

Cue Sheet

Guides for
Teachers

The Hound of the Baskervilles

Friday, March 20, 2026
10:15am

Questions to ask students BEFORE the performance

- Have you heard the name Sherlock Holmes before, and if so, where have you heard it?
- When you think of a mystery story, what do you envision the setting being like? Describe what makes a setting feel mysterious or atmospheric.
- How can a story's setting shape its mood even before anything happens?

Questions to ask students AFTER the performance

- How did Sherlock Holmes use deduction and inference to solve the mystery?
- How did superstition affect the choices characters made? What might have happened if they relied only on logic?
- What mystery would you hire someone like Sherlock Holmes to solve?



About the Performance

Aquila Theatre's production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* adapts Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's classic with a dynamic and inventive theatrical approach. In line with the company's mission to breathe new life into the classics and make world-class theatre accessible for all, Aquila mixes comedy and mystery into the adaptation to create an entry point for audiences wholly unfamiliar with the Holmes' serials. The mystery unfolds when Sir Henry Baskerville inherits his family's estate on a dark and isolated moor. Rumors of a supernatural hound and a long-standing family curse create fear and uncertainty.

In this production, four actors perform multiple roles in a 'play-within-a-play' structure. Through its staging, the adaptation balances gothic suspense with farcical humor. Select scenes from the show will be performed, followed by narration from the cast in what Aquila calls "a guided tour."



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Vocabulary

alibi (*al-uh-bye*) – proof that someone was somewhere else when a crime happened

deception (*di-sep-shuhn*) – the act of tricking or misleading someone

eccentric (*ek-sen-trik*) – acting or dressing in a way that is unusual or different from most people

estate (*ih-stayt*) – a large house and the land around it

heir (*air*) – a person who receives money or property after someone dies

inference (*in-fer-uhns*) – a conclusion you make based on clues and evidence

inheritance (*in-hair-uh-tuhns*) – money, property, or belongings received from someone who has died

interrogate (*in-ter-uh-gayt*) – to question someone closely, often about a crime

lineage (*lin-ee-ij*) – a person's family history or ancestry

motive (*moh-tiv*) – the reason why someone does something

naturalist (*nach-er-uh-list*) – a scientist who studies plants, animals, and the natural world

ominous (*om-uh-nuhs*) – giving the feeling that something bad is going to happen

phosphorescent (*fos-fuh-res-uhnt*) – giving off a soft glow or light without heat

superstition (*soo-per-stish-uhn*) – a belief not based on scientific proof or reason

supernatural (*soo-per-nach-er-uhl*) – attributed to a force that cannot be explained by science or the laws of nature, seemingly beyond the laws of nature

Beyond the Show

Shared Superstitions

Part 1: Ask students to think of a superstition that they've heard and/or believe in. Direct them to share this superstition with a partner. Discuss how they learned about it and how they believe it originated.

Part 2: Directly after students complete part one, ask all the pairs to share at least one of the superstitions they discussed. Does the same superstition show up more than once in the class? If so, as a class discuss how the superstition may have started and using reason rather than supernatural possibilities, think about what events or traditions may have contributed to or inspired the belief.

Historical Event Telephone

Sometimes, superstitions and stories travel like the game "telephone," where small details change over time through different retellings. This even happens for historical events! Ask students to watch YouTube videos on the same historical event from different content creators. Is the story told the same in each, or does it differ slightly? Discuss why and how this happens, and what it means for our understanding of the past. You can extend this further by asking students to research the historical event and script their own video.

Click here!

For additional educational resources, download this study guide prepared for the production by Aquila Theatre.

Facts about Popejoy Hall

- Popejoy Hall officially opened on October 1, 1966.
- The hall can seat up to 1985 people.
- Most walls inside the hall are not parallel or perpendicular to the stage. Curves, angles, and soft or textured surfaces scatter the sound throughout the hall so that audiences can hear performances better.
- Popejoy Hall has an orchestra pit which raises and lowers. It is the largest elevator in the building.
- The ceiling over the stage is three times the height of the curtain opening. Sets can be lowered into place by pulleys and raised high enough to be stored completely out of sight when not in use.

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