



Second Stage study guide

Aug.-Sept. 2017



BY ALVIN CHAN

The Cast

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Musician
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The Artistic Staff

Director	Eric Johnson
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Video Design	Chesley Cannon
Light Design	Joseph Governale
Costume Design	Alvin Chan
Sound Design/Stage Manager	Matthew Mazzella
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WE WELCOME YOU TO HONOLULU THEATRE FOR YOUTH!

The year-round work of HTY is supported in part by a grant from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts with funds from the Hawaii State Legislature. This support, with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and gifts from private foundations, the corporate community and individuals, enables HTY to offer plays to schools at nominal cost.

Introduction

TEACHER PREVIEW

HTY invites you & a guest FREE to *The Ballad of Mu Lan* on Fri., Aug. 18 at 7:00pm or Sat, Aug. 19 at 4:30 pm at Tenney Theatre. Please call ahead for reservations.

USING THIS GUIDE

For a more complete list of Standards Connections, please visit the HTY website:
<http://www.htyweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/mulan-standards.pdf>

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---Take your trip to the HTY production of The Ballad of Mu Lan---

AFTER THE SHOW Activities	Page	STANDARD CONNECTION
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CONTACT US. TELL US WHAT YOU THINK.

Feedback Forms: Please return an evaluation form after seeing the performance. We often contact teachers for further information, so include your name, school address and email address.

HTY Online: Visit our website for last minute changes or special offers, www.htyweb.org.

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 Eric Johnson, *Artistic Director*
 Daniel A. Kelin, II, *Director of Drama Education*
 Stu Hirayama, *School Reservations Manager*

For Teachers

INTRODUCTION FROM ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, ERIC JOHNSON

Welcome to Honolulu Theatre for Youth's 63rd Season. We are celebrating "the power of people" this season and can think of no better story to start with than this new version of a classic story from China. It is nice to know that there are examples ancient and new of people defying expectations. In fact, young people surprising their community and taking a stand against tradition when necessary is almost a tradition in itself. We hope that through this guide you are able to explore the script and the story actively in the classroom and through discussion both prior to the performance and long after your visit to the theatre. We look forward to many more adventures in the year to come.

PEOPLE POWER: AN OPENING ACTIVITY

Our 2017-18 season theme is "The Power of People!" Start your HTY journey before traveling to the theatre with the following activity, giving students the opportunity to imagine their own story, together.

ONE WORD STORY

Preparation: Sitting in a circle, the class will create a story together. Each participant contributes one word at a time as you go around the circle. The words should connect to create sentences and the sentences string together to create a single story.

Guidelines:

- Do not think too hard. It is only one word. Trust intuition.
- Words like "a," "and" and "the" are important words.
- Do not tell anyone else what word to say.

Procedure: As students slowly build off of each other to create the story, occasionally repeat it back, so students can stay abreast of the basic plot. Guide the students to incorporate the following simple properties to help shape the story and give it purpose:

- Character(s)
- Want/Goal
- Problem/Obstacle

RESOURCES

BOOKS (local library)

Heroines

The Great Deeds of Heroic Women by Maurice Saxby and Robert Ingpen

Fearless Girls, Wise Women and Beloved Sisters by Kathleen Ragan

Not One Damsel in Distress by Jane Yolen

Strong Females

A Paper Bag Princess by Robert Munsch

I Like Myself by Karen Beaumont

Stand Tall Molly Lou Melon by Patty Lovett

Disguise Story

Fake mustache: or, how Jodie O'Rodeo and her wonder horse (and some nerdy kid) saved the U.S. Presidential election from a mad genius criminal mastermind by Tom Angleberger

WEBSITES

Untraditional Female Characters

<http://www.rejectedprincesses.com/>

For Teachers

Before seeing the Show

MU LAN. THE ORIGINAL STORY

In Imperial China, a ruthless army have launched an invasion. China's Emperor declares that one man from every family must serve in the Imperial Army. In a distant village, a young woman by the name of Mu Lan wants to serve in the Army to help her father and family. Mu Lan dresses like a young man, donning her father's armor, and joins. In the army and in battle, Mu Lan sets out to prove her worth. Eventually, her smarts and determination prove she's a worthy soldier, and the army battles the enemy with Mu Lan as an effective warrior. In the end, Mu Lan is offered the opportunity to become a general in the army, but decides to return home to be with and help her family.

