

Study Guide 2025-2026



Adapted from Arthur Conan Doyle's novel
by Steven Canny and John Nicholson

Florida Standards

Language Arts

ELA.6-12.RL.1.1
ELA.912.R.1.2
ELA.912.R.3.2
ELA.912.R.3.3
ELA.912.R.3.1
ELA.912.R.2.3
ELA.912.C.1.3
ELA.912.C.1.4
ELA.912.C.2.1
ELA.912.C.2.2
ELA.912.R.1.1 / R.3.1

ELA.912.R.1.1 / R.3.1

ELA.912.V1

Theatre

TH.912.F.2.2
TH.912.C.1.3
TH.912.C.2.1
TH.912.S.1.4
TH.912.H.1.5
TH.912.H.3.3
TH.68.S.1.1

PG-13

Language, Use of Alcohol, Use of Tobacco, Men as Female Characters,
Violence

Most appropriate for Grade 8 and up. Children under 5 will not be admitted to the theater.

The Hound of The Baskervilles

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The Hound Of The Baskervilles

An Introduction

Educators:

Thank you for taking the time out of your very busy schedule to bring the joy of theatre arts to your classroom. We are well aware of the demands on your time and it is our goal to offer you supplemental information to compliment your curriculum with ease and expediency.

We hope this Study Guide and the companion Spotlight Guide will help you prepare your students to experience live theatre at Orlando Shakes! Additionally, we would love to come to your classroom to introduce your students to the Shakespeare play of your choosing and teach them how to unlock the meaning of our favorite playwright. With a few simple tools, they will realize that Shakespeare isn't scary, rather can be quite contemporary!

Please take a moment to explore our website at orlandoshakes.org/education for the following ways to add to your curriculum.

- Our Virtual Workshop *Spotlight: Theatre Careers*, which introduces students to the many professions in Theatre Arts.
- Classroom Activities to energize students to explore character status and motivation
- Shortened Shakespeare scripts that range from 60 – 120 minutes long that are perfect for school productions

We look forward to hosting you at the Lowndes Shakespeare Center. Feel free to contact us at Orlando Shakes should you have any questions or suggestions on how we can better serve you. We are always learning from you.

Thank you for your tremendous work in nurturing our audiences of tomorrow.

Anne Hering
Director of Education

Keith Traver
Education Coordinator



The Hound Of The Baskervilles

Enjoying Live Theater

Theater is a Team Sport

The **Playwright** writes the script. Sometimes it is from an original idea and sometimes it is adapted from a book or story. The Playwright decides what the characters say, and gives the Designers guidelines on how the play should look.

The **Director** creates the vision for the production and works closely with the actors, costume, set and lighting designers to make sure everyone tells the same story.

The **Actors** use their bodies and voices to bring the author's words and the director's ideas to life on the stage.

The **Designers** imagine and create the lights, scenery, props, costumes and sound that will compliment and complete the director's vision.

The **Stage Manager** assists the director during rehearsals by recording their instructions and making sure the actors and designers understand these ideas. The Stage Manager then runs the show during each performance by calling cues for lights and sound, as well as entrances and exits.

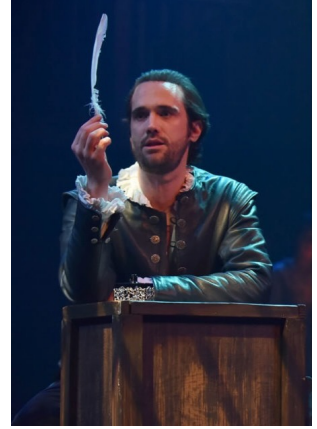
The **Shop** and **Stage Crew** builds the set, props and costumes according to the designer's plans. The Stage Crew sets the stage with props and furniture, assists the actors with costume changes and operates sound, lighting and stage machinery during each performance.

The **Front of House Staff** welcomes you to the theater, takes your tickets, helps you find your seat and answers any question you may have on the day of performance.

The **Theater** is where it all takes place. Orlando Shakespeare Theater In Partnership with UCF is the only professional, classical theater company in Central Florida, reaching students and audiences in the surrounding eight counties.

Mission:

To enrich our community with engaging professional theater, inspiring educational experiences, and thought-provoking new plays.



