

WU?[@]therep

THE 39 STEPS

Adapted by Patrick Barlow

From the novel by John Buchan

From the movie of Alfred Hitchcock

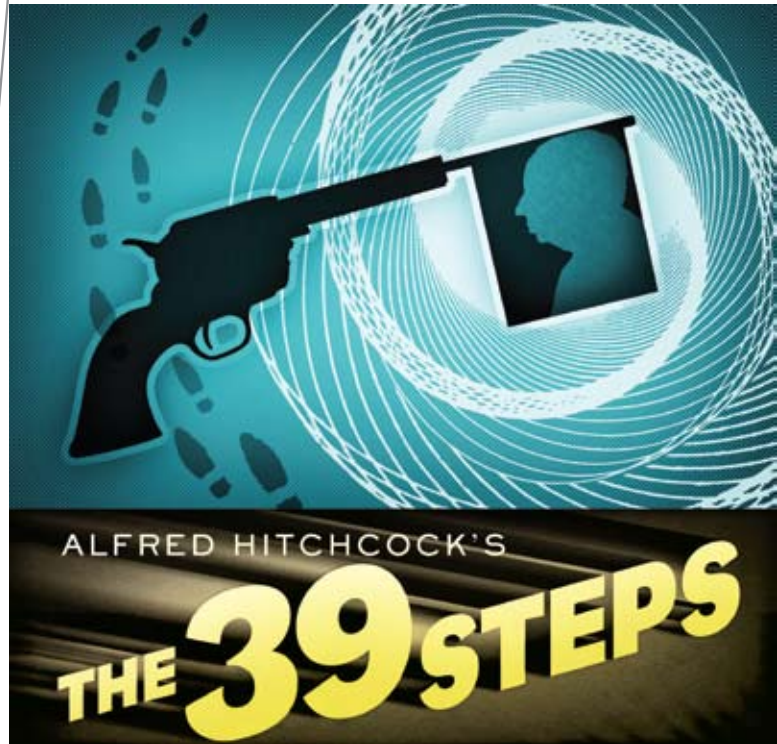
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And an original concept by Simon Corble and Nobby Dimon

Directed by Martha Banta

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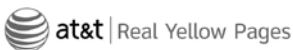
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At The Rep, we know that life moves fast—okay, really fast. But we also know that some things are worth slowing

down for. We believe that live theatre is one of those pit stops worth making and are excited that you are going to stop by for a show. To help you get the most bang for your buck, we have put together **WU? @ THE REP**—an IM guide that will give you everything you need to know to get at the top of your theatergoing game—fast. You'll find character descriptions (**A/S/L**), a plot summary (**FYI**), biographical information (**F&F**), historical context (**B4U**), and other bits and pieces (**HTH**). Most importantly, we'll have some ideas about what this all means **IRL**, anyway.

CU@therep!



The Teacher's Lounge

In an effort to make our educational materials more accessible to students and easier for educators to incorporate into the classroom, our study guide is written in a student-oriented format. We hope that you will circulate this guide among your students in the weeks preceding your visit to The Rep, encouraging them to browse it before and after class and as time allows, using it as a launch point for both pre- and post-performance discussions. You may also want to visit our website, www.repstl.org, for additional information including educational games, activity suggestions and behind-the-scenes information. Any materials, either from this guide or from our website may be reproduced for use in the classroom. As always, we appreciate your making live theatre a part of your classroom experience and welcome your feedback and questions.

NEATO!

Show Me Standards: CA 2, 3, 7; FA 2, 3, 4, 5; SS 2, 4, 6
and Illinois Learning Standards: 1, 2, 5, 14, 15, 16, 18, 25, 27.

WELCOME!

The desire to learn, insatiable when awakened, can sometimes lie dormant until touched by the right teacher or the right experience. We at The Rep are grateful to have the opportunity to play a role supporting you as you awaken the desire for learning in your students.

