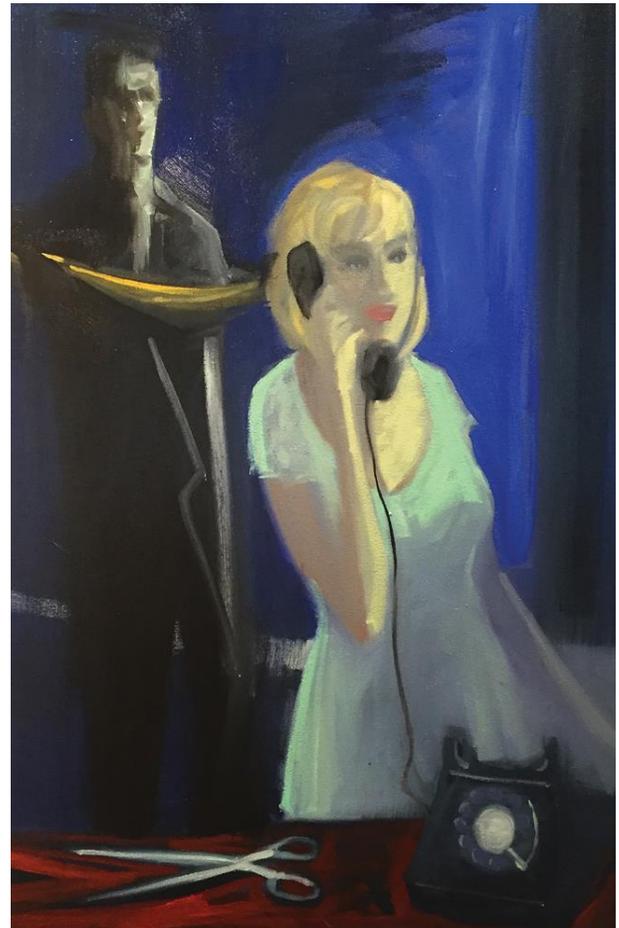




INDIANA
REPERTORY
THEATRE

Dial "M" for Murder

by Frederick Knott



April 25 – May 21, 2017 on the IRT's OneAmerica Mainstage

STUDY GUIDE

edited by Richard J Roberts

with contributions by Janet Allen • James Still

Kate Sutton-Johnson • Tracy Dorman • Lindsay Jones

Indiana Repertory Theatre • 140 West Washington Street • Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
Janet Allen, Executive Artistic Director • Suzanne Sweeney, Managing Director

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SUPPORTERS



Dial “M” for Murder by Frederick Knott

A retired tennis pro plots the murder of his own wife, but on the fateful night nothing goes as planned, and she soon finds herself in a different kind of danger. Can she be saved in time? The play that inspired Alfred Hitchcock’s classic suspense film weaves an ever tightening web of danger and deception.

THEMES & TOPICS

Murder Mystery Genre, Puzzle Solving, Marriage and Deception, Blackmail, Revenge, Mortality, Betrayal

CONTENT ADVISORY

Dial “M” for Murder is an edge-of-your-seat thriller that contains mild language and scenes of violence.

Student Matinees • May 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, & 11, 2017 • 10:00 A.M.
estimated length: 2 hours & 20 minutes

Recommended for grades 6-12.

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GREAT STORIES, GREAT PERFORMANCES

BY JANET ALLEN, EXECUTIVE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

The thriller genre is a great means of gathering people from many different viewpoints and ages under a subject matter umbrella that deeply connects us as humans. We all share a fascination with human evil and murder, whether that comes at the hands of the gentle Agatha Christie, or the bloodthirsty Quentin Tarantino. *Dial "M" for Murder* lives somewhere in the middle—retaining some of the gentility of the British thriller, it also adopts the sociological nuance of the post-War, ruthless, get-ahead economy, with the very frank plotting of a cold-blooded murder. The play's gender viewpoint provides another source of its suspense: Margot seems to exist in a world entirely peopled by men.

One of the greatest sources of this script's enduring power is the same thing that makes it ripe for great performance—the depth of characterization that Frederick Knott brings to the proceedings. We learn a great deal about these characters in deep conversations they share about how their pasts affect their present moments: past misdeeds, past discoveries, past longings. The backstories of the characters seem to have brought them, inexorably, inevitably, to their fateful actions. And unlike today's movie and TV thrillers, it almost all happens with language. Save one brief action sequence, the suspense is meted out in words, in the cascading power of language to persuade, to confuse, to implicate, to elicit doubt and fear. This makes for perfect stagecraft and delicious work for actors.

