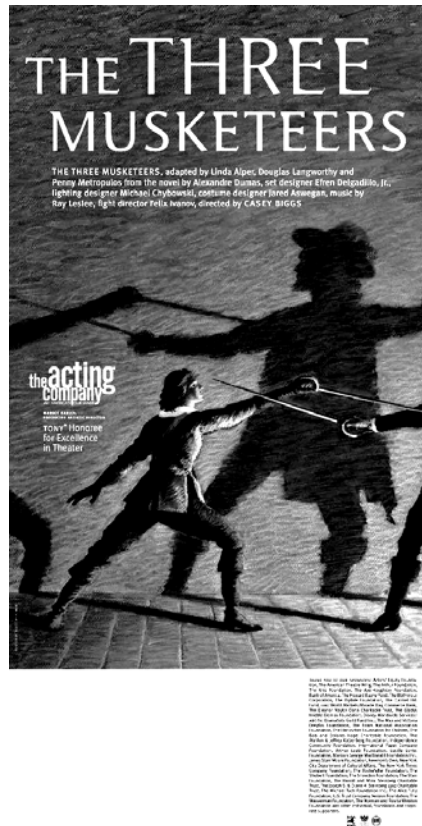


the acting company

ALL AMERICA'S FOUR STAGE

Margot Harley
Producing Artistic Director



Written by **Alexandre Dumas**
Adapted by
Linda Alper, Douglas Langworthy and Penny Metropulos

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Teacher Resource Guide
by **Paul Michael Fontana**

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Section 1: Introduction

<p>How is it that little children are so intelligent and men so stupid? It must be education that does it.</p>
--

Alexandre Dumas

Thanks for taking some of your classroom time to work on *The Three Musketeers*! Although your students will enjoy the play without preparation, the experience can be deepened by some pre- and post-performance classroom work.

The exercises in this guide are intended to help you and your students get the most out of the workshop production. Please do not feel that you need to do everything in this guide! They provide a wide variety of drama-based teaching techniques that you can use as they are presented or you can adapt for your class or for other pieces of literature. You can experiment with them and add the ones that work for you to your “bag of tricks.”

The education programs of The Acting Company are intended to mirror the mission of the company itself: to celebrate language, to deepen creative exploration, to go places where theater isn’t always available. We try to use the same skills in our outreach programs that actors use in the preparation of a role. Many of the exercises here are adaptations of rehearsal “games” and techniques.

In addition to the Teacher Resource Guides for our performances, the Education Department provides week-long artist-in-residence experiences called **Literacy Through Theater**, Actor-driven **Workshops and Master Classes**, post-performance **Question and Answer Sessions**, teacher training workshops called **Partners in Education**, and a variety of specially-designed outreach programs for high school students, college students, and adults. We also provide **The Student Workshop Series**, a series of performance-based workshops for young theatergoers meant to introduce them to theater. This year, the play in this series is *The Lottery* based on the story by Shirley Jackson.

If you need more information on any of these programs, please call Denise Bruxelles, Education Associate at 212-258-3111 or e-mail her at **dbruxelles@theactingcompany.org**. We wish to be of service to you and your students. Please contact us if there is anything we can do for you.
Enjoy the Show!

Paul Michael Fontana
Director of Education
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Section 2: Who was Alexandre Dumas?

- **Overall Objective:** The students will know the facts of the life and career of Alexandre Dumas and his work.

Only a man who has felt ultimate despair is capable of feeling ultimate bliss.
Alexandre Dumas

Interviewing Alexandre Dumas

Objective:

- The students will learn about Dumas's life
- The students will write interview questions based on Dumas's life.

Alexandre Dumas (1802-1870) was born in Villes-Cotterêts in France. His grandfather was a French nobleman who had married an Afro-Caribbean woman, Marie-Cessette, who had been a black slave in what is now part of Haiti. Dumas's father was a general in Napoleon's army and, after his death when Alexandre was only four, the family lived in poverty.



Dumas did not generally define himself as a black man, and there is not much evidence that he encountered overt racism during his life. However, his works were popular among the 19th-century African-Americans, partly because in *The Count of Monte-Cristo*, the falsely imprisoned Edmond Dantès, may be read as a parable of emancipation. In a shorter work, *Georges* (1843, *George*), Dumas examined the question of race and colonialism. The main character, a half-French mulatto, leaves Mauritius to be educated in France, and returns to avenge himself for the affronts he had suffered as a boy.

As a young man, Dumas went in 1823 to Paris to find work (much like D'Artnagnan in the play). Due to his elegant handwriting, he secured a position with the Duc d'Orléans -- later King Louis Philippe. He also found his place in theater and as a magazine publisher. An illegitimate son called Alexandre Dumas fils ("Dumas the son"), whose mother, Marie-Catherine Labay, was a dressmaker, was born in 1824. Therefore, our Dumas is sometimes referred to as "Dumas pere" which means "Dumas the father."

Historical novels like *The Three Musketeers* brought Dumas a great deal of money – and he produced some 250 books! He worked along side the history teacher Auguste Maquet. Maquet often proposed subjects and wrote first drafts for some of Dumas' most famous novels, including *Les Trois Mousquetaires* (1844, *The Three Musketeers*) and *Le Comte de Monte-Cristo* (1844-45, *The Count of Monte-Cristo*). As a master of written dialogue, Dumas developed

character traits, kept the action moving, and composed the all-important chapter endings - teaser scenes that maintained suspense and readers interest to read more. Because these novels were first published in newspapers in serial form (each chapter was printed in a different edition of the paper), getting the reader hooked and keeping them interested was very important.

Dumas' role in the development of the historical novel owes much to a coincidence. The lifting of press censorship in the 1830s gave rise to a rapid spread of newspapers. Editors began to lure readers by entertaining serial novels. Everybody read them, the aristocracy, and the bourgeoisie, young and old, men and women. Dumas' first true serial novel was *Le Capitaine Paul* (1838, *Captain Paul*), a quick rewrite of a play.

Dumas lived as adventurously as the heroes of his books. He took part in the revolution of July 1830, caught cholera during the epidemic of 1832, and traveled in Italy to recuperate. He married his mistress Ida Ferrier, an actress, in 1840, but he soon separated after having spent her entire dowry.