The Hound of The Baskervilles

Enjoying Live Theater

The Actor/Audience Relationship

The Audience is the reason Live Theater exists. At Orlando Shakes, we cherish the Actor/Audience relationship, the unique give and take that exists during a performance which makes the audience an ACTIVE participant in the event. The actors see the audience just as the audience sees the actors, and every, laugh, snuffle, chuckle and gasp the audience makes effects the way the actor plays his next moment. We want you to be engaged, and to live the story with us!



Photo: Rob Jones

There are certain Conventions of the Theatrical Event, like, when the lights go down you know that the show is about to start, and that the audience isn't encouraged to come and go during a performance. Here are some other tips to help you and your classmates be top notch audience members:

- Please make sure to turn off your cell phones. And NO TEXTING!
- Please stay in your seat. Use the restroom before you take your seat and stay in your seat unless there is an emergency.
- Please do not eat or drink in the theater.

Talkback

After the performance, the actors will stay on stage for about 10 minutes to hear your comments and answer any questions you have about the play, the production and what it means to be a professional actor. We'd love to hear what you felt about the play, what things were clear or unclear to you, and hear your opinions about what the play means. This last portion of the Actor/Audience Relationship is so important to help us better serve you!

Consider the Themes and Key Questions above and ask yourself:

1. What Key Questions did the play answer?
2. Do you agree with everything the play said about these themes?
3. How did the actors, directors, and designers all address these themes?
4. What opinion did the artists bring to the process, did those opinion change throughout the process (designing, rehearsing, performing) and how did that impact their work?

The Hound of The Baskervilles

About the Play

Summary

The Hound of the Baskervilles opens with Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson speculate on the identity of the owner of a cane that has been left in their office by an unknown visitor. **Holmes predicts the appearance of James Mortimer, owner of the found object and a convenient entrée into the baffling curse of the Baskervilles.**

Entering the office and unveiling an 18th century manuscript, Mortimer recounts the myth of the lecherous Hugo Baskerville. Hugo captured and imprisoned a young country lass at his estate in Devonshire, only to fall victim to a hound of hell as he pursued her along the moors late one night. Ever since, Mortimer reports, the Baskerville line has been plagued by a mysterious and supernatural black hound. The recent death of Sir Charles Baskerville has rekindled suspicions and fears. The next of kin, Sir Henry Baskerville, the duo finds out, has arrived in London to take up his post at Baskerville Hall, **but he has received an anonymous note of warning and, strangely enough, the theft of a shoe.**

Agreeing to take the case, Holmes and Watson quickly discover that Sir Henry Baskerville is being trailed in London by a bearded stranger. Holmes, however, announces that he is too busy in London to accompany Mortimer and Sir Henry to Devonshire, and he sends Dr. Watson to be his eyes and ears, insisting that he report back regularly.

Once in Devonshire, Watson discovers a state of emergency, with armed guards on the watch for an escaped convict roaming the moors. He meets potential suspects in Mr. Barrymore and Mrs. Barrymore, the domestic help, and Mr. Jack Stapleton and his sister **Beryl**, Baskerville neighbors.

A series of mysteries arrive in rapid succession: Barrymore is caught skulking around the mansion at night; **Watson spies a lonely figure keeping watch over the moors;** and the doctor hears what sounds like a dog's howling. Beryl Stapleton provides an enigmatic warning and **Watson learns of a secret encounter between Sir**

Charles and a local woman named Laura Lyons on the night of his death.

Doing his best to unravel these threads of the mystery, Watson discovers that Barrymore's nightly jaunts are just his attempt to aid the escaped con, who turns out to be Mrs. Barrymore's brother. **The doctor interviews Laura Lyons, and discovers that the lonely figure surveying the moors is none other than Sherlock Holmes himself.** It takes Holmes—hidden so as not to tip off the villain as to his involvement—to piece together the mystery.

Mr. Stapleton, Holmes has discovered, is actually in line to inherit the Baskerville fortune, and as such is the prime suspect. **Laura Lyons was only a pawn in Stapleton's game, a Baskerville beneficiary whom Stapleton convinced to request and then miss a late night appointment with Sir Charles. Having lured Charles onto the moors, Stapleton released his pet pooch, which frightened the superstitious nobleman and caused a heart attack.**

In a dramatic final scene, Holmes and Watson use the younger Baskerville as bait to catch Stapleton red-handed. After a late supper at the Stapletons', Sir Henry heads home across the moors, only to be waylaid by the enormous Stapleton pet. Despite a dense fog, Holmes and Watson are able to subdue the beast, and Stapleton, in his panicked flight from the scene, drowns in a marshland on the moors. Beryl Stapleton, who turns out to be Jack's harried wife and not his sister, is discovered tied up in his house, having refused to participate in his scheme.

