

Educational
Study Guide

Chanhassen Dinner Theatres created this guide as a tool for educators to encourage their students to explore both the story and the production elements of the show. Live theatre can enrich young peoples' lives like few other experiences. This study guide contains information that allows students of music, theatre and dance to experience, respond to and critique live performance. CDT's hope is that youth will gain a greater understanding and appreciation for musical theatre and its role in our lives and greater community.

Basic Theatre Etiquette Reminders...

1. Do not talk, whisper, sing or hum during the performance.
2. Keep feet on the floor, with your shoes on.
Health and Safety regulations require that everyone wear shoes.
3. Clap after the songs to show the performers that you are enjoying the show.
4. Remain seated until the end of the show, and clap during the curtain call to say "thank you" to the performers and orchestra.
5. Do not use any electronic devices during the performance. **TURN OFF** all cell phones, i-pods, cameras, etc. before the the show begins.
6. Photos may be taken prior to the show - **Photography is not permitted during the performance.**
7. Gratuity (tip) is not included on any items not included in your ticket price. Please be prepared to tip your server on those items. If you have questions, please ask your server.



Behind The Scenes

From play selection to opening night-
Check out the process of getting a CDT show on stage



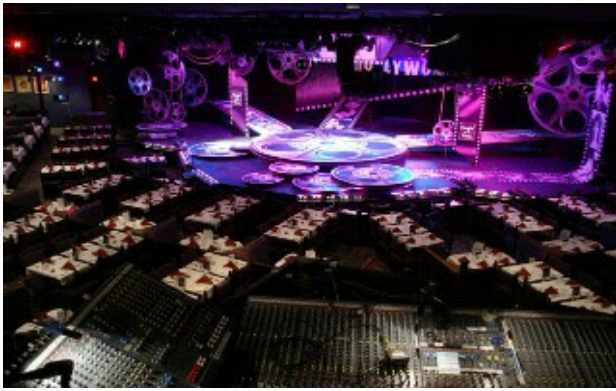
As a producing theatre company, CDT is one of the few theatres in the Twin Cities with facilities to create all production elements from scratch. From initial concepts of scenic design to costume creation to choreography, music, lighting, sound, and props - *everything* is created at Chanhassen.



After a play title is chosen, the director works closely with the design team in development. Once designers understand the director's vision, they begin researching and creating. The scenic designer creates a scenic plot on paper and then makes a tiny scale model of the set, set pieces and backdrops. The costume designer sketches costume renderings and selects fabric swatches for each costume. From these drawings, costume artisans hand-make patterns and begin stitching away. Main Stage productions have included up to 250 individual costumes!



The properties master begins gathering the wide range of props called for in the script. Props are created in the scene shop - furniture, loaves of bread, shrunken heads, foreign currencies and hairspray cans - each item hand-crafted to look like the real thing according to the time period. It takes the scene, costume and prop shops about twelve weeks to produce everything needed for the show. Items need to be made sturdily to handle wear and tear.



The musical director re-works the musical score for Chanhassen's live, professional orchestra and rehearses with musicians. The choreographer works closely with the director and music director to create actors' movements for dance and musical numbers. Sound and lighting designers plot technical components to create effect and mood. The makeup and hair designer develops a specific look for every character.



Actors begin rehearsals just 2 ½ weeks prior to opening. When they arrive, they have their lines and much of the music prepared. Rehearsals are packed with perfecting music, learning choreography and blocking scenes. In-between, are costume fittings and press interviews. During a rehearsal period many actors do double-duty: they rehearse by day and perform the currently-running production by night.



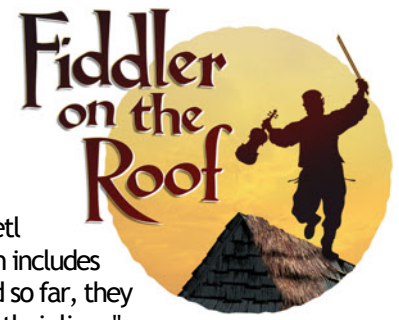
The currently-running production closes over the weekend, at which time the old set is removed to make room for the new one. Scenery is brought in, drops hung, special effects set, floor painted. "Tech Week" is in full-swing. Light and sound technicians re-direct over 250 separate lighting instruments in accordance with the designer's plot. Body microphones are re-plotted and all sound cues recorded. Finishing touches are made to costumes, scenery is put into place and the production stage manager coordinates the details and communication.



Everything comes together for the actors' first stage rehearsal. The director, cast, orchestra and design team work to make sure that everything is seamless. Can you believe the company has only three days to make this happen before opening night? It's nothing short of amazing that a new musical can be created in such a short time. Another op'nin, another show!

Synopsis

Act One



Tevye, a poor Jewish milkman with five daughters, explains the customs of the Jews in the Russian shtetl (village) of Anatevka in 1905. He describes the inner circle of the community and the larger circle which includes the constable, the priest, and countless other authority figures. He explains, "We don't bother them and so far, they don't bother us." He ends by insisting that without their traditions, he and the other villagers would find their lives "as shaky as a fiddler on the roof." ("**Tradition**").

