



Kimberly Akimbo

a new musical

STUDY

GUIDE

Illustration by Anja Kunz



**Kimberly
Akimbo**
a new musical

WELCOME

Teachers are encouraged to use this guide to elicit student discussion before the show, guide them through aspects of the production, and engage them in activities once they return to the classroom.

Our goal is to help teachers utilize the production as a catalyst for student education, collaboration, and inspiration, incorporating these essential concepts:

- Embracing the here and now to live life fully
- The struggle to navigate high school relationships
- Defining who you are on your own terms
- Negotiating family dynamics
- Understanding characters' situations, actions, words, and points of view
- Contemplating characters' journeys in concert with personal experience

Kimberly Akimbo is a new musical about growing up and growing old (in no particular order). Kimberly is about to turn 16 and recently moved with her family to a new town in suburban New Jersey. Here, she is forced to navigate family dysfunction, a rare genetic condition, her first crush ... and possible felony charges. Ever the optimist, she is determined to find happiness against all odds and embark on a great adventure.

We hope that your students, inspired by the production, can learn from you and from each other through these activities. Enjoy the ride!



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CHARACTERS

Kimberly Levaco

A sixteen-year-old girl who suffers from a rare genetic condition that causes her to age rapidly. Despite her challenges, she is sharp-witted and resilient, navigating adolescence with humor and insight.

Seth Weetis

A teenage boy who befriends Kimberly at school. He is socially awkward but kind-hearted and is fascinated by word games. He sees beyond Kimberly's physical appearance to appreciate her intelligence and humor.

Buddy Levaco

Kimberly's loving but flawed father who is often unreliable and irresponsible. Buddy cares deeply for his daughter and wants to provide for her, even though he often falls short.

Pattie Levaco

Kimberly's overbearing and self-absorbed mother. Pregnant with her second child, she is well-meaning but often neglects Kimberly's needs due to her own preoccupations.

Aunt Debra

Kimberly's eccentric and scheming aunt always seems to find trouble, dragging others along with her. Despite her flaws, she has a soft spot for her niece and wants to help in her own unconventional ways.

Delia McDaniels

Often acting as the voice of reason among her friends, Delia is the leader of the show choir and dedicated to putting all of the important pieces together. She is compassionate and empathetic.

Martin Doaty

He is a bit shy, yet quite confident in his singing ability, eager to add some dynamics to his personality while not standing out too much.

Aaron Puckett

He is friendly and enjoys being part of the group, sometimes letting his thoughts get the better of him. Aaron is not always the brightest individual but means well.

Teresa Benton

She is bubbly, energetic, and often preoccupied with the typical concerns of a teenager. Despite her superficial demeanor, Teresa has moments of genuine kindness.



MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT ONE

“Skater Planet” - Aaron, Delia, Martin, Teresa, Seth, Kimberly

“Hello, Darling” - Pattie

“Make a Wish” - Kimberly

“Skater Planet (reprise #1)” - Aaron, Delia, Martin, Teresa

“Anagram” - Seth, Kimberly, Company

“Better” - Debra, Kimberly, Company

“Hello, Darling (reprise)/Father Time” - Pattie

“Happy For Her” - Buddy

“Anagram (reprise)” - Kimberly

“This Time” - Company

ACT TWO

“How to Wash a Check” - Debra, Kimberly, Seth, Aaron, Delia, Martin, Teresa

“Good Kid” - Seth

“Hello, Baby” - Buddy

“Skater Planet (reprise #2)” - Aaron, Delia, Martin, Teresa, Seth

“Our Disease” - Kimberly, Seth, Aaron, Delia, Martin, Teresa

“The Inevitable Turn” - Pattie, Buddy, Debra, Aaron, Delia, Martin, Teresa

“Now” - Seth, Kimberly

“How to Wash a Check (reprise)” - Debra, Aaron, Delia, Martin, Teresa

“Before I Go” - Kimberly, Buddy, Pattie

“Hello, Sister” - Kimberly, Seth

“Great Adventure” - Company



CREATING THE PRODUCTION

An Interview with David Lindsay-Abaire

What was the process like adapting your play into a musical?

The first step was simply talking with composer Jeanine Tesori about whether it was a good idea. It was actually her idea. We'd worked together on *Shrek The Musical* with many others involved. I said, "I'd love to write another musical with you, but maybe not with all of these other people involved." It's so much easier to write a play—just me. Jeanine suggested adapting one of my plays. At first, I resisted, thinking, "My plays are my plays." But she pulled *Kimberly Akimbo* off the shelf and believed it would make a good musical. She felt the characters had complicated internal lives, essential for a musical—you need characters who have a reason to sing.

