



# Imaginary theatre company

2008–2009 SEASON

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By Michael Erickson

Music by Neal Richardson

Directed by Jeffery Matthews

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by Michael Erickson  
Music by Neal Richardson  
Directed by Jeffery Matthews

**Musical Director**

Neal Richardson

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**Costume Designer**

Betsy Krausnick

**Stage Manager**

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**Director of Education**

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**Artistic Supervisor**

Jeffery Matthews

## The Company

Robin Hood / **Briston Ashe**

Henchman, Merry Man, King / **Katie Consamus**

Sheriff, Friar Tuck / **Chauncy Thomas**

Peasant Mother, Maid Marion / **Amanda Williford**



Financial assistance for this theatre has been provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency; the Missouri Arts Council, a stage agency; the Arts and Education Council of Greater St. Louis; and the St. Louis Regional Arts Commission.

# setting the scene



*Robin Hood* is based on a popular character of the same name from English folklore. While he may resemble Peter Pan, Robin Hood's story isn't about flying away to Neverland on fairy dust. Robin Hood is traditionally known as the leader of a band of thieves (also known as the "Merry Men") who rob from the rich to give to the poor. Though his story comes from a long time ago, it's never boring since it's full of kings, castles and damsels in distress.

When Robin Hood and his Merry Men aren't standing up for the peasants of Nottingham (a real place in England), they're hiding out in Sherwood Forest (also a real place in England) from the greedy Sheriff who makes everyone pay more taxes than they really owe. Robin Hood and his Merry Men fight for the freedom of the peasants from the Sheriff and anyone else that treats others unfairly.



# who's who?



Robbing the rich to feed the poor,  
**ROBIN HOOD**  
is here to save the day  
(but whatever you do, don't mistake  
him for Peter Pan)!

In his quest to get more and more  
stuff for himself, the  
**SHERIFF OF NOTTINGHAM**  
is one mean, bad dude.

In order to try and save her father,  
**MAID MARION**  
is forced to do whatever  
the Sheriff says.

Though he may have a bit of a belly,  
**FRIAR TUCK**  
has an even bigger heart as he lends a  
helping hand to Robin Hood.

Though he's not the sharpest tool  
in the shed, **HENCHMAN**  
typically fills his role as a tax collector  
for the Sheriff... unless Robin Hood has  
anything to say about it!

Though she does what she can,  
**PEASANT MOM**  
just can't seem to keep up with the Sheriff  
and his taxes.

One of the good guys,  
**MERRY MAN** helps Robin give back to  
the peasants of Nottingham.

In her deepest moments of despair,  
Maid Marion envisions her **DADDY**,  
who holds the key to solving all  
of her problems.



*Costume rendering by costume  
designer Betsy Krausnick*

# what's the story?



As things kick off in *Robin Hood*, the evil Sheriff has sent one of his henchmen to collect taxes from a poor mother and her family. Even though she just paid her taxes last week, the henchman demands money, tagging on additional fees as she tries to reason with him.



is known as one of the best archers around). This way, no matter what his disguise, the Sheriff will be able to capture his slick challenger. While in the woods, Maid Marion battles with her conscience—what's the right thing to do? In a moment of weakness, she sees a vision of her captured father and he

Luckily, Robin Hood (often confused for Peter Pan) swoops in and saves the day, giving the family their taxes back along with some extra money to share with other folks around the village.

tells her to follow her heart.

Meanwhile, across town, the Sheriff tries on fancy new clothes (which he can only afford because of all the taxes) for his wedding with Maid Marion. Though she can't stand the Sheriff, she has agreed to marry him in the hopes that he will release her father from prison once they are wed.

When Robin Hood shows up at the archery contest in monk's clothing, he isn't fooling anyone, much less the Sheriff.

As quickly as Robin shoots three bull's eyes he is captured and sent to the dungeon. When the Sheriff will not release her father in exchange, Maid Marion realizes she has made a huge mistake. When no one is looking, she sneaks a key to Robin and her father down in the dungeon, setting them free.

