GUYS AND DOLLS EDUCATION RESOURCE PACK

The Donmar’s multi Olivier Award nominated smash hit production of Frank Loesser’s classic musical, **Guys and Dolls**, directed by Jamie Lloyd, with original direction by Michael Grandage features a sensational cast and is bursting with breathtaking dance routines and classic hits, such as *Luck Be a Lady*, *Sit down You’re Rockin’ the Boat* and *Guys and Dolls*.

“Michael Grandage’s production lights up the West End with some timeless Broadway magic.”
*Sunday Times*

**Guys and Dolls** tells the story of a group of small-time gamblers and the ladies in their lives. Nathan Detroit bets his pal, Sky Masterson, that he can’t make the next lady he sees fall in love with him, and when the next ‘doll’ happens to be prim and proper neighbourhood missionary, Sarah Brown, the stage is set for an evening of high spirited entertainment, set to the toe-tapping beat of Loesser’s superlative score.

**Guys and Dolls** provides an inspiring starting point for students to explore many aspects of theatre. This pack provides a greater insight into the show with fascinating, in-depth background information and a selection of stimulating classroom activities to engage your students. The pack is aimed at students from Key Stage Three and above, but all activities can be easily adapted to suit the age and ability of the students you work with.

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This Pack was written by Su Newell, Head of Education & Community Manchester Palace Theatre, Opera House and Tameside Hippodrome

With thanks to Trina at EMG, Chris Bailey and the **Guys and Dolls** tour company members

Photographs from the West End Production of **Guys and Dolls**
INTRODUCTION

Guys and Dolls


Writing during the 1920’s and 30’s Damon Runyon created an image of New York City, and especially Broadway, that was to influence popular culture the world over. His ability to identify with the outsider, and write with humour about those who lived on the edge, surviving by gambling and running scams, created a mass audience, voyeuristically fascinated by both celebrity and criminal culture.

Two of his popular short stories became the basis for *Guys and Dolls*, with a number of his other characters also appearing. The ‘book’ for the show was written by Abe Burrows and Jo Swerling. Burrows had studied to be a doctor and an accountant before turning to writing (*Guys and Dolls* was his first Broadway libretto), whilst Swerling had worked his way up from selling newspapers and went on to collaborate on the writing of *It’s a Wonderful Life*.

Frank Loesser created the music and lyrics, following on from his first Broadway hit, *Where’s Charley*, which was based on the comedy *Charley’s Aunt*. Loesser had made his name writing songs for films in Hollywood but easily made the transition to creating Broadway hits, two of which went on to become blockbusting films.

*Guys and Dolls* first opened in November 1950 on Broadway and went on to win a Tony Award for best musical, followed by a hugely successful film version in 1955. Nearly sixty years later *Guys and Dolls* is proving as popular as ever. Two years after its successful revival in the West End it is touring the UK bringing its blend of classic songs, sympathetic characters and exciting dance to audiences all around the country.
SYNOPSIS

Act One
Amidst the hurly-burly of Broadway (Runyonland; Fugue for Tinhorns), Sarah Brown and her gallant band from the Save-a-Soul Mission endeavour to recruit sinners (Follow the Fold). Nathan Detroit and the gambling fraternity are more concerned with finding a place for their illegal floating crap game (The Oldest Established) and Adelaide, Nathan's long-time fiancée, is preoccupied with trying to get him to the altar.

Sky Masterson saunters into town and gets suckered into a bet with Nathan that he can take any doll he likes to Havana. Nathan names Sarah Brown, and, undaunted, Sky presents himself at the Mission as a sinner. When this doesn't work, he guarantees her a dozen sinners in return for having dinner with him – in Havana. Sarah's response is he's not her type of guy (I'll know).

At the Hot Box night club where Adelaide stars (A Bushel and a Peck), Nathan promises her he will reform (Adelaide's Lament). Meanwhile, his side-kicks Benny and Nicely-Nicely Johnson complain she's taking his mind off his work (Guys and Dolls). The arrival of General Cartwright, intent on closing the Mission through lack of support, galvanises Sarah into accepting Sky's invitation. Nathan, still hoping to win his bet and the thousand bucks he needs to set up the game, is having trouble with the gambling fraternity – Big Jule, Harry the Horse and Rusty Charlie, to name but a few – who are getting increasingly restless. The appearance amongst them of Lt Brannigan spells trouble, but the day is saved when they tell him they're celebrating Nathan and Adelaide's elopement (Adelaide).

In Havana, Sarah becomes decidedly more friendly after drinking several of the local 'milkshakes' (Havana) and causes a riot at El Café Cubana when she objects to Sky dancing with another girl. After he carries her out of the bar, she confesses to having had a wonderful evening and begins to confess her feelings for him (If I Were a Bell). He is shamed into telling her about the bet and takes her back to New York where they arrive just before dawn – sober and in love (My Time of Day / I've Never Been in Love Before). Their idyllic moment is soon shattered as Arvide, Sarah's uncle, and the Mission Band return wearily from all-night canvassing, the sound of a police siren sends the gamblers scuttling out of the Mission, where Nathan had finally found a place for the game. Although Sky promises Sarah he knew nothing of the gamblers plan to use the Mission, it just convinces Sarah they are too different to be together.

Act Two
(Entr'acte)
Adelaide entertains the Hot Box customers (Take Back Your Mink), still blissfully believing she is about to become Mrs Nathan Detroit (Adelaide's Lament - reprise). Arvide consoles Sarah as the deadline for closing the Mission approaches and tries to put in a good word for Sky, who is still determined to honour his pledge (More I Cannot Wish You). He follows the gamblers, and the game (Crapshooters' Dance), into the sewer and bets each of them a thousand dollars against their souls on the roll of the dice (Luck Be a Lady). After watching a group of gamblers emerging from a sewer and scurrying off, Adelaide discovers Nathan is one of them, and has been running the craps game again. She is furious with him. She demands he elope with her immediately, but he can't because he has given his marker that he will attend the prayer meeting at The Mission and he cannot welch on that. Nathan tells her than he loves her, but he has to go (Sue Me). Adelaide in turn is convinced that he is lying. As Sky won the gamblers are obliged to attend the meeting at the Mission where – after some initial reluctance – they join Nicely-Nicely in giving testimony (Sit Down, You're Rocking the Boat). Though Lt Brannigan, hot on their heels, remains unconvinced, General Cartwright is impressed.

When Sarah learns that Sky told Nathan he had lost their bet and did not take her to Havana, she realises he can't be all bad. She and Adelaide commiserate with each other on the problems of getting their guys to change their ways and decide the answer is to marry them first – and then change them (Marry the Man Today). So they all live happily ever after.
CHARACTER OUTLINES

Sky Masterson  
no bet is too high for this gambler – hence his name (he is really called Obadiah). A good looking guy with style and an ego to match, Sky is a respected figure in gambling circles.

Sarah Brown  
a beautiful doll with a prim outlook and strong opinions, although glimpses of a passionate nature sometimes show through. Miss Sarah Brown is the dedicated leader of the Save-a-Soul Mission.

Nathan Detroit  
a sharp guy, Nathan runs an illegal floating crap game; finding a location for the game and dodging the police distracts him from marrying his long-term fiancée Miss Adelaide.

Miss Adelaide  
the star doll at the Hot Box Night Club, Miss Adelaide has been waiting for Nathan to marry her for fourteen years, so much so that the waiting has given her a cold.

Nicely-Nicely Johnson, Benny Southstreet  
Nathan’s side-kicks who help to direct gamblers to the game, Nicely-Nicely is happiest when eating. Both are kept busy running errands.

The Gamblers  
Big Jule, Harry the Horse, Rusty Charlie, Angie the Ox, Brandy Bottle Bates, Scranton Slim, Liverlips Louie  
A mixed group of small-time and big-shot gamblers, all convinced they can win big if only they can get in the game, or find the right horse or…

General Cartwright  
an important figure in the Mission world, with the power to close the Save-a-Soul Mission down.

Arvide Abernathy  
Sarah’s uncle and a staunch supporter of her and the mission. He also develops a soft spot for Sky.