Once we decided it was a good idea, we went through the play and asked, "Where might a song be?" It's called "song spotting." Musical theater songs aren't like pop songs; they start in one place and end in another, much like a scene. For example, Kim realizing she might like Seth became the song "Anagram." Interestingly, we didn't start at the beginning of the play; "Anagram" was actually the first song we wrote. "Father Time" was the second. One challenge was making Pattie, the mom, more sympathetic. I wanted a moment in the musical that wasn't in the play, showing the audience that Pattie's bad behavior stems from a fear of losing her daughter. That's how "Father Time" came about. We wanted to see Pattie when no one was around, singing to her baby at night, revealing her fears. These are just a couple of spots where we found songs might be. And then, many years later, we finished.

Were there any significant changes made during the process?

Yes, there were many changes. One of the biggest was adding the show choir kids. The play

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LINDSAY-ABAIRE
(Book, Lyrics,
Original Play)
is a playwright,
screenwriter, lyricist
and librettist. He
received Tony Awards
for Best Score
and Best Book of
a Musical for his
work on *Kimberly
Akimbo*.



has just five characters, so it was always going to be a small musical, but we wanted to open it up a bit because Kim's school life is integral to her character. In the play, we don't see her at school, so we wanted to explore her life outside the house. We didn't want to do "nerdy kids versus popular kids" because it feels like a trope. Instead, Jeanine and I decided the other kids should reflect Kim—outsiders like her and Seth, but on a slightly higher rung on the social ladder. They represent who Kim could be and who she'll never be, adding depth to the story.

The structure also changed a lot. Some changes corrected story elements in the play that I didn't like. When I first wrote it, I identified more with the teenage characters. I was new to parenthood and didn't fully understand what it was like to raise a teenager. I was really writing about my own teenage years and my relationship with my parents, not overtly, but there were things that bugged me about our relationship.

Years later, revisiting those characters as a parent with two teenage sons, I realized, "These parents aren't so terrible." They're still flawed, but I could now see the parents' perspectives more clearly. This allowed me to give Pattie a

CREATING THE PRODUCTION

song showing her fear and Buddy, despite his flaws, a deeper love for his daughter. It gave me more empathy for the parents, which I didn't have 20 years ago when I wrote the play.

A musical behaves differently. It allows you to access audiences and characters' emotions more directly. There's something magical about a song that opens you up emotionally, making it easier to connect with the characters in a way that's harder to achieve in a play.

Do you gravitate towards certain kinds of stories, characters, or situations in your writing?

Yeah, it's not deliberate, but looking back, I realize that it does. I read a quote where someone said, "Almost every writer goes back to a time when they were around 12 or 13." Maybe it's because puberty is happening, and we're changing. All our work often funnels from that time. I thought, "Who was I at 12 or 13? Is that true?" At that age, I got a scholarship to a private school in the suburbs. I grew up in a working-class neighborhood in Boston, so every day I'd leave my rough neighborhood and go to this beautiful campus. I felt like a complete outsider.

I realized that everything I've written is about an outsider in an upside-down world trying to figure out how they fit in. That's the common thread in all my work.

It's not deliberate, but Kimberly is obviously that. She's an outsider who's new to school, trying to reinvent herself. She says at the beginning, "I'm the new kid." That's Kimberly. But even in *Rabbit Hole*, which is my most serious drama, the theme is similar. It's about a woman whose life is perfect until her three-year-old is killed in an accident, turning her world upside down. She has to navigate her grief and redefine herself as a mother. *Shrek The Musical* is about an ogre who thinks he knows who he is until his world is turned upside down by fairytale creatures and a donkey who wants to be his friend. So, while *Shrek*, *Kimberly*, and *Rabbit Hole* are very different, they're all tied together by that same theme of an outsider seeking clarity. And that's who I was at 11.

What would you would you like young audiences to take away from Kimberly Akimbo?

I've never been a writer who likes to announce the message because everyone walks away with their own interpretation. But *Kimberly Akimbo* is fundamentally about living in the moment and appreciating the time you have because you don't know when it will end. I hope that's clear to everyone.

But more importantly for teenagers, I hope they take away the message to be who they are and find people who understand them. Kimberly spends most of the play trying to change her parents and get them to see her for who she is, not who they want her to be. She realizes she can't change them, so she finds the one person who truly sees her, Seth, and they go off on an adventure. I'm not advocating for teenagers to literally run away from their families, but to embrace who they are and find the people who know and accept them.

What advice would you have for aspiring young playwrights?

Two things are most important. First, always be a student. Even after all the writing I've done, I still ask questions and try to learn. Every time I see a show or read a play, I ask myself, "Do I like it? Why or why not? What's going on under the hood?" I think like a mechanic and a student. This mindset has always served me well. I read and watch as many plays as possible because it makes me a better writer.

