, and I need to focus on my kids.

The orchestra is having some issues as well. For the most part, they sound good, but there are a few instruments (oboe and piccolo) that really stick out as sounding flat. I'm not a musician, and I can tell it doesn't sound right, so I don't even know what it sounds like to Greg and Nate! I keep giving Nate the note to have the musician make sure she plays the right notes, but it seems to really be hit or miss. I'm hoping this gets resolved before we open!

We also decided a few days ago not to have recorded sound effects. With so few of them, it would sound cheesy to have these sounds on top of the orchestra. So, the orchestra will be our sound effects! We have a horn being the elephant trumpet sound at the end of the show, a triangle acting as the alarm clock, and the flute as the voice of the Elephant Bird. It sounds really cool!

**Thursday, February 21, 2008:**

I really don't have the time or patience to deal with people who do not listen or understand what we're trying to do with this program. I sent the bookkeeper an e-mail this morning, reminding her we'd need her and another RSD employee to be at the theatre tomorrow by 6:15 PM to sell tickets. (Only RSD employees are allowed to sell the tickets, and these people are scheduled ahead of time by the bookkeeper.) She e-mailed me back saying “I thought your parents were in charge of selling tickets – I don't have anyone scheduled.” Um, excuse me? Since when? So I replied “Yes, my parent volunteer was helping with pre-sale tickets, but we still need them sold at the door.” Can't I spend any time actually focussing on my students? This is the type of stuff that stresses me out and is giving me grey hairs – not the actual art of directing the show, but the producing of it, when people don't seem to listen or understand what to do.

Ok, so in other news – there is a theatre saying that if you have a really bad final dress rehearsal, you'll
have a very good opening night. So, we'll have a very good opening night.

Let's start with the beginning of the day (besides the ticket drama listed above). I get an e-mail from the entertainment reporter at the Tri-City Herald, letting me know she scheduled to have our show reviewed. Usually, on a two weekend run show, the reviewer will come the first weekend, write a review, and the review will be in the paper the following weekend. Well...this morning, the e-mail stated we get a review, but the reviewer would be there today. As in, our last dress rehearsal before we open. Ok, I told myself this morning, it will be OK.

So, I e-mail Nate, Greg, my volunteers, everyone involved, letting them know what the schedule is today, and letting them know the reviewer will be there that night. I get an e-mail back from Nate saying the drummer for the pit isn't there today, he doesn't know where he is, and he hasn't heard from him. By the time I get to RHS to get everyone ready for the final dress rehearsal, the drummer still isn't there. We NEED a drummer for this show. One of the other pit musicians says her sister is a drummer, Nate says OK, and we wait for this sub drummer, who has never seen the music, to show up. I had been told the reviewer would be there by 4:00 PM. At 4:20 PM, the reviewer still wasn't there, and the new drummer had just arrived. The reviewer finally showed up at 4:30 PM, and we began.

It was the worst dress rehearsal I have ever had at this school. This isn't saying the kids were bad, but between lights not going on cue, the music sounding totally different due to a different drummer, and all sorts of nerves and funkiness, I came to the conclusion that maybe this year was just not our year to have a stellar musical. We, the cast and crew, had done everything we could to make this work. I knew we were all trying hard, but here we were, the night before we open, and it looked like a typical, "cute" high school musical. We don't do those at RHS. But this time around, it looked like we would. (To make this a more interesting situation, this is the dress rehearsal I recorded for my thesis. I don't even want to watch the video of it.)

I gave the kids notes afterwards, pumped them up for tomorrow, told them everything was going to be OK, and went home. I've done all I can. Now we need to wait and see what happens.

Friday, February 22, 2008 (Opening Night!):

Guess what wasn't in the paper this morning (the first thing I looked for)? The correct information for our play seems to be missing. Not only did they not put in the information about pre-sale tickets like I had requested and reminded them to do, but according to the paper, our tickets are $6 and $3. (Our tickets are actually $10 and $8.) Sunnyside High School is also performing Seussical this weekend, and the Tri-City Herald put in their ticket prices instead of ours for our school performance. I really hope audience members aren't miffed when they come to this show and find out they have to pay more than what was published. I also find it ironic that the paper said they had no room for a photo or an article for our show, but they found space for an article for Sunnyside's production (Sunnyside is not even a part of the Tri-Cities!) It has been like pulling teeth to get the paper interested in this play at all. Never mind the fact that we will be performing for over 1300 elementary school students next week as part of Read Across America Week — that doesn't seem to be news worthy for what many people in this community call the "Tri-Cycle Herald." I e-mailed the entertainment reporter once again — she said she'll make sure all the correct information is in the paper next weekend. I'm nervous now, because if we do have big crowds show up, as people have been telling me, we'll have people waiting in line to buy tickets who could have bought them ahead of time.
I took a half day today, in order to give myself some time to relax before going to the theatre. I left school around 11:30 and went and got a facial and massage. It was nice to just do nothing for two hours (I don't even remember the last time I did that since starting this show). It also helped me focus and realize whatever happens happens, and it will be OK. I trust my kids, they've worked hard, and now we just need to do it and have fun.

Well, I guess the theory of a bad final dress rehearsal/great opening night stands true. I have no clue what happened between yesterday and tonight, but something clicked, everything fell into place, and except for a few odd moments with the music, (and a few periactoi randomly turning when they shouldn't have been,) the show went really well. We had a great crowd – I'm guessing maybe 600? (It's really hard to tell in a theatre that holds almost 1500!) I'm very happy and relieved with how tonight went. There was a 5th Avenue High School Musical Theatre adjudicator out there tonight. Tamara came over today to see the show as well. Tomorrow is when Wes and Greg show up.

Saturday, February 23, 2008:

Throughout this process, I've tried to keep an even balance between making sure I followed the guidelines given to me in my graduate courses, and adapting what I needed to for my venue, my kids, and my production staff. My kids knew Wes was going to be out there tonight – and they told me they wanted to do a really good job, to get me an “A.” I reminded them that if I did my job, and if they stayed focused and had fun, everything would be fine.

Greg had arrived earlier in the day, and he came to the auditorium with me. The mom volunteers were busy setting up our lobby display (pictures and letters about Dr. Seuss and his stories written by local elementary and middle school students), and I made the rounds making sure everything was being taken care of. I got to say hi to Wes before the show started, and went to my seat in the very back of the house to watch the show. We had even more people the second night than the first! We did have some stressful ticket situations I had to deal with, but I think if I e-mail the principal about it on Monday, it will work itself out.

Unfortunately, we were still having sound problems. I hate wasting so much energy and getting so stressed about things that really shouldn't be that stressful! I wish the sound guy would just listen to us! But once again, one of my Bird Girls didn't have a microphone, and it was difficult to hear the harmonies. Wes even mentioned that afterwards. But he liked the show a lot, and that made me very happy and proud. If he genuinely liked it overall, then I knew we had a good show. The kids loved listening to Wes talk about the show afterward. I really like the having the opportunity to talk and listen to other people who are involved in the theatre. I think that is important for them to hear different comments, viewpoints, etc.

After the show, Greg, Wes, Geoff, and I tried to find somewhere to talk. We ended up at Shari's, and had a good discussion about the show. A lot of the challenges Wes mentioned I was aware of, and for the most part we agreed on a lot of it. He was really happy with the false proscenium - I'm glad we did that. I'm thankful for all the input and ideas I received from other people throughout this process. It really helped the play become well-rounded.

Two shows down - one elementary school performance and two more public performances to go!
Sunday, February 24, 2008:

A DAY OFF!!!!!!!!!!!! I get to sleep in! I'm very, very thankful for such a good weekend, and a day to relax.

Monday, February 25, 2008:

Even though this is a day off for the cast, crew, and orchestra, it is not a day off for me. I've been working on our special elementary school performance that we'll have tomorrow for the past couple of months. Most of the work has been done during my prep hour during the day, when I'm teaching middle school. I've e-mailed all the principals of the elementary schools here in Richland, and tomorrow we'll have 1300 elementary school students come see what is actually the first part of our pick-up rehearsal (Act I) during the school day. This is a way to promote the show, celebrate Read Across America Week and Dr. Seuss' Birthday, and to do an educational outreach for our students here in Richland. I'm using the experience I had at CWU working with Leslee, helping out with the children's theatre shows, hoping I remember how she made everything run so smoothly. I guess we'll see how it goes!

Tuesday, February 26, 2008:

I took the day off of teaching at the middle school today to host the first elementary school performance I think RHS has ever had. My awesome parent volunteers helped me set up, putting up signs welcoming the schools, and figuring out the seating chart. Everything pre-show actually ran really, really smoothly. I think we were well organized, and working with a lot of kids before in other venues and for other things helped me stay calm. I absolutely love seeing young children watch a play. However, I could have been happier with the performance. I'm sure the kids, parents, and teachers didn't notice anything, but I could tell my actors were a bit off, especially my Cat in the Hat, who has been doing so well. He forgot some of the words to the closing musical number, and just hummed along instead of trying to recoup. He finally found his words again, ended the song, and that was that. I could tell he was really disappointed in himself, so I didn't push the issue.

Everyone seemed to have a good time. I'm interested in possibly pursuing another type of children's theatre show (next time, not nearly as complicated) for one of our shows next season.

I found our review on-line today. The entertainment reporter said hopefully there will be enough room in Friday's paper to publish it. The theatre gods must have been looking out for us, because it was actually really, really good. You never know what to expect from our local arts reviewers. I'm just glad she enjoyed the show. This review will help us out for our second weekend.

Wednesday, February 27, 2008:

Today we went through our full-length pick up rehearsal. I wish this one would have been recorded. The sound was perfect. A mic was put on our third Bird Girl – the only problem with the old one was it was, well, old. Instead of putting on a new one, which the auditorium staff had all along, our sound guy just told me we had too many mics. But now we have enough mics for everyone, and if everything goes as well as it did today, the audience will be able to hear everyone. The light cues were great! The kids had energy! I really wanted people to see this performance!
I was finally able to sit back, relax, and enjoy this show we have all worked so hard for.

Thursday, February 28, 2008:

There was no rehearsal today, but I spent most of the day finalizing plans for the elementary schools we will visit tomorrow as part of Read Across America Week. Four of the local schools couldn't make it to the show on Tuesday, so a small group of students and I are going to these schools to attend Dr. Seuss rallies and read Dr. Seuss stories to the students. I'm really excited – I love seeing young children's reactions when they see these Dr. Seuss characters. And I'm so proud of my high school kids, who are now pros at this type of thing. It's stuff like this that reminds me why I love teaching theatre.

Friday, February 29, 2008:

Whew! Today, by the end of the school day, I was exhausted. And we still had a show to do! My high school students did an amazing job hopping from school to school, keeping up their energy, making each elementary student feel special, encouraging them to read, and celebrating Dr. Seuss. Four schools in four hours – that's a lot of driving around, reading, and entertaining. And my cast members did an outstanding job.

We must have had about 800 audience members tonight – possibly more. Once again, the information regarding pre-sale tickets was not in the paper, so we had quite the line outside with people waiting to get in. I had to hold the show, and I had Thing One and Thing Two run outside to visit with the kids waiting in line. I usually don't have my students out and about before the show, but I thought for something like this, it could work.

The show was strong. I was happy with how it turned out. I'm just trying to soak up and appreciate each performance, as I know it's almost over.

Tomorrow, my family, including my brother and grandparents will be coming to the show. This will be the first time my brother will see a musical directed by me.

Saturday, March 1, 2008:

OK, Richland High School and the Tri-City Herald. There is no way in hell you can ever tell me again we don't need to pre-sell tickets. Our theatre seats 1458, and by the time we finally started the show at 7:45 PM, due to a line going all the way past the portables in the parking long, we had almost 1200 people in the house. Once again, our bookkeeper was unable to understand the importance of this. At one point, it looked like we would get very close to selling out. I went up to the ticket booth and asked her how many tickets we had sold. She told me she didn't know. I told her we may sell out, and she seemed to snuff out that idea. I'm taking so many mental notes this year on how to improve things in the future.

Tonight, maybe because I knew it was the last night, seemed to be the best night. The kids gave it their all, and totally floored the audience. I'm so proud of what they as students have accomplished. What we as a theatre family have accomplished. What we've been able to provide to our community.

Of course, the show wasn't perfect. It was recorded tonight for my thesis, and unfortunately this was the night when some of my leads (Sam and Melissa) voices were just getting exhausted by the end of
the show. They usually sing this stuff (almost) perfectly. Tonight there were a few moments where a voice cracked or a deep enough breath wasn't taken. But, in the large scheme of things, I don't want to worry about those few moments. Overall, this show was a success, and you could tell the audience genuinely loved it.

I was completely overwhelmed at the cast party. Heck, I was overwhelmed before the show when we had our pep-talk backstage. It's so surreal to have something you've been working toward for the past four summers, four years, to almost be done. You spend so much time prepping for it, and then poof! There it is, and there it went. Wow.

Sunday, March 2, 2008 (Happy Birthday, Dr. Seuss!):

Today we took apart the set. This is always a therapeutic, yet somewhat disappointing time. We work really, really hard on our sets, and most of the time, we just have to tear them apart afterwards. A church offered to buy parts of our set for their children's rooms, so that was cool. We didn't have to take apart as much as I thought. But we still had to throw away General Schmitz's cannon and some other items the kids were really proud in making. We're hoping to hold on to some specialty pieces like this later on, once the auditorium renovations are done and we actually have somewhere to store this stuff.

