

Study Guide prepared by
Catherine Bush
Barter Playwright-in-Residence

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow

Adapted by Catherine Bush from the short story by Washington Irving

*Especially for Grades 4-11

**By the Barter Players, Barter's Smith Theatre Fall, 2019
On tour January thru March, 2020**

(NOTE: standards are included for reading the story *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, seeing a performance of the play, and completing the study guide.)

Virginia SOLs

English – 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 4.9, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 5.7, 5.9, 6.1, 6.2, 6.4, 6.5, 6.7, 6.9, 7.1, 7.2, 7.4, 7.5, 7.7, 7.9, 8.1, 8.2, 8.4, 8.5, 8.7, 8.9, 9.1, 9.3, 9.4, 9.6, 9.8, 10.1, 10.3, 10.4, 10.6, 10.8, 11.1, 11.3, 11.4, 11.6, 11.8

Theatre Arts – 6.5, 6.7, 6.18, 6.21, 7.6, 7.18, 7.20, 8.5, 8.12, 8.18, 8.22, TI.10, TI.11, TI.13, TI.17, TII.9, TII.12, TII.15, TII.17, TIII.12

Tennessee/North Carolina Common Core State Standards

English Language Arts – Reading Literature: 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 5.4, 5.9, 6.4, 6.7, 6.10, 7.4, 7.7, 7.10, 8.4, 8.7, 8.10, 9-10.4, 9-10.10, 11-12.4, 11-12.7, 11-12.10

English Language Arts – Writing: 4.3, 4.7, 5.3, 5.9, 6.1, 6.4, 6.6, 6.7, 7.1, 7.3, 7.7, 8.1, 8.3, 8.7, 9-10.1, 9-10.3, 9-10.7, 11-12.2, 11-12.1, 11-12.3, 11-12.7

Tennessee Fine Arts Curriculum Standards

Theatre – 4.T.P3, 4.T.Cr2, 4.T.Cr3, 4.T.R1, 4.T.Cn1, 5.T.P3, 5.T.Cr2, 5.T.R1

Theatre 6-8 – 6.T.Cr2, 6.T.R1, 6.T.R3, 7.T.P3, 7.T.Cr2, 7.T.R3, 8.T.P3, 8.T.R1, 8.T.R3

Theatre 9-12 – HS3.T.Cr3, HS1.T.R1, HS2.T.R1, HS1.T.R1, HS1.T.R2, HS1.T.R3

North Carolina Essential Standards

Theatre Arts – 4.C.1, 4.A.1, 5.A.1, 6.A.1, 6.C.2, 6.CU.2, 7.C.2, 7.A.1, 7.CU.2, 8.C.2, 8.A.1, 8.CU.2, B.A.1, B.CU.2, I.A.1, I.CU.2

Setting

The hamlet of Sleepy Hollow, New York, 1790



Characters

Ichabod Crane – the new schoolmaster

Katrina Van Tassel – the village coquette

Headless Horseman – ghost of a Hessian soldier

Baltus Van Tassel – Katrina’s father, a rich farmer

Mrs. Van Tassel – Katrina’s mother

Brom Bones – a country swain in love with Katrina

Maria Metternich – a maid in the village

Johanna Brinkerhoff – a maid in the village, sings

Peter Ganesvoort – Brom’s schoolmate and friend

Mrs. Van Ripper – Ichabod’s landlady



Note: Cast Size and Doubling of Actors

(“Doubling” means one actor playing more than one role in a production)

In this production of *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* we will be using six actors; the actor playing Ichabod will play that role only; the other five actors will play two or three roles each. Doubling (and tripling) of actors requires distinction between characters. In this production, characters will be distinguished by costume, voice and other physical character traits.

The Visual Aspects of the Production: Sets and Props

The sets and props for this production will be minimal. This further helps to focus the audience on the human aspects of the play. A good set is not necessarily one that dazzles the audience with spectacle but rather creates a visual and physical world that allows the audience to participate in the most important aspect of the play: the journey of the main character(s).