As we draw IRT's 45th season to an end, we thank all of you who have been with us on the journey—a journey bringing this institution from birth into its true adulthood; a journey through many seasons of variety in playmaking; a journey through this season, from *The Three Musketeers* through

Finding Home: Indiana at 200 to Dial "M" for Murder and many others in between. We promise you a world of human experiences packed into each season, and look forward to sharing the 46th with you!

The company of the IRT's 2016 production of Agatha Christie's The Mousetrap.



SURPRISE vs. SUSPENSE

BY JAMES STILL, DIRECTOR

Thanks to the movie (based on the play) directed by Alfred Hitchcock, *Dial "M" for Murder* is a story we think we know. There I've said it ... the two scariest words in the murder-mystery genre: Alfred Hitchcock. Who hasn't pulled back a shower curtain hoping *not* to find something out of *Psycho*? "Hitch" (his well-known nickname) had plenty of witty things to say about murder. One of my favorites is: "I have a perfect cure for a sore throat: cut it."



What you may not remember is that *Dial "M"* isn't a typical mystery, because the audience is in on the murder plan from the beginning. I find that twist to be one of the many compelling things about the story. Playwright Frederick Knott makes the audience both witness and accomplice to the attempted murder of Margot. In that way, Mr. Knott reinvents the murder mystery and turns it on its head. The venerable question posed by a murder mystery is "Whodunit?" But *Dial "M"* asks a different question: "WillHeGetAwayWithIt?" By turning the genre inside out, Mr. Knott not only changes the question that drives the play, but also how the audience is drawn into the play. The character Tony has spent a year working out the details of his wife's murder, and in theory, it's fool-proof. But to quote the character Max: "...in stories things turn out as the author plans them to.... In real life they don't—always." In *Dial "M,"* when things don't go exactly to plan, they get even more ... interesting.

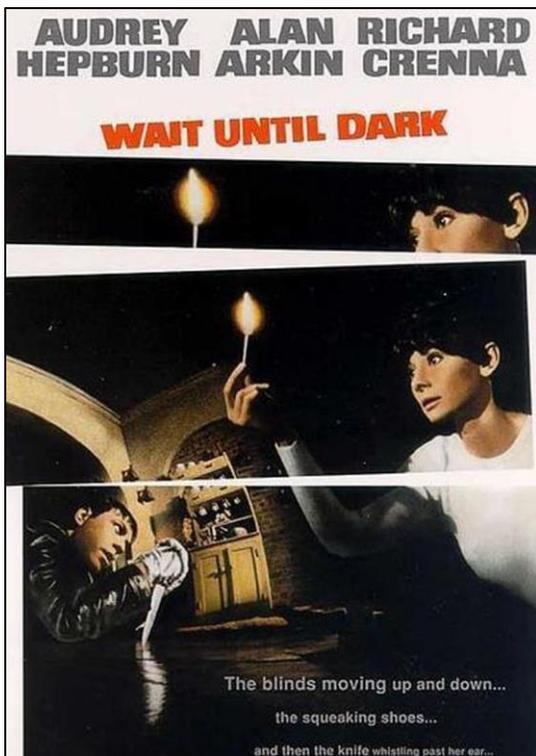
Mr. Knott had the great instinct to focus less on mystery and more on suspense. Hitchcock, of course, was known as the Master of Suspense. He said, "Mystery is an intellectual process ... but suspense is essentially an emotional process." Hitchcock also made a distinction between "surprise" and "suspense." Surprise is when two people are sitting at a table and a bomb goes off. Suspense is when two people are sitting at a table and the audience *knows* there is a bomb about to go off ... so they are *waiting* for the surprise....

Hitchcock had something to say about audiences too: "Give them pleasure: the same pleasure they have when they wake up from a nightmare."