Because strike is on Sunday, we usually only have about half of the cast show up. I really try to encourage them to stop by at some point when they're done with church, as I think it's important they go through this process of striking the set. But as of right now, I can't make Sundays mandatory (I'd have too many parents complain,) so we put to work whoever shows up. The same core group of kids who have been in every show since I've been here, and who have a really special connection with Geoff and I, always show up to help. So that was nice spending some time with them, finishing off this part of the show.

We're saving the props for our performance at the Washington State Thespian Festival in a couple weeks, and the costumes are going back to Val's to get washed and ready for state as well. I can't believe that the hours and days it took to create this set equaled out to only about eight hours to completely clear the stage.

Monday, March 3 – Thursday, March 6, 2008:

Usually, at this point, everyone has a chance to relax. But this year, with the way the play was scheduled, and when the Washington State Thespian Festival takes place, we haven't had any time to “unwind.” We are having rehearsals this week and next to prepare to take part of Seussical (the first forty minutes) to the state festival at CWU, and to help prepare the individual students who won the Mono/Duo festival in January to compete at the state level. I was hoping to rehearse every day this week, but now (due to other activities scheduled in the auditorium, etc.) we only have rehearsal for Mono/Duo candidates this Tuesday and Thursday. So, I guess the cast does get a little break. But they need to be ready to kick it into gear when we return from this weekend, as we'll only have a couple days to practice before we head up to Ellensburg.

Friday, March 7 – Sunday, March 9, 2008:

Geoff and I went up to Spokane this weekend for a couple different reasons. First and foremost, to
attend Greg's thesis production Miss Saigon. Secondly, to have a much deserved break from all the work we've done on Seussical. We met up with Greg and Megan on Friday night when we got into town. It was so nice to see both of them! I've been spoiled as I've been able to see my best friend at least once or twice a month the past few months. I hadn't seen Megan since grad school last summer, so that was awesome to hang out with her. On Saturday morning/afternoon, I treated myself to a mini-spa day at the Davenport Hotel, and we went and saw Greg's show that evening. Megan, Greg, Geoff and I went out with Wes after the show, to hear what he had to say about Miss Saigon. I agree with Wes - I think “The American Dream” did need a kick line (but don't tell Greg I said that!) It was so much fun to hang out with everyone, and take time to relax. A wonderful weekend, and a much deserved break!

Monday, March 10 – Wednesday, March 12, 2008:

We spent Monday through Wednesday rehearsing the first forty minutes of Seussical. We will perform the first part of Act I at the Washington State Thespian Festival this weekend. We're scheduled to perform on Saturday, as that is when our piano player can make it up to Ellensburg. I'm a little worried, as the cast will had their last rehearsal today (Wednesday,) and they don't perform for two and a half more days. Throw in a field trip, staying at a hotel, workshops, and hundreds of other high school drama students to hang out, and someone could see why that might make me nervous. The kids know my expectations, and they want to look good. So hopefully they'll keep themselves in check on this trip.

In addition to rehearsing Seussical, I'm also rehearsing with my four students who will be representing RHS at the state competition Mono/Duo. We had a really good year last year, and it's important for them and me to remember not to expect anything, such as winning state two years in a row. There were over 700 students that participated in these competitions this year. I've been reminding Britton, Sam, Mari, and Andy that, even though it may sound cliché, it really is an honor just to make it to state. I have complete faith that Sam will give 100%. I am, however, really concerned about Britton. This year, he's acted more and more as if things should just be given to him - and on Monday, he had forgotten half of the words to the song he'll be performing at state! It's disappointing to me when I give all of this time to help him, and he doesn't see the necessity of giving just as much effort if he expects to win anything. Out of my four kids, he's the one that wants to win the most, but he's also the one that is trying the least. I think it will be humbling for him when he realizes he should have pushed himself more.

I'm working on last minute things, such as organizing permission slips, talking to chaperones, verifying where the bus will pick us up, etc. I'm really, really excited to take my kids to CWU, so they can see where I went (am going) to school, and to have fun with them this weekend. This will be the last time we do Seussical, and I want us to end it on a really good note.

Monday, March 17, 2008 (in conclusion):

Once again, a show is over. And once again, people are saying things to me like "Well, now you'll have some free time." Or, "Aren't you glad it's over?" Or, "What a relief! Now you can take a break."

But I can never take a break from theatre. It's what I do, it's what I love. Geoff and I were just talking the other day about how much we miss acting - I still remember after last fall, we both agreed we could take a break. Well, I guess a little over a year is the break we can take before we start craving being on stage again.
Some people have told me I could move to Seattle or another large town and go to a program that is established, where I could teach at the same school during the day, and work in an area that is, for lack of a better term, more "supportive." But what they don’t understand is, I’m home. I’m where I want to be. And for those who keep telling me now I can "take a break," I need them to know that you can never take a break from something that so truly defines who you are.

I have taught in other towns, directed at other schools. I have had a good time working with many different people across the state. But here at RHS, this is where I belong, and these are my kids, and I love them so much. We are truly a family here, from the parent volunteers to the kids to me and Geoff, and there is no way in hell I would give that up.

I know my kids need a break from each other, and from me. And yea, I guess I do to. But teaching/directing young people is, I feel, truly a vocation, and I can’t stay away from it for long.

I’m missing my Seussical kids especially right now, due to the fact that they are the ones who accomplished my thesis with me, who represented why I chose to do my MA in the first place. When I first decided to go for my MA, I didn’t have a home school. I didn’t have a group to work with. Then God brought me to RHS. And He gave me these specific kids. It’s a beautiful experience to have young people who trust you and love you enough to take what you tell them to do, and move mountains with it. I can read all the Hodge I want and try to give them notes on subtext and style, but they are the ones that truly get to decide whether it’s going to work or not.

I got to see Seussical for the last time at CWU, where I began studying to be a drama teacher, when we went to state this past weekend. That is something I cannot even begin to describe in words. And to top it off, some of my kids had the honor to be acknowledged for their amazing acting work, and Sam (Turner) won state for the second year in a row.

We don’t expect these things, we just work hard. And I’m so thankful that karma decides to award us for our hard work.

I have so many seniors this year - I think I’m now beginning to understand (to a point) what parents must go through as they see their kids grow up. I’m going to miss these kids like crazy, and I sure hope they keep in touch.

And so it goes...I’m so happy I had this opportunity in my life, and I know I’ll have many more wonderful experiences with our program. But for right now, the feeling is bittersweet, and I know that these moments we had these past few months can never be repeated again.

Viewed Saturday night, February 23, 2008

Directed by Ellicia Mertens, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree, Master of Arts in Theatre Production

SEUSSICAL, a musical based on the stories of Dr. Seuss, is rapidly becoming one of the most frequently produced musicals in high school drama programs in America. It deserves the attention. The musical is clever, witty and touching (sometimes at the same time), and, except for a few moments in Act II (padding for the Broadway production) moves along delightfully to a warm and satisfying conclusion.

Charming characters and good music, developed around popular and artistic stories, are a fine combination for musical theatre. The show abounds with opportunities for both professional and amateur actors, in this case students. Actors can have fun with these characters and with this plot. And directors can create inventive movement and settings to support the action.

Ellicia has charming settings, props, and costumes, much to the credit of Geoff Elliott, set designer, master carpenter, and technical director, and Val Watson, costumes – both design and construction. The visuals work well for the period, the music, and the actors. The overall “look” is wonderful and rates in the top group of production values I’ve seen in high school productions. The technical success is a good thing, because the RHS auditorium is too large for student actors. But in this case Ellicia wisely narrows the proscenium width with a false proscenium and periaktoi – creating multiple scene opportunities while reducing the space. A fine student orchestra, directed by Nathan Simmons, fills the large pit and makes a beautiful contribution to the show. Choreographer Suzanne Burroughs makes imaginative use of the catchy score and achieves some impressive results from her young student dancers.

The floor plan is excellent and allows the director to move actors around gracefully, which she does, creating many lovely pictures. Overall, the environment is first rate for this production.
Of primary importance for any production is the ability of the director to draw truthful performances from the actors. This is a huge task in high school theatre, as the director often must teach basic acting before she can begin on the play that is in rehearsal, and she must work with those students who are available and willing to make a serious commitment to a lengthy rehearsal period. As with dance, music, art, and some sports, theatre, in this case musical theatre, provides a clear measurement of achievement, as the young performers respond to training and demonstrate learning. The demonstration is in the public arena. In high school theatre, all of the director’s strengths and weaknesses are displayed to the public!

Ellicia’s production is extremely successful in some areas and needs more work in only a few. Of special importance is the invaluable learning experience the production has been for the students. What a wealth of skills they are developing doing this production! For example, stage managers David Bergsman and Caroline Carson, and some others, ran the show without glitch. Sound and lights were less successful than sets, costumes, and props, but will get kinks worked out with more performances and more experience.

Acting, as in all high school productions, varies from experienced to beginner – and that is as it should be. The principals are very solid — Alex Gonzalez, Maddi Howe, Sam Turner, Hannah Stanfield, and Melissa Schenter (!). The others are fun but less skillful at this stage in their careers – except Thing 1 and Thing 2 are delightful, even without lines.

The chorus performs admirably – the dancers ranging in skills from accomplished to beginner – but all are disciplined and doing their best. Some of the actors/singers need to watch articulation, a common challenge for young actors.

If Ellicia has a weakness in directing actors it is that she allows a little too much “presentation” — applied character rather than internal character. But the challenges of doing a musical like this with students she doesn’t also have in acting classes makes taking that larger acting-skills step almost impossible. Ellicia needs the opportunity to teach acting to the same students she is rehearsing at night. When that happens, she’ll take another step as a director. But the overall “concept” of this show is strong, as is the director’s inventiveness. The discipline Ellicia has brought to the cast and crew is truly first rate.

The main weakness of the production is the second act padding, something the director has to deal with unless she wants to infringe on copyright — or choose to produce the seventy-minute version of the musical — which I suspect is stronger. (Even so, I watched the audience and noticed that nearly everyone was able to follow every speech and song and rarely “drifted away.”) Sections of act two simply could be cut — but then, that’s illegal, isn’t it?
Ellicia's skills include the elimination of "let's pretend," the nemesis of amateur theatre. There's none of that, and this draws a great bravo! from me. Ellicia knows what she's doing, and this production leaves no doubt about that.

One of Ellicia's jobs as director is to apply what she is learning in the master's program to her production. This challenge can often be very difficult, especially when working with young students. But creating a real experience has to be the goal and Richland High School has created a real experience. I look forward to seeing another show in the future.

I enjoyed my evening; I enjoyed the lobby display, the attractive poster, the "hats" everywhere, the pre-show setting, the puppets, the roller shoes on the fish, and the outstanding smoothness of the production. I like that Ellicia could do big production numbers and then catch a simple and honest moment of intimacy. Thank you for a lovely visit.

Sincerely,

Wesley Van Tassel, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus

Cc Committee
   Michael Smith
   Terri Brown

Please note:
This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.
Final Self-Evaluation

The production process of *Seussical* was circular in nature. It began with a specific artistic concept that started strong, traveled a bit off track throughout the production process, and in the end arrived where it needed to be. There is always room to learn and grow, and if this show were to be produced again, some things would be changed, but most of the process would stay the same. Richland High School Theatre Arts gave the Tri-City community a strong premiere performance of *Seussical*.

Technically, the ideas and concepts first proposed for *Seussical* were met nearly one hundred percent by the end of the process. Some technical elements, such as using the faux fly space for jungle leaves, and hoping to really bring in the sides of the stage to create a more usable proscenium, didn't quite work. The faux fly space was cut out of the production during tech week, and some gains were made in bringing in the sides of the stage by using periactoi and a false proscenium. After watching the full production both live and on film, however, the stage at times still looked quite empty and large, especially during the smaller ensemble and solo numbers. Credit should be given to the production staff for narrowing a fifty-two foot proscenium to thirty-four feet. That is quite a bit of difference in space. The set designs first drafted by designer Geoff Elliott came to fruition one hundred percent. The costume designs created by Val Watson, with the assistance with the color palette and shape by the director, assisted the actors in their characterizations and brought vibrant Seussian color and characters to the stage. The use of puppets in this production added an element of surprise and child-like joy, enjoyed by the entire audience. Students involved had the opportunity to learn about puppetry, and used it as an important element in their storytelling.

Some technical elements, such as sound and lights, were mostly not accessible by the production staff to begin with. Due to regulations in the Richland School District, and more specifically with the Richland High School Auditorium, students and staff are not allowed to design sound or hang and program lights. Both of these elements were brought in at the eleventh hour, adding
some stress and lack of cohesiveness to the production. Frustrations have been shared with the school principal and auditorium staff, and it is hoped opportunities will arise in the future providing these technical elements to be taught and used by the students and staff of the school.

