The Goodman Theatre
Student Subscription Series
2003-2004 Season

Student Guide

The Light in the Piazza

Directed by
Bartlett Sher

Student Guide written and designed by
David Biele, Education Consultant
Theresa Kipp, Education and Community Programs Intern
Megan Welch, Education and Community Programs Coordinator

Edited and published by The Goodman Theatre
Stacey Ballis, Director of Education and Community Programs
Megan Welch, Education and Community Programs Coordinator

KRAFT FOODS
is the Principal Sponsor of the 2003-2004 free Student Subscription Series
Making a Musical

**The Light in The Piazza**

It is the summer of 1953. Margaret, an elegant middle-aged American woman, travels with her beautiful daughter Clara to Italy. While enjoying the sites of Florence they meet a handsome young Italian, Fabrizio, who is immediately captivated by Clara. His persistence is matched by Clara’s interest in him, and the two seem destined for a whirlwind romance. There is a secret in Clara’s past, however that may threaten their future together.

Elizabeth Spencer was born in Carrollton, Mississippi, in July of 1921. Her career as a writer has spanned over fifty years. Most of Spencer’s works are set in places where she has lived. While she is best known for her works set in the south, where she grew up, she has also written works set in Canada and Italy. Spencer lived in Italy for two years, where she met and fell in love with her husband, John Rusher. **The Light in the Piazza**, her most famous work, was published as a novel in 1960. In 1962, a film version was made starring Olivia de Havilland, Yvette Mimieux, George Hamilton, Rossano Brazzi, and Barry Sullivan.

**Composer:** creates the score, the music in the musical
**Lyricist:** creates the lyrics sung in the musical

Adam Guettel is a composer/lyricist living in New York City. His past works include the music and lyrics for **Love’s Fire, Saturn Returns**, and **Floyd Collins**, which was produced at the Goodman Theatre in 1999. He has also written film scores for **Arguing the World**, a feature documentary by Joe Dorman, and for **Jack**, a documentary for CBS by Peter Davis (1994). He is the recipient of the Stephen Sondheim Award (1990), the Obie Award (1996), the Lucille Lortel Award (1996), and the ASCAP New Horizons Award (1997). Adam Guettel comes from a family famous for their contributions in American Musical Theatre. He is the grandson of Richard Rodgers (the famous composer of the musical team Rodgers and Hammerstein) and the son of Mary Rodgers (a famous Broadway actress.)

**Librettist:** Author of the libretto; all of the spoken words in a musical

Craig Lucas is a playwright, librettist, screenwriter, and director. His plays include **Stranger, The Dying Gaul, God’s Heart, Prelude to a Kiss, Blue Window, Reckless, Missing Persons, This Thing of Darkness** (with David Schulner), and an adaptation of Strindberg’s **Miss Julie**. In addition to **The Light in the Piazza**, Lucas has written the libretto for **Orpheus in Love**, and the book for the musical **Three Postcards**. His screenplays include **The Secret Lives of Dentists, Longtime Companion**, as well as numerous adaptations of his plays. His many awards include the Distinguished Literature Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Obie awards for both his written and directorial work, and a 2003 PEN/Laura Pels Foundation Award for Drama. He has received such prestigious fellowships as the Guggenheim, Rockefeller and NEA/TCG. He is the Associate Artistic Director of the Intiman Theatre, where he directed **The Light in the Piazza**.
The Musical: An Introduction

The following section, adapted from Stephen Citron’s *The Musical from the Inside Out* (1991), will give you important insights into the differences between musicals and plays and help you better understand Lucas and Guettel’s work.

Musicals! The very word conjures up the most exciting and diverting form of live theater in the world today. Flashing chorus girls, stunning scenic effects, dashing leading men, tap, ballet, orchestras, overtures, and exit music. Musicals come in all shapes and sizes. Following is a list of the different kinds of musicals and some examples of each.

### Types of Musicals

**Musical Cavalcade or Biography:** A survey of a songwriter’s body of work of the music of a specific era. It can be a biography in song of a musician, as *Ain’t Misbehavin’* was of Thomas “Fats” Waller. In that case, it uses the original songs of the creator with just enough biographical information thrown in to give an idea of the “times” of the main character. Often this kind of musical does not have a plot, or at most the thinnest wisp of a story.

*Examples:* *Side by Side by Sondheim* (the music of Stephen Sondheim), *Sophisticated Ladies* (the songs of Duke Ellington), and *Fosse* (the choreography and direction of Bob Fosse).