FREDERICK KNOTT PLAYWRIGHT



Frederick Knott (1916-2002) was born in China, the son of English missionaries. He was educated in England and earned a law degree from Cambridge University. He served in the British Army in World War II, rising to the rank of major, and eventually moved to the United States. *Dial "M" for Murder* started as a BBC television production. The play premiered in London in 1952, followed by a successful Broadway run. Knott also wrote the screenplay for the 1954 Hollywood movie directed by Alfred Hitchcock in 3D, starring Ray Milland and Grace Kelly. Knott wrote only a few other plays. *Write Me a Murder* was produced on Broadway in 1961, but it was not successful. *Wait until Dark* was produced on Broadway in 1966, and it was another big hit like *Dial "M" for Murder*. The film version was released in 1967 starring Audrey Hepburn.



STAGE NOIR

KATE SUTTON-JOHNSON SCENIC DESIGNER

Pulling from the rich Hitchcock canon of suspense films, while generously nodding to film noir's distinctive graphic qualities, we've placed our *Dial "M"* in an elegant, Hollywood-esque London apartment. It's 1952. The upper surround (which we've dubbed the "mega-cornice") sits above the apartment, separate but echoing its architecture. Projected images and Hitchcock-inspired close-ups will illuminate this surface, helping us drive the suspenseful and more intricate plot points of the story. The way that this set piece looms and leans out over the apartment below is meant to enhance the dark psychological quality of these film-noir-inspired compositions. The images will feature odd angles, odd scales, and odd croppings, creating in the audience a subtle sense of discomfort or imbalance as our story unfolds.



Preliminary model by scenic designer Kate Sutton-Johnson.

*(opposite)
Preliminary
costume sketch
for Margot
by designer
Tracy Dorman.*

LINDSAY JONES COMPOSER & SOUND DESIGNER

When James Still approached me about doing the music and sound for *Dial "M" for Murder*, I said yes before he could even finish the question. As a lifelong devotee of Alfred Hitchcock films and an eternal student of the music of Bernard Herrmann and Dimitri Tiomkin, I leapt at the chance to explore the stylish beauty of this suspense thriller. The first step in this process for us was determining that we would be willing to embrace the conventions of classic movie thriller music. In our irony-laden post-modern world of today, there's an aversion to allowing music to show emotions in cinematic underscore, with a focus towards mega-volume and excitement. But *Dial "M"* is a thriller from another era, in which a slow dramatic build is essential to creating the suspense needed for the story. Music is essential to creating that feeling of dread and suspicion. The next step in the process was understanding how important romance is to the story, and how music could convey that sense of a love long past with embers that are still smoldering. The final step is incorporating all of these ideas into the actors' performances, and now you can see the results of how it all came together. Thank you for coming, and I hope you enjoy this labor of love for all of us.

**TRACY DORMAN** COSTUME DESIGNER

When we began discussions about the look of the characters in *Dial "M" for Murder*, one of the first things that director James Still brought up was the idea of the characters feeling like they inhabited a lush Technicolor world of early fifties American cinema. We decided to use this idea of color palette to convey character, and to rely on lighting and projections to evoke the film noir qualities of the play and setting. As a design team, we've worked carefully together to craft a world that feels very heightened and tense, as befitting the suspense of the play. It's set in 1952; with Margot our only female character, it's a great opportunity to contrast the femininity of her character with the men who both threaten and protect her. This was the era of Dior's New Look, when women were excited to dress more extravagantly and colorfully after the war, and it gives us an opportunity to convey Margot's wealth and polish.

PLACES IN LONDON

Many London neighborhoods, streets, and landmarks are mentioned in the play.

Albert Hall is a treasured and distinctive concert hall on the northern edge of South Kensington, London, site of the annual summer Proms concerts.

Belsize Park is an area of north-west London, a lively area with many restaurants, pubs and cafés. Primrose Hill Park provides some of the best views of Central London.

Brixton is a multiethnic community in south London, mainly residential.

Carlisle Court is a two-story building of inexpensive residential flats on Carlisle Avenue.

Charing Cross is the "center of London" from which distances from the city are measured.

Chelsea is an affluent area in West London, bounded to the south by the River Thames.

Hampstead is known for its intellectual, liberal, artistic, musical, and literary associations and for Hampstead Heath. It has more millionaires than any other area of the United Kingdom.

Knightsbridge is a residential and retail district in West London, south of Hyde Park, home to many expensive shops, including Harrods and Harvey Nichols.

Maida Vale (*below*), where *Dial "M" for Murder* is set, is in west London. The area is mostly residential, and mainly affluent, with large Victorian and Edwardian blocks of mansion flats.