At Tevye's home, everyone is busy preparing for the Sabbath meal. His sharp-tongued wife, Golde, orders their daughters, Tzeitel, Hodel, Chava, Shprintze and Bielke, about their tasks. Yente, the village matchmaker, arrives to tell Golde that Lazar Wolf, the wealthy butcher, who is a widower older than Tevye, wants to wed Tzeitel, the eldest daughter. The next two daughters, Hodel and Chava, are excited about Yente's visit, but Tzeitel is unenthusiastic ("**Matchmaker, Matchmaker**"). She knows that a girl from a poor family must take whatever husband Yente brings, but Tzeitel wants to marry her childhood friend, Motel the tailor.

Tevye is delivering milk, pulling the cart himself, as his horse is lame. He asks God, whom would it hurt "**If I Were a Rich Man**"? Avram, the bookseller, has news from the outside world about pogroms and expulsions. A stranger, Perchik, hears their conversation and scolds them for doing nothing more than talk. The men dismiss Perchik as a radical, but Tevye invites him home for the Sabbath meal and offers him food and a room in exchange for tutoring his two youngest daughters. Golde tells Tevye to meet Lazar after the Sabbath but does not tell him why, knowing that Tevye does not like Lazar. Tzeitel is afraid that Yente will find her a husband before Motel asks Tevye for her hand. But Motel resists as he is afraid of Tevye's temper, and tradition says that a matchmaker arranges marriages. Motel is also very poor and is saving up to buy a sewing machine before he approaches Tevye to show that he can support a wife. The family gathers for the "**Sabbath Prayer**."

After the Sabbath, Tevye meets Lazar at Mordcha's inn, mistakenly assuming that Lazar wants to buy his cow. Once the misunderstanding is cleared up, Tevye agrees to let Lazar marry Tzeitel. With a rich butcher husband, his daughter will never want for anything. All join in the celebration of Lazar's good fortune; even the Russian youths at the inn join in the celebration and show off their dancing skills ("**To Life**"). Outside the inn, Tevye happens upon the Russian Constable, who has jurisdiction over the Jews in the town. The Constable warns him that there is going to be a "little unofficial demonstration" in the coming weeks (a euphemism for a minor pogrom). The Constable has sympathy for the Jewish community but is powerless to prevent the violence. Tevye conjures the fiddler, who plays his violin as Tevye dances his way home.

The next morning, after Perchik's lessons with her young sisters, Tevye's second daughter Hodel mocks Perchik's Marxist interpretation of a Bible story. He, in turn, criticizes her for hanging on to the old traditions of Judaism, noting that the world is changing. To illustrate this, he dances with her, defying the prohibition against opposite sexes dancing together; they begin to fall in love.

Later, a hung-over Tevye announces that he has agreed that Tzeitel will marry Lazar Wolf. Golde is overjoyed, but Tzeitel is devastated and begs Tevye not to force her. Motel arrives and tells Tevye that he is the perfect match for Tzeitel and that he and Tzeitel gave each other a pledge to marry. He promises that Tzeitel will not starve as his wife. Tevye is stunned and outraged at this breach of tradition, but impressed at the timid tailor's display of backbone. After some soul-searching ("**Tevye's Monologue**"), Tevye agrees to let them marry, but he worries about how to break the news to Golde. An overjoyed Motel celebrates with Tzeitel ("**Miracle of Miracles**").

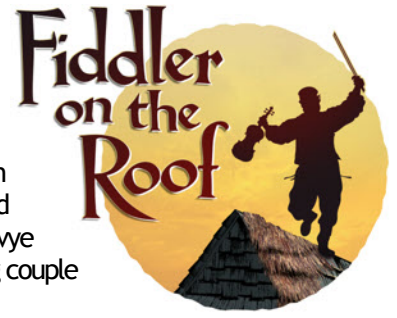
That night, in bed with Golde, Tevye pretends to be waking from a nightmare. Golde offers to interpret his dream, and Tevye "describes" it ("**Tevye's Dream**"). Golde's grandmother Tzeitel returns from the grave to bless the marriage of her namesake, but to Motel, not to Lazar Wolf. Lazar's formidable late wife, Fruma-Sarah, rises from her grave to warn, in graphic terms, of severe retribution if Tzeitel marries Lazar. The superstitious Golde is terrified and she quickly counsels that Tzeitel must marry Motel.

The villagers gossip in the street upon learning of the about the mix-up in Tzeitel's wedding plans. As Chava enters Motel's tailor shop, a group of Russians on the street taunt her. Fyedka, a Russian youth, protects her, insisting that the others stop. After they leave, Fyedka follows Chava into the shop and offers Chava the loan of a book - thus a secret relationship begins.

The wedding day of Tzeitel and Motel arrives, and all the Jews join the ceremony ("**Sunrise, Sunset**") and the celebration ("**The Wedding Dance**"). Lazar gives a fine gift, but an argument arises with Tevye over the broken agreement. Perchik ends the tiff by breaking another tradition: he crosses the barrier between the men and women to dance with Tevye's daughter Hodel. The celebration ends abruptly when a group of Russians rides into the village to perform the "demonstration". They disrupt the party, damaging the wedding gifts, wounding Perchik, who attempts to fight back, and wreaking more destruction in the village. The constable bows to Tevye and says, "I am genuinely sorry. You understand?" Tevye replies with mock courtesy, "Of course." Tevye instructs his family to clean up the mess.

