

THEATRE GARGANTUA *Avaricious* STUDY GUIDE

theatre
GARGANTUA

AVARICIOUS

November 4 – 21, 2015

Study Guide

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A. Notes for Teachers

Getting to the Show:

Avaricious will be performed at:
THEATRE PASSE MURAILLE
16 RYERSON AVENUE
TORONTO, ON



Using the TTC:

From **Queen or Osgoode** Subway Station...

- Take the 501 Streetcar westbound along Queen Street to Augusta Avenue.
- Walk west along Queen Street to Ryerson Avenue.
- Theatre Passe Muraille is one block north on Ryerson Avenue on the west side.

From **Bathurst** Subway Station...

- Take the 511 Streetcar southbound on Bathurst Street to Queen Street.
- Walk east along Queen Street to Ryerson Avenue.
- Theatre Passe Muraille is one block north on Ryerson Avenue on the west side.

Before You Arrive:

Thank you for bringing your students to the world premiere of Theatre Gargantua's *Avaricious*. This study guide is designed to help engage your class with the company and its production.

CONTACT DETAILS

Please send **Yolanda Ferrato (Producer)** your cell phone number before the event at yolanda@theatregargantua.ca. Contact Yolanda on her cell phone at **647 999 4207** should you have any difficulty finding the theatre or if your group is running late due to unforeseen traffic delays. Yolanda will be your contact person at the theatre and therefore will not be at the Theatre Gargantua office.

In order to accommodate teachers, students and our performers, we start all performances on time. Please do your best to **arrive at the theatre 20 minutes early**.

Theatre Etiquette:

While some of your students may be seasoned theatregoers, others may be new to the experience. It is important to ensure that all students are familiar with general theatre etiquette. Here are a few guidelines to review before arriving at the theatre.

Do not bring food, drinks, candy, or gum into the theatre. If you anticipate the need to take any medication such as cough drops or throat lozenges, please unwrap them and keep them nearby before the performance begins.

Turn off all cell phones or other electronic devices before the performance begins. These devices not only distract your fellow audience members and the actors on stage, but can also interfere with our sound and communication systems. A good rule to follow is that if you can see the light from your device, so can everyone else!

Photography, audio, and video recording during the performance are prohibited by the Canadian Theatre Agreement, and can endanger our performers.

If you need to leave the theatre at any moment during the show, please do so quietly. However, you may not be permitted back into the audience once the performance has begun. This is at the discretion of the front of house manager who will determine if there is an appropriate moment to re-enter. **Please use the washrooms at least five minutes prior to the start of show.**

Theatre is a two-way exchange between actors and audience. Actors are thrilled when the audience is engaged in and responsive to their work. By being attentive, responding and clapping, you are contributing to their performance. However, please be considerate by remembering that talking, whispering and moving around is distracting for the actors and disruptive for other audience members. All that's being asked is a shared respect for everyone in the audience and on the stage.

Every performance is followed by a brief Q&A. Encourage your class to think of some questions in advance to ask the cast after the show. The performers are *always* interested to hear what the audience has to say.

If you or any of your students want to share feedback about the performance or learn more about Theatre Gargantua, you are more than welcome to e-mail the company at info@theatregargantua.ca or drop us a line at 416 260 4660. We'd love to hear from you.

B. Production Credits

Theatre Gargantua Presents

The World Premiere of

AVARICIOUS

Conceived and Directed by **Jacque PA Thomas**

Written by **Michael Spence and the ensemble with contributions by Kat Sandler**

Ensemble.....**Patrick Howarth**

Pam Patel

Michelle Polak

Michael Spence

Lighting and Projection Design.....**Laird Macdonald**

Set Design.....**Michael Spence**

Costume Design.....**Melanie McNeill**

Sound Design**John Gzowski**

Stage Manager.....**Erika Morey**

Production Manager.....**Terence Duraisami**

Producer.....**Yolanda Ferrato**

Producing Assistant**Gloria Mok**

Artistic Interns.....**Šimon Mizera & Madeleine Brown**

C. About Theatre Gargantua

Theatre Gargantua is one of Canada's leading multi-disciplinary theatre companies. Since 1992 we have been committed to the development of original, groundbreaking Canadian physical theatre. Our productions explore compelling subjects and use daring physicality, striking designs, rich vocal layers and an innovative use of emerging technologies. We begin with an inspired idea and explore it with our talented ensemble of actors, directors, writers and designers through a series of workshops and public presentations over the course of a two-year cycle; the work is then ready for its world premiere. The company is committed to the production of original work that is beautiful to look at, listen to, experience and remember. Theatre Gargantua has garnered over 30 awards, nominations, and recognitions for outstanding script, direction, sound design, set design and lighting design.



