



# WICKED

The untold true story of the Witches of Oz

**AT THIS STAGE™**

**LESSONS THAT PERFORM**

## GREEN WITH EMPATHY

EMILY ROGERS WICKED Cast Member

KAZZ PINKARD National School Climate Center  
at Ramapo for Children

ELA, Life Skills, Character Studies

Grade: 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

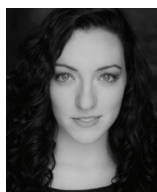
# BACKGROUND

## ARTIST INSIGHT

“Playing the role of Elphaba is a dream come true! It’s magical and terrifying all at the same time, but it also takes a lot of strength because you have to go on stage every night and be bullied just because of the way you look.

Whenever I get the opportunity to play Elphaba I think back to when I was a child. I was never bullied, but I was a bystander to other kids being bullied. I think about that shy little girl who didn’t think she had a voice and I wish that she

could see me now playing Elphaba using her voice to be an upstander in her community despite the fact that she was bullied. With empathy and a little courage we can all be upstanders like Elphaba!” —Emily Rogers



## ABOUT THE EXPERT

**EMILY ROGERS** is a native of Rockford, Illinois. She made her Broadway debut in the ensemble of the Broadway cast of *Wicked* and is the understudy to Elphaba. She was a swing on the national touring company of *If/Then*. Her other New York theatre credits

include Jasper in *Deadland* and *Unlock’d*. Most recently she played Sophie in *Mamma Mia!* at A Contemporary Theatre of Connecticut. Emily received her BFA in Musical Theatre from Pace University in New York City.

# WICKED

## SYNOPSIS

So much happened before Dorothy dropped in.

*Wicked* is a Broadway musical with music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz and book by Winnie Holzman. It is based on the Gregory Maguire novel “Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West”. *Wicked* looks at what happened in the Land of Oz...but from a different angle. Long before Dorothy arrives, there is another young woman, born with emerald-green skin—smart, fiery, misunderstood, and possessing an extraordinary talent. When she meets a bubbly blonde who is exceptionally popular, their initial rivalry turns into the unlikeliest of friendships...until the world decides to call one “good,” and the other one “wicked.”

## OFFICIAL RESOURCES

### Wicked

*Wicked* is currently playing on Broadway at the Gershwin Theatre, 222 West 51 Street and is on tour across America.

[www.wickedthemusical.com](http://www.wickedthemusical.com)

<https://wickedthemusical.com/photos-videos/>

For student group tickets, call 877.321.0020

### BullyBust

For more information on the Educator toolkit, classroom activities and resources, as well as the Upstander Alliance and Upstander Pledge, please visit [www.BullyBust.org](http://www.BullyBust.org)

### National School Climate Center

The National School Climate Center promotes safe, supportive learning environments that nurture social and emotional, civic, and academic growth for all students. [www.schoolclimate.org](http://www.schoolclimate.org)

### Ramapo for Children

Ramapo for Children’s mission is to keep young people from being relegated to the margins of their schools, programs, families, or communities because of challenging behaviors, cognitive disabilities, or other differences. [www.ramapoforchildren.org](http://www.ramapoforchildren.org)

**Special Thanks:** These materials were developed in collaboration with the National School Climate Center and feature their BullyBust Program. All WICKED Materials are reproduced with permission of WICKED LLC, all rights reserved. WICKED music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz, book by Winnie Holzman.

# LESSON PLAN

**WORKSHOP TITLE:** Green with Empathy

**SUBJECT EXPERT:** Kazz Pinkard, Deputy Director,  
National School Climate Center  
at Ramapo for Children

**STANDARDS:** ELA, Life Skills, Character Studies

**GRADE BANDS:** 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

## SESSION OVERVIEW

Empathy is often described as “understanding and entering into another person’s feelings.” Elphaba Thropp, the “beautifully tragic” heroine of the world-renowned musical *Wicked*, is one of the most misunderstood characters in the Broadway canon. In the story, Elphaba is a student at Shiz University where she is often the victim of bullying and exclusion from her classmates, who tease and taunt her because her skin is green. To commemorate National Bullying Prevention Month, AT THIS STAGE will present a discussion about empathy, bullying, and racial equity. Emily Rogers of WICKED will join Kazz Pinkard of National School Climate Center at to help raise awareness of the harmful effects of bullying and promote empathetic ways that students can stand up against harassment.



## STUDENT OBJECTIVE

Students will be able to:

- Illustrate bullying behavior by showing how Elphaba, the character in *Wicked*, is treated by her classmates
- Explore the meaning and importance of empathy
- Inspire discussion about the personal responsibility each person must have to become upstanders in their own community.

## LEARNING OUTCOME

Students will:

- Obtain a deeper understanding of the toxicity of bullying
- Understand concrete strategies for how to prevent bullying
- Empower themselves to help create positively engaged, safe and caring schools and communities.

## ESSENTIAL QUESTION

- How do we become upstanders in the fight against bullying through the context of *Wicked* the musical?

## LESSON RATIONAL

- As the actress playing Elphaba, Emily had to portray a character who is different. The class is designed to help students empathize with this character to inspire discussion and reflection of the three main roles played by people in any bullying incident: the bully, the victim and the witness.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

- Video monitor, audio speakers, keyboard and Internet access, copies of the “Defying Gravity” lyrics and the Session Notes/Reflections worksheet for distribution to students.

## STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

### English Language Arts

1.Comprehension and Collaboration:  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1.C

Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.2

Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it

contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.

### National Core Arts Standards

TH: Cr2-7 Examine and justify original ideas and artistic choices in a drama/theatre work based on critical analysis, background knowledge, and historical and cultural context.

