



**EDUCATION KIT**

# Wicked

The untold true story of the Witches of Oz

# WICKED

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# WICKED

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## ◆ INTRODUCTION ◆

### Welcome to WICKED!

Gregory Maguire's novel, *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West* (1995) was based on L. Frank Baum's novel *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* and the 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz*, and explored the untold story of the *Wicked Witch of the West*. The musical *WICKED* (2003), with its book by Winnie Holzman and music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz, is based on this revised telling of the classic tale of Oz.

This musical provides students with a unique opportunity to explore the wonderful world of Oz and its characters from different perspectives. This production is not only entertaining, but also serves as a powerful tool for education.

This resource will serve as a guide to allow teachers and students to engage with the marvelous story of *WICKED*. For full *WICKED* materials and individual activity pages visit [WickedTheMusical.com.au/education](http://WickedTheMusical.com.au/education)

### SUBJECTS AND GENERAL CAPABILITIES

This guide has been prepared in order to help you explore this musical with your students, tying in with the Australian Curriculum, including the subject areas of **English, Humanities & Social Sciences**, and **the Arts**, as well as the **General Capabilities of Literacy, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability** and **Ethical Understanding**.

### KEY THEMES

This guide contains activities and points of discussion that will assist you in exploring the themes of **'good versus wicked', 'appearances and differences', 'friendship', 'popularity', and 'propaganda and critical thinking'**. This educational guide includes activities and materials for Years 7-12. Before seeing the musical, teachers are encouraged to ensure they have researched the content of the musical to ensure suitability for their contexts and students. Teachers are invited to select the activities in this guide that are suitable for their contexts and students, and these may be used either prior to seeing *WICKED* or after seeing the musical.

### SCHOOL BOOKINGS

Great prices available for schools - \$60.90 per student for Wednesday and Thursday performances and Sunday evening performances subject to availability. Schools will receive one complimentary teacher's ticket per 12 paid students.

For all **Sydney School Group bookings** please visit <https://shops.ticketmasterpartners.com/wicked-school-groups> or email the Ticketmaster Groups team: [groups@ticketmaster.com.au](mailto:groups@ticketmaster.com.au)

For all **Melbourne School Group bookings** please call (03) 9299 9873 or email the Marriner's Groups team: [groups@marrinergroup.com.au](mailto:groups@marrinergroup.com.au) or visit <https://premier.ticketek.com.au/shows/show.aspx?sh=WICKEDGP>



The Cast of *Wicked*, Broadway Production.  
Photographer: Joan Marcus

# WICKED

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## ◆ SYNOPSIS ◆

### ACT I

Glinda, the Good Witch of the North, announces to the citizens of Oz that Elphaba, the green-skinned Wicked Witch of the West, is dead. We go back in time: young Elphaba and her sister Nessarose (who uses a wheelchair), daughters of the Governor of Munchkinland, arrive at Shiz University. Elphaba and Galinda clash immediately when Elphaba is invited to join headmistress Madame Morrible's sorcery class, and Galinda is not. Elphaba, excited and surprised to discover she might have a talent for magic, imagines what it would be like to meet the Wizard. The students settle into their routine at Shiz; roommates Elphaba and Galinda loathe each other. Galinda and the other students pay little attention to their history professor, Doctor Dillamond, a talking goat. Only Elphaba is troubled by his warning that, throughout Oz, talking Animals are losing their ability to speak. Fiyero, a Winkie prince, arrives at Shiz, and invites Galinda to a dance. She accepts, and to evade her persistent Munchkin admirer, Boq, Galinda convinces him to escort Nessarose. When a grateful Elphaba gets Galinda into sorcery class, Galinda decides to give Elphaba a social makeover. Elphaba is distraught when Doctor Dillamond is arrested and taken away by the authorities. When she witnesses a government official experimenting on a caged lion cub, Elphaba's anger releases a spell, freezing everyone in the room. When Elphaba and Fiyero free the terrified lion in the woods, Elphaba learns to her surprise that she is attracted to Fiyero. Madame Morrible informs Elphaba she's been invited to the Emerald City to meet the Wizard; Elphaba invites Galinda along. Under the pretence of testing her magical skill, the Wizard tricks Elphaba into creating an enchanted army of spies for him. Elphaba is shocked to realise that the Wizard has encouraged anti-Animal sentiment to strengthen his own political support. As Madame Morrible denounces her to the public as a "wicked witch", Elphaba vows to fight the Wizard's injustice.



*Brittney Johnson, Lindsay Pearce, Broadway  
Production. Photographer: Joan Marcus*

# WICKED

The untold true story of the Witches of Oz

## ◆ SYNOPSIS ◆

### ACT II

Act II begins with Glinda and Madame Morrible, now part of the Wizard's administration, announcing Glinda's plan to marry Fiyero, who is in charge of the hunt for Elphaba, a position he took on so he could find her. Glinda appears happy, but has paid a price for her success. In Munchkinland, Nessarose has become Governor. She has grown bitter and cruel, earning her the nickname "The Wicked Witch of the East". Elphaba comes to Nessarose seeking aid, but they quarrel and go their separate ways. Elphaba returns to the Emerald City, where the Wizard tries to persuade her to join him in ruling Oz; she is tempted, but refuses. After crossing paths in the Emerald City, Elphaba and Fiyero have fallen in love and plan their life together. Elphaba sees a disturbing vision of a flying house and rushes to Munchkinland, only to discover that Nessarose has been crushed. Glinda and Elphaba confront each other; when Fiyero tries to intervene, an angry mob rushes him off. Elphaba vows to become truly wicked, since her good intentions bring only suffering. Meanwhile, the citizens of Oz set out to destroy her.