Back in London, Holmes ties up the loose ends, announcing that the stolen shoe was used to give the hound Henry's scent, and that mysterious warning note came from Beryl Stapleton, **whose philandering husband had denied their marriage so as to seduce and use Laura Lyons. Watson files the case closed.**

**** highlighted in red are difference between the book and the play.**

The Hound of The Baskervilles

About the Play

Meet the Characters

NOTE: All Characters are played by the same 3 actors.

Sir Charles Baskerville- Late owner of Baskerville Hall

Sherlock Holmes- World Famous Detective

Watson- Sherlock's assistant and right hand man

Sir Henry Baskerville- Young Canadian heir to Baskerville Hall

Cabbie- Cab driver that assists in spying on Sir Henry

Yokel 1,2,3 - three uneducated persons from the countryside of Dartmoor

Wise Yokel -1 wise uneducated person from the countryside of Dartmoor

Stapleton- The towns naturalist

Cecile - Stapleton's beautiful Spanish wife

Barrymore -Baskerville Halls butler

Mrs. Barrymore- wife of the butler



The Hound Of The Baskervilles

About the Play

Meet the Author and Creator of Sherlock Holmes

Early Life

On May 22, 1859, Arthur Conan Doyle was born to an affluent Irish-Catholic family in Edinburgh, Scotland. Doyle's mother, Mary, was lively, well-educated and delighted in telling her young son outlandish stories. Her great enthusiasm and animation while spinning wild tales sparked the child's imagination. As Doyle would later recall in his biography, "In my early childhood, ... the vivid stories she would tell me stand out so clearly that they obscure the real facts of my life." At the age of 9, Doyle was shipped off to England, where he would attend a preparatory school—from 1868 to 1870 and then went on to study at Stonyhurst College for the next five years. For Doyle, the boarding-school experience was brutal. Over time, Doyle found solace in his flair for storytelling, and developed an eager audience of younger students.

Medical Education and Career

When Doyle graduated from Stonyhurst College in 1876, he decided to pursue a medical degree at the University of Edinburgh. At med school, Doyle met his mentor, Professor Dr. Joseph Bell, whose keen powers of observation would later inspire Doyle to create his famed fictional detective character, Sherlock Holmes. While a medical student, Doyle took his own first stab at writing, with a short story called *The Mystery of Sasassa Valley*. That was followed by a second story, *The American Tale*, which was published in London Society. Doyle would later give up medicine altogether, in order to devote all of his attention to his writing.

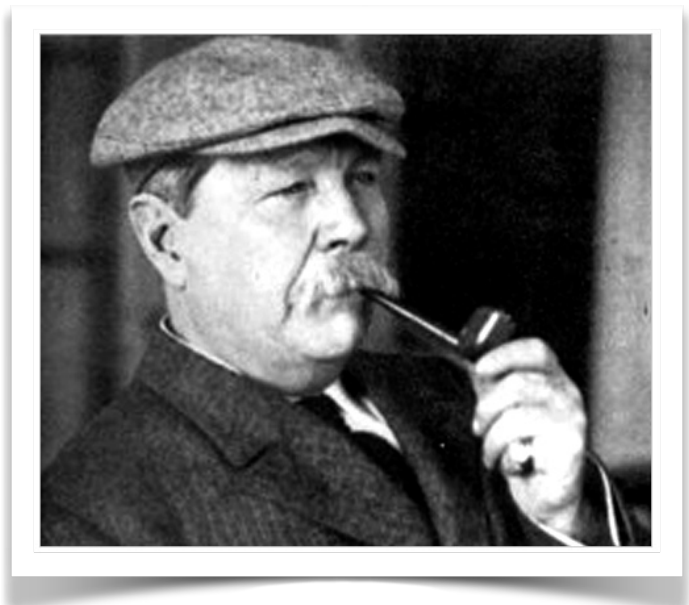
Writing Career

In 1886, newly married and still struggling to make it as an author, Doyle started writing the mystery novel *A Tangled Skein*. Two years later, the novel was renamed *A Study in Scarlet* and published in *Beeton's Christmas Annual*. *A Study in Scarlet*, which first introduced the wildly popular characters Detective Sherlock Holmes and his assistant, Watson, finally earned Doyle the recognition he had so desired.

