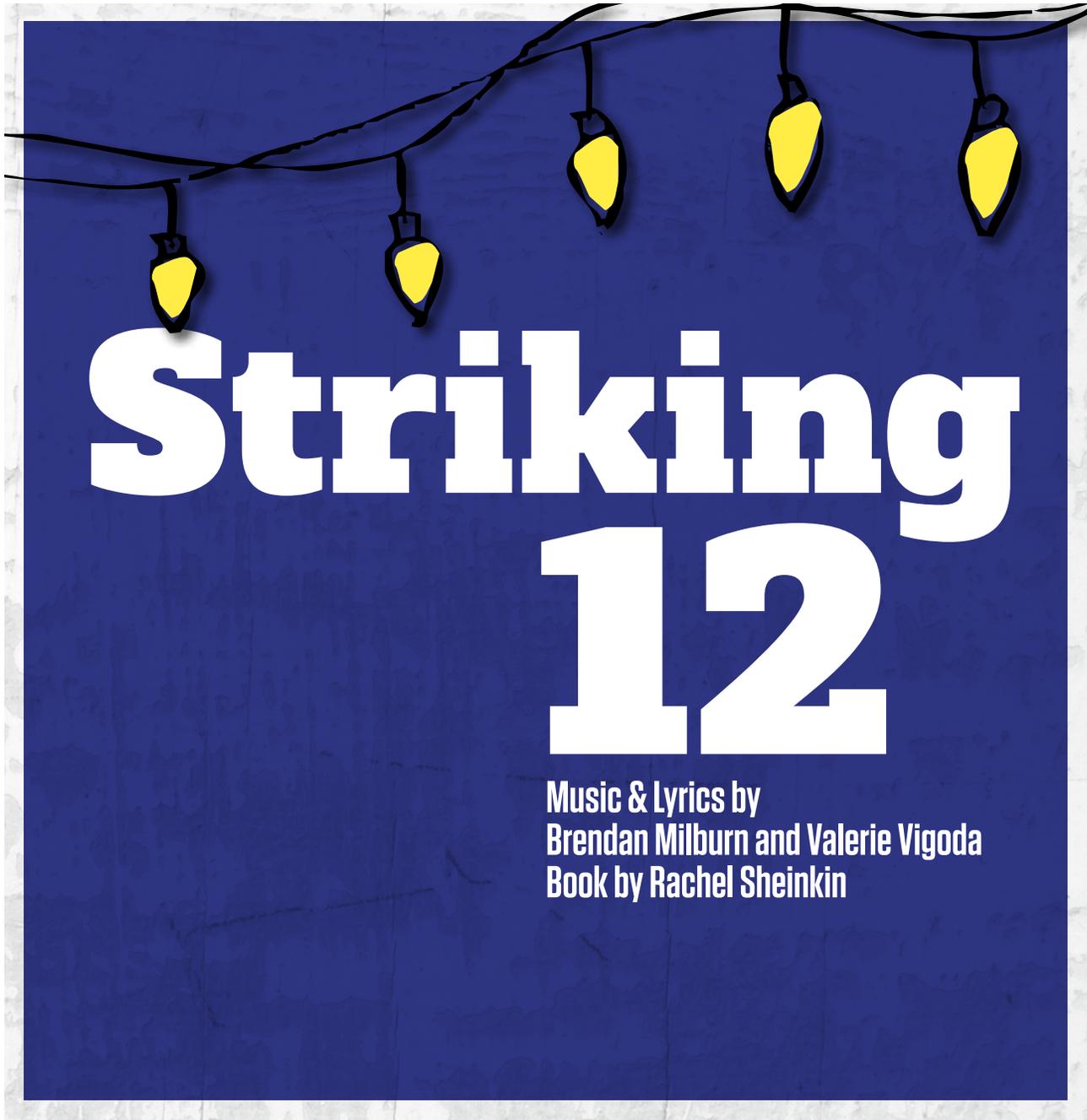


COMPANY OF FOOLS

Study Guide



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WELCOME TO COMPANY OF FOOLS!

Dear Educator,

Company of Fools and the Sun Valley Center for the Arts are pleased to offer you this study guide to help you and your students get the most from our production of *Striking 12*. Providing transformational and fun learning opportunities for the valley's students is a fundamental part of The Center's work.

We hope this study guide will serve as a useful resource. It is designed to enhance student learning both before and after the performance, to support your classroom lesson plans and deepen the educational value of your students' experience. The resources and activities in this study guide support the Idaho Core Standards in English Language Arts and Literacy.