Jacquie P.A. Thomas, Artistic Director

In addition to her role as founder and Artistic Director of Theatre Gargantua, Jacquie has served Gargantua as an actor, director, producer, composer, choreographer, dramaturge and writer, earning 10 Dora¹ nominations for her artistic contributions to the company. Other selected credits include the Ossetynski Actors Lab in Los Angeles, Roy Hart Theatre in France, the National Theatre of Greece and the Gardzienice Theatre Association of Poland. Jacquie was awarded a Harold Award for contributions to Toronto's independent theatre community, and the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for contributions to Canadian culture and community.

Michael Spence, Associate Artistic Director

Michael Spence is Associate Artistic Director and an award-winning, long-standing member of Theatre Gargantua's creative team. He has been involved in all of Gargantua's productions, appearing in all major Cycles and writing or designing for many of the company's noted works. His script for *The Exit Room* was nominated for the Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding New Play and he won the award twice for Outstanding Set Design. He has received 11 Dora nominations for his work with the company. Michael is a recipient of the Harold Award, a distinguished honour for members of the Toronto independent theatre community. He is also an accomplished musician and singer-songwriter. He directed the first SideStream Cycle, *Shrapnel*, which represented his directorial debut with the company.



¹Dora Awards: The Dora Mavor Moore Awards honour the creators of over 200 theatre, dance and opera productions annually in six major categories.

D. Creating *Avaricious*

How We Create:

Theatre Gargantua, in collaboration with exciting groups of artists from a wide variety of disciplines, develops its work in a unique two-year cycle. We begin with an inspired concept and distil that idea into a richly layered work through exploratory workshops. Each cycle involves annual spring, summer and fall phases, with planning and preparation taking place between each phase. The first year of a cycle's development ends with a limited-run public presentation allowing the audience a rare glimpse into the process of bringing a new Canadian work to life. Ten such cycles have been created to date: *The Trials - Fortune's Desire* (1992-1994), *Raging Dreams - into the visceral* (1995-1996), *love not love* (1997-1998), *The Exit Room* (1999-2000), *Phantom Limb* (2000-2001), *(nod)* (2003-2004), *e-DENTITY* (2005-2006), *FIBBER* (2007-2008), *IMPRINTS* (2010-2011) and most recently *The Sacrifice Zone* (2012-2013).

To create *Avaricious*, each member thoroughly researched issues related to the changing Canadian and global economy, wealth distribution, and related environmental change. During development, the artists created **written text** (i.e. **scenes, monologues, poems**), **vocal compositions**, and a **movement vocabulary** that became the starting point for the show's **choreography**.

Genre:

Theatre Gargantua's work is most often described as **physical** and **multidisciplinary**. But how do these words describe what you are going to see?

Physical or **movement theatre** uses the actors' bodies to tell the story just as much, or more, than the words they speak. As a result not all the movement is naturalistic.

Multidisciplinary theatre incorporates two or more art forms. Theatre Gargantua's productions fuse together elements such as text, music, movement and media into engaging and thought provoking theatre.

Themes of *Avaricious*:

avarice *n* extreme greed for wealth or material gain

The main theme of *Avaricious* is **extreme greed** to the degree that it causes disparity in society and changes to their environment. The show's creative team began their creation process by exploring the ancient instinct to **plan and store for the future** in order to protect the individual, their family and community from danger. The team considered greed and generosity's roles in society. Can greed be a good thing? Can working towards accumulating wealth and material protect the ones we love? Or, is it generosity that makes our society a more liveable place?

From there, they researched individual and corporate greed, consumer consumption, the use of the earth's resources, the consumer lifestyle's impact on the environment and how governments, laws and lobbyists affect **how wealth is distributed** through taxes and public services.

From greed and consumption, they delved further into the idea of **economic disparity** and how the richest 1% of the world's population own as much as half of global wealth. Why is this the case? How long can we sustain a society where half the world is built on a cycle of buying, consuming and throwing away while the other half struggles to afford food, clothes and shelter? How does this affect the earth?

Synopsis:

Avaricious takes place as the threat of an impending flood tests the limits of a modern society.

Billy Atlas, a wealthy opportunist, has built a giant home on stilts to protect himself and his mother, **Esme**, from the flood. From here he runs a business empire with his assistant **Rupa**. Profiting from the predicted flood, they sell **GoBags**, kits with emergency survival gear and food. However, most of all Billy desires seeds—their society's soon-to-be “new currency”—in order to control the food market after the flood. There's just one problem: the seeds they have won't grow.

Rupa recruits **Jimmy**, a man who successfully grows corn under an overpass, to help them develop their crop. Meanwhile, **Adelouise**, a former political studies student, petitions to have Billy return everything he has taken from their society and allow the population to wait out the flood in his home. After waiting below his house's retractable ladder for 13 days, Jimmy accidentally lets her in.