Newport Street is a very short street that runs alongside elevated train tracks

The Old Baily is a nickname (derived from the street on which it stands) for the Central Criminal Court; it deals with major criminal cases from within Greater London.



Pimlico is a small area within central London. Like Belgravia, to which it was built as a southern extension, Pimlico is known for its garden squares and Regency architecture.

Scotland Yard is the headquarters of the Metropolitan Police Service, responsible for policing Greater London (excluding the central City of London). Its name derives from the headquarters' original location on Great Scotland Yard, a street of Whitehall.

Soho is part of the West End of London, England. Long established as an entertainment district, known for its night life and the headquarters of leading film companies.

S.W.9 is the London postcode for Brixton, like the U.S. zip code system

The Thames Embankment is a work of 19th-century civil engineering that reclaimed marshy land next to the River Thames in central London.

The Tower of London is one of the country's most popular tourist attractions. The Crown Jewels have been displayed there since 1669.

Victoria Station is a central London railway terminus and connected London Underground station in Victoria, in the City of Westminster, near Victoria Street.

Waterloo Station is located in central London. It is Britain's busiest railway station.

Wimbledon is the oldest and most prestigious tennis tournament in the world. It has been held at the All England Club in London since 1877, and is played on outdoor grass courts.

AND AROUND GREAT BRITAIN

Cambridge is, with Oxford, one of England's two most prestigious universities.

Dartmoor Prison contained some of Britain's most serious offenders at the time of the play.

Glasgow is the largest city in Scotland, 335 miles north of London

Liverpool is located on the west coast of England, about 180 miles northwest of London.

Windsor is a historic market town in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead in Berkshire, England. It is widely known as the site of Windsor Castle, one of the official residences of the British Royal Family. It is located 25 miles west of London.

ALIGNMENT GUIDE

Seeing a performance at Indiana Repertory Theatre is a great way to help make connections for students and facilitate their understanding of a text. Some key literature standards to consider on your trip would be:

Reading – Literature

- RL.1 – Read and comprehend a variety of literature independently and proficiently
- RL.2 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature by analyzing, inferring, and drawing conclusions about literary elements, themes, and central ideas
 - Sample: 9-10.RL.2.2: *Analyze in detail the development of two or more themes or central ideas over the course of a work of literature, including how they emerge and are shaped and refined by specific details.*
- RL.3 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature, using knowledge of literary structure and point of view
 - Sample: 11-12.RL.3.2: *Analyze a work of literature in which the reader must distinguish between what is directly stated and what is intended (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement) in order to understand the point of view.*
- RL.4 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature by connecting various literary works and analyzing how medium and interpretation impact meaning

Reading – Nonfiction

- RN.2 – Extract and construct meaning from nonfiction texts using a range of comprehension skills
 - Sample: 8.RN.2.3: *Analyze how a text makes connections and distinctions among individuals, events, and ideas.*

Reading – Vocabulary

- RV.3 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature and nonfiction texts by determining or clarifying figurative, connotative, and technical meanings
 - Sample: 9-10.RV.3.3: *Interpret figures of speech (e.g., euphemism, oxymoron) in context and analyze their role in the text.*

PRE-SHOW QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES

Discussion:

Although technically *Dial "M" for Murder* is a suspense play rather than a mystery play, it does fall into the genre of murder mysteries. What other mystery plays or movies have you seen? What detective dramas do you watch on TV? What elements of the mystery genre establish mood, tone, and atmosphere? What do you believe are the key ingredients of an engaging detective story?

Is it possible to plan a perfect crime? Why or why not? What would be the variables involved?

Activities:

Compare and contrast several fictional detectives. What are their differences and similarities? What if any are their idiosyncrasies? What makes them so engaging to readers that authors are able to sell series of books? Who are the interesting sidekicks these detectives have? Here are a few to get the discussion started and to spark further reading in this genre:

Agatha Christie's detectives Miss Marple and Hercule Poirot

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories

Dog on It (The Chet and Bernie Mystery Series) by Spencer Quinn

Ghost Hero (Bill Smith/Lydia Chin Novels) by S. J. Rozan

Devil in a Blue Dress (Easy Rawlins Mysteries) by Walter Mosley

An Unsuitable Job for a Woman (Cordelia Gray Mysteries, No. 1) by P.D. James

A Is for Alibi (Kinsey Millhone Alphabet Mysteries, No. 1) by Sue Grafton

A Share in Death (Duncan Kincaid/Gemma James Novels) by Deborah Crombie

If Walls Could Talk (Haunted Home Repair Mystery) by Juliet Blackwell

As with any piece of literature, plays contain words that are not part of our everyday vocabulary. This is often particularly true of works written in England rather than America. In an effort to increase both your students' reading and spoken vocabulary, have them review the meanings of these words found in *Dial "M" for Murder*.

gasworks

debutante

vichyssoise

heath

port

bookmaker

charwoman

attaché

brandy

maharaja

reprieve

brief (legal)

porter

latchkey

embankment

POST-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read James Still's director's note ("Surprise vs. Suspense") on page 4. Discuss how *Dial "M" for Murder* differs from most murder stories. How does this make the experience of watching the play different? What keeps you interested in the story (or doesn't)?

Discuss the concept of denouement (the final part of a play, movie, or narrative, after the climax, in which the strands of the plot are drawn together and matters are explained or resolved). What is the climax of *Dial "M" for Murder*? Does *Dial "M" for Murder* have a denouement? Why or why not? How has the playwright modified traditional dramatic structure?

Compare *Dial "M" for Murder* with today's popular detective television series such as *Law & Order* or *CSI*. How have changes in technology affected this kind of detective work? How is storytelling different in television from novels, short stories, and/or theatre?

Discuss the character of Detective Inspector Hubbard. How does he "go by the book" in his investigation? How does he violate standard police procedures? Would his case stand up in a court of law? How does he compare to such popular detective characters as Hercule Poirot, Miss Marple, or Sherlock Holmes?

Although murder is a horrifying crime in reality, it makes for very popular entertainment in fiction and drama. Why do you suppose we are fascinated by detective mysteries in all formats? Is it our desire to have a hero? Do we need the cause revealed so we can come to an understanding of the actions and thereby have peace of mind? What do you think?

How do issues of class become expressed in *Dial "M" for Murder*? Which characters are "higher" class and which are "lower"? Why? How does social class affect the characters' interactions? How do the issues of class seen in this play, set in Britain in the 1950s, compare to class issues in America today?

Discuss the character of Margot as the only woman in a play full of men. How does this isolation affect our perceptions of her? How do traditional male and female stereotypes factor into this play originally written in 1952? How might the gender politics of the play be different if it were set in today's world?

Discuss the character of Max as the only American in a play full of British characters. How does this isolation affect our perceptions of him? How do traditional stereotypes about Americans and Brits factor into this play? How might the play be different if it were set in America, and Max were the only British character?

What do you believe to be keen skills for observation? Actors develop their skills of observation in their training. What other professions do you believe use the skill of observation? How do you suppose such people put this skill into practice? What is the difference between really observing and simply seeing or watching? Is there a greater advantage to observing unnoticed than to be a known observer? When is observation a necessity?

How does Tony's status as a professional athlete affect his viewpoint about marriage, career, money, morality? In the 1950s, professional tennis was not nearly the popular sport it is today, while professional sports in general were likewise less pervasive in popular culture. How might this aspect of the play be different if the play were set today? If Tony played a different sport?

Discuss the concepts of morality (which might be described as the difference between right and wrong) and ethics (which might be described as the relative difference between two wrongs). How do we make moral choices? How do we make ethical choices? What are some of the varying guidelines or standards that different people use in making such choices? How might one compare the moral or ethical outlook on Tony's plan to murder his wife vs. Margot's affair with another man? How would Captain Lesgate's various infractions compare? What about Detective Inspector Hubbard's violations of police protocol?

The choice to show the offstage characters in various phone conversations through the use of video projections in this production is not a standard part of the play *Dial "M" for Murder*. How effective was this production element? How did it enhance or detract from your experience of the play? In general, how do you feel about the use of video elements in stage productions?

This production featured a generous amount of musical underscoring during dialogue scenes. This technique has long been used in films, but it is a relatively new (and growing) development on the stage. How did it enhance or detract from your experience of the play?

Discuss the differences in manners, courtesies, and customs between the world of Britain in the 1950s seen in *Dial "M" for Murder* and our current American society. What has remained similar? What is different? What has brought about these changes in manners, courtesies, and customs? How might some of these changes be seen as improvements in society? How might some be seen as deteriorations? How might different generations answer this question differently?