Lt Brannigan  
the local police officer whose main mission in life is to track down the location of Nathan’s game and actually catch the gamblers at it.

The Hot Box Girls  
Mary-Lou Albright, Mimi, Tallulha Bloom, Dolly Devine, Cutie Singleton, Ruby Simmons  
A group of cute singers and dancers who work with Miss Adelaide, putting on a nightly show at the Hot Box Night Club.
PREPARATION ACTIVITIES

Before you see a performance of **Guys and Dolls** prepare your students for the experience using the following activities.

**Aims**
- To prepare students before seeing a performance of **Guys and Dolls**
- To encourage students to discuss expectations, opinions and ideas in a group or class setting.
- To enable students to form ideas by responding to different media.

**Resources**
You will need the synopsis and character list from this pack, a copy of the CD soundtrack (Guys and Dolls – complete recording 1996, Jay Productions Ltd, featuring Frank Loesser’s daughter Emily), a poster or leaflet from the show.

**Expectations** – ask your students what they expect from **Guys and Dolls**. Do they know the story or the music? Make a class record of their ideas, thoughts and feelings, so you can refer back to them once you have seen it. Look at the poster or leaflet, what ideas do the images used give the students about the show?

**Story** - Introduce your students to the main points of the story of **Guys and Dolls** using the synopsis from this pack. Once you have concluded the story discuss it with the class, paying particular attention to any themes or issues they feel it contains.
Use questions to establish students have grasped the main plot points, for example;
- Q: Where do events take place?
- Q: What is the relationship between the four main characters?
- Q: What is the significance of the contrast between Sarah and Sky’s interests?
- Q: What is the consequence of Sky and Nathan’s bet?

**Character** - Using the character outlines from the pack discuss the possible relationships between the characters, looking at friendship, love, duty and power.

**Music** – Listen to ‘Guys and Dolls’ (CD 1 track 9), the title track from the show. Discuss the style of the music and the lyrics with your students. What impressions do they have of the show now?

**Context** – briefly discuss the context of **Guys and Dolls**, for example New York in the 1920’s, Prohibition, the role of the Missions, gambling. Also consider that the musical was written in 1950, after the Second World War, how may this have influenced the story?
Definition: Musical, \( n \) – a play or film of which (especially light) music is an essential part.

So, a musical is a play, with singing and dancing. This definition can be further defined by the terms ‘book musical’ – songs and dialogue that tell a story, such as **Guys and Dolls** – and ‘revue’ – a showcase of the talents of varied performers. Comic opera, operetta, musical comedy, vaudeville and variety may also be used to describe the same thing – a musical.

Musicals that stand the test of time and become popular favourites are those with three special ingredients – brains (intelligence and style), heart (genuine and believable emotion) and courage (doing something creative and exciting). Musicals can also be strongly associated with certain people – composers and lyricists such as Rodgers and Hammerstein, dancing stars such as Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers or choreographers and directors such as Jerome Robbins.

Music and theatre have a long history but the beginnings of the musical are found in French and Viennese operettas of the 1800's; the works of Offenbach and Strauss becoming internationally successful. In England the Music Hall developed, whilst in America variety and minstrel shows developed into Vaudeville or Burlesque shows. The comic operas of Gilbert and Sullivan and Lehár's **The Merry Widow** had a strong influence on the American musical, which was soon refined into a particular 'style' by writers such as Jerome Kern.

By the 1920's American musicals had become popular worldwide. Composers and lyricists such as Cole Porter, Rodgers and Hart and the Gershwins took Broadway by storm with their witty lyrics and charming music. **Showboat** and **Anything Goes** were the popular shows of the 20's and 30's, but the 1940's saw more realistic musicals on Broadway's stages – including **Pal Joey** and **Oklahoma**. **Oklahoma** was the first musical to fully use every song or dance to develop the characters or plot. Known as the 'integrated' musical this new style was also used in **Annie Get Your Gun** and **Kiss Me Kate**.

By the 1950's the position of the musical on Broadway was confirmed, with audiences queuing up for each new show and being treated to hits such as **The King and I**, **Gypsy** and **My Fair Lady**. Each of these shows were shaped by three key elements – composer, director and female star. The 1960's, however, were years of change for the American musical; popular music tastes changed and audiences began to look for something different. The rock musical **Hair** in 1968 was seen as a landmark but left the creators of musicals wondering where to go next. The 1970's brought the collaboration of composer/lyricist Stephen Sondheim and director Hal Prince; they introduced the ‘concept’ musical, based on an idea rather than a plot. **Company**, **Follies** and **A little Night Music** were all a success, while the rock musical all but faded away.

1974 saw **A Chorus Line** become the pinnacle of the concept musical, telling as it did the story of a group of dancers at an audition, before attention turned to revivals of old favourites, new works such as **Sweeney Todd** and an invasion of British musicals beginning with **Evita**.
The British musicals proved to be what audiences wanted and the 1980’s saw Evita followed by Cats, Les Miserables, The Phantom of the Opera and Miss Saigon. Such effect heavy musicals struggled to make a profit in the 1990’s, and shows backed by multi-million dollar corporations such as Disney, with The Lion King, or based on popular films, like Saturday Night Fever, became the new successes on Broadway.

Currently big budget musicals are still influenced by popular films, or the back catalogue of certain very successful bands, with a story attached, like Mamma Mia. Revivals of popular musicals also seem to be as popular as ever. Of course Guys and Dolls could be described as the ultimate Broadway musical, set within the streets, theatres and night clubs of the area and featuring characters who really existed in that world – even if they were from the seedier side.

Frank Loesser
1910 – 1969
Loesser was born in June 1910, in New York City. He never studied musical formally, although he was surrounded by it at home as his father was a teacher of classical piano and his older brother became a well-known concert pianist. Loesser refused to study classical music as his enthusiasm was for pop music, which his father hated. Loesser dropped out of college during the Depression and supported himself with various jobs, including selling newspaper advertising and working as an editor. Confident in his use of words he began writing songs, sketches and radio scripts. In 1931 he co-wrote his first lyric – ‘In Love With A Memory Of You’ – with William Schuman. It was a flop, as was his first attempt at Broadway but it secured him a Hollywood contract, first with Universal and then with Paramount. He wrote lyrics for songs for over sixty films, including Fred Astaire’s Let’s Dance.

By 1939 Loesser was writing both music and lyrics and during the Second World War he worked for special services, providing lyrics for camp shows that soldiers could perform for entertainment. He returned to Hollywood after the war but was then persuaded to return to New York by the producers of a possible Broadway musical version of Charley’s Aunt. It opened in October 1948 and gave Loesser his first smash hit.

He straight away followed Where’s Charley with Guys and Dolls, which opened in 1950 and won a Tony Award for Best Musical. Over the next four years he worked on his next project, writing the book as well as music and lyrics for The Most Happy Fella. Then came Greenwillow; it received seven Tony nominations but only ran for 95 performances in 1960, years later the song ‘Never Will I Marry’ became a huge hit for Barbara Streisand. Loesser soon bounced back, however. How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying, won the Pulitzer Prize and seven Tony Awards, including Best Musical, and ran for four years on Broadway.

During all this Loesser was still writing for Hollywood. He created the score for the film Hans Christian Anderson in 1952, which was nominated for an Academy Award and later transformed into a stage musical. He consistently worked at an unrelenting pace, rarely sleeping more than four hours a night and finding time to create a music publishing company with the aim of encouraging and developing new composers and lyricists. He was married twice and had four children. He died at the age of 59, in July 1969, in the city of his birth.

His shows continue to be popular today with major revivals of Guys and Dolls and How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying in recent years on both sides of the Atlantic.
Damon Runyon
1880 – 1946

Born Alfred Damon Runyan in Manhattan, Kansas both his father and grandfather had been newspaper men. After growing up in Colorado, he worked for several newspapers in the Rocky Mountain area, one of them changing the spelling of his last name to Runyon. He moved to New York City in 1910 and became a sports reporter for the New York American, where the Alfred was dropped from his name and he was from then on known as Damon Runyon.