*Talia Suskauer, Broadway Production.  
Photographer: Joan Marcus*

# CHARACTERS



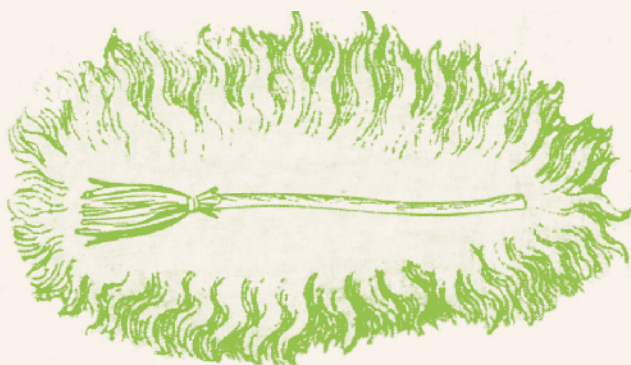
## Elphaba

Gregory Maguire created the name "Elphaba" using the first letters of the name of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*'s author: **L. Frank Baum**. The first thing you notice about Elphaba is her skin colour – an unconventional shade of green. Somewhat stubborn, she is a strong character of high moral standing and is not afraid to stand up for what she believes is right and rise above any taunts she may receive. Elphaba is a naturally good judge of character and has a caring nature, revealed through her love of Animals and the support she gives to her sister, Nessarose, who uses a wheelchair. She is a brilliant student with a rather exceptional gift for magic that she tries to hide. Although Elphaba is the eldest daughter of the Governor of Munchkinland, she knows that her green complexion will make it impossible for her to ever take over the role of Governor. That role will be reserved for her father's favourite – her younger sister, Nessarose. Elphaba's origins are shrouded in mystery, but we do know that her mother received a strange visitor before she was born. At Shiz University, Elphaba is a brilliant student with magical gifts that she tries to hide. Because of her green skin, the students, including her roommate Galinda, shun her. Elphaba's momentous meeting with the Wizard in the Emerald City sets her on the fateful path whereby she becomes "wicked".



## Galinda / Glinda

Beautiful, popular and privileged, Galinda is a bit of a snob and is used to getting everything she wants. Not always as sugary sweet as her appearance would suggest, she leads the class in making rude remarks about Elphaba and is not afraid to use others to her advantage. She ignores her conscience and is swayed by temptation to join the Wizard's administration and elevate her position in Oz. Galinda couldn't have had a happier upbringing in the Upper Uplands. She is the stereotypical picture of a golden girl – perfectly dressed and poised – to which everyone else aspires. At Shiz University, rooming with Elphaba challenges Galinda's good will. However, the two eventually become friends ... then enemies. Glinda (who changes her name in deference to Doctor Dillamond, who always mispronounces it) joins forces with the Wizard and Madame Morrible, who unilaterally declare Elphaba to be "wicked". Ultimately, Glinda sees the truth about Elphaba.



# CHARACTERS



## The Wizard

Elevated with little qualification or experience to the revered position of 'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz', the Wizard craves admiration and glory. Calculating and manipulative, his politics might be more accurately described as 'smoke and mirrors'. He stirs up fear amongst the citizens of Oz, who look to him for security and hold him in higher regard than he deserves. Not a lot is known of the Wizard's life before he came to Oz by hot-air balloon, but once there, he certainly makes an impression. The Wizard adds showbiz panache to the Emerald City and starts restricting Animal rights. Crossing paths with Elphaba was the beginning of the Wizard's downfall. Exploiting *The Grimmerie* and Elphaba's magic powers, he tricks her into giving his monkey servant, Chistery, wings.



## Fiyero

Fiyero is a handsome Winkie prince without a care in the world, except for himself and having fun. He's had it easy in life, usually gets what he wants and can get away with anything. On the surface he's very shallow but Elphaba uncovers his much deeper, thoughtful side, allowing him to realise what he truly wants in life. When he comes to Shiz University, Fiyero brings his "scandalacious" reputation for always getting booted out of schools and his view that one should "keep dancing through life". However, his life is changed by a friendship with Elphaba, then his reluctant alliance with the Wizard and tentative engagement to Glinda. Ultimately, when it comes to choosing between Glinda and Elphaba, Fiyero gets serious and makes a risky decision.



## Madame Morrible

When we first meet her, Madame Morrible is the Headmistress at Shiz University. There, she's an eccentric but likeable mother-figure to the students. She teaches sorcery to Glinda and Elphaba. However, Madame Morrible makes a startling career move when she becomes the Wizard's press secretary. She amasses great power, which she abuses mightily. Part of Madame Morrible's diabolical propagandising includes labelling Elphaba as "wicked".



# CHARACTERS



## Boq

Boq is a Munchkin. He attends Shiz University, where he falls hopelessly in love with Galinda. Galinda barely knows he exists. As a favour for Galinda, for whom he would do anything, Boq escorts Elphaba's sister, Nessarose, who uses a wheelchair, to the Ozdust Ballroom dance. Nessarose mistakenly thinks Boq is in love with her. When Nessarose becomes the Governor of Munchkinland, she retains Boq as a servant. His life is utterly changed when Elphaba comes back to visit. Boq, along with Fiyero and the lion cub, provide one of the significant links back to the original story of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.



## Doctor Dillamond

Doctor Dillamond is *WICKED*'s main Animal representative and its most passionate civil rights defender. Unlike most of the other Animals represented in the production (including an Animal midwife and monkey servants), Doctor Dillamond occupies a position of authority as a respected historian at Shiz University. Yet, even he falls before the repressive policies of the Wizard, who has convinced Ozians that allowing Animals to talk and enjoy social equality is dangerous.