Second, put yourself out there as much as possible. When I had plays to submit, I sent them to every contest, theater, and developmental workshop available. I got rejected 99% of the time. It's like playing the lottery. But eventually, I won. I got a production of an early play, and that led to more opportunities. You have to keep buying the lottery tickets and surround yourself with other creative people. Form a network, attend readings, and work with actors you want in your plays.

CREATING THE PRODUCTION

An Interview with Jeanine Tesori

What about the play Kimberly Akimbo “sang” to you?

What struck me about *Kimberly Akimbo*, much like *Fun Home*, was the contrast between the essence and the identity of the characters. There’s a significant difference between who these characters are and how the world perceives them. This gap often gives rise to the need to sing. In *Kimberly Akimbo*, everyone is misunderstood and ill-equipped to deal with their circumstances. Collaborating with the playwright was invaluable because he provided the foundation, allowing me to ask, “What were you thinking when you wrote this?” Initially, he wrote from a young perspective, similar to Kimberly’s. But when we revisited the material, we approached it from the vantage point of parents and middle-aged individuals. This evolution in perspective was fascinating. The characters sing from a place of great desire, loss, and hope.

Could you talk about a song or two that you “spotted” while creating the musical?

One song I’d highlight is Kim’s “Make a Wish.” It’s a prime example of what I’ve learned called “Scena”—a song that essentially includes a scene with a beginning, middle, and end. It’s an interior monologue where Kim sings about what she wants—to travel the world and experience everything—but what she truly needs is to feel safe and loved within a family. This realization propels the story forward. From that moment, Kim knows she

JEANINE TESORI (Music) is a composer of musical theatre, opera and film. She is a two-time Tony Award winner for Best Score, for Kimberly Akimbo with David Lindsay-Abaire and for Fun Home with Lisa Kron.



Photo Credit: Rodolfo Martinez

has to leave to find what she needs because she can’t find it where she is. The plot is set in motion when Debra arrives and introduces the mechanics of the story. Kim’s journey is defined in that first song.

Another song is “The Inevitable Turn.” David and I exchanged holiday horror stories and realized the true tragedy within dysfunctional families lies with the young people who don’t yet understand that things won’t change. They keep hoping that if they do things differently—get better grades, please their parents—things will improve. But the sad reality is that these families are stuck in their patterns, and no matter what the child does, the outcome remains the same. This endless, futile hope is what drives “The Inevitable Turn.”

What is the collaborative process like for you and David Lindsay-Abaire?

David is incredibly fun to talk to, which makes a huge difference. I’ve collaborated with

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many people, and sometimes, even if you don't get along, you can still work together. But with David, it's more like a marriage—a relationship. We enjoy spending time together, and in those moments, ideas emerge. He's taught me a lot about dramatic writing, and in turn, I've taught him about the relationship between music and storytelling.

David loves puzzles, much like Sondheim did. His mind works in a way that's all about solving problems, intricately piecing things together. I'm different in my approach, which is why we complement each other. When we started, we read the play separately, and I asked him why he wrote certain aspects, what he was thinking about each character. I liken it to conducting, where you understand each instrument's part to see the whole picture. Similarly, in a musical, you track each character's journey—what they want, what's challenging them, and whether they get what they desire. This approach allows us to explore and push the boundaries of the classic musical form, like we did with *Fun Home* and now with *Kimberly Akimbo*.

How do you see the music in Kimberly Akimbo contributing to the overall messages or themes of the show?

This is a tough one because I don't want to dictate how the music should be interpreted. I want the audience to feel the music, not just listen to it. Kim is a delicate character who must be tough because she looks much older than she is. When my daughter was 16, I noticed it was like a second toddlerhood—a time of discovering who she was, filled with whims and vulnerabilities. This phase inspired

the beginning of Kim's music, which has a marionette-like, almost Pierrot theme. It reflects the delicate dance of first crushes, balancing toughness with a tender heart. The music tries to capture that complexity within her.

What advice might you have for aspiring young composers?

The best advice I can give is to be part of a team. I learned a lot from playing sports—field hockey, lacrosse, volleyball—because theater is a team sport. It's about understanding that a good idea can come from anywhere.

Another piece of advice is to be a student of the world. Lead with curiosity. David has taught me the value of saying “maybe” instead of shutting down ideas immediately. It keeps possibilities open and allows ideas to evolve. Music is just one aspect; writing stories about people, observing human behavior and history, is crucial. Open your world to write for everyone—that's really important.