Background

Washington Irving moved to England in 1815. Shortly after taking residence there, Irving became friends with the writer Sir Walter Scott. Scott encouraged his friend to read German folklore, particularly the writings of Johann Karl August Musäus, who had written a series of “headless horseman” tales. Many claim that these stories are the origin for Irving’s *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, which was first published in England in a volume called *The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* *The Sketch Book* was published in installments in the United States beginning in 1819, but the section that contained this story was not issued until 1820.

Synopsis

Ichabod Crane, a young schoolmaster from Connecticut, arrives in Sleepy Hollow, New York to take his first teaching assignment. But Sleepy Hollow is not as “sleepy” as it looks, according to Ichabod’s landlady, Mrs. Van Ripper. The town is well-known for its “haunts” and especially famous is the Headless Horseman, the spirit of a Hessian soldier who arises from his grave nightly to search for the head that an American cannonball removed from his shoulders during the Revolutionary War. Ichabod, superstitious from birth, thrills with these ghost stories but finds himself even more fascinated with one of his older students, the delectable Katrina Van Tassel. Katrina is not only beautiful; her father is the wealthiest farmer in the region and her mother a wonderful cook – and how poor, penniless Ichabod loves to eat! Ichabod considers it a match made in heaven. Only one thing stands in his way – the handsome, brutish Brom Bones. Brom is the best horseman in the county and has no time for things like books and homework. More importantly, Brom is deeply in love with Katrina Van Tassel. When Katrina invites Ichabod to dinner on the first day of school, a confrontation ensues, rendering Ichabod and Brom mortal enemies forever. Brom’s



ire is further increased when Katrina’s mother, Mrs. Van Tassel, discovers Ichabod’s beautiful singing voice and hires him to give Katrina lessons. Mrs. Van Tassel is determined that Katrina should sing the solo in the school concert, much to the consternation of Johanna Brinkerhoff, a classmate of Katrina’s. Johanna has a lovely voice and has always been given the solo – and sees no reason why this year should be any different. Ichabod tries his best to aid the tone-deaf Katrina, but to no avail. He assigns her the solo anyway, after Mrs. Van Tassel bribes him with the promise of a celebratory feast on All Hallowed’s Eve. Meanwhile, Mrs. Van Ripper is being eaten out of house and home. **(continued.)**

Synopsis (cont.)

When Mrs. Van Ripper complains to Ichabod about his voracious appetite, he threatens to report her “stinginess” to the town fathers, who pay her to board the schoolmaster. Mrs. Van Ripper has no choice but to stay silent. She is also forced to lend Ichabod her decrepit nag Gunpowder so that he may “ride in style” to the Van Tassel’s party. At the party, Brom Bones regales the guests with a story of his encounter with the Headless Horseman and how they raced on horseback to the Old Dutch Church Bridge. When Brom tries to dance with Katrina, she refuses in a fit of pique and dances with Ichabod instead. Brom leaves the party, furious. Ichabod takes Katrina off by herself and asks her to marry him. He tells her of his plan to sell her father’s farm so that they might take the money and move to Kentucky where many adventures await. Baltus, overhearing this remark,



becomes furious and leaves. Katrina tells Ichabod that she is in love with Brom and refuses his hand. Humiliated, Ichabod leaves the party and starts to ride home. He hears hoofbeats behind him – he turns and sees the Headless Horseman! He tries to gallop away, but at every turn he takes the Headless Horseman is already there! Finally, with a shriek, Ichabod eludes this heinous ghost and rides off down the road, never to be seen again.

Did You Know...?

Sleepy Hollow is an actual village located on the Hudson River in New York state. Originally incorporated as “North Tarrytown” in the late 1800’s, in 1996 the village officially adopted the traditional name. The Old Dutch Church still stands today.