## Nessarose

Nessarose Thropp is Elphaba's sister. She is the "tragically beautiful" daughter of the Governor of Munchkinland. Because her older sister, Elphaba, was born green, her mother chewed too many milk flowers to ensure her second child was not born green. As a result, when we meet Nessarose, we see that she uses a wheelchair. Still, Nessarose is her father's favourite; he gives her beautiful silver slippers when she goes to Shiz University. At Shiz, Nessarose becomes convinced that Boq loves her because Galinda tells Boq to pay attention to her. Later in life, when she becomes the cruel and reclusive Governor of Munchkinland, Nessarose crosses paths with her sister, now the Wicked Witch of the West. She learns the power of *The Grimmerie* and becomes "The Wicked Witch of the East" who is killed when Dorothy's house from Kansas falls on her.



# SECTION 1

## GOOD versus WICKED



**“No one mourns the wicked.”**

- Ozians

### ACTIVITY

#### ◆ GOOD AND WICKED ◆

***“I’d like to try to be – Glinda the Good.”*** – Glinda

***“Let all Oz be agreed I’m wicked through and through, and since I can’t succeed, Fivero, saving you, I promise no good deed will I attempt to do again.”*** – Elphaba

In WICKED, we see examples of both good and bad (or wicked, if you will) choices made by different characters.

Before beginning your discussion about ‘good’ and ‘wicked’, have your students walk around the room as if they were a wicked witch. Then, have them walk around the room as if they were a good witch. In both cases, students should think about how they would move, what their voices would sound like and how they would behave. Ask the students why they embodied their characters that way. Discuss the images or characters the students invoked to portray good and wicked witches.

**Have your students reflect on what ‘good’ means and what ‘wicked’ means.**

Then, have your students prepare a Venn diagram of ‘good’ and ‘wicked’ moments in the musical. In the middle section of the diagram, students can list moments that could fall under both ‘good’ and ‘wicked’. Have students note all events that involve choices made by Glinda in pink and all those that are made by Elphaba in green. All other moments can be noted in black. After completing the diagram, have students share their responses with the class. Which events fell in the middle and why? Is it so simple as noting something or someone is ‘good’ or ‘wicked’?





## SECTION 1

### GOOD versus WICKED



#### ACTIVITY

##### ◆ WICKEDNESS ◆

***"Are people born wicked? Or do they have wickedness thrust upon them?"*** – Galinda

**Galinda poses two very important questions at the beginning of the musical:  
*"Are people born wicked? Or do they have wickedness thrust upon them?"***

Show your class the statement *"People are born wicked"*.

**Have your class prepare a debate, with one team arguing for this statement and one team arguing against this statement.**

This debate provides an opportunity for reflection on how circumstances, environment and personal values can affect the choices an individual makes.

#### ACTIVITY

##### ◆ DEFYING GRAVITY ◆

***"I'm through accepting limits, 'cause someone says they're so."*** – Elphaba

Throughout history, there are examples of women who, like Elphaba, were labelled negatively or even labelled as "witches" for standing up for what they believed in or for breaking boundaries and "defying gravity".

Two more recent examples of female leaders who have been labelled as "witches" are former Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard and former US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

**Have your students research one inspiring woman who defied the odds and, using their experiences, write a poem about how they defied gravity.**





## SECTION 2

### APPEARANCES & DIFFERENCES



**“Shouldn’t a girl who’s so good inside  
have a matching exterior?”**

- Elphaba

#### ACTIVITY

##### ◆ RESPECT ◆

***“Alright, fine - we might as well get this over with:***

***No, I’m not seasick;***

***yes, I’ve always been green;***

***no, I didn’t eat grass as a child.”***

- Elphaba

From the moment she was born, Elphaba was judged by the green colour of her skin. In the story of WICKED, we not only see Elphaba being treated poorly, but also other characters who are considered ‘different’, such as Doctor Dillamond and even Nessarose.

There are many examples around the world, including here in Australia, of people being excluded, judged, mistreated and discriminated against due to their race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, culture, and/or other factors. Have your students think of and share examples of when people in Australia have been treated differently because of “their background or certain personal characteristics”<sup>1</sup>, including those noted above.

It is particularly important to use the opportunity to explore the experiences of First Nations people and the role all Australians play in reconciliation.

**Discuss with your students the importance of learning about others and celebrating diversity.**

**Have your students research the lives of famous Australians who have had to face prejudice and/or discrimination, such as Cathy Freeman OAM, Nicky Winmar, Adam Goodes, Dylan Alcott AO and Ian Thorpe AM.**