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How does the plot of *Kimberly Akimbo* explore the theme of aging and mortality? How do Kimberly's experiences as a teenager in an aging body shape the story?
2. What role does family dynamics play in the development of the plot? Describe how Kimberly's relationships with her parents and Aunt Debra influence her actions and decisions.
3. How does the plot balance elements of comedy and drama? Can you identify specific scenes or moments where this balance is particularly effective or impactful?
4. In what ways do the characters learn to appreciate the present moment despite their various challenges and uncertainties? How does this affect their relationships?
5. What changes in Kimberly's character from the beginning to the end of the musical? What key events or interactions contribute to her growth and development?
6. How does the character of Seth contribute to Kimberly's journey? Explain the qualities he brings out in her, and how their friendship evolves.
7. Describe the ways Kimberly's peers' relationships and behaviors towards one another affect her experience and sense of belonging.
8. What are the main characteristics of Kimberly's parents, and how do they each cope with her condition? How do their actions and attitudes affect Kimberly's sense of security and well-being?
9. How does the set design contribute to the overall atmosphere and tone of the musical? Are there specific design choices that stood out to you as particularly effective or symbolic?
10. Discuss the use of music and lyrics in *Kimberly Akimbo*. How do the songs help to develop the characters and advance the plot? Are there any musical numbers that you found especially memorable or poignant?
11. How does lighting design enhance the mood and emotional tone of specific scenes in the musical? Can you provide examples of how lighting was used to highlight key moments or shifts in the narrative?
12. Consider the costume design in *Kimberly Akimbo*. How do the costumes help define the characters and their personalities? Are there any particular costume choices that you think significantly contribute to the storytelling?



LANGUAGE ARTS

YOUR TASK: In the song “Make a Wish,” Kimberly uses vivid and specific details to communicate her desires to the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Her precise mentions of items like a “Dior dress,” “Jimmy Choos,” “Montserrat,” and “Mel Tormé” bring the song to life, making her wish unique and compelling. Think about something you would wish for or dream about, and create a narrative essay imagining and describing it as vividly as Kimberly does. Use as many specific and descriptive details as possible, using the prompts below to help guide you.

Part 1: Brainstorming

What is your dream or wish for the future? Describe it in one sentence: _____

Why is this dream or wish important to you? _____

What inspired this dream or wish? _____

Part 2: Details and Description

What does achieving your dream or wish look like? _____

Where are you? Describe the setting: _____

Who is with you? Mention any important people: _____

What are you doing? Describe the actions you are taking: _____

How do you feel? Describe your emotions: _____

What challenges might you face in achieving your dream or wish? _____

How will you overcome these challenges? _____

Part 3: Writing

On a computer, paper or the back of this worksheet, use the brainstorming and descriptive detailing you did above to write the dream out in full. Organize your ideas logically so they develop smoothly and flow from one idea to the next. Imagine what steps you could take and resources you’d need to achieve your dream. Share your dream with classmates. As an extension of this activity, you could create a visual representation of your dream or wish as a drawing, a collage, or a digital presentation.

STANDARDS ADDRESSED - CCSS Writing 9-12: 2, 3, 4, 5, 9 • Language 9-12: 1, 2, 3 • Speaking & Listening 6-12: 1, 4, 5



LANGUAGE ARTS

YOUR TASK: Seth tells Kimberly that he is a member of “The Junior Wordsmiths of America” and that anagrams are his specialty. An anagram is a word or phrase formed by rearranging the letters of another word or phrase, using all the original letters exactly once. Seth uses Kimberly’s full name and works through possibilities as the song “Anagram” progresses to finally come up with the anagram “Cleverly Akimbo.” Look at the selections below to explore anagrams and other games from what Seth calls the “puzzleistic arts.”

Anagram Phrases

Create an anagram for each phrase that relates to the original phrase.

Use all of the letters in the phrase and the hint to discover the related anagram.

EXAMPLE: Phrase: A gentleman (Hint: What might you call a well dressed gentleman?)

Anagram Phrase: elegant man

Phrase: The eyes (Hint: What can you say the eyes do?)

Anagram Phrase: _____

Phrase: Eleven plus two (Hint: What is another way to add up to 13?)

Anagram Phrase: _____

Phrase: Astronomer (Hint: What would you call an astronomer observing a bright object in the night sky?)

Anagram Phrase: _____

Phrase: The classroom (Hint: What is an older term for a teacher?)

Anagram Phrase: _____



Anagram Scramble

Unscramble the letters to make a word, and determine what the four words have in common:

THICKEN _____

BOREDOM _____

BEAN STEM _____

HAM ROBOT _____

Commonality: _____

(Hint: Think about areas of a house.)

MANY DO _____

SEA DUTY _____

SANDY WEED _____

YARD HUTS _____

Commonality: _____

(Hint: You’ll find them on a calendar.)