Musically, the production of *Seussical* had both strong and weak moments. The majority of the cast is musically trained, and learned the music in a short amount of time. Some students grew by leaps and bounds in their musical knowledge. Others tried hard, but had difficulty grasping concepts or exercises that would have strengthened their singing and vocal quality in this show. The orchestra has had challenges all year, due to the former music teacher's poor decisions. Once this transition occurred in the fall, the production staff realized compromise and patience would be needed to support both the orchestra and their new director through a challenging show during a difficult time. Overall, even with some weaknesses here and there, the orchestrations for the production were strong enough to carry the actors through the show.

Acting wise, about ninety-five percent of the cast pushed themselves artistically, trying to develop their character through voice, movement, and motivation. Due to the majority of the students pushing themselves, those that did not did stick out a bit on stage. Toward the closing of the show, it was more difficult to see who wasn't focussed, as the energy and leadership of the other cast members spread to others as though through osmosis. Basic acting skills and exercises were taught to help the actors on stage. Throughout the rehearsal process, the director did want more time to work with the students on these basic elements. This is something to continue working for in the future.

Movement, especially choreography, had its challenges in this production. To a community audience, the choreography looked well-polished and put together. To a theatre artist, it was evident in some numbers that the movement did not match the plot or characterizations represented on stage. Choreography is a challenge at Richland High School, as there aren't very many choreographers in the Tri-Cities area, and none that are trained in musical theatre. Most of the students involved in the theatre
program at Richland High School are not dancers, so it takes more time to teach basic movements, causing some of the choreography to be quite simple. For the past three years, however, the director has specifically requested the choreographer to push the students past their comfort level in movement, and every year, a majority of the students have met this task.

The goal to use this production as an educational outreach opportunity to the community was fully met. Over two thousand elementary school students experienced the stories of Dr. Seuss by watching the show and having actors in costume visit their schools and read them stories. Hundreds more attended the evening performances with their families. Posters, letters, and cards were sent from the local elementary school students to Richland High School after the production to the cast and crew. The attention to detail of what the students saw and heard shows how engaged they were with the performance. More than just a way for the theatre arts department to earn money and to have the high school students be in the spotlight, *Seussical* provided an opportunity to teach and to share the love of theatre with the local community.

Overall, the immediate elements of the show, such as directing, designing, and developing, worked well. Most of the production staff worked collaboratively throughout the process, and when issues arose, calm conversation and compromise were used to solve the problem. It is hoped that in the future, some of Richland High School's staff, namely the activities office and book-keeper, will explain clearly the expectations of the programs, any restrictions required by state law, and then let the theatre department go about its business in order to develop and produce a strong show. Too much time and effort was given to stressful situations due to miscommunication that did not need to occur. Rather, this time could have been used to assist the cast and crew even more.

*Seussical* was a success. Due to hard work, research, an artistic vision, and a collaborative team of volunteers, this musical was shared with over 4500 audience members over the course of two weekends of performances. More than anything, this production served as an excellent learning tool for
the director, the students, and the community.
Works Cited


<http://www.talkinbroadway.com/world/Seussical.html>


<http://www.ahrensandflaherty.com/seussindyreview.html>


<http://www.ahrensandflaherty.com/>


<http://www.ahrensandflaherty.com/>


**November**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mandatory Info Mtg.**
2:45 PM - choir room

- **Auditions**
  - 3 PM - 6:30 PM
  - RHS Auditorium
- **Call-backs**
  - 3 PM - 6:30 PM
  - RHS Auditorium
- **Mandatory Cast Mtg.**
  - 3 PM - 6:00 PM
  - RHS Auditorium

**2007**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All vocal rehearsals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All Cast Members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>No Rehearsal Today</td>
<td>Musical Theatre Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2:40 PM – 5:00 PM</td>
<td>2:40 PM – 4:30 PM</td>
<td>2:40 PM – 4:30 PM</td>
<td>2:40 PM – 4:30 PM</td>
<td>No Rehearsal Today</td>
<td>9 AM to 3 PM, HHS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>No Rehearsal Today</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:40 PM – 5:00 PM</td>
<td>2:40 PM – 5:00 PM</td>
<td>2:40 PM – 5:00 PM</td>
<td>2:40 PM – 5:00 PM</td>
<td>2:40 PM – 5:00 PM</td>
<td>No Rehearsal Today</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2:45 PM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2:45 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>no rehearsal</td>
<td>no rehearsal</td>
<td>no rehearsal</td>
<td>no rehearsal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:40 PM – 5:00 PM</td>
<td>2:40 PM – 4:30 PM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Cast Members</td>
<td>All Cast Members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remember: All cast called for vocal rehearsal on January 7 from 2:40 PM to 5:30 PM (the first day after winter break).
## Seussical: Tentative Rehearsal/Production Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All vocal rehearsals will be held in the choir room.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choreography and blocking will be held in the auditorium.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Cast Members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>work day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
<td>vocal rehearsal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>choreography:</td>
<td>choreography:</td>
<td>choreography:</td>
<td>choreography:</td>
<td>choreography:</td>
<td>choreography:</td>
<td>choreography:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:15 PM - 5:30 PM</td>
<td>3:15 PM - 5:30 PM</td>
<td>3:15 PM - 5:30 PM</td>
<td>3:15 PM - 5:30 PM</td>
<td>3:15 PM - 5:30 PM</td>
<td>3:15 PM - 5:30 PM</td>
<td>3:15 PM - 5:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>23</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(no school)</td>
<td>all day rehearsal</td>
<td>9 AM - 5 PM</td>
<td>9 AM - 5 PM</td>
<td>9 AM - 5 PM</td>
<td>9 AM - 5 PM</td>
<td>9 AM - 5 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please see attached schedule.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Seussical: tentative rehearsal/production schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work day</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Run Act II</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Run Act I</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>costume parade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 AM to ?</td>
<td>2:40 PM - 6:30 PM</td>
<td>2:40 PM - 7:30 PM</td>
<td>2:40 PM - 6:30 PM</td>
<td>Run full show</td>
<td>10:30 AM - story readers meet with Mizzle</td>
<td>work day 10 AM to 4 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work day</td>
<td>cue to cue (includes all tech and actors)</td>
<td>Tech/Dress</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Final Tech/Dress</td>
<td>Opening Night!</td>
<td>5 PM call time 7:30 PM show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 AM to ?</td>
<td>9:00 AM - 12:30 PM</td>
<td>2:40 PM - 7:30 PM</td>
<td>Run full show 2:40 PM - 7:30 PM</td>
<td>2:40 call time 4:30 show time</td>
<td>7:30 PM show</td>
<td>5 PM call time 7:30 PM show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary School Performance</td>
<td>pick-up rehearsal</td>
<td>5 PM call time 7:30 PM show</td>
<td></td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1:00 PM show time 2:40 PM - 6:00 PM
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|     |     |     |     |      |     | Closing night!  
|     |     |     |     |      |     | 5 PM call time  
|     |     |     |     |      |     | 7:30 PM show  
|     |     |     |     |      |     | Cast party after show! |
| 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6    | 7   | 8   |
| WSTF rehearsal  
2:45 PM - 5:30 PM in auditorium | WSTF rehearsal  
2:45 PM - 5:30 PM in auditorium | Mono/Duo rehearsals  
2:45 PM - 5:00 PM in auditorium, choir or drama room | —— | WSTF rehearsal  
2:45 PM - 4:00 PM (Yes, I realize Tolo is today. We need to run through it at least once.) | Miss Saigon at Lewis and Clark H.S. in Spokane! |
| 9   | 10  | 11  | 12  | 13   | 14  | 15  |
| Mono/Duo Rehearsal  
2:45 PM to 5:00 PM drama or choir room | WSTF rehearsal  
2:45 PM - 6:00 PM in auditorium | Final Mono/Duo Rehearsal  
2:45 PM - 5:30 PM in auditorium, drama or choir room | Washington State Thespian Festival  
Leave at 3 PM | March 13-15 | Ellensburg, WA |
| 16  | 17  | 18  | 19  | 20   | 21  | 22  |
| 23  | 24  | 25  | 26  | 27   | 28  | 29  |
|     |     |     |     | Tentative Auditions for MSND |     |     |
|     |     |     |     | Tentative MSND cast meeting |     |     |
Seussical
Tentative Calendar and What Not

Auditions: November 27-29, 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM, RHS Auditorium

Cast Meeting: Friday, November 30, 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM, RHS Auditorium
(costume measurements, etc. taken at this time)

Rehearsals: Before winter break, weekdays from 2:45 PM to 5:00 PM, ending on December 18.
After winter break, weekdays from 2:45 PM to 5:30 PM, through January.
Possible “all day rehearsal” on Monday, January 21, MLK Jr. Day
February rehearsals will last until 6:00 PM most evenings, and later during tech weeks.

Work Days: January 3 and 5, tentatively.
All Saturdays, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
February – at least two to three times a week on week days (~ 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM) and weekends.

Tech Weeks: February 11 – 15 and February 18 - 21

Performances: February 22, 23, 29 and March 1, 7:30 PM, RHS Auditorium

Publicity: Time line will be created and given to the publicity managers.

Special Events:
Possibly HHS’ dessert night – late January.
Barnes and Noble “Seuss Day,” tentatively February 9. (We will need a lot of help!)
WSTF March 14 and 15 (tentatively) hopefully at CWU this year!

Other things to organize:
Costume and puppet due dates, payment methods, etc.
Posters, programs, t-shirts, etc.
Props
Educational outreach
Important Dates
- auditions and callbacks: November 27 and 28, 3:00 PM to 6:30 PM
- cast meeting: November 29, 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM
- rehearsals: Mondays through Fridays, December 3 through February 15 (excluding winter break, but including MLK Jr. Day and possibly President’s Day)
- work days: (tentatively) January 3 and 5, all Saturdays (10:00 AM to 4:00 PM), weekdays and weekends in February (~6:00 PM to 8:00 PM)
- tech week: February 18 – 21
- theatre production performances: February 22, 23, 29 and March 1, 7:30 PM
- public appearances/other: possible dessert theatre performance February 2, Barnes and Noble (tentatively) on February 9, RSD elementary schools (date TBA), WSTF March 13 –15
- publicity: dates will be determined by director and publicity team

Help Needed – Group Leaders, teams, etc.
- Publicity
- Costumes
- Puppets
- Hair and Makeup
- Set Construction
- Props
- T-Shirts
- Public Appearances (including Barnes and Noble, elementary schools)
- Boosters/Fundraising (including concessions, raffles, etc.)
- All day rehearsals, work day lunches, snacks, etc.
- House Managing
- Ticket Sales (outside vendors)
- Advertising in program
- Sponsors/Donors/Donations
- Parent/Volunteer organization (making sure paperwork is filled out, checking to make sure jobs are done, etc.)
- Lobby Display
- Cast Party
- Cast get-togethers (such as skate parties, holiday gift exchange, etc.)
- Field Trip – Washington State Thespian Festival
- Keeping the Director Sane ©

Director’s Contact Information:
Ellicia Mertens

I will know more specifics regarding the show after I’ve completed Section II of my thesis on November 26. After this date, and after auditions, I’d like to schedule another meeting.
Seussical Information Meeting – November 19, 2007

- Introduce myself and Mr. Fryhling
  - Name, background, why I’m doing Seussical
  - Also working with Suzanne Burroughs

- Audition Process
  - In as short of a time as possible, we need to see if you can sing, dance, act, and work well with others.
  - Auditions – November 27, 3 PM to ~ 6:30 PM
    - Choreography first
      - Everyone will learn the same dance to the same song
      - We’re looking for movement, how well you pay attention/focus.
      - Can you roller skate or do gymnastics? Write that on your audition form. 😊
    - Singing second
      - Each person auditioning has to choose one minute (or less) of a song from a musical. We will have someone to play piano for you.
      - Pick a part of the song that shows your strengths. Don’t pick something that would be too much of a challenge.
      - You are expected to sing/act at the same time. It’s your monologue and song all in one. Show us what you can do – we need people who can sing and act, sharing a story with the audience.
    - Poise/Professionalism
      - Interaction with others
      - Patience/work ethic
  - Callbacks – same format, with songs from the show and more dancing

- Casting
  - The hardest part of being a director.
  - Will be posted sometime on Friday, on an auditorium door or near the choir room. (Will know more at auditions.)
  - Cast of 30 – 40, no more than that.
  - Everyone is allowed one “grumpy day.”
  - Creative casting – JoJo, Cat, others can be either a boy or girl.
    - Distribute character list, make sure to include bird girls, Thing 1 and Thing 2, etc.
  - Understudies will be cast from the ensemble group. Be honest on your form. It’s an important job!

- Qualifications
  - Time available – look at tentative calendar, be honest!
  - Grades – progress reports, audition form.
- Hard work, getting along well with others.
- No “drama in drama.”
- WIAA rules

- Audition sheet – go over it

- Important dates:
  - Performances (Feb. 22, 23, 29, March 1)
  - Workshop on December 8
  - Barnes and Noble, Feb. 9
  - WSTF, March 13 - 15
These are copies of my choreography notes for 2 dances from the Richland High School production of "Seussical" 2008.

These were never intended to be decipherable by anyone but myself, but they are being submitted as examples of my work for Eilicia Mertens to use as part of her thesis.

The notes for the rest of the dance numbers are available upon request.

I would like to say that it has been a real pleasure to work with Eilicia on this project and I would be delighted to have the opportunity to work with her again in the future.

