

Broadway Musicals

"Ribbons Down My Back" from *Hello, Dolly!*

"I Could Have Danced All Night" from *My Fair Lady*

**"The Best Things Happen While You're Dancing"
from *White Christmas***

"Sunrise, Sunset" from *Fiddler on the Roof*

"People" from *Funny Girl*

The Music of Broadway

The vibrant melodies and powerful lyrics found in Broadway music can transport listeners to different worlds, allowing them to experience a range of emotions from joy to heartbreak. This collection of Broadway hits will draw us into the middle of personal journeys and colorful stories.



Song: "Ribbons Down My Back" from *Hello, Dolly!* (1963)

Songwriters: Jerry Herman

Brief context: "Ribbons Down My Back," written by Jerry Herman, is a standout ballad from the 1964 musical *Hello, Dolly!* Known for its large, energetic numbers, *Hello, Dolly!* takes a quiet, reflective turn with this song, as Irene Molloy, a young widow and milliner, expresses her longing for new love. Sung as she dreams of catching the attention of a gentleman with the ribbons on her hat, this tender and melancholic piece contrasts with the show's usual vibrancy. Though short, the song encapsulates Irene's hopes and sets the stage for her eventual romantic journey.

Activity: Listening

What do you need?

- Perfect Harmony "Ribbons Down My Back" video

Fun Fact

In September of 1970, did you know that the original production of *Hello, Dolly!* became the longest-running musical in Broadway history up to that time, surpassing *My Fair Lady* and then being surpassed in turn by *Fiddler on the Roof*. Consider what musical YOU would like to see break records on Broadway today!



Song: "I Could Have Danced All Night" from *My Fair Lady* (1956)

Songwriters: Frederick Loewe and Alan Jay Lerner

Brief context: "I Could Have Danced All Night," with music by Frederick Loewe and lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner, was first performed by Julie Andrews in the 1956 Broadway musical *My Fair Lady*. The song captures the joy and excitement of Eliza Doolittle after dancing with Henry Higgins and has become one of the most iconic numbers from the show. In the 1964 film adaptation, Marni Nixon provided the singing voice for Audrey Hepburn's Eliza. Over the years, it has been covered by artists like Frank Sinatra, Peggy Lee, and Shirley Bassey, and featured in films like *The Birdcage* and television shows like *Glee*.

Activity: Singing and Discussion

What do you need?

- Perfect Harmony "I Could Have Danced All Night" video
- Perfect Harmony "I Could Have Danced All Night" lyrics

Suggested Discussion Prompt

Have you ever met someone who instantly made your heart beat a little faster or who made you feel like you could dance with them all night long?

Tell someone about a person who makes you feel alive inside.



I Could Have Danced All Night

from the musical *My Fair Lady*

Bed, bed, I couldn't go to bed

My head's too light to try to set it down

Sleep, sleep, I couldn't sleep tonight

Not for all the jewels in the crown

I could have danced all night

I could have danced all night

And still have begged for more

I could have spread my wings

And done a thousand things I've never done before

I'll never know what made it so exciting

Why all at once my heart took flight

I only know when he

Began to dance with me

I could have danced, danced, danced all night

I Could Have Danced All Night

from the musical *My Fair Lady*

I could have danced all night

I could have danced all night

And still have begged for more

I could have spread my wings

And done a thousand things I've never done before

I'll never know what made it so exciting

Why all at once my heart took flight

I only know when he

Began to dance with me

I could have danced, danced, danced all night

Song: "The Best Things Happen While You're Dancing"

from *White Christmas* (1954)

Recorded by: Danny Kaye, Joseph J. Lilley & His Orchestra

Brief context: "The Best Things Happen While You're Dancing," written by Irving Berlin, was first performed by Danny Kaye and Vera-Ellen (dubbed by Trudy Stevens) in the 1954 musical film *White Christmas*. The song, a lively duet, plays a pivotal role in the film's storyline, as Phil (Kaye) and Judy (Vera-Ellen) share a romantic dance that helps set the stage for the blossoming love between their friends, played by Bing Crosby and Rosemary Clooney. The song was specifically crafted by Berlin to suit this joyful, situational dance moment in the film. The song was also included in the Broadway musical, which came after the film.

Activity: Movement

What do you need?

- Perfect Harmony "The Best Things Happen While You're Dancing" video

Suggested Seated Movement

Follow Perfect Harmony leader Kenny or create your own seated movement!

Use movements like . . .

- Clasping your hands and reaching to the sky
- Tango-ing with your pretend partner
- Reaching your big toe forward and back
- Giving yourself a big hug



Song: "Sunrise, Sunset" from *Fiddler on the Roof* (1964)

Songwriter: Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick

Brief context: "Sunrise, Sunset," composed by Jerry Bock with lyrics by Sheldon Harnick, debuted in the 1964 musical *Fiddler on the Roof*. The song is performed during Tzeitel's wedding, as her parents, Tevye and Golde, reflect on the rapid passage of time, while younger characters wonder about their own futures. "Sunrise, Sunset" became one of the most iconic songs from the show, praised for its poignant lyrics and emotional resonance, often moving listeners to tears. It has since been recorded by artists like Bing Crosby and Perry Como and remains a staple in the musical theater canon.