Biography of the Author

Washington Irving was born on April 3, 1783 in New York, the eleventh child born to Sarah and William Irving. Though born sickly, he was an adventuresome young man; traveling would become a life-long passion. In 1804 Irving set sail for France to treat a lung ailment. For the next two years he traveled throughout Europe. In 1806, his health restored, he returned to America, where he composed his first novel, *Knickerbocker's History of New York* (1809), a satirical weaving of fact and fiction narrated by Diedrich Knickerbocker which won Irving much acclaim at home and abroad. In 1815 he left for England to visit his brother. An unsuccessful business venture there compelled him to take up his pen again in hopes of earning an income. Irving's short stories, including *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* and *Rip Van Winkle*, were first printed in America under his pseudonym Geoffrey Crayon between the years 1819-1820. These stories, wildly popular in both Europe and America, shot Irving to fame. In 1832, Irving returned to America and bought a farm on the banks of the Hudson River at Tarrytown NY – a few miles from the hamlet of Sleepy Hollow. The little Dutch cottage, known as "Sunnyside," would be his home for the remainder of his life. Washington Irving died on November 28 1859 and now rests in the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery overlooking the Old Dutch Church in Tarrytown, New York.



Biography of the Playwright

Catherine Bush lives in Abingdon, VA where she is Barter Theatre's playwright-in-residence. Her plays for young audiences include *Cry Wolf!*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Rapunzel*, *Frosty*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *My Imaginary Pirate*, *The Red Badge of Courage*, *All I Want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth*, *The Princess and the Pea*, *The Call of the Wild*, *Aesop's Fables*, *Santa Claus is Coming to Town*, *Mother Goose: The Musical*, *Antigone*, *Jingle All the Way*, *Great Expectations*, *Anne of Green Gables*, *Old Turtle and the Broken Truth*, *Robin Hood*, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Clementine: the Musical*, *Tarzan*, *The Little Mermaid*, and *Peter Pan*.





A Brief History

Barter Theatre was founded during the Great Depression by Robert Porterfield, an enterprising young actor. He and his fellow actors found themselves out of work and hungry in New York City. Porterfield contrasted that to the abundance of food, but lack of live theatre, around his home region in Southwest Virginia. He returned to Washington County with an extraordinary proposition: bartering produce from the farms and gardens of the area to gain admission to see a play.

Barter Theatre opened its doors on June 10, 1933 proclaiming, “With vegetables you cannot sell, you can buy a good laugh.” The price of admission was 40 cents or the equivalent in produce, the concept of trading “ham for Hamlet” caught on quickly. At the end of the first season, the Barter Company cleared \$4.35 in cash, two barrels of jelly and enjoyed a collective weight gain of over 300 pounds.

Playwrights including Noel Coward, Tennessee Williams and Thornton Wilder accepted Virginia ham as payment for royalties. An exception was George Bernard Shaw, a vegetarian, who bartered the rights to his plays for spinach.

Today, Barter Theatre has a reputation as a theatre where many actors performed before going on to achieve fame and fortune. The most recognized of these alumni include Gregory Peck, Patricia Neal, Ernest Borgnine, Hume Cronyn, Ned Beatty, Gary Collins, Larry Linville and Frances Fisher. The list also included James Burrows, creator of *Cheers*, Barry Corbin, and the late Jim Varney.

Robert Porterfield passed away in 1971. His successor, Rex Partington, had been at Barter in the 1950s as an actor and in the 1970s as stage manager. Rex returned as chief administrator from 1972 until his retirement in 1992. In March 2006, he passed away.

Richard Rose was named the producing artistic director in October 1992. In that time, attendance has grown from 42,000 annual patrons to more than 163,000 annual patrons. Significant capital improvements have also been made. Including maintenance to both theatres, and in 2006, the addition of The Barter Café at Stage II and dramatic improvements to Porterfield Square.

Barter represents three distinct venues of live theatre: Barter Theatre Main Stage, Barter Theatre Stage II and The Barter Players. Barter Theatre, with over 500 seats, features traditional theatre in a luxurious setting. Barter Stage II, across the street from Barter Main Stage and beyond Porterfield Square, offers seating for 167 around a thrust stage in an intimate setting and is perfect for more adventurous productions. The Barter Players is a talented ensemble of actors, producing plays for young audiences throughout the year.