The prolific author composed four of his most popular Sherlock Holmes books during the 1890s and early 1900s: *The Sign of Four* (1890), *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (1892), *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* (1894) and *The Hound of Baskervilles*, published in 1901. In 1928, Doyle's final twelve stories about Sherlock Holmes were published in a compilation entitled *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*.

Death

Doyle was diagnosed with Angina Pectoris. On July 7, 1930, Doyle collapsed and died in his garden while clutching his heart with one hand and holding a flower in the other.



The Hound of The Baskervilles

About the Play

Meet the Playwrights

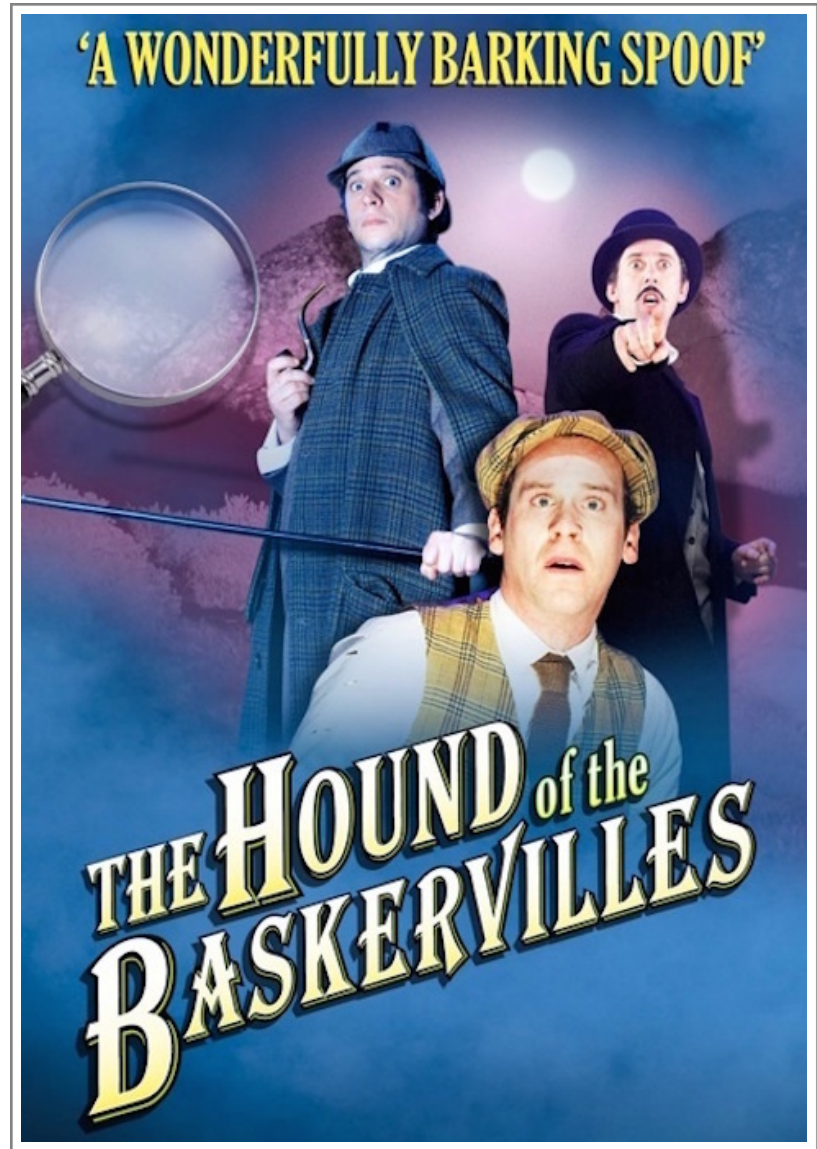
Steven Canny (co-writer)