**Vaudeville or Variety:** A series of musical, acrobatic, magic, tumbling, and/or novelty acts that was a popular entertainment before the days of movies. Somehow, it survived even into the late 1930s. In the United States, it has basically been dead for the past sixty years.

*Examples:* *Helzapoppin*, *Sons ‘o’ Fun*, and *Sugar Babies*.

**Operetta:** A musical theater production that has many of the musical elements of opera, but is lighter and more popular in subject and style and contains spoken dialogue. They do not have opera’s tragic arias and high drama. They have shorter, wittier, less-florid songs and lively dance numbers rather than arty ballet.

*Examples:* *A Little Night Music*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, and *Aspects of Love*.

**Musical Comedy:** Of all the terms in musical theater, musical comedy is the most misunderstood. What today’s Americans call a “musical” they formerly called “musical comedy.” The British still call it “musical comedy,” whereas the French call it “opérette.” Actually, the term is used by the public as a generic term for any show with music, just as “Kleenex” is used for any disposable tissue. A musical comedy generally has a light plot, and its dialogue is interspersed with songs and dances. The lyrics of the songs must generally advance the action of the story, but there is time for songs sung just for fun. Its dancing is almost always in a lighter style.

*Examples:* *Anything Goes*, *42nd Street*, *On The Town*, and *Little Shop of Horrors*.

**Musical Play:** A musical play differs from a musical comedy mostly in the seriousness of its purpose. Songs almost always further the action or reveal character. Dancing tries to be realistic. They can deal with unpleasantness, such as pre-World War II Germany in *Cabaret*.

*Examples:* *Evita*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Les Miserables*, *Kiss of the Spiderwoman*, and *Rent*.

**Concept Musical:** The concept musical is a relative newcomer to the musical theater. It need not have a plot, or it may have just a very slight thread of one. Its purpose is to examine an idea through song.

*Examples:* *Company* (marriage), *A Chorus Line* (getting a job in a musical), and *Cats* (those four-legged felines).
The Book

The spoken words in a musical are called its book (or libretto). A musical’s book is rarely written from beginning to end. It’s generally created in sections which build on one another. The librettist keeps an eye on production numbers, shortness of dialogue, solos, duets, dancing, and everything that separates a musical from a play. Even more importantly, however, he/she is aware of the four “pressure points” in a musical. These are:

The Opening: The opening of a musical establishes the period, tone, character, and plot of the show right away. A famous librettist once said, “It takes fully ten minutes to get the audience’s attention. You have to sledgehammer the whole way. They must be required to pay attention. You must insist that they do.”

The First Act Curtain: In musicals, the first act curtain usually resolves some of the plot but leaves important threads left hanging for the finale. Usually, this is the moment of the play’s greatest intensity; it is such a strong moment that members of the audience often feel that they need the intermission to relax for a few moments away from the drama of the show.

The Second Act Opening: The opening of a musical’s second act usually begins with a scene or musical number that shows the result of what happened at the first act curtain. Like the first act’s opening, it’s designed to get the audience’s attention back.

The Eleven O’clock Number: This part of a musical received its name because most musicals used to start at 8:30 p.m. and this musical number usually took place at about 11:00 p.m. The eleven o’clock number climaxes the play, resolves the plot, and states the show’s theme. In addition, it is usually a “showstopper” and an emotional heart wringer as well. There may be a scene or two after this number, but they generally do not reach the emotional and dramatic heights of the eleven o’clock number.

Your Turn!

After you have read The Light in the Piazza, go back and analyze the book, looking specifically for the pressure points mentioned above. Describe how it handles each of these pressure points. For each pressure point, ask yourself if it accomplishes what it needs to accomplish. If it does, how does it do so? If not, why not?

Differences between Play Scripts and Books

Although there are many similarities between a play script and a book, there are some significant differences between them. These include:

The Opening: The openings of straight plays are often murky, talky, and focus more on atmosphere than on plot. Audiences expect it will take them awhile to get into the swing of it. Musicals, however, usually plunge audiences headfirst into them, usually through a big musical number.

Speed of Character Development: Straight plays often devote most of the first act to acquainting audiences with the characters. In musicals, this leisurely pace is taboo; from a character’s first appearance, we almost always know who that character is and what he/she wants.