History is always in the making at Barter Theatre, building on legends of the past; Barter looks forward to the challenge of growth in the future.

Vocabulary Words

In The Play

schoolmaster
supernatural
superstitious
traitor
gallows
torment
Hessian
churchyard

hayseed
discipline
boisterous
afflictions
woo
psalmody
conspire
tutelage

goblin
knave
solo
bumpkin
buffoon
epitaph

In The Story

spacious
expansion
denominate
inveterate
propensity
vouch
authentic
tranquility
stripling
exploit
reverberate
listless
sequester
pervade
reverie

gambol
apparition
adjacent
vicinity
collate
quest
imbibe
laud
incessant
sojourn
pedagogue
cognomen
formidable
peradventure
potentate

discriminate
indulgence
urchin
dogged
sullen
chastisement
consolatory
convoy
behoove
onerous
drone
itinerant
erudition
credulity
capacious

Define the vocabulary words above then write sentences using them. Remember: anyone reading your sentence should be able to understand the word from the context in which it is used.

Questions/Activities for Elementary School Students

1. This story is set in the year 1790. Ichabod Crane is a schoolmaster who teaches in a one-room schoolhouse. How does a one-room schoolhouse differ from our school system today? Are there any one-room schoolhouses left in your state? In the country? Did Ichabod Crane's schoolhouse have electricity? What did the students use to write? Were there computers? Internet? Restrooms? Cafeterias? How did the students get to school? **Research the life of a student in 1790 and compare it to your life as a student today. Present your findings to the class.**

2. Ichabod Crane was fascinated with ghost stories. Do you have any "ghosts" that supposedly haunt your town? How do ghost stories get started? Are stories like these more powerful when they are told orally? What part do our imaginations play in stories told to us? What effect have television and film had our tradition of oral story-telling? **Write a ghost story of your own and read it to your class.**

3. The Headless Horseman is said to be the ghost of a Hessian soldier. What is a "Hessian?" What would a Hessian soldier be doing in that part of the country? **Discuss.** What historical event caused him to lose his head?

4. What is your favorite scene from *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*? **Illustrate this scene from using paint, markers, colored pencils, pen and ink, charcoal, colored paper, photographic collage, etc.** Be prepared to explain to the class why this scene is your favorite.

5. This play was adapted from a short story by Washington Irving. What is your favorite story? Why is it your favorite? **Pick a scene from this story and "adapt" it for the stage.** Do not use a narrator. Concentrate on forwarding the story by using dialogue and action only. Once your scene is written, **rehearse it with your classmates and present it to the class.** What is the difference between reading a story in a book and watching it onstage? **Discuss.** What aspects the story did you leave out of your script? Why? How is theatre different from television? From film? **Discuss.**

6. **Write a letter** to your favorite actors from this production. Tell them what you liked about the play, their performance, etc. Mail your letters to:

The Barter Players
c/o Barter Theatre
P.O. Box 867
Abingdon, VA 24212-0867
ATTN: Sleepy Hollow



Word Search

Find the following words in the puzzle below: **schoolmaster, legend, Old Gunpowder, Halloween, Ichabod Crane, epitaph, ghost, Hessian, graveyard, Katrina Van Tassel, psalmody, headless, solo, Sleepy Hollow, Brom Bones, bridge, Daredevil, haunted**

W O L L O H Y P E E L S Y J I H
D G M C O Z J F D T O E V O Q E
I C H A B O D C R A N E E E N A
A N X D V K V D R I M Z C P R D
K A T R I N A V A N T A S S E L
R E T S A M L O O H C S D E D E
D A R E D E V I L N E R R P W S
N U P L D T L H W N G Q A I O S
X E J S S N A F O M D V Y T P H
G W E O A U E B S W I H E A N O
K K H W N L M G E N R V V P U R
K G W T O O M Q E W B C A H G S
G I E T R L X O S L M U R P D E
M D X B S O L O D P E C G G L M
N A I S S E H A I Y W M B K O A
J B G E J J Q C H I P A B L P N

True and False

Write **T** if the statement is **True** and **F** if the statement is **False**.