Sincerely,

Signature is illegible.

Please note:
This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.
Oh the Thinks You Can Think

CAT IN THE HAT
I can see that you've got quite a mind for your age!
Why, one Think and you dragged me right onto the stage!
Now, I'm here, there is no telling what may ensue
With a Cat such as me, and a Thinker like you!

(THE CAT begins to "create" the Seussian world of imagination
for THE BOY)
Oh, the thinks you can think!
Oh, the thinks you can think
If you're willing to try...

Think invisible ink! - L hand on Jib's R shld. R hand wiggle fingers in air like a puppet.
Or a gink with a stink!
Or a stair to the sky...
If you open your mind,
Oh, the thinks you will find
Lining up to get loose...

Oh, the thinks you can think
When you think about...

(The company of "Seussian" characters now enters)

CAT & ALL (except BOY)
Seuss! Seuss!
Seuss! Seuss!
Seuss! Seuss! Seuss! Seuss!
Seuss!

curtain opens (cautiously does half turn of east)

CAT & ALL (except BOY)
Oh, the thinks you can think!
Any thinker who thinks
Can come up with a few!

BOY
Oh, the thinks you can think!

CAT & ALL
Think a trip on a ship
To the Vipper of Vipp

WOMEN
Or to Solla Sollew...

CAT (spoken)
Think of beautiful Schlopp...

BOY (spoken)
With a cherry on top!

CAT, BOY, ALL
You don't need an excuse!

CAT, BOY (spoken)
Oh, the thinks you can think
CAT, BOY, ALL
When you think about Seuss!
Seuss, Seuss, Seuss,-
Seuss...

HORTON
Think of an elephant up in a tree

MAYOR, MRS. MAYOR
Think of a person too tiny to see!

GERTRUDE
Think of a bird with a one-feather tail

ALL
Going on adventure down a dangerous trail!

MAYZIE
Think a bird who flies off on a spree!

SOUR KANGAROO
Think of a kangaroo, sour as can be!

SCHMITZ
Think of a general crazy for war!

CAT
Think of something horrible and hairy!

CAT, PRINCIPLES (except BOY)
Something sinister and scary

ALL (except BOY)
That you never dared to think of before!

ALL (except CAT & BOY)
Think of nobody here
And the feeling of fear
And the darkness of night
(with menace)
Oooh Oooh...

ALL, CAT
All alone in your room
As you're facing your doom

CAT (spoken)
Think a glimmer of light!!

ALL (except BOY)
(with relief)
Aah Aah!

CAT
But I hope you're prepared
To be scareder than scared!

CAT, ALL (except BOY)
'Cause this ain't mother goose!
CAT (spoken)
Think right over the brink!

CAT, ALL (except BOY)
When you think about Seuss!

MEN WOMEN
Seu-u-u-u-u
Seu... Seu...
Seu-u-u-usa Seuss!
Seu-u-u-u
Seuss! Seuss! Seuss! Seuss!

CAT
An unusual story will soon be unfurled
Of an elephant trying to save a small world
And a boy from that world who has Thinks just like you!

WHOS
From the Planet of Who

BOY
And the smallest of small.

CITIZENS OF THE JUNGLE
To the jungle of Nool,

HORTON
And the largest of all...

GROUP 1 GROUP 2
You think You think
And think and think and think and think
And think and think and think and think
And think and think and think and think
And think and think and think and think!

ALL, BOY
Just think!

ALL
Oh, the thinks you can think
Think and wonder and dream-
Far and wide as you dare!

CAT
Oh, the thinks you can think!

ALL
When your thinks have run dry,
In the blink of an eye
There’s another think there!
If you open your mind,
Oh, the thinks you will find
Lining up to get loose!
Oh, the thinks you can think

BARITONES AND BASSES
Oh, the thinks you can think

ALL
Oh, the thinks you can think!

TENORS
Oh, the thinks you can think!

ALL
Oh, the thinks you can think
When you think about Seuss!
When you think about Seuss!
When you think about Seuss!
When you think about Seuss!

(The SOUR KANGAROO riffs through the following)

GROUP 1 GROUP 2 GROUP 3 GROUP 4
Seu-u-u-u Seu ... Seu ... Seuss! Seuss!
Seu ... Seu ... Seuss! Seuss! Seuss!
Seu-u-u-u Seuss! Seuss! Seuss! Seuss!
Seu-u-u-u Seuss! Seuss! Seuss!
Seuss! Seuss!
Seu-u ... Seu ... Seuss!
Seuss! Seuss!

BOY
Seuss!

CAT
Our story begins
With a very strange sound -
The drums of a jungle
Beginning to pound.

(Jungle drums begin.)
CAT
Now, imagine a sky.

BOY
I'll imagine bright blue!

(BOY and CAT create a blue sky and a jungle setting.)

CAT
It's the Jungle of Nool!

BOY
Near the River Walloo!

(The CAT and the BOY watch as the Jungle of Nool is revealed.
The JUNGLE CITIZENS enter, along with the BIRD GIRLS,
a flamboyant "girl group" of the jungle.)
It's Possible →
It's Possible

JOJO
This might be a pool,
Like I've read of in books,
Connected to one of those underground brooks!
An underground river
That starts here and flows
Right under this bathtub!
And then-
Who knows!

It's possible!
Anything's possible!

JOJO, CAT
It's possible!
Anything's possible!

(JOJO's imagination starts to expand.)

JOJO
It might go along,
Down where no one can see
Right under state highway
Two hundred and three!
Right under the wagons!
Right under the toes
Of Mrs. Umbroso! ...
Who's hanging out clothes!

It's possible!
Anything's possible.

JOJO, CAT
It's possible!
Anything's possible!

JOJO
This might be a river
Now mightn't it be,
Connecting McElligot's Pool with the sea!
Then maybe some fish might be swimming...
Swimming toward me!

(We are suddenly underwater.
Strange fish appear - all shapes and sizes, wildly-coloured
and wildly improbable.
The FISH dance and swoop through the water in a "water
ballet" with JOJO)

FISH FALSETTO GROUP
Ah! Oo-wee-ee-ee-ee-ooh!
It's possible!
It's possible...
Ah! Oo-wee-ee-ee-ee-ooh!
It's possible
JOJO FISH
Oh, the sea is so full Ooh ... Wah-ooh ...
Of a number of fish
If a fellow is patient Ooh ... Wah-ooh ...
He might get his wish!
And that's why I think Ooh ... Wah-ooh ...
That I'm not such a fool
When I sit here and fish When I sit here and fish
In McElligot's pool!

It's possible. It's possible
It's possible
Anything's
Possible. Possible.

It's possible. It's possible
It's possible
Anything's
Possible. Possible.

It's possible...
Anything...
Anything...

(JOJO's parents abruptly interrupt his fantasy.)

MR. MAYOR
Jojo! The tub's overflowed on the floor!
The water is running right under the door!

MRS. MAYOR
The ceiling is peeling! You've flooded the den!
Oh, JoJo, I think you've been Thinking again!

MR. MAYOR
I say this with firmness and terrible sorrow,
Young man, we will deal with you come tomorrow!

(MR. and MRS. MAYOR exit)

JOJO
I still think
That I'm not such a fool
When I sit here and fish
In McElligot's pool!

CAT
It's possible.

(The FISH magically re-appear)

JOJO, CAT & FISH
Anything's ...
Possible!

(Lights out on JOJO, as JOJO's PARENTS appear.)
Dance Notes for Tuesday, February 19th Rehearsal (Read & initial on Wed. 2/20)

Jungle of Nool:
- **Bird Girls:** which way do you turn to go upstage towards the pool after saying, “Through the jungle, the news quickly flew”? You went different ways. Please fix this.

Here on Who:
- **Sierra:** please stand in “who position” (your feet were wide apart)
- **All Whos:** After the marching band, acknowledge that you see the Grinch by pointing at him, and wave “C’mon!” to each other so it’s time to go watch the show. Look excited!
- **dance break couples:** please remember that the second part is “AWAY-TOWARDS, AWAY-TOWARDS” because sometimes you are together, and sometimes somebody forgets this and goes the other way and it looks messy.

Fish:
- **Nile:** your waves went the wrong way the second time (see me to clarify this)
- **Stage Left Group:** watch your spacing on the wave & swim part behind the tub, some of you are standing in front of each other here, and we need to see all of you. Also, stay in a tighter clump when you “hide” from Mom & Dad (you were too spread out)

Military:
- **Eric:** After entering “Shmitz...” stand with feet together in line (yours were wide)
- **Canon** was late, so this part looked off. Mizzle says we’re still working on the placement of stuff backstage, but let’s make sure the canon is on time, okay?

Amayzing Mayzie:
- **Bird Girls:** Look at Gertrude and Mayzie more on your entrance so we can see you are part of the drama there.
- **Brigid:** Your facial expressions are excellent! Keep up the good work.
- **Charlotte:** You’ve stepped your character up a bit, but you need MORE flirty-diva face to keep up with Brigid!
- **Mari:** You can crank yours up a few more notches too. You are in the center, look like you think you are the best! Be show-offey! (is that a word?)
- **Mayzie:** Even more hip and shimmy to match your way cool costume!

Monkey Around- going into Chasing the Whos:
- **Monkeys:** on “Scared to death from head to tail” please keep up with Horton and surround him as you say this line and do the cool movement Alex gave you. It was in random spacing last time and didn’t look quite right.

How Lucky You Are:
- **Cassie:** You were early on the drag movement crossing behind Cat. I think it’s supposed to be on “Empty” also, please end in the same final position as Elizabeth. You used to end in the same position, and it looked good, so let’s go back to doing it that way.
- **Things:** I am so proud of you for switching places and still doing such an AWESOME job! Kudos to you!

Weather on the tree:
- **Bird Girls:** ALL of you please react as if a big wind almost blew you over as the weather goes by. Thanks.

Act 1 Finale:
- **Cat & Things:** I liked it whe you did more of the dance steps as from “How Lucky You Are” such as on “Why rehash a nasty crash. Why call a hearse or curse the universe” Do similar movement as before, only all together moving from stage left towards center, then on “My philosophy is simply” sneak towards tree, then do a quick rewind on “Things could be worse” to end in your final positions in front of the tree.

Hunches:
- **Elizabeth:** see me about the flick ball change after “Hunch” that you, Thing 2 & Cat do 2x. You need to do this with them.
Mics needed:

1. Horton
2. Gertrude
3. Mr. Mayor and Mrs. Mayor (share one the entire time)
4. JoJo
5. Wickersham 1
6. Wickersham 2 shares with General Schmitz
7. Wickersham 3
8. Sour Kangaroo
9. Cat in the Hat
10. Yertle the Turtle/Grinch/Vlad Vladikoff shares with Mayzie
11. Bird Girl 1

Bird Girl 2 (will try her with no mic, to see if she can still blend with the other two girls on either side of her)
12. Bird Girl 3
Seussical
mic assignments per scene

Act I

Thinks You Can Think (pp. 10-15)

1. Cat in the Hat
2. JoJo
3. Horton
4. Mr. Mayor
5. Mrs. Mayor
6. Gertrude
7. Mayzie
8. Sour Kangaroo
   (General Ghengis Khan Schmitz won’t have a mic in this scene. Hopefully he can project enough.)

Jungle of Nool (pp. 16-25)

1. Cat in the Hat
2. JoJo
3. Horton
4. Bird Girl 1 (blue dress)
5. Bird Girl 2 (green dress)
6. Bird Girl 3 (purple dress)
7. Sour Kangaroo
8. Wickersham 1
9. Wickersham 2
10. Wickersham 3
11. (off stage mic) Mr. Mayor

Here on Who (pp. 25-32)

1. Mr. Mayor
2. Mrs. Mayor
3. The Grinch
4. Horton

McElligot’s Pool (pp. 32-36)

1. Cat in the Hat
2. JoJo
3. Mr. Mayor
4. Mrs. Mayor
How to Raise a Child – General Schmitz (pp. 36-40)

1. Mr. Mayor
2. Mrs. Mayor
3. General Schmitz
4. JoJo

Alone in the Universe (pp.40-44)

1. Horton
2. JoJo

Gertrude McFuzz – Amazying Mayzie (pp.44-49)

1. Gertrude
2. Mayzie
3. Bird Girl 1
4. Bird Girl 2
5. Bird Girl 3
6. Cat in the Hat
7. JoJo

Monkey Around – Chasing the Whos (pp.49-54)

1. Wickersham 1
2. Wickersham 2
3. Wickersham 3
4. Horton
5. Sour Kangaroo
6. Bird Girl 1
7. Bird Girl 2
8. Bird Girl 3
9. Cat in the Hat
10. Vlad Vladikoff

How Lucky You Are (pp.54-56)

1. Cat in the Hat
2. Horton the Elephant

Notice Me Horton (pp.56-58)

1. Gertrude
2. Horton
How Lucky You Are – Mayzie (pp. 58-60)

1. Mayzie
2. Horton
3. Cat in the Hat

Horton Sits on the Egg/ How Lucky You Are (pp.60-64)

1. Bird Girl 1
2. Bird Girl 2
3. Bird Girl 3
4. Horton
5. Gertrude
6. Cat in the Hat
7. JoJo

Act II

Intro & Egg, Nest, and Tree (pp.65-68)

