

AGE GROUP 2: GRADES 7-10

ACTION - PACKED
ACTIVITIES!



OUR SOARING SOUND DESIGN

Sound design aims to assist the telling of a story. Good sound design is often subtle and impacts the audience without them even knowing. Not only do we need to make sure that the spoken word is audible through the use of microphones and speaker systems throughout the theatre, but the development of creative sound design draws upon various sound effects to establish mood and location, to highlight key moments in the narrative and to reinforce musical motifs.





ACTIVITY

Here are some aspects of the sound design for THE LION KING which assist to transport us into Simba's world. Please **READ** through this as a whole class, and **HIGHLIGHT** information which may be useful for you when you are discussing what you have heard after the show.



In They Live In You, a reverberation effect, or 'wet' sound, is used on the ensemble* audio to create a sense of distance. This ethereal effect is further enhanced by routing the ensemble* audio to the surround speakers, to make the audience feel like Mufasa and Simba's ancestors are all around them. This is in contrast to audio without any reverberation added, known as 'dry' sound, which is more natural.

The sound evident during Rafiki Mourns contrasts with the scenes which sit either side of it. After the drama and tension of The Stampede, the sound for Rafiki Mourns helps to create a much smaller, emotional and intimate effect, before the uplifting and positive Hakuna Matata. This also reinforces the unique and unusual character of Rafiki, who sits outside of the world the other characters inhabit in a number of ways.

Did you hear any sound effects in the auditorium before the show began? Take a moment to **DISCUSS** this now with a classmate.

Some keen listeners will have noticed various musical motifs - repeated musical patterns, and choice of particular instruments - which occur in connection with certain themes or characters. For example, the flute is often associated with Zazu, whilst Scar often appears accompanied by the ominous sound of a concert bass drum. **SHARE** your observations about motifs which you heard during the performance with your classmates and teacher.

When you enter the theatre, look for the sources of sound! **SHARE** amongst your classmates any observations you have about the location of the speakers; remember, some may have been rigged behind you. The theatre uses a surround sound system to enhance the audience's experience and to immerse us fully in each moment of the narrative. Once the music begins, see if you can spot where the orchestra is located. Then, as the show goes on, notice where the performers deliver lines and perform songs from in relation to the audience.

In the Elephant Graveyard scene, use of instrumentation and sound design is very important to create a sinister and dangerous environment in which Simba and Nala play. Note the use of the electric drum kit, electric guitar and bass drum. The use of electric instruments makes the environment much less natural and welcoming and so creates a sense of danger for the young lion cubs.

In the Elephant Graveyard scene, electric instruments also sound much harsher than more traditional orchestral sounds; this creates a strong contrast with Simba's usual safe environment with his father.



ACTIVITY

Working with a partner, please use this information to FILL OUT the table below. Some details have already been drawn out and entered into the relevant boxes to help you get STARTED. ORGANISING your ideas and observations will make it easier for you to SHARE this information with your classmates. Once you have seen the live performance of THE LION KING, you may have many observations about the element of sound you would like to make note of, or perhaps you would like to COLLABORATE on a massive sound table with your classmates. If this is the case, please CREATE your own large template on a piece of paper.

<u>Song/Scene</u>	<u>SFX</u> <u>(Sound Effect)</u>	<u>Instrumentation</u>	<u>Key Character</u> <u>& Dialogue</u>	<u>Location</u> <u>of Speakers</u>	<u>How did the</u> <u>audience feel?</u>
		electric drum kit, electric guitar and bass drum			Scared, overwhelmed and excited!
<u>They Live In You</u>	reverberation effect, or 'wet' sound			Surround	
Zazu's entrance		musical motifs using the flute			
Overture*	<u>None</u>				



SETTING THE SCENES

The sun in THE LION KING is constructed from 43 aluminium ribs attached to each other with silk strips. As the circle is lifted up by the wires, it gives the impression of the sun coming up over the horizon. As it rises, the lights shine onto the silk, creating the mirage effect you might see in hot climates. This is the first use of the circle motif which we see throughout the show. Julie Taymor describes this sun set piece as 'sculpture on stage'.