Thank you for the sharing the magic of performing arts with your students! And enjoy the show.

—Company of Fools

ABOUT THE MUSICAL: *Striking 12*

Inspired in part by Hans Christian Andersen's "The Little Match Girl," *Striking 12* is a theatre-concert hybrid that springs to life through its rock band cast who tell the story of an overworked New Yorker who has resolved to spend New Year's Eve alone, when an unexpected visitor brings much-needed hope and cheer. This uniquely musical urban fairytale co-written by Tony Award-winning book writer Rachel Sheinkin (25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee) with an eclectic and electric score by Valerie Vigoda and Brendan Milburn of the indie band GrooveLily, weaves three stories and settings—contemporary New York City, 19th century Denmark, and the Liberty Theatre right here in Hailey—into one magical, rock-tastic, playful, family-friendly holiday event.

For us, *Striking 12* is about the ways we can reach out and take care of each other—how we can be each other's light, even in times of darkness.

Striking 12 has been performed by Groovelily since the early 2000's; they only very recently made it possible for other companies to perform it. This is the Idaho premier of *Striking 12* and we are so excited to share it with you!



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER BEFORE SEEING STRIKING 12

This musical is about reaching out to others in need...

- What are ways you might help other people when they feel lonely or sad?
- What are some local examples of how we take care of one another and people who might have less during the holiday season here in the Wood River Valley?
- Holidays are a traditional time of giving, what can we do to foster this year-round?
- What inspires you to tell stories?

With the story of *The Little Match Girl*:

- In a sentence, what would you say *The Little Match Girl* is about?
- What do you think of the ending? How might you change it?



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER AFTER SEEING STRIKING 12

- How would you describe in one sentence what this musical is about? "This is a musical about _____."
- Can you think of other stories of people who were having a bad day and others reached out and helped make it better?
- Can you think about a time when you were a good friend? What did you do and how was that helpful?
- How was *The Little Match Girl* connected to the story of *The Man and the Lights Seller*?
- Did it help for this story to be told through songs and with a band? If so, how?
- Can you think of a time when the arts (music, drawing, a book) changed how you felt?
- What did you notice about the sound design? About the lighting design? About the scenic and costume designs? How would you describe the ways in which each of those elements helped to tell the story?
- If you had to write a play, musical, or story with that question at its core, how might you begin? Who would be the characters? What kind of music might you use?

WAYS TO ENGAGE STUDENTS AFTER SEEING STRIKING 12

★ Teacher Tip!

Using the above questions as potential prompts, here are some ways to encourage further examination of the play-going experience.

EXPLORE

Write a poem, short play or story inspired by an image or by *Striking 12*

Make a paper cutting—draw a picture that can be cut out to make a flat puppet

ANALYZE

Draw a connection to something else you're learning about in your classroom.

Connect, compare, contrast

INTERACT

Improvise scenes

Make a group collage

Play a game

ABOUT THIS COMPANY OF FOOLS PRODUCTION

The Band



Samantha Blain*

Samantha Blain is a NY-based Cuban-American actor, musician, teaching artist and puppeteer. She has played violin since the 3rd grade and also plays piano and Ukulele.



Grant Carey

Grant Carey is an LA-based Pittsburgh native who sometimes calls Ketchum home. He is a musician, actor, writer, sound designer, and music director who has his own band, Summer Underground.



Chris Carwithen*

Chris Carwithen is an actor who was born in Texas, grew up in Oregon, and just moved to Hailey from Seattle! Chris was in COF's *A Year with Frog and Toad*; *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*; *Good People*; *Almost, Maine*; *Grey Gardens*; *ART*; and *Life Sucks*.



Joel Oramas*

Joel Oramas is a NY-based actor, drummer, and teaching artist. He received his masters in acting from University of Florida and has performed all around the US and Canada.



DeAnne Stewart*

DeAnne Stewart is a NY-based actor with a passion for music. In the last two years, DeAnne has visited 27 countries while performing with Royal Caribbean cruises.