Patrick Barlow's *The 39 Steps* is a non-stop mystery that will engage your students from the start. The play is based on Alfred Hitchcock's movie of the same name, but you and your students don't need to have seen it to enjoy the performance. Not only does it have the cleverness and twists for which Hitchcock is known, this production uses four actors to play a great number of diverse characters, often switching between them on a breath. In my pre-show speech, I often mention that live theatre is interactive and the audience has an important role in any performance. That is especially true for this show. The set is simple and open using objects to suggest the many locations to which our characters travel. The audience—your students—will have to engage their imaginations to transport us to trains, bridges, music halls and more. This play truly needs an audience willing to play with us. Who does that better than students?

It would be a good idea to take a minute on the bus to give your students these quick theatre etiquette reminders:

- This show has an intermission; there will be time for bathroom breaks before the show and partway through.
- The actors can hear the audience and appreciate the laughter, gasps and quiet attention to action. However, talking, moving around and eating is very distracting to others and can dampen the energy of what is happening on stage.
- Pictures, phone calls and texting are not allowed at any time during the performance.

Live theatre won't allow your students to take a passive role—they must work with us to create the experience which takes the learning deeper. Our unique ability to fuse words and images onstage allows your students to explore new ideas as well as excites their imaginations. We will do our part so your students will be stirred to understandings and self-awareness while delving into new and familiar worlds. You are doing your part by using The Rep to extend your intellectual and aesthetic curriculum. Thank you!

Marsha Coplon, Director of Education

A/S/L

RICHARD HANNAY might tell you to be careful what you wish for. Though he used to spend much of his time pining for more excitement, his life quickly changes after seeing a show starring the famed Mr. Memory.

Richard seems to always be meeting some new lovely young lady, with ANNABELLA being the first and perhaps most unique. She is a charming young woman, though she has her fair share of oddities. You never know what she's going to do or say, so be on the lookout!

A sweet but skeptical girl, PAMELA seems to be everything Richard is looking for... except she kind of hates his guts.

In his travels, Richard comes across CROFTER and his wife, MARGARET. While they are kind enough to give Richard a place to stay, it's probably accurate to assume Margaret is fonder of him than her husband (surprise!).


Smart and sophisticated, PROFESSOR JORDAN seems to have all the answers that Richard is seeking...but is meeting with the Professor the end of Richard's journey?

MR. and MRS. MCGARRIGLE (the inn keepers) seem to be good judges of character as they protect Richard and Pamela from the suspicious characters who pursue them.

And whatever you do, watch out for the wily CLOWNS!

READ MORE ABOUT IT

We encourage you to explore the following books, movies and websites for more information.



Buchan, John. *The 39 Steps*, Kessinger Publishing. 2004. You've seen the play, check out the book that started it all!

McGilligan, Patrick. *Alfred Hitchcock: A Life in Darkness and Light*, Harper Perennial, 2004. Want to know about the man behind the mystery? Check out this book to learn the master of suspense's deepest, darkest secrets!

Alfred Hitchcock's *The 39 Steps*, 86 minutes, *Miracle Pictures*, 2002. You've seen the play, you're going to check out the book (right?!), why not finish off the experience by seeing the classic movie?

Alfred Hitchcock's *North by Northwest*, 136 minutes, *Warner Home Video*, 2009. If you dig *The 39 Steps* then you just might like the similar tale of *North by Northwest*.

<http://hitchcock.tv/>
Got a fix for the 411 on Hitchcock? Get it quick on this website which features a bio, essays, film info and more!

<http://www.imdb.com/>
IMDB.com—that's short for Internet Movie Database—is the definitive source for information on any and all movies ever made, and most (if not all!) of the folks behind them. Don't believe me? Search out your favorite movie, actor or boom mic operator for yourself and see!

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THOUGH HE'S only recently returned home from exciting travels, Richard Hannay is already bored and looking for action as the play begins. Luckily for him, in a trip to a show starring the famous Mr. Memory (a man who seems to know anything and everything) he meets a strange but intriguing woman by the name of Annabella.



AFTER SOME curious antics at the show (antics involving some gunshots and clowns), Annabella persuades Richard to take her home with him. Once they arrive, Annabella reveals that she is a secret agent attempting to defend confidential information regarding the nation's air defense. It would seem that the clowns are the bad guys, and they'll stop at nothing to smuggle the information out of the county. Before they retire for the evening, Richard decides to assist Annabella in saving the country.