Fun with Anagrams

Choose a favorite word or phrase and create an anagram. Share it with the class and explain why you chose it. Word/Phrase: _____ Anagram: _____

Explanation: _____

Look up the other word games that Seth mentions “The Junior Wordsmiths of America” explores:

Palindromes

Definition: _____

Example(s): _____

Spoonerisms

Definition: _____

Example(s): _____

Scramble Answers: KITCHEN • BEDROOM • BASEMENT • BATHROOM □ MONDAY • TUESDAY • WEDNESDAY • THURSDAY
Phrases Answers: they see • twelve plus one • moon starter • schoolmaster

STANDARDS ADDRESSED - CCSS Writing 9-12: 2, 4, 5 • Reading 9-12: 4 • Language 9-12: 4, 5, 6 • Speaking & Listening 6-12: 1



LANGUAGE ARTS

YOUR TASK: In the song “Hello, Darling,” Pattie expresses her hopes and feelings to her unborn baby, just as Bobby does later. Write a letter from one character in *Kimberly Akimbo* to another. This letter should convey significant thoughts that one character wishes to share with another. You’ll be expressing that character’s point of view on a particular event in the production. It might be a friendly greeting, an apology, a question that needs answering, or something important they need to share or discuss. Read your letter to the class and compare messages and meanings.

Character Selection:

From which character is the letter being written? Character Name: _____

To which character is the letter addressed? Character Name: _____

Relationship and Context:

Describe the relationship between these two characters: _____

What recent events or interactions have occurred between these characters that might influence the letter? _____

Purpose of the Letter:

Why is the first character writing this letter? What do they want to communicate? _____

What emotions might the first character be feeling as they write this letter? (ex: anger, sadness, joy, confusion, etc.) _____

Key Points to Include:

List three important points or topics that the first character wants to address in the letter: _____

What specific details or examples support these points? _____

Character’s Voice and Tone:

Describe the tone of the letter. Is it formal, informal, apologetic, accusatory, etc.? _____

List some phrases or vocabulary that are typical of the first character’s way of speaking: _____

Now that you’ve outlined what you have to say, write the letter. Be sure to use the proper letter format with an opening greeting and a final message and signature. Organize your ideas and try to use the character’s “voice” as you write as much as possible. As an extension activity, you could write a response from the character you wrote to. You might even exchange letters with a classmate and respond to each other’s letters.

STANDARDS ADDRESSED - CCSS Writing 9-12: 3, 4, 5, 10 • Reading 9-12: 1,3 • Language 9-12: 1, 2 • Speaking & Listening 6-12: 1, 2, 3

SOCIAL STUDIES

YOUR TASK: One of the main themes in *Kimberly Akimbo* is embracing the here and now. Creating a time capsule offers a unique way to capture and document our present “here and now” in history. A time capsule is a curated collection of items, documents, and artifacts that represent a specific moment in time. As you carefully select artifacts and primary sources for your time capsule, you’ll gain a deeper appreciation for the world around you and how today’s experiences shape tomorrow’s history. Use the prompts below to plan, create, and present your own time capsule.



Research and Selection - Current Events Research:

Research significant events, cultural trends, technological advancements, and influential people from the current year (or a past year/decade). Year(s): _____

List at least five significant events or trends:

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____

Primary Sources: Find two primary sources (e.g., photographs, news articles, social media posts, videos) from the year(s). Describe each primary source and explain its significance.

Primary Source 1: _____

Description & Significance: _____

Primary Source 2: _____

Description & Significance: _____

Creating the Time Capsule

Artifacts Selection: Select four items that you would include in a time capsule:

Item 1: Description: _____ _____ Significance: _____ _____	Item 2: Description: _____ _____ Significance: _____ _____
Item 3: Description: _____ _____ Significance: _____ _____	Item 4: Description: _____ _____ Significance: _____ _____

Presentation

Prepare a 5-minute presentation to share your time capsule with the class. Summarize your research, the items selected, and their significance and be sure to use visual aids (e.g., images, physical items, slides) to enhance your presentation.

Extension activity: Write a 1-2 page essay explaining the importance of preserving history through time capsules. Discuss how the items you selected reflect the current historical context and the potential impact on future generations. Use evidence from your research and primary sources to support your analysis.

STANDARDS ADDRESSED - CCSS Writing 9-12: 2, 4, 5, 9 • Literacy RH 9-12: 1, 3 • Language 9-12: 1, 2, 3, 4 • Speaking & Listening 6-12: 4, 5, 6

SOCIAL STUDIES

YOUR TASK: In the song “The Inevitable Turn,” the Levaco family discusses how situations often take unexpected turns that dramatically change things. Similarly, history is full of major “turning points” that can alter its course, leading to new directions and outcomes. These pivotal moments significantly shape the present and influence future developments. Using the prompts below, analyze how these events have shaped the present and impacted future developments, gaining a deeper appreciation for how our past has shaped the world we live in today.