1. Cat in the Hat
2. JoJo
3. Horton
4. Gertrude
5. Bird Girl 1
6. Bird Girl 2
7. Bird Girl 3
8. Sour Kangaroo
9. Wickersham 1 (hunter)
10. Wickersham 2 (hunter)
11. Wickersham 3 (hunter)

Circus/How Lucky You Are/Palm Beach (pp.69-73)

1. Cat in the Hat
2. Horton
3. Mayzie

Solla Sollew (pp.74-76)

1. Horton
2. JoJo
3. Mr. Mayor
4. Mrs. Mayor
General Schmitz transition (pp. 76-77)

1. JoJo
2. General Schmitz

[skipping pp. 78-81]

Alone Reprise/Havin’ a Hunch (pp.81-85)

1. JoJo
2. Cat

All For You (pp.85-89)

1. Gertrude
2. Horton
3. Cat in the Hat
4. Bird Girl 1
5. Bird Girl 2
6. Bird Girl 3

Return of Who/Trial Scene (pp.89-99)

1. Horton
2. Gertrude
3. Mr. Mayor
4. Mrs. Mayor
5. JoJo
6. Wickersham 1
7. Wickersham 2
8. Wickersham 3
9. Sour Kangaroo
10. Cat in the Hat
11. Yertle the Turtle
12. Bird Girl 1
13. Bird Girl 2
14. Bird Girl 3

Green Eggs and Ham - Curtain Call (pp.99-101)

JoJo at end, when he says “Seuss”!
Besides that, all voices should be blended at this point.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Cue</th>
<th>Page #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pin-point light on Seuss hat, soft glow on prosenium/Seussical title</td>
<td>Pre-show</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid closed, periactoi turned to show</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flash house lights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House lights to 50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-show announcements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House lights out, prosenium/Seussical title lights out</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotlight on Boy/JOJo (SR)</td>
<td>JoJo enters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotlight on Cat (CS)</td>
<td>Cat enters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid opens</td>
<td>Cat: “When you think about...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: day wash to 100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotlight on actors (HR, HL)</td>
<td>“Seuss!” first time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotlights fade out</td>
<td>As actors move onto the stage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights fade to black light effect</td>
<td>Cat: “Think of something horrible...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights back to day wash</td>
<td>Cat: “Think a glimmer of light!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights focus on CS</td>
<td>After applause for “Thinks you can think”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights fade to jungle gobo</td>
<td>Jungle drums begin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights on cyc turn sky blue</td>
<td>Boy: “I’ll imagine bright blue!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periactoi rotate to Jungle side, jungle drop comes down</td>
<td>Cat: “It’s the Jungle of Nool!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light appears (low) on DSR prosenium</td>
<td>Cat and Boy move DSR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two side jungle pieces enter</td>
<td>Jungle drums, but before</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horton’s pool enters</td>
<td>First “who-who-wah-dah”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: Jungle wash to 100%</td>
<td>Cat: “Think of an elephant...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jungle pieces exit</td>
<td>“who-who-wah-dah” play off</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights fade to CS focus on Horton</td>
<td>Horton: “Hello?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periactoi rotate to Whoville side, jungle drop raises, side Who pieces enter</td>
<td>Horton: “Hello? Is anyone there?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: day wash to 100%</td>
<td>Horton: “Who are you?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who Clock enters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights fade to 75% with CS full, cyc fades to purple</td>
<td>Mayor: “We’re on the brink of war...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights fade out except for CS</td>
<td>Whos: “On the other side of town...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Side Whoville pieces exit</td>
<td>Horton: “I won’t let you down...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who Clock exits</td>
<td>Applause for “Here On Who”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights up on Cat and JoJo DSL proscenium</td>
<td>Cat: “An invisible world...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fade out DSL proscenium light</td>
<td>Cat and JoJo exit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: day wash to 100%, cyc to bright</td>
<td>Mayor: “Meet a tiny Who”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathtub enters</td>
<td>Mayor: “Now take your bath...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: CS at full, other lights fade to 50%</td>
<td>Jojo: “This might be a pool...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periactol rotate to black</td>
<td>Fish enter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyc lights turn deeper blue, stage wash turns blue, add water effect</td>
<td>Mayor: “JoJo!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: day wash to 100%, cyc to bright blue, water effect off</td>
<td>JoJo: “I still think I’m not such a fool...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: water effects return</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Mayor: “Inside this brochure!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights fade to day wash, 50%, cyc is orange, DSL proscenium lights 100%</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Mayor enter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound: alarm clock</td>
<td>General enters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: day wash to 100%</td>
<td>General: “Run them out of”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannon enters</td>
<td>Soldiers exit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannon exits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights fade out</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotlight on Horton (SR)</td>
<td>Horton enters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotlight on JoJo (SL)</td>
<td>JoJo enters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotlight on Cat</td>
<td>Horton exits, Cat enters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periactol rotate to Jungle side, jungle drop comes down</td>
<td>Gertrude enters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: CS to 100%, cyc bright blue</td>
<td>Mayzie enters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotlights out</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: day wash to 100%, cyc to bright</td>
<td>Mayzie exits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: cyc to bright blue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: DSR proscenium to 100%, add Dr. Dake special</td>
<td>Dr. Dake appears in window</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillberry bush is brought on</td>
<td>Dr. Dake calls for the bush</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillberry bush exits</td>
<td>“Amazing Gertrude” ends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Dake special out</td>
<td>Dr. Dake disappears</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights face to Jungle gobo</td>
<td>Cat: “Things go wrong!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: Jungle wash to 100%</td>
<td>Wickershams: “Yeah!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotlight follow the clover around the audience</td>
<td>Wickershams enter the audience SR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotlight on Cat with helicopter</td>
<td>Cat enters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotlight out on Cat</td>
<td>Cat exits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periactoi rotate to black, jungle drop out</td>
<td>Whos scream</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid closes</td>
<td>After Cat sneezes on Whos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: day wash to 100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountains enter USR</td>
<td>Mid is closed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clover carpet draped on stage behind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periactoi rotate to Jungle side</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid opens</td>
<td>Cat: “Curtain!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clover carpet is moved downstage</td>
<td>Mid opened</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree enters</td>
<td>Horton: “Two million...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piano enters</td>
<td>Mayzie: “Neither did I.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clover carpet is removed by Things</td>
<td>Mayzie: “Toodle-0000!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piano exits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountains exit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyc lights turn deeper blue, stage lights dim 50%, CS area at 100%</td>
<td>Bird Girls: “Terrible storm...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyc lights turn ice blue</td>
<td>Bird Girls: “Then came the winter...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound: thunder</td>
<td>All: “Things could be worse...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackout</td>
<td>Cat: “How lucky you are!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid closes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House lights to 100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proscenium &amp; Seussical title lights on</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flash house lights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House lights to 50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House lights out, proscenium/Seussical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>title lights out</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotlight on Cat (CS)</td>
<td>Cat: “Seuss!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotlight on Boy/JoJo (SR)</td>
<td>JoJo enters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid opens</td>
<td>Cat: “When we last saw our hero...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: day wash to 100%, cyc is green</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotlight on Cat (CS)</td>
<td>Bird Girls: “Horton was taken to auction...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotlight off</td>
<td>Cat: “…man from the circus!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage lights dim slowly as everyone exits</td>
<td>All: “Sold...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periactoi rotate to black</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circus tents in USL</td>
<td>Cat: “Step right up...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyc to green</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotlight on Cat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage lights dim, proscenium DSL up</td>
<td>All: “Palm beach!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage lights up, proscenium DSL out</td>
<td>Mayzie: “I think I’ll go!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage lights dim, CS area still 100%, cyc to purple</td>
<td>Horton: “And now little egg...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSL and DSR proscenium lights up</td>
<td>JoJo and Mr. &amp; Mrs. Mayor enter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: day wash to 100%, Cyc to orange, proscenium lights out</td>
<td>Soldiers enter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rear traveller closes</td>
<td>Soldiers exit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage lights dim except for CS</td>
<td>JoJo: “Alone in the universe”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add blacklight effect</td>
<td>Hunches enter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remove blacklight, lights to day wash</td>
<td>Cat: “Think a glimmer of light!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rear traveller opens, periactoi rotate to Whoville side</td>
<td>All: “Follow it home...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackout</td>
<td>End of “Havin’ a Hunch”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage lights to night wash</td>
<td>Gertrude: “Horton, are you”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add Dr. Dake special, DSR proscenium lights</td>
<td>Gertrude: “So I ran to the Doctor”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remove Dr. Dake special, DSR proscenium lights</td>
<td>Gertrude: “Gertrude could sail!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: day wash to 100%, cyc to bright</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who Clock enters</td>
<td>Horton: “Whos, hello!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periactoi rotate to Jungle side, jungle drop comes down</td>
<td>Horton’s tree is moved DSL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights fade to Jungle wash, gobos</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jury box enters, Judge’s podium enters</td>
<td>Wickershams: “On trial!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound: elephant trumpet</td>
<td>Wickershams: “Sittin’ on an egg! Ha! Ha! Ha!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beezlenut oil kettle enters</td>
<td>Cat: “…kettle of beezenut oil!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound: egg cracking</td>
<td>Cat: “Including this think…”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyc turns pink</td>
<td>Cat: “The sky became pink!”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights dim except for CS area</td>
<td>Characters exit, leaving JoJo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackout</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lights: day wash to 100%</td>
<td>Curtain call</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid closes</td>
<td>End of Curtain call</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fade to black</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House lights to 100%, proscenium/title lights up</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Play review: Watching Richland High's Seussical 'a joy'
By Karen Bertsch, Special to the Herald

There could be no other name for a musical starring Dr. Seuss' characters than the clever name of Seussical.

Richland High School's Performing Arts drama director Ellicia Mertens' production of Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens' Seussical takes you back to the days of reading Dr. Seuss.

Most of us have been on the reading side or listening side of his books, or both. The nonsensical, light-hearted stories are some of the first poetry many children hear. Dr. Seuss promoted kindness, loyalty and most of all -- the power of imagination. And Seuss did it using fun-to-say phrases that have taken on near iconic status.

But don't go expecting to hear a Dr. Seuss book in this production. This is a new story using familiar characters. Seussical is full of whimsy, humor, a few tender moments and some good life lessons. And even a touch of controversy.

Dr. Seuss may have had a heavily anti-war, anti-military, downright pacifist side to him but it's balanced by Seussical's protect-the-egg message. Or maybe I'm being too analytical, maybe it's all just whimsy. There may be a little too much overlapping of Seuss stories for Seuss purists.

I watched a full dress rehearsal that was an explosion of color. The stage is like a page out of a Dr. Seuss book -- impressively reproduced. The costumes are vivid, colorful and detailed. Set designer and technical director is Geoff Elliott and costume designer is Val Watson.

The actors are confident and move with choreographed ease on the stage. The cast is large, in the neighborhood of 35, and all sing and dance. Vocal direction is handled by Greg Fryhling with choreography by Suzanne Burroughs.

The production is accompanied by a full orchestra directed by Nathan Simmons. At times the orchestra is weak but the volume and energy are in good balance.

The Cat in the Hat, played by Alex Gonzalez, narrates and his voice is clear and strong. But Horton the Elephant, played to perfection by Sam Turner, is clearly who the plot revolves around. It's his adventure. Horton and his famous Who -- those microscopic people who live on a world as small as a speck of dust that Horton vows to protect because "a person's a person, no matter how small, everyone matters."

Gertrude McFuzz, played delightfully by Melissa Schenter, is romantically interested in Horton but can't seem to get his attention. Schenter is appropriately perky and very talented. Justin Jonson's portrayal of General Genghis Khan Schmitz is exceptional. The sultry vocal talent of Amy Parks who plays Sour Kangaroo was a voice to hear again.

There are no bad performances. Not even any mediocre performers. Mertens has kept the standards high and her students have risen to them.

The children sitting near me showed obvious joy watching the musical. You can take the kids and grandma, too. It's that entertaining.
Seussical brings favorite author's characters to life

The stories of Dr. Seuss come to life as the award-winning "Richland High School Performing Arts presents the musical Seussical," opening Friday, Feb. 22. This is the first time Seussical (created by the Tony award-winning team of Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty) has been produced in the Tri-Cities area, and it promises to be a night of energized entertainment the whole family can enjoy.

Seuual performances are Feb. 22, 23, 29 and March 1 in the Richland High School Auditorium. All shows begin at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are $10 for general admission, and $8 for students and seniors. Tickets will be available in mid-February and can be purchased at the Richland Bookworm, Adventures Underground, or at the door the night of the performance.

The one and only Cat in the Hat guides a young boy through a whirlwind tour of the magical world of Dr. Seuss. Various classic stories including Horton Hears a Who, How The Grinch Stole Christmas, McElligot's Pool, The Butter Battle Book, and Horton Hatches the Egg are tied together into one unforgettable celebration of perhaps the greatest children's literature of all time.

Theatle director Ellicia Mertens is heading up the production once again, with chore teacher Greg Fryhling leading the vocal efforts and band director Nathan Simmons conducting the orchestra. Various community volunteers are also pitching in to assist and educate the students.

