

INSIDE
broadwayTM
Michael Presser, *Executive Director*

Presents...



Study Buddy

BYE BYE BIRDIE, A Musical Comedy
Book by Michael Stewart Music by Charles Strouse Lyrics by Lee Adams
Originally Produced by Edward Padula
Book ©1958 Michael Stewart Music &Lyrics ©1960, 1962 Charles Strouse and Lee Adams

The Story

Welcome to Sweetapple, Ohio, the setting for *Bye Bye Birdie*, the rocking and rollicking musical by Charles Strouse (music) and Lee Adams (lyrics), with book by Michael Stewart! This exciting story takes place in 1958, a time when America was seeing the growth of a new kind of kid, one which had never been seen before: the teenager! During the 1930s and 1940s, young people were too busy dealing with the Great Depression and then World War II to worry about having fun. But during the 1950s, young people suddenly found themselves with free time, spending money, and their own music: rock and roll! *Bye Bye Birdie*, written in 1960, was the first Broadway musical to take rock and roll and put it on the musical theatre stage.

The story is as simple as it is fun. Rock and roll megastar Conrad Birdie has been drafted into the army. Not good news for Conrad, but great news for Rosie Alvarez, secretary to Albert Peterson, the president of the Almaelou Music Company, Conrad's recording company. Rosie thinks that now that Conrad will be out of the way, Albert can go back to his first love, teaching, and finally settle down with her. But Albert's domineering mother has other plans. Rosie comes up with a plan to get Conrad out of their hair for good: she picks a name at random from the Birdie Fan Club: Kim MacAfee, aged fifteen, sophomore at the Sweet Apple High. Conrad will give Kim his last kiss before going into the army.

Will Conrad kiss Kim, despite the anger of her father, Harry MacAfee, and her boyfriend Hugo Peabody? Will Rosie lure Albert away from the music business and back into the classroom where he belongs? Will the town of Sweetapple, Ohio, survive a visit from Conrad Birdie? There's only one way to find out! Sit back and get ready to rock: *Bye Bye Birdie* is about to begin!

KIDS!

"Why can't they be like we were

Perfect in ev'ry way!

What's the matter with kids today?"

– Mr. MacAfee,
from *Bye Bye Birdie*

If you were a teenager in 1958, you would be entering a world your parents or grandparents would never have recognized or understood. Two World Wars and a crippling Depression had meant years of saving, cutting back, and doing without. Young people in the 1930s and 1940s had been expected to grow up quickly, to work, to contribute to the family and to understand the harsh realities of life.

But now those times were over! The economy was booming and parents wanted their children to have the luxuries they themselves had never known. Teenagers received allowances and, in general, were not made to work. With extra money came another luxury: freedom! Teens could make many decisions for themselves, and developing a taste in music, clothes and style separate from their parents became every teen's goal. Teens went out to drive-ins and soda shops. Rock and roll singers like Conrad Birdie, with their cool attitude, wild moves on stage and rocking music, were every teen's dream, and every parent's nightmare!

BYE BYE BIRDIE

GLOSSARY

Kids used words and phrases during the time of *Bye Bye Birdie* that might seem strange to us today. Here are some you may hear when you see the show:

Cloud 9 – Really happy

Cut out – to leave"

Dig – Understand

Dungarees – Jeans

Fan Club – a group of people who meet to discuss and appreciate something, usually a musician, actor or famous person.

Flick – a movie

Get pinned – When a boy gave a girl his class pin to wear, it meant that they would only date one another, and not see other people.

Get with it – understand

Going Steady – Exclusively dating

Later, Alligator – see you later!

Threads – clothes

What's the Story, Morning Glory? –
"What's happening, pal?"



CHANGE THE CHANNELS! ED SULLIVAN IS ON!

"Me – on the Ed Sullivan Show... Me... Harry MacAfee... appearing with... Ed Sullivan! Coast to coast! I've got a wonderful wife... two swell kids... a good job... and, now, this! My life is complete!"