Honesty of Characters: In many contemporary plays, characters are less than truthful about themselves when we first meet them. The audience gradually comes to separate their lies from their truths. This is almost never done in musicals. As we see the characters in the beginning, so they truly are. Of course, they may develop from there through the events in the play, but characters almost always are what they seemed to be from the outset.

Length: The most obvious difference between librettos and play scripts is length. The libretto of an average musical is about half the length of the average straight play. Plays often sprawl, but musicals generally do

http://www.neevia.com
The librettist Arthur Laurents once said, “You have to make every line count. You have to do it fast. In musicals there isn’t time for chitchat.” Stephen Sondheim, a giant in today’s musical theater, adds, “To write a good libretto, you have to accomplish everything a play accomplishes in half the time.”

**Tone:** Unlike plays, musicals usually end on some sort of positive note, no matter what the subject matter. This does not mean that all musicals have happy endings, but simply that downbeat tragedy and hopelessness is usually best served in straight drama or operas. Musicals, no matter how tender or moving, are almost always ennobling.

**The Ending:** in most plays, there is a gradual tapering off of the action as we near the end of the show. Generally called the denouement, this slow-down serves as an artistic return to reality. Musicals, however, generally end with a musical number that pulls all the themes together in an exciting fashion. Rather than becoming slower and quieter toward the end, musicals generally pick up the pace and hurl themselves toward the final curtain.

**Your Turn!**
Keeping the differences between plays and musicals in mind, write an essay which compares *The Light in the Piazza* to a play. Look specifically at each of the characteristics of plays and musicals listed above and describe how each work does or does not have that feature.

**The Score**
The music in a musical is known as its score. Generally, music is written into scenes when the emotions in the scene are too intense to be spoken and therefore must be sung. The work of every dramatist, whether a playwright or librettist, builds toward a climax, a turning point that keeps audiences on the edge of their seats. In musicals these moments get an added emotional kick from songs. Love and hate, happiness and sadness—all the emotions can be expanded through music. Although every song in a score is unique, there are some kinds of songs that appear again and again in musicals. These include:

**Character Identification Songs:** Every good musical gives each of its protagonists a kind of “musical signature,” a song that sums up who that character is and what that character wants.

**Establishing Number:** A song that provides the audience with information that is necessary to understanding the story. It may shed light on elements such as plot, time period, setting, characters, or theme.

**Comedy Songs:** One of the most important elements of a musical is humor, and most musicals have songs written specifically to make audiences smile, chuckle, or laugh out loud.

**Dramatic Songs:** These songs are serious in nature and often evoke emotions and sympathy from the audience.

**Soliloquies:** A soliloquy in a musical is similar to a soliloquy (monologue) in a play, except that it is sung. Musical soliloquies are songs in which characters tell the audience about themselves—they often express their hopes, fears, loves, hates, and anything else that is important for the audience to know.

**Love Songs:** In musicals, characters express their emotions through song in ways that would seem unreal. This is especially true in love songs, which most musicals have in one form or another. One type of love song is a ballad.

**Reprises:** When a song that was sung earlier in a musical is sung a second or third time, it is known as a reprise. The second acts of most musicals generally have at least one or two reprises.
Vocabulary

The following vocabulary words are found in the play, the study guide, and the OnStage magazine. Find definitions for each.

agonized
aperitif
awkward
Beacon
bureaucracy
cajole
capacity
catechism
cautions
chariot
coincidence
commissioned
contrary
dividing
dowry
engrossed
envy
extortion
extricated
forgery
ignited
impulsive
inattentive
inferno
intently
liaison
listless
maturity
merit
monastery
negotiate
obelisks
occupation
republic
self-flagellating
silhouette
unfurling
ushers
wretchedly

The following are some of the Italian words in *The Light in the Piazza*. The English translations are given.

bella: beautiful
grazie: thank you
prego: you’re welcome
Mi dispiace: I’m sorry
bene: good
buon giorno: good day/good morning
buona sera: good evening
uno: one
due: two
tre: three
manca: tip
Ciao: hello or goodbye
albergo: hotel
la cicatrice: scar
l’orecchio: ear
Passeggiata
cosa?: what?
si: yes
simpatico: nice
villa: mansion
piazza: public square
regazza: girl
Capisce?: understand?
OnStage Worksheet

Read the articles from the Onstage newsletter provided in the back of this guide and answer the following questions.

