

Lesson Plan 4

Bargain Broadway: Working on a Budget

SLO: In what ways will the student explore the many aspects of a theatre production budget and discover how the budget impacts the creative and logistical development of a production?

VITAL INFORMATION	
Subjects (s) & Topic(s) Covered	Theatre (T)
Grade/Level	9-12
Standard(s)	<p>Content Area Standard based on the Wisconsin Academic Standards for Theatre Education</p> <p>Standard 4 - CONNECT: Students will relate prior knowledge and personal experience with theatre to cultural and historical contexts. TD.Cn.15.h: Career Connections Explain what knowledge or training is required for theatre production careers, and how theatrical skills translate to other fields.</p> <p>Standard 2 - PERFORM: Students will analyze, develop, and convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. TD.P.18.h: Design & Management Documentation Assemble documents, renderings, and artifacts in a portfolio that includes design concept and working within the parameters of a production.</p> <p>Standard 1 - CREATE: Students will generate, develop, and refine artistic work. TD.Cr.16.h: Collaboration Collaborate as a creative team with specified roles to make artistic, interpretive choices in a devised or scripted work.</p>
Objective(s) I can...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can identify the major areas of a theatre production budget and its needs. • I can implement strategies to limit costs within a budget. • I can understand the importance of a budget, its effect on the market, and how finances may or may not contribute towards its success. • I can identify the risks of not sticking to a budget. • I can work collaboratively on creating a budget, problem-solve for unexpected expenses, and works with others on staying within a budget. • I can identify ways in which a budget is important in many areas of life.
Assessment/Rubrics	See below.
Collaboration/Student Centeredness	<i>Students will get to collaboratively work in groups for this activity-based lesson plan. Many of the activities are focused on the decisions of the students, who have creative freedom in the decision-making process, which can empower them to feel like their voice matters.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Students choose the Broadway show they would like to produce.</i> • <i>Students get to pick an overall budget amount to follow.</i> • <i>Students create their own budget for their assigned area.</i> • <i>Students have autonomy over their vision statement and design ideas.</i>
Time Allotment	90 minutes
Materials	<p><u>Teacher Materials</u>: Laptop, access to the internet, PowerPoint slides (if desired)</p> <p><u>Student Materials</u>: laptop, access to the internet, access to Microsoft Excel or Google spreadsheets, pen/pencil, journal</p> <p><u>Space</u>: Standard Classroom space, group desks or tables</p>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wisconsin Academic Standards for Theatre Education • Ken Davenport: Breaking Down a Broadway Budget • Columbia – Dollars & Cents • A Breakdown of an Off-Broadway Play • Breaking Down the Budget • Weekly Budget • Backstage - Budgets
IMPLEMENTATION	
Prior Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial Theatre • Non-Profit Theatre • Producers
Focus of Lesson	<p><i>*This is Part 1 of an optional two-part lesson plan. This lesson plan can be modified based on the instructor's discretion (i.e., students can decide the budget, etc.)</i></p> <p>This class-wide activity-based lesson plan is a collaborative way for students to understand the importance of budgeting from a bottom-up approach. The students will create a budget for an area of a production, and evaluate the importance of design, collaboration, staying within a budget, and how budgeting may affect the outcome of the succession of a show. Students will make a budget list, establish necessities vs. wants, and work together to stay within the overall budget.</p> <p>Part 2 (optional) would investigate profit and loss, returns, and how to make a profit in the theater in addition to creating a budget. Students would learn that even creating a hopeful budget with good intentions may not always predict the success of a performance. Part 2 would focus on ticket sales, look into Broadway grosses, and how society, theatre criticism, and public opinion may play a role in a show's success as well.</p>
Discussions & Topics to Explore (Vocabulary/Input)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Budget</u>: An estimate of expenses for a specific period of time. • <u>Contingency</u>: An unforeseen event or circumstance that cannot be predicted but may be planned for. • <u>Earned Income</u>: Income received as payment for work.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Unearned Income</u>: Income that is not from work, but rather investments, sponsorships, donations, etc. • <u>Return on investment (ROI)</u>: A measurement used to evaluate the effectiveness of an investment and whether it is profitable. • <u>Profit and Loss</u>: A measurement tool that summarizes that costs, revenues, and expenses during a specific period of time.
<p>Introduction/Anticipatory Set – 15 minutes</p>	<p><u>Making Connections – Pick 1:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Verbal Discussion:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is a budget? -Have you ever created a budget, or needed to stay within a budget? -What are your experiences? 2. <u>Activity: Gimme Gimme, that thing called a BUDGET!</u> Students will “Guess the Budget” for varying Broadway/Professional Theater Productions via a matching worksheet. (The instructor can choose to display this on the board or write on a whiteboard instead). Students can discuss in groups their guesses before the answers are revealed. <u>Examples:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Great Gatsby - \$25 Million • Moulin Rouge - \$28 Million • Death Becomes Her – \$31.5 Million • Spiderman, Turn off the Dark - \$75 Million
<p>Procedures</p>	<p><u>Direction Instruction (I Do):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary/Input • Food for Thought: Necessities vs. wants • The importance of a budget • What even IS a Broadway Flop? Video <p><u>Verbal Discussion:</u> <i>According to the video, what are the four things that contribute towards the success of a Broadway show?</i></p> <p><u>Guided Practice (We Do):</u></p> <p><u>Class Discussion:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the major categories of a budget within a production? • What are the considerations of a budget? What about performers and actors? • How can you track and control spending? <p><u>Flash Quest:</u> Students have 1 minute to create a list on their laptop of items that may appear on a Broadway show budget list.</p> <p>Then, class will discuss what items may appear on a budget list. The instructor will keep a running list on the main screen/whiteboard.</p> <p>The instructor model budgets, then will introduce the next activities and the expectations.</p> <p><u>Collaborative Independent Practice (You Do Together):</u></p>

