

**Exploring the Prompt?
Session #417**

Way Down HadesTown



BEFORE WE GET STARTED

Remember to register your
attendance and
complete session evaluations.

Session numbers
are in the program.



SCAN ME



2023 - 2024 Theatrical Design Directorial Prompt

We will produce the musical, *Hadestown*, Book, Music & Lyrics by Anais Mitchell.

After a careful study of the musical, *Hadestown* by Anais Mitchell, designers must select a theme and create a thematic statement that will drive all design decisions and be evident throughout all their design choices and supported with textual or music lyric references.

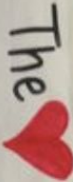
Designers this year will be asked to define their own theme or message from the story. This becomes their guiding statement and should be clearly stated.

The possibilities for themes in the musical are endless as the story touches on so many ideas relevant not only throughout history but to our modern society. Once you identify what you determine as the most engaging theme in the production, make design choices to highlight and support that purpose throughout. Your design should highlight the theme's thread throughout the entire production. This is sometimes referred to as a "concept," "motif," or "commanding image" to name a few examples of the language designers use to communicate their overriding vision.

Designs can be set in a different time or place as inspired by the designer's thematic statement, but may stay in the original setting, as long as designs are original and not overtly emulating, imitating or copying other designers' work and intellectual property.

IDENTIFYING THEMIES

WHAT IS A THEME?

The  of a story

Theme

Theme message } the moral or the lesson of the story.

Sometimes it's...

Stated

The author tells what the theme is. Fables tell the theme at the end.

Sometimes it's...

Implied

The reader must infer the theme based on life and story details.

Theme is **NOT** a subject.

Subject	Theme
Honesty	Honesty is the best policy.
Teamwork	Working together leads to success.
Hard Work	Practice makes perfect.

Theme must be revealed in a sentence.

In other words...

Theme is what the story teaches the reader.

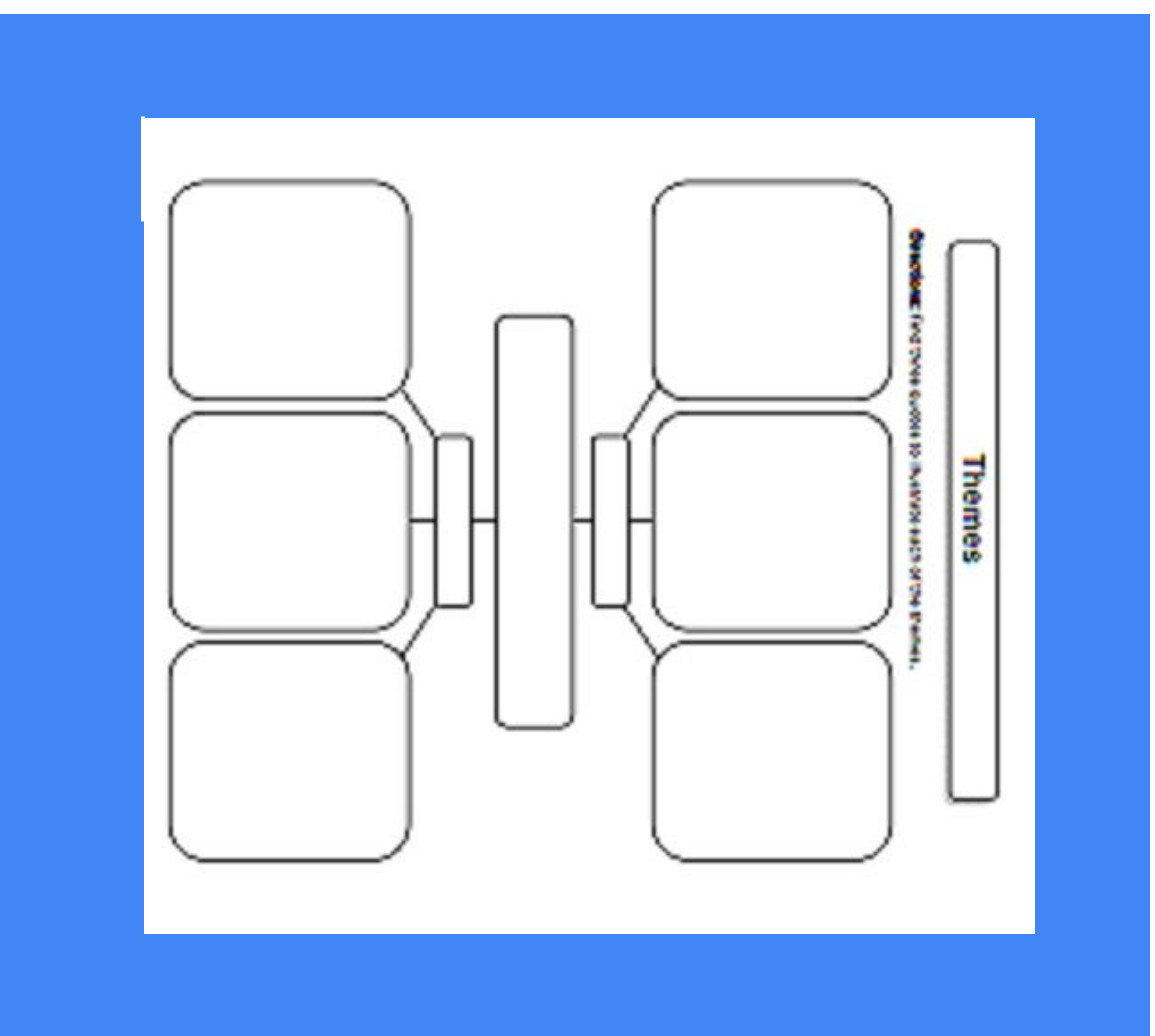
HOW DO I DETERMINE A THEME?