– Mr. MacAfee, from *Bye Bye Birdie*



The Ed Sullivan show was a "Variety Show". "Variety" means "a number of different things", and that certainly was the case for this unique television program, that ran from 1948 to 1971. Sullivan booked acts from all types of entertainment, from classic performers like ballet dancer Rudolf Nureyev to comedians like Bob Hope, Joan Rivers, from singers and musical groups like James Brown and the Rolling Stones to strange acts like Topo Gigio, a

marionette mouse, and Senor Wences, a ventriloquist who talked to his own hand! When the Beatles appeared on the Sullivan show in 1964, more than 73 million people watched; Elvis Presley's music was popular, but he became a household name when he appeared on the Ed Sullivan Show in 1956. No wonder Mr. MacAfee is so excited to appear on the show in *Bye Bye Birdie*!



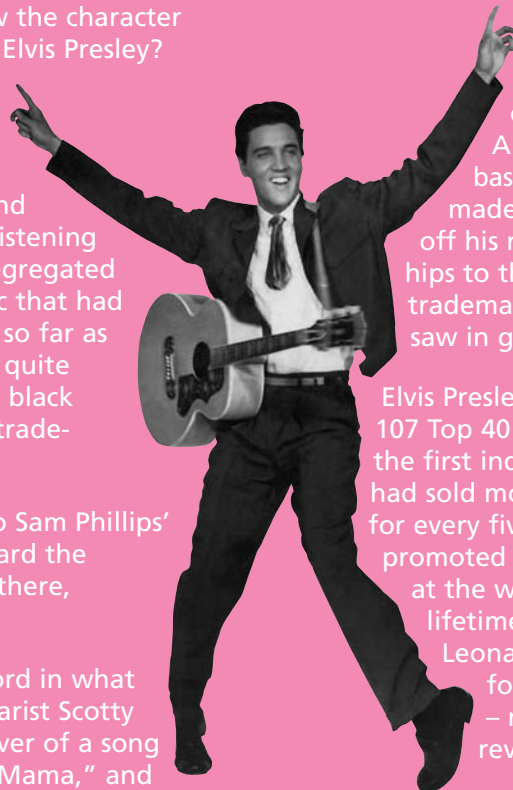
Who Was Elvis Presley?

When *Bye Bye Birdie* was first produced in 1960, many saw the character of Conrad Birdie as a parody of Elvis Presley. But who was Elvis Presley?

Elvis Aron Presley was born in Tupelo, Mississippi on January 8, 1935. Although his family was very poor, he grew up surrounded by different styles of music. He was exposed to Gospel music in church and listened to blues and jazz. Presley loved to hang out at all-night gospel shows, listening to the music and admiring the singers. Although strictly segregated during those times, these gospel shows incorporated music that had originated in black religious communities. Elvis even went so far as to sneak into black churches to hear the music, which was quite daring for that time. Presley was absorbing the mixture of black and white musical traditions that would later become his trademark.

In the summer of 1953, a teenage Elvis Presley walked into Sam Phillips' recording studio in Memphis, Tennessee. When Phillips heard the young singer, he thought to himself, "There is something there, something original and different."

A year later, Phillips brought Presley into his studio to record in what was to become an historic session. Teaming Elvis with guitarist Scotty Moore and bassist Bill Black, Phillips had them record a cover of a song by black blues singer Arthur Crudup called "I'm All Right, Mama," and



a song by bluegrass singer Bill Monroe, called "Blue Moon of Kentucky." These intense and exciting recordings became a model for rock musicians in the coming decades. As Richie Unterberger writes in the *All Music Guide*, these recordings "established the basic language of rock & roll." Later that summer, Presley made his first public appearance, where he began to show off his raucous and provocative style, wildly swiveling his hips to the music. Many music experts believe that Presley's trademark hip-swaying was borrowed from the dances he saw in gospel churches.