He began to write poems as well as short stories and essays and even incorporated the characters he met on the stands into his sports writing. Sky, Nathan and Miss Adelaide are believed to be based on people who he met and knew well, although it is not known if he ever knew a Mission girl such as Sarah Brown.

His short stores were drawn on by Hollywood as well as Broadway. Madame La Gimp became Lady for a Day (1933), directed by Frank Capra and nominated for four Academy Awards. Capra referred to Runyon as the “creator of the American Fairy Tale”. Film versions were also made of The Lemon Drop Kid (1934) and Little Miss Marker (1934), which launched the career of Shirley Temple and made her into a star.

His depictions of New York life and the characters he created were unique in literature. Readers loved the world he had created, which even had its own language, the slang of the underworld became known as Runyonese. He had the ability to humanise gangsters, criminals and Broadway low life, bringing poignancy and humour to their stories. His influence continues to been seen in Mario Puzo’s Godfather novels, and the subsequent films, TV series The Sopranos and the stage musical Chicago.

Stage and Film Versions

Based on the Damon Runyon short stories The Idyll of Miss Sarah Brown and Blood Pressure, with book by Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows, music and lyrics by Frank Loesser.

The first performance of Guys and Dolls on Broadway was at the 46th Street Theatre, on November 24 1950, it ran for 1194 performances and won the Tony Award for Best Musical before finally closing on November 28 1953, having already opened at the London Coliseum on May 28 that year.

Film producer Samuel Goldwyn was at the opening night and was determined to make a film version of the show. He had to battle MGM, Columbia and Paramount for the film rights, eventually paying a record $1 million. Joseph L Mankiewicz was appointed as director and also wrote the screenplay. After looking at Gene Kelly and Bing Crosby for the part of Sky, eventually Marlon Brando was cast, despite never having sung or danced before. Jean Simmons was chosen as Sarah Brown, again a straight actress over a musical star. Betty Grable was unavailable to play Miss Adelaide, so the role went to Vivian Blaine, who created the role on Broadway. The final casting was that of Frank Sinatra as Nathan Detroit, who had expressed an interest in the role and was cast by Goldwyn not Mankiewicz.

Frank Loesser worked closely on the film, creating new material, firstly as Goldwyn didn’t like ‘A Bushel and a Peck’ (despite it being in the hit parade for twenty weeks) – this was replaced with ‘Pet Me Poppa’, after the choreographer, Michael Kidd, suggested something with the movement of cats would be excellent for the dancers. ‘My Time of Day’ and ‘I’ve Never Been in Love Before’ were replaced by ‘A Woman in Love’, and a new song was written for Frank Sinatra, as he didn’t feel he had enough to sing. ‘Adelaide’ was written for him (it appears in the stage version for the first time in this production, as it illustrates the character of Nathan so well), although he was reluctant to turn up and rehearse it before it was filmed. The music from a number of the songs that were cut was used to underscore the action, and some of the lines in Sky’s song ‘My Time of Day’ became his spoken dialogue instead.

As Michael Kidd had also choreographed the original stage version of Guys and Dolls a number of sequences were replicated in the film, including ‘Adelaide’s Lament’, ‘The Crapshooters Dance’ and ‘Sit Down You’re Rocking the Boat’. Kidd had developed a new style of dance for films with his work on
Seven Brides for Seven Brothers, when, rather than using a particular dance style, he had the cast dance in character to whom they were playing, so the dance could help tell the story and inform about character, rather than just be pleasing to watch. The film depicts a stylised version of New York, clean and colourful, full of larger than life characters, with even those in the background having an important part to play. The dance sequence for the overture tells its own story of tourists, pick pockets, girls and gamblers, setting the scene for the story to come. Some of the characters seen in this sequence are then revealed as key players as it merges into ‘Fugue for Tinhorns’, which introduces Nicely-Nicely Johnson and Benny Southstreet to the audience. The other major change between stage and screen was the ending, with a double wedding for Sky and Sarah, Nathan and Adelaide, and Nicely-Nicely becoming a paid-up member of the Mission rather than Sky. Released on November 14 1955, the film version of Guys and Dolls proved as popular as it had on stage, finally making over $13 million, the highest box-office take of the year.

Context

Guys and Dolls is set in New York City sometime during the 1920’s, the time when Damon Runyon was writing his short stories and articles. New York, made up of a number of islands on the East coast of America is a unique city, for many the gateway to a new life, as most immigrants would arrive from Europe in the city. It became a complicated tapestry of different types of people, from extreme poverty to incredible wealth, speaking many different languages and bringing different cultures, beliefs and customs to the mix. New York symbolises the American Dream in many ways and has an incredible energy and forthrightness recognised the world over.

The 1920’s was a post First World War boom time for America, and many saw this as an opportunity to build a new society. Prohibition was an experiment as part of this; the government hoped banning alcohol would end crime, poverty and violence, amongst other things. The new law was brought in at the end of 1919, forming the 18th amendment to the Constitution. The 1920’s, however, was also the Jazz Age, new music, fashion and lifestyle all enhanced by the consumption of alcohol, a reaction against the horrors of the War. As alcohol was in demand a thriving black market grew up to supply it, as supply of alcohol was illegal, it fell to ruthless gangsters, such as Al Capone, to supply it, both through smuggling and the setting up of secret stills to produce it. There were such vast profits to be made from this that gang wars built up over who would control the trade. These gang wars were very violent and also the alcohol they supplied was expensive, so Prohibition was doing nothing to end crime, poverty or violence. Eventually the Wall Street Crash of 1929 ended Prohibition, although it was largely ignored by then anyway, especially as there were legal loopholes where you could claim you needed alcohol for medicinal purposes, and the fines were so small nobody minded them. The law was becoming impossible to enforce, alcohol could be taxed and production would create jobs, so the Constitution was amended again and alcohol was legal once more.

The musical of Guys and Dolls was created by Frank Loesser at the end of the 1940’s, twenty years after it is set, again post war, this time the Second World War, which changed America’s position in the world forever. Attitudes to women, work and society were once again changing, all of which must have had a level of influence on the writing of Guys and Dolls.
Themes

There are a number of key themes to be found in Guys and Dolls, which are outlined below.

The Title

The main theme that runs through the show is the differences between men and women, what they want, their dreams and desires and also their views of each other. The male characters believe women are out to trap them and make them settle down, that the only reason a man would be ‘steady’ is if there is a woman demanding it, whereas the female characters despair of men ever changing and giving them what they want – security and love. This theme provides both humour (in the relationship between Nathan and Adelaide) and tension (in the relationship between Sky and Sarah), which is ultimately resolved at the end of the show.

Love

Love is used as a theme in different ways in Guys and Dolls. Adelaide’s steadfast love for Nathan, over a fourteen year engagement; Nathan’s reluctant love for her, something that ‘interferes’ with the greater love of his life – gambling. The love between Sky and Sarah is more surprising, it initially seems an impossible relationship, originating because of a bet when Sarah abhors gambling. The love between them is very immediate but doesn’t seem to have any future, with Sarah determined to put the Mission first. Arvide’s gentle, paternal love for Sarah enables her to look at her life in a different way and accept Sky’s love, which he demonstrates in the only way he knows by risking everything on a bet.

Making people change /saving them

As soon as we meet the characters from the Save-a-Soul Mission and hear their message to the gamblers and drunks of Broadway, another theme of Guys and Dolls is introduced. The idea that people should change in order to fit the desires or beliefs of another person, that you should confirm to a certain type, that one way of living your life is better than another, are all found in the story. Miss Adelaide and Sarah are quite blatant in their desire to change their men but accept that they may have to take it slowly and wait until they are married to mould their men into what they want. Sky, in particular, seems quite ready and willing to change, almost without knowing it.

Gambling v religion

The characters in Guys and Dolls are divided between two beliefs – that gambling is evil and brings about man’s downfall and that gambling is exhilarating and you never know when you might win big, you always have to take that chance, whatever the risk. When Sky bets the gamblers for their souls to make them attend the Mission, so it will stay open, he is bringing the two worlds together. Sarah and Adelaide also finally decide to take a chance, and ‘gamble’ on the fact that they can get their men to change after they marry them.
The Production

The West End revival of **Guys and Dolls**, directed by Michael Grandage, has now begun a tour of the UK, directed by Jamie Lloyd, Associate Director on the West End production.