Creative Team

Direction Ilana Becker
Music Direction—Vocals R.L. Rowsey
Music Direction—Band Grant Carey
Stage Management K.O. Ogilvie*
Scenic Design Joe Lavigne
Lighting Design..... Mike Inwood**
Sound Design.....Alex Dietz-Kest
Costume Design..... Maria Gerhardt
Mixer/Production Assistant Chris Henderson



*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the US #EquityWorks

**Member of United Scenic Artists, I.A.T.S.E. Local 829

One of the characters in *Striking 12* chooses to stay home on New Year's Eve to read *The Little Match Girl* by Hans Christian Andersen instead of going out with his friends. The fairytale magically comes to life through song and we learn a little more about Andersen himself when another character sings about Andersen's upbringing and work.



**Hans Christian Andersen
(1805-1875)**

Hans Christian Andersen is most famous for writing fairytales, including *The Little Match Girl*.

Andersen's other well-known fairy tales include *The Princess and the Pea*, *Thumbelina*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Emperor's New Clothes*, *The Ugly Duckling*, *The Red Shoes*, and *The Ice Maiden*.

Hans Christian Andersen was an only child, born in Odense, Denmark, on April 2, 1805. His father was a shoemaker and his mother was a washerwoman. Andersen's father died while he 11.

In 1819, Andersen moved to Copenhagen with hopes of becoming an actor and writer with the Royal Theatre. Though his work was initially rejected by the Theatre, he received support from one of its directors who instead arranged for Andersen to attend school.

His first published works were poetry. The success of his poetry allowed him to travel throughout Europe. His first collection of fairy tales was published in 1835.

Andersen was also a visual artist. He created drawings and collages, puppets and puppet stages. He excelled in paper cutting, often cutting illustrations of characters from his own stories.

About writing *The Little Match Girl*, Andersen said, "I received a letter from the editor of a Danish almanac for the people, in which he said he was very anxious to have something of mine for it. In the letter were two woodcuts, and these he wished to make use of, if only I would write something to which they might serve as illustrations. One was the picture of a little match-girl, exactly as I have described her. It was from the picture that I wrote the story—wrote it surrounded by splendor and rejoicing..."



THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL



Before seeing *Striking 12*, you may want to share the story of *The Little Match Girl* by Hans Christian Andersen with your class. As with many original versions of fairytales, Andersen's *The Little Match Girl* ends with a darker twist. If you decide to read in class, consider best ways to discuss this story's meaning with your students.

The Little Match Girl by Hans Christian Andersen, (1846)



It was terribly cold and nearly dark on the last evening of the old year, and the snow was falling fast. In the cold and the darkness, a poor little girl, with bare head and naked feet, roamed through the streets. It is true she had on a pair of slippers when she left home, but they were not of much use. They were very large, so large, indeed, that they had belonged to her mother, and the poor little creature had lost them in running across the street to avoid two carriages that were rolling along at a terrible rate. One of the slippers she could not find, and a boy seized upon the other and ran away with it, saying that he could use it as a cradle, when he had children of his own. So the little girl went on with her little naked feet, which were quite red and blue with the cold. In an old apron she carried a number of matches, and had a bundle of them in her hands. No one had bought anything of her the whole day, nor had anyone given her even a penny. Shivering with cold and hunger, she crept along; poor little child, she looked the picture of misery. The snowflakes fell on her long, fair hair, which hung in curls on her shoulders, but she regarded them not.

Lights were shining from every window, and there was a savory smell of roast goose, for it was New-year's eve—yes, she remembered that. In a corner, between two houses, one of which projected beyond the other, she sank down and huddled herself together. She had drawn her little feet under her, but she could not keep off the cold; and she dared not go home, for she had sold no matches, and could not take home even a penny of money. Her father would certainly beat her; besides, it was almost as cold at home as here, for they had only the roof to cover them, through which the wind howled, although the largest holes had been stopped up with straw and rags. Her

little hands were almost frozen with the cold. Ah! perhaps a burning match might be some good, if she could draw it from the bundle and strike it against the wall, just to warm her fingers. She drew one out—"scratch!" how it sputtered as it burnt! It gave a warm, bright light, like a little candle, as she held her hand over it. It was really a wonderful light. It seemed to the little girl that she was sitting by a large iron stove, with polished brass feet and a brass ornament. How the fire burned! and seemed so beautifully warm that the child stretched out her feet as if to warm them, when, lo! the flame of the match went out, the stove vanished, and she had only the remains of the half-burnt match in her hand.

She rubbed another match on the wall. It burst into a flame, and where its light fell upon the wall it became as transparent as a veil, and she could see into the room. The table was covered with a snowy white table-cloth, on which stood a splendid dinner service, and a steaming roast goose, stuffed with apples and dried plums. And what was still more wonderful, the goose jumped down from the dish and waddled across the floor, with a knife and fork in its breast, to the little girl. Then the match went out, and there remained nothing but the thick, damp, cold wall before her.