WRITING PROMPTS

Readers like the detective characters in mysteries such as Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys, Nero Wolf, Easy Rawlins, Jim Chee, Jane Tennison, Kinsey Millhone, Jessica Fletcher, Sherlock Holmes, Hercule Poirot, and Miss Marple. Try your hand at creating a contemporary detective of your liking. To develop a full character, ask and answer questions: Where and when does your character live? What are his or her likes and dislikes? How did he/she get into this line of work? What are his or her dreams, nightmares, and aspirations? Family history? Often writers will give their detective character a significant personal obstacle, vice, or quirk: Sherlock Holmes uses drugs, Jane Tennison is an alcoholic, Jim Chee has bad luck in love, and Hercule Poirot has numerous eccentricities. Perhaps your character could have a foible.

Write your own minute mysteries. Invent a fictional crime, then craft a series of clues that lead to the culprit. Write your story in a page or less, but leave out the solution. See if your friends can solve the mystery.

Observe a painting from a writer's point of view. Some choices could be Van Gogh's *The Potato Eaters*, Edward Hopper's *Nighthawks*, Renoir's *Le Moulin de la Galette*, or George Seurat's *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*. Write a paragraph describing the atmosphere, mood, and setting. Use sensory imagery such as smells and sounds of the location. What emotions are in the air? What might be the time of day? Set the scene for your readers and pull them into your world. Use the painting as a detective uses clues to create a story for what is happening in the painting.

We learn about characters from what they say, what they do, and from what other characters say about them. Choose one of the characters from *Dial "M" for Murder* and do a character analysis beginning with those three points. Then extrapolate more biographical information about your chosen character, such as age, gender, education, passions, aspirations, likes and dislikes, hopes and dreams, work life, relationships, socioeconomic position, etc. Write a poem or story from your chosen character's point of view, imagining a different aspect of his or her life from that in the play.

Write a review of the play. A well-rounded review includes your opinion of the theatrical aspects—scenery, lights, costumes, sound, direction, acting—as well as your impressions of the script and the impact the story and/or themes and the overall production had on you. What moments made an impression on you? How do the elements of scenery, costumes, lighting, and sound work with the actors' performance of the text to tell the story? What ideas or themes did the play make you think about? How did it make you feel? Did you notice the reactions of the audience as a whole? Would you recommend this play to others? Why or why not? To share your reviews with others, send to: education.irt@gmail.com

ACTIVITIES

Find a murder mystery game kit, or make your own. Create a fictional victim, a murder method, and a series of possible suspects. Secretly choose one student to be the murderer. Plant clues in your classroom, or give each student a different piece of the puzzle. How can you use logic and intuition to discover whodunit?

In groups, discuss those areas of knowledge each participant feels is his/her area of particular expertise. Once you have this list of your combined knowledge, create a mystery story that makes use of each group member's area of expertise. Each of you might have to do a little additional research to find the necessary tidbit to make your dialogue believable. (Example: If your group has the detective discover a plant on the bottom of the victim's shoe, then the expert on plants needs to research what type of plant you want discovered and why it is that particular plant and share the plant's properties with the readers or listeners.) Your group will have to decide from whose point of view you are telling the story. Also, remember the basic elements of a good story are character, setting, conflict, and resolution. Try improvisation to help move along your dialogue and to maintain or capture your characters' voices. Or your group might make your detective mystery a radio drama. All the above perimeters apply but you have the added element of dramatizing sound and making a recording live or otherwise.

Most people enjoy whodunit and who-are-you guessing games. You can adapt these games to make them relevant to your class work. Create your own detective game for your class:

In playing Celebrity, you can make the name cards relevant to what you are teaching and reading. <http://www.howdoyouplay.net/party-games/how-to-play-the-celebrity-game.html>

You can adapt the setting and characters of a mystery game or Shakespeare game. http://www.amazon.com/How-To-Host-Murder-Guilty/dp/1582362297/ref=pd_sim_t_8?ie=UTF8&refRID=1HTHRN94492KCZ144T20

<http://www.mymysteryparty.com/?gclid=CKPY6cbTycMCFYQ9aQodcLMAgA>

<http://www.amazon.com/Shakespeare-Box-The-Taming-Shrew/dp/0761123814>

http://www.educationworld.com/a_news/teaching_improvisation_techniques_brings_creativity_mental_flexibility_classroom-928959238