The production takes a fresh look at the classic musical, returning to its original source material, the stories of Damon Runyon, in which the director never lets us forget that **Guys and Dolls** is a very funny show in which every line tells a story.

Michael Grandage is the artistic director of the Donmar Warehouse, his recent work includes **Frost/Nixon, Grand Hotel and After Miss Julie**, as well as the current production of **Evita** at the Adelphi Theatre. As well as Associate Director on the West End production of **Guys and Dolls**, Jamie Lloyd is Associate Director on **Evita** and was Resident Director for Trevor Nunn’s recent production of **Anything Goes** at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

Grandage chose to direct a new production of **Guys and Dolls** as it hadn’t been seen in London since the National Theatre production in 1982 and he considered it “an enormous privilege to work on one of the greatest classic musicals of all time.” The original idea was to present it at the Donmar Warehouse before moving to a West End theatre, but it was felt that such a show befitted a larger audience, so the production was mounted at the Piccadilly Theatre, with Ewan McGregor as Sky and Jane Krakowski as Miss Adelaide.

Grandage feels that **Guys and Dolls** is a play first and foremost, so chose to direct it as a play with wonderful music. He wanted it to be based firmly on the original source material, the Damon Runyon stories which had such a huge impact on Frank Loesser. In rehearsals they returned to the source material and created a life and a biography for all the smaller characters, which roots the four principal characters in a real world. The music and the songs are then able to come out of this reality. By paying close attention to the book, Grandage also gave a new perspective to the main characters. In many versions of **Guys and Dolls**, Nathan is played as a sharp-witted hustler. But in this version Nathan, with loosened tie and insecure smile, is exactly what Miss Adelaide calls him, a “cheap bum”, a born loser, easily outwitted by Harry the Horse and Big Jule. Sky initially appears cool and in control, but deep down is a decent, religious guy who knows his Proverbs from his Isaiah. Not only the development of the characters but the staging of certain scenes reflects Runyon's view of the world. The scenes in the Hot Box Club scenes are staged in a way that represents the lewd tattiness of small-time cabaret and so makes total narrative sense in that it explains why Adelaide is so determined to escape from this life into marriage.

Grandage feels that **Guys and Dolls** is “a masterpiece of construction. The detail is astonishing. There’s a wonderful moment when the gamblers all have to go to the Save a Soul Mission and on their way there they run into Adelaide on the street. She asks Nathan where he is going and he says he’s off to a prayer meeting and, exasperated, she refuses to believe him, out of which flows the song “Sue Me”. Then Nathan disappears and we cut to the next scene with the guys arriving at the Mission and Sky says ‘where’s Nathan?’ At which point we discover he’s late – and we know that because he’s outside singing “Sue Me” to his fiancée. Other writers would just cut to the point where he arrives with the group. That kind of precise detail charges scenes up dramatically and it's there throughout the show. Every single moment leads you forward to a finale which is so well constructed there’s barely three lines of dialogue. You fiddle with the narrative of this musical at your peril.”

In taking this different approach to directing a musical Grandage has shown that any show, be it play or musical, can benefit from a close exploration of its roots. Jamie Lloyd has worked with the cast of the touring production to ensure this approach is reflected as the production appears in different theatres around the country.
“Grandage has not just revived one of the best of all Broadway shows, he has reminded us that even musicals need to be rooted in truth if they are to earn their classic status.”

*Michael Billington – The Guardian*

Michael Grandage also had particular views on how the show should be designed, feeling that previous productions have been too colourful and stylised. He and designer, Christopher Oram, felt that it was Runyon’s characters that created the colour, through their lives and personalities, so instead of an almost cartoon approach, the design uses traditional suit colours of blues, browns, greys and blacks for the male characters and a believable 1930/40s New York setting, inspired by a photograph Mrs Loesser showed them of her late husband with a group of friends. “They’d clearly been at a bar and were all in jackets and shirtsleeves. “That’s the world he wrote about” she said. It was an inspiration for us.”

Christopher Oram has designed a number of productions for the Donmar Warehouse, including *Frost/Nixon, Grand Hotel, Pirandello’s Henry IV, Caligula* (Evening Standard Award for Best Stage Design). He designed *Power* (Olivier Award for Best Costume Design) for the National Theatre and *Don Carlos* and *Suddenly Last Summer* for Sheffield Theatres. He designed the current production of *Evita* at the Adelphi Theatre and *Macbeth* and the *Jew of Malta* at the Almeida.

“The tone of the evening is also set by Christopher Oram’s design, which brings out all of Manhattan’s gaudy drabness. Times Square itself is brilliantly evoked through a blaze of light on blanked-out facades.”

*Michael Billington – The Guardian*

The combination of Oram’s set and Howard Harrison’s lighting design incorporates the use of light and dark in order to reflect both the nature of Broadway and the nature of the characters who live there. It can also be seen to represent the contrast between the world of the gamblers in contrast to that of the Mission workers. We see the backstreets, alleys and sewers of New York, with the bright lights and glamour of Manhattan in the distance. The Save a Soul Mission is drab and dusty, an indication of Sarah’s frustrations with the sinners of Broadway. The trip to Havana is a contrast with a full moon looking down on the characters and introducing a more passionate mood. The set and costume design supports the vision of the production with its realistic grounding making character and place believable to the audience.

The dance in *Guys and Dolls* must also reflect this reality and develop out of the narrative. The original West End choreography was by Rob Ashford, recreated for the tour by Chris Bailey.
“Dazzling dance moves gives ‘Guys’ a new kick. There hasn’t been a book musical either side of the Atlantic in recent years this richly danced.”

Variety

Bailey attended a local dance school in Leicester from a young age and then continued his training at a professional theatre college. Since graduating he has worked as dancer and choreographer on productions such as Tap Dogs (including choreographing the recent BBC TV ident), Contact and Thoroughly Modern Millie.

Why did you want to be a choreographer? What qualities do you need to be a choreographer?

“I was asked to work as an associate choreographer to begin with, which means I was involved with Guys and Dolls from the very start in London helping the choreographer create new routines for the show. I was then asked to recreate the work we had done for the UK tour.

There are many qualities one needs to be a choreographer. You have to be incredibly creative and original. I think you need a lot of patience when teaching people your work and you have to work very closely with both the director and musical director to make sure you all have a very clear idea of the piece and work in the same style.”

What is the process of choreographing a large scale musical? Is it an individual or collaborative process? What are the challenges of choreographing a show that has been produced before?

“Choreographing a large scale musical is a huge collaborative effort. You have to work closely with the director, the musical department and all other technical departments such as lighting and sound. There are many challenges in re-creating a show that has been produced before. You have to stay true to the original script and score yet make it feel new and exciting. This can be done by using new steps and working with the musical supervisor to create new dance arrangements.”

The cast of the touring production of Guys and Dolls come to the production with a wealth of different experience. Many of them will tackle more than one role in the ensemble, as well as understudying for the principal roles or taking on the duties of Dance Captain.

“A brilliant cast.”

Mark Shenton, Daily Express
Joe McGann: Nathan Detroit.

How did you get into theatre?

“I started with ‘Everyman Youth Theatre’ in Liverpool when I was 12 years old. Working with professional actors whilst playing child parts gave me experience. I had no other training”

What preparation have you done for your role?

“Our research included background into the stories of Damon Runyon, New York life in 1930’s through to 1950’s to get an idea of the look and feel of the times. I don’t take on board any particular practitioner, but fitness and stamina work is so important in this job, as is eating properly before a show”

How do you get into character before you go on stage?

“I put my costume on, ……”

What is special about Guys and Dolls?

“It’s that rarest of things – a musical with both a fantastic score and a brilliant book and script to go with it. It’s one of the best musicals ever written”

Is there such a thing as a typical day when you work in the theatre?