As the Sheriff prances about in his new clothes, the henchman returns to report Robin Hood has struck again. In a flash, the haberdasher reveals himself as Robin Hood, and he robs the Sheriff of his new clothes and money. Tired of Robin Hood and his antics, the Sheriff hatches a plan in which he will use Maid Marion to capture Robin.

As he revels in his triumph over Robin Hood, the Sheriff dreams of becoming the new king (with Maid Marion as his queen). But before he can get too far, Robin Hood reappears and challenges the Sheriff to a duel. Amid the fighting, King Richard returns, restoring order to all and punishing the Sheriff for his misdeeds.

The Sheriff sends Maid Marion out into Sherwood Forest, posing as a damsel in distress so that she can lure Robin into an archery contest with the Sheriff (Robin Hood

Please feel free to adapt these materials to suit your classroom needs and reproduce them for future use.

The activities in this guide address the following Missouri Show Me Standards and Illinois Learning Standards.

MO: CA1, 3, 4, 5, 7; FA2, 3, 4, 5; MA1; SC3, 4, 8; SS2, 6

IL: 1, 3, 5, 6, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 25, 27

Answers to questions on page 10:  
1. C; 2. A; 3. C; 4. B;  
5. A; 6. B; 7. C

# words to the wise



Poaching: illegally hunting fish or game

Hovel: a small, simple dwelling

Haberdasher: a men's clothing dealer

Entourage: a group of people attending or surrounding an important person

Peasant: a poor person of low social status

Archer: a person who shoots with a bow and arrows

Crown: a British coin used in medieval times

Accountant: a person whose job is to keep or inspect financial accounts

Itinerant: traveling from place to place

Usurp: to take power illegally and/or by force

Stonehenge: an ancient stone landmark in Wiltshire, England

Conventional wisdom: ideas or explanations generally accepted as true by the public or experts in the field

Nuptial: relating to marriage

Ingrates: ungrateful people

Futile: pointless

Morality: a system of rules about the difference between right and wrong or good and bad behavior

Marooned: abandoned



# read more about it



We encourage you to examine these topics in-depth by exploring the following books, videos and websites.

McSpadden, J. Walker. *Robin Hood*, Kessinger, 2007. Now that you've seen the play, are you thirsty for more Robin Hood adventures? Check out this book for more courage, daring and fun!

Roberts, Jonathan. *Mythic Woods: The World's Most Remarkable Forests*, WN, 2005. Does Sherwood Forest sound cool to you? Check out

some of the world's coolest forests in this book, including amazing pictures!

*Robin Hood*, 83 minutes, Buena Vista, 2006. Check out Disney's classic telling of the tale of Robin Hood.

*Robin Hood—Prince of Thieves*, 144 minutes, Warner Home Video, 1997. Want something that's not a cartoon? Check out Kevin Costner and Morgan Freeman in this award-winning version of the story.

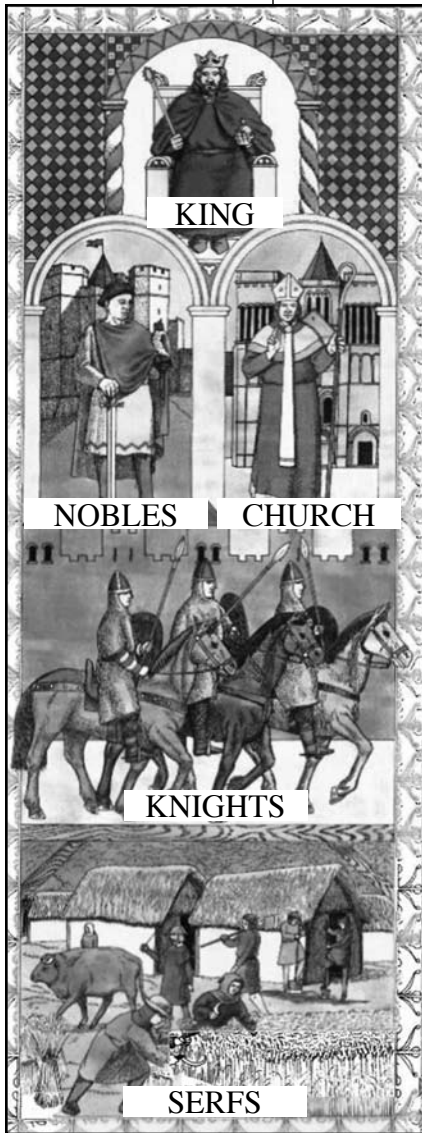
[www.boldoutlaw.com](http://www.boldoutlaw.com)

Want to know more about the man, the myth, the legend that is Robin Hood? Check out this site with loads of stories, pictures, links and more!