RESOURCES

BOOKS

The Mystery Lovers' Book of Quotations by Jane Horning

The Craft of Crime by John C. Carr

The Murder Book by Tage la Cour & Harald Mogensen

Encyclopedia of Mystery and Detection edited by Chris Steinbrunner & Otto Penzler

The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes by Arthur Conan Doyle, edited by Leslie S. Klinger

The Figure of the Detective: A Literary History and Analysis by Charles Brownson

The Art of Alfred Hitchcock: Fifty Years of His Motion Pictures by Donald Spoto

HitchcockTruffaut by Francois Truffaut

WEBSITES

<http://www.thrillingdetective.com/>

<https://www.einvestigator.com/>

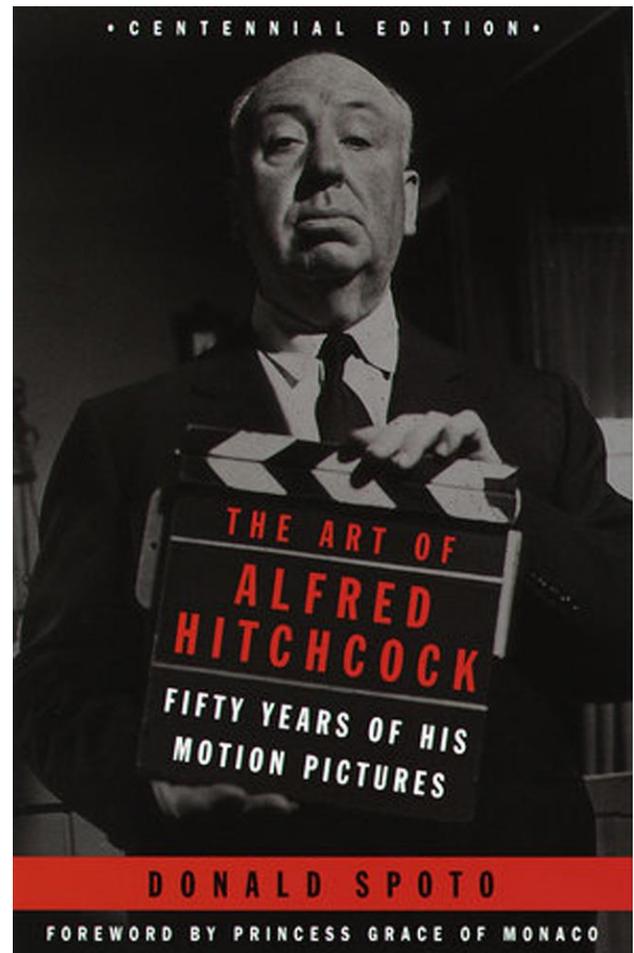
<http://www.wad.net/>

World Association of Detectives

<http://www.alfredhitchcock.com/>

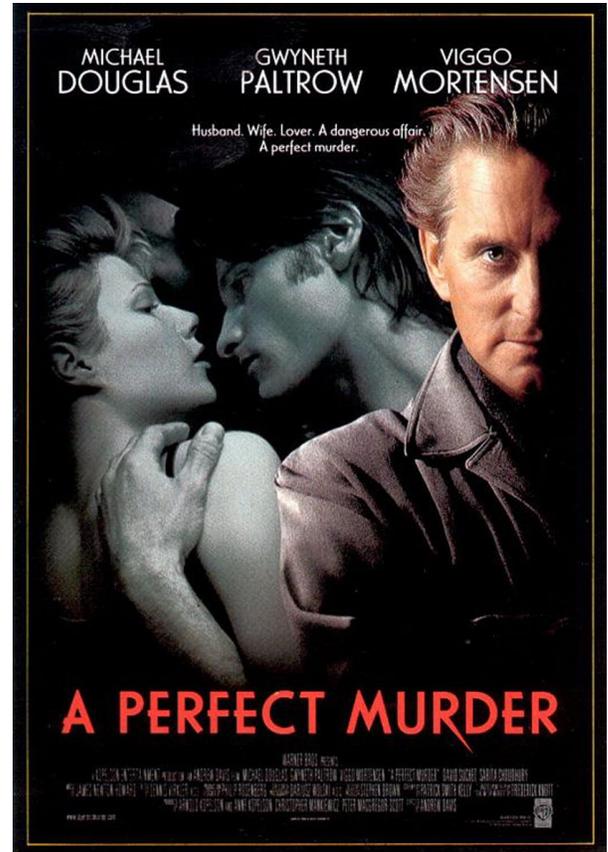
<http://hitchcock.tv/>

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/mystery/index.html>



FILMS & TV

Dial M for Murder (1954)
A Perfect Murder (1998 remake of *Dial M for Murder* – rated R)
Rear Window (1954)
To Catch a Thief (1955)
The Man Who Knew Too Much (1956)
Vertigo (1958)
North by Northwest (1959)
Psycho (1960)
The Birds (1963)
The Third Man (1949)
The Big Sleep (1946)
Laura (1944)
The Maltese Falcon (1941)
The Thin Man film series (1934-1947)
The Departed (2006 – rated R)
Memento (2000 – rated R)
L.A. Confidential (1997 – rated R)
Who Framed Roger Rabbit (1988)
Veronica Mars series (2004-2007) & film (2014)
Castle series (2009–)
CSI series franchise (2000–)
Law & Order series (1990-2010)
The Rockford Files series (1974-1980)
Columbo series (1971-2003)



*Peter Falk
 as Columbo.*



GLOSSARY

bet on the Tote

The Tote (formerly the Horserace Totalisator Board) was created in 1928 as a government institution intended to provide a safe, regulated alternative to illegal off-course bookmakers, and to ensure that some gambling revenues were put back into the sport of horse racing.

Brussels

Brussels is the capitol of Belgium, a center for international political and trade organizations.

College Ball

The colleges of the University of Cambridge each often hold a May Ball at the end of the academic year. They are elaborate and lavish formal affairs, with ticket prices ranging upwards of £100. Some colleges offer balloon rides when the ball ends, and even breakfast in Paris, or, more traditionally, punting to Grantchester. The tradition goes back to the 1830s.

Saturday Night Theatre

Saturday Night Theatre was a long-running radio drama series on BBC Radio 4. Launched in 1943, it featured stage plays, book adaptations, and original dramatizations. For most of its 50-year history, programs ran for 90 minutes and were largely thrillers, comedies, and mysteries.