“No, there’s no such thing as a typical day! I like to get up early and do ‘normal day’ things then have something to eat and a nap at about 4.30pm for an hour or so. I eat carbohydrates in the morning and then proteins before the show for energy and lightness”

Alwyne Taylor: General Cartwright.

How did you get into theatre?

“I have always had a passion for theatre and live performance – even as a small child. I went to see plays from an early age and was involved in school plays and pantomimes from the age of 5 to 18. In the school holidays I was part of a youth theatre. I went to Exeter University to study English and Drama which combined an English honours course with practical drama training way back in 1970 through to 1973. I have now been working in professional theatre for 33 years.”

What preparation have you done for your role?

“For General Cartwright, I did some research around the Salvation Army via internet and books. With information from the script and my own information, I worked at her life history and gradually built up a character during the five week rehearsal period with the company. Costume, footwear, wigs, etc help to define movement, but the core of the General comes from my research and imagination and choices I make, for example with her tone of voice, physical deportment, attitude to other characters, etc.

I don’t have one particular guru, but have taken on many aspects of many teachers and theatre practitioners along the way.”

How do you get into character before you go on stage?

“At focus on all the things I discussed in rehearsals. Getting into costume and make-up can and does help me do this.”

What is special about Guys and Dolls?

“It is a great musical with a lovely love story, colourful characters and a delightful score of music and songs. It’s a show that makes the actors and the audience feel good”

Is there such a thing as a typical day when you work in the theatre?

“It depends if you are rehearsing or performing. When rehearsing you usually work from 10am until 5 or 6pm with an hour for lunch. With Guys and Dolls, there are lots of songs to learn, many dance routines and acting scenes, so the typical days rehearsal is split into sessions of dance, music and song, and dramatic (acting) scenes. Lines and words to songs are usually learned in rehearsals, or if you have a lot to say, you will be familiar with words when you start the day’s rehearsal having prepared the night before.

When performing Guys and Dolls, a typical day when we have just one show in the evening….. We meet up at 6pm and have a dance warm up and a singing warm up on stage. At 6.45pm we get our make up on, our costumes on, microphones and wigs on.

At 7.30pm we perform the show until 10.10pm when it ends, then we get out of costume, wigs and microphones. On matinee days, we meet at 1pm for the warm up and do two shows.
Chris Hornby: Dance Captain and Male Swing (a 'swing' understudies a number of ensemble roles, so if someone has to understudy a principal role, their ensemble part is also covered.)

How did you get into theatre?

"I started performing in school plays then joined an amateur group in my home town. At 18 I trained on a professional musical theatre course at the Arts Educational School in London."

What preparation have you done for your role?

"An intense four week rehearsal period in London following a six month run in the West End production. We read the complete works of Damon Runyon, whose books inspired the musical of Guys and Dolls. The style of the piece determines which theatre practitioners we refer to. It can range from Brecht to Fosse."

How do you get into character before you go on stage?

"I take time out to think of my character's history. The first entrance can be the most significant, whether you have lines or not. You should always have a sense of the piece and the place you are in."

What is special about Guys and Dolls?

"It has been quoted as being 'one of the greatest musicals ever written'. This particular production won two Olivier Awards. The show has a fantastic mix of comedy and truth. It has a classic musical formula; four leading roles, two men, two women, each of who are the opposite of one another. Each couple has a difficult path to love, but there's a happy ending with an onstage wedding."

Is there such a thing as a typical day when you work in the theatre?

"In my position as dance captain, I may have to rehearse understudies or call a clean-up rehearsal to make sure everyone is doing the steps as the choreographer taught them. About four times a week, I will watch the show from the audience and then pass on any notes to the cast to keep the show looking fresh and clean."

Jenni Bowden: Martha, Waitress and internal Hotbox cover.

How did you get into theatre?

"I have always gone to dance classes and took part in school and amateur shows. Gradually I did more and more and added singing classes. At 18 I went to London Studio Centre and did a three year BA(Hons) in Theatre and Dance."

What preparation have you done for your role?

"Researched the history of the Salvation Army, looked at photographs of the period, architecture, etc. We read the complete works of Damon Runyon, whose books inspired the musical of Guys and Dolls. I also played with different physicalities to find my character's."

How do you get into character before you go on stage?

"I usually become the character physically a couple of seconds before entering. I find that puts my head into the right place."

What is special about Guys and Dolls?

"It is packed full of great songs and great dialogue. This production really allows the men to men and the girls to be girls. It's great because of the attention to detail in the direction and acting. Also the spirit behind the production and care taken in all areas both on stage and behind the scenes with costume, set design, lighting, etc, also help to make the show what it is."

Is there such a thing as a typical day when you work in the theatre?

"My typical day, I get up around 10am, read for a bit, watch a DVD or a couple of hours of T.V. Have a wander around the town or visit a gallery, museum or other tourist attraction. I go to work at around 6pm. I try to eat a main meal around 3 or 4pm if possible. After the show, I'll socialise for an hour or so. Then home, read or watch a DVD before going to bed."
How did you get into theatre?

“I did Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat at the London Palladium when I was 11 with my school which really got me interested, but I have been dancing from a young age. I then was always involved in school productions and from there went on to train at Mountview in London.”

What preparation have you done for your role?

“Most preparation was done in the rehearsal period. We looked at lots of research material looking into the period. You have to trust yourself and have a good imagination. I don't look so much at practitioners anymore but learn a lot more from the people around me who have experience in the business. I also watch a lot of theatre – all varieties.”

How do you get into character before you go on stage?

“I concentrate on physicality and focus.”

What is special about Guys and Dolls?

“The direction, choreography, costumes, set, script, score…. The whole piece!”

Is there such a thing as a typical day when you work in the theatre?

“A typical day without any understudy or clean up rehearsals would be to come in at 5pm, put make up on, then eat and chill for a bit. Do the physical and vocal warm up, then get into wig, mic and costume to go to the stage. I always do a second 15 min warm up on the stage before the show starts.”
FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Reviewing and Assessing
The aim of the following activities is to assess the show, especially certain elements of it, in detail and also explore the different roles and skills of those involved in creating it.

Write a Review of the Show
Aim to understand the required elements for review writing, to explore ways of expressing and writing their opinions and to develop their ability to critically analyse theatre productions
Subjects English, drama
Resources paper, pen, theatre review worksheet (see Appendix), newspaper reviews

Discuss with your class what they think they should write about in their review, what to look for at the theatre and during the performance and different ways of recording their ideas and thoughts. Look at some reviews for Guys and Dolls from your local papers for ideas.

A well-written review should contain three elements –
- A brief retelling of the story
- A brief description of how well performed and presented the show was
- An indication of the circumstances under which you were watching the show (for example, where you were sitting, what expectations you formed from advanced publicity and whether you have seen the same show or a similar production before.)

The students should take the Theatre Review Worksheet with them to the theatre. They should try to fill it in straight after the show. It is a good idea for them to do a spider diagram – using words and phrases to record their immediate responses to the show.

Things to look for may include –
- The Story: how is it told, visually, musically, through dialogue? Is there a subplot, what is its value and purpose? How do sets, lighting and costume support the story, do they deepen or enhance the meaning?
- The Performers: is their interpretation of character believable, why? What is the affect of their performances on the overall production?

They should finish their reviews with a brief conclusion that sums up their personal response to the production, making sure they are clear about whether or not they liked it – and why.

Once your students have written their reviews, share and discuss them as a class.

Analyse the Dance Style
Aim to explore the choreographic style of the show and examine the role of the choreographer, to explore the relationship between music and dance, to compare different dance styles and how they can be used effectively
Subjects dance
Resources paper, pen, dance style worksheet (see Appendix), CD and DVD of Guys and Dolls
Discuss with your students the use of dance in musical theatre, if possible watch some examples on DVD or discuss other productions your students may have seen. They should consider the questions - is the dance narrative, does it move the story on or inform us about character, is the dance used to set the scene or as a 'show within a show'? What are they expecting the dance in Guys and Dolls to be like?