[www.robinhood.org](http://www.robinhood.org)

Think Robin Hood is dead? Think again! His spirit lives on today in charitable organizations all around the world, just like this one!

# Medieval Matters



*Robin Hood* takes place long, long ago (hundreds of years!) and in a land far, far away (over in England), which pretty much makes the play totally boring and completely un-relatable to you, right? Um, wrong! The play is totally about action, heroics and doing the right thing! While a lot of things may have changed over the last several hundred years, the people of medieval England have a lot in common with the folks in England today, who have a lot in common with you!

Though life in the Middle Ages (another name for the medieval period) may have been simple (there weren't any cars, TVs, computers, cell phones or electricity), it was anything but boring. Everyone had a job to do, just like today. Most people were farmers, but there were all kinds of jobs that people could do—from building things (like a carpenter or blacksmith) and selling things (like a merchant) to being a soldier (like a knight). Everybody pitched in and did their duty.

Sure there may have been lots of jobs to do, but how did so many people get into farming? The biggest reason they got into farming was because of a system in place called feudalism. Feudalism basically entailed a nobleman (a land owner) renting out land to poor farmers (also called serfs). The serfs got to live and work on the land as long as they gave a portion of their crops to the landowner (kind of like paying rent). This system was widespread all over Europe and because most people were poor, they were farmers.

But medieval England wasn't just all about work—there were plenty of fun things

to do once all the jobs were completed. People enjoyed many of the same pastimes that we do today, like bowling, wrestling, archery and dice. They also enjoyed hunting and fishing when all the work was done. Though they may not have had the Cardinals or the Rams to cheer for, medieval sports fans had various tournaments and jousts between knights to check out. I know what you're thinking though—there wasn't any TV! That's okay, because they had performances like mystery and morality plays, which were theatrical performances of Bible stories. There were also traveling shows that included minstrels (musicians who sang tales), strolling players (actors who performed skits and plays), mummers (dancers and merrymakers), and jugglers (um, well, they juggled stuff). There were also religious feasts, fairs and festivals to mark the special occasions. Whew! There was a lot to keep medieval people busy!

Between work and play, there doesn't seem like a whole lot of room for anything else, does there? Well, there was something else, and it was quite a big deal in medieval life—religion. The dominant Christian religion in England during the Middle Ages was Catholicism, and it held a lot of power over how people thought and acted. Religion was heavily celebrated with festivals and holidays honoring saints, and there was a strong focus in everyday life on living morally.

Today, things have progressed but they haven't changed all that radically. The people of England still all have jobs to do, including many of the same tasks as back in the Middle Ages (though with a little technological spunk). Carpenters, merchants, blacksmiths, farmers and soldiers are all among the many occupations that people still hold today.



Things have changed, however, since the days of feudalism. Nobility and serfs don't exist in the same way, and England isn't known for its dominant farming culture (though they do export a lot of beef). Instead, it is known for its leadership in the pharmaceutical industry (research and sale of medicines), aerospace (industry surrounding aviation and space flight) and software (computer programs).



While the English are as hard working as ever, they still find time to play. Popular activities include cricket (a sport a lot like American baseball), rugby (a sport kind of like American football), football (what we call soccer), tennis and badminton. Football (again, our soccer) is easily one of the most popular pastimes in the country, and England is home to many of the top teams in the world. Other forms of entertainment remain intact, though evolved. The theatre (though still very popular in England) has paved the way for television and film, while music has evolved from minstrels to pop sensations. At the root of English performance are past great writers like William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe, and today the theatrical legacy lives on in new actors like Christian Bale and Michael Caine (both starred in *The Dark Knight*, among other films). England has led the way in musical trends with such historic rock bands as the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, and continues to define pop music with stars like Sting and Amy Winehouse.