RICHARD'S LIFE just got a little more interesting!

NOTHING COULD prepare him, however, for what would happen in the middle of the night—Annabella falling over dead before his eyes, stabbed in the back! With national security on the line, Richard must set off quickly for Professor Jordan, a name Annabella mentioned the evening before. What is the information that Annabella was trying to protect? Where is it? Surely Jordan will know!

BEFORE HE'S able to get away cleanly, however, Richard's housekeeper discovers Annabella's body and informs police. Radio bulletins blare that Richard is a murderer on the loose, armed and dangerous. Though he's taken the first train out, the authorities are already on to him. His last hope is to hide with the lovely stranger Pamela, but when she gives him away he has no choice but to leap from the train.

NARROWLY ESCAPING, Richard travels the countryside until he comes upon Crofter and Margaret. They kindly open their home to Richard, though Crofter quickly becomes jealous as Richard turns on the charm with Margaret. He barely gets away once again, but not before stealing Crofter's coat (with a hymnal in the pocket).

FINALLY, Richard lands at Professor Jordan's mansion. It seems Richard is on cusp of fulfilling Annabella's quest until he notices that the Professor is missing a piece of his little finger...something Annabella warned Richard to look out for. Professor Jordan reveals he's in cahoots with the bad guys before shooting Richard.

MIRACULOUSLY, however, the hymnal absorbs the bullet and Richard is able to slip away once again. Before being apprehended for a second time, he runs into Pamela (the lovely stranger from the train), and the pair are handcuffed together before they once again escape (she, by the way, hates every minute of it). They end up in an inn where Pamela begins to see that all may not be what it seems. She's able to slip out of the handcuffs and they part ways the next morning.

RICHARD ENDS UP returning to the place this whole mess started—the Mr. Memory show. Pamela is there too, with a slew of officers behind her. As it turns out, Professor Jordan is also there, seemingly to finish the job he started with Richard (that is, kill him). In a last ditch effort to prove his innocence, Richard reveals that Mr. Memory holds the information Annabella wanted to protect. Jordan is shot, Richard is cleared, and Pamela falls into his arms—whew! All's well that ends well!

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LIVERISH: unhappy and bad tempered

BUFFERS: people or things that prevent other incompatible people or things from coming into contact with or harming each other

SUPERNUMERARY: person or thing that is present in excess of the normal or requisite number, like a person not belonging to a regular staff but engaged for extra work

IMPERTINENT: not showing the proper respect; rude

HADDOCK: a silvery gray bottom-dwelling fish of the North Atlantic coastal waters, related to the cod; popular as a food fish and of great commercial value

LAVATORY: a room or compartment with a toilet and washbasin; a bathroom

LOCH: a lake

ACQUIRER: one who buys or obtains an object or asset for oneself

MOORS: tracts of open uncultivated land

PUSILLANIMOUS: showing a lack of courage or determination; timid

GALLANT: brave; heroic

MANACLED: chained or shackled by the hands or ankles

PICCADILLY CIRCUS: famous road junction and public space of London's West End, connecting Regent Street with the major shopping street, Piccadilly

Be Careful What You Wish For

In the opening moments of the play, Richard Hannay seems bored with his life and wishes there was something more adventurous and wild about it. Not long after, his wish is granted to the extreme, as he's chased around the nation on a mission of national defense. Did Hannay really have it all that bad sitting at home? Do you think at any point during his journey he might have taken back his wish? Have you ever taken your own situation for granted, wishing for more, only to realize later that you made a mistake?

The End of Innocence

Though he may have been guilty of not appreciating what he had, Hannay is certainly not guilty of anything illegal. However, throughout the whole play he is pursued as the murderer of Annabella. Have you ever been accused of something you didn't do? Do you know someone else who has? How did you/they deal with the accusation? What's the best way to deal with being falsely accused?

All Is Not As It Seems

Though no one believes him, Richard Hannay is not, in fact, guilty of murder. And though he tells everyone that his success isn't just a matter of life and death but of national security, people think he's just a loony making outlandish statements. Have you ever been in a situation where no one believed you? How did that feel? Have you ever not believed someone else because what he or she said didn't sound true? How did you feel when you found out they were actually telling the truth?