Elvis Presley's fame was astounding. Over his career, he created 107 Top 40 singles and 18 No. 1 records. In 1986 he was among the first inductees into the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame. He had had sold more than one billion records worldwide, or one record for every five people in the world! But beyond his music, Elvis promoted a style, an outlook, an optimistic way of looking at the world that became the standard for cool during his lifetime and beyond. No wonder composer and conductor Leonard Bernstein called Presley "the greatest cultural force in the twentieth century...he changed everything – music, language, clothes, it's a whole new social revolution."

HAIRSTYLES!

Do you ever worry about how your hair looks? Well, you're not alone – people throughout history have sometimes created wild styles to make their hair look different and cool. During the time of *Bye Bye Birdie*, hairsprays to keep these styles in place were a huge business:

PONY TAIL: During the early 1950s, the pony tail was very popular among teenage girls, but this simple style soon made way for more complicated styles.

BEEHIVE: You probably know this style best from Marge Simpson on *The Simpsons*, but during the late 1950s and early 1960s, many women in America used large amounts of hairspray to get their hair to resemble a beehive.

BOUFFANT: A puffed-out, full style, made popular in the early 1960s by First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy.

POODLE CUT: Poodle dogs were very popular during the late 1950s, so, of course, human hair styles soon followed along! The poodle cut was a curly bunching on the top of the head. The most popular poodle cut during this time belonged to the comedienne Lucille Ball!

DUCKTAIL: For the boys, the ducktail haircut (also called the D.A.) required you to comb your hair to the center of your head, then make a center part with your comb, using plenty of grease (that's where the term "greaser" came from!).



DANCES!

Kids danced to music in new and exciting ways during the time of *Bye Bye Birdie*. The dances of the late 1950s and early 60s were done individually, that is, kids danced by themselves, not with a partner or a group.

THE TWIST: a rock and roll dance created in the early 1960s, it was made popular by Chubby Checker's 1960 song, "The Twist." Your feet stay still while the rest of your body twists to the music.

MONKEY: Most popular in 1963, this dance was created to go along with Major Lance's "The Monkey Time" and The Miracles "Mickey Monkey." To perform this dance, you swing your arms up and down, alternating right and left while twisting your body.

WATUSI: Created in Philadelphia in 1960, the Watusi was performed by alternating a swinging motion with your hands back and forth as if swinging a golf club, while at the same time, shifting your weight from one foot to another while moving your hips.

THE SWIM: dancing with a swimming "crawl" motion to the arms



FASHION!

Just like today, teens back in the time of *Bye Bye Birdie* were concerned about what they wore.

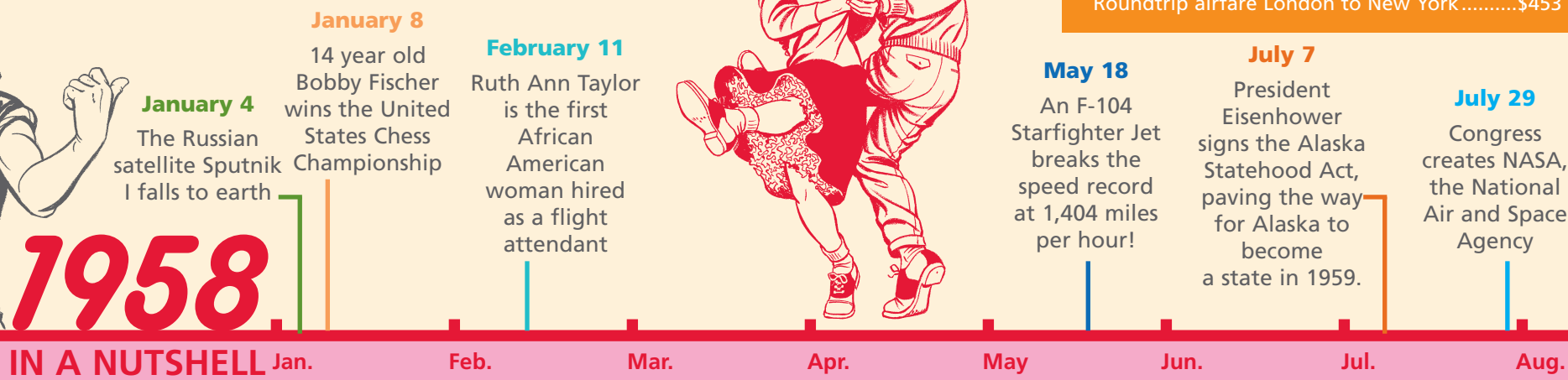
MINI SKIRTS: These daring skirts were perfect for dancing to rock and roll songs. They seemed to symbolize the new freedom teens were feeling.

