The Habits of Mind offer much to teachers because the Habits are so versatile and can potentially impact learning in so many subject areas. The Habits of Mind framework is a series of 16 problem-solving strategies and dispositions that can help an individual throughout life. In January 2017, Bena Kallick and Allison Zmuda published Students at the Center: Personalized Learning with Habits of Mind. If we picture our classrooms as stages or movie screens, we can allow the curtain to rise by exposing our students to musical plays and musical films while fostering the Habits of Mind.

Two main questions can frame lessons and units:
• How can Habits of Mind be fostered using musicals?
• How is using Habits of Mind for musicals similar to using them for literature?

Musicals can serve as stimuli similar to literary works because of the dialog, sung dialog, and song lyrics. Instrumental songs can also be included in analysis. Even without lyrics, names of instrumental songs evoke meaning, emotions, and even character development.

The following discussion presents the 16 Habits of Mind with examples of how songs or concepts from musicals can clearly foster them. This represents only a fraction of possibilities with the numerous musicals available and their rich musical scores. Below summarises each habit of mind and how the study of musicals can foster these problem-solving strategies.

1) Persisting:
Students can complete a musical project and see it to its completion. Students create a series of storyboards that depict the main scenes in The Sound of Music and present them to the rest of the class. Students learn about Alexander Hamilton through the musical Hamilton and learn how he demonstrated the Habit “persisting” in major contributions to the formation of the United States as a Founding Father. Other possible examples of persisting include creating multiple takes of a song to get it right or filming a scene in a musical over and over until it is right. The analysis of a main or secondary character's perseverance in the face of adversity could also foster this Habit.

2) Managing impulsivity
A student focuses on the main plot of Carousel and decides whether he or she likes the ending of the musical or not. Other ways to foster this Habit include practicing the dialog or song from Carousel or another musical or reviewing the dialog or song again.

3) Listening with understanding and empathy
While students are having a class or group discussion about the conflicts in West Side Story, they listen to what other classmates have to offer regarding the gang wars and the conflicts between the Jets and the Sharks. With follow ups activities tied to

Musicals tied to the 16 Habits of Mind

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musicals, students listen to their classmates and teacher and focus on comprehension and relating to the content with feeling.

4) Thinking flexibly:
In a group project about the musical Carnival, students come up with various options for their project before deciding on the best option. How else could the song lyric from “Love Makes the World Go ‘Round” be used to convey the message? How could the musical begin or end in an alternate way? Could the songs occur in a different order without negatively affecting the storyline?

5) Thinking about thinking (metacognition):
As students watch the “Broadway Melody” scene in Singin’ in the Rain, they think about what the creative team intended with this huge, musical spectacular. Students work individually first and then in groups to come to a consensus regarding the main message of the “Broadway Melody.”

6) Striving for accuracy:
When writing an essay describing the main conflicts in Guys and Dolls, students reread and revise their essays for accuracy and persuasiveness. Students can learn to sing or play through a song from the Guys and Dolls score or another musical without stopping.

7) Questioning and posing problems:
When students watch the musical Grease, they come up with questions that may have made the school year go differently. How could the musical have ended differently? Why does the musical present the conflict that it does? What are the main conflicts in the musical that need resolution by the end? Why do they like the musical Grease?

8) Applying past knowledge to new situations:
When watching Oklahoma!, students determine what the characters had to accomplish in order for the Native American territory to become the state of Oklahoma.

9) Thinking and communicating with clarity and precision:
In watching The Wizard of Oz, what clear messages are conveyed in the musical? Students can give an oral presentation or write an essay on why Dorothy wanted to return home so much. They could also give the motivation for the Scarecrow wanting a brain, the Tin Man wanting a heart, and the Cowardly Lion wanting courage. Why did the Wicked Witch of the West want the ruby slippers so much? What makes The Wizard of Oz appealing? What makes the music memorable?

10) Gathering data through all senses:
While students watch a scene from My Fair Lady, they focus on what they are seeing,
hearing, and feeling emotionally. In the flower gathering scene, what do the flowers smell like? How does Eliza enjoy the taste of “lots of chocolate for me to eat” from the song “Wouldn’t It Be Loverly?”