# CLASS ACTIVITY

## CREATIVE CONTEXT

Winnie Holzman, who wrote the script for *WICKED*, said in an interview, “What attracted me to the story is the whole idea that things are not as they seem. What you think you know you don’t really know. But you don’t know the deeper story and it’s more complicated than you think. It’s intriguing to take this extreme figure of iconic wickedness and make her the heroine. I just love that she behaves in a human wicked way, and not in a wicked witch way.”

Art is a powerful way to reach people. The musical *Wicked* uses the power of art to reach and teach audiences. The show illustrates how to stand up against bullying. Elphaba stands up against The Wizard who tries to scare, control and hurt others. In doing so, she demonstrates that doing the right thing is hard, but heroic. Elphaba’s actions even inspire her former classmate and rival Glinda to become an “upstander” and change “for good.”

### AT THIS STAGE

Produced by Camp Broadway LLC  
Compiled by Karen Sarah Watson,  
Curriculum Specialist  
Materials Designed by Kathy Giarrano

## DO NOW

Class Exercise (10 minutes)

**Persuasive Speech:** Imagine that there is a new student in your school who is green-skinned. She is having trouble making friends, as everyone is teasing and excluding her because of her green skin. Write a short persuasive speech sticking up for the new student by explaining to others why it is important for us to accept and support our peers

**Assessment: Turn and Talk:** *Direct your students to share their speech with a partner. Follow up this activity by asking a few students to share their speech with the class.*

## VOCABULARY

**bully** (*noun*), a person or group who uses power to hurt, threaten, or intimidate others. “Bullying” and “bullying behavior” include any behavior that is mean and cruel.

**bystander** (*noun*), a person or group who observes or hears about bully behavior. An active bystander supports or encourages the bully with words, gestures, or actions. A passive bystander supports the bully by ignoring or doing nothing in response to the bullying.

**courage** (*noun*), from the French word “coeur”—to speak and act from the heart. Having courage often involves standing up for a value, person, or group in the case of threat, fear, or actual harm.

**empathy** (*noun*), more than simply understanding another person’s point of view; empathy involves embracing the feelings and experiences of other(s), especially when your perspective is different

**upstander** (*noun*), a person or group who acts to interrupt or prevent bully behavior and/or supports the target of bullying. Upstanders are heroes and examples of socially responsible conduct others.

**victim** (*noun*), a person or group who is a target of the bullying behavior—often because of their race, social class, gender, or other things like religion, weight, special needs, being an immigrant, or speaking different languages

## MAIN ACTIVITY

Group Presentation (30 minutes)

### Staging the Story:

**Part 1.** Play the song “Defying Gravity” to the class. Discuss the meaning behind this song and ask the students to write a short monologue discussing a time they have defied gravity. (You can listen to the official cast recording at [www.soundcloud.com/wickedthemusical/defying-gravity](http://www.soundcloud.com/wickedthemusical/defying-gravity)).

**Part 2.** Read, post or distribute the lyrics to “Defying Gravity” to the class. Divide the students into groups of 4 (depending on the size of the class that may vary). Invite your students to read the lyrics and instruct each group to write a scene based on this song that delivers the emotional impact of the message in the lyrics. Each group will present their scenes to the class. (You can find the complete song lyrics at [www.songlyrics.com/wicked/defyinggravity-lyrics/](http://www.songlyrics.com/wicked/defyinggravity-lyrics/)).

**Assessment:** *Students will reflect on the scenes presented with the words “I liked”... and “I wonder”... (for example “I liked how you made Elphaba sympathetic character.” And, “I wonder what it would be like if you had added Glinda’s perspective?”)*

## EDITORS NOTE:

Students can document their Session Notes and Reflections on the following worksheet.

We hope this class on Empathy will inspire them to Stand Up to bullying At This Stage of their lives.



# SESSION NOTES

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Video Title/Topic \_\_\_\_\_



**Background Knowledge:**

What are some of the common reasons that students bully? What can you do to protect yourself or other students from bullying?

**Meet the Artist:**

What did you learn about empathy from the presentation?

**New Vocabulary:**

What new word did you learn from this lesson? Use the word in a sentence.

**Take Action:**

**I AM AN UPSTANDER** Putting an end to bullying is everyone's responsibility. Join thousands of students from across the country by pledging your commitment to make a difference in your school and community.

**THE STAND UP PLEDGE.**

I WILL ALWAYS:

- S**upport those around me who are being bullied or victimized
- T**ell a friend, teacher or parent when I see someone being bullied
- A**sk myself, "How would I want to be treated?"
- N**ote where and when bullying occurs (bathroom, playground, online, etc.)
- D**o something when I see someone being bullied—be an UPSTANDER
- U**nderstand why bullies bully
- P**ractice being a good role model for my fellow students and share "STAND UP to Bullies" strategies

Sign the pledge today at <https://bullybust.org/students/pledge>.

# REFLECTIONS

**Question:**

Have you ever watched someone be bullied? Did you intervene or did you step back? Why? How do we protect each other before during and after it happens? Discuss with a partner and share as a class.

**Connection:**

An Upstander is someone who recognizes when something is wrong and acts to make it right. Find a story in the news that shows a person, group or organization being an upstander and write a brief description. Share these with the class. Make sure you ask yourself why is this story a strong example of upstander behavior and who is benefiting from these positive actions?

**Application:**

Name three people in your school community who are upstanders. They can be a parent, teacher, student, safety officer, or any other person who is part of your school.

1. WHO is this person?  
HOW are they examples of upstanders?
2. WHO is this person?  
HOW are they examples of upstanders?
3. WHO is this person?  
HOW are they examples of upstanders?

**Exploration:**

Make your own unique commitment to be an upstander! Write down your pledge AND share it with others on the Commitment Wall at <https://www.bullybust.org/students/commitment-wall>. Share in your school. Get other classmates involved!