



By Dawn King
Directed by Dámaso Rodríguez

Oct. 29 – Dec. 1, 2013

**THIS PLAY WILL RUN APPROXIMATELY
95 MINUTES WITH NO INTERMISSION**

STUDY GUIDE

Study guide prepared by Torrie McDonald, Community Engagement Manager,
and Alyssa Haning, Community Engagement Intern.

SYNOPSIS

By Alyssa Haning

NOTE: The production and the synopsis contain mature language. **SPOILER ALERT**

Samuel and Judith Covey sit at their kitchen table, anxiously awaiting their “guest.” The government is sending a Foxfinder to investigate their farm. When William Bloor finally arrives, he is young, simply dressed, and serious. He begins meticulously questioning the Coveys about their land and the events of the past year. The Coveys get defensive, but William maintains that he’s only there to help rid the countryside of foxes—their “greatest enemy.” It’s important that no farm falls behind quota—for the sake of all, for England. Samuel heads out to work, and William presses Judith further, asking about their young son, who died months earlier. In a frantic attempt to excuse her husband from scrutiny, Judith tells William about a crippling bout of flu that left Samuel unable to farm for weeks. Later that night, Judith assures Samuel that all of this “it isn’t his fault.” He is comforted, but not enough to reciprocate her physical intimacy. On the other side of the wall, William reviews his notes: The Coveys are tense, and there is certainly more to their story.

The next morning, Judith gets a visit from her best friend and neighbor, Sarah. Sarah urges Judith to be careful with William, and shows her an anti-Foxfinder pamphlet someone in town gave her: “Foxes—Not Our Enemy.” Horrified, Judith makes her hide it just as William enters. Nervous that he overheard their conversation, Sarah leaves the pamphlet with Judith, who hastily shoves it in her coat pocket.

Out on the fields, William finds “signs” warning them of foxes. When Samuel scoffs, William questions him about his son’s death. Samuel recounts the night’s haunting events, his guilt and grief palpable. Later, William asks Judith about her sexual practices with Samuel. The questions start vague—but become increasingly graphic. Personal. Too personal. Samuel interrupts, and William is left flushed and visibly distressed. That night, alone in his room, he begins to methodically whip himself, chanting: I. Am. Clean. In. Body. And. Mind.

Judith’s doubts about fox infestations grow. She protests the lack of evidence, but William shockingly declares that it was foxes that killed their son. Unbelieving, Judith is too afraid to disagree. William found her pro-fox pamphlet, and, now their lives are ever more in his hands. When William visits Sarah to confront her about the pamphlets, she reveals secrets about the Coveys in order to save herself. But when she questions him—has he ever seen a fox? *Are there any foxes?* William becomes angry and leaves. But he didn’t answer her questions.

Samuel becomes increasingly involved in William’s investigation. He wants to find the murderous foxes, and he’s sure he just heard one! But their search yields nothing, shaking William’s convictions. And Judith has had enough. She approaches William, begging him to leave. When he refuses, she is reassured by his affirmation that he’ll give them a clean report. Grateful, Judith hugs him, a dizzying personal contact for William.

As it grows darker outside, Samuel begins to “see” foxes in the bushes. He fires his gun erratically as William tries to stop him. There’s nothing out there! William doesn’t see *anything*! Samuel runs after the creatures, but William stays put, horrified to realize that there isn’t anything to see. Judith appears, and as William realizes that all of his actions have been in aid of a lie, he breaks down. Judith comforts him, which is the last straw—William gives in to his suppressed desire and kisses her, giving her an ultimatum: Have sex with me, and I’ll tell everyone your farm is clear. Deny me, and I’ll tell everyone that you are the one who has brought the foxes. She submits, and when Samuel comes barreling through, he shoots; William falls to the ground. “I shot a fox,” Samuel says.

A few days later, Judith and Samuel sit at their kitchen table, anxiously awaiting their “guests.” The government is sending a Foxfinder to investigate. This time the story is clear—Samuel killed a fox, their greatest enemy.