1. What other work by Adam Guettel has been produced on the Goodman stage?

2. What were Elizabeth Spencer’s first impressions of Italy and it’s people?

3. What famous playwright has set many of his works in Italy?

4. Name two poets that have written about Italy.

5. Name one famous author who has written a travel guide about Italy.

6. Name two aspects of Italy that attract visitors.

7. What was Adam Guettel’s goal in creating this musical?

8. What is the job of the orchestrator?

9. What does Ted Sperling suggest audience members should watch for in the second act?

10. When does an orchestrator start to work on a show?

11. Who does the orchestrator collaborate with on the musical?

12. Describe the orchestra and the orchestral concept for *The Light in the Piazza.*
Piazza: a public square in an Italian town

For centuries, Italy has been a place of fascination for those who love history, adventure, romance and beauty. For the American tourist, particularly in the 1950s, Italy was an escape from the rigidity of American life. In contrast to the ordered way of life in America, life in Italy was laid back and exotic. As Margaret says in The Light in the Piazza, in Italy all dreams seem possible.

The beauty found in Italy feeds both the body and the spirit. Visually, Italy is a land of aesthetic balance and harmony. The terrain consists of breathtaking mountains, hills, valleys, vineyards and islands. The land is laced with stunning architecture and art that spans the ages. In Italy, the purpose of food is not simply to nourish, but to enjoy. Meals are seen as a form of art. Italy is known for being the birthplace of pizza, gelato, parmesan cheese, prosciutto, as well as for their wide varieties of pasta such as spaghetti, farfalle, tortellini and agnolotti.

For much of the world’s population Italy is also a place of faith and religious pilgrimage. Vatican City, the center of the Catholic Faith, and an independently governed city, is located within Rome. Much of Italy’s political and artistic history has been shaped by the presence of the Vatican City. The Catholic Church commissioned many now famous works of religious art during the Renaissance period.

The city of Rome, the modern capital of Italy, is founded in the ancient mythology of Romulus and Remus, sons of Mars, the god of war. They were abandoned as infants and saved by a she-wolf who nursed them until a shepherd and his wife took them in. When Romulus and Remus grew up, they built a city on the spot where the shepherd found them. After the city was built, Romulus and Remus got into an argument over who would run the city. They fought and Remus was killed. Romulus ruled over the city and named it Rome.

Through its long history, Rome was the home to famous politicians such as Julius Caesar, Pompey and Constantine who laid the foundation for modern day civilizations and governments. During the Renaissance, the area became the land of famous artists such as Michelangelo, Raphael and Leonardo da Vinci. It was also the home of scientists such as Galileo, and architects such as Andrea Palladio and Filippo Brunelleschi. Some men, such as Michelangelo, were gifted in the fields of art, science, and architecture. Landmarks found in the capital city include the Colosseum, the Pantheon, the Forum, and Saint Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican.

Florence (Firenze) was the capital of Italy from 1865 until 1871. It is known as the birthplace of the Italian Renaissance and is credited with housing nearly one fifth of the world’s art. Notable sites in Florence include the cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore, the Pitti Palace, and the Uffizi.

Italy houses remnants of ancient Greek and Roman architecture. The Colosseum is an example of Roman architecture. Structures of this time period often contained large, austere columns and arches. They were massive and visually heavy. Later, in the gothic period, pointed arches and stained glass windows became common architectural elements. The exteriors of the buildings were often decorated with ornate design work. In the Renaissance, architects drew on classical (Roman and Greek) architecture. The Renaissance style was based on proportion, balance and symmetry. St. Peter’s Basilica with its soaring dome, is an example of Renaissance architecture. Numerous piazzas, fountains, and statues were also built during the Renaissance. Modern day Italian society co-exists with the stunning history, architecture and art of the country’s glorious past.

Write It!

♦ Imagine that you are either Clara or Mrs. Johnson. It is 1953 and you are visiting Italy.
♦ Make a list of:
   1. a tourist attraction you have visited in either Florence or Rome
   2. a person that you have met
   3. what you hope for the rest of your trip
   4. what you look forward to on your trip home.
♦ Now, with the information from your list, write a “postcard” to someone back in the United States, filling him/her in on your adventures.
♦ Write a small paragraph under the postcard explaining who you are writing to and why you chose that person.
The Setting

**Act It Out!**
Clara is an American visiting Italy, the home of Fabrizio. She speaks English and Fabrizio’s first language is Italian. This language barrier is an obstacle to their communication. Use this exercise to explore using actions, expressions, and tone of voice to communicate.