At the theatre they should complete the dance styles worksheet or make notes in a way that suits them, to record their thoughts and ideas. They should write up their notes as a report, after which you should return to the previous questions and discuss them again, also discussing the way there are contrasts between the dance in the show, for example between the Hot Box girls’ routines and the ‘Crapshooters Dance’. If possible look at the same sequences in the film and see how they are similar or different.

**How Music is Used**

**Aim**

to explore how music is used in Guys and Dolls and if the style of the music reflects the style of the show

**Subjects**
music

**Resources**
paper, pen, CD of Guys and Dolls

After you have seen the show use the CD to illustrate a discussion about the music, considering these questions –

- How do music and lyrics tell the story?
- Which songs introduce or inform the audience about character?
- How might the director use the lyrics – as text – to support his interpretation?
- How does the overture introduce us to the story of Guys and Dolls?
- Does the style of the music reflect the style of the show?

**Assess the Set and Lighting Design**

**Aim**
to explore how the set and lighting work as an integral part of the show, to discuss the process of designing for musical theatre

**Subjects**
drama, art

**Resources**
paper, pen, design worksheet (see Appendix), poster and leaflet

The set and lighting design for Guys and Dolls incorporates the use of light and dark in order to reflect both the nature of Broadway and the nature of the characters who live and work there. Ask your students to assess how successful the design is in relation to the content of the show. They should begin by completing the design worksheet whilst at the theatre. This will give them a record of what they saw. After they have seen the show, they should work in small groups and discuss their views and ideas. They could also develop this by considering how they might have designed the set and lighting for the show. They should then report back, giving considered responses and backing up their ideas with references to story, character and song lyrics.

**Explore the Roles of the Creative Team**

**Aim**
to investigate the various roles involved in creating a performance

**Subjects**
drama

**Resources**
paper, pen, show programme
Initiate a discussion with the whole class regarding the different roles involved in creating a musical theatre performance (see the show programme for ideas). Think about how the different members of the creative team work together in order to make the show work, you could also consider some of the other necessary roles in the success of the show, such as press and marketing, venue management and front of house. The tour of *Guys and Dolls* has been directed and choreographed by Jamie Lloyd and Chris Bailey, who were the associate director and choreographer on the original West End production. Consider how they would need to work in order to recreate the sense of the show, but make it work in many different theatres on the tour.

Now imagine your students are going to have the opportunity to question the creative team behind *Guys and Dolls*. They should work in pairs and decide which member of the team they would like to interview. They should brainstorm their ideas and use them as a basis to put together a series of questions they would ask. When preparing the questions they should consider:

- what information they require
- how to structure the questions to gain interesting answers
- using open questions, rather than ones that only require a yes or no answer
- the order of the questions, so they lead on from one another

They should put their questions into a questionnaire, exploring different formats, and then swap them with another pair, so they can assess each other’s questions.

**Compare Stage and Screen Versions of Guys and Dolls**

**Aim**

*to look at any differences between the stage production and film of *Guys and Dolls*, to consider why any changes were made for the film, to discuss how a new film version could be different again*

**Subjects**

English, drama, media studies

**Resources**

paper, pen, flip chart, DVD of *Guys and Dolls*

After you have seen the stage version of *Guys and Dolls*, watch the film with your class. Discuss the various differences between them (taking into account the fact that the film is fifty years old) and why the changes may have been made. Think about what works better in the film version and vice versa. Make notes on the flip chart as you go along. Imagine that a new film version of *Guys and Dolls* is to be made, ask your students to prepare a short presentation on how they would make the film, including casting, location for filming and any changes to scenes, songs and dialogue. Share the presentations with the class.
Exploring and Developing

The aim of the following activities is to examine the themes, characters and structure of Guys and Dolls in more detail through a range of practical activities.

Discussions

Aim  to explore the themes and ideas in Guys and Dolls through informed discussion

Subjects  English

Resources  paper, pen, flip chart, CD of Guys and Dolls

Below are a number of starting points for discussion that explore the production and its themes. Your students may also bring up ideas they wish to discuss themselves, after watching the show. Keep a record of your discussions on a flip chart, so that you can use any notes made as a basis for further writing or drama work.

Starting points –
- The viewpoints of male and female characters (listen to ‘Guys and Dolls’, CD 1 track 9 and ‘Marry the Man’, CD 2 track 10).
- “Love is a worldwide weakness”
- The culture clash between the Mission and the gamblers – is Sarah fighting a losing battle?
- The seedy side of Broadway – Damon Runyon's world.
- Do Sky and Sarah change to be with the one they love or were they always that way, underneath?
- ‘Adelaide’s Lament’ (CD 1 track 8) – does a long engagement make you ill?

Improvisations

Aim  to explore aspects of the story and characters of Guys and Dolls through practical drama activity, to use improvisation as a basis for script writing

Subjects  English, drama

Resources  paper, pen, CD of Guys and Dolls

Begin with some games and activities to warm up and get the class ready to be creative. Put your students into groups and provide them with different scenarios for improvisation, inspired by the show, for example
- Moments of realisation – Sarah loves Sky; Nathan didn’t lie
- Sky’s former life
- Nathan meets Miss Adelaide
- “Love is a worldwide weakness”
- Song lyrics, for example – “When the smell of the rainwashed pavement comes up clean, and fresh and cold.” or “Standing there, gazing at you.”
- Who is Harry the Horse?

Once they have explored the various ideas, look at refining and adapting their improvisations. They should then go on to write them out as script, including stage directions. They could then try performing each other scenes.
Exploring Character

Aim to examine the characters in Guys and Dolls in more detail, to explore the ways actors develop character from text

Subjects drama

Resources paper, pen, CD of Guys and Dolls

Have a discussion about the different characters in Guys and Dolls, exploring certain questions, from the point of view of the character, such as:

Who am I?
When am I?
Where am I?
What do I want?
Why?
How am I going to get it?

Keep notes of all the ideas you come up with.

Use the notes made, the experience of watching the show and the song lyrics (listen to the CD) as a basis for exploring the following activities, choosing a particular character to work on –

Finding the character’s energy
You can develop your character’s energy by exploring them vocally and physically.

Movement –
Consider how your character moves within the space, do they move slowly or quickly, what physical contact do they have with their environment or other characters? Can you think of an animal that represents your character – how will this effect the way they move?

Voice –
Think about accent, use of language and how the character might speak to other characters.

Create a character study
This will help you to reveal different aspects of the character. The information you gather can then be used to as a basis for the character’s motivation.

Draw up a chart with these four headings:

| Questions to ask about the character | Information from the lyrics | What this reveals about the character | Implications for performance |

Refer back to the original questions (Who am I?, etc) to get you started.

Background
Explore your character’s background. Draw up a family tree and explore the different relationships. Write a family history that fully explains the character, their family and friends, as all these people will have an influence on the character.

Collecting
Make a collection of words, props, clothes or other items that suggest your character. Share your collections with the other actors and justify why you chose the words or items.

This is not an exhaustive list of methods for exploring character but will get the students started and allow them to develop and extend their ideas. Discuss with them other ideas they have and what methods they think the actors in Guys and Dolls may have used.
Damon Runyon Stories

Aim: to go back to the source material of Guys and Dolls and develop stories and characters using different drama techniques

Subjects: English, drama

Resources: paper, pen, copies of several Damon Runyon stories, for example Madame Le Gimp or Lonely Heart

In groups, look at the characters and plot lines of other Damon Runyon stories and use them as a basis for creating a short piece of drama, using improvisation and different devising techniques. Write the piece up as text and then perform for the rest of the class.

Explore the Musical Structure

Aim: to explore the musical structure of Guys and Dolls, to consider how the songs are used in the show

Subjects: music, drama

Resources: paper, pen, CD and DVD of Guys and Dolls

You can explore the musical structure of Guys and Dolls in a number of different ways, enabling your class to expand their listening skills, musical ideas and creative abilities.

First set your class a personal task, which they must work on as individuals. Ask them to write about their own response to the music of Guys and Dolls, looking at which songs they liked or disliked – and why, exploring their emotional response to the music and how the lyrics communicated to them. They should look at which songs they felt had the most impact or were most memorable. They might like to put their ideas down in the form of a spider diagram, to elicit ideas and thoughts quickly before they begin to write.

