



WESTERN
CANADA
THEATRE

November 26 to December 6, 2016

SAGEBRUSH THEATRE



MAMMA MIA!

STUDY GUIDE

MAMMA MIA!

A Study Guide

Music & Lyrics by **BENNY ANDERSSON & BJORN ULVAEUS**
And some songs with **Stig Anderson**
Book by **Catherine Johnson**

Production Personnel

Cast

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| George Absi | Ensemble / Dance Captain |
| Kevin Aichele | Sam Carmichael |
| Paul Almeida | Pepper / Ensemble |
| Michelle Bardach | Ensemble |
| Danielle Benton | Lisa / Ensemble |
| Janet Gigliotti | Rosie Mulligan |
| Annie Chen | Ensemble |
| Rachel Clark | Ensemble |
| Austin Eckert | Eddie / Ensemble |
| Nicko Giannakos | Father Alexandrios / Ensemble |
| Mark Harapiak | Bill Austin / Ensemble |
| Alana Hibbert | Tanya Cresham-Leigh |
| Katie Kerr | Sophie Sheridan |
| Ben Montgomery | Ensemble |
| Desmond Osborne | Ensemble |
| Chelsea Preston | Ali / Ensemble |
| Antonette Rudder | Ensemble |
| Colin Sheen | Sky / Ensemble |
| Cailin Stadnyk | Donna Sheridan |
| Leon Willey | Harry Bright / Ensemble |

Musicians

| | |
|-------------|--------|
| Kris Ruston | Guitar |
| Alex Ward | Bass |
| Ed Hilliard | Drums |

Production Team

| | |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| Ron Ulrich | Director |
| Steve Thomas | Musical Director |
| Jeff Dimitriou | Choreographer |
| Ivan Brozic | Set and Costume Designer |
| Ken Wells | Scenic Painter |
| Gail Ksionyk | Lighting Designer |
| Greg Klohn | Sound Engineer |
| Beth Bruck | Stage Manager |
| Skylar Nakazawa | Assistant Stage Manager |
| Madison Henry | Apprentice Stage Manager |
| Andrew G. Cooper | Assistant Director |
| Christine Leroux | Head Dresser |
| Roya Mole | Technician |
| Liam Befurt | Technician |
| Robin Arundel | Technician |
| Joel Feenstra | Technician |

Contributors

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Mamma Mia! is a **jukebox musical** written by British playwright Catherine Johnson, based on the songs of ABBA, which were composed by Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus, former members of the band. The title of the musical is taken from the group's 1975 chart-topper "Mamma Mia!". Ulvaeus and Andersson were involved in the development of the show from the beginning. Anni-Frid Lyngstad, who was also a member of ABBA, has been involved financially in the production and been present at many of the premieres around the world.



Catherine Johnson



Bjorn Ulvaeus



Anni-Frid Lyngstad



Benny Andersson

What is a Jukebox Musical?

A jukebox musical is a stage or film musical that uses previously released popular songs as its musical score. Usually the songs have in common a connection with a particular popular musician or group, because they were either written by, or for, the artists in question, or at least covered by them.

Synopsis

Sophie seems to have everything going for her. She's about to be married to the man she loves. She lives on a beautiful Greek island with a mother who cares about her. Her life should be perfect, but something is missing. Although she's been raised by her loving mother, she's never met her father. In *MAMMA MIA!* Sophie longs to find out the truth about who she is; with three letters in the mailbox, she hopes to create what she has never had: a traditional family. With the help of her mother and friends, she discovers that families come in many different shapes and sizes, and that love doesn't always need to follow the rules.

Characters

DONNA: Sophie's fiercely independent and hard-working mother, Donna is the owner of a taverna (a small restaurant) on a beautiful Greek island. She is the former lead singer of "Donna and the Dynamos."

SOPHIE: Donna's headstrong 20-year-old daughter, Sophie is determined to have what her mother never had: a traditional family.

SKY: Sophie's fiancé is a former stockbroker who got tired of the cutthroat world of Wall Street.

TANYA: One of Donna's oldest and best friends, Tanya has married several millionaires, but has never found the right man. Wild and fun loving, she catches the young Pepper's eye. Once a member of "Donna and the Dynamos".

ROSIE: Another of Donna's old friends and also once a member of "Donna and the Dynamos".

ALI and LISA: Two of Sophie's friends who have come for the wedding.

PEPPER and EDDIE: Donna's employees, these two are the bar-staff, waiters, boatmen and general help around the Taverna. Both are relaxed and good-natured.

SAM CARMICHAEL: An architect, Sam has regretted leaving Donna all his life.

HARRY BRIGHT: Although he was known as the wild "Head Banger" when he first knew Donna, today Harry is a respected banker.

BILL AUSTIN: A well-known travel writer, Bill has visited the far reaches of the earth but is afraid of making a commitment.

FATHER ALEXANDRIOS: The minister of the island.

Activities in the Classroom

Activity #1 – I HAVE A DREAM: The 1970's, A Time of Extraordinary Change

The 1970's play a role in *Mamma Mia!*, because it is the era in which the character of Donna Sheridan really discovered herself. She was an independent and fiery young woman with dreams and aspirations, a woman of the time.