KNEE HIGH BOOTS: These leather boots that went up to the knee were usually held together by a zipper and featured a high heel, sometimes as high as three inches!

DUNGAREES: Today, kids are casual, but during the time of *Bye Bye Birdie*, teenagers were expected to dress up when they went to school. Girls wore dresses every day. On weekends, or around the house, teens wore dungarees, or jeans.

WHAT THINGS COST IN 1958

House	\$30,000
Average income	\$4,650 per year
Average Teacher's salary	\$5,174 per year
A gallon of Milk	\$1.01
A gallon of Gas	\$.24
A loaf of bread	\$.19
Postage stamp	\$.04
1 pound bag of caramels	\$.37
5 pounds of oranges	\$.49
Tuition at Harvard	\$1,250 yr.
Roundtrip airfare London to New York	\$453



IN A NUTSHELL Jan. Feb. Mar. Apr. May Jun. Jul. Aug.

The fictional events of *Bye Bye Birdie* take place in the year 1958. Here are some REAL events that occurred during that important year:
Rock and Roll Highlights: "At the Hop" by Danny and the Juniors is number 1 on the charts; #2 is "Stood Up/Waitin in School" by Rickie Nelson; #3 is Jerry Lee Lewis with his famous "Great Balls of Fire."

**"ASK NOT WHAT
YOUR COUNTRY CAN
DO FOR YOU..."**

JOHN F. KENNEDY

When John Fitzgerald Kennedy was elected President of the United States in 1960, he became the youngest president in American history. In his inaugural address, he seemed to represent the idealism of young people when he said, "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country." He pledged to jumpstart the American economy, and his programs created a long period of growth. He worked to

expand the cause of equal rights for all while at the same time calling for a more central role of the arts in society. He used the power of his office to promote idealistic organizations like the Alliance for Progress and the Peace Corps.

John F. Kennedy was assassinated on November 22, 1963 in Dallas, Texas. As the youngest elected President, he was also the youngest ever to die in office.



1950s FADS

During the 1950s, young people had a lot of choices when it came to spending their money!

WIFFLE BALL: when David N. Mullany of Shelton, Connecticut cut eight oblong slots into the top of a hollow plastic ball to help his son throw a curveball he created a toy still used today in sandlots across the country. The name comes from an expression his children would use; when someone struck out, they "wiffed."

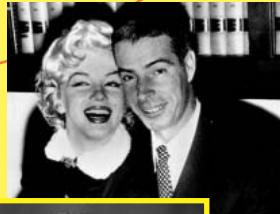
MR. POTATO HEAD: When this toy first appeared in 1952, you had to supply your own real potato! A plastic one was soon provided, although Mr. Potato Head had to wait until 1966 to meet his wife!

LEGOS: These plastic interlocking bricks were invented by a Danish carpenter in 1954.

HULA HOOP: this simple toy, a hollow hoop of plastic, manufactured by the Wham-O Toy Company, became a country-wide craze during the summer of 1958.

