

Ken Ludwig's  
**BASKERVILLE**  
A SHERLOCK HOLMES MYSTERY  
STUDY GUIDE



Directed by Laura Kepley

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**DEAR EDUCATORS:**

Welcome to Season 52 at Alabama Shakespeare Festival! The amount of effort it takes to coordinate a trip from the classroom to the theater is not lost on us. Thank you for recognizing the value of live theatre for your students! We at ASF believe in the transformative power of the arts and its ability to educate, entertain, and inspire.

ASF is committed to supporting educators in the classroom. By engaging with this play and all others in our regular season, teachers will be able to address several standards in the state and national curriculum. It is our hope that all study materials and lesson activities are useful for classroom educators, though not exhaustive.

Viewing a performance at Alabama Shakespeare Festival and participating in the post-performance discussion can serve as a powerful springboard for positive classroom discourse, detailed and specific writing, and rich individual student exploration. Below you will find just a few of the possibilities for aligning your study of our productions to National Core Arts and Alabama Course of Study literacy standards.

See you at the theater!

**ALABAMA COURSE OF STUDY:  
 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS**

- [ELA21.W.6.1] Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- [ELA22.W.6.2] Write informative or explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- [ELA15.RI.6.5] Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.
- [ELA16.RI.6.6] Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.
- [ELA12.RI.9-10.3] Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.
- [ELA4.RL.11-12.4] Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS *cont.***

- [ELA5.RL.11-12.5] Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
- [ELA7.RL.11-12.7] Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)

**NATIONAL CORE ARTS ANCHOR STANDARDS**

- TH.Re7.1 Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- TH.Re8.1 Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- TH.Re9.1 Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.
- TH.Cn10.1 Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
- TH.Cn11.1 Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

## PLOT

*Baskerville* is a unique comedic adaptation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's famous detective story, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. This production combines the intrigue of a classic Sherlock Holmes tale with comedic elements of a farce by employing clever staging, costume quick changes, and witty dialogue. A small ensemble of actors portray numerous characters, adding an element of comedic chaos as they switch back and forth between roles.

The play opens in darkness with eerie music looming all around. A man named Sir Charles Baskerville appears through the mist and fog and starts down an alley, when suddenly someone or *something* comes barreling toward him. The audience hears a "roar" followed by an ear piercing "ahh," then silence... The actions that follow are the findings of an investigation of a mysterious death led by Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson, M.D. who take on the case, encountering a "wild" animal and a series of eccentric characters on their quest to uncover the truth.

**Think about it:** Think about Ken Ludwig's use of humor in this adaptation. How do you think injecting comedic elements — like wild costume changes — into this iconic mystery might affect the overall experience? Explain.

## CHARACTERS

**Sherlock Holmes** — A highly intelligent specialist in crime. Calm, calculated, and an excellent observer.

**Doctor John Watson** — A man of medicine. A solid and reliable partner to Holmes. The audience witnesses the action through Watson's eyes.

### Additional Characters:

**Actor One** — An actor who plays multiple supporting characters, including **Mr. Stapleton**, a seemingly cunning charmer who cannot be trusted.

**Actor Two** — An actor who plays multiple supporting characters, including **Sir Charles Baskerville**, a middle-aged man who is mysteriously killed off.

**Actress One** — An actress who plays multiple supporting characters including **Miss Stapleton**, the initially secretive, scared "sister" of Stapleton who passionately falls in love with another character in the investigation.

## SETTING

London and the Misty Moors of Devonshire. The late 1890s.



What is **theme**? Though not the primary idea or subject, theme refers to the overarching topics that pervade the work. A few of the major themes from *Baskerville* are listed below.

## THE WEATHER

There is a foreboding, eerie atmosphere at the top of the play. The isolated stretch of the moor that we can see brings about an air of gloom and mystery. And like the opening of any good mystery, inordinately dense and misty fog makes it almost impossible to recognize anything but shadows. The visual depiction of nature seems skewed, as everything, including alleyways and buildings, looks frighteningly dark and gray — leading the audience to believe that something bad could happen at any moment. Ludwig uses this setting as a backdrop for what actually turns out to be a truly humorous chain of events.