Although he made an enormous fortune as a writer, he was able to spend more than he earned and was always on the brink of financial ruin. With the money earned from his writings, he built a fantastic Château Monte Cristo, his country house, on the outskirts of Paris. Dumas escaped his creditors and spent two years in exile in Brussels, Belgium. In 1858, he traveled to Russia and in 1860 he went to Italy, where he supported Garibaldi and Italy's struggle for independence (1860-64). He then remained in Naples, in southern Italy, as a keeper of the museums for four years. After his return to France his debts continued to mount.

Called "the king of Paris," Dumas earned fortunes and spent them right away on friends, art, and women. Dumas died of a stroke on December 5, 1870, at Puys, near Dieppe. His son Alexandre Dumas fils, became a writer, dramatist, and moralist, who never accepted his father's lifestyle.

Exercise: Provide each student a copy of the biography of Alexandre Dumas above (a copy is found in the Reproducibles Section at the end of this Resource Guide). After everyone has read it, discuss what aspects of his life the students think contributed to his ultimate career as writer of adventure stories. Ask each student to look, again, at the biography of Dumas. Have them individually devise a list of 8-10 interview questions that they might ask him about his life.

As an extension, have a volunteer play Alexandre Dumas and, with the help of the class, answer some of the questions on the other student's lists.

Exercise: Look up Dumas' grave at Find-a-Grave (www.findagrave.com) and examine the picture of his tomb. Why would Dumas be buried in a place such as this? Note who is buried beside him and the other 72 people buried in this prestigious place.

Lines Written at the Grave of Alexandre Dumas

Objective:

- The students will read a Harlem Renaissance poem and
- The students will relate a poem to the life of its subject.

Facts: Harlem Renaissance poet and visual artist Gwendolyn B. Bennett wrote this poem after visiting the grave of Dumas in 1926. This is before his body was moved into the Pantheon in Paris in 2002.

Exercise: As you and your students read the poem, ask them to think about the things that, according to his biography and his writings, Dumas did during his life. Does she find the grave a fitting place for Dumas? What would Bennett like Dumas to do? How does his current state – in which he rests in a “silence [that] never moves / Nor speaks nor sings” – contrast with his exploits while alive?

Gwendolyn B. Bennett (1902-1981)

Lines Written at the Grave of Alexandre Dumas (1926)

Cemeteries are places for departed souls
 And bones interred,
 Or hearts with shattered loves.
 A woman with lips made warm for laughter
 Would find grey stones and roving spirits
 Too chill for living, moving pulses . . .
 And thou, great spirit, wouldst shiver in thy granite shroud
 Should idle mirth or empty talk
 Disturb thy tranquil sleeping.

A cemetery is a place for shattered loves
 And broken hearts . . .
 Bowed before the crystal chalice of thy soul,
 I find the multi-colored fragrance of thy mind
 Has lost itself in Death's transparency.
 Oh, stir the lucid waters of thy sleep
 And coin for me a tale
 Of happy loves and gems and joyous limbs
 And hearts where love is sweet!

A cemetery is a place for broken hearts
 And silent thought . . .
 And silence never moves,
 Nor speaks nor sings.

Section 3: What to Look for in *The Three Musketeers*

Overall Objective: The students will have an introduction to the world of *The Three Musketeers* by Alexandre Dumas.

Infatuated, half through conceit, half through love of my art, I achieve the impossible working as no one else ever works.

Alexandre Dumas

Brainstorm from the Title: Alexandre Dumas' Novel

This exercise is designed to be used BEFORE seeing the play!

Objective:

- The students will explore the title of Dumas's *The Three Musketeers*

Exercise: Have the students brainstorm a list of the types of characters, situations, emotions, themes, locations, and images they think might be included in a play called *The Three Musketeers*. Write the list on newsprint. Post it before seeing the play. What is a "musketeer" anyway? Are there muskets involved?

Discussion: Judging a Book by its Cover

This exercise is designed to be used BEFORE seeing the play!

Objective:

- The students will discuss their expectations of *The Three Musketeers* from looking at the words and images on the poster for The Acting Company production and on a copy of the novel.
- The students will discuss the choices made by publishers and executives to put the images and words on the cover.

Exercise: Bring in a copy of *The Three Musketeers*. Ask the students to look at the cover of the book. Is there a picture or image? What function do those images have? Note too the colors on the cover. What do the colors mean and why were they chosen? Do these images help sell this edition? What words did the publishers choose to put on the cover? In what font is the title of the novel? What other words or phrases are on the cover? Do these words and phrases help sell this edition? Are you more likely to buy a book or magazine based on images or words? Are there images and words on the back cover? Why did Dumas choose this title? Did he feel the title would help sell copies of the book?

Do the same exercise with the poster or handbill for The Acting Company production which you can get from the theater. You can also show them the image by Scott McKowan on our website: [www. TheActingCompany.org](http://www.TheActingCompany.org).

Post Performance follow up: Ask the students to create a poster or book cover for *The Three Musketeers*. They can cut images out of magazines and newspapers or draw them. What words will they include and why?

Characters in The Three Musketeers

This exercise is designed to be used BEFORE seeing the play!

Objective

- The students will be familiar with the characters in the play.
- The students will make assumptions about characters based on their names.
- The students will become aware of the importance of names in *The Three Musketeers*

Exercise: Write the following list for the class on the board. Discuss what each of the names makes us feel about them. Predict which characters might have the most important roles in the play.

CHARACTERS in The Three Musketeers

D'Artagnan

Athos

Aramis

Porthos

Cardinal Richelieu

Milady de Winter

Comte de Rochefort

King Louis XIII

Queen Anne

Madame Bonacieux

Monsieur Bonacieux

George Villiers, the Duke of Buckingham

John Felton

Captain Treville

Kitty

Planchet

Madame de Coquenard

Choral Reading

Objective:

- The students will read excerpt from *The Three Musketeers*
- The students will create a Poem using the excerpt as inspiration

Exercise: Provide each student with the passage from Chapter LXVI (66 – or, in some editions, Part II, Chapter 26) of *The Three Musketeers*. A sheet with the excerpt is found in the Reproducibles Section of this guide. Ask one student to read the entire passage aloud.

It was now almost midnight. The waning sickle-shaped moon rose ruddy, as though emblooded by the last vestiges of the storm. It arose behind the little town, which showed against its pale light the dark outline of its houses, and the skeleton of its high belfry. On the left was an old abandoned mill from the ruins of which an owl threw out its shrill, periodical, and monotonous cry. On the right and on the left of the road, which the dismal procession pursued, appeared a few low, stunted trees, which looked like deformed dwarfs crouching down to watch men traveling at this sinister hour.