What happens next is a comedy of mistaken identities, and unexpected changes of heart as the characters are forced to re-evaluate their actions and attitudes. In addition to the four principal characters, the actors play the **Evensies**, a group of mischievous characters who are reminiscent of the chorus in Greek drama that appear throughout the play to comment on the main action.

E. Spotlight on the Creative Team

In the Ensemble with Michelle Polak:

Q: Michelle, from the actor's perspective, how is rehearsing with Theatre Gargantua different from other theatre companies?

A: When working with Theatre Gargantua you are included in the creative experience and process. So there is an expectation that you are able to generate physical as well as vocal compositions and even contribute to the writing. You are a collaborator right from the get-go. For instance a word that we were given off the top of this piece was "gluttony" and we had a day when we went off to the Toronto Reference Library to follow our personal curiosity inspired by that. In normal theatre traditions you are given a script and you are doing that role. In this case I went off and started researching survival methods because I'm concerned with environmental collapse. There's a whole bunch of stuff from those foundational pieces that made it into the show.

What were some of the ideas you researched and discussed for the piece?

I researched a lot of survival methods and different kinds of methodology. For instance, surviving tsunami versus surviving drought versus surviving the urban city life. I watched documentaries on the disparity between the 1% and the 99%. I was looking at graphs and trying to break into the economic mind. In one of the workshops, we looked at a book by a very famous French economist [*Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (2013) by Thomas Piketty] that basically proved that the gap cannot close if we continue on the course that we're on.

Did any of the ideas or research surprise you or challenge you?

I'm surprised that a lot of the people in my circles know about this and yet there's still such inertia in terms of action.

How do rehearsals compare for the world premiere of *Avaricious* versus the workshops prior?

I think that when we get to the final phase of a cycle there is a bit more pressure because this is the final instalment. You want to bring the best of the best ideas, the most beautiful compositions, the most of your stamina and endurance to be able to see the vision through to the end. You know that once we complete the piece mid-November that's *Avaricious* this time around.

What do you hope people will ask or experience through the play?

I hope that people will ask, "How does that relate to me?" and in the asking of that question, "What actions can I take?" and "What is my part in it?" In the case of a lot of our student audiences, they are the stewards of the earth and they're going to inherit this piece of work. I hope they consider, "How do we go from here?"

Michael Spence on Set Design:

What is the design composed of?

There are two elements in this design: structural cardboard and big exercise balls. The balls range in diameter from about two feet to six feet. And there are about 50 cardboard boxes creating a cyclorama across the back of the stage with one tower that will reach all the way to the balcony.

Is there any reason for the tower and cardboard boxes?



Avaricious' maquette (a scaled model of the theatre and set)



The tower itself was inspired by a number of things. When we were doing our initial workshop last spring we looked at a lot of graphs of wealth distribution and they all had this ridiculous peak indicating the top one percent's worth. So that was one way of portraying the shape of those distorted graphs. And then there was an actual tower, Antillia, built in Mumbai by a billionaire in the middle of a slum, and it is a huge display of disproportionate wealth. Towers are culturally ubiquitous. There's always something important in the center of a community that's really tall.

The cardboard has a cardboard-city feel to it. Also, they could hold contents...or not. They imply the possibility of something within; they could be empty or they could be full of goods. There are a lot of allusions to come from cardboard. I like the material itself as a building material; it's got texture, it has an interior, people will understand it because everyone has experience with cardboard and know that a single piece of cardboard has corrugation inside. That's the kind of stuff that I dig.

Why did you choose exercise balls?

Again, the balls came from graphs. We were looking at images of different ways of representing economic markets and wealth distribution and the circles came from those graphs. There's the idea of balloons popping, like a bubble of inflated markets. I like those kinds of symbols and I just loved the ball shapes with the cardboard. They just look great. They're kind of beautiful, they can be configured to look like a constellation, like a galaxy, like atoms. They also have a sense of volume, empty volumes. So there's a number of signifiers that appeal to me. They're a whole lot of fun. I like to give the actors stuff to do, stuff to play with. The cardboard boxes are built to be structural so the actors can build with and climb on them. The balls add a really exciting physical dimension.



Melanie McNeil on Costume Design:

What images inspired your costume designs?

When researching images for a show, I usually end up in pretty interesting internet wormholes. While reading the script I keep a list of key words that I want to use in my searches and go from there. I start with plain old Google, but recently began using Pinterest as a resource as well. I have a Pinterest board that I use year-round to save any images I find that have interesting details that I may want to use for future productions.

How do you approach designing costumes for non-traditional characters like the Evensies? Aren't the possibilities endless?