Foxfinder touches on many themes and ideas; here are a few we think would make great **Curriculum Connections**: conspiracies, foxes, dystopian societies, revolutions, groupthink

Artists Repertory Theatre believes that watching our show and using our study guide can help you meet the following **Common Core State Standards**: AR.HS. CP.01, 03; AR.HS.AC.01-03; AR.HS.HC.01, 03, 05; EL.HS.RE.02-07, 09, 13; EL.HS.LI.01-02, 06, 15-19; EL.HS.WR.02-06, 22; SS.HS.1-2,4-6, 9, 30, 57, 60.

Dawn King

From the award-winning writer who works in theatre, radio, and film, *Foxfinder* won the Papatango Theatre Company writing competition in 2011 and was produced at the Finborough Theatre, London, where it was critically acclaimed and sold out. *Foxfinder* won Dawn 'Most Promising Playwright' at the Off West End Awards 2012 and was shortlisted for the Susan Smith Blackburn prize 2012 and the James Tait Black drama prize 2011/2012. *Foxfinder* has had productions in Sweden (Gothenburg English Speaking Theatre) and Australia (Red Stitch). Dawn was Pearson writer-in-residence at the Finborough for 2012. She was one of 10 writers chosen for the BBC Writersroom 10 scheme in 2012, and through this, received a seed commission and residency at West Yorkshire Playhouse, where she wrote *Ciphers*. *Ciphers* is being produced by Out of Joint, Exeter Northcott and The Bush and will tour the UK in 2013/2014.



In 2013, Dawn participated in the prestigious Channel Four television writing scheme, 4 Screenwriting 2013. She has an original drama series in development with Touchpaper Television. Her short film, *The Karman Line*, is in post-production. Dawn writes regularly for radio and has had radio plays broadcast on BBC Radio 4, 4 Extra, and BBC Radio 3.

Previous theatre work includes: *Water Sculptures/ZOO* double bill – The Union Theatre; *Face Value* – Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough; and *Doghead Boy and Sharkmouth Go To Ikea* – The Junction, Cambridge. Dawn was a member of both the Soho Theatre and Royal Court Theatre Young Writers' Programmes and has an MA distinction in Writing for Performance from Goldsmiths University, London.

A Chat with the Playwright

Artists Repertory Theatre did a quick email interview with Dawn King, and here's what she had to say...

Artists Rep: Do you remember the first story you ever wrote?

Dawn King: I don't remember the first story I ever wrote, but the first play I ever wrote was a ten-minute piece I made for my A Level Theatre Studies exam when I was 18. I wrote and directed it, operated the lights and sound and made the set and costumes (with help from my mum). It was about a young woman torn into different personalities by the pressures of life. It was quite literal. I had one actor playing the woman, and two actors playing two different personalities each and they were wearing costumes that were two colours, split down the middle.

AR: How did that experience influence your later life as a professional writer, if at all?

DK: At that time the thought of trying to be a playwright would never have crossed my mind in a million years. I didn't want to be an actor or a director (or make terrible costumes) so that was the end of my relationship with theatre for some time. Several years later, I looked back on the experience and thought how much I had enjoyed it and decided to try getting back into theatre in some way...

AR: What has been your favorite writing experience, thus far?

DK: That's really hard. Every writing experience is different. *Foxfinder* was a play I wrote mostly on my own, without being commissioned by any theatre. For a long time, I didn't tell anyone what I was writing. It was hard to explain and I didn't want anyone to give me that sceptical look that would have crushed it. At times, it was lonely and hard, but once I had created the world of the play I enjoyed spending time there.



AR: *Have you ever worked outside of theatre/film/radio?*

DK: God yes! I've had loads of terrible jobs. I used to work as an office temp doing filing, typing, and photocopying. Most of those jobs were awful at the time, but they were probably good experience. I met a lot of people and went into lots of different workplaces. It's good for a writer to know what it's like in a solicitor's office or corporate bank. I also worked in an art house cinema for ten years, which was very badly paid but it meant I could watch all the films for free.