1. ___ *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* is a novel written by Mark Twain.
2. ___ Ichabod Crane is a schoolteacher from Connecticut.
3. ___ Brom Bones rides a horse named Old Gunpowder.
4. ___ Sleepy Hollow is a small village in rural Kentucky.
5. ___ Baltus Van Tassel is a wealthy farmer.
6. ___ Ichabod Crane is so thin because he lacks an appetite.
7. ___ Major Andre was hung from Major Andre's tree.
8. ___ The Headless Horseman is looking for his missing boot.
9. ___ Johanna Brinkerhoff is known for her lovely singing voice.
10. ___ Ichabod Crane believes in ghosts.
11. ___ Washington Irving was named after George Washington.
12. ___ Ichabod Crane falls in love with Maria Metternich.
13. ___ All Hallows' Eve is known today as "Halloween."
14. ___ Brom Bones' real name is Abraham Lincoln Bones.

Matching

Draw a line connecting the person/place in the 1st column with the corresponding description in the 2nd.

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Brom Bones | a. Sings like an angel |
| 2. Sleepy Hollow | b. Schoolmaster with an appetite |
| 3. Ichabod Crane | c. The ghost of a Hessian soldier |
| 4. Katrina Van Tassel | d. The scene of an arrest |
| 5. Johanna Brinkerhoff | e. A rich farmer |
| 6. Headless Horseman | f. Ichabod's landlady |
| 7. Baltus Van Tassel | g. A beautiful maiden |
| 8. Major Andre's Tree | h. owns Daredevil |
| 9. Mrs. Van Ripper | i. A small village in New York |

Questions/Activities for Middle/High School Students

1. Read the short story *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* by Washington Irving. **How does it compare to this play?** What words and phrases does Washington Irving use to describe the mood of the town? How was this mood created in the play? Do any characters appear in the play who are not mentioned in the story? Who are they? Why do you think this was done? **Discuss.**

How much time elapses between the opening scene of the story and the last page? Does the same amount of time pass in the play? How is the passing of time handled in the play? **Discuss the difference between dramatic action and exposition.** Does this explain why time may seem “collapsed” in a theatrical adaptation of a novel? **Discuss.**

2. Laura Ingalls Wilder taught in a one-room schoolhouse on the American prairie in the 1880's and wrote about her experiences there in her *Little House* books. **Compare and contrast her experiences in the classroom with Ichabod's.** Had much changed in ninety years? How well would Ichabod fare teaching on the prairie? Are there any other famous characters in literature who spent time as teachers? How many options for careers were available in this time period? **Discuss.**

3. The setting for this story, Sleepy Hollow, is an actual village located on the Hudson River in New York State. Locate Sleepy Hollow on a map of the United States. How far away is Sleepy Hollow from where you live? **Using the internet, map out a route from your school to Sleepy Hollow.** On which roads would you travel? Make a list of the towns/cities you would pass along the way. **Pick one of those towns and research it.** Are there any “legends” or local folklore associated with these towns? **Present your findings to your class.**

4. Describe the set used for the Barter Players' production of *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. How realistic was it? How were the set pieces used to convey place? Time? Mood? Design a backdrop for this play. Keep in mind that both indoor and outdoor scenes will be played in front of it, scenes played in various locations throughout Sleepy Hollow. **Paint a picture of it and present it to the class.** Be prepared to explain the purpose of your design and its function as the background to each scene.