She lighted another match, and then she found herself sitting under a beautiful Christmas-tree. It was larger and more beautifully decorated than the one which she had seen through the glass door at the rich merchant's. Thousands of tapers were burning upon the green branches, and colored pictures, like those she had seen in the show-windows, looked down upon it all. The little one stretched out her hand towards them, and the match went out.

The Christmas lights rose higher and higher, till they looked to her like the stars in the sky. Then she saw a star fall, leaving behind it a bright streak of fire. "Someone is dying," thought the little girl, for her old grandmother, the only one who had ever loved her, and who was now dead, had told her that when a star falls, a soul was going up to God.

She again rubbed a match on the wall, and the light shone round her; in the brightness stood her old grandmother, clear and shining, yet mild and loving in her appearance. "Grandmother," cried the little one, "O take me with you; I know you will go away when the match burns out; you will vanish like the warm stove, the roast goose, and the large, glorious Christmas-tree." And she made haste to light the whole bundle of matches, for she wished to keep her grandmother there. And the matches glowed with a light that was brighter than the noon-day, and her grandmother had never appeared so large or so beautiful. She took the little girl in her arms, and they both flew upwards in brightness and joy far above the earth, where there was neither cold nor hunger nor pain, for they were with God.

In the dawn of morning there lay the poor little one, with pale cheeks and smiling mouth, leaning against the wall; she had been frozen to death on the last evening of the year; and the New-year's sun rose and shone upon a little corpse! The child still sat, in the stiffness of death, holding the matches in her hand, one bundle of which was burnt. "She tried to warm herself," said some. No one imagined what beautiful things she had seen, nor into what glory she had entered with her grandmother, on New-year's day.

One of the characters in *Striking 12* is selling strings of full spectrum light bulbs to help people with SAD. She hopes we can help people address increased sadness during the winter months. For some scientific background and some ideas about how to feel better during the winter, explore the following information about SAD with your class before seeing the show.

WHAT IS SAD?

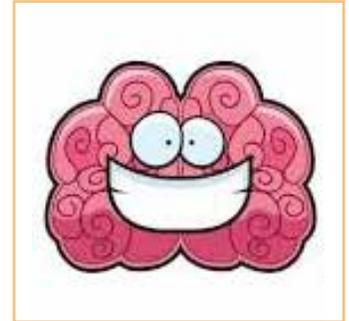
SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER

Seasonal Affective Disorder is a reason why some people might feel sadder, more tired—sometimes even depressed during the winter months.

Scientists believe the amount of sun we get during the winter can affect our internal body clocks—also known as Circadian Rhythm. Simply put, our internal body clocks are really a complex batch of chemicals in our brains that influence things like mood, appetite, and sleep.

The chemicals in our brains that are most highly impacted by how much sun we are exposed to are **Serotonin** and **Melatonin**.

When a person's brain notices it's darker out, Melatonin level increase, making a person sleepier. At the same time Serotonin levels drop, which might make a person feel less joyful. So when a person gets very little to no natural sunlight, they might have increased Melatonin and decreased Serotonin over a long period of time.



Serotonin
Affects mood



Melatonin
Regulates sleep

WHAT HELPS WITH SAD?

GET MORE NATURAL SUNLIGHT

When you don't need to be inside, go outside during the daytime hours. Play in the park, walk on the sunny side of the street, sit near windows when you are able if you need to be inside.

BE KIND TO YOURSELF

Get sleep on a consistent schedule. Keep your space clean. Eat regular, healthy meals. Exercise. Find activities you like to do in winter. Spend time with friends and family. Read your favorite book. Listen to your favorite music.

TALK TO SOMEONE YOU TRUST

Whether you are just feeling sad at the moment or if you think you might be sad because of the winter months, it's okay. Find an adult (like a teacher, parent, aunt, uncle, grandparent, etc.) you trust and share your feelings with them.

IDAHO CONTENT STANDARDS

Reading Standards for Literature that apply to *Striking 12* performance by Company of Fools

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

- Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
- **6th grade:** Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.
- **7th grade:** Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).
- **8th grade:** Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE

- Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
- **6th grade:** Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.
- **7th grade:** Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS

- Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
- **4th grade:** Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.
- **6th grade:** Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they "see" and "hear" when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.
- **7th grade:** Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).
- **8th grade:** Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.