## SUPERNATURAL AND FANTASY

Twentieth-century Gothic literature is a genre well known for its dark, supernatural elements, expanding on fear and haunting. And Doyle, the original author of the Holmes series, became famous for this brand of storytelling. The essence of *Baskerville* can be deduced as truth versus fantasy. Holmes uses reason and logic to solve cases, but the case of the Hound presents an interesting set of circumstances that lean more toward the supernatural. And for many of us, fear often breeds superstition. The hound, after all, is believed to have come from beyond the earthly realm in pursuit of a notorious Baskerville who sold his soul to the Devil. The bizarre and unexplained are often chalked up as “supernatural.” The author’s opinion seems to favor logic, but Doyle actually took quite an interest in spiritualism and the existence of ghosts in real life.

## COMEDY AND PARODY

Ken Ludwig, the playwright who adapted Doyle’s work, beautifully weaves comedy throughout this iconic retelling of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Ludwig is known for stage comedies rooted in the complex nature of the human experience. A 1901 suspense novella involving a grisly murder, a famous detective, and a slaving hound may not on the surface seem like great material to adapt for a comedic writer, but it presents interesting opportunities to stretch the boundaries of traditional comedy by making it less literal. The characters Doyle created are so specific and quirky, their stories so gruesome that their plight seems almost ridiculous at first glance. Ludwig infuses humor into the story without mocking or making fun of Doyle’s work. In this sense, his “parody” is quite flattering. At its core, *Baskerville* is an adventure story that walks a careful line between comedy, parody, and mystery. The characters in this play are just as honest and real as with any thriller. It just happens to be quite entertaining to watch one actor working hard to truthfully portray 30 characters in a given scene.



Sidney Paget Original Sherlock Holmes Artwork. 1892

**Austere** — A stern and cold appearance or manner.

**Baronet** — The holder of a military or other honorable rank of honor; can also reference someone who has great influence in a particular field.

**Bog-hole** — A hole or depression in a land surface having a miry or spongy bottom.

**Bohemians** — A person, such as a writer or an artist, living an unconventional life usually in a colony with others.

**Castilian** — A native or inhabitant of a region and medieval kingdom in central and northern Spain.

**Chamber** — Private quarters, usually a private office, bedroom, or other room designated for special private use.

**Danke** — A German word meaning “thank you.”

**Exploit** — A notable, memorable, or heroic act.

**Falstaff** — A comedic, roguish character in Shakespeare’s *Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Henry IV*.

**Free Trade** — Trade based on the unrestricted international exchange of goods with tariffs used only as a source of revenue.

**Hogwash** — An expression for complete nonsense, lies, or ridiculous actions.

**Maharaja** — A Hindu title for an Indian prince.

**Manor** — The main residence of a large estate owned by a lord or member of British aristocracy.

**Manuscript** — An author’s original text, usually handwritten, that has not been published.

**Moor** — A vast area of foggy, rolling, uncultivated land.

**Sixpence, Shilling, Pounds** — British forms of currency.

**Spoil-sport** — Relating to a person who takes pleasure in ruining other people’s fun.

**Street Urchin** — A person, specifically a child, who is poor and does not have a home, living and sleeping on the streets of a city.