Creating costumes for non-traditional characters isn't all that much different from creating for more traditional ones—other than being more fun. The costume still needs to reflect who that character is, so the base layer of work is very much the same. But, once you have that core kernel of information the playing around can begin. It's very important to factor in any technical aspects of what the character/performer needs to do and also what the rules of the world being created are. The freedom of creating this sort of costume during the rehearsal process—as opposed to the more traditional way of figuring everything out design-wise before rehearsal even starts—is a huge gift. Collaborating with the performers from the start makes the ideas that much more exciting and the end product feel that much more right.



Costume design & rendering by Melanie McNeill

What do you have to consider when designing costumes for physical and multidisciplinary theatre?

The technical needs of designing for physical and multidisciplinary theatre are very similar to dance or musical theatre. In a nutshell, the costumes need to be durable and have the ability to move. There are all sorts of secret tricks of the trade a costume designer uses to make off the rack delicate clothing last and flexible. Plus the addition of spandex to most clothes these days is a huge help. The right kind of footwear is very, very important for this form of theatre. The shoes need to be secure and make the actor feel grounded and stable.

F. Discussion Questions and Topics

Leading Questions About Greed:

- Can greed be a good thing?
- Can anyone become rich through hard work and enterprise?
- What are famous historical incidents of greed or generosity?
- What kinds of things do individuals, companies and nations hoard? Why?
- What are the social implications of this behaviour?
- What might be some of the values that underlie this behaviour?
- Is a fair society one in which wealth is distributed evenly or where unlimited capital can be earned?
- Do you think our society rewards greed more than generosity?
- In what ways are they rewarded?
- Why is it hard to differentiate what we need from what we want?
- Why is money and material wealth important?
- What are your personal views on greed?
- How do these views impact how we live our lives?
- Is it important to take responsibility for the choices we make? Why?

Provocative Statements:

The following statements can be used as a starting point for short essays, or group discussion. Encourage students to address the statements from multiple perspectives, providing arguments for each.

- We need greed. It is the building block of society.
- Being generous can get you in trouble.
- Greed will destroy civilization.

Quotes to Inspire Discussion:

He who is not contented with what he has, would not be contented with what he would like to have. – Socrates

From the first day to this, sheer greed was the driving spirit of civilization. – Friedrich Engels

Greed, for lack of a better word, is good. Greed is right, greed works. Greed clarifies, cuts through, and captures the essence of the evolutionary spirit. Greed, in all of its forms; greed for life, for money, for love, knowledge has marked the upward surge of mankind. – Gordon Gekko in *Wall Street* (1987)

Greed is all right, by the way. I want you to know that. I think greed is healthy. You can be greedy and still feel good about yourself. – Ivan Boesky

If you are interested in finding out about Theatre Gargantua's student workshops, please contact **Yolanda** at 416 260 4660 or yolanda@theatregargantua.ca.

G. Pre-Show Lesson Plans

Lesson 1 – Beginning the Creative Process

Objective: Students will gain insight into how to begin a collaborative creation process such as the one used to create *Avaricious*. Students will also investigate their assumptions about greed and generosity, and thus gain a better understanding of how these opposing qualities are reflected in their own lives and the lives of those around them.

Materials:

- Paper and writing utensils
- Whiteboard, Blackboard, or Chart Paper
- Markers or chalk

Procedure:

1. Explain to students how Brainstorming or List Making is a great place to start during any collaborative creative process. Brainstorming can give you a sense of your interest as well as your collaborator's interest in a given topic.
2. **As an opening point for discussion: Ask students to Brainstorm** (at least) one word or phrase for each of the following prompts, individually:
 - a) Greed is...
 - b) Generosity is...
3. Have students **share their ideas** in pairs or small groups.
4. **As a class, create a larger Brainstorming List** on the board or on chart paper that incorporates everyone's ideas. Try to ensure each student shares at least one idea.
5. **To consolidate what they've learned, ask students:**
 - a) What are some examples of greedy/generous behaviour?
 - b) What might motivate someone to behave a certain way?
 - c) Who or what is being affected by greed/generosity?
 - d) What are the personal advantages to being generous or greedy?
 - e) What are the social implications of people being generous or greedy?

Lesson 2 – Finding a Character’s Voice (Focus: Drama)

Objective: Students will learn how to develop a character and find that character’s unique voice through monologue writing. Students will not only explore how their character acts in a certain situation, but will also learn how their character might react to conflict when they develop scenes with a partner.