Historians have increasingly portrayed the 1970s as a "pivot of change" in world history, focusing especially on the economic upheavals and the advancement of social progressive values that began in the 1960s. A large aspect of this was an increasing political awareness and economic liberty of women. For the first time we were seeing woman as heads of state and heads of government. Major scandals, wars and protests, natural disasters, technology and social movements were big in this decade.

Have your students gather in small groups to research an event in the 1970's. Have them choose a major event, movement or invention and present it to the class. If they need some help, have them pick from the list below comprised of important events and interesting people.

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 1973 OIL CRISIS | THE MICROWAVE |
| VIETNAM | MARGARET THATCHER |
| DRAFT DODGERS IN BC | THE FLQ CRISIS |
| WATERGATE | THE WALKMAN |
| MUNICH OLYMPICS MASSACRE | THE VCR |
| STEPHEN HAWKING | FACE LIFTS |
| NEOLIBERAL ECONOMICS | PUNK |
| HARVEY MILK | DISCO |

Once they have chosen their topic and done the research, have them choose the medium in which they will present it to the class. Below is a list of some of the possibilities.

| | | |
|---------|--------------|-----------|
| POEM | SONG | SKIT |
| DRAWING | RADIO PLAY | SCULPTURE |
| PLAY | TV BROADCAST | SPEECH |

Create a 1970's timeline out of a long piece of paper or on the board. As students present their topic, record it on the class timeline. Once all topics are done, discuss why events happened in the order they did, or why one events happening contributed to the next.

Activity #2- TAKE A CHANCE on Pop Music

In the dictionary, pop music or popular music is defined as “*music appealing to the popular taste, including rock and pop and also soul, country, reggae, rap, and dance music.*”

ABBA was a Swedish pop group formed in Stockholm in 1972 by members Agnetha Fältskog, Björn Ulvaeus, Benny Andersson, and Anni-Frid Lyngstad. They became one of the most commercially successful acts in the history of popular music, topping the charts worldwide from 1974 to 1982. In *Mamma Mia!* there are over 25 ABBA songs that create the structure for the play. A list of most of them is below. Playwright Catherine Johnson used these songs as a base and created a story around them.

Prior to seeing the show, have students, solo or in groups, choose a song from the list below. Have the students then listen to the song and transcribe the lyrics and then write out a storyline for the lyrics. When they share their storylines with the class, have the class first listen to the songs (or the relevant part of it), have the students reveal the storyline they created, and then have the class listen to the song once again. This way, the other students will be able to connect the two together.

When they see the show, they will be able to compare their storyline to that of Catherine Johnson’s!

ACT ONE

Honey, Honey
Money, Money
Thank You for the Music
Mamma Mia!
Chiquitita
Dancing Queen
Lay All Your Love on Me
Super Trouper
Gimme! Gimme! Gimme!
The Name of the Game
Voulez-Vous

ACT TWO

Under Attack
One of Us
SOS
Does Your Mother Know
Knowing me, Knowing You
Our Last Summer
Slipping Through My Fingers
The Winner Takes All
Take a Chance on Me
I Do, I Do, I Do, I Do, I Do
I Have a Dream

Did You Know?

ABBA was inducted into the
Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in
2010!

Activity #3: Identity: KNOWING ME, KNOWING YOU

A major theme in *Mamma Mia!* is **IDENTITY**. Identity is the quality, beliefs, personality, looks and/or expressions that make a person. In the play, Sophie wants the perfect wedding, and for her that includes having her father walk her down the aisle. The problem is that Sophie is unsure of who her father is, and she believes that finding out will help her figure out who she really is. She feels well adjusted, but feels she is missing something.

Our family and background are a significant part of what makes up our identity.

Have your students fill out a family tree. They can use their parents to help with this, of course! You can show them diagrams of how family trees look, reminding them that the dynamics of family have changed significantly. The concept of the nuclear family (mom, dad and children) of the 1940's and 1950's is no longer the norm.

Some questions upon completion:

- What does family mean? You can discuss the actual definition versus the emotional feeling of family.
- Why has an image of a tree been used to portray a family dynamic? Be sure to talk about the roots of the tree.
- Are you interested in going further back in lineage? How far back did most students go? Why?
- On your family tree, is there an individual who you connect with the most? Why? Is there an individual that you wish to know more about? And if so, how can you find out more about them?
- Did you learn something new about your heritage while creating your family tree?

Activity #4: GIMME! GIMME! GIMME! a Post-Show Discussion!

1. Discuss the play with your class. What did they like, what did they find challenging? Why? Ask for specifics to generate a more intense conversation.
2. How did you feel about the songs in the show? Did they suit the storyline and the placing they had in the performance? Which song was your favourite and why? Were you familiar with the songs before the play?
3. Have a discussion about the set and costumes. Were they what you imagined? What feeling did the set create on the island? What colours were used to create this feeling for the wedding?
4. What did you think of the ending of the play? Have students discuss or write down alternative endings. How would changing the ending affect the rest of the play? How would it change your final feeling about the play?

Curriculum Connections

| | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Drama | Historical and Aesthetic Context Exploring, Drama Forms Performance Context |
| Arts Education | Social and Cultural Context |
| Music | Thoughts, Images and Feelings Context Historical |
| Language Arts | Oral Language, Reading and Viewing, Speaking and Listening |
| Social Studies | Society and Culture |

Works Cited

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BCIRP

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