Act Two

Months later, Perchik tells Hodel he must return to Kiev to work for the revolution. He proposes marriage, admitting that he loves her, and says that he will send for her. She agrees (**"Now I Have Everything"**). They tell Tevye that they are engaged, and he is appalled that they are flouting tradition by making their own match, especially as Perchik is leaving. When he forbids the marriage, Perchik and Hodel inform him that they do not seek his permission, only his blessing. After more soul searching, Tevye relents - the world is changing, and he must change with it (**"Tevye's Rebuttal"**). He informs the young couple that he gives them his blessing and his permission.



Tevye explains these events to an astonished Golde. "Love", he says, "it's the new style." Tevye asks Golde, despite their own arranged marriage, **"Do You Love Me?"** After dismissing Tevye's question as foolish, she eventually admits that, after 25 years of living and struggling together and raising five daughters, she does, indeed, love him.

Meanwhile, Yente tells Tzeitel that she saw Chava with Fyedka. News spreads quickly in Anatevka that Perchik has been arrested and exiled to Siberia (**"The Rumor/I Just Heard"**) and Hodel is determined to join him there. At the railway station, she explains to her father that her home is with her beloved, wherever he may be, although she will always love her family (**"Far From the Home I Love"**).

Time passes. The villagers are now gossiping about a "new arrival" at Motel and Tzeitel's. At Motel's shop, we learn that the new arrival is a sewing machine. Fyedka and Chava speak outside the shop. She promises to speak to Tevye about their love for each other. Chava finally gathers the courage to ask Tevye to allow her marriage to Fyedka. Again, Tevye reaches deep into his soul, but marriage outside the Jewish faith is a line he will not cross. He forbids Chava to speak to Fyedka again. When Golde brings news the next day that Chava and Fyedka have eloped and been married by the priest, Tevye wonders where he went wrong (**"Chavaleh" (Little Bird)**). When Chava appears to ask his acceptance, he cannot allow himself to answer her plea and tells the rest of the family to consider her dead.

Rumors of the Russians expelling Jews from their villages spread. While the villagers are gathered, the constable arrives to tell everyone that they have three days to pack up and leave the town. In shock, they reminisce about **"Anatevka"** and how hard it will be to leave what has been their home for so long.

As the Jews leave Anatevka, the family goes separate ways. Tzeitel and Motel are going to Warsaw until they have enough money to join Tevye, Golde and the younger girls in America. Yente, the Matchmaker informs the family that she plans to go to the Holy Land. Golde worries about Hodel and Perchik, who are still in Siberia. Chava and Fyedka come to tell her family that they are leaving for Krakow, unwilling to remain among the people who could do such things to others. Tevye still will not talk to her, but when Tzeitel says goodbye to Chava, Tevye prompts her to add, "God be with you". Chava promises Golde she will write to her in America. As Tevye, Golde and their two youngest daughters leave the village for America the fiddler begins to play. Tevye beckons with a nod, and the fiddler follows them out of the village.

Musical Numbers

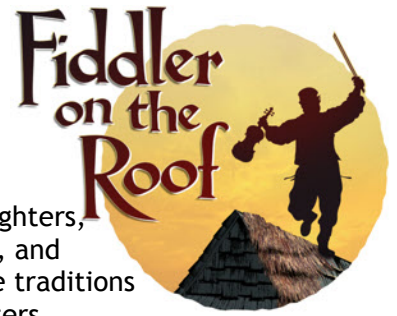
Act I

- "Prologue: Tradition" Tevye and Company
- "Matchmaker, Matchmaker" Tzeitel, Hodel and Chava
- "If I Were a Rich Man" Tevye
- "Sabbath Prayer" Family and Company
- "To Life" Tevye, Lazar Wolf and Village Men
- "Miracle of Miracles" Motel
- "Tevye's Dream" Tevye, Golde, Grandma Tzeitel, Fruma-Sarah and Company
- "Sunrise, Sunset" Family and Company
- "The Bottle Dance" Orchestra