Stand Up For What You Believe

Against all odds (and everyone against him/out to get him), Hannay stayed the course and pursued the secret he knew he had to protect. Have you ever had to face obstacles in your life? Has anyone ever tried to stop you from doing something you loved? How did you respond? Like Hannay, did you stay the course and fight for what you believe? Or did you give up under the pressure?





IN THE WORLD of making movies, there's one person who has the final say above all others on the set, in the editing room and in approving the final cut—the director. That's right, while you might not always know their names, directors are the people who famous writers, actors and designers make it a point to know. Few directors, however, commanded the amount of respect that “the master of suspense” Alfred Hitchcock did.

WHILE ALFRED HITCHCOCK had one of the most stellar and productive careers in the history of film as a writer, director, producer and actor (totaling a body of work that included over 50 feature films spanning six decades!), his successes weren't always guaranteed. Born in 1899 to a greengrocer and his wife, Hitchcock had a troubled childhood plagued by overly harsh parents and a continual sense of inadequacy over his physical appearance (most notably his weight). Upon finishing school Hitchcock took up work as a draftsman and advertising designer, not a world-famous film director. It wasn't until his mid-20s that he'd stumble upon directing after working in production (you know, working behind the scenes on a movie).

WITHIN TEN YEARS (by 1935 when he released *The 39 Steps*) Hitchcock had released an astonishing 21 films and was only beginning to find his groove as a director. His work was characterized by its suspense (Who dunnit?! And what did they really do?!), gallows humor (grim and ironic

humor in a desperate or hopeless situation), and making the audience feel like a voyeur, (they were watching something on the sly that perhaps they weren't supposed to be seeing) giving the audience the guilty pleasure of being a peeping tom of sorts.

THOUGH HIS PROLIFIC output and engaging style would have been enough to make him a special director, what really set Hitchcock apart is that all the while he was pioneering the film genre of suspense thriller. That's right, before Hitchcock, these kinds of movies didn't exist. He also innovated the overall art of filmmaking as he continually took on the toughest



challenges of the medium. For example, he was a master of cinematography, or the art of creating and manipulating the visual elements of filmmaking. He could take a single, static set (which could easily become the most boring film ever...just think about it, you'd only see one thing all the time) and play with framing, angles, props and perspective to keep it visually fresh.

IN THE FILM *Rope*, he demonstrated his mastery by making it appear as though the entire 80 minute film was one take, or the entire film was one continuous flow with no cuts or cutaways. Your eyes are always on the action, and still he fools you in the end! Hitchcock also developed cinematic techniques like the dolly zoom (as seen in *Vertigo*), where the camera is pulled in the opposite direction of the zoom. The effect? The image appears to stretch before your



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very eyes, no expensive computers or 3D special effects artists needed.

AMID ALL of his landmark successes and innovations, Alfred Hitchcock never ceased to have his own fun while filmmaking. He was known for employing famous landmarks as backdrops for his suspense sequences, and for making cameo appearances in his movies (brief appearances which may even go unnoticed by many), usually giving himself a humorous moment behind a more serious scene.

HITCHCOCK WAS decorated for all of his contributions to the world of film, winning over 30 different awards from Oscars to lifetime achievement awards. Though he passed away in 1980, his work continues to captivate audiences while influencing the craft of filmmaking today.

BEST OF HITCHCOCK FILMOLOGY:

• Psycho (1960)

One of the iconic suspense thrillers of our time, *Psycho* has one of the most parodied moments in all of film, a horrific shower scene that terrifies even by today's standards for horror movies.

• The Birds (1963)

If you weren't afraid of birds before watching this film, you might think twice the next time you see a gang of pigeons on the sidewalk...

• Mr. and Mrs. Smith (1941)

What, did you think Brad and Angelina were the first? Not hardly! While not typical of Hitchcock's style (this film is more romantic and funny than truly suspenseful), *Mr. and Mrs. Smith* reveals the versatility of the director.

• Vertigo (1958)

The moral of this story might be if you're afraid of heights, stay down on the low ground where it's safe.