Choose one of the following turning points in American history. Conduct research to gather information about the event, its causes, effects, and historical context. Use a computer, paper or the reverse of this sheet to record your findings and share your findings with a classmate or the full class.

1. **The American Revolution**
2. **The Louisiana Purchase**
3. **The Civil War**
4. **The Great Depression**
5. **The Civil Rights Movement**
6. **Your Own Choice:** _____

- **Define the Turning Point:** Clearly and concisely explain what the turning point was and when it occurred.
- **Causes:** Identify and explain the primary causes of the turning point. Consider political, economic, social, and cultural factors.
- **Effects:** Describe the immediate and long-term effects of the turning point on American society, politics, and economy.
- **Historical Context:** Explain how the turning point fits into the broader context of American history. What events led up to it, and how did it shape subsequent events?
- **Primary Source Analysis:** Find one primary source related to your turning point (e.g., a speech, letter, or newspaper article). Summarize the source and explain its significance in understanding the event.
- **Multiple Perspectives:** Identify two different perspectives on the turning point. Compare and contrast these viewpoints, explaining the reasons for the differing interpretations.
- **Evaluation:** Assess the impact of the turning point on American history. Assess the impact of the turning point on American history. Do you believe it was a positive or negative development? Support your answer with evidence.

Extension Activity 1:

Write a persuasive essay arguing whether or not your chosen turning point was inevitable. Use evidence from your research to support your claims.

Extension Activity 2:

Select two historical turning points (e.g., *The Fall of the Berlin Wall* and *The American Revolution*).

Create a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the events in terms of causes, key figures, immediate outcomes, & long-term impacts. Write a brief paragraph summarizing the key similarities and differences between the two turning points. Discuss how each event influenced the course of history in unique ways.

STANDARDS ADDRESSED - CCSS Writing 9-12: 1, 2, 7 • Literacy RH 9-12: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 • Language 9-12: 1, 2 • Speaking & Listening 6-12: 1, 6

SCIENCE

YOUR TASK: Kim and Seth embark on an exciting journey, as depicted in the song “Great Adventure.” Kim’s character fully embraces the present moment, seizing the opportunity to embark on a safari within a theme park. Scientists often go out on “great adventures” or “expeditions” in order to help them answer questions, test hypotheses, and collect data. Utilize the prompts below and your imagination to create a scientific expedition. Choose a topic, plan where to go, what to do, and how to gather information. Think of it as a great adventure where you’ll make new discoveries.

Components of an Expedition:

Team: Scientists often work in teams with different expertise

(ex: biologists, geologists, engineers).

Planning: Detailed planning is crucial, including choosing a location, determining the goals, and preparing equipment.

Fieldwork: Collecting samples, making observations, and recording data in the field.

Analysis: After the expedition, the collected data is analyzed to draw conclusions and share findings.

Designing an Expedition:

In a group of 3-4 students, or on your own, design a scientific expedition on a topic of your choice. You should consider:

Objective: What scientific question or problem are you investigating? _____

Location: Where will the expedition take place (ex: rainforest, ocean, Mars, local park)? _____

Team: What roles will team members play? _____

Methodology: How will you collect data and what tools will you use (e.g., surveys, samples, observations)? _____

Expected Results: What do you hope to find or learn? _____

After designing, create a presentation or poster summarizing your expedition plan and present it to the class. Allow time for questions and feedback from your peers. Discuss the different expeditions, highlighting their creativity and feasibility with the class. Reflect on what you learned about the planning and execution of scientific expeditions.



SCIENCE

YOUR TASK: The students in Kim’s class present their pathogen research in the song “Our Disease.” Understanding how diseases affect our bodies and how the immune system works to protect us is crucial for maintaining health and preventing illness. Explore different types of diseases and investigate how vaccines and immune responses help defend against infections below, gaining insight into how your body responds to pathogens and the importance of immunity in keeping us healthy.