THEMES OF THE PLAY

The story of the female warrior Mu Lan offers many themes to think about and explore. The activities in this guide explore a few, but you might find others to connect with in your class.

Disguising oneself to overcome prejudice
Female hero
Family Values

Teamwork vs. "Team useless"
Tradition vs. New ways of thinking
Strategic games and thinking

READ A BOOK VERSION IN CLASS

HTY's play is an original stage version of the Mu Lan story; less like the Disney movie than many children may be expecting. There are many book versions of the story. Below is a list you might share in class as a way to introduce the famous historical character. After reading some, it will be fun to see how the story is played out on the stage in HTY's production.

The Ballad of Mulan Retold & illustrated by Song Nan Zhang.

China's Bravest Girl: The Legend of Hua Mu Lan. by Charlie Chin, illustrated by Tomie Arai

Fa Mulan: The Story of a Woman Warrior by Robert San Souci

The Legend of Mu Lan: A Heroine of Ancient China by Wei Jiang and Cheng An Jiang

The Song of Mulan by Jeanne M. Lee

CHINESE JINGJU

Jingju, whose stories are taken from historical epics and novels of China's past, is a combination of singing, dialogue, acrobatic fighting and dancing to tell the story. One description states: "The stage of the Chinese opera is outfitted by the imagination of the audience." For example, props are simple and suggestive, as banners can suggest billowing waves; a whip can represent a horse. Tables and chairs represent many different things.

What do you see with your imagination?

For Teachers

Before seeing the Show

LIFE IN A CHINESE VILLAGE

It may be difficult for children in Hawai'i to imagine life in a Chinese village, let alone a village long ago such as the one in which Mu Lan might have lived. Before seeing the HTY production, visit the following websites to learn about and view pictures of villages in ancient China.

Images

Pictures of Old Chinese villages - <https://tinyurl.com/y95f3f6a>

Websites

The following webpages contain a variety of information introducing aspects of Chinese life, http://www.ducksters.com/history/china/daily_life.php and <http://www.historyforkids.net/ancient-chinese-daily-life.html> and <https://sites.google.com/site/1ancientcivilizationsforkids/ancient-china>

PRE-SHOW DISCUSSION

Below are some questions related to the themes and action of the play.

Imagination

- Who likes to pretend? What do you like to pretend? What do you like to pretend to be?
- What do you pretend with (imagination)?
- What can you do with the imagination that you can't do otherwise?

Heroes and Heroines

- Who do you consider a "hero" and why? What makes that person a hero?
- What's the difference between a hero and a superhero?
- Why do we need heroes?
- Whoever did something special for you that makes him/her a hero to you?
- Has anyone ever called you a hero? What did you do that made you a hero?

Family and Honor

- Why is family important?
- What do you believe is something that family should always do for each other?
- What's something special you've done for your family?
- Who in your family has accomplished something special? What did she/he do?
- In many places in the world people believe in 'family honor.' What does that mean to you?

Disguise

- So many heroes and superheroes wear disguises. Why?
- Some disguises or costumes define who we are, or what we can do. If you designed your own 'disguise,' what would you create and why would you make that choice?
- In the story of Mu Lan, she dresses up like a man in order to be in the military. What does she have to disguise herself?

For Teachers

Play-related Activities

READ A SCENE FROM THE PLAY

Distribute copies of the **FOR STUDENTS: Read a Scene** page to your students. Read it aloud with student volunteer readers or pair students up and have them read it out loud together. The scene brings up the question of what are the proper life roles for young men and women. Ask students to comment. Are there things that only boys or girls can or should do? Who should decide?