• North by Northwest (1959)

If you liked *The 39 Steps*, you just might enjoy *North by Northwest*. Or, if you're in the mood for another spy being chased across the country despite the fact that he's not really a spy then check this one out.



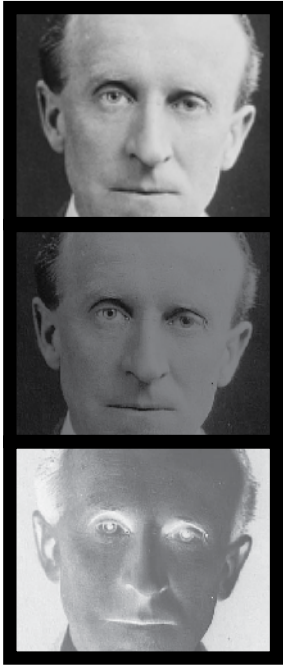


SO YOU KNOW that the play *The 39 Steps* was adapted from the movie of the same name by Alfred Hitchcock, right? But did you know that the movie was adapted from the novel of the same name by John Buchan? It was! But wait—who's John Buchan?!

BESIDES BEING one of Alfred Hitchcock's favorite writers, John Buchan was a lawyer and British politician who lived between 1875 and 1940. Don't let any of his titles deceive you though, he was truly a man of the world who led an inspirational life. It all started off in Scotland where he was born and raised. He moved to England to pursue studies at the University of Oxford, where he would begin to feed his writing addiction by meeting and befriending a number of influential writers. The real world came calling upon his graduation, however, and Buchan took up a career in tax law.

HIS DREAMS and desire for adventure wouldn't be held down for long, however, as Buchan traded in his law career to pursue writing and to become the private secretary to the colonial administrator of various colonies in South Africa, a move that launched a new career in politics. And when the First World War broke out, Buchan was on the front lines...with his pen as a war correspondent for the British (during which time he happened to meet the man who served as inspiration for Hannay in *The 39 Steps*).

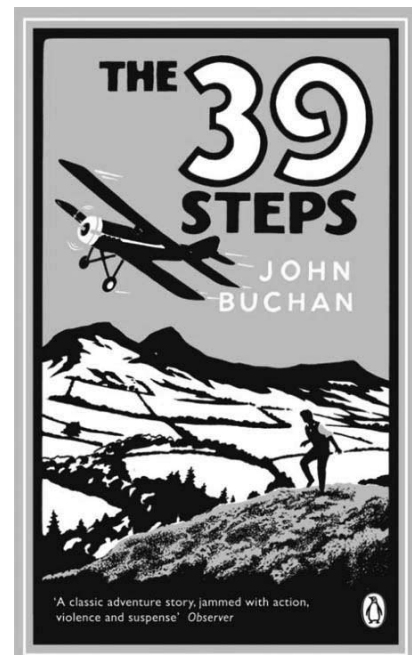
FOR THOSE keeping score at home—Buchan has lived in at least three different countries and had at least as many different occupations. That's all before turning 44, mind you.



AFTER RETURNING home from the war, Buchan held a variety of other government posts before receiving the biggest he would hold—Canadian Viceroy, essentially a ruler of Canada on behalf of the King (King George V). Mark that down as another country, another awesome job!

FOR THOSE who had forgotten, he's been writing all this time, too. In fact, by the time he died in 1940, Buchan amassed a library of 100 works. Most of his writings were novels, but he also wrote short stories and biographies. While his biographies were celebrated works, he was most known for his (yep, you guessed it) suspense thrillers. And though *The 39 Steps* would be Hitchcock's only adaptation of Buchan's work, it wouldn't be the only time Hitchcock thought about it.

THOUGH HE died just before Hitchcock came into his prime as a filmmaker (widely regarded as the 1950s), Buchan's life, adventures and influence upon Hitchcock never went away. His work lives on today in his many books, film adaptations (*The 39 Steps* alone was adapted multiple times), and short story collections.