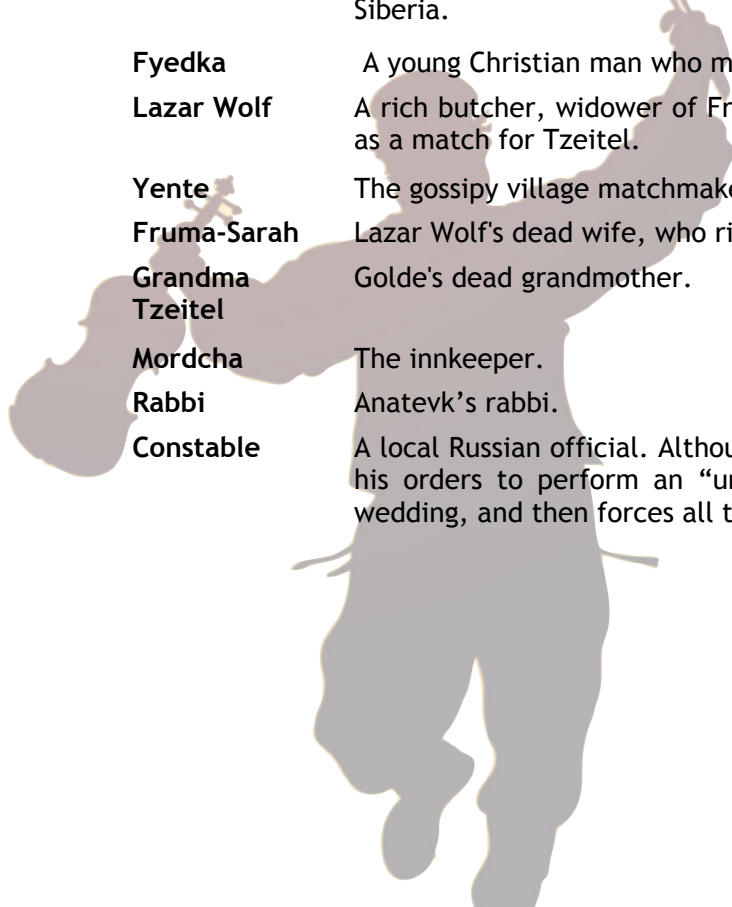
Act II

- "Entr'acte" Orchestra
- "Now I Have Everything" Perchik and Hodel
- "Tevye's Rebuttal" Tevye
- "Do You Love Me?" Tevye and Golde
- "The Rumor/I Just Heard" Yente and Company
- "Far From the Home I Love" Hodel
- "Chavaleh" (Little Bird) Tevye
- "Anatevka" Family and Company

Characters



Tevye	Narrator and main character, Tevye is the father of five daughters, an impoverished milkman, a leader in his Jewish community, and husband to the headstrong Golde. He struggles to uphold the traditions of his people, especially through the marriages of his daughters.
Golde	Tevye's wife of twenty-five years and mother of his five daughters, Golde is an efficient helpmate and traditionalist, faced with changes of a "new world." She has a sharp tongue and wit. Her love of family helps her face the challenges that her family encounters.
Tzeitel	Tevye and Golde's eldest daughter, Tzeitel is about twenty years old and in love with Motel, whom she eventually marries instead of Lazar Wolf.
Hodel	Tevye and Golde's second daughter, Hodel falls in love with Perchik and they defy tradition by not seeking her father's permission to marry, only his blessing. Later, she leaves Anatevka for Siberia to be with the imprisoned Perchik.
Chava	Tevye and Golde's third daughter, Chava falls in love with Fyedka, a Russian, and is ordered to "never see him again." They elope and her family disowns her, until the end, when Tevye momentarily acknowledges them.
Shprintze	Tevye and Golde's fourth daughter.
Bielke	Tevye and Golde's youngest daughter.
Motel Kamzoi	An impoverished tailor, secretly pledged to Tzeitel, Motel gathers the courage to ask Tevye for her hand in marriage. He feels, "even a poor tailor is entitled to some happiness." They marry and start a family, which also includes the "new arrival" of a sewing machine.
Perchik	A radical student revolutionary from Kiev and later Hodel's husband, Perchik leaves Anatevka to work for the revolution in Kiev. He is arrested and sent to prison in Siberia.
Fyedka	A young Christian man who marries Chava.
Lazar Wolf	A rich butcher, widower of Fruma-Sarah, and the man Yente the matchmaker sets as a match for Tzeitel.
Yente	The gossip village matchmaker who matches Tzeitel and Lazar.
Fruma-Sarah	Lazar Wolf's dead wife, who rises from the grave in Tevye's nightmare.
Grandma Tzeitel	Golde's dead grandmother.
Mordcha	The innkeeper.
Rabbi	Anatevka's rabbi.
Constable	A local Russian official. Although he has a good relationship with Tevye, he follows his orders to perform an "unofficial demonstration" during Tzeitel and Motel's wedding, and then forces all the Jewish villagers to leave Anatevka.



Vocabulary



Canopy - a piece of cloth held up by four poles that symbolizes a couple's first home together. During Jewish wedding ceremonies, the couple stands under the canopy. Also known as a *huppa* or *chuppah*. *Tzeitel and Motel are married under a canopy.*

Dowry- money, goods or estate that a woman's family gives to her husband when they marry. Dowries are often made up of items that that can be used in the home and sometimes livestock. *Being a poor milkman, Tevye's daughters' dowries are small.*

Edict- an official order or proclamation issued by a person in authority. *An edict is issued forcibly evicting the community from Anatevka.*

Israel- the Holy Land. *Yente plans to go to the Holy Land at the end of the show.*

King Solomon- a figure described in Middle Eastern scriptures as a wise ruler of an empire centered on the united Kingdom of Israel.