♦ Find a partner
♦ Together decide *who* you are, *where* you are, and *what* you are doing
  Some examples are:
  ♦ Mother and daughter, at school, waiting for a parent/teacher conference
  ♦ Best friends, at a mall, shopping for a dress
  ♦ Policeman and driver, at a stoplight, arguing over a ticket
  ♦ Teacher and student, in a museum, on a fieldtrip
  ♦ Boyfriend and girlfriend, in a library, studying for a test
  ♦ Waiter and customer, at a restaurant, sending a meal back
♦ Now, act out this scene with the given *who, what*, and *where*, but do NOT speak English. You will be speaking gibberish (sounds that do not resemble real words)
♦ After you practice your scene a couple of times, perform it for another group. See if they can guess your situation from what you *show* them, through your body language and tone.
Florence was the center of the Italian Renaissance. Therefore, it is not surprising that Italian Renaissance art serves as a backdrop in *The Light in the Piazza*. Here is some information about the artists who are referenced in the musical.

### Renaissance: rebirth, reawakening. Refers to the cultural rebirth in Europe from the 14th century through the middle 17th century.

Leonardo Da Vinci: famed painter, sculptor, architect and inventor, knowledgeable in anatomy, botany, music and optics. Da Vinci is known for his use of light and shadow as well as for his sense of balance and composition. Both skills are apparent in his works which mirror life with stunning accuracy. Some of his best known paintings are *The Last Supper* and the *Mona Lisa*.

Domenico Ghirlandaio: a Florentine painter, he is best known for his fresco and portraiture work. *Adoration of the Magi* is one example of his work. His style was noted for its realism. He had his own workshop and many pupils, the most famous of whom was Michelangelo.

### Humanism: (1) A system of thought that centers on humans and their values, (2) Concern with the interests, needs, and welfare of humans, (3) A cultural and intellectual movement of the Renaissance that emphasized secular concerns as a result of the rediscovery and study of the literature, art, and civilization of ancient Greece and Rome.

Fra Fillipo Lippi: a Florentine monk and painter. His style was noted for its three-dimensional appearance. Most of his works contain religious themes; he is best known for his paintings of the Virgin and Child.

Domenico Ghirlandaio: a Florentine painter, he is best known for his fresco and portraiture work. *Adoration of the Magi* is one example of his work. His style was noted for its realism. He had his own workshop and many pupils, the most famous of whom was Michelangelo.

Sandro Botticelli: a painter and student of Fra Fillipo Lippi, many of his paintings illustrate Roman and Greek mythology. Two examples are: *The Birth of Venus* and *Primavera*.

### Act It Out!
Much of the Renaissance Art reflected the dominant system of thought of its time: Humanism.
- Get into groups of 4-5 people.
- A theme will be handed to you. For the first one, try “Humanity.”
- One person will form a pose with his/her body and freeze like a statue. The pose will represent “humanity.”
- One by one, each person will join, freezing in their own pose.
- When everyone in the group is frozen, your sculpture is complete. The title of the sculpture is “Humanity.”
- Have each group take turns posing for the class. How are each of the sculptures different?
- Here are some other themes you may want to try: *peace, equality, inequality, love, hate, justice, failure, success, dreams, fears.*

### Michelangelo: sculptor, painter, poet and architect. Originally trained in fresco and sculpting techniques, his famous works include his statue *David* and his painting on the Sistine Chapel ceiling. *David* stands over 13 feet high, the largest freestanding marble statue to be built since classical times. The Sistine Chapel ceiling measures over 42 feet wide and 118 feet long. Michelangelo was commissioned by the Pope in 1508 to design and paint the ceiling. Michelangelo painted the ceiling from a standing position and completed the work in four and a half years.

### See for Yourself!
Interested in art? Visit the Art Institute! Among their vast collections are pieces of Italian Renaissance art. Tuesdays are free, so check it out.


The 1950s

WWII took many American men overseas, leaving traditionally “male” jobs unfilled. Women were encouraged to join the war effort by taking jobs which were formerly available only to men. Women were trained to fill positions such as welders, pilots, machine workers and factory workers. This change in the workforce was represented through the character of Rosie the Riveter. WWII ended in 1945 and men returned to re-claim their jobs.