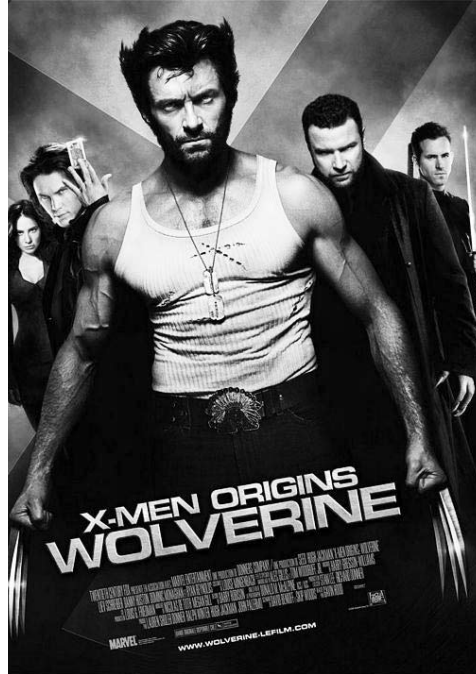
FILM FEAST

SUMMER IS the season for film blockbusters; there's no better time to get a pulse on the art of making movies than to check out what's hot from May to August. The summer of 2009 saw *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*, *G.I. Joe: The Rise of the Cobra*, *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince* and *Star Trek*. And while explosions, special effects and sexual innuendo may be the major selling points for today's biggest films, it wasn't always the case (big surprise, right?).

OKAY, SO maybe it's obvious that films haven't always had special effects. After all, today's computerized graphics weren't possible even 10 years ago. And it's true, even today not every movie blows stuff up (but shouldn't they?!) and if it's rated G or PG it tends to be pretty family friendly.

WOULD IT surprise you, though, to learn that films haven't always had sound?

TAKE ANOTHER look; it's not a typo. The earliest of films did not feature sound, at least not as we know it today. Up until around 1930, films had no dialogue (talking) or sound effects. Stories were conveyed entirely by action, the actors' body language and facial expressions, and occasionally onscreen placards when characters absolutely had to speak. The only sounds that these films featured were carefully chosen pieces of mood music that accompanied the action.



HOW IN the world did they sell tickets to what were essentially just moving pictures with music?

HEY, NOT so fast there! These films told stories as well as any modern day movie.

In fact, due to the technical limitations (the whole reason early movies didn't feature sound was because technology wasn't advanced enough) these movies had to work harder and smarter to let an audience know what was happening. Silent films as early as 1903's *The Great Train Robbery* cleverly told their tales and helped establish the linear structure used in modern filmmaking today.

SILENT FILMS were also successful because of great performers like Buster Keaton. Famed for his vaudeville performances (the chief entertainment of the early

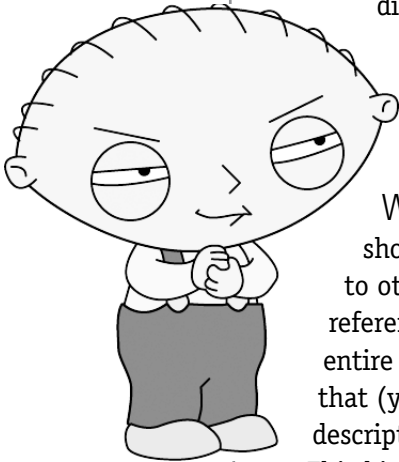
20th century, featuring song, dance, comedy and acrobatic acts like you see on television shows like *America's Got Talent*), Keaton became even more famous for his silent film work. Known for his comedic portrayals, he was one of the great "gagmen" of early film. His physical antics were hilarious, and his daring for performing stunts was unmatched. He never hesitated to perform a gag because it was dangerous, and among other injuries, he even once broke his neck.

AS YOU KNOW, however, physical antics and clever storytelling couldn't contend with technological advancements. The era of silent films ended around 1930 when the "talkies" (movies with actual dialogue) took over. Silent films and the techniques used to tell stories with sheer visuals still continues to have its impact on film today, with Alfred Hitchcock's innovative filmmaking as a striking example.

IRL

SAY WHAT?

HAVE YOU EVER just been sitting there, watching your favorite T.V. show or something, say like *Family Guy*, and then BLAM a character like Stewie or Brian or Peter cracks a joke or makes a reference to some other book, show, movie or otherwise (like *Star Wars*, for example)? Well I bet you didn't know it, but *The 39 Steps* does just that throughout the play, referencing many of Hitchcock's films like *Psycho* and *North by Northwest*.