Materials:

- Paper and writing utensils

Procedure:

- 1. As an opening point for discussion, ask students:**
 - a) What is a monologue?
 - b) What elements make a monologue effective (i.e. emotionally driven, honest, provides insight, focuses on a single event, includes specific details, brings out the voice and attitude of a character, etc.)?
2. Divide the class in half. Ask half of the class to **write a short monologue** for a character inspired by “greed”, and the other half to write a character inspired by “generosity”. Students may refer to their class Brainstorming List from Lesson 1.
3. **Give students 5-10 minutes** to write their monologue. Setting a time limit will not only get students writing, but will also help capture the free-flowing and uncensored nature of a monologue.
4. Give students the opportunity to **share their monologue with the class**.
5. Based on their monologues, **pair students up with a partner whose character expresses a contrasting point of view**. Ask students to **develop a short scene** in which these two characters meet and are in conflict. You may provide such prompting questions as:
 - a) What elements make a scene effective (i.e. environment, clear objectives, conflict, high stakes, resolution, etc.)?
 - b) What kind of situation do these characters meet under? Where are they?
 - c) Do they know each other already? What is their relationship?
 - d) How might they need to cooperate in this scene, or are they trying to work against each other?
6. Allow students time to **rehearse and then present their scene** to the class.
- 7. To consolidate what they’ve learned, ask students:**
 - a) How is performing a monologue different from performing a scene (dialogue)?
 - b) Why is subtext so important when creating a scene?
 - c) What were some effective ways your classmates demonstrated conflict?

Lesson 3 – The Recursive Writing Process (Focus: English)

Objective: By undergoing the recursive writing process themselves, students will understand the value of revisiting ideas in different ways, as opposed to focusing on the final product. Students will confront the words they have written, and will have the opportunity to clarify their thoughts, expand on their existing ideas, and stretch their creativity.

Materials:

- Paper and writing utensils (Alternatively: A computer with word processing capabilities)

Procedure:

Note: Following the nature of the recursive writing process, this lesson is meant to occur over a number of days. Students will chip away at the writing process one step at a time.

1. **Ask students to free write**¹ from their point of view about their own experience of greed and generosity on either a personal, social or global level.
2. Sharing a free writing exercise can be extremely vulnerable for an author. Depending on your class, students can voluntarily **share excerpts of their free writing** out loud, or they can have a partner read over their work silently. Often what you begin writing becomes inspiration for an entirely different piece that changes over multiple drafts.
3. Ask students to **write a short story** inspired by their free-writing exercise. Feel free to provide examples of writing that share similar thematic concerns to *Avaricious* (ex. *The Lorax* (1971) by Dr. Seuss, *The Giving Tree* (1964) by Shel Silverstein, or *The Fisherman and His Wife* by the Brothers Grimm).
4. Ask students to **review the short story they wrote**. Give students an opportunity to **share their short story with a classmate**. Ask students to provide written peer feedback with the following sentence stems:
 - This story made me feel... (How did the story affect them?)
 - I liked how... (What did they like about the story?)
 - I was confused by... (What part of the story could use more clarity?)
5. Ask students to return to their short story **and try incorporating their peer's comments**. Encourage them to connect their short story with what they have been studying in class and in other readings.
6. Ask students to **share their short story with the class**.
7. Discuss what students learned over the development of their short story:
 - How did working from a given theme affect their process?
 - What problems did they encounter in the writing process?
 - Why is it important to continually edit your work?

¹*Free write*: a pre-writing technique in which a person writes continuously for a set period of time without restraint. It usually produces raw, often unusable material, but helps writers overcome blocks of apathy and self-criticism. Sometimes referred to as stream-of-consciousness writing, this is a literary style in which a character's thoughts, feelings, and reactions are depicted in a continuous flow uninterrupted by objective description or conventional dialogue. James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and Marcel Proust are among its notable early exponents.

Lesson 4 – Building a Budget (Focus: Financial Literacy)

Objective: By tracking their weekly expenses, students will gain a better understanding of their personal finances, how to manage it, and how donating their money might help others.

Materials:

- Calendar, Agenda, or Budget Tracking Sheet
- Bills and Receipts

Procedure:

1. **Ask students to write down a list of their weekly expenses:**
 - What do they put their money towards (i.e. savings, socializing, shopping, food)?
 - Where does the money come from (i.e. parents, guardians, part-time job)?
 - How much do they **predict** they spend in a week?
2. **Ask students to share some of the items from their list with the class.** Based on some of the answers, ask students if they forgot to budget for certain items (i.e. cell phone bills, transit, personal hygiene and grooming products etc.) and to revise their list of expenses accordingly.
3. **Ask students to track their actual expenses for one week.** You may provide students a handout or calendar on which to record their spending and encourage them to keep receipts for their expenses. Agree as a class that no money values will be shared with other classmates or the teacher and their expenses will remain confidential. Ask students to factor in monthly expenses such as a travel pass or a phone bill by dividing the total cost by four to get an approximation of the weekly cost.
4. One week later, **have students discuss their findings as a class:**
 - How did their prediction of their weekly spending compare to how much they actually spent? How accurate was their guess?
 - Do they think they spend their money appropriately?
 - Did tracking their expenses make them more financially conscious?
 - Will they change their spending habits as a result?
 - Would they consider creating a budget for their weekly or monthly spending?