Some of the lead roles include Horton the Elephant, portrayed by Sam Turner. Sam portrayed Joseph in last year's production of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, and received a double superior rating in musical theatre at the state level in 2007. Gertrude McFuzz is portrayed by Melissa Schenter. Melissa was Mrs. Van Daan in the fall production of The Diary of Anne Frank, and has been involved in theatre both at RHS and ACT. And who can forget the lovable, mischievous Cat in the Hat? Alex Gonzalez takes on this role with an mischievous Cat in the Hat? Alex Gonzalez takes on this role with an

Lead roles for "Seussical" include Alex Gonzalez as Cat in the Hat, Melissa Schenter as Gertrude McFuzz and Sam Turner as Horton the Elephant.

Get the most for your diet dollar ........ 11
The real cost of sports ......................... 9
Regional Home & Garden Show ......... 10
Get the most for your diet dollar ...... 11
February time to dream of garden .... 12
Tri-City observatory open to public .... 13
The Rogues' tells adventure story .... 14
Local viewers like new 'Rambi' ....... 15
Harlem Globetrotters here Feb. 29 ... 16
Rhea headlines Laugh Lover's Ball .... 19
Razzle Dazzle way too much fun ...... 20
Fourposter comedy in Prosser ....... 21
Free tickets for Tri-City Americans .... 23
Toby Mac at Toyota Center .......... 24
3 Rivers Folklife Society sets stage .... 26
Irish fiddler, guitarist to play ......... 30

Calendar Of Events
Monthly Entertainment Planner .......... 31
18,000 copies distributed monthly within the Tri-Cities, as well as Prosser, Sunnyside, Toppenish, Connell, Walla Walla, Pendleton, Hermiston and Umatilla. All articles are the opinion of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of The Entertainer. The Entertainer gladly accepts any article submissions or calendar event listings. Use of submitted material is at the discretion of The Entertainer. Submitted materials will be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Deadline for ad and article submissions is the 15th of every month. Contact the business office for a copy of our Writers Guidelines.

The Entertainer Staff:
Publisher: Dennis Cresswell
Graphics/Production: Michelle Marshbank
Sales: Deborah Ross, Russ Campbell

Contact Us At:
1776 Fowler St., Suite 37
Richland, WA 99352
Phone: (509) 783-9256
Fax: (509) 783-9843
Web Site: www.theentertainernewspaper.com
E-Mail: info@theentertainernewspaper.com

Subscriptions:
Mail subscriptions are $50 per year and include The Entertainer, the Northwest Entertainment Guide and the Tri-City Citizen. Send check or money order to 1776 Fowler St., Suite 37, Richland, WA 99352.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the express written consent of The Entertainer Newspaper.

CHECK OUT OUR NEWSPAPERS!
Get a 6-Month Subscription to ALL of our papers for only $100 and receive $50 in FLEX classified advertising!
Richland High School Performing Arts present

Seussical

A musical journey through the stories of Dr. Seuss

Opens February 22

Also in This Issue

Antique Show
March 7-9
See Page 5

Valley Theatre Company Presents
The Fourposter
February 14, 15, 16, 22 & 23
See Page 19

Grand Coulee Chamber Of Commerce Presents
Faline Eagle Festival
February 16
Grand Coulee Dam
See Page 20

The Toyota Center Presents
Laugh Lover’s Ball
With Special Guest Caroline Rhea
February 15
7pm
See Page 22

Wendover Casino
Nevada’s Best Value
You’re invited to a Fun-Filled Get-away
See Page 32

Desert Thistle Pipe Band
An Evening of Celtic Music
Saturday February 23rd, 7:00 p.m., Chief Joseph Middle School Auditorium
Skweez the Weezle - An Daire Academy of Irish Dance - Academy of Scottish Dance
$10 - General; $6 - 65-over/12-under
Tickets: The Bookworm Kennewick and Richland (509) 546-0898) and at the door
RICHLAND HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS

present

Seussical

A musical journey through the stories of Dr. Seuss

Music by Stephen Flaherty
Lyrics by Lynn Ahrens
Book by Lynn Ahrens & Stephen Flaherty

February 22, 23, 29, & March 1
All Shows 7:30 pm
Richland High School Auditorium

Tickets - $10 adults, $8 students & seniors
The Bookworm & Adventures Underground in Richland
Also available at the door for each performance
RICHLAND HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS

present

Seussical

A musical journey through the stories of Dr. Seuss

Music by Stephen Flaherty
Lyrics by Lynn Ahrens
Book by Lynn Ahrens & Stephen Flaherty

Feb. 22, 23, 29, & March 1

All Shows 7:30 pm
Richland High School Auditorium

Tickets - $10 adults, $8 students & seniors
The Bookworm & Adventures Underground in Richland
Also available at the door for each performance
RICHLAND HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS

present

Seussical

Music by
Stephen Flaherty

Lyrics by
Lynn Ahrens

Book by
Lynn Ahrens & Stephen Flaherty

Producer & Drama Director
Ellicia Mertens

Vocal Director
Greg Fryhling

Orchestra Director
Nathan Simmons

Technical Director
Geoff Elliott

Choreography
Suzanne Burroughs

Costume Design
Val Watson

Special Thanks
Chris DeGraaf, Richard Jansons, Matt Leggett, Greg Pschirrer,
Academy of Children's Theatre, Michelle Price, Barnes & Noble,
**Act 1**

Oh, The Thinks You Can Think  
Horton Hears A Who  
Biggest Blame Fool  
Here On Who  
Oh, The Thinks You Can Think (Reprise)  
It's Possible  
How To Raise A Child  
The Military  
Alone In The Universe  
The One Feather Tail Of Miss Gertrude McFuzz  
Amayzing Mayzie  
Monkey Around  
Chasing The Whos  
How Lucky You Are  
Notice Me, Horton  
How Lucky You Are (Reprise)  
Finale

**Act 2**

Egg, Nest & Tree  
The Circus McGurkus  
Mayzie In Palm Beach  
Amayzing Horton  
Alone In The Universe (Reprise)  
Solla Sollew  
Jojo Alone In The Universe  
Havin' A Hunch  
All For You  
The People v. Horton The Elephant  
Yopp! / Alone In The Universe (Reprise)  
Oh The Thinks You Can Think! (Finale Act 2)  
Green Eggs & Ham (Bows)

---

**Director's Notes**

Dr. Seuss - his name is one almost every child has heard of even before they reach elementary school. His characters have become a permanent part of our American culture. How exciting to bring his stories to life through the musical *Seussical* - the very first time this show has been produced in the Tri-Cities!

This play has been a labor of love. Besides being our musical this year, it is also my thesis production for my MA in Theatre Production. Research for this show began two summers ago. During this time, I've come to appreciate Dr. Seuss' work even more than when I was a child. Every time I read one of his books, I learn something new about the world around me - we have much to discover from Dr. Seuss and his stories.

Special thanks must be given to those who have been a great support through this Seussian journey: Geoff Elliott, Greg Pschirrer, Tamara Burnett, Wes Van Tassel, my incredibly supportive family, the amazing volunteers, and most importantly, my students. I would not be here at Richland High School, doing what I love, if it wasn't for them.
Cast

The Cat in the Hat.......................... Alex Gonzalez
Thing One................................... Elizabeth Andrews
Thing Two..................................... Cassie Bender
Jojo............................................. Maddi Howe
Mr. Mayor...................................... Scott Miller
Mrs. Mayor................................. Bryanna Savelesky
The Grinch.................................... James Bath
Gen. Genghis Khan Schmitz............. Justin Jonson

The Whos / Ensemble...................... Alaina Boomer
                                      Alec Chunn
                                      Eleasha Ellis
                                      Kristen Miles
                                      Caitlin Mitchell
                                      Erik Nelson
                                      Mary Nelson
                                      Saydi Ostler
                                      Alexandra Porter
                                      Victoria Rowley
                                      Siara Stallings
                                      Horton the Elephant..................... Sam Turner
                                      Gertrude McFuzz......................... Melissa Schenter
                                      Mayzie La Bird.......................... Hannah Stanfield
                                      Sour Kangaroo............................ Amy Parks
                                      Wickersham Brothers.................... Britton Winterrose
                                      Andy Reinhardt
                                      John deLamare

Bird Girls.................................... Bridgid Abrams
                                      Mari Cannon
                                      Charlotte Miley

Vlad Vladikoff.............................. James Bath
Yertle the Turtle........................... James Bath

Jungle Creatures / Ensemble............ Emily Gifford
                                      Nino Gogebashvili
                                      Nile Phoolchoo
                                      Emily Shick
                                      Robin Walter

Orchestra

Piccolo/Flute............................... Jess Christensen
Flute....................................... Emily Chen
Oboe/Tenor Sax............................ Kari Pederson
Clarinet................................... Jill Bath, Alison Durand
Bass Clarinet/ Bari Sax................... Matt Hart
Bassoon/Alto Sax........................... Austin Winkelman
Trumpet.................................... Joe Lehuta, Kim Scheidegger
Trombone.................................. Chelsae Linehan
Dum Set.................................... Dustin Waite
Percussion................................. Leah Knibbe, Tabetha Schmitt
Piano....................................... Daniel Chiang
Keyboard.................................. Adam Houghton
Violin..................................... Freddie Chen, Erika Ball
Viola....................................... Krista Lingle
Stage Manager
David Bergsman
Assistant Stage Manager
Caroline Carson
Backstage Crew
Sean Champagne, Juliet Guercia, Sam Kim, Malia Pearson, Kirra Sharpe, Christopher Squier
Makeup Design
Kit Dobbin
Costumes
Monica Boomer, Loretta deLamare, Marcella Hanson, Sharon Knibbe, Linda Rogers, Barbara Rowley, Susan Walters, Val Watson
Props
Monica Boomer, Sue Shick

Puppets
Tina Miller, Ted Miller
Assistant Choreographer
Alex Erickson
Dance Captains
Brigid Abrams, Charlotte Miley

Production Assistants
Donna Andrews, Nancy Schenter, Sue Shick
Auditorium Staff
David Hurlburt, Jeff Thomason, Scott Thomason

Lighting Design
Geoff Elliott, Ellicia Mertens, Jeff Thomason
Spotlight Operators
Amanda Stacks, Shannon Thiede
Sound Design
David Bergsman
Poster & Program
Geoff Elliott

Hospitality
Donna Andrews, Doug & Nancy Elliott, Mr. Miller, Nancy Schenter
Adventures Underground
- Books, Used and New -
- Comics and Graphic Novels -
- Used CDs -
- New and Used LPs -
- Board and Card Games -
1391 George Washington Way
www.advunderground.com

Spring Showcase presents
Hansel & Gretel
Contemporary & Classical Ballet
April 26 - 7 p.m.
on sale 4-1-08
Tickets will be available online at www.midcolumbiaballet.org
and The Dance Boutique-Richland or call 946-5417
All performances at Richland High Auditorium

M. Scott Ostler, D.D.S., M.S.D.,
Specialist in Orthodontics
701A The Parkway
Richland, WA 99352
(509) 946-0898
10am - 6pm Mon-Fri
10am - 4pm Sat

Coming Soon from RHS Theatre Arts
A Midsummer Night's Dream
May 9 & 10, 16 & 17
Adams Enterprises
Proud Sponsor of
Youth Programs
Locally owned and
operated for 34 years

i'm lovin' it

McDonald's®
“Seussical” auditions mark start of play

Todd Manley
sandstorm staff

After dancing, the singing auditions were held. Groups of ten were escorted on stage where they sang a song while under review.

“I prepared by listening to my song over and over again, until it literally drove me insane,” said junior Alec Chunn. “But I’m ready.”

Overall, the auditions went well, making the decisions for director Ellicia Mertens and choir teacher Greg Fryhling all the more difficult. The cast list was posted and people were assigned to their parts.

“Competition was tough. More than seventy people showed up for the initial meeting,” said junior Elesha Ellis. “Needless to say, I was nervous. But I’m sure that I will do well.”

Dance with me
Seniors Brittan Winterson and Sam Turner (right), along with junior Bryanna Savelsky (left), auditions for the play “Seussical,” which will be performed this spring. The musical is choreographed by Susan Burroughs (left center).

Both Qiu and Hernandez beam with pride at seeing their art. “I’m really proud to have my art where everyone can see it, especially since I’m notably involved with art,” said Qiu.
Drama students given recognition

Thespian festival held at Central Washington University

Patricia Marr
editor-in-chief

The Washington Thespian Festival is a place for high school students to get together and act to their hearts content.

This year's festival at Central Washington University on March 22 showcased the pinnacle of Richland High Drama talent.

Senior Sam Turner performed the song "Johanna" from Stephen Sondheim's Sweeney Todd and won the State Solo Music Performance for the second year in a row.

"I was definitely relieved," said Turner. "It definitely makes you feel really good to be recognized.

-To prepare for his performance, Turner had to "really dissect the character and the changes he goes through."

One of the most difficult aspects of his performance was finding the balance between the "love song and the very creepy undertones," said Turner.

Richland High students who also placed were junior Elizabeth Andrews (top ten percent monologue), senior Britton Winterrose (top ten percent solo musical), senior Alex Gonzalez (top twenty percent solo musical) and seniors Mari Cannon and Andy Reinhardt (top ten percent duo scene).