HEROES AND HEROINES: CREATIVE WRITING PORTRAITS

Heroes and heroines excite us, inspire us and encourage us to consider ways we can each do something great with our own lives. Mu Lan's commitment to her family and fellow warriors is enviable, just as is her bravery to face prejudices against women. Guide students to celebrate their own hero or heroine with the following activity.

MATERIALS

- Watercolor paper
- Pencil
- Black Sharpie marker
- Crayons
- Watercolor paint

DIRECTIONS

1. Students select a hero of their choice, preferably someone from their own life or from history.
2. Students draw with pencil a VERY simple profile head with simple neck and shoulders.
3. Students draw several lines to split up the face for the writing.
4. Students trace all lines with a marker.
5. Students fill in all the sections in pencil with words that define their hero: activities, descriptions, personality. The words need to creatively FILL each section.
6. Students trace all words with crayon or marker.
7. Students fill the many backgrounds of the writing with watercolor paint.



For Students

Read a Scene

Below is a scene from *THE BALLAD OF MU LAN*. Assign one person to be Mu Lan and one to be her father, Huan Hu. After you read, ask yourself, “Should boys and girls be allowed to do the same things or there some activities that are only for boys or only for girls?”

Huan Hu enters limping with a cane. He puts the cane down and practices Wu Shu, but his leg cannot support him. He sits at a table. Mu Lan enters with an embroidery set.

Mu Lan: Baba...were you practicing wu shu?

Huan Hu: No, no, daughter!

Mu Lan: You should not strain yourself.

Huan Hu: I’m fine, Mu Lan. What is it you have there?

Mu Lan: Some new embroidery.

Huan Hu: Ah, Mu Lan hua! Magnolia flowers! The flowers you were named after.

Mu Lan: Do you like it?

Huan Hu: Very much. Say...would you like to play a game of xiang qi with me?

Mu Lan: Baba...

Huan Hu: One game? Humor your old man.

Mu Lan: One game.

Huan Hu: Hao! Sit down. Sit down.

Mu Lan sits across from Huan Hu who prepares the game board.

Mu Lan: Baba, why do you like xiang qi so?

Huan Hu: It requires strategy. You cannot rush into a battle without a plan. Remember that daughter.

Mu Lan: I doubt I’ll ever need to, Baba.

Huan Hu: Ah that is true. I suppose young girls don’t have a mind for battles, strategy, and adventure.

Mu Lan: I’d like to go on an adventure.

Huan Hu: Oh? Like the adventure of finding a husband?

Mu Lan: Baba! That’s not what I meant.

Huan Hu: Why not? The greatest adventure is a long life filled with loved ones and family.

Mu Lan: I know. That is my duty: to find a good husband, and raise many fine children. But what about seeing the world? Climbing high mountains? Meeting people from far off lands? That sounds like an adventure to me.

Huan Hu: Those adventures are not fit for you, Mu Lan. It is a man’s place to face danger and uncertainty and I would do anything to keep my family safe. You should be happy to live in a peaceful village. *(beat)* Shall we play?

Mu Lan: May I go first?

Huan Hu: Ah-ah! Age before beauty.

Mu Lan: You always say that.

They play and Mu Lan wins.

Huan Hu: Check! Aaah you are learning my little flower. If only you had been born a boy, you would be twice the soldier I was.

Mu Lan: If I had been born a boy, who would sew your clothes and fix your meals?

Huan Hu: True...how about a rematch?

Mu Lan: No, no. Time for dinner. I made you egg drop soup, Baba.

Huan Hu: Oooh you spoil me!

For Teachers

Reading and Drama

READ 'NANA MIRIAM' A TALE OF THE NIGER RIVER

After seeing *THE BALLAD OF MU LAN*, your students might enjoy experiencing another story about a female heroine (SEE below). They can then compare one strong female character to another.

As You Read Aloud...Stop occasionally at particularly engaging or tense parts. Ask students to make predictions about what might happen, giving reasons for their predictions.

After You Read ... Engage students in a post-reading discussion.

QUESTIONS

- Who are the major characters?
- Where does this story take place?
- What is the problem in the story that has to be solved?
- What do you think the story is trying to teach you?

NANA MIRIAM

Once, in a small village by the great river Niger, there lived a man named Fara Maka and his daughter, Nana Miriam. Nana Miriam was tall and strong like her father. And smart. Fara Maka was proud of his daughter and he taught her all he knew. He taught her the names and the uses of all things. Nana Miriam also learned one thing more, for she had magic powers that no one knew about. But she did not tell anyone of those powers.

Now, at that time which we are talking about a great hippopotamus lived in the Niger. But it was a monster with an insatiable hunger. And every time the rice crop was ready to be harvested, the monster hippopotamus rose up out of the River Niger, waddled onto the land and devoured the entire crop. Season after season, the monster devoured the rice for miles. At last this caused a famine in the land.

The village warriors went out with their spears to hunt the monster. But they could do nothing against it, for it was a shape-shifter as well. Whenever a spear was thrown at the hippopotamus, the animal changed—sometimes into a crocodile or a manatee.

Fara Maka went to Kara-Digi-Mao-Fosi-Fasi, a member of the neighboring Tomma people, who had a great reputation for hunting. "Will you hunt this beast with me?" asked Fara Maka.

Kara-Digi-Mao-Fosi-Fasi agreed. "And I will bring along my one hundred and twenty hunting dogs."

So, Fara Maka and Kara-Digi-Mao-Fosi-Fasi went out on the trail of the monster with the hundred and twenty hunting dogs. It was not a difficult trail to find, for the giant hippopotamus left a path of destruction wherever it went.

Soon they came upon the monster. The dogs were turned loose, one by one. The monster saw the dogs and just laughed. One by one by one, the monster hippopotamus grabbed up each dog, turned it around, and swallowed it whole, starting with the tail. When the last dog was devoured, the monster turned its back on Fara Maka and Kara-Digi-Mao-Fosi-Fasi, and waddled back to the rice field, where it consumed the last of the crop.

Fara Maka and Kara-Digi-Mao-Fosi-Fasi ran off in terror, and they ran all the way back to Fara Maka's house. There, trembling, they told Nana Miriam what had happened. "Well," said Nana Miriam, standing up, "it is time for me to see this monster for myself."

Nana Miriam went forth, a spear in one hand, her juju bag filled with charms in the other. It was not long before she came upon the monster. When the hippopotamus saw her, it stopped eating and turned. It smiled a broad hippopotamus smile, showing strong hippopotamus teeth. "Girl, girl, I know why you are here. You wish to stop me."

"That I do," said Nana Miriam.

"What makes you think a mere girl can stop me?" said the hippopotamus.

Nana Miriam put down the spear and held the juju bag up. "We will not know the answer to that until we engage in battle. I am ready if you are, monster."

The monster smiled again. "I am ready, girl!" The shout was full of flames, which set the rice field afire. Soon a wall of fire sprang up between the monster and Nana Miriam.

Nana Miriam reached into her juju bag and pulled out a magic powder. She flung the powder onto the fire, and at once the flames turned to water, which rained down upon the field.

"Ah!" shouted the hippopotamus. And at its shout, a wall of iron appeared between them.

Nana Miriam reached back into the juju bag, and this time she took out a small magic hammer that grew and grew into a great magic hammer. One blow, then another—Nana Miriam pounded the hammer against the iron wall. And in a matter of minutes, the wall was broken into small pieces by the force of her blows.

"Do you have something more?" cried Nana Miriam. "Or is that all?"

For the first time, the hippopotamus monster looked nervous. It turned from Nana Miriam and shifted its shape, becoming a river that flowed swiftly toward the Niger.

But Nana Miriam was ready. Once more she reached into her juju bag and took out a magic lotion and sprayed it over the monster river. In a twinkling the river dried up only inches away from the Niger, and the monster turned once again into a hippopotamus.

The monster charged. Nana Miriam grabbed the hind leg of the hippopotamus, and picked the monster up. Twirling it three times around her head she threw the monster across the Niger and far out of sight.

Fara Maka held out his arms and Nana Miriam ran into them. "What a wonderful daughter I have," he said.

"What a wonderful papa I have," said Nana Miriam.

When they returned to the village, their story preceded them. There was singing and dancing, and feasting, as well.

And from that time to this, no one has starved because of monster hippopotamuses. And from that day to this, the story-tellers have sung and told about Nana Miriam, who showed all the power of a mere girl!

DRAMATIZE A STORY

There are many stories referred to or included in this study guide, from versions of the *MU LAN* story to other strong female characters. After sharing a story in class, guide students in the activity below to explore and act out the story through drama.

FREEZE: Guide students to shape their bodies as each of the characters and then have them freeze in their poses/shapes. What does the character look like? (Freeze). What does the character like to do? (Freeze). What's something funny that the character likes to do? (Freeze).

ACTION: Guide students to walk about the room as each of the characters. How does the character feel? How fast or slow does the character move? What is this character doing as he/she walks about?

STORY EXPLORATION

Narrate parts of the story, guiding the students to act out the moments as you tell them. Explore different parts of the story more than once each time, encouraging the students to try new ways of showing the action.

STORY PLAY

Ask for or assign volunteers to portray each of the characters. Narrate the entire story, guiding students to play out each moment as you tell it. Repeat the experience, enlisting new volunteers each time until all of the students have a chance to perform.

For Teachers

Writing Activities

WRITING: YOUR OWN FANTASY STORY

Create an original story with your class. Guide your students to help suggest ideas for a story that features an amazing heroic character of their choice having a great adventure.

PROCEDURE

- Make a list of *heroes/heroines* and *locations* suggested by the class.
- Decide on one location and one central character. Ideally the heroine/hero will face a challenge that is threatening family or community. For example, a *school of gigantic fish* are eating away your island.
- Ask students to imagine what might happen when the creatures visit the island. How might their eating affect the people on the island? How might they feel when they first see the fish? What trouble do the people face as they challenge the gigantic creatures? How does the heroine/hero work together with the people to face the fish? How might she/he defeat the fish without violence?
- Start your story: 'Once upon a time there was a ...' Pause occasionally to encourage students to suggest the next action. Continue the story until you have a satisfying end.

WRITING: 'WHO COULD YOU BE?'

Guide students to write or draw in response to the question, "If you disguised yourself to go on a great quest, who would you be and where would you go?"

As desired, read the following selection from the original *MU LAN* poem before they write.

From *The Ballad of Mulan* the ancient poem

Father has no grown-up son,
Mu-lan has no elder brother.
"I want to buy a saddle and horse,
And serve in the army in Father's place."
In the East Market she buys a spirited horse,
In the West Market she buys a saddle,
In the South Market she buys a bridle,
In the North Market she buys a long whip.
At dawn she takes leave of Father and Mother,

She goes ten thousand miles on the business of war,
She crosses passes and mountains like flying.

DISGUISE

Using the **FOR STUDENTS: Make a Disguise** page, guide students to design and make their own disguise, just as *MU LAN* needed to do in the play.

For Students

Make a Disguise

Disguise yourself! Below are instructions to make your own hat, plus a moustache and beard. Of course, no one could ever possibly recognize you wear this disguise!

Hat

You will need:

Large sheet of red card
Gold pen or paint
Glue or sticky tape



Instructions:

- Tie a piece of string to a pencil. Hold the string in the center of the card. Hold the pencil so the string is taut and pull it round the center to draw a circle.
- Cut out the circle. Now cut out a segment of the circle - about one sixth of the total.
- With pen or paint, color the hat.
- Bend the edges of the hat together to form a cone and glue or tape in place.
- Attach a wide ribbon inside if you wish.

Moustache

You will need:

Black card
Elastic
Sticky tape



Instructions:

- Cut a moustache from black card.
- Cut a length of elastic long enough to go around your head.
- Tape the elastic to the back of the moustache.



Beard

You will need:

Black card
Wool
Glue
Elastic
Sticky tape



Instructions:

- Cut a beard from black card. Glue lengths or swirls of wool over the beard.
- Cut a length of elastic long enough to go around your head.
- Tape the elastic to the back of the beard.