Religion remains important in England, though it has changed a bit as well, shifting from Catholicism to the Church of England (also known as the Anglican Church, which is Protestant). While the Anglican Church is the dominant faith of the country, Methodists, Baptists, and the United Reformed churches all have a strong Protestant presence in England.

Though *Robin Hood* may seem to take place in a time long, long ago and a place far, far

away, it's actually closer to you than you thought, huh? Just like the people of the Middle Ages, we've all got work to do and games to play!



# Helping Hands

In the play, Robin Hood and his Merry Men rob from the rich to give to the poor. Their mission is to help those who cannot help themselves. Today, we have a variety of charities, foundations and other organizations that give back to the community and those in need. But that's all adult stuff, right? Wrong! Here are just a few examples of organizations and opportunities for you to help those in need.

## Do Something

**([www.dosomething.org](http://www.dosomething.org))**

Think that just because you're a kid you can't do something big for your community? Think adults are the only ones who can really help? Think again! Dosomething.org offers various grants for whatever cause you might be interested in. From global warming and energy conservation to school violence and teen pregnancy, dosomething.org offers opportunities to get involved and make your world a better place.



I know what you're thinking—these are big organizations with large mission statements and websites and all that jazz . . . but how can I do something to help my community? It's as easy as one, two, three—

## Who

**1.** Figure out who you'd like to help. There are people all around you who need help, from homeless people to the elderly to the sick and disabled. What cause is closest to your heart?

## How

**2.** Once you figure out your cause, think about what you want to do to help. Do you want to raise money? Maybe you could have a bake sale or yard sale to benefit your cause. Or maybe your cause calls less for money and more for your time. Perhaps you could visit someone in the hospital or write a letter or card to brighten someone's day.

## Help

**3.** Finally, once you figure out the first two steps, grab people around you to help because it's even more fun to volunteer with your friends and family!

## Kids Helping Kids

**([www.kidshelping.org](http://www.kidshelping.org))**

Founded by a young man with a malignant brain tumor, Kids Helping Kids is volunteer organization of youth to benefit other youth facing medical crises. As the name implies, it promotes kids helping kids in any way they are able—whether it be as simple as visiting a sick kid in the hospital to lending a hand in making a special wish come true.

## Tell Your Parents

**(<http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/volunteer.html>)**

Alright, maybe you've got some ideas of your own, but you say your parents won't let you participate. LAME! Check out this website with all kinds of great reasons to volunteer, from strengthening your family and community to learning about responsibility and tolerance. (Translation—it's a really fun way to make yourself and those around you better people!)

Now that you've thought about it, list some of your ideas on how you can help someone in need.

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# Animals in Your Hood

We've all seen lions and tigers and bears (oh my!) at the zoo, but where do these animals live in the wild? Each animal has a specific home in the wild called a habitat, and while Sherwood Forest may have been a great hiding place for Robin Hood and his Merry Men, the forest makes an even better habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals. In fact, the forests in Missouri are home to over 730 different species of wildlife. Here are a couple and some of their defining features:

**Animal:** White-tail Deer

**Defining Features:** White tail, reddish or grey-brown coat, medium size

**Habitat:** Forests and plains

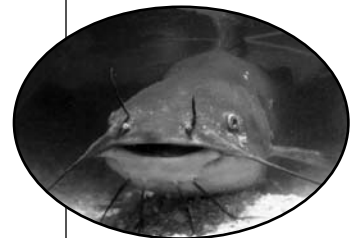
Found practically everywhere in the state (forest or not!), the white-tail deer enjoys large numbers here in Missouri. While they can take on a variety of sizes and colors, they are all noted for their trademark white tail. Adult male deer (known as bucks) grow and shed antlers each year. Females are known as does.

**Animal:** Catfish

**Defining Features:** Long whiskers; heavy, boney head

**Habitat:** Freshwater; prefer areas with shallow, running water

Common to Missouri's lakes and streams is a fish with large whiskers (known as barbels) protruding from its face (like a cat)—the catfish. While they may greatly vary in size, they have been known to grow as large as nearly six feet long and weigh well over 100 pounds.