Remember that the spaces where the audience is seated, called the auditorium, and including the aisles and boxes, are used in the opening number; the procession of performers through the auditorium to the stage draws the audience into the story and is also an opportunity to showcase the costumes up close. THE LION KING is set in the vast landscape of the African savannah. There are a variety of different locations, including Pride Rock, the grasslands, the Elephant Graveyard, the jungle, the gorge where the stampede occurs



and the waterhole. In the film, animators could create multiple landscapes and environments, but in live theatre, speed of transitions between locations is important, as is giving the performers enough space (including large ensemble* and dance numbers) to perform well and safely. The use of levels is also very important, both to create visual interest but also to create the different landscapes. The use of machinery and automation is key to help create this in the show; the designers leant into what they describe as 'some hardcore engineering' to create the 'corkscrew' design of the Pride Rock set piece, which can twist into and out of the floor of the stage, otherwise known as the 'deck'. The audience is able to 'fill in the gaps' so the creative team needs to provide the audience with enough information to suggest location, atmosphere and time, without trying to do so naturalistically.

Let's also consider the interaction between set and performer by looking at the way the grasslands are created: performers emerge from upstage wearing large trays of grassheads. These costumes have been designed not to portray the wildlife of the savannah but the landscape itself. They serve not only as costumes, but as architectural elements of a living, moving set. This moving landscape helps to portray a sense of journey which is essential to this scene.



The stampede is a great example of how masks and set work together to create perspective. The performers stand downstage holding large wildebeest shields and wearing woollen, shaggy costumes to create wildebeest. This then combines with smaller wildebeest on rollers, and a backcloth with African-style paintings of wildebeest on it. The stampede was one of the most challenging scenes to transfer from the animated film to the live stage, but when approached about directing THE LION KING for theatre audiences, Julie Taymor says that staging this scene in particular was one of the most appealing challenges that she offered her with. She says, clapping her hands together, 'I saw the stampede, and thought 'oh great! How are we going to put a stampede on stage? That was the most exciting thing; the most difficult thing was also the most exciting..!'

The scenes at the Elephant Graveyard allow you to discuss how space is used by performers, and the use of the skeleton to create levels and scale. It also provides a striking similarity to the circular environment created by Pride Rock.

The jungle at the end of Act 1 appears soon after the tragedy and horror of Mufasa's death. The lush, tropical location allows a change in colour palette and gives the audience the opportunity to experience a lighter mood, sending us into the interval on a high note.

The drought and disappearance of the watering hole is a very simple technique; the fabric which represents the water is drawn quickly through a tiny trap-door in the centre of the stage. This allows the audience to see time passing and the devastating impact of the drought very quickly, using very effective theatre technology to assist with the illusion.

To learn more about the process of designing, creating and operating the awesome set for THE LION KING from the creative team themselves, watch the video titled Setting the Scene in the Behind the Scenes Series at this link.





ACTIVITY

Before getting started, take a moment to **EXAMINE** all the images in this resource which depict the set design for **THE LION KING**. Next, **WRITE** a series of annotations in the lines positioned at each number around this colour wheel, **IDENTIFY** the following:

- Which **location** is being established through this element of the set design;
- Which **aspects of the set design** feature each colour; and
- What **mood** is being **established** through the use of this colour.



COLOUR: YELLOW

1. Location:
2. Aspects of set design:
3. Mood established:

COLOUR: ORANGE

1. Location:
2. Aspects of set design:
3. Mood established:

COLOUR: BRIGHT RED

1. Location:
2. Aspects of set design:
3. Mood established:

COLOUR: DEEP BLUE

1. Location:
2. Aspects of set design:
3. Mood established:

COLOUR: DEEP GREEN

1. Location:
2. Aspects of set design:
3. Mood established:

Next, CONSIDER the colours in this wheel which are **not** evident in the images of the set design for THE LION KING. IMAGINE natural features or locations around the world where these colours **are** evident, and using the lines below, JOT down a few in the spaces provided, and IDENTIFY the mood commonly suggested by this colour.



1. Colour:
2. Natural Location/s:
3. Mood of colour:

1. Colour:
2. Natural Location/s:
3. Mood of colour:

1. Colour:
2. Natural Location/s:
3. Mood of colour:

1. Colour:
2. Natural Location/s:
3. Mood of colour:

FRIENDS FOR REAL!



Friendship and loyalty* are two of the most powerful themes running through THE LION KING, tested repeatedly as characters face impossible choices, devastating losses, and moments where doing the right thing comes at a significant personal cost. Let's take a look at 3 totally different relationship styles between the characters in THE LION KING.

TIMON & PUMBAA

These two give 'ride or die'; Pumbaa would follow Timon into a howling pack of hyenas if it meant his bestie wasn't left all alone. Even though Timon can give Pumbaa short shrift at times, he will dance for his dinner in a feather boa to protect his constant companion. Try to spot a moment in THE LION KING where one of these loveable clowns is onstage without the other...hot tip: it's hard, they are almost connected at the hip! There is no room for doubt about the importance of loyalty* in the friendship dynamic here.

