

# Mrs. Doubtfire

The New Musical Comedy



## Resource Guide

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# HELLOOOO!

## Broadway is back!



Thank you for coming to *Mrs. Doubtfire* and supporting live performance.

This resource guide was created for teachers. It is broken up into four sections and is modular to fit your needs. There is dramaturgical information that you can share with your class, as well as activities (that can be done in groups or individually) to explore the themes and content of the show in a deeper way.

*Mrs. Doubtfire* is a show about love and the lengths we will go to for our family. On behalf of the entire Broadway community, we would like to thank you for supporting live theater and being a part of the Broadway family. Please enjoy the show!

# KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Daniel Hillard, a struggling, out-of-work actor, will do anything for his kids. After losing custody in a messy divorce, he creates the kindly alter ego of Scottish nanny Euphegenia Doubtfire in a desperate attempt to stay in their lives. As his new character takes on a life of its own, Mrs. Doubtfire teaches Daniel more than he bargained for about how to be a father. A hilarious and heartfelt story about holding onto your loved ones against all odds, *Mrs. Doubtfire* is the musical comedy we need right now — one that proves we're better together.

## Meet the Hillards!



**Miranda Hillard**  
played by Jenn Gambatese



**Daniel Hillard**  
played by Rob McClure



**Frank Hillard**  
played by Brad Oscar



**Christopher Hillard**  
played by Jake Ryan Flynn



**Lydia Hillard**  
played by Analise Scarpaci



**Natalie Hillard**  
played by Avery Sell



**André Mayem**  
played by J. Harrison Ghee

# CREATIVE TEAM

## MUSIC AND LYRICS

**Wayne Kirkpatrick**  
**AND Karey Kirkpatrick**  
(Tony Award®-nominated  
team behind *Something Rotten!*)

## LIGHTING DESIGNER

**Philip S. Rosenberg**

## SCENIC DESIGNER

**David Korins**  
(Tony Award nominee of  
*Hamilton* and *Beetlejuice*)

## DIRECTOR

**Jerry Zaks**  
(four-time Tony Award winner  
and director of *Hello, Dolly!*)

## SOUND DESIGNER

**Brian Ronan**  
(Tony Award winner  
of *Beautiful*)

## COSTUME DESIGNER

**Catherine Zuber**  
(Tony Award winner of *My Fair  
Lady* and *The King and I*)

## BOOK

**Karey Kirkpatrick**  
**AND John O'Farrell**

## CHOREOGRAPHER

**Lorin Latarro**  
(*Waitress*)



# FUN FACTS

*Mrs. Doubtfire* is based upon the 1993 Twentieth Century Studios Motion Picture of the same name which was based on the 1987 novel written by Anne Fine known as *Alias Madame Doubtfire* in the US.



Actor Rob McClure transforms from Daniel Hillard to Mrs. Doubtfire with the help of three dressers lovingly called “Team Effie”! In the movie version, Robin Williams’ makeup took over four hours to do each day—see how long it takes in the show!



*Mrs. Doubtfire* had only three preview performances before the Broadway shutdown. During the pandemic, the cast met monthly over Zoom to keep in touch.



## Pre-show Questions:

Have you seen the 1993 movie *Mrs. Doubtfire* starring Robin Williams?

When is the last time you saw a live performance?

What do you expect to see? What do you hope to see?

**Note:** This show explores themes of divorce, separation, and family. According to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, about half of all marriages in the United States will end in divorce.

# Studio Lot to Broadway



“A lot of people say, ‘Why a musical? What makes Mrs. Doubtfire sing?’ Our composers have found the perfect places in this story to sing. I think they started from the struggle that the kids are going through,” explains leading man Rob McClure. “I think the score and the music and the sound of the show was birthed out of what’s going on for those kids in the midst of this chaos.”

*Mrs. Doubtfire* is a beloved movie classic but not necessarily a movie about which you would immediately think, “This belongs on Broadway!” Think like a producer by choosing a classic movie and making the case as to why it should be a musical. This activity can be done individually or in groups.

## DIRECTIONS

1. What movie would you make into a musical and why? What makes this movie right for the live stage? Why would you add music?
2. Once you have decided what movie you would like to adapt, create a pitch deck. A pitch deck is a presentation (good slides or Powerpoint work great!) with words and images/pictures to help others understand your vision.