Steven is a four-time Sony Gold winning Writer, Executive Producer and Director. As writer and adaptor work includes: *No Wise Men* (Liverpool Playhouse); *Origins* (Pleasance and Theatre Severn); *Foot/Mouth* (Soho Theatre); *Spyski* (Lyric Hammersmith & National Tour); *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (West Yorkshire Playhouse, national tour, Duchess Theatre, West End and 30 international productions); *A Dulditch Angel* (national tour); *A Shropshire Lad* (R4 adaptation & Cottesloe); *Mnemonic* (R3 adaptation for Complicite); *The Virtuous Burglar* by Dario Fo (World Service). Directing for stage and radio includes: *Rik Mayall's Bedside Tales*; *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* (with Simon Russell Beale); *Brian Gulliver's Travels* by Bill Dare; *Beautiful Dreamers* by James Lever and Nat Segnit; *Hum* by Laura Wade; *People Snogging in Public Places* by Jack Thorne; *Donation* by Sean Buckley; *Burglar Beware* by Matthew Broughton (Union Chapel); *Eleven Lessons For The Paranoid* (BAC); *The Observed* (BAC). As Executive Producer credits include: *Just a Minute*, *Now Show*, *News Quiz* and *I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue*. Work as Associate Director and Dramaturg with Complicite includes: *Measure for Measure*; *The Elephant Vanishes*; *Mnemonic*; *The Noise of Time*; *Light*; *Genoa 01*. Steven was Associate Director of Al Pacino's *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*.

John Nicholson (co-writer, performer)

John works as a writer, director and performer. He is an artistic director of Peepolykus with whom he has toured worldwide since 1995 in 10 productions including *The Midsummer Rude Mechanicals* (National Theatre). Performing credits include: *No Wise Men* (Liverpool Playhouse); *The 13 Midnight Challenges of Angelus Diablo* (Royal Shakespeare Company); *Spyski*, *Jekyll and Hyde* (Lyric Hammersmith); *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (West Yorkshire Playhouse and West End); *The Wrong Door*, *The Bearded Ladies*, *P.S Sketch Show* (BBC Comedy); *Brian Gulliver's Travels*, *Marley was Dead*, *Baskervilles* (BBC Radio 4). Writing credits include: *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (West End and numerous licensed overseas productions); *Rik Mayall's Bedside Tales*, *Marley was Dead*, *Baskervilles* (BBC Radio 4); *Richard's Rampage* (Kevin Spacey Foundation) and *Origins* (Pentabus). Recent directing includes: *Force 9* (NYMT winner of MTM award); *The First Thing That Ever Happened* (Lyric Hammersmith); *Advice on Watson and Oliver* (BBC2); *Sick Room* (National Youth Theatre); Nina Conti - Dolly Mixtures and Mike Mcshane in *Mon Droit* (Edinburgh Festival and Touring), Paul Merton - *Out Of His Head* (West End).

Biographies courtesy of traverse.co.uk



Hound of The Baskervilles

Vocabulary List

Catatonic

appearing to be in a daze or stupor; unresponsive

Elementary

pertaining to or dealing with elements, rudiments, or first principles.

Faux Pas

an embarrassing social blunder; a slip in etiquette, manners, or conduct

Profane

characterized by irreverence for God or sacred principles or things.

Nefarious

extremely wicked.

Fiend

any evil spirit; demon.

Toff

a fashionable person, especially one who is or wants to be considered a member of the upper class.

Gesticulating

to make or use gestures, especially in an animated or excited manner.

Barren

incapable of producing offspring; sterile.

Snooker/Snooker Room

a variety of pool in which a player must shoot one of 15 red balls, each with a point value of 1, into a pocket before shooting at one of the other 6 balls, with point values of from 2 to 7.

Impasse

a position or situation from which there is no escape; deadlock.

Vexing

to irritate; annoy; provoke:

Inquest

a legal or judicial inquiry, usually before a jury, especially an investigation made by a coroner into the cause of a death.

Knackered

exhausted; very tired

Precipice

a cliff with a vertical, nearly vertical, or overhanging face.

Untoward

1. unfavorable or unfortunate. 2. improper.

Twaddle

trivial, feeble, silly, or tedious talk or writing.

Indigenous

originating in and characteristic of a particular region or country; native

Peat

also called turf, is an accumulation of partially decayed vegetation or organic matter that is unique to natural areas called peatlands, bogs, or mires.

Mire

A mire or quagmire, sometimes called a peatland, is a wetland terrain without forest cover dominated by living, peat-forming plants. Wet spongy earth (as of a bog or marsh)

Bog

A bog is a wetland that accumulates peat, a deposit of dead plant material—often mosses wet. (is found in a Mire)

Moor

a tract of open, peaty, wasteland, often overgrown with heath, common in high latitudes and altitudes where drainage is poor.