Extension Activity:

In small groups of 4-5 representing a nuclear family: Give students a tight budget, a list of items they need to purchase, the cost of those items (a list of average prices or local flyers), and have them allocate their family spending. The goal of this activity is to simulate the struggle and hardships a family living in poverty might be experiencing (ex. Adelouise is a character in the play that lives in the slums of a fictional society).

Points for Discussion:

- How are the expenses a family has to consider different from those of an individual?
- Would you ever consider donating to support a family in need?
- What are some social services available to families in need?

H. Post-Show Lesson Plans

Lesson 5 – What’s in Your GoBag? (Focus: Social Studies, Drama, and English)

Objective: By exploring their personal wants and needs, students will gain a better understanding of how developmental psychology plays into human survival. Students will also develop insight as to why certain motivational needs drive particular decisions characters make in the play that result in their ultimate downfall.

Materials:

- Paper and writing utensils
- Script Excerpt for Reference – GoBag Commercial (p. 22)

Procedure:

1. Recall Billy’s commercial in the play. **What is a GoBag?**
 - According to Billy: A GoBag is a portable kit that contains the items one would require to survive for 72 hours when evacuating from a natural disaster.
2. Ask students to **create a list of at least 10 items they would want in their GoBag.**
3. Give students an opportunity to **share their GoBag list with a classmate.**
4. As a class, decide the **top 10 items to include in a GoBag.**

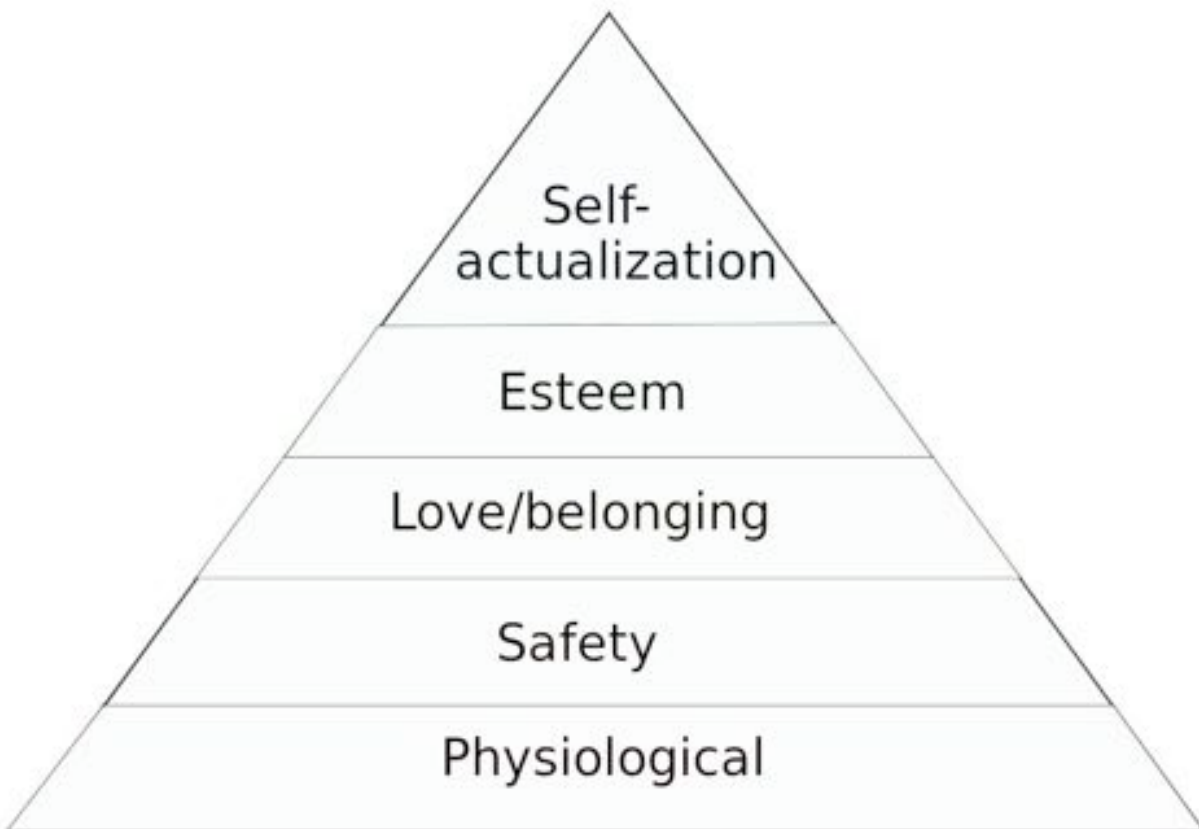
Social Studies Extension:

1. Introduce **Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs**, a developmental psychology theory which describes the pattern that human motivations generally move through. It is usually presented in a pyramid, starting with the most fundamental or basic needs at the bottom (Physiological, Safety, Love/Belonging, Esteem, and Self-Actualization).
2. Have students **brainstorm a list of the top 10 things they need in their lives.** They have to be as specific as possible (i.e. pet rabbit, PlayStation, best friend, yoga, etc.).
3. Have students categorize these needs under Maslow’s Hierarchy.
4. **To consolidate what they’ve learned, ask students:**
 - How do the top 10 items students *wanted* to include in their GoBags compare to the top 10 things they *needed* in their lives?
 - How are wants different from needs?