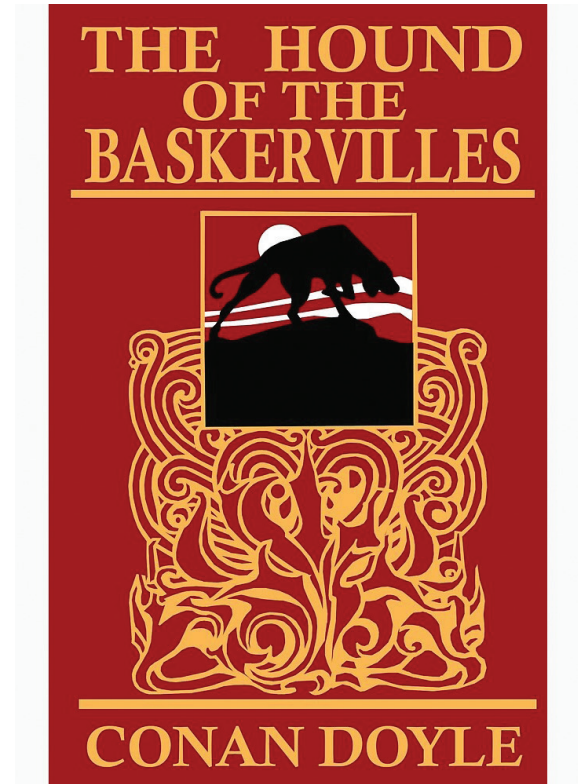
**The Baskervilles** — A fictional family that lived with a long-standing curse involving a gigantic hound. Allegedly the “curse” was brought on as a result of a particular family member’s indiscretions.

**Victuals/Vittles** — A supply or provision of food.

**Visiting Card** — A small card presented when visiting an aristocrat’s home that bears the name and sometimes the address of the visitor, usually presented before the guest is invited in for conversation.

**Yeoman** — An attendant or officer in a royal or noble household

**Yew Alley** — A path lined with evergreen trees and shrubs; a walkway.



Original Book Cover of  
*The Hound of the Baskervilles*  
by Arthur Conan Doyle.

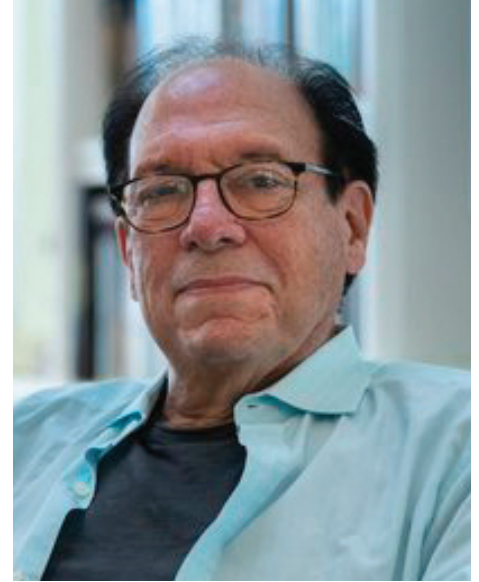


Queen Victoria - Silver Shilling



## KEN LUDWIG

Ken Ludwig has had six shows on Broadway, seven in London's West End, and many of his works have become a standard part of the American repertoire. His 32 plays and musicals have been performed in over 30 countries in more than 20 languages and are produced throughout the United States every night of the year. *Lend Me a Tenor* won two Tony Awards and was called "one of the classic comedies of the 20th century" by *The Washington Post*. *Crazy For You* was on Broadway for five years and won the Tony and Olivier Awards for Best Musical. In addition, he has won the Edgar Award for Best Mystery of the Year, two Laurence Olivier Awards, two Helen Hayes Awards, and the Edwin Forrest Award for Contributions to the American Theater. His plays have starred, among others, Alec Baldwin, Carol Burnett, Tony Shaloub, Joan Collins, and Hal Holbrook. His stage version of *Murder on the Orient Express* was written expressly at the request of the Agatha Christie Estate and had its European premiere at the Chichester Festival Theatre in June of 2022. His play, *Dear Jack, Dear Louise*, won the 2020 Charles MacArthur Award for Best New Play of the Year.



His newest plays include *Lend Me A Soprano*, premiering at the Alley Theatre in fall 2022; *Moriarty*, opening at Cleveland Playhouse in spring 2023; *Pride and Prejudice, Part 2: Napoleon at Pemberley*; and *Lady Molly of Scotland Yard*. His book *How To Teach Your Children Shakespeare*, published by Penguin Random House, won the Falstaff Award for Best Shakespeare Book of the Year, and his essays are published in the *Yale Review*. He is a graduate of Harvard and Cambridge and is a frequent guest speaker for groups as varied as the Oxford-Cambridge Society, the Jane Austen Society of North America, the Folger Shakespeare Library, and the Baker Street Irregulars.