Dartmoor

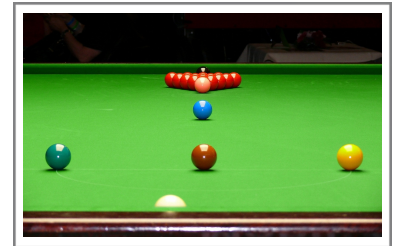
an area of moorland in southern Devon, England

Tor

a high, rocky hill



Toff



Snooker



Mire



Bog

The Hound of The Baskervilles

Fun Facts

1. Sherlock Holmes is the most-filmed fictional human character. According to IMDb, Holmes has appeared in 226 films and been played by dozens of different actors since the advent of the late 19th century.
2. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was knighted for his journalistic work during the Second Boer War. Doyle also wrote science fiction romances, such as *The Lost World* (1912), which would inspire Michael Crichton's *Jurassic Park*, and, subsequently, Steven Spielberg's film (the sequel to the novel and film being named, in homage to Doyle, *The Lost World*).
3. The Sherlock Holmes Museum both is and isn't at 221B Baker Street. Although the museum in London bears the official address '221B' in line with the celebrated address from the stories, the museum's building lies between 237 and 241 Baker Street, making it physically — if not officially — at number 239.
4. Perhaps one of the quirkiest twenty first-century homages to Holmes belongs to the award-winning American TV series *House*, starring the British actor, Hugh Laurie. Dr. Gregory House is in many respects a medical Sherlock Holmes, and series creator, David Shore, has admitted that even Dr. House name is meant as a subtle homage. The show draws heavily upon Holmes archetypes, such as House's reliance on psychology to solve a case, his reluctance to accept cases he does not find interesting, his drug addiction, his home address (apartment 221B), a complete disregard for social mores, personal talents (playing piano and guitar, rather like Holmes' violin), as well as Holmes' characteristic ability to judge a situation correctly with almost no effort. Dr. House confidant and sounding board is Dr. James Wilson.



The Hound Of The Baskervilles
Write Your Own Sherlock Story

Think up your own premise for a Sherlock Holmes mystery including:

1. A foreign location

2. An animal or object native to that location

Do the research of that area - the different terrain, weather, language and culture that you could utilize in creating a mystery and share your findings and premise with the class. Your story may start something like this: *On a family vacation to the Andes of Peru, a young girl is lost in the maze of Machu Picchu and is nowhere to be found...*



The Mystery of The _____

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

The Hound of The Baskervilles

Vocabulary Word Search

This will serve as both a word search and a little vocabulary quiz! Using the definitions below, find the vocabulary word that matches the definitions within the word search! The words can go ANY direction! Backward, forwards, up, down, diagonally!

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

_____ - trivial, feeble, silly, or tedious talking or writing

_____ - a stylishly dressed, fashionable person- considered a member of the upper class.

_____ - incapable of producing offspring; sterile

_____ - appearing to be in a daze or stupor; unresponsive

_____ - a position or situation from which there is no escape; deadlock

_____ - unfavorable or unfortunate - improper

_____ - a cliff with a vertical, nearly vertical, or overhanging face

Hound of The Baskervilles

Discussion & Themes

Discussion

1. How does having only three actors play all the characters affect the storytelling? What would you miss or gain by adding more actors?
2. This is a comic telling of a spooky story. Did it maintain any of the spookiness?
3. What clues did Dr. Watson miss that Sherlock Holmes picked up on to solve the mystery?
4. How does the pace of the story telling add to the suspense?
5. What stage tricks did the scenery, lights and sound let the audience know the action has switched to a new location?

CLEVERNESS AND REASON:

Holmes is known for his cleverness. In *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, Holmes isn't always a perfect genius. We see him slip up and make mistakes. However, Holmes still has plenty of wit and makes some remarkable deductions. How do our mistakes affect our ability to reason?

Deceit and Trickery:

All mysteries contain some version of deceit. Something is hidden and the clues must be followed to discover the objective truth. Can a deceit and lies ever be justified? What would a world without deceit be like?

ISOLATION:

Being in unfamiliar territory, having to keep a secret, and feeling threatened all make the characters in this story feel isolated. What causes you to feel isolated?

Information courtesy of [quora.com](https://www.quora.com), [smithsonianmag.com](https://www.smithsonianmag.com), [biography.com](https://www.biography.com), [sparknotes.com](https://www.sparknotes.com), [sherlockholmes.com](https://www.sherlockholmes.com), [shmoop.com](https://www.shmoop.com)