Many musicals contain what is known as an '11 o'clock song', a high energy musical number that occurs close to the end of the show. Its purpose is to jolt the audience into watchfulness, to re-engage their attention for the climax of the show. Guys and Dolls does this successfully with Nicely-Nicely’s testimony ‘Sit Down You’re Rockin’ the Boat, an engaging and exuberant number that brings the gambling and Mission communities together and leads the audience on to the happy ending to come.

Discuss the idea of the 11 o’clock song. Watch the ‘Sit Down You’re Rockin’ the Boat’ section on the DVD and ask your pupils to consider the impact it has on the story and the possible alternative endings it suggests. Ask the class to work in small groups and write their own lyrics for a new song for Guys and Dolls, to fit in instead of ‘Sit Down You’re Rockin’ the Boat’. If you have time, some of the groups may wish to compose music for their songs as well.

Adapt a Song

Aim: to explore how lyrics can be adapted into dialogue, to discover if dialogue can have the same impact as a song

Subjects: English, drama

Resources: paper, pen, song lyrics, CD of Guys and Dolls

‘I’ll know’ (CD 1 track 6) is an important song regarding Sky and Sarah, giving us an insight into their characters. Provide your students with a copy of the lyrics (see Appendix) and ask them to re-write the lyrics as a piece of dialogue for two actors. They must retain the sense of the song, but adapt it so that it no longer seems like lyrics. They should add stage directions as necessary.
Once the dialogue has been written divide the students into groups of three. They should select one script for each group and two members of the group should play the roles of Sky and Sarah, with one as director. The director should then work with the actors to produce a polished performance of the scene for the rest of the class. The students must put emphasis on creating well-rounded characters and perform the scene to retain the original atmosphere produced by the song. Is the song as effective when performed as dialogue?

Stage a Song

Aim to explore the role of music in *Guys and Dolls* through performing

Subjects music

Resources paper, pen, CD of *Guys and Dolls*

Listen to ‘Sit Down You’re Rockin’ the Boat’ with your students and learn the words and music. If possible, ask any of your students who play instruments to play them for this activity. Discuss how you would stage the song, for example how will the characters interact, will there be dance, what positions will the actors take on stage, how will the previous dialogue develop into the song and how will the music be used? Is it very different from staging a spoken scene, how can you make it relevant to the audience? Divide your students in half and have each group draw up a rehearsal plan, indicating the process of the rehearsal and who would be required to do what. Each group should now follow the rehearsal process and produce a version of the song. The song can then be performed for the rest of the class. Discuss the process and performance with your class after they have finished; do they have a clearer idea of how music works within *Guys and Dolls* from this activity?
Designing and Creating
The aim of the following activities is to provide opportunities for your students to design and create their own theatre inspired by Guys and Dolls.

Choreography
Aim to explore the process of creating dance inspired by the music of the overture to Guys and Dolls, to explore how dance can tell a story
Subjects dance
Resources paper, pen, CD and DVD of Guys and Dolls

Warm-up
It is important to begin every practical dance session with a warm-up. It is a useful activity for the students to create a warm-up in pairs; they can then be used at the beginning of each session.
Ask the students to put together a 15-minute dance warm-up. They should work in pairs and create a number of structured exercises that include: general stretching, exercises to focus on specific areas, (for example abdominals, legs, arms), combination exercises for strength and grace. The students should select different pieces of music for their warm-up, choosing styles and tempos to suit the exercises they have chosen. Once the warm-ups have been put together the pairs should take it in turn to lead the rest of the class in their warm-up at the beginning of each session. This will also help the students learn the language of the exercises and movements they have used and how to communicate their ideas to others.

Listen to the overture from Guys and Dolls (CD 1 Track 1) and discuss the different styles and tempo of the music and how it changes from one section to another. Think about the different characters in Guys and Dolls and how the music may tell a story about them or introduce them to the audience.

Divide the class into groups of 6-8 depending on the class size and number of sessions available. Decide if you wish to dictate a dance style, for example to reflect the style of Rob Ashford or Chris Bailey or a style that fits with your current programme of study.

Once the groups have thought about their story and the music they should work together to create their piece of dance. You may wish to give them set tasks for each session available or allow them free reign to create within a set period of time. Below are some ideas to get them started on their dance.

- Begin with a tableau or frozen picture that represents the characters in the story. Each character or group of characters should step out of the picture and perform a short sequence of steps suitable to the type of character they are. These steps can then be repeated through the dance as the characters move in and out of the story.

- Explore different ways of staging your dance, thinking about how the available space can be used and ways of moving within that space that will help the narrative to move along.

- Introduce terms such as formation, transition, cannon and repetition and explain how the groups can use them in their choreography to create interest for the audience.

- The groups could break their story down into sections or ‘chapters’ and create movement phrases that represent each one, possibly exploring theme or mood, before combining them with their other ideas to create a complete piece of narrative dance.
Once the groups have completed their choreography, set aside time to rehearse and polish their work and then allow each group to perform for the whole class, so they can discuss each other’s ideas. Watch the dance to the overture in the film version of Guys and Dolls and discuss any similarities or differences with the work of your students.

Devising
Aim  
**to create a new piece of drama inspired by the overture of Guys and Dolls, to explore different methods of devising**

Subjects  
drama

Resources  
paper, pen, CD of Guys and Dolls, flip chart

Discuss with your students the different starting points for devising theatre; explain that you are going to use the overture from Guys and Dolls (CD 1 Track 1) as your inspiration. Discuss some of the characters and stories in Guys and Dolls and other Damon Runyon stories, listen to the music and make notes of any ideas on the flip chart, focussing on character, plot and setting. Put your students into groups to begin the devising process, using methods such as supported storytelling, hot seating and internal monologue to begin to create ideas. They should spend time evaluating, adapting and developing their ideas before performing them for the rest of the class.

Create Your Own Show
Aim  
**to use the experience of seeing Guys and Dolls as inspiration for creating your own piece of theatre, to explore the process of creating musical theatre, to work in a team, to explore the different skills needed to create script, dance, music and set or costume**

Subjects  
English, drama, dance, art

Resources  
paper, pen, selection of CDs, The Hottest Guy in the World outline (see Appendix)

In this activity you and your students will take on the challenge of creating a complete music from scratch, as Frank Loesser did with Guys and Dolls. You will act as the producer and your students will take all the other roles in order to experience all aspects of creating a performance. The activity is divided into a number of sessions so you can spend time developing your performance as it fits in to your timetable.

**Session One**
You first need to explore the story that will be the basis for your performance. Discuss with your students ideas around the outline of The Hottest Guy in the World, another of Damon Runyon’s short stories, featuring the characters Big Jule and Lt Brannigan. Put the class into groups of five or six and ask them to create a tableau that represents an element of the story. Share and discuss the tableaux. Decide which tableaux represent the story you are trying to tell and use them as a basis for improvising short scenes. As the groups perform their scenes, make notes so you have an outline of the story written down.

**Session Two**
Now you need to introduce music and singing to your story. Discuss with your students at what point they feel these elements could be introduced, using Guys and Dolls as an example. They need to select incidental music, and also different types of songs, such as romantic duets or up-tempo ensemble numbers. Either select music that has already been written, or have a go at composing your own.

**Session Three**
Once you have selected your music you need to choreograph any dance numbers or movement that will work with the songs. Divide your students into groups and allocate each group a dance number to
create. They need to think about a dance style that will be suitable for your story, the piece of music they are working with and how to make the dance interesting for an audience. Share and discuss their work at the end of the session.

**Session Four**

Put together the different elements from the previous sessions. Discuss which areas need to be developed, and split the class into task groups to work on different aspects. You need to allocate the tasks of set and costume design, stage management, sound and lighting to your students, as these elements will all be vital to your performance. Put together a small marketing team to advertise the performance around the school. Get together at the end of the session to finalise what the performance piece will contain and all the different tasks that need to be done.

You should then use as many sessions as necessary to rehearse your performance before performing for an audience.

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**Set Design**

**Aim**

to encourage students to use research and observation skills to inform their design ideas, to use practical making skills to present design ideas.