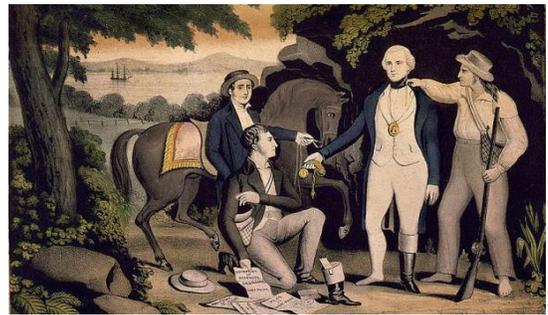
5. Select the character of either Bram Bones or Katrina Van Tassel and **keep a journal as that character**. Start with the day Ichabod Crane arrives at the school (sometime in September) and end with the night that Ichabod is chased by the Headless Horseman and disappears forever (Halloween). **On the school day following Halloween, read passages from your journal to the class.**

6. What do you think happened to Ichabod Crane at the end of the story? Why? **Discuss.**

7. Was Ichabod Crane a real person? **Using the internet, research the answer to this question. Present your findings to the class.**

8. The ghost of Major Andre is mentioned several times, both in the story and in the play. Who was Major Andre? What is his place in American history and why was it so important? How did he earn the sympathies of the early Americans?

Research this historical figure and present your findings to the class.



Discuss why Washington Irving may have chosen his ghost as a figure in this story.

9. *The Ballad of Major Andre* is sung in this play. Using an established melody of your choice, **compose a song** that tells the story of either Ichabod Crane, Brom Bones, Katrina Van Tassel or the Headless Horseman. **Present it to your class.**

10. What are ghosts without a graveyard? The graveyard referred to in the *Legend of Sleepy Hollow* belongs to the Old Dutch Church. At one point in the story, while wandering amongst the gravestones with Katrina, Ichabod reads aloud several epitaphs. What is an epitaph? Who wrote them? What purpose did they serve?



What would you like your epitaph to say about you? If your epitaph could only be one word, which word would you like it to be? Why? Pick one of your favorite celebrities and write an epitaph for them. Be as specific as possible.

Teacher: print off the celebrity epitaphs your students have written as well as pictures of the celebrities. Hang the pictures on one wall and the epitaphs on the wall opposite. Ask your students to try to match the epitaph to the correct picture.

11. The townsfolk of Sleepy Hollow all had one thing in common – their ancestors were Dutch. In fact, the Dutch were the first to settle New York. When did the Dutch come this country? What brought them here? Study a map of New York City. What street names can be attributed to the Dutch? Was Ichabod Crane Dutch? Washington Irving?



Write a critique of The Barter Player’s production of *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.

Be sure to include descriptions and analyses of the individual performances, the directing/staging choices, and the design elements (costume, set, props, & sound). Why do you think some of these artistic choices were made? How would you have done it differently?



12. Katrina Van Tassel was considered a “coquette”. What is a coquette? Can you name any other famous literary figures to whom this name might apply?

13. Washington Irving is also famous for his short story *Rip Van Winkle*. Read *Rip Van Winkle*, then **write a paper comparing and contrasting the two stories**. How are the two stories similar? How are they different?

Suggested Further Reading/Links

Other stories by Washington Irving include:

Rip Van Winkle

Knickerbocker's History of New York

Bracebridge Hall

Tales of a Traveler

The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus

Tales of the Alhambra.

Books written about Washington Irving:

The Original Knickerbocker: The Life of Washington by Andrew Burstein

The Spanish Adventures of Washington Irving by Claude G. Bowers

The Life of Washington Irving by Stanley T. Williams

To find out more about Washington Irving and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, check out the links below:

The Old Dutch Church Burying Ground – the graveyard that is haunted by the Headless Horseman!

<http://www.olddutchburyingground.org>

Sleepy Hollow Cemetery – The cemetery where Washington Irving is buried.

<http://www.sleepyhollowcemetery.org>

Washington Irving Quotes - A collection of Washington Irving quotes.

http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/w/washington_irving.html

Sunnyside, Washington Irving's house - The official site of the Irving's home in Tarrytown, NY.

www.irvingtonhistoricalsociety.org/nrhp/nrhp01.html

