

STUDENT WORKSHEET 1

BOB GALE ON COLLABORATION

In this section, you are going to learn about all of the roles and skills which were involved to create **BACK TO THE FUTURE: The Musical**. Here is Bob Gale talking about how collaborative the show was, and how everyone had to work together to face the challenges posed by the production:

“Theatre and movies are collaborative arts. It takes a lot of people doing different things to create the final product. (Books and paintings are examples of art created by a single individual.) Although directors are generally in charge of what ultimately ends up on the stage, one of their most important duties is to inspire everyone on the show to use their knowledge, experience, skills, and imagination toward creative problem-solving in a team effort. We had regular production meetings to discuss our challenges, and the solutions always involved combinations of various elements.

“The illusion of the car going 88 miles per hour required a car that could lift off the stage a few centimetres so that its wheels could actually turn, a physical turntable on the stage so that the vehicle could ‘turn’, a moving video background, a foreground video screen, stage lighting, sound effects, and music to make it more exciting. This was a collaboration between production designer Tim Hatley, video designer Finn Ross, lighting designer Tim Lutkin, special effects designer Chris Fisher, sound designer Gareth Owen and composer Alan Silvestri. The movie gave everyone the common understanding of what we were trying to achieve. When there is no movie as a reference point, drawings, illustrations, and models are used instead because the words on the script page can only go so far.

“In the lunchroom chase (at the end of Act 1), the early versions of the book had the entire sequence taking place only in the lunchroom with just a few ‘gags’ described. I kept it simple because I was ignorant of some of the things that could be created via clever stagecraft. But thanks to the knowledge, experience, creativity, and collaboration of the director with Tim Hatley, and the stunt coordinator, the special effects supervisor, the choreographer and the video supervisor, the chase occurs in a much bigger environment with many more ‘gags’.”

STUDENT DISCUSSION TASK

What is the most collaborative project you have been involved with? How did you work together to overcome problems? What were the challenges? How did you work through these problems?

Write down three ways how to work most effectively in groups:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.