NALA & HER PRIDE

The limits of loyalty* are shaped by Nala's integrity. Nala is courageous and clear; we see her stand up to the corrupt* and serving king, Scar. Nala acts for the good of her kin, and crucially, she challenges Simba to do the same. Her role as a friend means speaking up for what matters, even if it risks her being unpopular.

SCAR, HIS SIBLING & THE HYENAS

Scar uses his 'friends' shamelessly*, working hard to promote his own interests and to seize power over others. He makes a terrible enemy, but at least you know where he stands with this dynamic - his loyalty* as a brother is lower than a snake's belly!

After reading through these descriptions, let's get ready to explore where you stand on the limits of friendship. The next whole class workshop uses the different relationship dynamics in THE LION KING as a springboard for dramatic exploration



ACTIVITY

Working with your classmates and teacher, you are going to use your physical position in your classroom to EXPLORE the limits of your loyalties and how far you will go for a friend. With your teacher, IDENTITY three separate areas in your classroom and work to CLEAR pathways between them.

DESIGNATE one space as 'Timon & Pumbaa's Jungle' site;

ISOLATE a second site called 'Nala's Nest'; and

DUB the third 'Scar's Spot'.

Next, your teacher will READ out a series of scenarios where your loyalty* to yourself and your friends and family may be challenged. In response to each of the following scenarios, POSITION yourself somewhere between these three various locations, to INDICATE where you would stand if you found yourself facing this dilemma. Be prepared to EXPLAIN your position to your classmates referring to the descriptions of the three relationship styles explored on the previous page. REMEMBER, there are no right or wrong answers here, only honest ones.

Love our littlest lions? Let's listen to what it takes to turn into Simba and Nala each night in the clip called [Being a Lion Kid in the Behind the Scenes Series](#) at this link. ✨

NOTICE where your classmates stand around the room. Take this chance to HEAR what has motivated their choice and SHARE your own thinking which led you to stand where you are in each scenario.

After exploring these scenarios, GATHER as a group and sit with this question for a few minutes before discussing it: in THE LION KING, almost every act of true loyalty* requires the loyal character to do something frightening or difficult. Timon and Pumbaa risk their safety for Simba. Nala challenges Scar and risks rejection and failure to seek help. Zazu remains faithful* even when everything falls apart around him.

Now, as a group, DISCUSS the following prompt: Is loyalty* that costs you nothing really loyalty* at all? And as a class, IDENTIFY what THE LION KING suggests is the reward for those who remain loyal even when it is hard?

SAMPLE SCENARIOS:

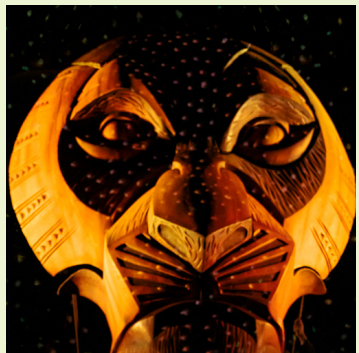
- Your best friend asks you to do their homework on their behalf.
- Your best friend has worked incredibly hard on a school project and asks for your honest opinion, but you genuinely think it needs a lot of improvement.
- You and your sibling both audition for the lead role in the school production, and your sibling gets the part even though you feel you performed better on the day.
- Your closest friend is convinced they are ready for a big swimming race, but you have noticed in training that another teammate is significantly faster.
- You have made plans with one friend when another friend, who you know is going through a tough time, unexpectedly asks if you can spend the day with them instead.
- Your teammate deliberately breaks a rule during a competition, and the coach asks the group if anyone saw what happened.
- A friend's bandmate has fallen ill right before a gig and wants you to play instead, but you feel horrified by the idea of all that attention...



LET'S LOOK AT LIGHTING DESIGN

READ the following analytical paragraph which explores a particularly memorable moment in the lighting design, and HIGHLIGHT any words you would consider to be specific theatrical terminology.

He Lives In You is a key moment in the lighting design for THE LION KING, as individual pieces come together to form the shape of Mufasa's face through the positioning of 'stars'. The stage is filled with a wash of tiny dots of light; these are thrown onto the performance area from a series of lights rigged from the front of the balcony in the auditorium. Dancers dressed in theatre blacks carry abstract* shapes on long poles onto the stage and assemble a complete Mufasa mask. To reveal this, the lighting state changes to a cross light. When the shape begins to separate again, a black gauze is flown in to conceal the dancers, and the gauze is then backlit, using a 'snap' to reveal dancers in colourful costumes on the cue in the music, He Lives In You, at which point the gauze is flown out. The combination of this visual effect and the crescendo in the music makes the transition dramatic and emotional, which emphasises the moment where Simba realises his father will always be with him, and through the courage this knowledge brings him, recommits to living out his destiny and reclaiming his rightful place as 'the Lion King'.