Students will be separated into groups for the remainder of the activities. It is up to the instructor's discretion whether they should be separated randomly or whether students can choose their own groups.

Modeling: Let's take a look at some examples of budgets in the theatre world.

- [Ken Davenport: Breaking Down a Broadway Budget](#)
- [Columbia – Dollars & Cents](#)
- [A Breakdown of an Off-Broadway Play](#)

*As a class, we will create a budget for a Broadway show! Let's choose the Broadway show you would like to produce!
(This can be done at random, or by taking suggestions from the students).*

Each group will write on a piece of paper the total budget amount you'd like to work with. Please be realistic!

The instructor will gather the slips, and a student can pick one out of a hat. That will be the budget for the overall production, in which all groups as a collective will have to stay within.

Now, each group will be assigned an area of the production.

Groups will then pick at random their "assigned" area, which can include:

- Set design
- Costumes
- Marketing
- Lighting
- Make up
- Sound

Required Elements for Each Student Group:

- Vision Statement: What are your design choices? Create a statement that exudes the creative decisions you will make for this show.
- What will you need? = Budget. Your budget sheet will act as a running list and the total number of items that you will need to complete your vision. Remember items that are needs and wants to help enhance your vision.
- How can you save money? Provide at least three examples of ways in which you can save money in your area.
- Return on Investment: How do you hope to return on your investment? In what ways could this be possible?

Your goal is to create a budget in your assigned area. Think of everything you could need that will match your vision. You can use the internet to research estimated costs. At this time, there is no need to worry about the overall budget – just create a list of items that you would need to execute your goal and design and add up the costs in an excel sheet.

Budget Activity Part 1: Based on their assigned area, student groups will create a list of potential items to add to their area budget based on their vision. They should also associate the estimated cost for each item by researching estimated costs and using the resources provided. Groups will keep a total of their budget as they add up their items. However, they will not be able to communicate with the other groups (yet).

Resources:

- [Breaking Down the Budget](#)
- [Weekly Budget](#)
- [Backstage - Budgets](#)

Activity Break-Out: The groups have five minutes to choose one other group to correspond with to discuss their vision statements and area budget amounts. The goal will be to try and stay within the overall budget. Based on that conversation, the groups will need to reevaluate whether to add more items or take items off the budget plan. Groups will have additional time to add items or subtract items off their budget list.