From time to time a broad sheet of lightning opened the horizon in its whole width, darted like a serpent over the black mass of trees, and like a terrible scimitar divided the heavens and the waters into two parts. Not a breath of wind now disturbed the heavy atmosphere. A deathlike silence oppressed all nature.

Point out how Dumas creates a bleak mood in the “heavy atmosphere” of the road at midnight. Discuss the passage’s meaning, use of literary devices (like the translator’s use of alliteration), words and phrases that might be interesting to say aloud (like “stunted trees” with its triple “t,” and “emblooded” with its gushing onomatopoeia), and define odd words like “waning,” “vestiges,” “periodical,” “monotonous,” and “scimitar.” And why does he choose to say “ruddy” instead of simply “red”?

Divide the class into two groups (they can remain in their seats for this exercise) and ask volunteers to be Solo 1, 2, & 3. Then read it using the soloist-group divisions as indicated. Remind them that they have to stress the consonants (especially the “t”), listen to one another, and create a common value for the punctuation.

Solo 1: From Chapter 66 of *The Three Musketeers* by Alexandre Dumas

Solo 2: It was now almost midnight.

Group 1: The waning sickle-shaped moon rose ruddy, as though emblooded by the last vestiges of the storm.

Group 2: It arose behind the little town, which showed against its pale light the dark outline of its houses,

Group 1: and the skeleton of its high belfry.

Group 2: On the left was an old abandoned mill from the ruins of which an owl threw out its

Solo 3: shrill,

Solo 1: periodical,

Solo 2: monotonous

Group 2: cry.

Group 1: On the right and on the left of the road appeared a few low, stunted trees,
Group 2: which looked like deformed dwarfs crouching down to watch men traveling at this sinister hour.
Solo 1: From time to time a broad sheet of
All: lightning
Solo 2: opened the horizon in its whole width,
Solo 3: darted like a serpent over the black mass of trees,
Group 1: and like a terrible scimitar divided the heavens and the waters into two parts.
Group 2: Not a breath of wind now disturbed the heavy atmosphere.
Solo 2: A deathlike silence oppressed all nature.

Using the quote as a base, the students will write a short Poem in free verse. Each Poem must contain words or phrases from the original passage. Remind them of some of the literary devices they have studied (alliteration, repetition, metaphor, etc.) that you want them to use in their Poem.

Your class might enjoy working on breaking down another passage from *The Three Musketeers* or a different novel by Dumas into a Choral Reading.

All generalizations are dangerous, even this one.

Alexandre Dumas

Section 4: The Hero's Journey

Overall Objective: The students will know the archetype of the Hero's Journey

Facts: The **monomyth** (often referred to as the **Hero's Journey**) is the cyclical journey undertaken by the standard mythological hero, as described by Joseph Campbell in his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1948). The core concept of the monomyth is: A hero ventures forth from the world he knows into a region of marvels and wonder. While there, he comes in contact with "fabulous forces" and wins a decisive victory over them. The hero comes back from his mysterious adventure with new powers.

The Archetypal journey has three main parts: Departure, Initiation, and Return. Each of them has several steps:

A. Departure

1. The Call to Adventure

2. Refusal of the Call

In some versions of the story, the Hero refuses the quest at first.

3. Supernatural Aid

Once the hero has committed to the quest his or her guide and magical helper appears.

4. The Crossing of the First Threshold

This is the point where the person actually crosses into the field of adventure, leaving the known limits of his or her world and venturing into an unknown and dangerous realm where the rules and limits are not known.

5. The Belly of the Whale

The belly of the whale represents the final separation from the hero's known world and self. By entering this stage, the person shows their willingness to undergo a metamorphosis, to die to him or herself.

B. Initiation

1. The Road of Trials

The road of trials is a series of tests, tasks, or ordeals that the person must undergo to begin the transformation. Often the person fails one or more of these tests, which often occur in threes.

2. The Meeting with the Goddess

This is a very important step in the process and is often represented by the person finding the other person that he or she loves most completely.

3. Woman as the Temptress

At one level, this step is about those temptations that may lead the hero to abandon or stray from his or her quest. Woman is a metaphor for the physical or material temptations of life, since the hero-knight was often tempted by lust from his spiritual journey.

4. **Atonement with the Father-figure**

In this step the person must confront and be initiated by whatever holds the ultimate power in his or her life. In many myths and stories this is the father, or a father figure (or someone or thing with incredible power) who has life and death power. This is the center point of the journey. All the previous steps have been moving in to this place, all that follow will move out from it.

5. **Apotheosis**

To apotheosize is to become like a god. When someone dies a physical death, or dies to the self to live in spirit, he or she moves to a state of divine knowledge, love, compassion and bliss. This is a god-like state; the person is in heaven and beyond all strife. A more mundane way of looking at this step is that it is a period of rest, peace and fulfillment before the hero begins the return.

6. **The Ultimate Boon**

The ultimate boon is the achievement of the goal of the quest. It is what the person went on the journey to get. All the previous steps serve to prepare and purify the person for this step.

C. **Return**

1. **Refusal of the Return**

So why, when all has been achieved, the ambrosia has been drunk, and we have conversed with the gods, why come back to normal life with all its cares and woes?

2. **The Magic Flight home**

3. **Rescue from Without**

Just as the hero may need guides and assistants to set out on the quest, often times he or she must have powerful guides and rescuers to bring them back to everyday life, especially if the person has been wounded or weakened by the experience.

4. **The Crossing of the Return Threshold**

5. **Master of the Two Worlds**

In myth, this step is usually represented by a hero who has achieved the ability to live in his normal world and the world of his adventure.

6. **Freedom to Live**

Mastery leads to freedom from the fear of death, which in turn is the freedom to live. This is sometimes referred to as living in the moment, neither anticipating the future nor regretting the past.

Facts: The pattern of the monomyth, which Campbell claimed literally every hero myth exhibited to some degree, can be found in contemporary mythology as well. The pattern was followed by George Lucas in the original *Star Wars* trilogy (and followed more loosely in the prequel trilogy.) Other examples of the monomyth cycle are Disney's *The Lion King* in 1994 and the Wachowski brothers' *The Matrix* in the 2000s. The Harry Potter series uses a monomyth structure for each

installment, and many contemporary Hollywood superhero films more or less deliberately conform to the general architecture.