For more information, visit his website at [www.kenludwig.com](http://www.kenludwig.com).

## SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE



Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was a Scottish writer best known for his creation of Sherlock Holmes, the great fictional detective. Born on May 22, 1859, in Edinburgh, he started writing stories while studying medicine. Doyle lived quite an interesting life — he spent time as a ship surgeon in the Arctic, played football, tried boxing under the pseudonym "Roddy McSwat," dabbled in solving real-life crime cases and the supernatural, and even ran for parliament twice. Despite all his additional work and effort, Doyle had a difficult time separating himself from the beloved *Sherlock* series. In fact, he was all but forced to bring back Sherlock Holmes after killing him off due to high public demand. This led him to resurrect the detective in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* in 1901 — the source and inspiration for Ken Ludwig's play.

# CREATING THE ICONIC DETECTIVE

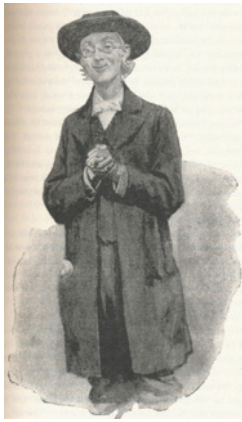
**By ASF Dramaturg, Dr. Susan Willis**

Professor Emerita of English, Auburn University at Montgomery



## THE METHOD

Arthur Conan Doyle wanted to add a new element to the detective genre and remembered one of his medical school professors, Dr. Joseph Bell, a brilliant diagnostician and surgeon who showed his students how much you could quickly see and know about people's lives, occupations, health, origin, and address by looking and listening. Doyle recalled [Bell's] eerie trick of spotting details. If he were a detective, he would surely reduce this fascinating, but unorganized, business into something nearer to an exact science. It was surely possible in real life, so why should I not make it plausible in fiction....



Holmes disguised as a vicar  
(Watson did not recognize him.)

## HOLMES' SKILLS

As well as being an astute listener and observer, Holmes is an exceptional master of disguises with superb fighting skills and arcane areas of expertise (poisons, soil types), so he serves as his own CSI unit.

Yet because Doyle did not do in-depth research for the Holmes tales, the CSI is spotty. Holmes is cutting edge on a few procedures, but the late 19th century had fingerprint analysis, the absorption spectroscope, the colorimeter, and good police labs which Holmes never uses, so that sometimes Holmes's "science" is the story's greatest fiction.

## AND HOW OTHERS CREATED HOLMES' DISTINCTIVE LOOK

Doyle said, "I imagined him [with] a thin razor-like face, with a great hawk's bill of a nose, and two small eyes, set close together on either side of it." However, Sidney Paget, the artist illustrating the original *Strand* magazine stories, based his Holmes sketches on his own handsome younger brother, Walter.

Sidney Paget also gave Holmes the deerstalker hat (Doyle never specifies such a hat, which is country wear) and later included a straight pipe.

In 1898, when American actor William Gillette wrote and performed the first Sherlock Holmes play, he felt using a straight pipe would block his mouth, affecting his projection from stage, so he used a curved pipe, a meerschaum, which became iconic.

"Elementary, my dear Watson" is a phrase Holmes never uses anywhere in the print canon. He uses each half separately, but never combined. Readers created the phrase.



One of Sidney Paget's illustrations of Holmes.



Queen Victoria's influence on Britain's social climate led to a rebirth of social "rules" and chivalry — giving way to the popular phrase "mind your manners." Here's a fascinating glimpse into the intricacies of Victorian society and how strict social traditions played a significant role in shaping interpersonal relationships and communication during that era (1837 – 1901). This is the backdrop of Sherlock Holmes' London.

## VICTORIAN GENDER ROLES AND SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS

Men and women in this period adhered to strict gender roles. Women focused on domestic duties, while men were expected to be chivalrous. There were clear distinctions in societal expectations for behavior, dress, and responsibilities.