AR: *In Foxfinder, you have a couple of interesting professions represented—farmer and Foxfinder. Farming may be a little more familiar to us than foxfinding. What inspired you to write about this type of “calling”?*

DK: I think there is some similarity between the mission of the foxfinder and the mission of the writer or anyone who is driven in some way. At times you may want to give up but the mission drives you on. Fortunately, I have tea to fortify me. If, like William in *Foxfinder*, all I had was a crust of bread at lunchtime I don't think I'd have made it through a single script.

AR: *There are many creatures that may be seen by some as blights on agricultural systems, what about foxes made you choose that animal as the play's scapegoat?*

DK: Ah, yes there are. There is a big battle going on in the UK at the moment over the badger, which is accused of spreading TB to cattle. However, the fox has a particular reputation, and not just in British culture, of being sly, sneaky, a semi-magical trickster. I wanted to use that. Foxes are also very beautiful.

AR: *Name three things you actually like about the fox? (We wouldn't want people to think you have a personal vendetta.)*

DK: No, I love foxes. We see them all the time in London. They are beautiful. It's lovely to see something that looks so wild right in the heart of the city, seemingly unbothered by the presence of humanity, getting fat and sleek by eating our rubbish.

AR: *If there is but one thing patrons take away from this play, what do you hope it is?*

DK: That's also hard. The play has a lot of things in it and everyone is going to respond differently. I would never try to guess what anyone else is going to think. However, I like to think of audience members looking at the next fox they see a bit differently because of watching *Foxfinder*.

AR: *If you had to describe this play in one word, what would that be? In one sentence?*

DK: Dark. A dark, dystopian parable about belief and desire.

AR: *And now for the really tough question...if you owned a farm, what would you grow?*

DK: I have a tiny garden in London and I can't keep up with weeding that so I don't think I could manage to grow anything. I'd keep Shetland ponies and goats instead. They would eat the grass and then I wouldn't have to mow it.

AR: *Bonus question: what question are you always secretly hoping you'll be asked when interviewed about your work? (And the answer to it is...)*

DK: “Where do you get your inspiration from?”

I'm like many writers, I get inspiration from the things around me. *Foxfinder* was born when I was on a retreat on an ancient farmhouse in February 2010. The weather was terrible and fields in every direction were flooded. On walks through the mud and floodwater, I saw animal skulls in the fields, and sheep wool caught on the fence and I started imagining that these things were signs of some kind, messages from nature to me. I created a character who would really believe that nature is full of signs and symbols. I knew that if I set this character, a young man who believes that foxes are against us and even working in league with other animals

to destroy us, in our world, he'd have to be delusional, insane. I didn't want to write a play about insanity, so I created a whole world in which he believed what everyone believed. I think *Foxfinder* also shows that I've been inspired or influenced by fairy tales and folk tales in which the deep dark woods are a dangerous and mysterious place, and horror films like *Wicker Man* and *Witchfinder General*.

Activity/Discussion:

After seeing the play, have your class write a review of the production. Be sure they include their thoughts on the characters, language, sets, lighting, costumes, and sound.

Are there any special elements they were not expecting?

Did the overall story create an emotional response for them?

Would they recommend this play to their friends? Family? Why or why not?



Costume Design Concept

By Gregory Pulver,
costume designer



A theatrical design concept must begin from the text to create a “world of the play” that is relevant, believable, and applicable to the story and the viewer. For me, this script posed several questions that began my discovery of the design – Is this play set in our past or our future, or is this a fable that is set in a time and place that looks and feels like our own, but is entirely different?

I was intrigued by the possible notion that this world is in a near future/post-large-scale world event setting. There are so many references to a new and cruel world, a world that has very limited resources and a need for the few to carry out the tasks for the survival of the many. From the text, I had a few options to consider when telling the visual story of this play and discovering that world. I start with what I like to call the

designer’s visual tool box. I like how the script reveals that William has been "created/made/crafted" in this new society of urban rulers/gatekeepers, and therefore, has a look that is manufactured and industrialized. Conversely, I am drawn to the rural characters – Samuel, Judith and Sarah – who are bound by what they have, what they are allowed, what they are given, what they can find, and what was left after the “event.” These tool boxes I create clearly define color, texture, and mood for both worlds and characters.