11) Creating, imagining, innovating:
After students view the musical South Pacific, they devise a different ending using their own creativity and imagination. How would they stage a scene in a musical in a different way? Each student could select a different musical and create alternate characters, a different outcome within the plot, or a different ending.

12) Responding with wonderment and awe:
After students watch the title number from The Sound of Music including the aerial footage of Julie Andrews and the Alps, students imagine what it was like for the actress to film in such a beautiful locale and how the music and scenery create one of the biggest entrances of an actress in film history. In addition, students can find out about musicals they have never seen, explore new musical genres, or love the production process of creating musicals and describe it in words.

13) Taking responsible risks:
After students listen to the entire score from The Music Man, they decide that one song should be deleted. Which song would they forego and what song of their own creation would replace the deleted song? Students could try performing a song from a musical with an alternate arrangement, tempo, musical style, or cappella. Students could try delivering dialog with a different intonation pattern or accent and see what effect it creates.

14) Finding humor:
After watching the marbles scene in My Fair Lady, what do students find so funny about the scene? How would they have felt if they were Eliza Doolittle? What do students find funny in The Sound of Music scene when Maria sits on a pine cone? Students can explore YouTube for other funny scenes from musicals and explain what makes these scenes so humorous.

15) Thinking interdependently:
After students view the musical Chitty Chitty Bang Bang! they come up with an additional fantasy scene in groups. How would this fantasy scene fit into what is already there?

Which characters would be involved and would this include a musical selection? Other possibilities for fostering this habit include asking others about their experience with musicals; favorites, least favorites, and something they have learned from a musical. They can learn the scores and premises of new musicals, read an article, book, or web site about musicals, learn about the Broadway theatre district in New York City, or explore the history of musical theatre and film.

16) Remaining open to continuous learning:
After students listen to selections from the Hamilton cast album, they reveal what they learned about Alexander Hamilton and his time period that they did not know before. Students could explore several musicals and learn about life values and the world by means of these musicals. What main message or lesson is learned? What Habits of Mind are apparent? How does the musical give student’s insights about themselves?
Approaches to using Habits of Mind with musicals

How can musicals be utilised to promote the Habits of Mind? Consider the following five approaches:

**The Clip Approach**
Choose one scene from a musical film or captured stage production. For example, you could show students the opening scene of *The Sound of Music* beginning from the first view of the mountains up through the song “The Sound of Music.” The breathtaking aerial footage of the Alps could be used to illustrate the Habit Responding with Wonderment and Awe.

**The Song Approach**
Select one song to play for students. Lyrics could be included on the screen by selecting DVD subtitles or by choosing a YouTube version with lyrics on the screen. Before you play the song, you can ask students to identify examples of Habits of Mind revealed in the song lyrics.

**The Entire Musical Approach**
Choose one musical and have students identify examples of the 16 Habits of Mind as the film unfolds. Follow up class or group discussions could be guided by teacher questions that refer to specific scenes or songs and asking which Habits of Mind come to mind. Students can collaborate to discover what their classmates observe and have a discussion.

**The Research Approach**
Each student chooses one musical. Using the Internet and book resources selected by the teacher, students come up with a detailed description of which Habits of Mind can be found in their musical. The culmination of the research can be represented by a report, chart, poster, collage, or PowerPoint that can be presented to the rest of the class. Students could share their findings on a class blog so that they would benefit from all students’ research efforts.

**The Performance Approach**
To get students actively involved, they can perform one or more songs or scenes from a musical or musicals. After students perform their song or scene, classmates can identify which Habits of Mind are illustrated. Acting out a scene instead of a song may be more appropriate for students who are less comfortable singing.

**The Project Approach**
Students choose one musical and closely analyse it with the 16 Habits as the focus. Once students choose a musical with the instructor’s approval, they write a traditional essay or an illustrated magazine article, create a poster, make a video, or create a PowerPoint explaining how the musical fosters the 16 Habits of Mind. All students present their findings to the class to stimulate discussion and to foster the third Habit of Mind “Listening with understanding and empathy.”

Habits of Mind has impacted the way we approach a number of school subjects. The 16 Habits can be fostered in numerous ways using the songs and concepts from musical plays and films. The Habits of Mind can bring the musical to the forefront in student learning while concomitantly reinforcing the 16 valuable Habits of Mind.