## FORMAL INTRODUCTIONS AND SOCIAL CALLS

Formal introductions were crucial, with specific rules for order and etiquette. Social visits were facilitated by calling cards; leaving a card indicated polite interest. Think of it as today's voicemail or text messaging.

## DINNER TABLE DECORUM AND DINING ETIQUETTE

Elaborate rules for table manners included use of specific utensils, maintaining proper posture, and eating at a turtle's pace. High importance was placed on refined dining experiences as a reflection of one's social standing.

## SECRET CODES: LANGUAGE OF FANS AND FLOWERS

Women used fans for discreet communication; specific gestures convey messages. For example, placing it on the left ear supposedly meant "I wish to get rid of you," while touching it with the tip of the finger suggested "I wish to speak with you," and dropping it was a suggestion to be friends. Flowers also held symbolic meanings, allowing individuals to express sentiments without words.



## COURTSHIP AND SOCIAL GATHERINGS

The Victorian era brought about strict guidelines for courtship and dating; chaperones were often present during outings or "dates." Parlor games and entertainment often played a significant role in Victorian social gatherings, fostering camaraderie and amusement.

**Think about it:** Victorian social norms were in full effect during the time Sherlock Holmes was created. How do you think these "rules" might have impacted Doyle's storytelling and the way the characters interact with one another? Explain.



The Sherlock Holmes character played a significant role in shaping public perception and interest in forensic science. This is due in large part to the author's inordinate interest in medicine, science, and mystery. Even though the crimes he solved in his novels didn't always include the science available at the time, Holmes' keen powers of observation and deductive reasoning showcased the potential of **scientific methods** in solving crimes. His emphasis on details, logical analysis, and the use of evidence predated and foreshadowed the evolution of modern forensic techniques.

Holmes' approach to solving crimes often involved **analyzing fingerprints, footprints, and other physical evidence** — as you will see in the play — and resonated with the emerging field of forensic science in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The character's popularity coincided with real-world advancements in forensic methods, contributing to a growing awareness and acceptance of **scientific investigation** in solving criminal cases.



Elements of Holmes' approach, such as the **scrutiny of crime scenes** and the importance of preserving and interpreting evidence, remain integral to forensic investigations today. While contemporary forensics has evolved with technological advancements, including DNA analysis and sophisticated laboratory techniques, the foundational principles inspired by Sherlock Holmes persist even today.

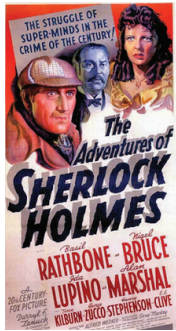
Sherlock Holmes not only entertained audiences with his brilliant detective work but also indirectly influenced the public's perception of forensic science, laying the groundwork for its evolution as a crucial component of criminal investigations in the real world. Not to mention, Arthur Canon Doyle's passion for solving real crimes himself certainly influenced the creation of Sherlock Holmes.



# SHERLOCK ON SCREEN: THE WORLD'S GREATEST DETECTIVE

## Other Adaptations from Film, Television, and Beyond

There have been many popular adaptations of Doyle's novels and the adventures of his iconic detective, Sherlock Holmes. Take a look at the sample below of a few more popular film and television adaptations over the past few decades. The phenomenon continues today with new audiences' interests in detective and crime drama. We have Sir Arthur Canon Doyle to thank for his entertaining and inspiring work — one that continues to evolve in new ways.



### **Sherlock Mysteries film series (1939 – 1946)**

This popular series of Sherlock Holmes mysteries, starring Basil Rathbone as Sherlock and Nigel Bruce as Dr. Watson produced 14 films by 1946 — including *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*.



### **Sherlock Holmes (2009)**

This blockbuster action film adaptation, set in 1890, follows eccentric detective Holmes and his companion, Dr. Watson, played by Robert Downey Jr. and Jude Law, respectively, as they attempt to foil a dangerous plot to gain control of Britain by seemingly supernatural means.