Kosher- food that fulfills the requirements of Jewish dietary law; prepared in accordance with Jewish religious practices. *When Tevye talks and sings about tradition, he says, "...we have traditions for everything...how we eat..."*

L'chaim- a word used to express good wishes just before drinking meaning "To life!" *At the inn, when Tevye announces Tzeitel's engagement to Lazar Wolf, everyone sings, "To Life."*

Matchmaker- someone who arranges marriages. *The Matchmaker of Anatevka is Yente, which appropriately, means busybody.*

Mazel Tov- 'good fortune' in Hebrew; often used as a congratulatory exclamation. *This expression is heard at the inn after Tevye announces Tzeitel's engagement to Lazar Wolf.*

Nazdrovia- "Cheers!" in Polish and Russian. *Some of the Russian townsmen offer their own blessings to Lazar Wolf and Tevye at the inn when the engagement is announced.*

Passover- Jewish holiday celebrating the exodus and freedom from slavery of the Children of Israel. During Passover certain dietary restrictions are observed, for instance, leavened bread cannot be consumed.

Pogrom- a planned, violent mob attack which results in the killing of large numbers of people and of destruction of property, including religious buildings, usually done for reasons of race or religion. The term, a Russian word, originally entered the English language to describe 19th and 20th-century attacks on Jews in the Russian Empire; similar attacks against Jews at other times and places also became known as pogroms. The word is now also sometimes used to describe attacks against non-Jewish ethnic or religious groups. *The "unofficial demonstration" that takes place at Tzeitel and Motel's wedding is a pogrom.*

Prayer Shawl- During formal prayers, Jewish men (and in modern times, many women as well) wear the *tallit*, a prayer shawl over their clothing. The *tzitzit* is a garment with fringes that is worn under the clothing and can be seen coming out from under a man's garments. *Tevye comments on his tzitzit by saying, "This shows our constant devotion to God."*

Rabbi - a person qualified by academic studies of the Torah and Talmud who acts as a spiritual leader and religious teacher of a Jewish community, qualified to explain and apply Jewish law. *The Rabbi of Anatevka is called upon to give his blessings, wisdom and advice.*

Reb - a title of respect for a man, similar to *Mister*. *Tevye is referred to as "Reb Tevye."*

Sabbath- the Jewish day of worship and rest. The Sabbath begins at sundown Friday and lasts until nightfall Saturday. *Tevye invites Perchik to stay with his family for the Sabbath.*

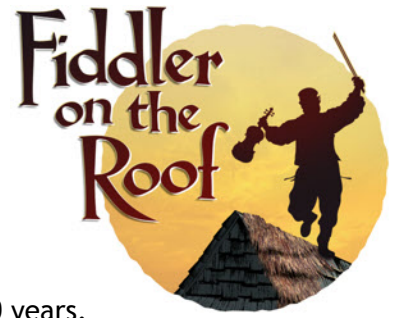
Siberia- a vast region on the Eastern and North-Eastern part of the Russian Federation. With incredibly harsh winters, it is sparsely inhabited. Siberia held a series of labor camps. For those sent to the camps, it often equated to a death sentence. Many never made it to Siberia, dying instead on the journey. *Perchik is sentenced to work in Siberia and Hodel chooses to follow him there. Golde later worries about them.*

Synagogue- Jewish house of prayer, also used for religious instruction. When Tevye sings "If I Were a Rich Man," he longs to rich enough to sit and pray in the synagogue and discuss the holy books with learned men all day.

Tsar- the emperor of Russia, an absolute monarch. *Mendel asks, "Is there a proper blessing for the tsar?" To which the Rabbi replies, "A blessing for the tsar? Of course. May God bless and keep the Tsar...far away from us!"*

Yeshiva- An Orthodox Jewish college or seminary; an Orthodox Jewish elementary school teaching both religious and secular subjects. *Yenta brings two yeshiva boys for Golde to consider as possible suitors for Shprintze and Bielke.*

Fiddler Facts



- *Fiddler on the Roof* opened on Broadway at the Imperial Theatre on September 22, 1964. It was the first musical theatre production in history to have a Broadway run surpassing 3,000 performances, closing with a total of 3,242 shows.
- *Fiddler on the Roof* held the record for the longest running show on Broadway for 10 years.
- The original Broadway production of *Fiddler on the Roof* was directed and choreographed by Jerome Robbins. By the end of his life in 1998, Robbins had received five Tony Awards®, two Academy Awards, the 1981 Kennedy Center Honors, the 1988 National Medal of Arts, the French Legion of Honor, three Honorary Doctorates and an Honorary Membership in the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters.
- The first actor to play Tevye on Broadway was Zero Mostel. Mostel was also considered by director Norman Jewison for the 1971 film adaption, but Jewison felt Mostel's interpretation of Tevye was too comedic. He instead cast Chaim Topol, who also played Tevye in numerous stage productions.
- The 1971 film version of "Fiddler on the Roof" was shot mostly on soundstages in England. The film won two Golden Globe Awards and three Academy Awards.
- Paul Lipson holds the distinction of appearing as Tevye more than 2,000 times.
- In 2007, Time Magazine ranked *Fiddler on the Roof* as the 7th most frequently produced musical in American high schools.
- Harvey Fierstein replaced Chaim Topol as Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof: The Farewell Tour* in 2009 after Topol left the tour due to torn muscles in his arms.

Quotes from the Show

Tevye: Without our traditions, our lives would be as shaky as...as a fiddler on the roof!

Mendel: Is there a proper blessing for the tsar?

Rabbi: A blessing for the tsar? Of course. May God bless and keep the Tsar...far away from us!