Exercise: Ask the students to apply the monomyth archetype to books, films, comics, video games. Write a brainstorm list of their ideas.

After seeing the play: Revisit the Hero's Journey and see where D'Artagnon's journey parallels it.

Bio Poem

Objective:

- The students will write a bio poem about one of their heroes.

Exercise: Ask the students to choose a hero, living, dead or fictional. They will write a BioPoem about him or her. A **BioPoem** is a structured collection of vivid details about a character's life, personality traits and aspirations: a portrait in words. In creating their BioPoems, the students should avoid generalizations, which tend to be boring and uninteresting, in favour of vivid details which reveal interesting aspects of the person in question. The structure of the BioPoem is outlined below. An example is also provided.

Begin each line with the words in quotes where indicated, and after research supply the details requested in the parentheses.

Line 1: (Character's first name)

Line 2: (Position or job)

Line 3: (List 3 character traits that would describe this person or his personality)

Line 4: "Lover of..." (3 things, people, activities, etc.)

Line 5: "Who felt..." (3 emotions and explanations)

Line 6: "Who feared..." (3 descriptions of things this character may have feared)

Line 7: "Who longed for..." (3 descriptions)

Line 8: "Who would like to have seen..." (1 things the subject wanted to see in his lifetime)

Line 9: (Synonym - one profound word that describes the character)

Line 10: "Resident of..." (description of place, dates, location, etc.)

Line 11: (Character's last name)

Example:

Martin Luther
Minister
Brave, Proud, Strong
Lover of equality, his people, all people
Who felt frustrated, tired, called to the struggle
Who feared injustice, apathy, ignorance
Who longed for freedom, peace, the Mountaintop
Who would like to have seen children walking hand-in-hand
Visionary
Resident of the UNITED States of America
King

Section 5: The Theater

Overall Objective: The students will have a stronger understanding of the art of the Theater.

All human wisdom is summed up in two words; wait and hope.

Alexandre Dumas

Brainstorm: Creating a Theatrical Production

This exercise is designed to be used BEFORE seeing the play!

Objective:

- The students will identify careers in the theater.
- The students will use The Acting Company website as a resource.
- The students will know the collaborative nature of theater.

Exercise: Ask the students to name some of the people who work to put a theatrical production like *The Three Musketeers* on stage. Write their answers on the board. As the brainstorm continues, present information about the various professions. When you attend the performance, see if your students can talk to some of the professionals associated with **The Acting Company**.

Producer or Producing Organization

The producers raise the money needed to produce the play - the money allows the Creative Team to build its vision of the play. Producers oversee all aspects of the production and make sure that the play sticks to their artistic standards. They often put together the package of Script, Director, Designers, and Cast.

The Acting Company is a not-for-profit organization, which means that money to produce the plays comes from fund-raising through grants and donations rather than from investors. [a "Not-for-Profit" organization uses money raised from donors, foundations, grants to do its work. A "Profit Making" or "For-Profit" organization gets money from investors. The investors receive a percentage of the profit made by the work.]

The Playwright

A "wright" is a type of artisan who makes things that people can use. A wheelwright makes wheels. A playwright makes plays. Plays are of use to other artists - Actors, Directors, Designers - who use the script to make their own artistic statement. Alexandre Dumas (who was a playwright as well as a novelist) is the author of the novel *The Three Musketeers* but Linda Alper, Douglas Langworthy and Penny Metropulos are the playwrights who adapted his book for performance.

The Director

After reading the playwright's script, the director decides on an overall vision for the production. The director meets with the Creative Team to assemble a unified look for the sets, costumes, lighting, and other elements. The director oversees the actors in rehearsal, often with the help of the Stage Manager. Casey Biggs is the director of *The Three Musketeers*, and is a well-known actor as well as an alumnus of The Acting Company.

The Actor

The Cast is the group of men, women, and children who perform the play. Many people call all the performers “actors” (instead of “actors” and “actresses”), since this is the professional term that applies to people of both genders. The members of the cast may be seasoned actors or new to the stage. They may have trained at different theater schools that teach acting in various ways. They draw on their own experiences and understanding of life to create believable characters.

Actors usually audition for the parts they play. This means that they had to work on the part and read, sing, or dance for the director and producers before they were given the role. All of the actors had to memorize their lines and attend many rehearsals, including some with costumes and props, before opening night.

The Stage Manager

According to Carissa Dollar's stage management website, “there is no single definition or job description for the tasks performed by the person who accepts the title of Stage Manager for any theatrical production.” However, according to Actor's Equity Association (AEA) *at least* the following duties: organizes all rehearsals, before or after opening; assembles and maintains the Prompt Book; works with the Director and the Creative Team to schedule rehearsal and outside calls; assumes active responsibility for the form and discipline of rehearsal and performance and is the executive instrument in the technical running of each performance; maintains the artistic intentions of the Director and Producer after opening; keeps any records necessary to inform the Producer of attendance, time, welfare benefits, etc.; and Maintains discipline.

The Costume Designer

Costumes in a play must help the actors as they create the characters. The costumes should not restrict the movement of the performers. The costume designer and his staff work within the vision of the director for each character. They choose colors and styles to help the audience better understand the characters. They often do historical or sociological research to make the world of the play come to life. In this production of *The Three Musketeers*, designed by Jared Aswegan, the costumes are from the seventeenth century.

The Set Designer, the Sound Designer, and Lighting Designer

The play needs an environment in which to take place. The set can be a literal world, with many objects (“props”) and lots of furniture. It can be a suggestion of reality with minimal actual components. Music and sound effects can make the

theatrical experience more real (or more fantastical). The lights add to the environment of the play and enhance the mood that the other designers, the actors, the playwright, the composer, and the director have created. For The Acting Company productions, the set must be easy to assemble and disassemble and must be portable. The sound and lighting design must be able to be recreated in each venue.

The Staff and The Crew

The theater staff - house manager, ushers, box office people, and others – assist the audience in many ways and support each performance. In a large-scale performance, backstage the Stage Managers and the running crew run the lighting equipment, move the scenery, and make sure the technical aspects of the performance are perfect. In the office, Marketing people work to make sure people know about the performances and the Development staff makes sure the producers have money to put on the play.