- WHAT IS THE CONFLICT?
 - MAN VS MAN
 - MAN VS NATURE
 - MAN VS SELF
- HOW DO THE CHARACTERS CHANGE OVER THE COURSE OF THE STORY?
- WHAT DO THE CHARACTERS LEARN?
- ARE THERE IMPORTANT SYMBOLS? WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

COLLECT SCRIPT DETAIL

FIND SUPPORTING LINES FROM THE
SCRIPT TO SUPPORT YOUR THEME

3'S ARE MOST EFFECTIVE



Things to Consider

Think about the song that you feel best reflects your chosen theme and allow the feelings generated from the music in addition to the lyrics to be reflected.

PROMPT ADDRESS Preparation Questions

Use your answers to the following questions to formulate your 100 word Maximum Prompt Address.

- What is HADESTOWN about in one sentence?
- What lesson for the audience stands out most to **YOU** in the story and why?
- State this lesson in the form of a question.**
- How does HADESTOWN answer that question?**
- (NOTE: the answer to these two questions forms the basis for your THEMATIC statement)*
- What line(s) from a song best represent the lesson to be learned?
- Which character(s) relate most closely to this lesson?
- What guiding image or symbols come to mind?
- How have I imbedded or represented this in my design?

NOW

Think of your **Prompt Address** as the lens through which you want judges to view your work. This is the "thesis statement" of your design - how your design highlights the theme you deemed most important or relevant in *Hadestown*.

Sample sentence stems to serve as the first sentence of your Prompt Address.

- The theme of _____ in *Hadestown* by Anais Mitchell made me think of _____.
- *Hadestown* by Anais Mitchell explores the theme of _____ which I connected with _____.
- After reading *Hadestown* by Anais Mitchell, I immediately connected with the theme of _____, and highlighted that theme in my designs by exploring _____.

NOTE: These same questions and sentence stems can be expanded upon in more detail within your justification paper.

Planning your Thematic Collage

Name: _____

Determining Theme

Directions: Complete the graphic organizer below as you read to help you identify big ideas in the text and write your own theme.

Text Title																															
Main Character																															
What is the conflict in the text?																															
What does the main character learn or how does the main character change as a result of the conflict?																															
Big Ideas Circle the topics that are present in the text.	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Beauty</td> <td>Change</td> <td>Growing up</td> <td>Danger</td> <td>War</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Death</td> <td>Family</td> <td>Evil</td> <td>Love</td> <td>Fear</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Inequality</td> <td>Hope</td> <td>Knowledge</td> <td>Power</td> <td>Pride</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Identity</td> <td>Nature</td> <td>Loss</td> <td>Wealth</td> <td>Tradition</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Overcoming</td> <td>Survival</td> <td>Recovery</td> <td>Strength</td> <td>Faith</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fairness</td> <td>Greed</td> <td>Honor</td> <td>Isolation</td> <td>Violence</td> </tr> </table>	Beauty	Change	Growing up	Danger	War	Death	Family	Evil	Love	Fear	Inequality	Hope	Knowledge	Power	Pride	Identity	Nature	Loss	Wealth	Tradition	Overcoming	Survival	Recovery	Strength	Faith	Fairness	Greed	Honor	Isolation	Violence
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Theme Statement Must be: - A message about life - General - A complete sentence																															

Hint: Use one or more of the big ideas you selected above to help you write your theme.

Visualizing Theme

Directions: You will create a collage of words and images to represent your thematic statement. Your collage should include your thematic statement as well as at least two quotations from the text that help to show your theme. See the example below. Brainstorm words and images to include below.

BRAINSTORMING	
Words	Ideas for Images

EXAMPLE



“They mocked him for thinking that he with his simplicity could get through the world, when they two could not make their way, and yet were so much cleverer.”



COMPASSION

Size is not a measure of strength of character.



KINDNESS



“The king of the ants whose life he had once saved, came with five thousand ants, and before long the little creatures had got all the pearls together, and laid them in a heap.”

CHOOSING TIME & PLACE

ASK YOURSELF ...

**IS THERE A TIME OR PLACE WHERE YOUR CHOSEN THEME
CAN BE ENHANCED WITHOUT COMPROMISING THE
SCRIPT?**

**(KEEP IN MIND THAT THE WORDS AND ACTIONS MUST
REMAIN AS WRITTEN)**

YOU SHOULD HAVE 3 REASONS TO SUPPORT YOUR IDEA

**REFLECTING
THEM IN
YOUR DESIGN**

IN ADDITION TO YOUR
RESPONSIBILITY OF
ESTABLISHING SETTING AND
CHARACTER... YOU CAN
SUPPORT/REFLECT THE THEME

POSSIBLE WAYS...
LOOK TO
SYMBOLS/GUIDING IMAGE



Hades and Persephone by Janaina Art

EMPHASIZE DETAILS THAT HELPED YOU DETERMINE THE THEME.....

- **SUPPORT CONFLICT WITH ARTISTIC ELEMENTS**
- **ILLUSTRATE CHARACTER CHANGE**
- **USE THE THEME AS A LENS THROUGH WHICH YOU
VIEW ALL DECISIONS**
- **WHEN POSSIBLE, SELECT THE MOMENTS THAT MOST
ILLUSTRATED YOUR THEME AND DESIGN FOR THEM**



**IN
DRAMA**

**CONTRAST &
CONFLICT**

**EXPLAIN WHAT
YOU DO AND
WHY...**

GO BACK TO YOUR SCRIPT DETAILS AND YOUR RESEARCH
TO DEFEND HOW YOUR CHOICES SUPPORT THE THEME
AND THEREFORE THE PLAY AS A WHOLE.

EACH AREA OF DESIGN REVEALS/SUPPORTS THEMES IN
THEIR OWN WAY. FIND WHERE YOUR AREA DOES THIS
MOST EFFECTIVELY WITHIN THE PLAY.