GI JOE VS. BARBIE: She was beautiful and popular. He was a rugged man of action with a scar on his cheek. A match made in heaven? These two iconic toys fought for the minds and hearts of America's kids during the time of *Bye Bye Birdie*. Barbie had been introduced in 1959 by the Mattel Toy Company, and become wildly popular. To counter Barbie's hold on America's youth, Hasbro introduced a doll for boys in 1964: G.I. Joe. Like Barbie, Joe had many accessories, but unlike Barbies combs, brushes and shoes, G.I. Joe came equipped with guns, jeeps and combat boots. Both of these toys have survived to the present day. By 1993, over 250 million G.I. Joe dolls had been sold; Mattel claims that there are three Barbies sold every second!

Who's Who



MARILYN MONROE: Born on June 1, 1926 as Norma Jean Mortenson, Marilyn Monroe became a movie actress during the 1950s and early 60s. Some of her most famous movies were *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1952), *Bus Stop* (1956), and *Some Like It Hot* (1959). Elton John and Bernie Taupin wrote the song "Candle In the Wind" about her.

MARTIN LUTHER KING: One of the most beloved and influential figures in American history, King gained prestige as a civil rights organizer when he led the successful Montgomery bus boycott in 1955–56.

ROSA PARKS: A retired seamstress, her refusal to give up her seat for a white man sparked the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott, a pivotal moment in the Civil Rights movement. Parks died in 2005 at the age of 92. Her casket was placed in the rotunda of the United States Capitol, a true honor as she was the first woman in American history to lie in state in the Capitol, an honor reserved for Presidents.

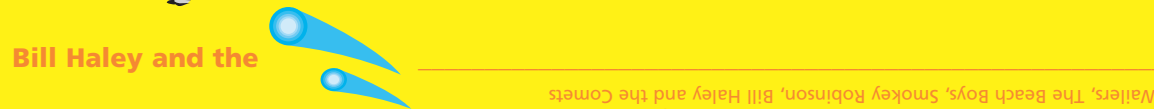
MUHAMMAD ALI: Although Cassius Clay won a gold medal at the Summer Olympics held in Rome in 1960, many were skeptical of his boxing skills. He was too wild, too sure of himself. He changed his name to Muhammad Ali and said, "I don't have to be what you want me to be; I'm free to be what I want." He would improvise witty poems on the spot (many call him the first rap artist), and he called himself "The Greatest." He was proven correct when he won a total of 56 out of 61 fights, becoming the Heavyweight Champion of the World.



THE GOLDEN DECADE

Many music historians call 1954 to 1964 the "Golden Decade" of rock and roll in America. This is when rock and roll, the music you'll hear in *Bye Bye Birdie*, really became popular. Along with Elvis Presley, many groups brought rock music to the radio waves.

Can you solve these picture-puzzles and learn the names of some real-life rock groups and musicians from the "Golden Decade"?



ANSWERS: Herman and the Hermits, The Beatles, Chubby Checker, The Wallers, The Beach Boys, Smokey Robinson, Bill Haley and the Comets

Catch A Rising Star

Now that Conrad Birdie has left for the Army, Rosie and Albert are searching for their next star. Use the star code below to find out the name of their Music Company.



Radio Station Puzzle



Along with record albums, young people in the late 1950s and early 60s listened to music on their favorite radio stations. Below find a list of fictional radio stations. Follow the instructions to discover a musician who was a great inspiration for Conrad Birdie:

WQUA _____ - 1 = _____

WSOU _____ - 1 = _____

WAFU _____ - 1 = _____

WOOT _____ - 1 = _____

WMEO _____ - 1 = _____

WUEF _____ - 1 = _____

WAEZ _____ - 1 = _____

1. Cross out all W's
2. Cross out all vowels
3. Place the remaining letters in the spaces, then subtract one letter from the alphabetically. For example, if your letter was C, subtracting one letter would give you B.