[1] <https://humanrights.gov.au/quick-guide/12030>



## SECTION 2

### APPEARANCES AND DIFFERENCES



#### ACTIVITY

##### ◆ A CELEBRATION THROUGHOUT OZ ◆

***"... I swear, someday there'll be a celebration throughout Oz that's all to do with me!"***

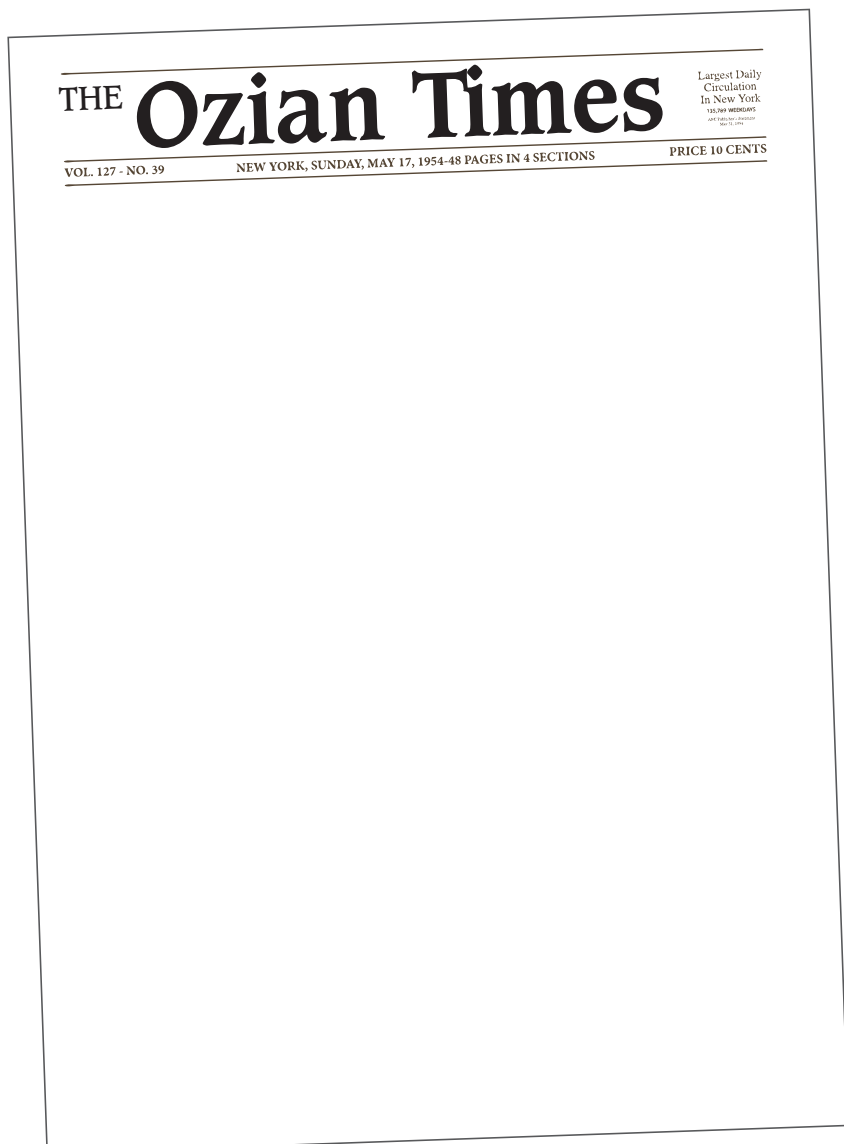
– Elphaba

Early in the musical, Elphaba prophesies that one day all of Oz will celebrate her, however as we come to see in the musical, this celebration is because the citizens of Oz think she has died.

Instead, imagine the citizens of Oz had embraced Elphaba from the very beginning. What might Elphaba have achieved with their support? Imagine that a celebration throughout Oz has been planned that's all to do with Elphaba.

**Prepare a front cover of an Oz newspaper, highlighting some of Elphaba's achievements.**

> SEE WEBSITE FOR FULL PAGE RESOURCE





## SECTION 2

### APPEARANCES AND DIFFERENCES



#### ACTIVITY

##### ◆ QUIRKS ◆

***"This weird quirk I've tried to suppress or hide is a talent that could help me meet the wizard..." – Elphaba***

Until Madame Morrible praises Elphaba for her use of magic, Elphaba had thought of her talents as simply a "quirk". One of the things that had set Elphaba apart was actually an asset.

**Give each of your students an outline of a mirror.**

**Have your students draw a picture of themselves in the centre of the mirror.**

Then, put your students into pairs and have them swap their pictures. Around the borders of the mirror, have them add positive things about their partner that set them apart from others or even other aspects that may be considered talents. Then, have the students swap their pictures back and discuss what they had written. Ask your students if there were talents their classmate saw in them that they hadn't considered to be talents. Use these images to facilitate a discussion with your students about valuing their individuality.

> SEE WEBSITE FOR FULL PAGE RESOURCE





## SECTION 2

### APPEARANCES AND DIFFERENCES



#### ACTIVITY

##### ◆ "GALINDA-FIED" ◆

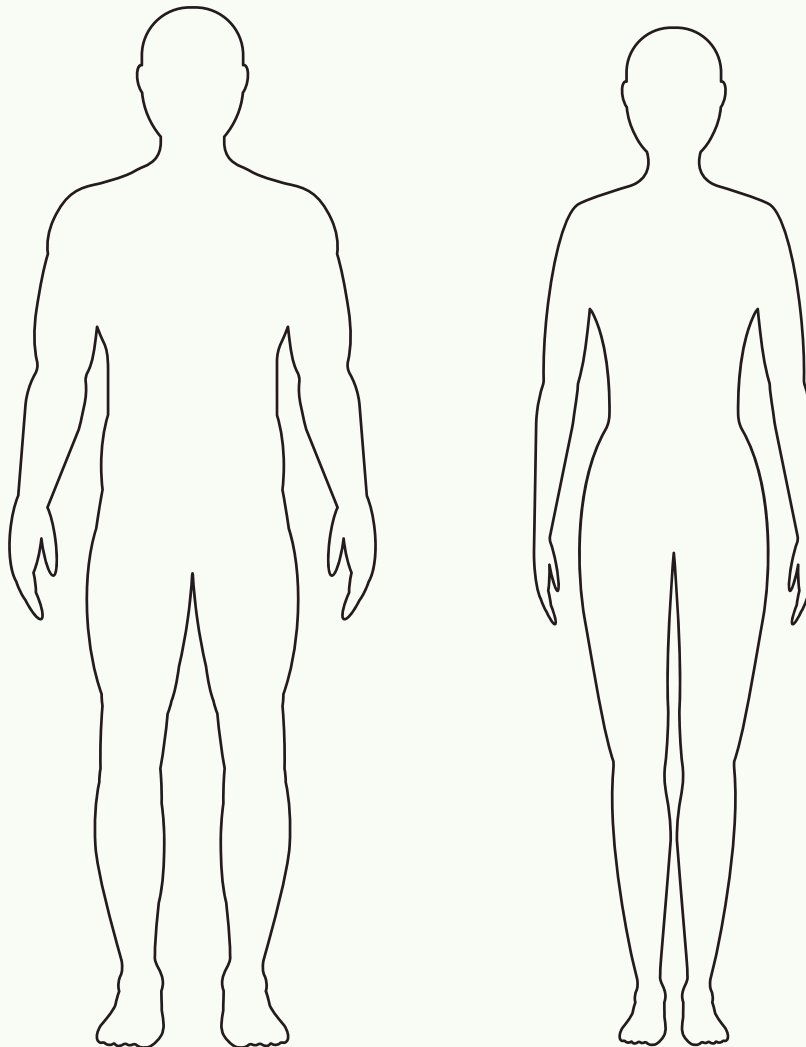
***"You've been Galinda-fied!" – Fiyero***