In additional readings of the text, I was struck by several other ideas: What is the post-world event society really like? How far in the future is it? How far did we "evolve" leading up to the event? What was the progress before? What is left to possess? Did we go backwards or forwards? Is this new world Military Utilitarian or Organized Survival? (with a smattering of Dictator and Torture and mysticism). I was also stuck on the idea that this production of the play is the U.S. premiere, and here in the U.S. we struggle with our own societal structures and beliefs. We seem to struggle with many issues of created/made/left behind, 99%, super - privileged/less fortunate. The fact that GMO wheat is a huge modern concern and so many companies lie about ingredients in food makes my head spin...So, what if I truly create a new world for this play to live in? Familiar, yet new.

I am a big fan of SciFi and "other world" story telling. Movies like *Elysium* and *Oblivion* where the privileged “have” and the under-represented “have not” dominate our theaters. So... I have created a tool box of ideas for the Rural - "Future Past/Future present" – where the means by which people live are from the past and they were left with flotsam to work with in their present. It can look anytime in the 20th Century – worn, depleted, recognizable. But is that safe? Is that too familiar? Another tool box is "Future Present," where our society evolved, modernized, became more utilitarian and then stopped after the world event. The lines of the clothing are trimmed and modern, but the resources are natural and of the earth – wools, linens, cottons. Yet time has taken its toll, so the clothes can still be worn, patched, depleted. This can create a world that is of our own imagination, but is not too far from now that it will lose story or separate the audience from the now or the near now.



Activity/Discussion:

To the left, you can see two examples of the type of inspiration designer Gregory Pulver used in creating the aesthetic for the characters in the play. Ask your students to use the following list of words to devise their own costume design for a character: dark, dystopian, rural, future past/future present, utilitarian, worn.

After seeing the show, discuss how well the students’ visions fit in with what they saw on stage and whether they would make any changes to the costume design.

Dystopia: The Bad Place in Good Literature

By Torrie McDonald

The world of *Foxfinder* is a nebulous dystopian Britain. A time and place where the government controls all aspects of life and can reward or punish as it sees fit. If you don't bring in the requisite harvest perhaps you and your family should be removed from your farm and sent to work in separate factories. Of course, if things are going wrong, a foxfinder will be sent to ensure that it is not through dissent but rather the plague of the evil creature, the fox.

Yes, this world is similar to reality but it deviates in important ways, ways that lend themselves to the canon of dystopian literature. *Dystopia* itself means "bad place" as opposed to *utopia*, "good place." It is often shown as a society rife with corruption, oppression, poverty, and fear brought about by the imperfections of humanity. Indeed it is often rampant technology and overreaching capitalism that leads to tyranny and the resultant rebellion in dystopian fiction. These stories are usually set in the near future, sharing aspects of contemporary reality but placed in a world replete with our fears of corporate, government, technological, or religious control.



The National Council of Teachers of English has listed the characteristics of a dystopian society:

- Propaganda is used to control the citizens of society.
- Information, independent thought, and freedom are restricted.
- A figurehead or concept is worshipped by the citizens of the society.
- Citizens are perceived to be under constant surveillance.
- Citizens have a fear of the outside world.
- Citizens live in a dehumanized state.
- The natural world is banished and distrusted.
- Citizens conform to uniform expectations. Individuality and dissent are bad.
- The society is an illusion of a perfect utopian world.

While this type of storytelling had a heyday in Nazi-era Germany and Stalin-era Russia, it can be found any time and anywhere a people are worried about repression and dehumanization. It is not just our foxfinder who is mistrusted and feared.

Activity/Discussion:

Each student should pick a work of dystopian literature and write a journal for a week as though they are one of its characters. How do they react to the repression they are facing? Do they want to rebel? Are they afraid or are they part of the system? What does this experience tell them about our world today? Are there aspects of government here or around the world that give them pause? Anything in our technological advances that worries them? What can or should they do to alleviate these concerns?