Tevye: [to God] Dear God, did you have to make my poor old horse lose his shoe, just before the Sabbath? That wasn't nice... It's enough you pick on me, Tevye...bless him with five daughters, a life of poverty. What have you got against my horse? Sometimes I think when things are too quiet up there, you say to yourself: Let's see, what kind of mischief can I play on my friend, Tevye?

Tevye: As Abraham said, 'I am a stranger in a strange land.'

Mendel: Moses said that.

Tevye: Forgive me. As King David put it, 'I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.'

Mendel: That was also Moses.

Tevye: For a man with a slow tongue, he talked a lot.

Tzeitel: Motel, even a poor tailor is entitled to some happiness.

Tevye: [repeated line] On the other hand...

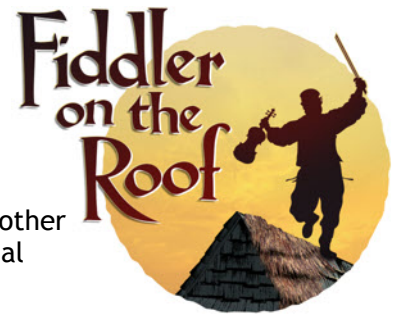
Perchik: Money is the world's curse.

Tevye: May the Lord smite me with it! And may I never recover!

Tevye: A bird may love a fish, but where would they build a home together?

History of the Show

Fiddler on the Roof draws on the work of Sholem Aleichem which blends humor with the pathos of 19th Century Jewish Life. The musical premiered on Broadway in 1964 and ran for over 3,000 performances. It held the record for longest running Broadway musical for almost 10 years until surpassed by the run of *Grease*. *Fiddler's* continuing popularity is reflected in its initial acclaim, its history of awards (nine initial Tonys, another for the lead in the 1981 production and best revival in 1991), and its heritage of regional and local productions.



While *Fiddler* has in its original production and the four subsequent Broadway revivals been a commercial success, that outcome was not the initial expectation. With its “serious” subject matter that reflected the poverty, persecution, and the struggle to maintain beliefs, faith and traditions in an increasing hostile and invasive world, it was deemed too challenging to resonate with audiences. Resonate it did and has continued to do. The domestic collision of culture, traditions, and changing attitudes and experience of families mirrors, and is mirrored by, the external threats of politics in turn-of-the century Russia. *Fiddler* can be credited with paving the way for more serious musicals, such as *Les Miserables*, that later followed.

As Alisa Solomon observed in an article for the Jewish Times, “The fortunes of *Fiddler* tell the ever-evolving story and stretch the ever-pliable limits of Jewish cultural adaptation in America.” Applauded in the 1960s as ennobling of the human spirit, by the time the 1971 film adaption was released it had become the subject of satire. And in modern times, the revivals and adaptations of this work have shown it to be at the core of both Jewish exploration of identity and cultural challenge, as well as central to the traditions and “icons” of American culture in general.

While the source is Aleichem’s short story, *Tevye and his Daughters*, the title is a nod to the work of artist Marc Chagall. “The Fiddler” is a reference to a wall painting in the Moscow State Yiddish Theater (1920) which portrayed Eastern European Jewish Life with a fiddler at its center who “stands” as a metaphor for survival through a balance of adaptation and tradition, joy and sorrow, life as knowable and as uncertain. Chagall made a “copy” for himself of the piece entitled “The Green Violinist.” Boris Aronson’s original Broadway scenic design was strongly influenced by the painting.

Sholem Aleichem

Sholem Aleichem was the pen name of Solomon Naumovich Rabinovich a leading Yiddish author and playwright of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (1859-1916) whose stories on the life of *Tevye the Milkman* are the source for *Fiddler on the Roof*. Born to a Hasidic family in Pereyaslav and Voronko (now in the Kiev region of the central Ukraine), Solomon went from a childhood of relative ease to poverty with the failure of his father’s business and the death of his mother in a cholera epidemic. His teenage years saw his “birth” as a writer (at fifteen, he wrote a novel based on *Robinson Crusoe*) and his adoption of his pseudonym which is a Yiddish variant of the Hebrew greeting “peace be with you.” After his graduation in 1876, he served as a tutor to a wealthy landowner’s family where he fell in love and married the daughter Olga Loev against her father’s objections. They raised six children (several of whom became artists and writers), but were forced to emigrate during the pogroms of 1905. For a while the family maintained households in both New York City and Geneva, Switzerland. He died of tuberculosis in New York City in 1916 and is buried in Old Mount Carmel cemetery in Queens.

Initially, Solomon wrote in Russian and Hebrew, but soon settled on Yiddish since it was the vernacular for most literate East European Jews. His characters are noted for their naturalness and his stories, for their accurate depictions of shtetl (small Jewish towns). He is often referred to as the “Jewish Mark Twain” - upon hearing this description, Mark Twain quipped, “Please tell him that I am the American Sholem Aleichem.”