After Galinda tries to help Elphaba to become popular, Fiyero tells Elphaba that she has been "Galinda-fied".

**Provide your students with a blank outline of a person. Ask them to 'Galinda-fy' the figure.**

As a class, have your students share their images and discuss what this description meant to them. Use this as a prompt to discuss how appearance is used as a tool to promote popularity.

> SEE WEBSITE FOR FULL PAGE RESOURCE





## SECTION 2

### APPEARANCES AND DIFFERENCES



#### ACTIVITY

##### ◆ ONE PERSON'S TRASH IS ANOTHER PERSON'S TREASURE ◆

*"My Granny's always buying me the most hideoteous hats!  
I'd give it away, but I don't hate anyone that much!"*

– Galinda

In giving Elphaba the hat that she had received from her Granny and had thought was so hideous, Galinda gave Elphaba an item of clothing that became symbolic of Elphaba.

**Have your students design a hat.** Once the students have completed the project, have them place their designs on display in the classroom and have all students come in and choose a hat that they like.

After, discuss why they chose that hat. Did it matter what others thought looked good or was it their personal taste that mattered? Should we decide on what we wear based on what others think looks good?



#### ACTIVITY

##### ◆ EMERALD CITY FILTER ◆

*"There are wonders like I've never seen. It's all grand and it's all green."*

– Elphaba and Glinda

*"You look positively – emerald!"* – Glinda

The Emerald City is all about appearances, with its many attractions, the Wizard and, of course, its emerald 'filter'. However, as we find out during the course of the musical, all is not as it appears. Students today may experience their own type of Emerald City in the form of filters on mobile devices and, depending on their age, social media.

**Have your students create a design for an Emerald City filter.**

Ask your students what the purpose of a filter is. What happens when we use a filter? What do we miss out on seeing when we use a filter? What is more important: a perfect image or an honest image?



## SECTION 3

### FRIENDSHIP



“... I’ve had so many friends.  
But only one - that mattered.”

- Glinda

#### ACTIVITY

##### ◆ LOATHING ◆

***“Loathing! There’s a strange exhilaration in such total detestation [...]”***

- Elphaba and Galinda

When required to share a room together at Shiz University, Galinda and Elphaba are forced to confront the way they feel about each other. They both write home to their families, describing their situation.

**Have your students place themselves in Elphaba or Galinda’s shoes.** Have students work in groups of 3 to role play an attempt at resolving their conflict. Have one student play Elphaba, one student play Galinda and one student play the mediator.

#### ACTIVITY

##### ◆ DANCING THROUGH LIFE ◆

***“May I cut in?”*** – Galinda

A turning point in the relationship of Elphaba and Galinda comes at the Ozdust Ballroom dance. After seeing Elphaba arrive at the dance wearing the hat she had given her and dancing in her unique style on her own, Galinda joins Elphaba in the middle of the dance floor and begins to dance like her. Eventually, the other students also join in the dance, showing an acceptance of Elphaba. This marks the beginning of a friendship between Elphaba and Galinda.

**Have your students pair up and design a dance together, representing friendship.**

After performing their dance, have them explain their choreography and how it relates to their understanding of ‘friendship’.





## SECTION 3

### FRIENDSHIP



#### ACTIVITY

##### ◆ FOR GOOD ◆

***"Because I knew you, I have been changed for good."* – Elphaba and Glinda**

Stephen Schwartz said, "The song *For Good* was, of course, written for the show to try to express the leading characters' feelings as they are seeing each other for the last time. The title came out of a brainstorming conversation I had with Winnie Holzman (the book writer) - basically at one point she said it should be about how the two of them had changed each other "for good", at which point, hearing the amazing possibilities in that phrase, I knew I had found the title for the song. To get some of the content, I had a long conversation with my daughter, in which I asked her what she would say to her best friend (someone she has known pretty much all her life), if she knew she was never going to see her again. A lot of what Jessie said got transformed into the first verse of the song. Other than that, it was simply trying to put myself into the hearts and minds of the characters and see what they said".

**Have your students make a list of things that they might say to their best friend if they were travelling overseas to live.**

In the song *For Good*, Glinda and Elphaba both express how their friendship has had a deep impact on them. Have your students write a letter to someone who has changed their life "for good".





## SECTION 4

### POPULARITY



“And with an assist from me to be who you’ll be,  
instead of dreary who-you-were... are...  
there’s nothing that can stop you  
from becoming popul-er...”

- Galinda

## ACTIVITY

### ◆ POPULAR ◆

***“You’ll be popular. Just not quite as popular as me!”***– Galinda

When Elphaba arrives at Shiz University, she learns the value that is placed on popularity by her peers. In particular, Galinda is seen as the prime example of a popular student who is loved by her fellow students.

**First, as a class, have your students define the word ‘popular’.**

Then, have your students design a social media profile page for someone who would be considered popular at Shiz. This task can be completed using a printed template.

After designing their pages, have the students share their work with their class. Ask students to share what characteristics they included that might make someone popular at Shiz and why they included them. Would these characteristics be the same in a different context?