Some dystopian novels to choose from: *The Time Machine* by H.G. Wells (1895); *Iron Heel* by Jack London (1908); *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley (1932); *1984* by George Orwell (1949); *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury (1953); *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding (1954); *The Chrysalids* by John Wyndham (1955); *The Running Man* by Richard Bachman (1982); *Neuromancer* by William Gibson (1984); *Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood (1985); *The Children of Men* by PD James (1992); *The Giver* by Lois Lowry (1993); *Armageddon's Children* by Terry Brooks (2006); *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins (2008); *Empty* by Suzanne Weyn (2010); and *Green Heart* by Alice Hoffman (2012).

Conspiracy Theories

By Alyssa Haning

According to *Merriam-Webster*, a conspiracy theory explains an event or situation as the result of a secret plan by usually powerful people or groups

In *Foxfinder*, Judith begins to suspect that there is something more sinister to the government interventions of William Bloor and the other foxfinders. Though the foxfinders claim they have definitive proof that the foxes are invading the countryside, that they have a whole score of evil powers, that they are responsible for Britain's food crisis, and that eliminating them will solve the problem; she quickly sees that it doesn't add up. Suspicions build, and she turns out, unfortunately, to be right. Though this isn't always the case with conspiracy theories, looking at a few of the most famous real-life examples is a fascinating study of the relationship citizens have with their government, and the way that information is communicated and spread. And, even if some of them are next to impossible, they're pretty fun to think about. Here are some of the more notable conspiracy theories of the past few decades:



CHEMTRAILS – You know those long cloud tails you can see for a couple hours after a fast moving plane flies overhead? Some people believe that they actually result from chemicals being deliberately sprayed in the sky for... some unknown reason. These “chemical interventions” have been pointedly denied by the government and by scientists, but it hasn't stopped many radio-show hosts from claiming that they are the product of some kind of federal plot.

THE AIDS VIRUS – Dr. William Campbell Douglass theorized that HIV was genetically engineered in 1974 by the World Health Organization in order to create a killer virus. Many others also believe that it was created by the governments of the U.S. or Russia to reduce the overall world population.

THOUSANDS OF COFFINS – Outside of Atlanta, Georgia, about 500,000 plastic coffins, allegedly owned by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, were seen on the side of a road. Certain theorists believed that these were produced in order to prepare for a mass, government-issued killing of Americans, as a result of future financial crisis and resulting chaos. The coffins were later explained by a burial company that said that they were in the middle of working out a deal with a farmer to store their leftover stock—but it makes sense that the image of all of those coffins would freak people out just a little.

FLUORIDE – Here's one that has some local, recent relevancy. Fluoride is often added to drinking water in an effort to improve dental health. This measure was recently voted down in Portland. Opponents of fluoridation purport that there is evidence that there are potential harmful side effects from fluoride. Others believe that drug companies would benefit in this situation, as people would develop more health problems and need more care.

THE GOVERNMENT IS SPYING ON US – For good measure, here's one that we've seen is true. For a long time, people have suspected that the government monitors activity and listens to conversations much more than they will admit. Recently, the National Security Association, under new scrutiny due to the information leaks by Edward Snowden, admitted that yes, they do monitor people. A lot, actually. If you are connected, even by a friend of a friend of a friend, to someone who is a potential threat, it's not impossible for your phones to be tapped, or your internet activity to be monitored.

Activity/Discussion:

Ask your students to choose one of conspiracy theories above, or in the list below, and write a short story supporting it. Then, have them write another story that debunks the theory. Did they find one side easier than the other? What did their research teach them about the nature of “facts”?

Conspiracies: JFK assassination, government hiding proof of aliens, fake moon landings, the Illuminati.

Sarah Box is unhappy with how the world is working, in our play, and she thinks the government and its agents, such as the foxfinder, are to blame. She, and those like her, strives to make a change in the political and societal structures under which they live, they are hoping to create a revolution.