Drama & English Extension:

1. Have students **pick a character from the play** (Billy, Rupa, Adelouise, or Jimmy).
2. Have students **explore character motivation**:
 - What is this character's greatest need in the play?
 - How is this need being (or not being) satisfied?
 - How does this need influence a character's particular decision or action in the play?

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: <http://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>



Lesson 6 – Analyzing and Assessing Elements of Form (Focus: English)

Objective: Students will analyze and assess elements of form, and explore the use of literary devices in their own piece of creative writing that mirrors Evensies speech. They will see how effectively their intentions come through as writers when given a particular form to work with, and whether that helps or hinders how they communicate their ideas.

Materials:

- Script Excerpt - Evensies 2 (pg. 23-24)

Procedure:

1. As a class, **read the excerpt from *Avaricious*, “Evensies 2”**. Note that in the scene each number indicates a different speaker, or specifically, a different Evensie (there are four in total).
2. **Discuss the style and form of the writing:**
 - What literary devices are used?
 - How do these characters speak?
 - How does rhyme affect the story being told?
 - What if the rhyme was taken away?
 - Is there any significance as to how the lines are divided among four voices?
3. Ask students to revisit their lists, scripts, free writing exercises, and short stories generated in Lessons 1-3 respectively. Invite them to reimagine their ideas **by using one or more of the formal devices** found in the script excerpt. You may want to provide students examples of writing that share a similar structure, such as the limericks found in *A Book of Nonsense* (1846) by Edward Lear.
4. Ask students to **share their writing with the class**.
5. **As a point for consolidation, discuss:**
 - How do distinct formal techniques change the intention of your writing?
 - Does it help communicate the intention or does the form distract from it?
 - Why might a writer choose to incorporate such a form in their writing?
 - Is the form equally effective when read silently versus aloud?

Lesson 7 – Writing a Review (Focus: Drama & English)

Objective: Students will reflect critically on Theatre Gargantua’s production of *Avaricious*, by discussing how effectively the show’s message was translated through the performance, and what design elements helped capture the show’s underlying themes.

Materials:

- Paper and writing utensils (Alternatively: a computer with word processing capabilities)

Procedure:

1. **Begin with a class discussion** about the content and style of the production:
 - Did this production change or strengthen your own opinion about greed?
 - Did this production change or highlight your own opinion about the value of money and material wealth?
 - Theatre Gargantua creates all of its own work, sharing and developing ideas as an ensemble. How might a story about different economic classes benefit from being created in this way?
 - What are some examples from the production that demonstrate effective storytelling?
 - What did you learn about the use of movement to tell a story?
 - What did you learn about the value of design (i.e. set, costume, sound, lighting and projection) in this production?
 - What was confusing or unclear to you?
 - Based on the production you have just watched, is there anything you are inspired to change in the compositions you created?
2. Ask students to **write a short analysis of the production**. Encourage them to include their responses to the above questions.

I. Suggested Reading/Viewing

When developing new work, Theatre Gargantua's initial stages involve in-depth research. Below are some links and references that inspired discussion amongst the company during the creation of *Avaricious* that led to the final version of the production.

VIDEO:

- iceylonist. "[Rich vs. Poor \(Global Wealth Inequality\)](#)." Online video clip. *YouTube*. YouTube, 6 Jul. 2013. Web.
- Neo Newz. "[Kevin O'Leary Says 3.5 Billion People Living in Poverty is 'Fantastic News.'](#)" Online video clip. *YouTube*. YouTube, 23 Jan. 2014. Web.
- politizane. "[Wealth Inequity in America](#)." Online video clip. *YouTube*. YouTube, 20 Nov. 2012. Web.
- Slate Magazine. "[If Walmart Paid Its Employees a Living Wage, How Much Would Prices Go Up?](#)" Online video clip. *YouTube*. YouTube, 4 Apr. 2014. Web.
- storyofstuffproject. "[Story of Stuff \(2007, OFFICIAL Version\)](#)." Online video clip. *YouTube*. YouTube, 22 Apr. 2009. Web.
- Zak, Paul. "[Trust, morality—and oxytocin?](#)" TedGlobal. International Conference Centre, Edinburgh. 14 Jul. 2011. Lecture.