PEOPLE, PLACES AND THINGS

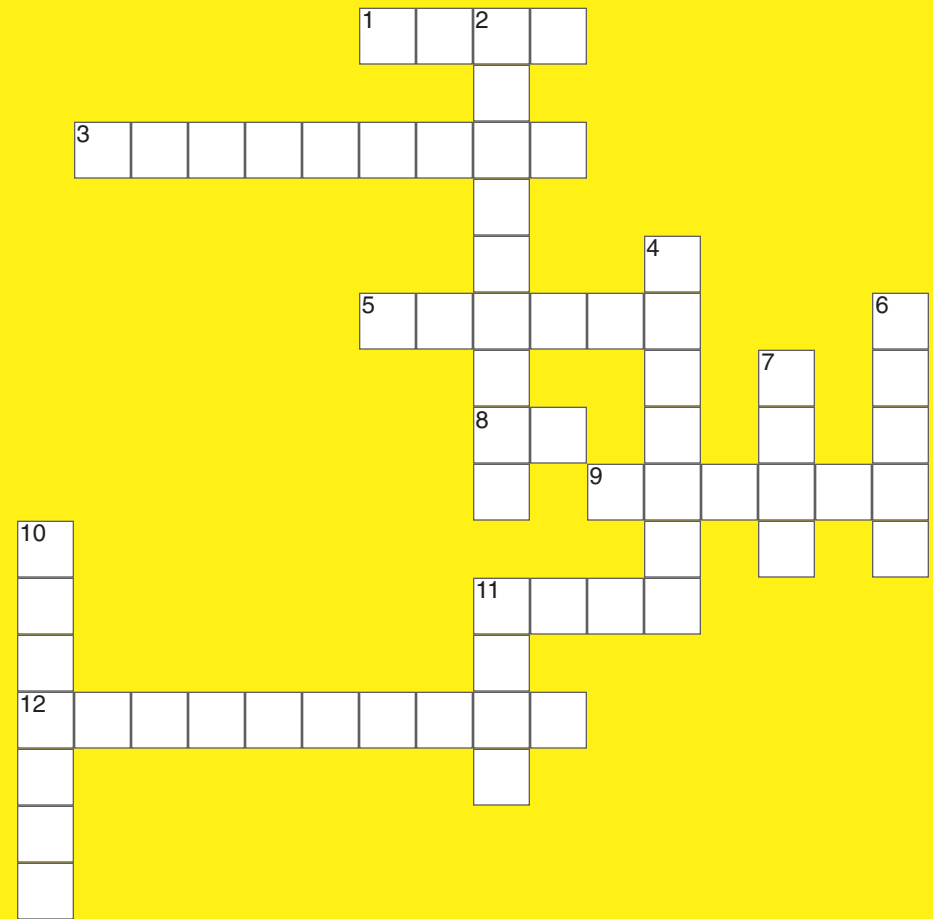
B E E H I V E O E Z Q W U S M
 T K Z T M E W Y D E I S O R U
 T H E A D D A M S F A M I L Y
 C U R N R T Q W U A T A F K Z
 H O K E Z Y T H L Y O T E X T
 D J N R A K L V L O F R K E T
 Q E W R H D S W I R T M L W T
 O F H O A I S V V R N E P A L
 O I R C H D L B A A V G O T U
 L T D P T L B T N I Q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

BEEHIVE
 ED SULLIVAN
 OHIO
 ROSIE
 THE ADDAMS FAMILY
 BEWITCHED
 HULA HOOP
 RADIO
 STAR TREK
 THREADS
 CONRAD BIRDIE

LEGOS
 ROSA PARKS
 TELEVISION
 WATUSI



BYE BYE BIRDIE



Across:

- What's the matter with _____ today?
- Popular SweetApple talking device
- Conrad's last name
- _____ Sullivan
- Conrad's occupation
- Albert's favorite flower
- Home of Kim MacAfee

Down:

- Today we call them jeans
- High hairdo
- What's the story morning
- Kim's boyfriend
- Elvis _____
- Rock and _____





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IB's musical adaptations are presented in public schools throughout the city and in our Weekend Family Series. We also offer related hands-on, in-school Teaching Artist Residency Programs that enrich core curriculum subjects through drama, dance, and music. Finally, we present *Creating the Magic*, our theatre demonstration program that introduces children to the elements of a Broadway production.

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