Limey

Limey is a predominantly North American slang nickname for British people, originally referring to the use of lime juice in the daily ration of grog to prevent scurvy among sailors. By 1925, the usage of limey had been extended to mean any British person.

Detective Inspector

Within the British police, inspector is the second supervisory rank. It is senior to that of sergeant, but junior to that of chief inspector.

Chief Inspector

Detective chief inspector is usually the minimum rank held by a senior investigating officer, who heads major investigations such as murder.

export quotas

a limit imposed by the government on the quantity of goods that may be exported

Home Secretary

The Home Secretary is a British Cabinet level position, responsible for internal affairs, immigration and citizenship, policing, and national security. At the time of the play, the Home Secretary was also responsible for prisons and probation.

The Role of the Audience



You, the audience are one of the most important parts of any performance. Experiencing the theatre is a group activity shared not only with the actors, but also with the people sitting around you. Your attention and participation help the actors perform better, and allow the rest of the audience to enjoy the show. Here are a few simple tips to help make each theatre experience enjoyable for everyone:

Leave mp3 players, cameras, mobile phones, and other distracting and noise-making electronic devices at home.

You may think texting is private, but the light and the motion are very annoying to those around you and on stage. Do not text during the performance.

Food and drink must stay in the lobby.

The house lights dimming and going out signal the audience to get quiet and settle in your seats: the play is about to begin.

Don't talk with your neighbors during the play. It distracts people around you and the actors on stage. Even if you think they can't hear you, they can.

Never throw anything onto the stage. People could be injured.

Remain in your seat during the play. Use the restroom before or after the show.

Focus all your attention on the play to best enjoy the experience. Listen closely to the dialogue and sound effects, and look at the scenery, lights, and costumes. These elements all help to tell the story.

Get involved in the story. Laugh, cry, sigh, gasp—whatever the story draws from you. The more emotionally involved you are, the more you will enjoy the play.

Remain at your seat and applaud during the curtain call because this is part of the performance too. It gives you a chance to recognize a job well done and the actors a moment to thank you for your attention.