Sholem Aleichem's most famous protagonist is Tevye the Dairyman, the basis for *Fiddler on the Roof*. The first Tevye story, “Tevye Strikes it Rich,” was a monologue published in 1894. In it, Tevye tells of how he earned enough money to set up a dairy. On his way home from a day working in the fields, he came across a woman and her daughter who are lost. After getting over the fear that they are demons, he escorted them home and was rewarded for his heroism. But his luck didn’t last long. In the second Tevye story, “The Bubble Bursts,” published in 1899, Tevye was brought into a doomed money-making scheme and lost everything.

In a classically rabbinic manner, Tevye lives his life inter-textually, sprinkling his speeches with biblical verses. Tevye often mangles these verses. Although some believe Sholem Aleichem created Tevye this way to present him as an ignorant Jew, it's more likely that the humor is not in Tevye's naivete, but in our not knowing when he is purposefully misquoting and when he isn't.

Marc Chagall

Born Moishe Shagal, the youngest of six children born to a herring merchant father and a grocer mother just outside the town of Vitebsk, in what is now Belarus, Marc Chagall's paintings of Jewish life were inspiration for the title of the show. Most of what is known about Chagall's early life has come from his autobiography, *My Life*. In it, he described the major influence that the culture of Hasidic Judaism had on his life as an artist. Chagall drew upon this culture for artistic inspiration. He would go on to become one of the best-known painters of the 20th century, traveling all over the world and having his paintings displayed in museums worldwide.



The Pale of Settlement

Czar Cathrine II (aka "Catherine The Great") established the Pale of Settlement in 1791 as a territory for Russian Jews to live. Created under pressure to rid Moscow of Jewish business competition and "evil" influence on the Russian masses, the Pale of Settlement included the territory of present-day Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine and Belorussia. More than 90% of Russian Jews were forced to live in the poor conditions of the Pale, which made up only 4% of imperial Russia.

The word pale, as used in this sense, comes from the Latin *palus*, or stake, such as might be used to indicate a boundary. A pale is thus a district separated from the surrounding country. It may be defined by physical boundaries, or it may be distinguished by a different administrative or legal system. The Jewish Pale of Settlement was both a defined area within the Russian Empire and a legal entity regulated by laws that did not apply to the Russian Empire as a whole. Even within the Pale, Jews were discriminated against; they paid double taxes, were forbidden to lease land, run taverns or receive higher education.

The restrictions imposed by the Pale fostered the development of a distinctive religious and ethnic culture in an area covering roughly 386,000 square miles between the Baltic and Black seas. Despite being relegated to areas considered the lowliest regions of Russia, the Jewish population grew from 1.6 million in 1820 to 5.6 million in 1910.

Ascending to the throne in 1855, Czar Alexander II introduced a number of exceptions to the repressive laws regulating life in the Jewish Pale. Jews in certain professions and with particular educational backgrounds were allowed to settle "beyond the pale". This relaxation of the laws initially affected only some merchants but was gradually extended to persons with higher levels of education; doctors, nurses, midwives, and others in the medical profession; some artisans and craftspeople, such as tailors and shoemakers; and those who had completed their military service.

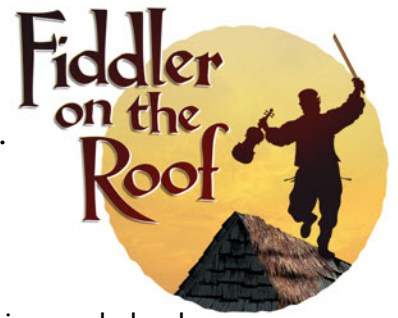
As the nation reacted to the assassination of Alexander II in 1881, the pendulum swung back toward greater restriction of the Jews. The new czar, Alexander III, issued a series of edicts known as the Temporary Laws (also called the May Laws), which prohibited new Jewish settlements outside the Pale; permitted Christians living within the Pale to expel Jews from the areas in which they lived; and prevented Jews already living outside the Pale from moving to other areas outside the Pale. Occasionally, new areas were proscribed, such as the city and province of Moscow. Between 1891 and 1892 thousands of Jews were expelled from Moscow and forced to return to the Pale.

The 1897 Russian census indicated that most of the Jewish population in the empire remained confined to the Pale. Almost 5 million Jews lived within its boundaries, while roughly 200,000 lived elsewhere in European Russia. The majority of Jews lived in towns. During the early 20th century, the government eased the restrictive laws somewhat, granting Jews slightly more freedom and permitting them to live in the small towns or shtetls that developed from rural villages. The Pale effectively ceased to exist during World War I, when Jews in great numbers fled to the Russian interior to escape invading German forces. Following the Revolution of 1917, the provisional government abolished the Pale, along with other anti-Jewish restrictions.

Siberia

In 1754, the Russian government decided to send petty criminals and political opponents to eastern Siberia. Sentenced to hard labor at *katorga*, or labor camps, the convicts had to travel mostly on foot and the journey could take up to three years. It is estimated about half died before they reached their destination. *Katorga* had many of the features associated with concentration camps: confinement, simplified facilities (as opposed to prisons), and forced labor, usually connected with hard, unskilled or semi-skilled work

Over 130 years, approximately 1.2 million prisoners were deported to Siberia. Some prisoners helped to build the Trans-Siberian Railway. Others worked in the gold, silver, lead or salt mines.