**Have your students identify characters in WICKED who would not be considered popular.**

What makes them different from the popular students at Shiz? Ask the students whether they feel the characteristics of these students should make them unpopular.

Ask the students how they feel the notion of popularity impacts on social relationships with their peers and how it affects social behaviour. Have your students reflect on the value placed on popularity. Should being popular matter more than being a good person?





## SECTION 4

### POPULARITY



#### ACTIVITY

##### ◆ UNPOPULAR PEOPLE ◆

***"When I see depressing creatures with unprepossessing features,  
I remind them on their own behalf to think of celebrated heads of state or specially  
great communicators. Did they have brains or knowledge?  
Don't make me laugh! They were popular! Please, it's all about popular!  
It's not about aptitude, it's the way you're viewed,  
so it's very shrewd to be very very popular, like me!"***  
– Galinda

In the song *Popular*, Galinda draws on the example of leaders or great orators and implies that their popularity was behind their success. However, there are examples of leaders throughout history who may have gained popularity during their time and did terrible things with their power. You may discuss with your students whether popularity makes someone a good leader. What qualities do make someone a good leader?

There have been times throughout history when figures have been unpopular during their lifetime and only found popularity after their passing because of their aptitude.

**Have your students research and report back to the class about one such historical figure.**

One such example is the now well-known artist, Vincent Van Gogh.





## SECTION 5

### PROPAGANDA AND CRITICAL THINKING



**“When I first got here, there was discord and discontent. And where I come from, everyone knows: the best way to bring folks together, is to give them a really good enemy.”- The Wizard**

## ACTIVITY

### ◆ SCAPEGOAT ◆

**“If you make it discouraging enough, you can keep anyone silent.” – Doctor Dillamond**

In WICKED, we see how Animals are targeted and used as scapegoats. The Wizard employs powerful propaganda to ensure he can get away with stopping Animals from speaking and going about their lives. Doctor Dillamond describes examples of fellow Animals who have lost their rights in Oz, beginning the song *Something Bad* by sharing:

*“I’ve heard of an ox, a professor from Quox, no longer permitted to teach, who has lost all powers of speech...”*  
Doctor Dillamond, himself, becomes a target of this treatment of Animals in Oz.

**Show your students an image of Doctor Dillamond’s blackboard with the graffiti saying –  
“Animals should be seen and not heard”.**

Ask your students who they think would paint such a message and why? How would this message make Animals feel? How does this image make the students feel? Ask your students what they could do to help Doctor Dillamond. Use their answers to stand up for the Animals of Oz. Students may prepare posters, letters to the editor and even TV advertisements in support of the Animals’ rights.

The Oxford Dictionary of English defines propaganda as “information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view”. There are several moments in the musical that demonstrate the Wizard’s use of propaganda. One such example is the scene in which the students at Shiz University are shown the lion cub in a cage.

### SCENE EXCERPT

**Official:** More and more everyday, with each tick of the Time Dragon Clock, in every corner of Our Great Oz, one hears the Silence of Progress. For example: This is called a “cage”. You’ll be seeing more and more of them in the future. This remarkable innovation is actually for the Animals’ own good, and—

**Elphaba:** If it’s so good for him, why is he trembling?

**Official:** He’s excited to be here, that’s all. As I was saying - one of the benefits of caging a lion cub this young is that he will never, in fact, learn how to speak!

**Elphaba:** Oh no!

**Official:** That’s right, gather ‘round...

**Elphaba:** Can you imagine a world where animals are kept in cages? And they never speak?

**Official:** He does seem a bit agitated. But that’s easily remedied... (he takes out a syringe)

**Elphaba:** What are we going to do?!

**Fivero:** We?!

**Elphaba:** Well, somebody has to do something!

**Have your students rehearse an alternative ending to this scene, showing what they would do after the Official’s first line.** Would they question the information being presented to them? Would they be an ‘upstander’ or a bystander? Use the students’ performances to prompt a discussion about the importance of critical analysis. Ask them if they can think of any examples of propaganda that they have seen either from history or from today. How did it make them feel?



## SECTION 5

### PROPAGANDA AND CRITICAL THINKING



#### ACTIVITY

##### ◆ THE TRUTH ◆

***"The truth is not a thing of fact or reason,  
the truth is just what ev'ryone agrees on."***

– The Wizard

The Wizard demonstrates that he is willing to employ many tools of deception to ensure his popularity and to carry out his plans. He even goes on to say, *"The truth is not a thing of fact or reason, the truth is just what ev'ryone agrees on."*