WHILE MANY books, television shows and movies pay homage to other works and artists with references and parodies, there are entire works that are composed of just that (you might actually argue this description fits *Family Guy* perfectly).

This kind of work—one that imitates other works and/or is composed of a medley of pieces taken from various sources is called pastiche.

A PASTICHE ISN'T simply limited to referencing scenes or lines from other works, however, as it can also reference time periods, historic figures, places, styles and just about anything else you can think of. The key to a pastiche is that it's referential, typically in a tongue-in-cheek (ironic or funny) kind of way. Sometimes the referencing isn't obvious, as the pastiche may utilize the thing it references for its own style and tone.

FURTHER, THE TERM pastiche can be used to refer to anything from a book to a movie to music and more, as just about any art form lends itself to being referential in one way or another. And of course, one form can reference another, like a movie referencing music, for example.

WHILE THERE are many artists and works that comprise the pastiche movement, here are a few of the more popular, recent pieces and artists that you might recognize. Can you think of any more?

"Bohemian Rhapsody" by Queen

This song is pastiche as it references various musical styles all in one song, including opera, a cappella and heavy rock.

Weird Al Yankovic

Weird Al's work as a whole is pastiche, as he doesn't actually write his own songs so much as he re-writes the songs of others. Take Michael Jackson's "Beat It" for example:

"Beat It"

*They Told Him Don't You Ever Come
Around Here*

*Don't Wanna See Your Face,
You Better Disappear*

*The Fire's In Their Eyes And
Their Words Are Really Clear*

So Beat It, Just Beat It.

And Weird Al's version:

"Eat It"

*How come you're always
such a fussy young man,*

*Don't want no Captain Crunch,
don't want no Raisin Bran,*

*Well don't you know that other kids are
starving in Japan,*

So eat it, just eat it.

Quentin Tarantino

Quentin Tarantino's work is pastiche in that it often pays tribute to pulp novels, blaxploitation and kung fu films.





SWDXT?

"Listen I'm so terribly sorry! I was desperate! I had to do it! My name's Richard Hannay. They're after me. I swear I'm innocent! You've got to help me! I've got to keep free for the next few days. You see the safety of this country depends on it."

- * In his attempt to get away from the police on the train, Hannay runs into Pamela and tries to get her to hide him. Has anyone ever come to you in some trouble that they didn't want anyone else to know about? What's the best thing to do in that situation?

"Mr. Hannay you've forced me into a very difficult position. You see I live here as a respectable citizen. My very best friend is the Sheriff of the County. You must realize my whole existence could be jeopardized if it became known that I was not—what shall we say—not what I seem. But what makes it doubly important that I simply can't let you go is that I'm just about to convey some very vital information out of the country. Oh yes I've got it alright. I'm afraid poor Annabella would have been far too late. So it seems there's only one option Mr. Hannay."

- * In the final moments of their first meeting, Professor Jordan reveals his true identity to Hannay. Can you think of other characters in the play who lie about their identities? What do you make of all the deception?

"I've been pretty busy all my life really. Well actually not recently. Recently I've been in a bit of a slump to be honest. Catching myself in the lonely hours, full of...thoughts and what have you. Well not that recently. Recently, the last few days—well the last day really, everything's gone haywire frankly."

- * In a moment of reflection, Hannay remarks that he's been in a bit of a slump lately. What characterizes a slump for Hannay? Have you ever found yourself in a bit of slump? What do you do to shake yourself out of it?

"So look here I'm asking...all and every one of you now you...and...and—you ...and—and Mr. McCrocodile—let's just set ourselves resolutely to make this world a happier place! A decent world! A good world! A world where no nation plots against nation! Where no neighbor plots against neighbor, where there's no persecution or hunting down, where everybody gets a square deal and a sporting chance and where people try to help and not to hinder! A world where suspicion and cruelty and fear have been forever banished! That's the sort of world I want! Is that the sort of world you want?"

- * What do you think of the world Hannay pines after in this passage? To steal his words, is it the sort of world you want? Is it possible? What can you do to help move our world closer to the one he envisions?