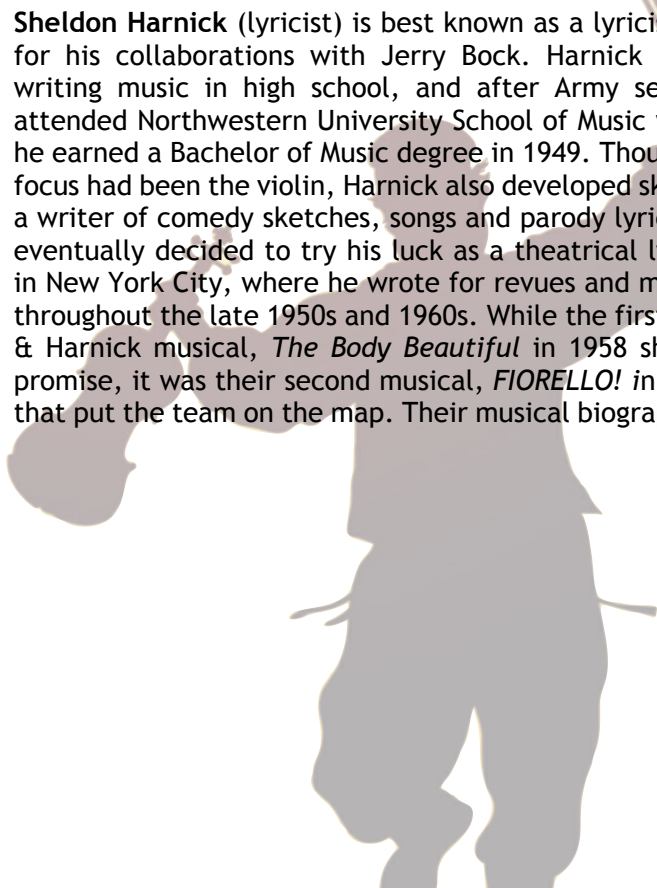
About the Composer, Lyricist & Playwright

Jerry Bock (composer) was an established musical theater composer who won Tony awards for both *Fiorello!* and *Fiddler on the Roof*. Born in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1928, his family moved to Flushing, New York, where Bock studied the piano from an early age and began writing music for various shows while still in high school. His first success came during his high school years, in the form of the musical comedy *My Dream*. As a senior at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, he scored the musical comedy, *Big as Life*, based on the legend of Paul Bunyan. Returning to New York after college, Bock's Broadway debut came with song contributions to the 1955 *To Catch a Star*. He soon found a steady collaboration with Lyricist Sheldon Harnick which includes *The Apple Tree* and *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Sheldon Harnick (lyricist) is best known as a lyricist and for his collaborations with Jerry Bock. Harnick began writing music in high school, and after Army service, attended Northwestern University School of Music where he earned a Bachelor of Music degree in 1949. Though his focus had been the violin, Harnick also developed skills as a writer of comedy sketches, songs and parody lyrics. He eventually decided to try his luck as a theatrical lyricist in New York City, where he wrote for revues and musical throughout the late 1950s and 1960s. While the first Bock & Harnick musical, *The Body Beautiful* in 1958 showed promise, it was their second musical, *FIORIELLO!* in 1959, that put the team on the map. Their musical biography of

New York City's legendary mayor earned the Tony Award, Pulitzer Prize and New York Drama Critics' Circle Award. His most recent musical, *The Phantom Tollbooth*, premiered at The Kennedy Center in 2007.

Joseph Stein (book) was born in 1912 to Jewish Polish émigrés Charles and Emma Stein. Growing up in the Bronx, Stein's father read him the stories of Sholem Aleichem, a noted author of Jewish folk tales. Stein would remember these stories when he was called upon to develop the musical that became *Fiddler on the Roof*. A graduate of City College New York and Columbia University, Stein began his working life as a social worker and psychologist, until a chance meeting with Zero Mostel led him begin writing for radio personalities. He later worked for TV on "Your Show of Shows" with other talents such as Woody Allen, Mel Brooks and Carl Reiner. While he had numerous successes on the Broadway stage, including *Plain and Fancy* and *The Baker's Wife*, his greatest hit was *Fiddler on the Roof*.



Critical Thinking



- What does tradition mean to you? Consider a tradition that you hold dear- what would you do if it was challenged? Have you challenged a tradition of your family, church or school? What was the response or outcome?
- How do the pogroms of early twentieth-century Russia resemble or differ from other anti-Semitic historical events? Can you think of current events that could be labeled this way?
- Explore the ideas behind Tevye's disowning his daughter Chava for marrying outside of the Jewish faith. Consider his point of view and compare and contrast it along side of Chava's viewpoint. Consider holding a debate, which each side arguing against the other.

Student Guide Sources

<http://www.pcpa.org/outreach/fiddlerstudy.html>

<http://www.slashdocs.com/imtmms/a-study-guide-of-fiddler-on-the-roof.html>

http://www.stratfordfestival.ca/uploadedFiles/Stratford/Watch_and_Listen/Publications/Study_Guides/FIDDLER%20ON%20THE%20ROOF%20STUDY%20GUIDE.pdf

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/pale.html>

<http://faculty.washington.edu/rmcnamar/link269/article1.html>

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