

# THE GOAT OR, WHO IS SYLVIA?

## THE GOAT OR, WHO IS SYLVIA?

By **Edward Albee**

Directed by **Dean Gabourie**

## GRADE RECOMMENDATION

Grade 11+

## CONTENT ADVISORY

The play explores mature themes and includes discussions of sex and sexuality as well as coarse language, explorations of homophobia and homophobic epithets. [Please see the show page for a detailed audience advisory.](#)

## SYNOPSIS

Celebrated architect Martin Gray is easing into dignified middle age when he shatters his reputation and family life by falling in love with a goat. What can he do—the heart has its reasons! Edward Albee’s Tony Award-winning play challenges our contemporary notions of tolerance with dizzying wordplay and wit that has crowned him one of the great playwrights of the last century.

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

### GLOBAL COMPETENCIES:

- Collaboration, Communication, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Metacognition, Self-Awareness

### GRADE 11-12

- The Arts
- English
- Health and Physical Education
- Social Sciences and Humanities
- Technological Education

### POST-SECONDARY

- Suitable for courses in disciplines such as Arts, Cultural Studies, Creative Writing, Drama, English, Fine Arts, Gender Studies, History, Human Rights, Music, Social Development Studies, Teacher Education and Theatre

## THEMES

- Acceptance, Inclusion and Rejection
- Aging
- Betrayal
- Class, Consumerism and Patriarchal Structures
- Connection and Disconnection
- Denial and Delusion
- Family and Friendship
- Generational Relationships and Rifts
- Guilt and Judgment
- Jealousy
- LGBTQ+ Issues
- Love and Loss
- Morality and Hypocrisy
- Public vs. Private
- Revenge
- Secrets and Repression
- Sex, Desire and Intimacy
- Upended Expectations
- Urban vs. Rural

## DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Edward Albee was inspired by Greek tragedy when writing *The Goat or, Who is Sylvia?* What do you know about the characteristics of Greek tragedy? How do you imagine these might be incorporated in this play?
- In your opinion, why do some people seek revenge while others work to forgive?
- In what situations would it be important to share information that someone has told you in confidence? In what situations is it important to keep a secret? Explain your thinking.
- Is the theatre a space for exploring complex subjects and topics some audience members may consider taboo? Why or why not?

## STUDY GUIDES

Study Guides for selected 2024 productions are available free of charge online:

[stratfordfestival.ca/StudyGuides](http://stratfordfestival.ca/StudyGuides)

Email [educate@stratfordfestival.ca](mailto:educate@stratfordfestival.ca) for access to past study guides.

**BOOKING INFORMATION: STUDENT MATINÉES,  
INTERACTIVE PRESHOWS, WORKSHOPS & CHATS**

**STUDENT MATINÉES**

You may book any available date, but selected student matinée performances for this show are at 2 p.m. on the following dates:

- Thursday, September 5
- Thursday, September 12
- Wednesday, September 18
- Thursday, September 19
- Thursday, September 26

**WORKSHOPS & CHATS**

Workshops and Chats (virtual, onsite or at your school/centre) can be booked by calling the Box Office at 1.800.567.1600 or by emailing [educate@stratfordfestival.ca](mailto:educate@stratfordfestival.ca).

**Pre-Show Workshops** customized to your students' needs and interests are available from 10–11 a.m. or 11 a.m.–noon before selected matinées.

\$10 per student

[stratfordfestival.ca/Workshops](https://stratfordfestival.ca/Workshops)

**Half-Hour Post-Show Chats** with cast and creative team members are available after selected matinées.

\$3 per student

[stratfordfestival.ca/Chats](https://stratfordfestival.ca/Chats)

**SOCIAL MEDIA**



/StratfordFestival



/stratfest



/Stratford Festival



/stratfordfestival



/stratfest



/Stratford Festival

**TOOLS FOR TEACHERS SPONSORED BY**



Tools for Teachers includes InterACTIVE Preshows, Study Guides and Stratford Shorts.

**PROUD SEASON PARTNER**



The 2024 season is generously supported by Ophelia Lazaridis.

Production support is generously provided by Sylvia Soyka.

Support for education initiatives is generously provided by Laurie J. Scott.