It should include:

- Name of the movie
- Reasons why you think it should become a live performance, why it would be successful, and why you believe it should be made.
- Dream cast: who would you like to star in your show?
- Dream creative team: Who would you like to write the music? Design? Choreograph?
- Style and tone of reimagined show

Your pitch deck should have a color palette and design aesthetic that matches the feeling of the musical you would like to make.

3. Present your pitch to the Studio Executives in the room (the other students).

# THE LIFE OF AN ACTOR

## Meet the Hillards

(and the actors who play them!)



### Natalie Hillard

(youngest)

Actor Name: Avery Sell (age 12)

I was 5 years old when I was cast in my first professional production. But I've been singing, dancing, and acting since I was born.

Fun fact: I love avocados!

First role: *Meet Me in St. Louis* as Tootie Smith

I am most excited about FINALLY making my Broadway debut as "Natalie Hillard", and being reunited with our amazing cast, crew and creative team!

One of my favorite parts of the show is when we meet Mrs. Doubtfire for the first time. The audience reaction is always priceless!

My advice for other actors is to always DREAM BIG and stay humble!



### Christopher Hillard

(middle)

Actor Name: Jake Ryan Flynn (age 14)

I was 5 years old when I started acting.

Fun fact: I was named after the character Jake Ryan in the movie *Sixteen Candles*.

First role: Tiny Tim in *A Christmas Carol*

I am most excited about hearing the audience's reaction and feeling their energy again.

My favorite part to perform is when I discover my dad is actually Mrs. Doubtfire. It gets such a great reaction and big laugh

My advice is to always be yourself! There is only one you, so just bring that into your audition and role.



### Lydia Hillard

(oldest)

Actor Name: Analise Scarpaci (age 22)

Fun fact: I am a HUGE New York Giants fan!

First role: Munchkin in *The Wizard of Oz*  
I had a line ;)

I can't wait to be in a room with my *Doubtfire* family and make art. Musicals have had my heart since I could walk and talk so I've been itching to work on our show again and to bring Lydia back to life with my favorite humans!

My favorite part in *Mrs. Doubtfire* to perform is definitely "Just Pretend." which is a song I sing with Rob McClure who plays my dad in the show! I love this song and this moment for so many reasons, but mainly because it's a moment where Lydia gets the chance to truly share her feelings about her parents' divorce. I think a lot of people can relate or know someone who can relate to how she feels, and I am honored to represent those people.

Being an actor is about showing your truest self. No one wants to see a made-up version of you! And never turn your back on what you believe in! Always put your dreams and your beliefs before anyone else's—otherwise you won't be happy!

# Creating a Character



In the show opening of *Mrs. Doubtfire*, you will see Daniel Hillard perform multiple characters including (but not limited to) a pirate, a German fashion designer, an alien, and Porky Pig! The character of Daniel Hillard is an actor (very meta!). An actor is someone who changes their voice and body to become different characters. An impressionist is someone who studies the speed, tone, rhythm, and physicality of a person and copies those things to do an impression of that person/character.

## Warm up like an actor!

### VOICE

Tongue twisters are a great way to warm up the mouth, lips, and tongue.

Repeat these tongue twisters five times fast:

Toy boat  
Red leather, yellow leather  
Unique New York  
She sells seashells by the seashore

### BODY

Lead a stretch and share.

Each person gets a turn to suggest a **stretch** that everyone can do. While they are stretching, students can chat and **share** what's on their minds.

## Now it's your turn!

- Choose a celebrity whom you admire.
- Think about seeing the world through their eyes.
- Study the way they speak and move. *Do they use their hands when they talk? What are they doing with their face? Where do their eyes look? Do they pause between words?*
- Choose a line that they are known for saying, and practice saying the line the way they say it.
- Record yourself saying the line, and watch it back. Watch yourself critically, and adjust how you say it.
- Perform your impression for a friend!

### Have you seen these impressionists?

Jay Pharoah, Melissa Villaseñor, Ariana Grande (check out her “Wheel of Musical Impressions” on “The Tonight show” with Jimmy Fallon!)