Exercise: Ask the students to see how many of the members of the cast, crew and staff they can find at The Acting Company website:

www.theactingcompany.org.

Feel free to have them correspond with the Company members through e-mail links.

Casting

This exercise is designed to be used AFTER seeing the play!

Objective:

- The students will create a cast list for a movie of *The Three Musketeers*

Exercise: Ask the students, “If you were casting a movie of *The Three Musketeers*, what stars would you get to be in it?” Who would play D’Artagnon? The seductive Milady? The foppish king and his noble queen? While considering the film, where would each of the segments be filmed?

Types of Theater Buildings

This exercise is designed to be used AFTER seeing the play!

Objective:

- The students will be able to identify different types of theaters.
- The students will weigh the benefits of each type of performance space.
- The students will use The Acting Company website as a resource.
- The students will write a report about a theater.

Discussion: In which types of theaters have the students seen plays, concerts, or other live performances? In what type of theater was **The Acting Company’s** production of *The Three Musketeers* performed? What might be the benefits of each type of performance space? What might be the drawbacks of each?

Facts:

Three different types of performance space are most common in the theater:

- **The Proscenium Stage** is the most common. The play is performed within a frame. The frame is called a proscenium arch; the audience looks through this frame as if the performance was a picture.
- **The Thrust Stage** extends into the audience. Spectators sit on three sides.
- **Theater-in-the-Round** has the audience sitting all around the stage. The action takes place on a platform in the center of the room. Another name for a Theater-in-the-Round is an Arena Stage because it is similar to a sports arena.

Exercise: At The Acting Company website, www.theactingcompany.org, have the students find the “Itinerary” page. Many of the theaters that the Company is playing this year are linked to this page. The students can learn about different types of theaters in different parts of the country from these links. Students can write a report about one of the theaters where The Acting Company is performing this year. Their report might include a map of the location, distance from the last theater and to the next theater, and statistics about the theater (size, seating capacity, ticket prices).

Rogues are preferable to imbeciles because they sometimes take a rest.
--

Alexandre Dumas

Still Images

Objectives:

- The students will do a close reading of a passage from *The Three Musketeers*
- The students will create tableaux based on images in the passage

Exercise: Provide each student with the following passage from Chapter 36 of *The Three Musketeers* (a page with the passage can be found in the Reproducibles section of this guide). Ask six students to each take one of the sections of the passage. Introduce the idea of “tableau” to the class. Tableaux are living sculptures or frozen images made up of living actors’ bodies. Tell them that the poses they adopt in their tableau should be both easy to maintain for a few minutes (avoid one foot off the floor, for example) and easy to recreate.

Begin with each reader reciting his part in order so the class can get a sense of the whole passage. Break the class into separate groups by section, so in the end you have six groups. The readers and the others in their group should prepare a still image to illustrate the passage. Some sections may be better served by abstract rather than literal images (like the “fever” in section 2). Allow them about five minutes for this process. Give a warning to the group when they have a minute left and ask the groups to rehearse what they are going to present to the class. Reconvene the class as a whole and place them in a circle with a playing space in the center. Ask the readers to read the passages in order while

the other members of each group present their tableaux. Follow the presentation with a discussion. You may wish to show the whole piece a second time before discussing.

Milady assumed the most agreeable air possible, and conversed with more than her usual brilliancy. At the same time the fever, which for an instant abandoned her, returned to give luster to her eyes, color to her cheeks, and vermilion to her lips. D'Artagnan was again in the presence of the Circe* who had before surrounded him with her enchantments. His love, which he believed to be extinct but which was only asleep, awoke again in his heart. Milady smiled, and d'Artagnan felt that he could damn himself for that smile. There was a moment at which he felt something like remorse.

from *The Three Musketeers* by Alexandre Dumas

1. Milady assumed the most agreeable air possible, and conversed with more than her usual brilliancy.
2. At the same time the fever, which for an instant abandoned her, returned to give luster to her eyes, color to her cheeks, and vermilion to her lips.
3. D'Artagnan was again in the presence of the Circe* who had before surrounded him with her enchantments.
4. His love, which he believed to be extinct but which was only asleep, awoke again in his heart.
5. Milady smiled, and d'Artagnan felt that he could damn himself for that smile.
6. There was a moment at which he felt something like remorse.

*Circe – a character in *The Odyssey*; she was a witch who seduced Ulysses.

What did the groups learn about the passage from the exercise?

Why Theater?

This exercise is designed to be used BEFORE seeing the play with a followup section AFTER the performance.

Objective:

- The students will explore the importance of theater.

Exercise: Give each student a copy of the following quote (found in the Reproducibles section of this guide) from George Cram Cook (1873 –1924), founder of New York's Provincetown Playhouse (artistic home of Eugene O'Neill). Ask each student to identify the two reasons Cook gives for the importance of theater, especially in time of crisis. Are they important and relevant today? Are there other reasons?

Ask the students to write a paragraph or two, based on the passage, in which they explore the importance of Theater (or the Arts in general) in our time. Have volunteers share them with the class. After seeing the performance, ask the students which reason (as a means of escape or as a gateway for imagination) does *The Three Musketeers* provide? Or does it do something else? Can theater provide different things for different people? Can it provide many things for an individual?

“Seven of the Provincetown Players are in the army or working for it in France and more are going. Not lightheartedly now, when civilization itself is threatened with destruction, we who remain have determined to go on next season with the work of our little theatre.

It is often said that theatrical entertainment in general is socially justified in this dark time as a means of **relaxing the strain of reality**, and thus helping to keep us sane. This may be true, but if more were not true - if we felt no deeper value in dramatic art than entertainment, we would hardly have the heart for it now. One faculty, we know, is going to be of vast importance to the half-destroyed world - indispensable for its rebuilding - the faculty of creative imagination. That spark of it, which has given this group of ours such life and meaning as we have, is not so insignificant that we should now let it die. The social justification, which we feel to be valid now for makers and players of plays, is that they shall help **keep alive in the world the light of imagination**. Without it, the wreck of the world that was cannot be cleared away and the new world shaped.”

George Cram Cook, founder of New York’s Provincetown Playhouse, 1918

Discussion: How is seeing theater different from watching TV or seeing a movie (either at home or in the theater)?

Theater Etiquette

This exercise is designed to be used BEFORE seeing the play!

Objective:

- The students will know standard rules of behavior in the theater.