Nearly 85% of women who worked during the war did not want to quit their jobs when the war ended. They enjoyed the independence and satisfaction of their challenging jobs. Many women were not eager to return to lives that revolved solely around domestic duties and raising children. Many who had been fired from their wartime jobs continued to work traditionally feminine jobs as secretaries, nurses and teachers. Married women usually worked only part time, and often when their children were school age or older. According to the History Channel, 70% of all middle class women worked to contribute to their household income.

Women of the 1950’s were expected to be attractive, docile, and “feminine” in all ways. The image of the ideal woman shifted from the strong capable working woman of the war effort to the domestic “feminine” wife and mother of the 1950’s. Marriage and motherhood were seen as the primary duties and joys of a woman’s life. In order to “catch” a husband, women were encouraged to look as attractive and feminine as possible at all times and to downplay their intelligence so as not to intimidate men. Women were expected to marry and often they married young. By the late 1950’s, nearly half of all brides were under the age of 19; about fourteen million girls were engaged by the age of 17. Within the first year of peace following WWII, 2.2 million couples were married.

A good housewife ran her household smoothly and saw to the comfort of her family, especially her husband. Social pressure to have a successful marriage was significant; in the United States there were only 385,144 divorces in 1950, compared to 1,135,000 in 1998. Women also put energy into being “good mothers.” Mothers were seen as ultimately responsible for their children’s future health, success and happiness. Because the standard of the “ideal housewife” was impossibly high to achieve, depression, or “housewives blight” as it was termed, became rampant. Anti-depressants entered the mass market and were heavily advertised as helping women get through their days of housework with smiles on their faces.

Examine the text!
Find an example in the text of The Light in the Piazza that reflects Margaret’s duties as a wife and mother. Does she feel like she has been successful, or does she feel like she has failed?
The Light In The Piazza takes place in 1953. The following is an excerpt from a 1950s home economics textbook for high school girls to be used for preparation for married life. Note how the suggestions reflect the time in which The Light in the Piazza takes place.

1. Have dinner ready: Plan ahead, even the night before, to have a well balanced delicious meal - prepared and ready to serve at the usual time. This is a way of letting him know that you have been thinking about him and are concerned about his needs. Most men are hungry when they come home and the prospects of a good meal are part of the warm welcome needed. Some men like a drink before dinner; if so, plan to keep the meal warm, and not burn anything while he finishes his drink.

2. Prepare yourself: Take 15 minutes to rest so you will be refreshed when he arrives. Touch up your make-up, put a ribbon in your hair and be fresh looking. He has just been with a lot of work-weary people. Be a little gay and a little more interesting. His boring day may need a lift. Remember, too, that the women who are in the work force are usually well-dressed and single, and probably looking for a husband.

3. Clear away the clutter: Make one last trip through the main part of the house just before your husband arrives, gathering up school books, toys, paper, etc. Then run a dust cloth over the tables. Your husband will feel he has reached a haven of rest and order, and it will give you a lift, too.

4. Prepare the children: Take a few minutes to wash the children's hands and faces if they are too young to do so themselves. Comb their hair, and, if necessary, change their clothes. They are his little treasures and he would like to see them playing the part. Caution the children that while discussion is welcome at the dinner table, unpleasant squabbles or disputes should wait until a later time.

5. Minimize the noise: At the time of his arrival, eliminate all noise of washer or dryer. Make sure all appliances, such as the vacuum are properly put away. Try to encourage the children to be quiet. Be happy to see him. Greet him with a warm smile and be glad to see him.

6. Avoid using the phone: Should anyone telephone you before/during/after dinner, politely advise them you'll return their call after doing the dinner dishes.

7. Things to avoid: Don't greet him with problems or complaints. Don't complain if he's late for dinner and didn't have time to call. Count this as minor compared with what he might have gone through that day.

8. Make him comfortable: Have him lean back in a comfortable chair or suggest he lie down in the bedroom. Have a cool or warm drink ready for him. Arrange his pillow and offer to take off his shoes. Speak in a low, soft, soothing and pleasant voice. Allow him to relax and unwind, either before or after dinner. Some men relax with the evening paper, others with TV.
9. Listen to him: You may have a dozen things to tell him, but the moment of his arrival is not the time. Let him talk first. However, should you sense his mood sullen because of the business day, be prepared for some lighthearted banter or just some small talk.

10. Stress the positive: Plan to inform your husband of the positive events of the day; include the children's accomplishments.

