

PRODUCER'S WELCOME

“It’s looking at things another way...”

Long before Dorothy dropped in, two girls meet in the Land of Oz in the new Broadway musical **WICKED**. Playwright Winnie Holzman (*My So-Called Life*) has adapted Gregory Maguire’s best-selling novel of the same title and paired it with new music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz (*Godspell, Pippin*), to create a show about the untold story of Glinda, the Good Witch, and Elphaba, the Wicked Witch of the West.

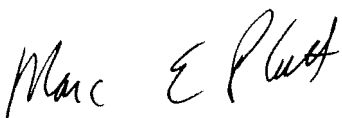
WICKED centres on Elphaba, a young woman who is born green and thus is an outsider. Her different appearance leads the people of Oz to misjudge and ostracise her. As the characters journey through Oz, they develop the courage to overcome stereotypes and realise the true meaning of friendship. This show raises many questions that will challenge our students as they think about their experience at **WICKED** and work through this study guide. Simultaneously, they will enjoy a theatre experience filled with laughter, fun, magnificent sets and costumes, and wonderful music.

The characters in **WICKED** grapple with moral dilemmas and ethics in a way that is unique amongst Broadway shows. At the heart of the show are important and relevant questions about tolerance: Does “tolerance” mean that we should respect and treat kindly those who are different from us, or has it been redefined to mean that we should not “tolerate” anyone with whom we disagree? In the same way, **WICKED** probes the question of good and evil. Can we ever judge anyone as evil? Is there any objective source that defines good and evil or are they strictly matters of one’s personal feelings and opinion? Can we say it is wrong to scapegoat girls born green and talking animals for one’s own political gain? Can we say anything is ever wrong or is that “judging” and being “intolerant” of those whose motives, behaviour and goals may not be valid in our personal opinions?

This charming musical also raises the issue of propaganda and the manipulation of the citizens of Oz. Students now live in a world where the media is pervasive and drives our popular culture. **WICKED** raises questions that will inspire students to assess their own sources of information and how they respond to the barrage of media influences that permeate their lives, becoming an instructive tool for developing critical thinking skills.

For today’s young people who are growing up in a world searching for its moral compass, **WICKED** is a provocative theatrical work that explores these critical issues in an entertaining way. What happens when good is called “evil” and evil, “good”? Is it all that black and white? **WICKED** brings out shades of green.

I am glad to have you with us. Join our talented staff and cast and see for yourself the remarkable story of these two women. It is guaranteed to be a fun-filled evening with characters you will embrace. Welcome to this journey through Oz.



Marc Platt,
Producer of the original Broadway production.