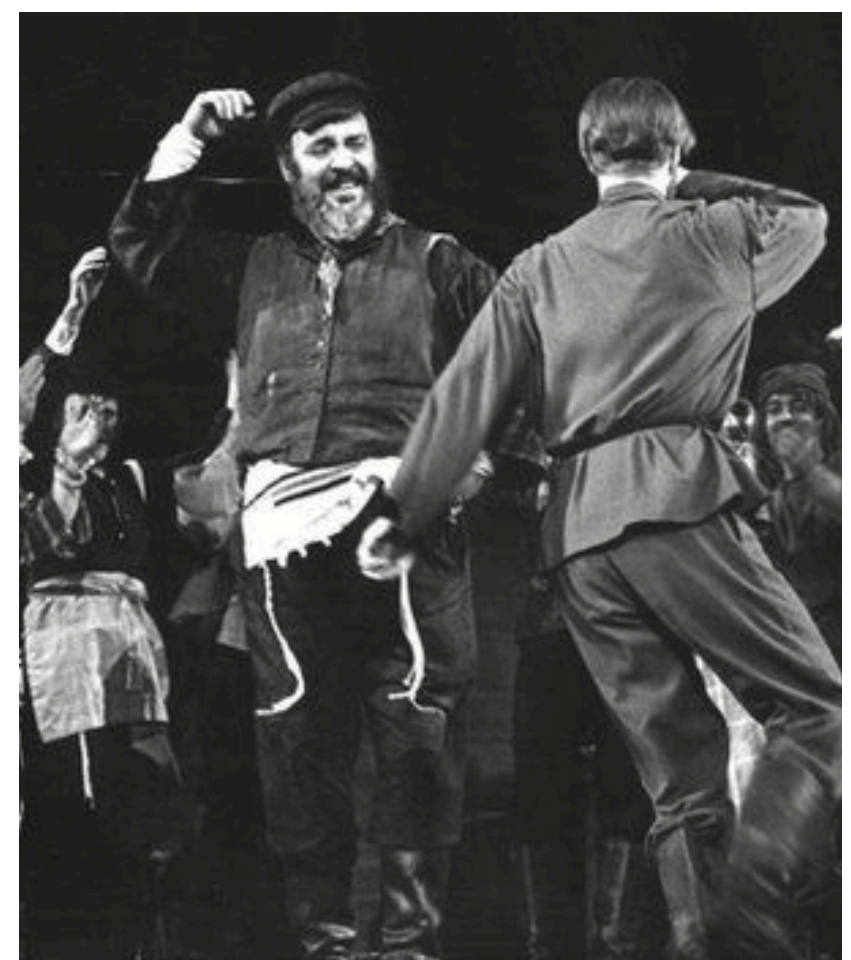
Activity: Singing

What do you need?

- Perfect Harmony "Sunrise, Sunset" video
- Perfect Harmony "Sunrise, Sunset" lyrics

Note from the lyricist:

"I do remember when we wrote 'Sunrise Sunset,' the first person we played it for was Jerry Bock's wife... and when I finished, then I looked at Jerry's wife Patti and I was startled to see that she was crying. And I thought, my goodness; this song must be more effective than we even know. And the same thing happened - I am not a pianist but the music to "Sunrise Sunset" is easy enough so that I could learn the piano part - and I played it for my sister. And when I finished I looked and she had tears in her eyes. And that was a very unusual experience." - Sheldon Harnick



Sunrise, Sunset

from the musical *Fiddler on the Roof*

Is this the little girl I carried

Is this the little boy at play?

I don't remember growing older

When did they?

When did she get to be a beauty?

When did he grow to be so tall?

Wasn't it yesterday when they were small?

Sunrise, sunset

Sunrise, sunset

Swiftly flow the days

Seedlings turn overnight to sunflowers

Blossoming even as we gaze

Sunrise, sunset

Sunrise, sunset

Swiftly fly the years

Sunrise, Sunset

from the musical *Fiddler on the Roof*

**One season following another
Laiden with happiness and tears**

**They look so natural together
Just like two newlyweds should be
Is there a canopy in store for me?**

**Sunrise, sunset
Sunrise, sunset
Swiftly flow the days
Seedlings turn overnight to sunflowers
Blossoming even as we gaze**

**Sunrise, sunset
Sunrise, sunset
Swiftly fly the years**

**One season following another
Laiden with happiness and tears**

Song: "People" from *Funny Girl* (1964)
Songwriters: Jule Styne and Bob Merrill

Brief context: "People," composed by Jule Styne with lyrics by Bob Merrill, was introduced by Barbra Streisand in the 1964 Broadway musical *Funny Girl*. The song, which expresses Fanny Brice's feelings towards Nicky Arnstein, became Streisand's first Top 40 hit and one of her signature songs. Despite initial resistance from the show's producers, Streisand's performance of "People" in early tryouts stopped the show, ensuring its place in the musical. It has since been covered by numerous artists and was inducted into the GRAMMY Hall of Fame in 1998.

Activity: Listening

What do you need?

- Perfect Harmony "People" video

Additional listening:

In addition to Diane's instrumental interpretation, we encourage you to listen to 2024 Songbook Academy alumna Kaitlyn Blair sing the lyrics of this classic song.

CONSIDER: Does your understanding of this song change when you hear the lyrics? Do you prefer listening to the song with or without lyrics?



Listen at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0uejCuqgnWs>