Revolutions have been causing shockwaves in society since before the term was first coined by Copernicus in 1543, when he put forth his treatise *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* (*On the Revolutions of Celestial Bodies*). It took another 145 years for the term to be used in a political context with the overthrow of England's James II by William III in "The Glorious Revolution."

Since this time, there have been four "generations" of scholarly research and theory on the topic, giving rise to an understanding of various types of revolutions—political, violent, nonviolent, sudden, slow, civil war, social, failed, etc. Each type can result in sweeping changes in social, political, and economic structures; they can be sudden and fierce or take generations to culminate; and they can, but don't need to be, very bloody. Only time, or your imagination, will tell if the foxfinders will find themselves in a revolution.



REVOLUTIONS

a : a sudden, radical, or complete change

b : a fundamental change in political organization; *especially*: the overthrow or renunciation of one government or ruler and the substitution of another by the governed

c : activity or movement designed to effect fundamental changes in the socioeconomic situation

d : a fundamental change in the way of thinking about or visualizing something : a change of paradigm

e : a changeover in use or preference especially in technology

—Merriam Webster

Activity/Discussion:

Below is a list of some revolutions that had global impact. Ask your students to pick one of them and create a flyer that a member of the revolution might have made up to help further their cause.

- The Glorious Revolution
- The American Revolution
- The French Revolution
- The Haitian Revolution
- Taiping Revolution/Rebellion
- Young Turk Revolution
- Chinese Revolution(S)
- The October Revolution
- The Spanish Civil War
- Cuban Revolution
- The Iranian Revolution



Groupthink

By Torrie McDonald

The world of the Coveys in *Foxfinder* is one in which the populace has succumbed to the trend of Groupthink. This term was first coined by social psychologist Irving Janis in 1972 when he recognized eight symptoms of this phenomenon:

1. Illusion of invulnerability – this leads to risk-taking due to excessive optimism.
2. Collective rationalization – Members discount warnings and do not reconsider their assumptions.
3. Belief in inherent morality – the belief in the “rightness” of the group stance is absolute and mitigates thought about consequences of actions taken in pursuit of that belief.
4. Stereotyped views of out-groups – those out of the group are often seen as the “enemy,” which colors the group’s ability to respond effectively to conflict.
5. Direct pressure on dissenters – arguments against the group’s beliefs are actively discouraged, often by extreme pressure.
6. Self-censorship – individual members do not express doubts or dissent of the group stance.
7. Illusion of unanimity – each member assumes all others believe the same.
8. Self-appointed ‘mindguards’ – individual members strive to keep contradictory information and views from the leader and other members.

This type of behavior leads to lacks in decision-making and problem-solving skills, as well as creative thinking and risk assessment. It is easy to fall into the trap of Groupthink, of course. The Coveys live in a society where citizens are threatened if they deviate from the government’s stated beliefs. In our lives, we may be unwitting participants, however. If our access to information is stifled and our beliefs are, supposedly, upheld, how would we even know?

Recently, social media was abuzz with an article that Jim Edwards did for *Business Insider* in which he highlighted the trend of *Time Magazine* to tailor its content, and cover images, to fit either the U.S. or its overseas customers. On the next page, you can see some of the different stories focused on by the news outlet here and abroad.

Activity/Discussion:

As a class, discuss what you think the role of the media is and should be in keeping a nation from yielding to groupthink. What are some of the factors that might contribute to a company, such as *Time*, feeding into groupthink?

Have your students research this week’s top news stories around the world. Ask them to create a mock-up of a news magazine cover that deals with the week’s news. Would they make a different version for their peers than their parents? A U.S. audience vs. an international one?



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South Pacific

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In *Foxfinder*, fox are claimed to be the root of all evil; bringers of bad weather, infidelity, famine, even death. At least, this is what William Bloor and the other foxfinders would have us believe. But the fact of the matter is that fox are usually very mild-mannered creatures; they've just gotten a bad rap. Let's take a closer look at this misunderstood species, and break some of the stereotypes surrounding them.