ACTIVITY

Next, READ through the following shorter sentences, and FILL in the blanks using your knowledge of the show and relevant lighting terminology:

Lighting is used to create atmosphere in the scene where a conversation takes place between Timon, [] and Simba as they sit under a starry sky. During the [] into this scene from the dramatic moment at the waterfall that takes place immediately beforehand. Dancers, carrying a lighting prop that represents [], is used to make this transition seem smooth to the audience.

Nearly 700 lighting instruments were used to create the [] plot for THE LION KING.

Through the show, there are many examples of how light is used to create atmosphere. The lighting [] contains both static and [] lights and because of the amount of dance and movement in the show, the direction in which performers are [] is extremely important. Automated lights also use a number of different [] to project patterns onto the stage and the performers, helping to establish the [] of each scene.

Like distance can be measured in centimetres, feet and inches, the intensity, or brightness of light is measured in []. These levels vary in the show to help create mood and atmosphere. This technique can help suggest the time of day, the weather or the location in which a [] takes place. In THE LION KING, scenes set on the dry and hot [] at set with a much greater [] in the lighting states than those designed for the jungle scenes, where metal [] which are attached to the front of various lights throw texture and shadows across the space to establish a sense of the dense and lush foliage.





ACTIVITY

LONGING LYRICS



Some of the most powerful lyrics ever written begin in the same place: a deep, aching longing for something just out of reach. It might be freedom, love, belonging, safety, or something less distinct, like change. THE LION KING is full of moments where characters express themselves through songs about what they want most, and in doing so, they connect with every single person in the audience who has ever yearned for something just beyond their grasp.

READ through the following lyrics drawn from various songs in THE LION KING. FILL the blank line before each lyric with the name of the song it is drawn from; COLLABORATE with your classmates on this task if you like! On the blank line after each lyric, IDENTIFY what each character is longing for in this line, or in the song more broadly. If you need a little help along the way, FILL in the blanks in the sentences underneath each lyric for a clue.

A	_____ = 'Can you feel the love tonight? It fills the evening breeze...' = _____
	Two cheeky clowns, a smelly _____ and an overly confident _____ who both fear abandonment, sing about longing for _____ in the _____ around them.
B	_____ = 'No-one saying do this, no-one saying be there, no-one saying stop that, no-one saying see here, free to run around all day, free to do it all my way' = _____
	A young _____ longing for _____ imagines a life where he answers to _____ but himself.
C	_____ = 'We'll have you raw, won't be long to wait, seeing you're already toasted brown...' = _____
	Three devilish _____ longing for _____ describe their appetites with barely concealed comic desperation.



D	_____ = 'the future is littered with prizes...' = _____
	The ambitious _____ longing for power _____ himself that the _____ is full of prizes waiting to be claimed.
	_____ = 'When will the dawning break? Oh, endless night, sleepless I dream of the day' = _____
	A lost and grieving _____ longing for _____ asks desperately when the darkness will finally end.
E	_____ = 'Night and the spirit of life, calling 'Mamela', and a voice with the fear of a child, asking 'Mamela!'' = _____
	And the voice of _____ longs simply to be _____, calling out into the night with vulnerability.

Can you SEE any writer's techniques at work in these lyrics? NOTICE how the best lyrics use natural imagery to carry emotional weight; for example, the evening breeze, the endless night, the dawning light. OBSERVE how repetition creates urgency and rhythm, with phrases building on each other like waves. SEE how the simplest, most direct language is often the most devastating. And WITNESS how a single, unexpected image can make an entire lyric unforgettable.

HARNESSING at least three of these techniques, CHOOSE one of the following 'longing' prompts and WRITE eight to twelve lines of original lyrics inspired by it in your workbook. Your lyrics do not need to rhyme perfectly, but they should have a sense of rhythm and musicality when read aloud.

- Longing for a place where you truly belong;
- Longing for a person you have lost or left behind;
- Longing for a version of yourself you have not yet become;
- Longing for a moment from your past that you wish you could return to; and/or
- Longing for morning after a very long and difficult night.

When you have finished, READ your lyrics aloud to a partner. Lyrics live in the voice, not on the page, and HEARING them spoken will immediately DEMONSTRATE what is working and what still needs REFINING.