### **Sherlock (2010 – 2017)**

The British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC) produced a contemporary crime drama television show based on Doyle's Sherlock Holmes series starring Benedict Cumberbatch as Holmes and Martin Freeman as Dr. Watson.



### **Mr. Holmes (2015)**

An aged, retired Sherlock Holmes played by iconic actor, Ian McKellen, deals with dementia, as he tries to remember details of the one case he never solved.



### **Sherlock Gnomes (2018)**

In this sequel to *Gnomeo and Juliet*, the newlywed couple prepares the garden for spring when suddenly all their friends and family go missing. They call upon the famous detective, Sherlock Holmes, who whisks them away on a very memorable adventure.



### **Enola Holmes (2020)**

Millie Bobby Brown stars as Sherlock Holmes' teen sister who travels to London in search of their missing mother but instead finds herself on a dangerous adventure with a runaway lord as they attempt to solve a mystery that threatens the entire country.

**Think about it:** Many brilliant actors have portrayed the iconic Sherlock/Watson duo in hundreds of adaptations on screen. What, in your opinion, makes these characters so irresistible for new audiences? Who would you pick to play Holmes or Watson today?





Scenic rendering for ASF's production of *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery*. Scenic Design by Paige Hathaway.

**Think about it:** The world of *Baskerville* is vast, as there are many locations around London that the characters visit. Think about how the set design image above might serve the different locations. Additionally, a cast of only five actors play more than 30 characters. There are several moments where an actor must switch roles very quickly — making even the smallest costume piece (a hat, glasses, etc.) essential to creating an entirely new persona.



Costume renderings for Actor 1's track of characters for *Baskerville*. Costume design by Lex Liang.



Costume renderings for Actor 3's track of characters for *Baskerville*. Costume design by Lex Liang.

**Think about it:** Now that you've had a small glimpse into the world of the play, think about the challenges the actors might face with telling this story. Do any immediate questions arise for you regarding how the company might accomplish the demands of the script? Explain.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### PRE-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Adapting a well-known story for the stage presents unique challenges and opportunities. In your opinion, what steps should a writer take when adapting someone else's work? Explain.
2. What makes a good mystery? How does it begin? How does it end?

### POST-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Did your experience in the theater match your expectation for this Sherlock Holmes tale? Did anything surprise you?
2. What stage tricks did you observe that helped to push the plot forward?
3. Explore the dynamic between Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson in Ludwig's play. What details are revealed about their friendship and partnership by the end? Are there moments that highlight their individual strengths and roles?

## CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. **On your feet:** Quick-Change Relay! Fill two trunks or suitcases with a similar amount of items; place them a few feet apart at one end of the room. Clear some space, and set up a relay racetrack. Divide the class into two even groups. Students must race to put on everything in the trunk, take it back off, and place it back in the trunk. The group who gets everyone in their line through the quick change first wins the game!

**Variation:** Have your students work with their group to pull items from the trunk to change into different characters (inspired by the play). You could also have them interact by giving each group a different character and have them improvise a short scene. Have fun!

2. **On your feet:** Detective-style Party Quirks! Separate the list of quirks (attached) and place them in a jar or bowl. Start the game by telling your students, "Two detectives will be attending a party tonight." Select two students to be detectives (like Holmes and Watson). Ask them to step out of the room. Pick three students to be guests; allow them to choose quirks from the jar and discuss them with the rest of the class. When the guests are ready, invite the detectives back into the room. Begin the game by having the detectives improvise "setting up" the party as each guest arrives. The detectives will have three attempts to guess each guest's weird quirk. The audience should clap when a quirk is discovered. Win or lose, after they've expired their attempts, select new detectives for the next round. Keep it fair!

**Variation:** Have the class help the guests act out their quirks before the detectives come back in the room to lower the difficulty level of the game. The key to making it fun is *specificity*. Use a bell to maintain a short time between each guest's arrival.