FAST FOX FACTS

By Alyssa Haning

- “Fox” is the name used to refer to several species of mammals belonging to the *Canidae* family; that means they belong to the same family as dogs and wolves.
- Fox are typically characterized by a flattened skull; upright triangular ears; a pointed, slightly upturned snout; and a long, bushy tail, or *brush*.
- There are about 37 members of various species that are commonly referred to as “fox,” however, only 12 of them belong to the “*Vulpes*” genus, and are truly biological fox.
- The most common species of fox, and the one portrayed in “Foxfinder,” is the “*Vulpes Vulpes*,” or the Red Fox.
- In the wild, fox can live for up to 10 years, but most only live for 2 or 3, due to road accidents and hunting (foxfinder traps, perhaps?) .
- Fox are *omnivores*; they eat plants, usually small invertebrates, small mammals, insects, fish, grasses, and berries.
- Fox are not as “pack-oriented” as other *canidaes*. They can live in large groups, but more often live in small “family-based” units, and often prefer solitary hunting; perhaps where report of their “mysterious, aloof nature” comes from.
- Fox are typically wary of humans, but one species, the Silver Fox, has been successfully domesticated and kept as a pet.



FRIEND or FOE?

Fox are notable in the folklore of many cultures. They are most commonly portrayed as cunning tricksters. This reputation was likely formed due to the fox's independent nature, their distrust of humans, and their sleek, pointed appearance. This kind of portrayal likely started in Indo-Iranian folklore, but can be found even in the Bible—the Song of Solomon (2:15) includes the verse "Catch for us the fox, the little fox that ruin the vineyards, our vineyards that are in bloom." Thanks to this kind of press, fox are sometimes viewed negatively. A well-known example is Aesop's fable, "The Fox and the Grapes," in which a fox is shown to be spiteful and bitter. Spurred, perhaps, by these kinds of characterizations, fox hunting has

been a fashionable pastime in many cultures, especially in Europe, where hunting fox for sport and supposed “vermin control” has long been popular.

But this practice is changing. In Britain, most forms of fox hunting have been banned over the past few decades, as animal rights activists have begun to raise awareness about fox, promoting the fact that they are not a threat to humans and are not actually vermin. Looking at the history of certain cultures, we can see a very positive portrayal; for example, in ancient Peruvian stories, fox are worshiped as having extraordinary mental capacity, and for being nonviolent. Similarly, in Finnish culture, fox are portrayed as cunning, but not evil; they use their mental prowess to outsmart other, more brutish animals.

Activity/Discussion:

Each student should pick an animal that has traditionally been given a bad rap — fox, coyote, snake, spider, buzzard, eel, etc. — and write a story, poem, or short play that uses that animal as the protagonist.

What did their work/research tell them about how the animal got its reputation? Is it deserved?

Potato-Leek Soup

In our play, Judith and Sam grow leeks on their farm, and they enjoy a hearty bowl of leek and potato soup with the foxfinder. Here's a recipe for this delicious soup from Vegetarian Times, so you can dive into the world of the play stomach first.



*4 Servings
30 minutes or fewer*

- 1 Tbs. very thinly sliced green onion tops
 - 1 Tbs. vegetable oil
 - 1 medium onion, chopped
 - 1 lb. leeks (white and pale green parts), well rinsed and chopped
 - 2 medium russet potatoes, peeled, cut into ½-inch dice
 - 3 to 4 cups vegetable broth
 - 2 tsp. grated fresh ginger
 - Salt to taste
 - 1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
 - 4 thin lemon slices, seeded
1. In large pot, heat oil over medium heat. Add onion and cook over low heat, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, about 20 minutes. Add leeks, potatoes, 3 cups broth, and ginger. Bring to boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer until potatoes are tender, about 20 minutes. Remove from heat; let mixture cool slightly, about 10 minutes.
 2. Using slotted spoon, transfer all solids in saucepan to food processor. Process until very smooth, stopping to scrape down side of work bowl as necessary. With machine running, gradually add liquid in pan to processor. Return soup to saucepan. Bring to simmer, adding remaining broth for desired consistency. Season with salt and stir in lemon juice. Ladle into bowls. Garnish each with lemon slices and green onions if desired.