The Richland performance of Seussical also won an "Excellent" rating from its adjudication in the fall.

Maternal instincts
Senior Sam Turner portrays Horton the elephant during the play 'Seussical' this February. Turner and several others won awards for their acting skills at the Thespian Festival.

Shakespeare makes appearance at RHS

Sarah Worden
copy editor

"Ay me! For aught that I could ever read/ Could ever hear by tale or history/ The course of true love never did run smooth," is a line said by Lysander to Helena.
4 March 2008

Ms. Ellicia Mertens
Enterprise Middle School
5200 Paradise Way
West Richland WA 99353

Dear Ms. Mertens;

I want to thank you for bringing cast members from *Seussical the Musical* to Sacajawea last Friday. Our students loved hearing the stories they read, and seeing those wonderful costumes. Several of our teachers commented on what a great job the students did reading the stories; one even said she could take lessons from the student who visited her room!

I attended *Seussical* Friday evening and saw several of our students and staff members in attendance that night. If they enjoyed it half as much as my friend and I did, I know they had a great time! The music, the sets, the action, all contributed to a lively and memorable show. I especially appreciated meeting the cast members in the hallway after the show. They kept thanking people for coming, when we owed them thanks for a wonderful evening.

Thank you again, and I look forward to attending more productions at Richland High!

Sincerely yours,

Benita Brown
Librarian

Please note:
This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.
February 27, 2008

Dear Richland High Students and Ms. Mertens,

Thank you so much for performing and directing such an excellent Seussical full of energy and fun! Our students loved meeting the characters in the audience and a chance to see them up close and personal.

All facets of the play were extremely professional! The scenery was so Seussy and we all certainly felt like we were in the storybooks with the imaginative costuming and background. We loved the backlighting so that we could see Horton's shadow, the rolling bathtub, the characters as water and fish complete with heelies! The music all performed by your own orchestra was amazing and blended so well with the voices of the characters. I could go on forever—suffice it to say, "WE LOVED YOUR SHOW!"

The opportunity to combine lessons and literature with your theater performance is rare and wonderful. As we continue to study Seuss works, you have broadened our schema and will forever dance in our imaginations as we read the stories now and, hopefully, someday, to our own children!

In taking time out of your schedules to perform during your school day just for elementary students, it is clear that all of you really believe that, "A person's a person no matter how small!!"

Thank you one hundred percent!!!

Mrs. Wutzke Rm. 219  Second Grade  White Bluffs
From: Gail Ledbetter
To: Mertens, Ellicia
Date: 3/2/2008 5:44 PM
Subject: Re: Seussical school visits - Friday, February 29

Ellicia:

Thank you so much for bringing your students here to Badger Mountain. They did a fantastic job...even got in the newspaper!!! We really appreciate all of the efforts and energies you put into making sure your students could visit the elementary schools that could not make your show. Our students just loved it!!!

Warmly,
Gail

>>> Ellicia Mertens 2/20/2008 9:03 AM >>>
Good morning!

After speaking to all three of your schools (Jason Lee, Sacajawea, and Badger Mountain,) I think (hope) I've come up with a schedule that will work for everyone. Listed below are the times we could come visit your school to celebrate Dr. Seuss with your students on Friday, February 29:

9:00 AM to 9:45 AM - Jason Lee
10:00 AM to 10:45 AM - Sacajawea
11:00 AM to 11:45 AM - Badger Mountain

Due to the large nature of our show (costumes, set pieces, props, orchestra, lights, sound, etc.) and due to our visits happening during the school day, we will not be able to perform actual scenes from the show. Our piano players who play for us at rehearsals and public appearances are also teachers, so they are unavailable during the day. I'm more than willing to brainstorm ideas with each of you to figure out what you'd like the RHS students to do during that time to celebrate Dr. Seuss.

For example, at Badger Mountain, the actors will be showing up in costume, and we'll also bring some puppets along. We will rotate between three grade levels, and will read three different Dr. Seuss stories to these classes. We will not have the entire cast there with us, but I can promise Horton the Elephant, the Cat in the Hat, Thing 1 and Thing 2, and possibly the Grinch (if you want - even though it's not Christmas time,) the Sour Kangaroo, and some Whos.

Attached to this e-mail is something I had hoped to send out last week and did not get around to doing...if the librarians or teachers at your schools could help us with this, that would be great. What we at RHS would like to do for our lobby display is to display students' art work and/or writing describing who their favorite Dr. Seuss character is, or what their favorite book is, and why. If teachers are willing to do this, that would be great, and we'd display the students' work in our lobby during the run of our show. Because it's such short notice, I understand if this would not be possible. But if you could look at the attachment and see if anyone at your schools would be interested, that would be great.

Thank you so much for your support and enthusiasm! :) If you have any questions, please let me know. Thank you!

Ellicia Mertens
Enterprise Middle School
Richland High School Theatre Arts

"Seussical"
A musical journey through the stories of Dr. Seuss.

February 22, 23, 29 and March 1
Richland High School Auditorium
April 24, 2008

The Fifth Avenue Theater
1308 5th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to share my appreciation with you for a recent theater performance my students were fortunate enough to attend.

It all started with an e-mail from Ellicia Mertens, Richland High School Theater Arts teacher and an idea she had for elementary students to attend a free performance of Seussical The Musical. She was testing the waters to see what interest there might be. I found out later the response was overwhelming and students from every elementary school in our district attended the performance.

I am an advocate for the arts and for my students so sharing this opportunity with my staff was a no-brainer! Marcus Whitman is a low-income school and our students rarely get opportunities to see live theater. Every class in grades K-4 decided to attend! An added incentive was that Richland High School is within walking distance of Marcus Whitman so this experience was truly free with no transportation costs involved.

The thought of 1000+ elementary aged students descending on her school did not daunt Ms. Mertens. I was very impressed with the excellent communication and organization provided us by her. The arrangements were clear and very timely and I appreciated how she responded to suggestions and logistical concerns. E-mail updates were sent not only to me but to my secretary as well. Ellicia apologized for "over communicating" but believe me, it was greatly appreciated and helped to ensure the experience was positive for all involved.

The day went without a hitch. Our students, being the first to respond to the invitation, were given great seats for the performance. And since our students had to walk back to school when the high school dismissal time was nearing, our kids were the first to be excused so they could be on their way without disruption. We appreciated this kindness and attention paid our students and staff.

Our students came back buzzing about Dr. Seuss and Seussical. Teachers and students raved about the quality of the performance. I know several families who told me they took their children back to see an evening performance of Seussical because their children came home insisting that they go. I am certain positive feelings about reading, reading Dr. Seuss books, musical theater and Richland High School drama were formed.
You were great!
Kiley Andrews
The mower and his pipe
Seussical

Mayzie and Gertrude

Hazel
to thing
and thing 2.

you

ROCK!!!!!! clover

spec or dust
### Seussical Pre Sales - Ticket Distribution

#### The Book Worm Ticket Numbers and Tally

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>adult/general admission</th>
<th># tickets</th>
<th>Students and seniors</th>
<th># tickets</th>
<th>RHS students w/ASB</th>
<th># tickets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday 2/22</strong></td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>473-675</td>
<td>001-180</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>361-416</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ticket #s on location</td>
<td></td>
<td>203</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>390-412</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets #s remaining</td>
<td></td>
<td>519, 534-675</td>
<td>050-180</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>390-412</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets sold</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday 2/23</strong></td>
<td>$8</td>
<td>1351-1553</td>
<td>879-1058</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>1239-1293</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ticket #s on location</td>
<td></td>
<td>203</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>1255-1293</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets #s remaining</td>
<td></td>
<td>1373-1540</td>
<td>900-1058</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets sold</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday 2/29</strong></td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>2231-2434</td>
<td>1759-1938</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>2119-2174</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ticket #s on location</td>
<td></td>
<td>204</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2131-2174</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets #s remaining</td>
<td></td>
<td>2310-2434</td>
<td>1848-1937</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets sold</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday 3/1</strong></td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>3315-3518</td>
<td>2639-2818</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>2999-3054</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ticket #s on location</td>
<td></td>
<td>204</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>3009-3054</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets #s remaining</td>
<td></td>
<td>3448-3518</td>
<td>2761-2817</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets sold</td>
<td>133</td>
<td></td>
<td>123</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ADVENTURES UNDERGROUND TICKET NUMBERS AND TALLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>adult/general admission $10</th>
<th># tickets</th>
<th>Students and seniors $8</th>
<th># tickets</th>
<th>RHS students w/ASB $6</th>
<th># tickets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday 2/22</td>
<td>676-878</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>181-360</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>417-472</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ticket #s on location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets #s remaining</td>
<td>690-878</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>196-360</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>420-472</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets sold</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday 2/23</td>
<td>1554-1758</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>1059-1238</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>1294-1350</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ticket #s on location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets #s remaining</td>
<td>1589-1758</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>1080-1238</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>1296-1350</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets sold</td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 2/29</td>
<td>2435-2638</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>1939-2118</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>2175-2230</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ticket #s on location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets #s remaining</td>
<td>2472-2638</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>1981-2118</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>2181-2230</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets sold</td>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday 3/1</td>
<td>3111-3314</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>2819-2998</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>3055-3110</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ticket #s on location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets #s remaining</td>
<td>3172-3314</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>2879-2998</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3061-3110</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickets sold</td>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### $5$ PRE SALE TICKETS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tickets sold</th>
<th>2/22 #</th>
<th>2/23 #</th>
<th>2/29 #</th>
<th>3/1 #</th>
<th>$ ticket sales</th>
<th>Deposit amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Book Worm</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2/22 $1658.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult $10</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>$790</td>
<td>2/29 $2449.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student/senior $8</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>$720</td>
<td>3/3 $1654.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHS Students $6</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>$72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>142</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>$1582.00</td>
<td>$5761.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Book Worm tickets</td>
<td>661</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adventures</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2/22 $464.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult $10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>$370</td>
<td>2/29 $998.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student/senior $8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>$336</td>
<td>3/3 $1,214.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHS Students $6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>$36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>$742.00</td>
<td>$2,676.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Adv. Underground tickets</td>
<td>302</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$8,436.00</td>
<td>$8,437.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TICKET /DATE</td>
<td>22- Feb</td>
<td>23- Feb</td>
<td>29- Feb</td>
<td>1-Mar</td>
<td>SEUSSICAL $ SALES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AT THE DOOR:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult/general admission</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>863 (X$10) $8,630</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior/student</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>886 (x$8) $7,088</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHS ASB student</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>350(x$6) $2,100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRE SALES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BOOK WORM</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult/general admission</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>307(X$10) $3,070</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior/student</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>283(X$8) $2,264</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHS ASB student</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>71(X$6) $426</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADVENTURES UNDERGROUND</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult/general admission</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>147(X$10) $1,470</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior/student</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>138(X$8) $1,104</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHS ASB student</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17(X$6) $102</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL PRESALE</strong></td>
<td>174</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>$26,254</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL AT THE DOOR</strong></td>
<td>344</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>661</td>
<td>719</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRAND TOTAL PER NIGHT</strong></td>
<td>518</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>927</td>
<td>1112</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL FOR 4 DAYS!</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3062</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Good morning,

We had some stressful situations occur at this weekend's performances regarding tickets, etc. and I just wanted to make sure everyone was on the same page before the second weekend of performances comes up.

My parent volunteers and I are working very hard on ensuring everything we do follows the guidelines set by RHS and/or the RSD when it comes to ticket sales, etc. We believed we had covered all areas of concern, but due to some miscommunications and not receiving e-mails back (not having questions answered,) some people who gave hours of their time as a donation to our program, and who were on the guest list our House Manager had, were charged up to $20 for a show they had been told they could attend for free. On top of that, on Saturday, the booster parents who were setting up concessions, flowers, etc. in the lobby (we've done this the past two years now,) became concerned when it came across as they weren't allowed to do that. In order to make sure we all know what we can/cannot do as part of our theatre production, I am writing this e-mail.

We need written documentation of why we cannot have what is called in the theatre community "comp tickets" with the exact rules in the documentation so we can make sure we are following all guidelines/criteria. The past two years, no one at the school brought this up to us, and they were aware that for people who had volunteered, or for people adjudicating the show, they were picking up a "comp ticket" and coming in free of charge. I sent an e-mail on February 6 to Carolyn and Mike regarding this situation and how to take care of it, but never heard back. Part of our publicity/marketing, and something all theatres do is promote the show through tickets given to community members (such as on radio stations, etc.) and to volunteers who have given hours of their time for the show. We're trying to work with the guest list, but even then, people who are not the House Manager (the one with the main list) were giving our volunteers the wrong information and ended up charging people who should not have been charged. To solve this situation, if I need to fill out a Purchase Order for a certain amount to pay for "tickets," and then that amount basically is deposited right back into the drama account, I can do that. But we need to know how to do this, as this is something we need to do as part of a theatre company.

I have at least one parent at every Bomber Booster meeting. Usually, at least two show up. They understand the guidelines and what we can and cannot do as a fundraiser and absolutely no drama students are involved in the fund-raising during this show (they're all busy performing on stage). When the parent volunteers were setting up on Saturday, questions were being asked about where they got the donations, supplies, how they were earning the money, etc. Quite a few parents felt disrespected and interrogated in a situation where they knew they had gone through all the correct guidelines/rules. I came into the conversation towards the end, and tried to explain we had permission to do this, and yes, drama actually does have a booster club (we were being told we didn't have one).