Contingency! Contingency! The producer (the instructor) will reveal a contingency! The contingency amount will depend on the original budget, but may be millions less, for example.

Student groups will individually evaluate their budget again; Is there anything that they can save money on? Anything they can eliminate?

Budget Activity Part 2: All the groups will come together and discuss their overall budgets for each area and their vision statements. This will reveal whether they have stayed within the overall budget of the production. If the areas budget sum exceeds the overall budget, the class as a whole will need to discuss ways to adapt to stay within the budget given.

If the class stayed within the budget, they will be prompted to answer questions (or see the closure section):

- Is there anything you'd like to add to your budget? Any visions or enhancements?
- How did you handle the unexpected contingency that arose?
- What can you contribute to the importance of communication and budgeting?
- Do you wish you had a meeting prior to creating your area budgets? Why is it important to allocate funds?
- Share some of the ways you intended to save money.

*This part of class is encouraged to be a lengthy discussion on the overall vision of production, and what areas could use more/less of a budget. Additions or subtractions should be made to the overall budget. Each group member should contribute in one way, either by verbally communicating with

	other groups, assisting with the spreadsheet, or contributing ideas, writing things down.
Check for Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The instructor will allow for time between the guided practice and collaborative independent practice for questions and clarity. Students are encouraged to ask questions throughout the lesson plan.
Closure – 10 Minutes	<p><u>Reflection</u></p> <p><u>Circle Time Discussion:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How difficult was it to create a budget? What are the potential consequences of not sticking to the budget? How many meetings do you think occur to talk about budgeting and staying within budget? Who do you think attends those meetings? (Segue to Part 2 of the second lesson plan): Given your budget, do you think that your investment will be profitable? Why or why not? Does the amount of money equal a successful show? <p><u>Reflection Journals</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In your journal, write about the budgeting side of theatre. What have you learned, and what insight have you gained? What information will you use from this lesson in the future?
Differentiation: Remediation & Enrichment Activity	<p><u>Remediation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Videos will have closed captions enabled for students who are DHH. <p><u>Enrichment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact a guest speaker specializing in theatre finances (in advance of this lesson plan) to provide insight on the budgeting process of a production.
Homework Assignment(s)	<p>Broadway's Most Expensive Shows</p> <p>Before you watch the video, guess the 5 most expensive Broadway shows of all time. You will watch Broadway's Most Expensive Shows. Then, watch the video and see if any of your guesses are on the list. Answer these questions in no less than half a page:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What surprised you about this list? Did you realize the influence design has on a budget? What was the budget of your favorite show? <p><u>Extra Credit: 15 Points</u></p> <p>Create a realistic budget for the spring musical at our school. Consider all aspects of the production, and how our department can save on costs. Also consider ticket prices, concessions, and other ways to make a profit.</p>
Students' Questions	<p>Clarification Questions from students:</p> <p>Questions during Discussion:</p>
Resources/Ideas from Students	

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To Note for Next Year (or the next time the lesson is done)	
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Assessment/Rubric for Bargain Broadway: Working on a Budget

Name: _____

Verbal Discussions

/40 Points

The student actively participated in discussion and class activities through writing, excel spreadsheets, and verbal group discussions. The student contributed ideas towards the prompted discussion questions. Discussion among group members and classmates instigated a collaborative effort towards a well-rounded theatre budget for both the assigned area and the overall production budget.

Participation/Collaboration

/40 Points

The student participated in the discussion, activities, and decision-making process during class and during work time for the project. The student, with a group, created a theatre budget and collaborated on the decision-making process including budget items, cost, and contingency plans.

Reflection & Homework

/20 Points

The student participated in writing a thoughtful reflection after the lesson. The student completed the assigned homework of watching the video and writing a half page about the importance of a theatre budget, which displayed effortful exploration work.

Total: /100 Points