READING:

- BBC News. "[Oxfam says wealth of richest 1% equal to other 99%](#)." *BBC News*. BBC News.com, 18 Jan. 2016. Web.
- Longbottom, Wil. "[World's most expensive home lies abandoned...because billionaire owners believe it would be bad luck to move in.](#)" *Mail Online*. Associated Mail Ltd., 26 Oct. 2011. Web.
- Rifkin, Jeremy. "[The Rise of Anti-Capitalism](#)." *The New York Times*. The New York Times Company, 15 Mar. 2014. Web.
- Woolsey, Matt. "[Inside the World's First Billion Dollar Home](#)." *Forbes*. Forbes.com, 30 Apr. 2008. Web.
- [Worldmapper](#). The University of Michican, The University of Sheffield, The Leverhulme Trust and the Geographical Association. Web.
Unlike the Euro or North-American centric map which represents northern countries as disproportionately large compared to equatorial ones, the animated maps on this site represent countries by proportion of various factors such as income, population, life expectancy, housing prices, deforestation and fuel use.

AUDIO:

- "[Bourgeois Dignity \(Oct. 2011 Encore\)](#)." *Ideas*. Host Richard Handler. Interviewee Deidre McCloskey. *CBC Radio*, 20 Oct. 2011. CBC.ca. Web.

J. Excerpts from *Avaricious*

These excerpts were selected before the final version of the script was produced. There may be differences between what you read here and what is presented. Generating material, selecting, revising, and testing the work on its feet is a crucial part of the creative process.

Commercial

Billy Are you worried about The Flood? Concerned that you might panic and forget something vital? Anxious about Post-Flood Survival? Well, you should be. It's coming, so don't wait around like a sitting duck, you're a person, not a duck **SO DON'T JUST SIT THERE LIKE A DUCK, GET YOURSELF A GO-BAG! HI.** I'm Bill Atlas, of Atlas Industries, and we want to help you Save for the Wave with this **INCREDIBLE OFFER!** The Atlas Save for the Wave GoBag comes complete with everything you'll need to survive, including noodles, hatchet, matches, inflatable raft, water purifier, beans, toilet paper, and space blankets! How much would you pay for this absolute survival necessity? Don't answer that question! Because if you call within the next ten minutes, we'll throw in a bag of socks, **ABSOLUTELY FREE!** But wait, there's **MORE! CALL NOW** and we'll include the Doctor Atlas Hospital-in-a-Bag for all your emergency surgical needs including simple instructions for amputations, tooth extractions and organ transplants. But wait, there's **EVEN MORE!** I must be out of my mind because if you call this very second we'll throw in the Atlas Go-Go-Government-GoBag for everything you need to establish order amidst the post-flood chaos including barbed wire, flares, and a handy do-it-yourself constitution and amendment kit. That's not one, not two, but three emergency GoBags plus a bag of socks. Now how much would you pay? One hundred dollars? Five hundred dollars? Well stop what you're doing and pick up the phone and call 1-888-THE-WAVE and for only seven easy payments of 69.99 (Plus shipping and handling), you can be the proud and prepared owner of all three GoBags. Remember, at Atlas Industries there's a handy solution for every horrific situation. You got a crisis? We've got your GoBag.

(Atlas Industries not responsible for death or disfigurement resulting from use of the Doctor Atlas Hospital-in-a-Bag. Malpractice insurance not included.)

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Evensies 2

1. o dear
2. o dearsies
3. dearsy dearsy dearsy me
4. and me
2. me first
1. I'll stab you with a pencil
4. Oh things
3. Yes that's the stuff
4. Things and things and things and things
2. I want some
1. Nature or Devil
3. It's all one when your head is bound in belly-button lint
1. It seems
4. Yes precisely it does
1. It seems as though
2. You've really hit the nail on the head with that one
1. as though
3. You vile bastard
1. as though things
4. Yes?
1. are
3. Here it comes
2. pearls of wisdom
4. words to live by

THEATRE GARGANTUA **Avaricious** STUDY GUIDE

3. The meaning of it all
- 1 strange
4. O balls
2. Here try this
3. There was a man of noble breed
Who lived life by a hoarder's creed
Determined was he to proceed
In getting all the stuff
2. Who's birth and good luck guaranteed
His plot to own all would succeed
And though his goals he did exceed
It never was enough
1. And for those left with crippling need
4. Whose lot was now to beg and plead
3. Their collective groin he kneed
2. In their direction stood and peed
4. Their flowers plucked, their cars he keyed
1. No coins to rub nor books to read
3. Their forests cut and left untreed
2. Their dens and rec rooms unTV'd
4. And if you think that we mislead
1. Be certain, it's no guff