Basically, I feel due to mis-communication and misunderstanding, some stressful situations occurred this weekend. I understand it was probably just a big misunderstanding, but when our audience members and volunteers are disrespected, even by accident, it makes the drama program and the school look bad. We are working very hard on building a strong, professional, theatre arts program that the school and the community will support. I feel that a lot of energy and time that should have been focused on the students and their work was instead having to go towards situations I had thought we had cleared up weeks ago.

If we need to meet with someone to go over the paperwork, we are more than willing to do that. But we, as a theatre program, at the very least would like printed copies of the documentation that state all the rules/guidelines/expectations for ticket sales for a play, etc. so we are sure we are doing things the right way, and so our community will want to continue supporting the work we are doing.
Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Ellicia Mertens
Enterprise Middle School
Richland High School Theatre Arts

"Seussical"
A musical journey through the stories of Dr. Seuss.

February 22, 23, 29 and March 1
Richland High School Auditorium
NOTE: Please be advised that evaluators attending your production are provided with a copy of your school’s application prior to attending your production. Therefore, please answer all questions as thoroughly and completely as possible. This is your opportunity to communicate with the evaluators regarding the rationale behind a particular show choice, the vision of the directors, and the special challenges faced in each unique school setting.

NOTE: Please indicate the address you prefer we use in future communications by placing a check mark in one of the appropriate boxes in the margin.

SCHOOL NAME: Richland High School

☑ SCHOOL ADDRESS: 930 Long Avenue, Richland WA 99352
SCHOOL PHONE NUMBER: 509-967-6535  FAX NUMBER: 509-942-2512
COORDINATING TEACHER’S NAME: Ellicia M. Mertens
TEACHER’S DAYTIME PHONE:
TEACHER’S EVENING PHONE:
TEACHER’S E-MAIL ADDRESS:

NAME OF MUSICAL: Seussical, by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty

PERFORMANCE DATES/TIMES: (Include invited dress rehearsals, student matinees and senior citizen performances) (Please also indicate CAST A or CAST B if applicable)
CAST A (or only 1 cast): February 22, 23, 29 and March 1 2008, 7:30 PM all shows
CAST B: N/A

☐ EVALUATE BOTH CASTS (Please check if you want us to evaluate BOTH casts, if left unchecked we will only evaluate CAST A.

PERFORMANCE VENUE LOCATION: Richland High School Auditorium
930 Long Avenue, Richland, WA 99352

GENERAL OR ASSIGNED SEATING? General seating
1. Provide a brief overview of your school’s production history.

Over the past three years, Richland High School has worked on improving our performing arts community. I was hired as the new theatre arts director/producer in 2005 with the understanding that the theatre arts department was to focus more on educating students in the many arts of theatre, preparing them with the proper knowledge and craft needed to pursue theatre at the university level, and to create professional expectations for our staff, students, and productions. I believe we have accomplished a lot in a short amount of time. In the past, RHS would produce a fall play, a musical in January, and then occasionally produce a spring production as well. We now plan our upcoming season a year in advance. In the fall, we produce an ensemble piece. In the winter, we produce our musical. In the spring, we are working on alternating between a student produced one-act festival and a Shakespeare production. I believe we are moving in the right direction, as our musical last year, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, beat all attendance records for a musical produced by a high school in Richland, WA with over 3000 audience members attending our production.

2. Explain why you selected this year’s musical including special conditions surrounding the production.

*Seussical* has actually been in the production process much longer than the last two musical productions here at Richland High School. I am a Masters’ candidate for a MA in Theatre Production through Central Washington University. For my thesis, I am required to both write a thesis based on a specific play, and then produce that play at the school I work at. I had to choose a production two summers ago, keeping some specific rules in mind. It could not be a play I had been involved with before, and it had to be suitable for the school,
audience, and community I was a part of. *Seussical* is a show that grew on me. The more I listened to the music, the more I researched the life of Dr. Seuss and his stories, the more I knew I wanted to do this production. For some reason, this wonderful family musical has not been produced in the Tri-Cities area, ever. We will be the first theatre to share this show with our local community.

*Seussical* is a great production to have as our musical this year. First, it offers so many opportunities for students to shine in really creative roles. There may be the lead roles of Horton and The Cat in the Hat, but they are in no means the only stars of the show. Last year, when we did *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, we were able to have a large cast, but only a few students really had the opportunity to stand out and shine on their own in very distinct character roles (such as Joseph and the Narrator). This time around, almost every single student will have the opportunity to have at least one memorable character moment up on that stage. Secondly, I love the many layers of the play, as is relevant in Dr. Seuss’ stories as well. When children attend this show, they’ll get wrapped up in the fun, imaginative world of Dr. Seuss, hearing the rhymes and seeing the characters they have read about since they were very young. When adults come to see this show, they will understand the underlying messages Dr. Seuss put in his original stories – his comments on war, respect, helping others, social and political commentary, etc. I enjoy smart family shows like this. There is something for everyone who attends the show.

Technically, this production will allow the students to study the artwork of Dr. Seuss, and learn how to translate his images to the stage. The number of students who want to learn technical theatre increases greatly by each show we produce, and I believe this production will feed this artistic outlet allowing creativity in the design process. (As we don’t have a theatre tech class at our school, this is the main technical opportunity available to them this year.)

This is also a wonderful way to provide educational outreach to our students and community. We will produce this show the week before Dr. Seuss’ birthday, National Read Across America Week. It is our hope we can promote literacy, the joy of reading, and the magic of theatre through this production.
Our production of *Seussical* will be an over-all fun production, based on the fact that everyone involved will have a common connection: the Dr. Seuss stories they read as a child.
3. Explain the specific challenges of mounting a production at your school (i.e. space/facility, extent of community, school board or administration support, etc.)

The most recent challenge for our production occurred just a week ago. Our musical director/orchestra conductor suddenly resigned, and it wasn’t until this past Wednesday (November 7) that we found out the school did hire a replacement. I have heard positive things about our new music director, but he is coming in under very stressful circumstances and just weeks before we are supposed to have orchestra auditions. The rest of the production team now has to update him as quickly as possible, share our artistic vision with him, and help him get ready to do something in just a couple weeks that the rest of us have been working on since last spring.

Technically, our performance space also provides some specific challenges. Our proscenium is approximately fifty-two feet across. This size can become cumbersome when you’re trying to “fill the space” or create intimate moments on stage. Our auditorium seats 1500, with no middle aisle. This creates a challenge in blocking the actors when I want them to enter from the audience. This gigantic seating arrangement is also a challenge for bringing the audience into the story, making them feel a part of what is going on stage. We do not have a fly space, which puts a damper on our set design, forcing us to go to a “Plan B” in order to achieve the look we want. Our sound system is set up to work with only eight personal microphones. I believe sound is currently our largest technical challenge. We have no guarantees when or if it will work, as the auditorium managers (and not the theatre department,) are the only people allowed to work with the sound equipment. This same policy is also in place for lighting. Neither theatre students nor the theatre director can have access to the lighting instruments, making lighting design a very difficult process.
4. Please circle the estimated budget for your show. (This data is for information purposes only. Budget size is not used as a criteria for evaluation.)

$0-$499  
$499-$1000  
$1000-$2000  
$1500-$2500  
$2500-$4999  
$5,000-$7,499  
$7,500-$9,999  
$10,000-$20,000  
$20,000+

5. Please indicate the source of these funds with an estimated breakdown by percentage. (Example: 60% Ticket Sales, 40% Student Fundraising Activities)

- 0% School Board Allocations
- 2% Program Advertising/Boosters
- 0% Student Fundraising Activities
- 0% Community Support
- 95% Ticket Sales
- 0% Donations
- 3% Other (Be Specific) $1000 donation from the ASB
NOTE: Please be advised that evaluators attending your production are provided with a copy of your school’s application prior to attending your production. Therefore, please answer all questions as thoroughly and completely as possible. This is your opportunity to communicate with the evaluators regarding the rationale behind a particular show choice, the vision of the directors, and the special challenges faced in each unique school setting.

6. a) What is the estimated student population of your school? 2000
   b) What is the estimated number of students that participate in the musical? 100

7. CASTING
   a) Is casting for the musical selective or is everyone who auditions cast? selective
   b) Will your production be double cast with as little as one role being shared by two students?
      ☑ NO (if no, go to 7g) ☐ YES (if yes, go to 7c)
   c) If you answered YES for Q. 7c. and you wish to have BOTH casts evaluated, please include an application fee for both casts. (The application fee will offset travel costs of participating evaluators. See Guidelines for application fee information.)
   d) Is the grade level of students (i.e. Freshman, Sophomore, Junior or Senior) a factor in the casting of the production? Grade level is not a factor in the casting of the production.

8. YOUR THEATRE
   a) Is your seating General Seating or Reserved Seating? General seating
   b) How early does your house open? 7:00 PM (a half hour before show time)

IF YOUR THEATRE IS NOT EASILY SEEN FROM THE ENTRANCE TO YOUR SCHOOL, PLEASE PROVIDE A MAP OF THE CAMPUS. This will help ensure that your evaluators are not late for the performance.

*** Please see attached map and directions. Due to the current construction at Richland High School, the easiest way to the theatre may change before our production dates. If this is the case, I will fax the 5th Avenue Theatre new directions before our show opens to assist with finding our theatre.
8. Please indicate on the chart below which positions are held by adults versus students for your production. For the Director circle either Guest or Resident.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th># of Adults</th>
<th># of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Guest or Resident (circle one)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Director</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choreographer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance Captain</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Manager</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2 SMs &amp; 2 ASMs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set Designer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Designer</td>
<td>possibly 1</td>
<td>possibly 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Designer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costume Designer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>possibly 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestra</td>
<td>1 (conductor)</td>
<td>~16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Please indicate the % of your set and costumes that were built versus rented and borrowed.

- **95% Built**
- **5% Set Rented/Borrowed**
- **100% Costumes Built**
- **0% Costumes Rented/Borrowed**
APPLICATION CHECKLIST

X Accurate, driving directions and/or maps to the performance venue from a major highway (i.e. Interstate 5 or 90), including walking directions from the parking area to the auditorium/venue. Applications missing this information will not be considered.

X Completed and signed Application Form (Pages 10-15)

X (Pd.) $70.00 Registration Fee for First or Only Cast. $40 for Each Additional Cast

I hereby state that the above information is correct to the best of my knowledge, and I agree to abide by the enclosed rules and guidelines.

Ellicia M. Mertens
Signature of School Musical Representative

Richland High School Theatre Arts Director/Producer
Position/Title

November 8, 2007
Date

509-438-2746
Phone

Please note:
This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.
Drive: 218 mi – about 3 hours 21 mins

1. Head southeast on 5th Ave toward University St 0.1 mi 1 min

2. Turn left at Spring St 318 ft

3. Turn right onto the I-5 S ramp to Portland 0.9 mi 2 mins

4. Follow signs for I-90 E/Bellevue/Spokane and merge onto I-90 E 108 mi 1 hour 37 mins

5. Take exit 110 to merge onto I-82 E/US-97 S toward Yakima 102 mi 1 hour 23 mins
   Continue to follow I-82 E

6. Take exit 102 to merge onto I-182 E/US-12 E toward Pasco/Richland 4.9 mi 5 mins

7. Take exit 4 to merge onto WA-240 W toward Wellis Way/Vantage 0.6 mi 1 min

8. Turn right at Aaron Dr 0.1 mi

9. Turn left at Thayer Dr 1.4 mi 4 mins

10. Turn right at Long Ave 325 ft

930 Long Ave
Richland, WA 99352

These directions are for planning purposes only. You may find that construction projects, traffic, or other events may cause road conditions to differ from the map results.

Map data ©2007 NAVTEQ™, Sanborn

The auditorium entrance is off of Thayer Dr. on the right hand side.

You will drive past a Bus Depot and a LDS Seminary building (on your right). Turn right into the driveway immediately after those buildings to get to the auditorium.
Lower quality, full sound.

Elliea Merfere
Directed by

RHS Theatre Arts
2/24/08
Seussical

Seussical
3/1/08
Wes, Terri, and Michael,

I have included three videos of Richland High School’s production of *Seussical*. The first one is a recording of one of our dress rehearsals. The other two copies are of the actual production.

I’ve included two copies of the production due to sound problems when the play was filmed closing night, March 1, by a videographer. Our sound technician at the auditorium did not let the videographer know there were technical difficulties with the cable for sound until intermission, leaving the time between four minutes into the show to about twenty-three minutes without any sound at all, and the rest of Act I with minimal sound.

In order to compensate for this, I have included a copy of the performance on Friday, February 29. A parent volunteer filmed this production. I asked her to keep a wide angle while filming so the entire stage could be seen, but there are times when she zooms in, and some of the action (but not much) is lost.

I apologize for this extra work in order to watch the production. It was my hope the production filmed by the videographer would be sufficient. Needless to say, I will be talking to the sound technician at our auditorium.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Ellicia Mertens

Please note:
This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.