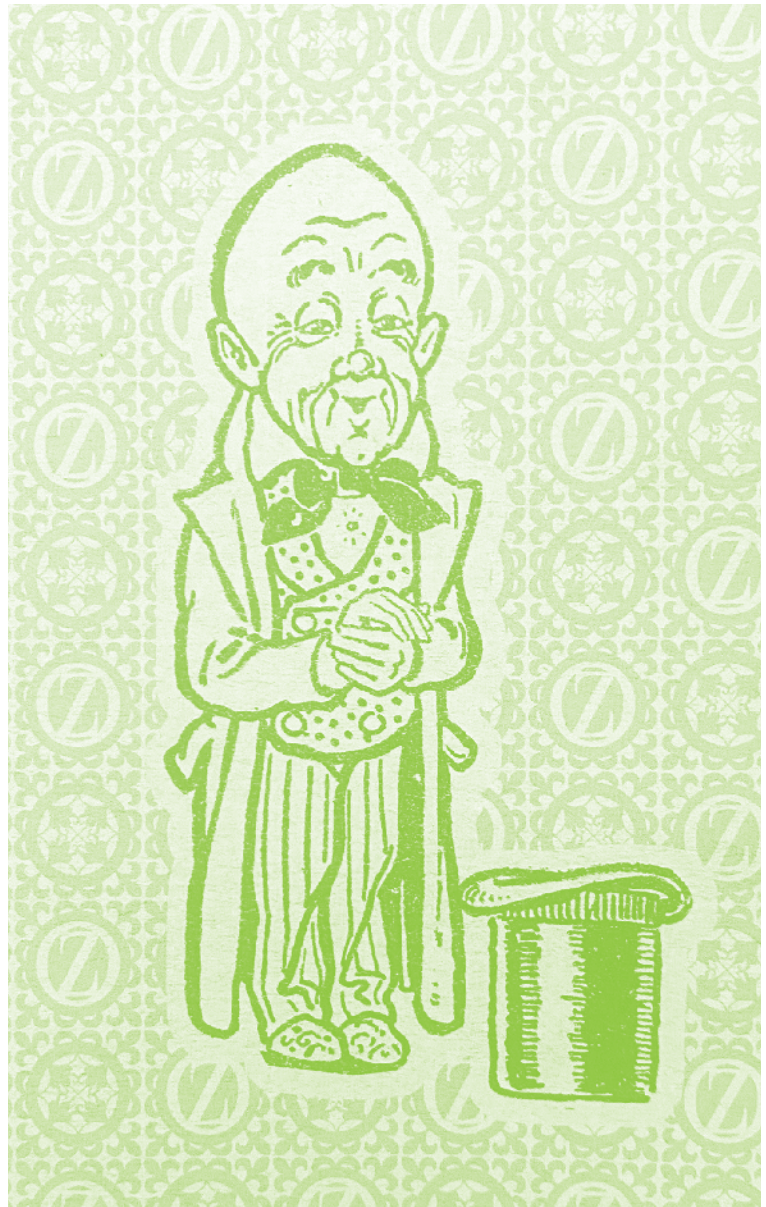
**Show your students a picture  
from a newspaper article.**

**Have the students decide,  
as a class, what happened,  
based on what they see in the  
picture.**

Once the students have reached a consensus on what the story is, share the real news story with the students.

Referring back to the Wizard's comment above, discuss what 'truth' means. Discuss the importance of fact in the notion of 'truth' and that sometimes, we may need to see the real truth when we are presented with something.

You may also wish to extend your studies by undertaking a project in critical analysis of the media and the importance of fact and truth-telling in the news.



# CURRICULUM



**This education guide has been designed with direct ties to the Australian Curriculum.**

Below, you will find the rationale for the relevant subject areas and general capabilities (with the rationale in bold) that tie in with these resources.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE SEE:

<https://v9.australiancurriculum.edu.au/teacher-resources/understand-this-learning-area/english>

<https://v9.australiancurriculum.edu.au/teacher-resources/understand-this-learning-area/humanities-and-social-sciences>

<https://v9.australiancurriculum.edu.au/teacher-resources/understand-this-learning-area/the-arts>

<https://v9.australiancurriculum.edu.au/teacher-resources/understand-this-general-capability/literacy>

<https://v9.australiancurriculum.edu.au/teacher-resources/understand-this-general-capability/critical-and-creative-thinking>

<https://v9.australiancurriculum.edu.au/teacher-resources/understand-this-general-capability/personal-and-social-capability>

<https://v9.australiancurriculum.edu.au/teacher-resources/understand-this-general-capability/ethical-understanding>

## ENGLISH

***Through the study of English, individuals learn to analyse, understand, communicate and build relationships with others and the world around them. It helps create confident communicators, imaginative and critical thinkers, and informed citizens.***

The themes explored in the musical WICKED enable students to explore the learning skills outlined above. In particular, students are enabled to explore the themes of friendship, as well as propaganda and critical thinking.

***Australia is a linguistically and culturally diverse country, with links to Asia. Participation in many aspects of Australian life is dependent on effective communication in Standard Australian English. This is central to the study of the English curriculum and all other learning areas. In addition, proficiency in English is invaluable globally.***

The experiences of the characters in the story of WICKED encourage thoughtful discussions around how we interact with others, the notion of 'popularity', critical analysis of information presented and more.

***The English curriculum helps students to engage imaginatively and critically with literature and appreciate its aesthetic qualities. They explore ideas and perspectives about human experience and cultural significance, interpersonal relationships, and ethical and global issues within real-world and fictional settings. Students are exposed to literature from a range of historical, cultural and social contexts. Through the study of texts, students develop an understanding of themselves and their place in the world. The English curriculum explores the richness of First Nations Australian voices and voices from wide-ranging Australian and world literature.***

Through the experience of Elphaba and other characters, WICKED presents an opportunity to look at the unfair treatment of individuals due to the colour of their skin, disability or other factors. In particular, in this education pack, teachers are encouraged to explore the experiences of First Nations people and are encouraged to promote the exploration of First Nations peoples, histories and cultures.

***The study of English plays a key role in the development of literacy, which gives young people the knowledge and skills needed for education, training and the workplace. It helps them become ethical, informed, perceptive, innovative and active members of society. The English curriculum plays an important part in developing the understanding, attitudes and capabilities of those who will take responsibility for Australia's future.***

Various activities in this guide allow for important learning about ethical behaviour, social relationships, and critical thinking. Reflection on these themes allows students to think about how they might approach real-world situations as an informed member of their community and of wider society.

## HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

*The Humanities and Social Sciences are the study of human behaviour and interaction in social, cultural, environmental, economic, business, legal and political contexts. This learning area has a historical and contemporary focus, from personal to global contexts, and considers the challenges that may occur in the future. It plays an important role in assisting students to understand global issues, and building their capacity to be active and informed citizens who understand and participate in the world.*

*The Humanities and Social Sciences subjects in the Australian Curriculum provide a broad understanding of the world we live in, and how people can participate as active and informed citizens with high-level skills needed now and in the future. They provide opportunities for students to develop their own personal and social learning, and to explore their perspectives as well as those of others.*

WICKED provides a unique world through which students can explore key issues, such as propaganda and critical thinking. The activities in this guide provide opportunities for students to make important links between the musical and real-life events, figures and matters. In addition, students are encouraged to explore various perspectives and experiences of both the characters in the musical and real historical and contemporary figures.

*Through studying Humanities and Social Sciences, students will develop the ability to question, think critically, solve problems, communicate effectively, make decisions and adapt to change. This requires an understanding of the key historical, geographical, legal, political, economic, business and societal factors involved, and how these different factors interrelate.*

In particular, this guide allows students to critically explore matters such as propaganda, as well as to make important links to concepts such as popularity and how individuals have been treated based on “their background or certain personal characteristics”<sup>2</sup>. It encourages students to think deeply about how they may respond to these issues in today’s world.

[2] <https://humanrights.gov.au/quick-guide/12030>



## THE ARTS

*The arts are as old as humanity. They are part of every culture and central to the diverse and continuing cultures of First Nations Australians. Through the arts, people share stories, ideas, knowledge and understanding. The arts engage our senses and give us ways to imagine, celebrate, communicate and challenge ways of knowing, being, doing and becoming.*

*Participating in quality arts experiences and practices enriches our social and emotional wellbeing. It fosters development of our imagination and enables us to reach our creative and intellectual potential. The distinctive languages, knowledges and practices of each arts subject in the Australian Curriculum enable learners to play, explore, question, challenge and imagine new possibilities as they create, embody, design, represent, collaborate and communicate ideas, emotions, observations and experiences. The arts foster rich cross-curriculum opportunities for learners as they grow in their understanding of self and others, and as they make sense of, interpret and respond to their real and imagined worlds.*

This educational resource includes opportunities for students to undertake valuable learning in the Arts, as well as to further develop their skills in these areas, touching on some of these subjects.

*Rich in tradition, the arts play a major role in the development and expressions of diverse cultures and communities, locally, nationally and globally. The exploration of cultures and histories through Arts learning strengthens understanding of Australia's cultural diversity and develops critical intercultural understandings to inform decision-making and aesthetic choices. Students communicate meaningful ideas in conventional and innovative arts forms. They use arts knowledge, practice and understandings to learn and make meaning as artists and as audiences, taking opportunities to engage with arts organisations, creative industries and arts professionals.*

WICKED provides its own communal context, in the form of Oz, allowing students to explore several themes, views and history through a different lens. In this guide, teachers are provided with activities that will allow students to explore this world and these themes through the Arts.

This production provides teachers with an opportunity to expose their students to a live, professional production, which offers many benefits to students to engage with the professional world of theatre.

*Through the arts, students learn to express their ideas, thoughts, questions, understandings and opinions. They develop aesthetic knowledge and learn that the creative and critical processes of each Arts subject are essential to learning in, about and through The Arts.*

*The arts are core to the development of creative, confident, compassionate and resilient individuals who can think and reflect critically, celebrate and challenge ideas, people and events, and work towards making a difference in sustaining and reimagining their own and their communities' futures.*

This guide provides activities that draw on several areas, aiming to promote creative exploration of the musical. The activities in this guide provide students with the opportunity to not only reflect critically on the themes presented in WICKED, but to also creatively express their interpretations of various aspects of the musical.

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## GENERAL CAPABILITIES

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The activities in this guide also make important links with the **General Capabilities in the Australian Curriculum.**

### LITERACY

- Speaking and listening
- Reading and viewing
- Writing

### CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING

- Inquiring
- Generating
- Analysing
- Reflecting

### PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CAPABILITY

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Social management

### ETHICAL UNDERSTANDING

- Understanding ethical concepts and perspectives
- Responding to ethical issues

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## SUPPORT RESOURCES

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Some of the themes and topics raised in the exploration of friendship, popularity and respect may be challenging for students. Additional support may be accessed through:

**Kids Helpline** – <https://kidshelpline.com.au> • **1800 55 1800**

## CREDITS



Among original resources, this education guide includes sections and adapted activities and materials from the *WICKED* edition of *Stage Notes: A Field Guide for Teachers* from Camp Broadway (USA), *WICKED* Active Learning resources (UK) and the *WICKED Active Learning Teacher Booklet* (NZ). We acknowledge the authors of these guides for allowing us to include and adapt some of their education materials for Australian students:

### **WICKED edition of Stage Notes: A Field Guide for Teachers from Camp Broadway (USA)**

Robert Hartmann

Maxine Kern

Allison Lynn

Russell Granet

### **WICKED Active Learning resources (UK)**

Michael McCabe

Mark Taylor

Gemma Holmes and the team at The Marketing Department

### **Wicked Active Learning Teacher Booklet (NZ)**

We acknowledge the education resources used for the New Zealand market which has been adapted from materials originally written by Rob Galbraith for the Australian premiere season in 2008.



## BIO

**EDITOR: Eli Erez** is the Head of Performing Arts and Senior Productions at King David School and has over 25 years' experience as a Drama educator. He is a recipient of the Drama Victoria Life Member award for his contributions to Drama Education. He has worked in various roles for the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority and has facilitated workshops for various organisations including the Melbourne Theatre Company and Malthouse Theatre. He has developed education resources for the Melbourne International Arts Festival, the Victorian Arts Centre and various independent productions, including *Noises Off*, *Jersey Boys* and *Come From Away*. Eli has also worked professionally as a director, writer, set designer, performer and puppeteer.

*This guide also includes quotations and excerpts from the musical Wicked (2003), book by Winnie Holzman and music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz.*