11. Make the evening his: Never complain if he does not take you out to dinner or to other places of entertainment; instead, try to understand his world of strain and pressure and his need to be home and relax.

12. The goal: Try to make your home a place of peace and order where your husband can relax and enjoy himself.

**What do you Think?**
How would you feel if this was a text book that you were given to study from? Write your own updated version of how to be a successful woman for 2003. What should her goals be? Who should her activities be centered on? What are her priorities?

**Act it Out!**
1. Get into groups of 4 or 5.
2. One person will act as the teacher; the rest of the group will act as students.
3. The teacher will read from this lesson book. The students will be in a contemporary classroom.
4. The students will come up with questions arguing the significance of the points made in this textbook.

**Research It!**
Research one of the following people that have made a difference either in women’s lives or what women can aspire to today. Write an essay about why this person is significant:
- Amelia Earhart
- Eve Ensler
- Betty Freidan
- Margaret Mead
- Sandra Day O’Connor
- Condoleezza Rice
- Sally Ride
- “Rosie the Riveter”
- Eleanor Roosevelt
- Margaret Sanger
- Gloria Steinem
- Margaret Thatcher
- Oprah Winfrey
- Virginia Woolf

**See It!**
To see more about what it was like to grow up as a young woman in the 1950s, check out the new film *Mona Lisa Smile*. The film explores the conflict of encouraging women to further their studies and career versus pursuing marriage as their sole goal in life.

**Act It Out!**
Write a monologue from the perspective of your chosen person about her thoughts on her accomplishments and on the lives of women. Perform your monologue, in character, for the class.
Men in the 1950’s

WWII ended in 1945 and millions of American servicemen returned to the U.S. Many of them struggled to fill society’s new expectations of them. Men were asked to put away their military uniforms and take on the roles of the “company man.” They were expected to be heads of their households, devoted to both family and work. Both of these roles differed drastically from their roles during the war.

During the war a man’s role was to serve his country, to fight the enemy, and bring peace and safety to the world. Servicemen in WWII had incredible morale; they believed strongly in what they were doing and why. Throughout the triumphs and horrors of war men formed intense camaraderie with each other, living through times that could only be understood by experiencing them. With their sense of purpose, war became an exciting and terrifying adventure. Men felt that they were playing an important role in the world, and that what they did mattered.

When soldiers returned home, the physical and emotional intensity they were used to during the war was suddenly replaced. Men were now expected to work 9-5 in an impersonal company, doing jobs which lacked the glory and ideals of the service. Work and individual accomplishment were seen as defining a man’s worth. Men were to be strong, silent, controlled in their emotions, logical, comfortable with risks, assertive and independent. The ideal was “the company man.” The company man as the name suggests, was defined by his work. The term “the rat race” was coined in this era, reflecting the race to climb up the corporate ladder. Men did everything they could to win the good graces of their “higher ups,” pushing for promotions and corresponding pay raises. Conformity to company standards and devotion to company goals, ideas, and existence was essential. Men’s very identities were defined by their careers. Men were even required to observe a code of dress, which further instilled conformity. Normal attire for a man was a dark gray suit, white shirt, and black shoes. At one major company men were required to wear ankle garters to make sure that their socks stayed securely in place and maintained the crisp, polished look the company demanded.

During the war families had struggled financially. After the war, consumerism was the mark of success. With increasing expectations for higher standards of living, men were under intense pressure to work longer hours, get better jobs, and get higher salaries. A man was to be the head of his household, responsible for making all major decisions and providing for the economic needs of his family. As husbands, many men found it difficult to share their stories, feelings and emotions about the war with their wives. The horrors and triumphs of war were not acceptable topics of conversation in conservative 1950s America. It was time to look forward and not reminisce about the past. Most parenting advice encouraged traditional gender and parenting roles within the family. As fathers, men were expected to be the disciplinarians, decision makers, and providers. Mothers were allowed to express emotion, but fathers were encouraged not to. Struggling to find their places both at work and at home, many men felt that they were lost, that their individuality and sense of purpose was gone. Alcoholism became a growing, although not openly discussed social issue.

A best seller in the 1950s, Sloan Wilson’s Man in the Grey Flannel Suit, reflected the social, emotional, and financial pressures of men returning to the workforce and family life after WWII.

Examine the text:
Find an example from The Light in the Piazza about the corporate pressures on Roy Johnson. How has his relationship with Margaret changed from before the war to after the war?