Now it's time to do your own research. Research three of these native Missouri animals and record their defining features and the habitat in which each lives.

	Bat	Coyote	Opossum	Squirrel
	Beaver	Fox	Otter	Woodchuck
	Cottontail Rabbit	Mole	Raccoon	
		1	2	3
Animal:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Defining features:	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
Habitat:	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____

# Saving Robin's Hood

Without Sherwood Forest, Robin Hood and his band of Merry Men wouldn't have any place to hide out from the evil Sheriff. Now more than ever, however, we are losing our forests to pollution, logging and other forms of human destruction. How can you help save the forests for other Robin Hoods? Knowing the facts is a great place to start, and sharing what you know with others will help spread the word and spur action! See what you know about forest conservation!

1. Forests originally covered \_\_\_\_\_ % of the Earth's land surface.
  - a. 25
  - b. 75
  - c. 48
2. Today, only \_\_\_\_\_ % of the Earth's forests remain pristine and undisturbed.
  - a. 20
  - b. 90
  - c. 48
3. In North America alone, more than \_\_\_\_\_ % of the coastal temperate rainforests (along the western coast spanning from California to Alaska) have been destroyed.
  - a. 13
  - b. 76
  - c. 50
4. Though we only comprise 5% of the world's population, the United States uses \_\_\_\_\_ % of the wood commercially harvested worldwide.
  - a. 67
  - b. 27
  - c. 87
5. About \_\_\_\_\_ of the wood delivered to a construction site is never used (instead, it's thrown away).
  - a. 1/6
  - b. 1/2
  - c. None
6. Each United States citizen consumes the equivalent of \_\_\_\_\_ per year.
  - a. 16 tree branches
  - b. One ancient tree
  - c. A ring of tree bark
7. How can you help save the forests of the world?
  - a. Tell everyone I know (including adults!) the facts about forest conservation
  - b. Do things like recycle and be smart about my wood and paper use
  - c. Both of the above

(Answers on page 4)

# Pack Your Knapsack

Robin Hood and his Merry Men survived in the wilderness of Sherwood Forest without the help of current luxuries for outdoor living like tents and space heaters. Today, if you needed to survive for a week in the forest, what do you think you would need? Think about things that may happen while in the forest. For example, what if you need to cook some food? You can't bring a microwave!

Below are some of the things you might need for a weekend adventure in the wilderness. However, you can only take as much as you can carry—in this case, 60 lbs. Choose the items you think are the most essential for you to survive. What can you live without? On the lines list your items and explain why you chose these things.



<u>ITEM</u>	<u>WEIGHT</u>	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>WEIGHT</u>	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>WEIGHT</u>
pocket knife	2	canned food	10	cooking pots	8
matches	1	lantern	5	can opener	2
blanket	2	soap	2	tent	20
compass	2	Swiss army knife	2	toilet paper	2
extra clothing	5	sleeping bag	5	cooler	5
canteen	3	binoculars	3	dried food	5
first aid kit	7	flashlight	3	fishing supplies	10

<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
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_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
<b>TOTAL WEIGHT:</b>	_____

Remember:  
You can only  
carry 60 lbs!

# Sherwood's Scramble

Find these words from *Robin Hood* in the puzzle.



M D H A B E R D A S H E R T  
Y M A H G N I T T O N L S B  
S J R T P M Q F G H P E K K  
E H T Y Z E S L M N R V C D  
N X E G M E A E V O K T U O  
G X C R X F D S F N H F T O  
L Y J A I I B D A E L A R H  
A M T Y E F O T A N G R A N  
N Q W V Z O F T W K T C I I  
D N A R W F R P Z O K H R B  
D L M R R E Z D F R R E F O  
M V E G V C N R M M F R G R  
T H H Q P O O R D P V Y A N  
S D X N O I R A M D I A M F



Archery  
Arrow  
England  
Friar Tuck  
Haberdasher

Maid Marion  
Medieval  
Nottingham  
Peasant  
Poor

Robin Hood  
Sheriff  
Sherwood Forest  
Taxes  
Theatre