**Subjects**
art

**Resources**
paper, pen, books, internet access, art materials

Ask your students to design sets for a touring production of *Guys and Dolls* in the round. The current set is designed for a proscenium arch theatre and is very two dimensional, like looking at a picture. They should do some research into how theatre in the round works and find other examples of sets designed for such productions. They should collect images from books and magazines that support their design ideas before beginning to make sketches of their ideas. They need to consider how the director and choreographer may use the set. When your students have completed their designs they could make a scale model to present to the class, including some ideas regarding materials and costings for their completed set. They should also take into account the fact that the set needs to be quickly and easily broken down and transported from theatre to theatre during the tour.

**Costume Design**

**Aim**

to use research and observation skills to inform their design ideas, to explore how costumes need to be practical for performance

**Subjects**
art

**Resources**
paper, pen, books, internet access

Discuss with your students the costumes for *Guys and Dolls*. Ask them about their own ideas for costume designs. They could research the period between the mid to late 1920’s and make a scrap-book of all their research ideas. They should think about how the costumes may be made to accommodate the dance moves necessary and also for quick changes. Ask each student to choose one character from *Guys and Dolls*; using their scrap-books for ideas, they should decide what accessories or props could be designed or chosen to represent the character. They should make close links between the character they have chosen and the accessories selected, how they reflect their personality and status, and also how to indicate that character’s journey through the play. Finally the students should present their ideas to the class, explaining the reasons behind their choices. If
appropriate some students may wish to explore this further by collecting some of the accessories and props together and using them in drama work.

Create Promotional Material

**Aim**  
_to explore the role of promotional material in selling a show, to look at persuasive writing, to explore layout and design_

**Subjects**  
English, art

**Resources**  
paper, pen, examples of *Guys and Dolls* poster and leaflet

A good promotional leaflet or poster should give as much information as possible about the show, but also needs to be eye-catching, concise and well-written. Posters and leaflets are often the first indication the general public has about a show being in their local theatre. They can be displayed or mailed out up to six months ahead of the performances. You cannot assume people will know what a show is about, so both images and information need to be chosen to give a clear indication of the content of the show. Look at the *Guys and Dolls* promotional materials with your students, what impressions do they give of the show. Why are quotes from reviews used on posters and leaflets?

Set your students the task of designing a new leaflet or poster for the show, considering one aspect of the show that they think will sell it to potential audiences. They should consider what information they need to include and how to lay out their design. They should make notes and try out various ideas before producing a finished leaflet or poster.
RESOURCES

Show Programme (available from the theatre)

CD Soundtrack – Guys and Dolls – complete recording 1996, Jay Productions Ltd

DVD of film – Guys and Dolls Special Edition 1955 – distributed by Sony Pictures

Guys and Dolls: And Other Stories
Damon Runyon Penguin

A Most Remarkable Fella: Frank Loesser and the Guys and Dolls in his Life – a Portrait by his Daughter
Susan Loesser  Hal Leonard Publishing Corporation

Guys and Dolls (Making of the Great Broadway Musicals Series)
Keith Garebian  Mosaic Press

www.damon-runyon.com

www.frankloesser.com

www.guysanddollsthemusical.com

www.stagetechnicalbooks.com

www.theatredesign.org.uk
Big Jule has returned to New York City despite being ‘hot’ as he is under suspicion for a number of violent crimes across the whole country.

The circus has arrived in Madison Square Gardens as it does every spring before going out on the road.

Big Jule has returned because he felt homesick for New York and wants to visit his sick mother.

Big Jule’s mother lives on the same block as Johnny Brannigan, a tough cop who would love to catch Big Jule, despite them growing up together.

Big Jule would also like to visit Miss Kitty Clancy, who he has always been sweet on.

Big Jule has recently been hiding out in an old warehouse, waiting for his injured hip to heal and using the rats for target practise.

Big Jule decides to go and visit his mother, whatever the risk.

As he walks along 49th Street, there is a great commotion going on, with women screaming and men shouting.

A gorilla, called Bongo, has escaped from the circus, grabbed a baby from its pram and carried it up on to a roof.

The police and circus workers arrive at the scene and try and decide how to persuade Bongo to come down; they try to keep the crowd quiet as noise upsets him.

The mother of the baby is standing still on the street, watching terrified as the gorilla holds her child.

Big Jule pulls out his gun, despite all the police around and shoots Bongo between the eyes, so he falls back and the baby is safe.

The mother of the baby turns to see who has done this and Big Jule realise she is Miss Kitty Clancy, who he loves.

Lt Brannigan appears; he has been following Big Jule but he doesn’t arrest him as he has married Miss Kitty and is father to the baby Big Jule saved.

Lt Brannigan puts Big Jule in a yellow cab and sends him to visit his mother, telling him to leave town once he has.
Song Lyrics - I'll Know

SARAH (spoken) Don't worry, I'll know.

SARAH (sung)
For I've imagined every bit of him
From the strong moral fibre to the wisdom in his head
To the home-y aroma of his pipe
SKY (sung)
You have wished yourself a Scarsdale Galahad
The breakfast-eating, Brooks-brothers type.
SARAH (sung)
Yes, and I shall meet him when the time is right.

SKY (spoken) You've got the guy all figured out.
SARAH (spoken) I have.
SKY (spoken) Including what he smokes. All figured out, huh?
SARAH (spoken) All figured out.

SARAH (sung)
I'll know when my love comes along
I won't take a chance.
I know he'll be just what I need
Not some fly-by-night Broadway romance.
SKY (sung)
And you'll know at a glance by the two-pair of pants.
SARAH (sung)
I'll know by the calm steady voice
Those feet on the ground.
I'll know as I run to his arms
That at last I've come home safe and sound.
Until then, I shall wait.
Until then, I'll be strong.
Oh, I'll know, when my love comes along.

SKY (spoken) No, no, no! You are talking about love! You can't dope it like that. What are you picking, a guy or a horse?

SARAH (spoken) I wouldn't expect a gambler to understand.
SKY (spoken) Would you like to hear how a gambler feels about the big heart throb?
SARAH (spoken) No!
SKY (spoken) Well, I'll tell you.

SKY (sung)
Mine will come as a surprise to me.
Mine I lead to chance and chemistry.

SARAH (spoken) Chemistry?
SKY (spoken) Yeah, chemistry.

SKY (sung)
Suddenly I'll know when my love comes along
I'll know then and there
I'll know at the sight of her face
How I care, how I care, how I care
And I'll stop. And I'll stare.
And I'll know long before we can speak
I'll know in my heart.
I'll know and I won't ever ask
Am I right, am I wise, am I smart.
And I'll stop. And I'll stare.
At that face. In the throng.
Yes, I'll know when my love comes along
TOGETHER (sung)
I'll know
When my love comes along.

SARAH (sung)
I won't take a chance.
I know he'll be just what I need
Not some fly-by-night Broadway romance.
Until then, I shall wait.
And till then, I'll be strong.
Oh, I'll know when my love comes along.
During the performance observe the set and lighting design. Make notes of any particular ideas you notice or any influences you can see.

How does the set and lighting design reflect the content of the show?

Is there anything you particularly liked or disliked about the design of the show?

How is lighting used to:
- Blend a scene?
- Make a statement?
- Create mood or atmosphere?
**DANCE STYLE WORKSHEET**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Production:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Theatre:</th>
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<tbody>
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What do you notice about the dance style in general?

What do you notice about the construction and staging of the dances?

Make notes on:
- Hand gestures:
- Arm movements:
- Body movements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarities:</th>
<th>Differences:</th>
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## THEATRE REVIEW WORKSHEET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your expectations:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Production: |
| Date: |

### STAGE AND AUDITORIUM

Kind of stage:

How was the stage design important to the production?

### MUSIC, SONG AND DANCE

How were music, song and dance used in the production?

### PERFORMANCES

Which ones worked the best and why?

Which ones were not convincing?

### WHAT THE PRODUCTION DID FOR YOU

Feelings and thoughts you had at the time:

Feelings and thoughts you had on reflection: