VISIBLE FICTIONS

the adventures of
ROBIN HOOD

mon
SEP 29 10 am
WELCOME TO THE HOP
A performance needs an audience, so be prepared to play your part!

THEATER ETIQUETTE
When entering the Hopkins Center, show consideration for all those sharing the building by remaining quiet and respectful in common areas.

Be aware and use quiet voices. Remember that live theater differs greatly from watching television or movies or attending a sporting event. Live performers can hear and see you and are easily distracted by any talking or moving around in the audience. Even the smallest sounds can be heard throughout the theater, so it’s best to be quiet so that everyone can enjoy the performance.

Applause is the best way to show your enthusiasm and appreciation!

Important things to remember: Backpacks, food, drink, and gum are not allowed in the theater. Please turn off all cell phones and note that recording the performance or taking any photos is strictly prohibited. Hats off! It is respectful to remove hats during your time in the theater.

INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS
Be prepared and arrive early. You should arrive at the theater 30 to 45 minutes before the show. Allow for travel time, parking, and trips to the restroom. You should be in your seat at least 15 minutes before the performance begins.

Have a head count. On the day of the performance be sure to have an accurate head count of students, chaperones, and teachers.

Staying for lunch? Please call 603.646.2010 no later than one week in advance of the show to make a reservation for lunch. The day of the show, bring lunches in marked boxes and give them to a Hop staff member. Lunches will be ready for you after the show in Alumni Hall.

Photo Policy. The Hopkins Center may take photographs during the performance for use on our website or on promotional materials. If you or your students do not wish to be photographed, please see a Hop staff member.

The Show Must Go On! We do not cancel events due to inclement weather. Performances will only be canceled if the artist is unable to reach the theater. Schools will be notified by phone if the performance has been cancelled. We do not issue refunds for weather-related cancellations; please feel free to fill empty seats with other school or community members.

This study guide was created for you by the Outreach & Arts Education team. To download copies of this study guide, see additional resources for this event, or view past study guides, please visit: www.hop.dartmouth.edu/outreach.

ENJOY THE SHOW!
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The Hopkins Center Outreach & Arts Education department embodies the Hop’s mission to “ignite and sustain a passion for the arts.” It provides Dartmouth, the community and beyond rare personal contact with artists and a broad context for the performing arts. Unveiling the creative process of extraordinarily diverse artists, Outreach programs touch more than 14,000 lives each year.

DID YOU KNOW?
• The Hopkins Center opened in 1962.
• The Hopkins Center was designed by Wallace Harrison, architect of Lincoln Center and the United Nations Building in New York City.
• Spaulding Auditorium houses one of the largest pipe organs in New Hampshire. Can you find it?
ABOUT THE COMPANY
Based in Glasgow (GLAZ-go), Scotland, in the United Kingdom (UK), Visible Fictions has been creating innovative and dynamic theatrical productions for over 20 years. It has toured all over the world with the goal of helping people of all ages to think, talk, share and create. Visible Fictions believes that the arts are a powerful educator and the company offers fresh and dynamic ways to learn, solve problems and form opinions. Though no two Visible Fictions shows are alike, all guarantee a memorable and powerful experience.

Many people at Visible Fictions worked together to bring The Adventures of Robin Hood to the Hopkins Center. The script was written by Oliver Emanuel and the show was directed by Douglas Irvine. Lighting was designed by Sergey Jakovsky, costumes were designed by Kylie Langford and sound was designed Danny Krass. The set was designed by Suzie Inglis and Douglas Irvine, with technical and stage management by Fiona Burness. The original performance was co-commissioned by Visible Fictions and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and was first presented at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. during its 2013-2014 season.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE
Robin Hood is a tale that has been told a thousand times, but never before like this. In The Adventures of Robin Hood, the stories come to life via two actors, a lot of cardboard boxes, a shopping cart and little else. The two actors, Martin McCormick and Billy Mack, are both from Scotland and between the two of them they play all the roles in the show.

Using their ingenuity, the magic of theater and the imaginations of the audience, the actors move smoothly from one character to the next and back again. The boxes become trees, houses, a castle; a shopping cart becomes a swirling vortex of water, a cart, a carriage. Flashlights become arrows and packets of crisps become luxurious food and drink. The lights overhead turn blue to indicate water and red to indicate fire. There are funky dance breaks to celebrate happy events. This mixture of traditional story and contemporary storytelling creates a unique and extraordinary experience for the audience, regardless of whether or not they are familiar with the stories of Robin Hood.
THE STORY

Though there are many stories about Robin Hood, Visible Fictions focuses on only a few to create their production. In The Adventures of Robin Hood, Robin defeats Little John on the bridge and saves him from drowning. Robin and John recruit the merry men including Much, the miller’s son, Alan a Dale, a singer of songs, Will Scarlet and Friar Tuck. This band of friends fools the Sheriff of Nottingham at the archery competition and wins the golden arrow. Maid Marian urges Robin to fight the Sheriff who, with his pet wolf, keeps raising taxes on the poor. The outlaws raid the Sheriff’s birthday party and steal all the food from him and his posh friends. The group survives a fire in Sherwood Forest and rescues Robin from the noose. All of this happens with two actors performing all the roles (even the wolf!).

The stories of Robin Hood originate from English and Scottish ballads sung by troubadours in the 11th-13th centuries. At that time in history, stories were told because most people did not know how to read and write. In the 14th century, people began to write the stories down. In some of the ballads, “Robyn Hode,” as he was known back then, is joined by his friends Litell Johnn, Wilyem Scarlock and Much, the miller’s son. His enemies included the Sheriff of Nottingham who worked for the evil Prince John, and Guy of Gisbourne, a knight and bounty hunter who worked for the Sheriff. As the stories continued to be shared, they were expanded and altered to include more characters and adventures. The stories were also adapted into plays that were performed in France and England and became a staple of traditional spring celebrations in the 15th and 16th century. Later versions of the story raise Robin’s status from a common yeoman or forester to that of an aristocrat who was forced out of his ancestral home. In addition to Robin Hood, Little John and the Sheriff of Nottingham, the cast of characters often found in the many variations of these stories includes Much, Will Scarlet, Will Stutely, Allen a Dale, Arthur a Bland and David of Dorchester. Maid Marian was not a character in any of the original ballads but was added later, as was Friar Tuck. Despite the variance in the stories and characters, Robin Hood’s adventures in archery and chivalrous thievery are consistently set between the years of 1189-1199 AD during the reign of King Richard I, who appears as himself in several of the stories.

CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

WHO WAS ROBIN HOOD?

Even though the historically-correct King Richard and Prince John make appearances in the stories, there is no firm or factual evidence to support the idea that there was a real Robin Hood. Some people believe Robin Hood was Roger Godbend, an 11th century outlaw. There are also judicial records from the early 13th century naming an outlaw as Robert Hode; several years later a judge bestowed the nickname of Robin Hood on a different outlaw. There is also mention of a Robin Hood in the definitive book about the earliest history of Scotland, the Scotichronicon. Most likely, Robin Hood and his friends are composite characters created from several real-life people. In the Middle Ages, many peasants were discouraged by the very restrictive rules and structure of feudalism. Under feudal rule, peasants had to give many of their hard-earned resources to knights and nobles. Stories involving a brave character who finds ways to get around these restrictive laws would have been popular, as would Robin Hood’s habit of helping the poor by stealing from the rich. Storytellers who wanted to keep their audiences enthralled with sword fighting, romance and living free from the laws of the land could use Robin Hood in any number of ways to create fun and exciting stories. Even now, hundreds of years later, we are still captivated with stories about Robin Hood and his merry men.
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Robin Hood stories were created and written by countless authors. There is no record of who told the first story or sung the first ballad of Robin Hood, nor is there a record of who first wrote down the stories. In reality, many people contributed to shaping the tales of Robin and his crew. The earliest mention of Robin Hood in writing is in the circa 1377 story Piers Plowman in which the author, William Langland, wrote:

*I do not know my Paternoster
perfectly as the priest sings it,
but I know the rhymes of Robin Hood
and Randolf Earl of Chester*

The earliest written compilation of Robin Hood ballads was published in 1795 by Joseph Ritson, a conveyancer who lived in London but was born in northern England near the border with Scotland. Mr. Ritson loved to research and write, and he wrote many books on a variety topics. One of the topics to which he was dedicated was the preservation of the songs and ballads of his rural childhood, including Robin Hood. Almost one hundred years after Joseph Ritson, Alexandre Dumas (DOO-mah), an author known for writing adventures like The Three Musketeers, adapted and condensed the swashbuckling stories into two volumes. In 1883, author and illustrator Howard Pyle adapted the stories into versions suitable for children. Since then, many other authors have adapted Robin Hood’s stories and over 40 movie versions of the story have been produced.

ABOUT ROBIN HOOD’S ‘HOOD: NOTTINGHAM AND SHERWOOD FOREST

Nottingham is in Nottinghamshire (sometimes abbreviated to “Notts”) in the country of England, which is now part of the United Kingdom. In medieval times, Sherwood Forest was approximately fifteen miles long and six miles wide—the size of Mt. Mansfield, Groton and Camel’s Hump State Forests all put together. The Great North Way—the main road from London to York—went right through it. Though the town of Nottingham was located within the boundaries of the forest, the land was considered a royal hunting forest under forest law. Forest law mandated that only the King could hunt in the forest; no one else could kill a deer, chop down trees or carry a weapon such as a bow or spear. At the time, all forests in England had a keeper appointed by the king. The keepership was hereditary, meaning that the oldest son of the keeper would automatically become keeper when his father died. Keepers hired foresters to walk or ride horses through the forest and arrest anyone breaking forest law.
CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND (CONT.)

There could be very serious punishments for breaking forest law, though the most severe punishments—including hanging—were banned in the Magna Carta. Over time, Sherwood Forest was reduced in size as trees were harvested and areas were developed for farming and housing. Today, Sherwood Forest is a 450-acre park inside the Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve, located north of the town of Nottingham. You can stay nearby and attend the annual Robin Hood Festival or walk the many trails and visit Major Oak, an oak tree that has been standing for an estimated 800 years. This might be the tree to which the actors in The Adventures of Robin Hood are referring when they say Robin lived under a large oak tree!

ABOUT VISIBLE FICTION’S ‘HOOD: SCOTLAND

Scotland is the northernmost part of the UK, located directly north of England. The entire country of Scotland is 30,414 square miles which, for comparison, is a little smaller than the size of the state of Maine (35,385 square miles). The capital of Scotland is Edinburgh (ED-in-BURR-a) but, with a population of 592,820, Glasgow is the largest city (almost as big as Boston). In addition to the mainland, Scotland has 790 islands, 130 of which are populated. While Scotland has three official languages—English, Scottish Gaelic and Scots—it is perhaps best known for the bagpipes and the great variety of tartans used in kilts and other items. Politically, Scotland is a constitutional monarchy and is currently part of the United Kingdom, along with Great Britain, Wales and Northern Ireland. That could change, however. On September 18, 2014, the citizens of Scotland are holding a vote to see if a majority of Scots want to leave the UK and become an independent country.

DID YOU KNOW?

Some Famous Glaswegians are:
- Robbie Coltrane-Hagrid in the Harry Potter movies
- Billy Boyd-Pippin in The Lord of the Rings films
- Gordon Brown-former Prime Minister of the UK

Map of modern-day United Kingdom, including Glasgow and Edinburgh

1 PLACE, 3 NAMES

Great Britain: a country made up of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland; also known as Britain
United Kingdom: another term for Great Britain, abbreviated UK
England: largest country within the UK

Scottish Flag, also called the Saltire

Flag of the United Kingdom: Can you find the Scottish flag?
LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

CAPTURE THE FLAG: GRADES 3-5

Using the Scottish and British flags for inspiration, research flags from other countries around the world. What are the various symbols on the flags, and what do you think they represent? Why do you think these symbols are important to the people of the country? Are there symbols you find in common on multiple flags? Think about your life and what symbols are meaningful to you. Use these symbols to create a flag that represents you. Display the flags in the classroom and identify the artist based on their use of symbols.

TRADING PLACES: GRADES 3-6

Much like the police force in this century, the Sheriff of Nottingham was responsible for making sure people followed the laws of the land. Write a persuasive letter from the Sheriff’s point of view. The letter could be to his daughter or other family member. How does the Sheriff feel about Robin Hood breaking the law? What are the Sheriff’s frustrations with trying to stop Robin Hood from robbing the Sheriff’s friends and neighbors? How do the actions of Robin Hood affect the Sheriff and his family? How do you think he feels about not being able to do his job well? How do you feel when you set out to accomplish a task but are unable to finish it to your satisfaction? Trade and read the letters out loud. Which letters are the most persuasive and support the Sheriff’s point of view?

Extension: Write a letter back to the Sheriff from Robin Hood’s point of view, responding to the Sheriff’s concerns but making a case for Robin’s objectives.

PAPER BAG STORIES: GRADES 3-8

Visible Fictions creates an exciting world by using flashlights as arrows, cardboard boxes as chickens and whole lot of imagination. Create your own story with the help of a few items. Bring in various household items and costume pieces and separate them out into paper bags. Break up into groups, with each group taking a bag of items. Look at all the items in the bag and discuss as a group what kind of story could be created using all the people in the group and all the items in the bag. It could be a retelling of a fairy tale or a myth, or something completely new. Items can be incorporated into the story realistically or imaginatively. After determining a story with a beginning, middle and end, turn it into a short play. Rehearse the story, acting out the parts and showing how all the items in your bag fit in with the story. Perform for the other groups in the class. Reflect as a class on how each group chose to use their items. What was the inspiration for their story? What genre was the story? Where there any items in the bag that were challenging? Any that were easy to incorporate/adapt?

A FAR COUNTRY: GRADES 4-6

Calculate the miles that Visible Fictions traveled to get from Glasgow, Scotland, UK to Hanover, NH, USA. Review a map and determine the different ways the group may have traveled (plane? boat? bus?—the choice is yours). If possible, trace the route on the map. After you have done the calculation in miles, determine the length in hours and minutes it took to travel. Take into consideration the average speed at which you would be traveling depending on your mode of transportation, as well as the time change. Convert the total miles traveled to kilometers, the measurement for distance that is used in the UK (1 mile = 1.6 km). Make a poster or chart that shows all the information you have gathered.

Extension: If Visible Fictions arrived in Hanover September 28th at 9:00 a.m., when did they most likely leave Glasgow, Scotland? If they leave Hanover at 1:00 p.m. on September 29 to return to Glasgow, when will they most likely return? Feel free to pretend that airport delays, layovers and such do not affect your travel plans.
HERE AND THERE: GRADES 5-8

Research both Glasgow, Scotland and [insert your town here], USA. Look for traditions such as annual holidays, festivals or celebrations. What kind of music is popular with students your age in each place? What movies are playing in both places? Use a map to determine the latitude and longitude of Glasgow and your town. How far apart from each other are they? How far from the equator are both? How far from the poles? Measure in both miles and kilometers. Research the climate and weather. How does the weather of Vermont or New Hampshire compare with Glasgow? What crops and other agriculture do Scotland and New England have in common? Create a chart that compares and contrasts our part of the world and Scotland. What conclusions can you draw about what it would be like to live in Scotland? Do you think Scots would like living here?

WORKING THE SYSTEM: GRADES 5-8

One of the reasons for conflict in the Robin Hood stories is the presence of feudalism. Research the basics of the feudal system and how it worked. Based on the total number of students in the class, separate students into the following groups: nobles (calculate 10% of total students), vassals/knights (calculate 30% of total students) and peasants (calculate 55% of total students). In addition to these groups, one student should represent the king. Evenly distribute paper cups or baggies labeled “A” or “B” to the peasants, vassals and nobles; vassals and nobles should have spoons or plastic gloves. Give each peasant ten M&Ms in their cup. Per the feudal system, vassals will demand payment for the protection they provide for the peasants by taking six candies from each of the peasants that share their cup letter. Then, each noble will demand five candies from the vassals that share their cup letter. Finally, all of the nobles, regardless of cup letter, will give three candies to the King. Calculate the total number of candies each individual has and the total number in each group (peasant, vassals, nobles, king). What does the final count suggest about the living situation for each group? What does it tell you about medieval society under feudalism? How do you think it feels to be a peasant, vassal or noble? Do you think you could change your status under this system? How? Have the class vote democratically to see if the candies should be redistributed evenly. After the vote, everyone can eat their candies. While enjoying the snack, discuss the choice the group made about the candies.

PRE PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

• What stories do you know about Robin Hood? Have you read the stories or watched them on film or TV?
• Do you think robbing from the rich to give to the poor would work in today’s society? Why or why not?