To make the theater-going experience more enjoyable for everyone, a code of behavior has been established. When attending theatrical performances, remember these simple rules of conduct:

- Be on time for the performance.
- Eat and drink only in the theater lobby.
- Turn off all cellular phones and pagers.
- Talk before and after the performance or during the intermissions only. Remember that the people near you and on stage can hear you.

- Appropriate responses to the performances, such as laughing and applauding, are appreciated.
- Act with maturity during romantic, violent, and other challenging scenes.
- Keep your feet off chairs around you.
- Read your program before or after, not during, the play.
- Personal hygiene (e.g., combing hair, applying make-up, etc.) should be attended to in the restrooms.
- Once you are seated and the play has begun, stay in your seat. If you see empty seats ahead of you, ask the usher during the intermission if you can move to them.
- Always stay until after the curtain call. After the final curtain, relax and take your time leaving.
- Open your eyes, ears, and mind to the entire theatrical experience!

Prepare for Q & A Session

This exercise is designed to be used **BEFORE** seeing the play!

Objective:

- The students will create questions for the post-performance Q & A session

Exercise: To make the post-performance Question and Answer session more beneficial to everyone, the students might create a few questions before the performance. Ask the students to think what questions they might want to ask the actors in the play? Here are some starter questions:

Are there questions about the **theater** as an art form? Does it require training? Where did the actors train? Can a person make a living in the theater? What careers are there in the theater? Are any of the students aspiring actors? Are they seeking advice?

Are there questions about **traveling** the country? Have the actors seen a lot of the United States? What is the bus like? How many hours do they spend on the bus? Does everybody get along?

What about life in **New York City**? How long have the actors lived there? And where are they from originally? (Have any of the students ever been in NYC?)

What about ***The Three Musketeers***, the play? How has it been received in places across the country? What is the best part about working on this play? What have been its drawbacks? Is fun working on the set with all its trap doors and trick? What do the actors think the themes of the play are? How is working

on an original play different from a play by Shakespeare (which is a lot of what The Acting Company does)?

NOTE: If there are questions that your students have after the company departs, feel free to contact the Education Department of The Acting Company, and we will get an answer for you!

Oh! The good times when we were so unhappy.

Alexandre Dumas

Section 6: What to Do After You See This Play

Please encourage your students to reflect on the play in some of the following ways. We would love to have copies of some of the writings or artwork your students create: **The Acting Company, Box 898, New York, NY 10108 or fax 212-258-3299**. We have also included in the appendix short pre- and post-performance questionnaires, and would be interested in gathering data about the play.

Write

- Write a play or scene in response to the play.
- Improvise a scene with a partner and then write it down.
- Write a monologue for one of the characters in *The Three Musketeers*
- Write a review of our production.
- Write a theatrical adaptation of another piece of literature, perhaps a Poem.

Draw

- Draw the world of one or more of the characters.
- Draw images from the production.
- Draw a poster for our production of *The Three Musketeers*.
- Create a collage of images from magazines in response to the play.

Create a Performance

Get a few copies of Dumas' novel *The Three Musketeers* and distribute them to small groups of students. Have each group write a short play based on part of the story. The plays can be an adaptation of the source material, a reflection on the themes in the story, or whatever the students devise. Ask them to present their work to the other groups. Send us copies of the plays if you wish.

View one of the Film Versions of the Story

Try the big-budget 1993 version with Chris O'Donnell as D'Artagnan, Charlie Sheen (of *Two and a Half Men*), Kiefer Sutherland (of *24*) and Oliver Platt as the musketeers and Rebecca De Mornay as Milady. Most fans love the 1973 version (heavy on swash and buckle) with Faye Dunaway as Milady and Charlton Heston (?) as Richelieu. There's also the 1948 Gene Kelly / Lana Turner version with Vincent Price as "Prime Minister Richelieu" (so as not to offend religious people) and a young Angela Lansbury as the Queen.

The entire novel is available on-line at the Sparknotes website:

<http://pd.sparknotes.com/lit/3musk/>

We Want to Hear from YOU and your STUDENTS!

By Mail

The Acting Company
PO Box 898
New York NY 10108
Telephone: 212-258-3111
Fax: 212-258-3299

By E-Mail

Paul Fontana, Director of Education
PFontana@ TheActingCompany.org

Denise Bruxelles, Education Associate
DBruelles@ TheActingCompany.org

Education@TheActingCompany

On the Internet

www.TheActingCompany.org

Internships

Please submit a letter of interest and your resume along with two references to the Intern Coordinator Douglas Mercer at the address above. You can call or check the website for more information.

Questionnaires and FREE Posters!

You will find a Pre-Performance and a Post-Performance Questionnaires on the last pages of this guide. Please have your students fill out the Pre-Performance Survey before you begin working on exercises from this guide. Ask them to fill out the Post-Performance Survey after seeing *The Three Musketeers*. Send them to us at the above address and we will send you a POSTER from one of The Acting Company's productions as a "Thank You."

Section 7: The Acting Company

The Acting Company, America's only nationally-touring classical repertory theater, was founded in 1972 by current Producing Director Margot Harley and the late John Houseman with a unique mission:

- By touring smaller cities, towns and rural communities of America, the Company reaches thousands of people who have few opportunities to experience live professional theater.
- By presenting superior productions of classic and contemporary plays, the Company builds a discerning national audience for theater, helping preserve and extend our cultural heritage.
- By providing continuing opportunities for gifted and highly-trained young actors to practice their craft in a rich repertoire for diverse audiences, the Company nurtures the growth and development of generations of theater artists.
- By commissioning and premiering important new works by America's foremost playwrights, the Company fosters a theater tradition in which story-telling, language and the presence of the actor are primary.
- By making the language of the theater accessible in performance, special classes and other educational outreach activities, the Company inspires students of all ages and helps them excel in every field of study.

The Acting Company has been fulfilling this singular mission since it was formed out of the first graduating class of the Juilliard School's Drama Division in 1972. Since then, it has traveled over 500,000 miles through 48 states and nine other countries, performing a repertoire of 77 plays for more than 2 million people.

2003 TONY Honor for Excellence in the Theater

In the professional theater, the highest honor one can achieve is to be recognized by the American Theatre Wing with an Antoinette Perry Award, called the "Tony"®. This year, The Acting Company was presented with a special Tony Honor celebrating our 30 years touring America with classical plays and newly commissioned works. Thank you for celebrating with us! To learn more about the Tony Awards, go to the Tony website: www.tonys.org.