3. **At your desk:** (Post-show activity) Now that you know how the play ends, consider an alternate ending. What if Mr. Stapelton hadn't been caught and his true origins revealed? What if he wasn't the real criminal at all? What if Holmes had not come back to finish solving the case? What if the murder at the end happened differently? Think up a few good "what if" questions and write your alternate ending. Get creative! Share your masterpiece with the class.

Teachers: You will find additional classroom activity sheets attached below! Use them however you like. Please let us know if you find these helpful or have other ideas for additional resources.

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

**Anticipation Activity**

**Responding to Live Theatre: Critical Response**

**Detective-style Party Quirks**

## ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES

*LIFE Sherlock Holmes: The World's Greatest Detective*

<https://www.life.com/arts-entertainment/sherlock-holmes-the-influence-of-the-worlds-most-famous-detective/>

*The Official Site of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Literary Estate*

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

*A Guide to Doyle's Sherlock Holmes Books*

<https://www.panmacmillan.com/blogs/classics/sherlock-holmes-books-in-order>

*Sherlockian: The Portal for the Great Detective*

<https://www.sherlockian.net/>

*The Sherlock Holmes Society of London*

<https://www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk/>

*The Sherlock Holmes Museum*

<https://www.sherlock-holmes.co.uk/>

*Read Doyle's Sherlock Novels*

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

Before you see the show, respond to the following statements as honestly as possible by circling your response. Then, explain your answer with an example.

SA – Strongly Agree, A – Agree, D – Disagree, SD – Strongly Disagree

<b>STATEMENT #1:</b> It is impossible to redeem yourself if you make a mistake.			
SA	A	D	SD
Explain your answer with an example:			

<b>STATEMENT #2:</b> Deceit and lies can never be justified.			
SA	A	D	SD
Explain your answer with an example:			

<b>STATEMENT #3:</b> Superstition and fear can be dangerous.			
SA	A	D	SD
Explain your answer with an example:			

<b>STATEMENT #4:</b> You should always pursue the truth no matter how painful.			
SA	A	D	SD
Explain your answer with an example:			

**Teachers:** A variation of this activity: "Four Corners." Make signs with the SA, A, SD, and D labels. Then, ask the students to stand in the middle of the classroom. Repeat each question aloud (or create new ones) and allow them to move to the corner of the room that best represents their opinion. Discuss.



## BASKERVILLE: A SHERLOCK HOLMES MYSTERY

### CRITICAL REVIEW

**Directions:** Imagine you are the official theatre critic for this production at ASF! For each area of the production, give thoughtful and honest feedback. Be specific and answer each prompt using complete sentences. Use the back of the page if necessary.

#### I. Playwright/Story

Use the space below to discuss elements of the story. What worked well? Did anything strike you negatively?

#### II. Performance/Acting

Use the space below to give constructive feedback about the actors' performances in the production. Was there a performer whom you particularly enjoyed? What could have been better?

#### III. Directing

Use the space below to discuss the overall direction and interpretation of this production. Remember, nothing happens by accident. Did anything surprise you?

#### IV. Technical Elements

Use the space below to discuss the lighting, sound, scenery, and costumes for this production. Were you transported to a different time/place? Did these elements effectively serve the story? Explain.

This sheet should be paired with the On Your Feet activity on **page 12**.  
Cut out each quirk and place it in a jar or bowl. You may also allow your  
class to come up with their own quirks.



<b>A skier who keeps skiing into things.</b>	<b>Slowly becoming a werewolf.</b>
<b>A palm reader who's obsessed with reading palms.</b>	<b>Can't stop smiling.</b>
<b>Can only say 4 words at a time.</b>	<b>Photographer. Keep rearranging groups of people.</b>
<b>A person who is always lost and confused.</b>	<b>Trying to find a bomb planted somewhere in the room.</b>
<b>Going through all stages of life repeatedly (baby, teen, adult, elderly).</b>	<b>Obsessed with what you're wearing. Other people should be jealous.</b>
<b>A T-Rex pretending to be human.</b>	<b>Obsessed with the color... (whatever color the detective(s) are wearing)</b>