POST PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

• Were the actors able to change convincingly from one character to another? Why or why not?
• In what ways were the story and performance updated for today’s audiences?
• Discuss the moral code of Robin Hood and his men. Should they be allowed to break the law? Do you think there are times when it is acceptable to break the law? Each person develops his or her own moral code, the accepted standards by which one judges right from wrong. What is Robin’s moral code? Are Robin and the merry men heroes? Why or why not? How would you describe your moral code? What is acceptable for you in terms of what you will or won’t do, even for a friend?
### VOCABULARY:

**Acre:** a unit of area used in some countries (including the United States and the United Kingdom) equal to 4,046.86 square meters or 4,840 square yards  
**Ancestral:** relating to something belonging to former generations of somebody’s family  
**Archery:** the activity of shooting with a bow and arrow  
**Aristocrat:** a member of the nobility or the highest social class in a country  
**Bagpipes:** a wind instrument consisting of an inflatable bag with an inlet pipe and one or more outlet pipes that produce either one fixed note or several notes  
**Ballads:** a song or poem, often traditional or in a traditional style, that tells a story in a number of short regular stanzas, often with a refrain  
**Bounty hunter:** somebody who captures criminals for reward money  
**Chivalrous:** relating to the values of the medieval code of knighthood, especially courtesy, self-sacrifice and a sense of fair play  
**Circa:** Latin; used before a date to indicate that it is approximate or estimated; abbreviated “c.”  
**Composite:** something made from different parts  
**Constitutional monarchy:** a political system in which the head of state is a king or queen who rules to the extent allowed by a constitution  
**Conveyancer:** a person of law who draws up the legal documents needed for transfer of ownership  
**Crisps:** the British term for potato chips; in Britain, “chips” are what Americans call French fries  
**Elude:** to escape or avoid somebody or something by cunning, skill or resourcefulness  
**Feudalism:** the legal and social system that existed in medieval Europe in which vassals held land from lords in exchange for military service  
**Folk tales:** traditional stories usually connected to a specific place, time or community; often handed down by word of mouth  
**Glaswegian:** someone from Glasgow, Scotland, UK  
**Judicial:** relating to judgment in a court of law  
**Kilt:** a knee-length wraparound plaid-print garment that is part of the traditional Scottish dress for men and is also worn by women and girls  
**Magna Carta:** a formal document establishing the rights of English barons and free citizens, granted by King John at Runnymede in 1215 and regarded as the basis of civil and political liberty in England  
**Mandated:** an official command or instruction from an authority  
**Medieval:** relating to, involving, belonging to or typical of the Middle Ages in Europe, generally ranging from the 5th to the 15th century CE  
**Middle Ages:** see Medieval  
**Miller:** somebody who owns, manages or operates a mill, grinding grain into flour  
**Noose:** a loop at the end of a rope ties so that it can be tightened; used for trapping animals or hanging people  
**Paternoster:** in Roman Catholicism, the Lord’s Prayer, also known as the Our Father, or a recitation of it  
**Posh:** well-off, elegant, fashionable person from the upper class of society  
**Prime Minister:** in a parliamentary system, the head of the cabinet and, usually, the chief executive  
**Reign:** the period of time during which somebody, especially a king or queen, rules a nation  
**Saltire:** in heraldry, one of the basic designs, used on coat of arms, consisting of a diagonal cross  
**Scotichronicon:** a 15th century historical narrative that provides an account of early Scottish history  
**Script:** the printed version of a stage play including the words to be spoken and often including technical directions  
**Shire:** a county in England or Wales  
**Tartan:** a Scottish wool fabric woven in a wide range of checked or plaid patterns, many of which are associated with specific Scottish clans  
**Troubadours:** a writer or singer of lyric verses especially in parts of Europe between the 11th and 13th centuries  
**Vassals:** somebody who gave loyalty and homage to a feudal lord and received the right to occupy the lord’s land and be protected by him  
**Yeoman:** a member of the class of English commoners who owned and cultivated their own land in the Middle Ages
OTHER RESOURCES AND REFERENCES:

Visible Fictions web page
http://visiblefictions.co.uk/

History.com Staff. “The Real Robin Hood.”


“History of the Monarchy: English Monarchs from 400 AD to 1603.”


Scotland.org