Trace Our Tour

If the students want to follow the tour as it progresses across the United States, they can read the Tour Journal (on our website www.theactingcompany.org) and see pictures of the places we visit. You can check in with us every day, check the itinerary, and see where we are on the map.

It is almost as difficult to keep a first class person in a fourth class job, as it is to keep a fourth class person in a first class job.

Alexandre Dumas

Section 8: Cast List and Information

THE ACTING COMPANY

In

THE THREE MUSKETEERS

Written by Alexandre Dumas

Adapted by

Linda Alper, Douglas Langworthy, and Penny Metropulos

Directed by Casey Biggs

Set Design, Efren Delgadillo Jr.

Costume Design, Jared Aswegan

Lighting Design, Michael Chybowski

Music, Ray Leslee

Fight Direction, Felix Ivanov

CAST

Captain Treville/Bonacieux	Keith Eric Chappelle
Athos.....	Timothy Carter
Aramis.....	David Foubert
Porthos.....	Cedric Hayman
D'Artagnan.....	Chad Hoepner
Rocheport.....	Spencer Aste
Jussac/Buckingham.....	William Brock
Planchet.....	Matt Steiner
Constance.....	Megan McQuillan
King/Felton.....	Henry Vick
Queen/Abbess.....	Deb Heinig
Cardinal Richelieu/Coquenard.....	Matt Bradford Sullivan
D'Astree/Kitty.....	Carine Montbertrand
Milady de Winter.....	Kaitlin O'Neal

Appendix: Reproducibles

For use with **Interviewing Alexandre Dumas**, p. 5

Alexandre Dumas (1802-1870) was born in Villes-Cotterêts in France. His grandfather was a French nobleman who had married an Afro-Caribbean woman, Marie-Cessette, who had been a black slave in what is now part of Haiti. Dumas's father was a general in Napoleon's army and, after his death when Alexandre was only four, the family lived in poverty.

Dumas did not generally define himself as a black man, and there is not much evidence that he encountered overt racism during his life. However, his works were popular among the 19th-century African-Americans, partly because in *The Count of Monte-Cristo*, the falsely imprisoned Edmond Dantès, may be read as a parable of emancipation. In a shorter work, *Georges* (1843, *George*), Dumas examined the question of race and colonialism. The main character, a half-French mulatto, leaves Mauritius to be educated in France, and returns to avenge himself for the affronts he had suffered as a boy.

As a young man, Dumas went in 1823 to Paris to find work (much like D'Artnagnan in the play). Due to his elegant handwriting he secured a position with the Duc d'Orléans -- later King Louis Philippe. He also found his place in theater and as a magazine publisher. An illegitimate son called Alexandre Dumas fils ("Dumas the son"), whose mother, Marie-Catherine Labay, was a dressmaker, was born in 1824. Therefore, our Dumas is sometimes referred to as "Dumas pere" which means "Dumas the father."

Historical novels like *The Three Musketeers* brought Dumas a great deal of money – and he produced some 250 books! He worked along side the history teacher Auguste Maquet. Maquet often proposed subjects and wrote first drafts for some of Dumas' most famous novels, including *Les Trois Mousquetaires* (1844, *The Three Musketeers*) and *Le Comte de Monte-Cristo* (1844-45, *The Count of Monte-Cristo*). As a master of written dialogue, Dumas developed character traits, kept the action moving, and composed the all-important chapter endings - teaser scenes that maintained suspense and readers interest to read more. Because these novels were first published in newspapers in serial form (each chapter was printed in a different edition of the paper), getting the reader hooked and keeping them interested was very important.

Dumas' role in the development of the historical novel owes much to a coincidence. The lifting of press censorship in the 1830s gave rise to a rapid spread of newspapers. Editors began to lure readers by entertaining serial novels. Everybody read them, the aristocracy, and the bourgeoisie, young and old, men and women. Dumas' first true serial novel was *Le Capitaine Paul* (1838, *Captain Paul*), a quick rewrite of a play.

Dumas lived as adventurously as the heroes of his books. He took part in the

revolution of July 1830, caught cholera during the epidemic of 1832, and traveled in Italy to recuperate. He married his mistress Ida Ferrier, an actress, in 1840, but he soon separated after having spent her entire dowry.

Although he made an enormous fortune as a writer, he was able to spend more than he earned and was always on the brink of financial ruin. With the money earned from his writings, he built a fantastic Château Monte Cristo, his country house, on the outskirts of Paris. Dumas escaped his creditors and spent two years in exile in Brussels, Belgium. In 1858, he traveled to Russia and in 1860 he went to Italy, where he supported Garibaldi and Italy's struggle for independence (1860-64). He then remained in Naples, in southern Italy, as a keeper of the museums for four years. After his return to France his debts continued to mount.

Called "the king of Paris," Dumas earned fortunes and spent them right away on friends, art, and women. Dumas died of a stroke on December 5, 1870, at Puys, near Dieppe. His son Alexandre Dumas fils, became a writer, dramatist, and moralist, who never accepted his father's lifestyle.

For use with **Choral Reading**, pp. 7-9

It was now almost midnight. The waning sickle-shaped moon rose ruddy, as though emblooded by the last vestiges of the storm. It arose behind the little town, which showed against its pale light the dark outline of its houses, and the skeleton of its high belfry. On the left was an old abandoned mill from the ruins of which an owl threw out its shrill, periodical, and monotonous cry. On the right and on the left of the road, which the dismal procession pursued, appeared a few low, stunted trees, which looked like deformed dwarfs crouching down to watch men traveling at this sinister hour.

From time to time a broad sheet of lightning opened the horizon in its whole width, darted like a serpent over the black mass of trees, and like a terrible scimitar divided the heavens and the waters into two parts. Not a breath of wind now disturbed the heavy atmosphere. A deathlike silence oppressed all nature.

Solo 1: From Chapter 66 of *The Three Musketeers* by Alexandre Dumas

Solo 2: It was now almost midnight.

Group 1: The waning sickle-shaped moon rose ruddy, as though emblooded by the last vestiges of the storm.

Group 2: It arose behind the little town, which showed against its pale light the dark outline of its houses,

Group 1: and the skeleton of its high belfry.

Group 2: On the left was an old abandoned mill from the ruins of which an owl threw out its

Solo 3: shrill,

Solo 1: periodical,

Solo 2: monotonous

Group 2: cry.