Things To Know In The Show

Keep your eyes and ears open for the following terms in our play:



Bog – wet, poorly drained ground often surrounding a body of water

Arable – fit for growing crops

Heritage – the beliefs, traditions, and achievements that make up the history of a group or nation

Spectre – ghost or spirit of the dead

Conjugal – relating to a married couple or marriage

Dispensation – permission to deviate from a rule, law, or oath

Infestation – the overrunning of a place or being by something in large enough quantities as to be harmful, damaging, or dangerous

Sabotage – the act of deliberately destroying something

Gullet – the esophagus, the tube that leads from the mouth through the throat to the stomach

Quota – the official number expected to be reached or achieved

Tenacity – having drive and determination to not stop something or be diverted

Canny – clever, shrewd

Protocol – a system of rules and regulations explaining expected and correct procedures and conduct

Extermination – to kill or destroy completely

Compensation – something given or done to make up for trouble, inconvenience, or damage



Leaf Blight – a phase of the disease of plants characterized by dead spots or streaks on leaves and seed rot

Activity/Discussion:

As a class, make a list of any terms in the play that were confusing. See if you, as a group, can find the answer. If not, write Artists Rep's education department a letter asking for clarification.

GRAB A GOOD BOOK

Booklist provided by Ross Betzer, librarian



Blindness by José Saramago

A city is hit by an epidemic of "white blindness," which spares no one. Authorities confine the blind to an empty mental hospital, but there the criminal element holds everyone captive. A magnificent parable of loss and disorientation, and a vivid evocation of the horrors of the twentieth century.

The Year of the Flood by Margaret Atwood

The times and species have been changing at a rapid rate, and the social compact is wearing as thin as environmental stability. A natural disaster has obliterated most of human life, and a band of survivors plan for a new world. Provocative, funny, and inspiring.

High-Rise by J.G. Ballard

Are we trapping ourselves in our high-rise apartment buildings? Within the walls of an elegant forty-story tower block, the affluent tenants are hell-bent on an orgy of destruction. Cocktail parties degenerate into marauding attacks on 'enemy' floors, and the once-luxurious amenities become an arena for technological mayhem.

Shades of Grey: The Road to High Saffron by Jasper Fforde

Welcome to Chromatacia, where, for as long as anyone can remember, society has been ruled by a Colortocracy. In this world, you are what you can see, and Eddie Russett, a better-than-average red perception, wants to move up.

The Children of Men by P.D. James

In 2021, with the human race becoming extinct because of the infertility of all males, Oxford historian Theodore Faron is drawn into the schemes of an unlikely group of revolutionaries out to save society.

The Dinner by Herman Koch

Two couples meet for dinner at a fashionable restaurant in Amsterdam. Behind their polite conversation, terrible things need to be said, and with every forced smile and every new course, the knives are being sharpened.

V for Vendetta by Alan Moore & David Lloyd

This graphic novel describes an alternate future in which Germany wins WWII and Britain becomes a fascist state. A mysterious man in a white porcelain mask and his young protégé fight political oppressors through terrorism and seemingly absurd acts.

Hard-Boiled Wonderland And The End Of The World by Haruki Murakami

The unnamed narrator struggles to reconnect himself in a near-future Tokyo of tomorrow. There are chips implanted in heads, creatures called INKlings, glowing unicorn skulls, and a librarian with a very large appetite.

The Adoration of Jenna Fox by Mary E. Pearson

In the not-too-distant future, when biotechnological advances have made synthetic bodies and brains possible but illegal, a seventeen-year-old girl, recovering from a serious accident and suffering from memory lapses, learns a startling secret about her existence.

Kafkaesque: Stories Inspired By Franz Kafka by John Kessel and James Patrick Kelly

A collection of writings inspired by the surreal and satirical work of Franz Kafka. Includes stories by Philip Roth, Jorge Luis Borges, and R. Crumb.