# MAY THE FARCE BE WITH YOU

Is it realistic to think that Daniel Hillard’s wife and kids wouldn’t recognize him dressed up as an old lady? Probably not. But that’s what makes the scenario so fun! *Mrs. Doubtfire* is considered a family comedy. One of the elements of a family comedy is farce. A farce is a comedy that seeks to entertain the audience through situations that are highly exaggerated, extravagant, ridiculous, absurd, and improbable. If you see heavy use of physical humor; the use of deliberate absurdity or nonsense; satire, parody, and mockery of real-life situations, people, events, and interactions—chances are you are watching a farce!

The director of *Mrs. Doubtfire*, Jerry Zaks, is an expert in farce. He even won a Tony Award in 1989 for his direction of *Lend Me a Tenor* (a well-known farce)! During Rehearsals the director and actors explored how to entirely invest in what they are trying (ridiculous as it may seem) with the highest stakes possible. Characters can do off-the-wall things because they are desperate to change their circumstances.

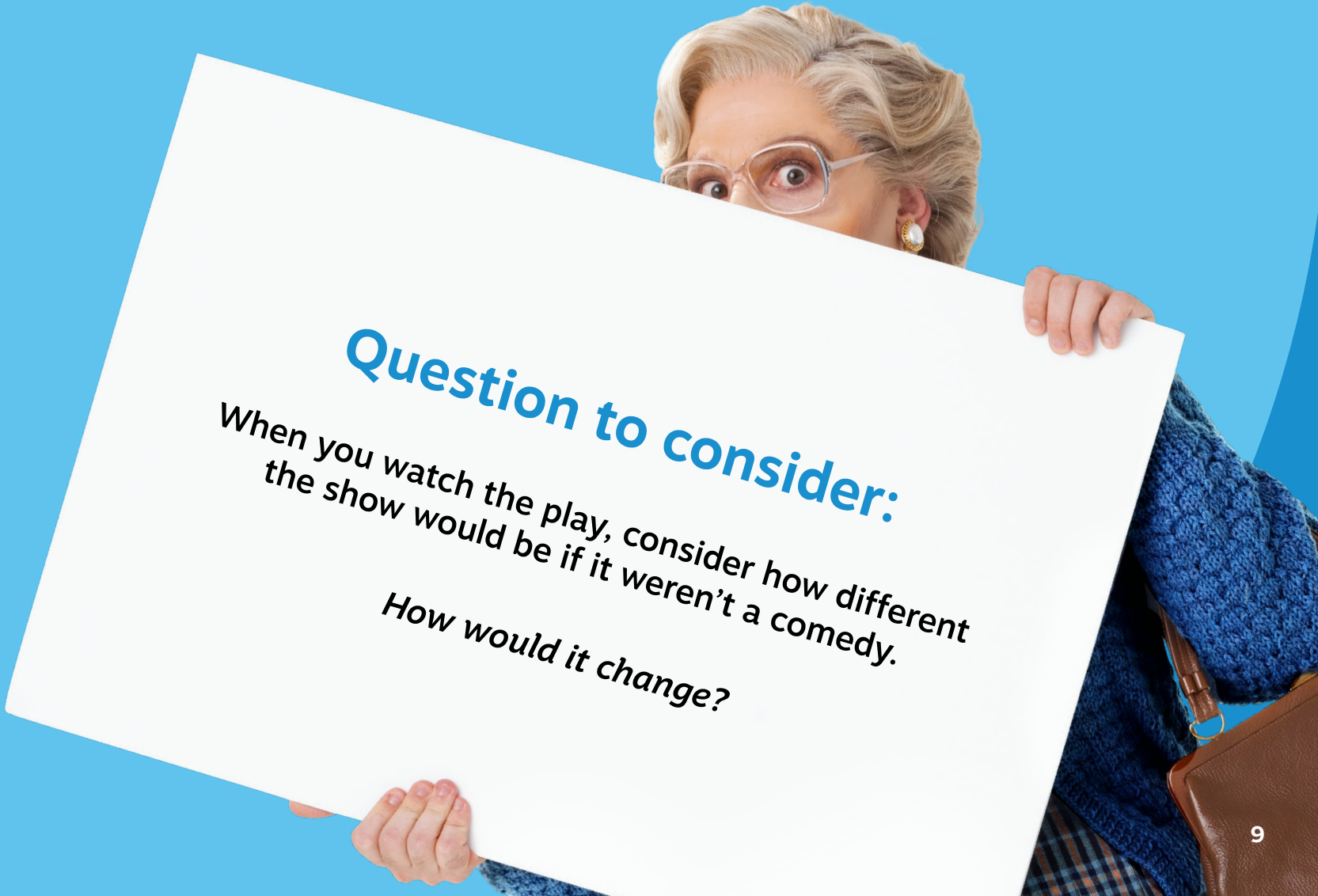
## FARCE IN DRAMATIC LITERATURE

*The Importance of Being Earnest*  
by Oscar Wilde

*The Taming of the Shrew*  
by William Shakespeare

*She Stoops to Conquer*  
by Oliver Goldsmith

Have you read or heard  
of any of these?

A photograph of Mrs. Doubtfire (Roberta Flack) from the movie Mrs. Doubtfire. She is wearing her signature blonde wig, glasses, and a blue knitted sweater. She is holding a large white sign in front of her face, with only her eyes and part of her face visible above the sign.

### Question to consider:

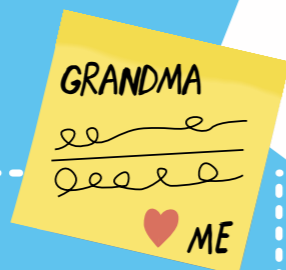
When you watch the play, consider how different  
the show would be if it weren't a comedy.

How would it change?

# What makes your family special?

## Pop-Up Activity 1 Selfless Acts

At the thought of not being able to see his children, Daniel Hillard went to great lengths to keep them in his life. Take a moment to consider what kind of selfless act your or your family members have done for each other. Write a note to one of your family members thanking them and letting them know how important they are to you.



Family can look like so many things; it can include blood relatives and chosen family. Now more than ever, everyone's sense of family is expanding and we understand the value of family. These pop-up activities encourage you to reflect on who your family is (either blood, chosen or both) and engage in exercises exploring those relationships.

## Pop-Up Activity 2 Gratitude Jar

Sometimes we forget what we should be thankful for. Set up a jar or container in your room, and every time you are feeling gratitude for your family write it down on a piece of paper and put it in your gratitude jar. Encourage all the members of your family to participate! At the end of the year, read the pieces of paper together as a family.

My dad made chocolate chip pancakes.



## Pop Up Activity 3 Your Version of a Family Tree

There is no one way a family should look, be, or feel. *Mrs. Doubtfire* celebrates all kinds of families and promotes the message that as long as there is love, everything will be alright. *Who do you consider to be your family?* Write it down on a piece of paper, and make a piece of art celebrating all of the important people in your life. Include pictures of them and memories that you have with them. This is something that you will cherish in years to come!

My sister helped me with my math homework.



# PERFORMANCE REFLECTION

## Review / Theater

### Be a Theater Critic

Receiving a positive or negative review can affect a show's chances of success. What did **you** think of *Mrs. Doubtfire*? Write a review letting your readers know what you thought of the show.

Your theater review should include:

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This should include the name of the play, the playwright, where the performance was, and the date of the show.

#### **PLOT**

Give a brief description of the story.

#### **THEMES AND ISSUES**

Outline the important themes and issues of the play. Discuss the director's interpretation of the story and how the style and form of the play communicates its themes.

#### **ANALYZE CHARACTERS**

Describe and analyze the characters. Talk about the characters' motivation or objectives.

#### **EVALUATE THE PERFORMERS**

Highlight standout performers and evaluate their performances.

#### **ELEMENTS OF THE PRODUCTION**

Discuss how effective you think the use of sound, lighting, sets and costumes were in the performance.



### Performance Reflection:

After the show, your students may want to discuss their opinions of the performance. Reflecting on the show is a vital part of the theater-going experience. Here are some questions to guide your conversation:

*What did you like?*

*What did you notice?*

*What do you wonder?*

*What was the story about?*

*Do you agree with what Daniel Hillard did? Why or why not?*

*Did you connect to this story? If so, how?*

*How did the show make you feel?*

# Mrs. Doubtfire

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## SOURCES

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