Types of Diseases

Define the following terms:

Infectious disease: _____

Non-infectious disease: _____

Draw a line to match the type of pathogen to the disease it causes:

DISEASE		PATHOGEN TYPE
Tuberculosis		Virus
Influenza		Bacteria
Athlete’s Foot		Parasite
Malaria		Virus
HIV/AIDS		Fungus



List three ways infectious diseases can be transmitted:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

The Immune System

Describe the primary function of each of the following components of the immune system:

White blood cells: _____

Antibodies: _____

Lymph nodes: _____

Spleen: _____

Thymus: _____

Vaccination and Immunity

What is a vaccine and how does it work? _____

Explain how herd immunity helps protect populations: _____

Explain the difference between active and passive immunity: _____

Disease/Pathogen Answers: Tuberculosis-Bacteria • Influenza-Virus • Athlete’s Foot-Fungus • Malaria-Parasite • HIV/AIDS-Virus

NGSS ADDRESSED: Biology • HS-LS1-2 • HS-LS1-3 • HS-LS1-4 • HS-LS1-6

THEATRE ARTS

YOUR TASK: In the song 'Happy for Her,' Buddy grapples with how he can help Kim, but his own desires keep getting in the way. Actors must understand their character's desires. Often a character's main motivation to achieve an objective can be stated in the form of a direct short expression or "mantra" of their desires beginning with "I want..." Consider the characters below and create a clear "mantra" for their wants in a specific scene from the production.

Kimberly Levaco

DESCRIBE THE SCENE: _____

STATE HER MANTRA: _____

WHAT OBSTACLE IS IN HER WAY? _____

Seth Weetis

DESCRIBE THE SCENE: _____

STATE HIS MANTRA: _____

WHAT OBSTACLE IS IN HIS WAY? _____

Buddy Levaco

DESCRIBE THE SCENE: _____

STATE HIS MANTRA: _____

WHAT OBSTACLE IS IN HIS WAY? _____

Pattie Levaco

DESCRIBE THE SCENE: _____

STATE HER MANTRA: _____

WHAT OBSTACLE IS IN HER WAY? _____

Aunt Debra

DESCRIBE THE SCENE: _____

STATE HER MANTRA: _____

WHAT OBSTACLE IS IN HER WAY? _____

Extension: Choose a character and work out what his/her motivation and mantra might be for the entire show. Share your mantras with your classmates and compare.

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS - **Theatre:** Creating, Performing, Responding, Connecting

THEATRE ARTS

YOUR TASK: Kimberly explains in “Before I Go” the history of her parents’ desire for a “girl [she’ll] never be.” Understanding a character’s history and backstory is crucial for actors as they prepare for a role. Before fully developing a character, actors should thoroughly research and incorporate these elements into their preparation. Choose a character from *Kimberly Akimbo* and explore the prompts below. Dive into the context of the play and understand the physical and psychological traits of your character to develop a plan for well-rounded and authentic portrayal.

Which character will you research: _____

Historical and Social Context

When and where is the play set? Describe the historical period and location.

Time Period: _____

Setting: _____

Major cultural events or social issues relevant to the time period: _____



Play Overview

Main themes and messages of the play: _____

Character Analysis

Character’s age, gender, and occupation/situation: _____

Character’s family and social background: _____

Key relationships with other characters: _____

Character Traits

List three to five adjectives that describe your character’s personality: _____

What are your character’s main motivations or goals? _____

Identify any major changes or developments your character undergoes throughout the play: _____

Physical Appearance and Mannerisms

Describe your character’s physical appearance: _____

Are there any specific mannerisms or physical traits your character exhibits? _____

Extension: Write a diary entry from your character’s perspective about a key event in the play or create a collage or mood board that visually represents your character.

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS - **Theatre:** Creating, Performing, Responding, Connecting

MUSIC

YOUR TASK: In the song “How to Wash a Check,” Aunt Debra insists that the choir add harmony to her refrain, “Nobody gets what they want,” to emphasize its message. Harmonic singing is a vital part of choral music that adds depth and beauty to any performance. By understanding intervals, building chords, and blending voices, you can elevate your singing and contribute to a richer, more cohesive sound. Explore the fundamentals of harmony and practice, creating your own harmonies, to help you build the skills necessary for effective harmonizing, and to make your singing life better.

Understanding Harmonies

What is Harmony?

Definition: Harmony is the combination of different musical notes played or sung simultaneously to produce a pleasing sound.

Example: When a choir sings in harmony, different sections (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) sing different notes that complement each other.

Types of Harmonies:

Consonant Harmonies: Harmonies that sound pleasant and stable.

Dissonant Harmonies: Harmonies that sound tense and unstable.

Building Harmonies

Triads:

Definition: A triad is a set of three notes that can be stacked in thirds.

Example: C major triad consists of C (root), E (third), and G (fifth).

Exercise 1: Write the triads for the following chords:

G Major: _____

D Major: _____

A Minor: _____

Intervals:

Definition: The distance between two notes.

Types of Intervals: Unison, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Octave.

Exercise 2: Identify the intervals in the following pairs of notes:

C to E: _____

G to B: _____

A to F: _____

Practicing Harmonies

- **Singing in Parts:** Choose a simple song and divide it into soprano, alto, tenor, and bass parts. Practice singing your part while listening to the others.
- **Ear Training:** Listen to a recording of a choral piece. Identify the different harmonies being used. Write down the sections where you hear consonant and dissonant harmonies.
- **Creating Harmonies:** Take a melody line and create harmonies for it. Use triads and intervals to guide your harmonization. Write down your harmonized version.

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS - **Music:** Performing, Creating, Responding, Connecting



MUSIC

YOUR TASK: Delia, Martin, Aaron and Teresa are highly motivated to create a competition winning performance with their show choir. Show choir combines the best of both worlds – singing and dancing – to create a performance that’s full of energy, emotion, and precision. It’s a unique art form that requires teamwork, creativity, and a lot of passion. Using the material and prompts provided below, brainstorm, detail, and plan a choreographed show choir presentation for the selection from “Great Adventure.”

[KIMBERLY]

We’re on a great adventure
Don’t know what we’re gonna find
When leaving what’s behind behind
But you are by my side

[SETH]

At last, a great adventure
Don’t know where the road will bend
Or when we’re gonna reach the end

[KIMBERLY & SETH]

So just enjoy the ride
Because no one gets a second time around

[SETH]

Sadly

[KIMBERLY & SETH]

No one gets a second time around
We’re sailing

[SHOWCHOIR]

We are sailing

[KIMBERLY & SETH]

To a distant shore

[SHOWCHOIR]

To a distant shore, ooh

[KIMBERLY]

Don’t know if we’ll catch a breeze or
Encounter stormy seas but

[KIMBERLY & SETH]

You will be my crew

[PATTIE & BUDDY]

We’re sailing

[SHOWCHOIR]

We are sailing

[PATTIE & BUDDY]

To a new world

[SHOWCHOIR]

To a new world, oh

[DEBRA]

Don’t know how the waves will flow
Or which-a-way the wind will blow

[KIMBERLY, PATTIE, BUDDY & DEBRA]

So just enjoy the view

Because no one gets a second time around

Detail your Choreography for lines here as you go through the song:

Planning your presentation:

1. What formations and transitions will you use to keep the routine visually interesting?

2. What costumes might complement your choreography?

3. Do you need any props, and how will they be integrated into the performance?

4. How will you gather feedback from performers and observers to improve the routine?

5. What strategies will you use to address challenges or difficulties that arise during rehearsals?

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS - **Music:**
Performing, Creating, Responding, Connecting

RESOURCES

HEAR YOUR SONG

To support children and teens with serious illnesses and complex health needs through the arts, visit KIMBERLY AKIMBO's partner, Hear Your Song, at www.hearyoursong.org.

Hear Your Song, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that empowers children and teens with serious illnesses and complex health needs to make their voices heard through collaborative songwriting. Hear Your Song provides power and choice—and a microphone—to young people with a wide range of diagnoses, both physical and mental health conditions, that so often deprive them of both power and choice in their day-to-day lives. At Hear Your Song, we believe that every young person deserves the chance to define themselves on their own terms.

In kid-driven, trauma-informed songwriting sessions, Hear Your Song volunteers work with youth participants to guide them through the process of writing their own songs about anything they want, from loving pasta to living with epilepsy. Youth songwriters write all their own lyrics and generate ideas for musical style, instrumentation, and tempo. Volunteer composers and musicians then use those ideas to set the words to music and record the song exactly as the songwriter imagined it to be heard, celebrated and shared. Some youth songwriters just write their lyrics and others choose to sing on the recording themselves and to compose and produce their own music — the journey is up to them!

Images from the collaboration concert between KIMBERLY AKIMBO and Hear Your Song:



RESOURCES

THE PRODUCTION

WEB

OFFICIAL BROADWAY SITE: <https://kimberlyakimbothemusical.com/>

SOCIAL MEDIA

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/AkimboMusical/>

INSTAGRAM: <https://www.instagram.com/akimbomusical/>

X: <https://x.com/akimbomusical>

TIKTOK: <https://www.tiktok.com/@akimbomusical>

YouTube:

How to Create a Musical: Story | Kimberly Akimbo

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8cZ-loGm_s

How to Create a Musical: Music & Lyrics | Kimberly Akimbo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JRqfG4SYzoU>

How to Create a Musical: Direction & Choreography | Kimberly Akimbo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8hilNaVUkYo&t=23s>

How to Create a Musical: Scenic & Sound Design | Kimberly Akimbo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRVgCCJUT7k>

How to Create a Musical: Costumes & Lighting | Kimberly Akimbo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GdWZ0kjiUGI&t=51s>