Group 1: On the right and on the left of the road appeared a few low, stunted trees,

Group 2: which looked like deformed dwarfs crouching down to watch men traveling at this sinister hour.

Solo 1: From time to time a broad sheet of

All: lightning

Solo 2: opened the horizon in its whole width,

Solo 3: darted like a serpent over the black mass of trees,

Group 1: and like a terrible scimitar divided the heavens and the waters into two parts.

Group 2: Not a breath of wind now disturbed the heavy atmosphere.

Solo 2: A deathlike silence oppressed all nature.

CHARACTERS in *The Three Musketeers*

D'Artagnan

Athos

Aramis

Porthos

Cardinal Richelieu

Lady de Winter

Comte de Rochefort

King Louis XIII

Queen Anne

Madame Bonacieux

Monsieur Bonacieux

George Villiers, the Duke of Buckingham

John Felton

Monsieur de Treville

Kitty

Planchet

Madame de Coquenard

For use with **Still Images**, pp. 16-17

Milady assumed the most agreeable air possible, and conversed with more than her usual brilliancy. At the same time the fever, which for an instant abandoned her, returned to give luster to her eyes, color to her cheeks, and vermilion to her lips. D'Artagnan was again in the presence of the Circe* who had before surrounded him with her enchantments. His love, which he believed to be extinct but which was only asleep, awoke again in his heart. Milady smiled, and d'Artagnan felt that he could damn himself for that smile. There was a moment at which he felt something like remorse.

from *The Three Musketeers* by Alexandre Dumas

1. Milady assumed the most agreeable air possible, and conversed with more than her usual brilliancy.
2. At the same time the fever, which for an instant abandoned her, returned to give luster to her eyes, color to her cheeks, and vermilion to her lips.
3. D'Artagnan was again in the presence of the Circe* who had before surrounded him with her enchantments.
4. His love, which he believed to be extinct but which was only asleep, awoke again in his heart.
5. Milady smiled, and d'Artagnan felt that he could damn himself for that smile.
6. There was a moment at which he felt something like remorse.

*Circe – a character in *The Odyssey*, she was a witch who seduced Ulysses.

For use with **BioPoem**, pp. 16-17

A **BioPoem** is a structured collection of vivid details about a character's life, personality traits and aspirations: a portrait in words. In creating your BioPoem, try to avoid generalizations, which tend to be boring and uninteresting, in favour of vivid details which reveal interesting aspects of your subject. The structure of the BioPoem you are going to use is outlined below. An example is also provided.

Begin each line with the words in quotes where indicated, and after research supply the details requested in the parentheses.

Line 1: (Character's first name)

Line 2: (Position or job)

Line 3: (List 3 character traits that would describe this person or his personality)

Line 4: "Lover of..." (3 things, people, activities, etc.)

Line 5: "Who felt..." (3 emotions and explanations)

Line 6: "Who feared..." (3 descriptions of things this character may have feared)

Line 7: "Who longed for..." (3 descriptions)

Line 8: "Who would like to have seen..." (1 things the subject wanted to see in his lifetime)

Line 9: (Synonym - one profound word that describes the character)

Line 10: "Resident of..." (description of place, dates, location, etc.)

Line 11: (Character's last name)

For use with **Why Theater?**, pp. 17-18

“Seven of the Provincetown Players are in the army or working for it in France and more are going. Not lightheartedly now, when civilization itself is threatened with destruction, we who remain have determined to go on next season with the work of our little theatre.

It is often said that theatrical entertainment in general is socially justified in this dark time as a means of **relaxing the strain of reality**, and thus helping to keep us sane. This may be true, but if more were not true - if we felt no deeper value in dramatic art than entertainment, we would hardly have the heart for it now. One faculty, we know, is going to be of vast importance to the half-destroyed world - indispensable for its rebuilding - the faculty of creative imagination. That spark of it, which has given this group of ours such life and meaning as we have, is not so insignificant that we should now let it die. The social justification, which we feel to be valid now for makers and players of plays, is that they shall help **keep alive in the world the light of imagination**. Without it, the wreck of the world that was cannot be cleared away and the new world shaped.”

George Cram Cook, founder of New York’s Provincetown Playhouse, 1918

For use with **Theater Etiquette**, pp. 17-18

Theater Etiquette

To make the theater-going experience more enjoyable for everyone, a code of behavior has been established. When attending theatrical performances, remember these simple rules of conduct:

- Be on time for the performance.
- Eat and drink only in the theater lobby.
- Turn off all cellular phones and pagers.
- Talk before and after the performance or during the intermissions only. Remember that the people near you and on stage can hear you.
- Appropriate responses to the performances, such as laughing and applauding, are appreciated.
- Act with maturity during romantic, violent, and other challenging scenes.
- Keep your feet off chairs around you.
- Read your program before or after, not during, the play.
- Personal hygiene (e.g., combing hair, applying make-up, etc.) should be attended to in the restrooms.
- Once you are seated and the play has begun, stay in your seat. If you see empty seats ahead of you, ask the usher during the intermission if you can move to them.
- Always stay until after the curtain call. After the final curtain, relax and take your time leaving.
- Open your eyes, ears, and mind to the entire theatrical experience!

Pre-Performance Questionnaire

Please rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 7. "1" represents something with which you strongly disagree "7" represents something with which you strongly agree. Circle the number that best matches your feelings.

I feel excited about seeing *The Three Musketeers*.

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

I want to learn more about Theater.

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

I have been to see plays before.

None

Some

Many

1

2

3

4

5

What are some plays you have seen?

Theater is fun!

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

Seeing a play can teach me about life.

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

Theater is more real than television and movies.

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

Comments:

Student Initials:

Post-Performance Questionnaire

After seeing *The Three Musketeers*, please rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5. "1" represents something with which you strongly disagree "5" represents something with which you strongly agree. Circle the number that best matches your feelings.

I enjoyed seeing *The Three Musketeers*

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

I want to learn more about Theater.

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

The Three Musketeers was better than other plays I have seen before.

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

**I have
never
seen a
play.**

I want to see more theater.

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

Seeing *The Three Musketeers* taught me something about life.

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

Some Lessons in *The Three Musketeers* are:

Theater is more real than television and movies.

Disagree

Agree

1

2

3

4

5

Comments:

Student Initials: