

2006—2007 SEASON

# WU?@therep

## ACE

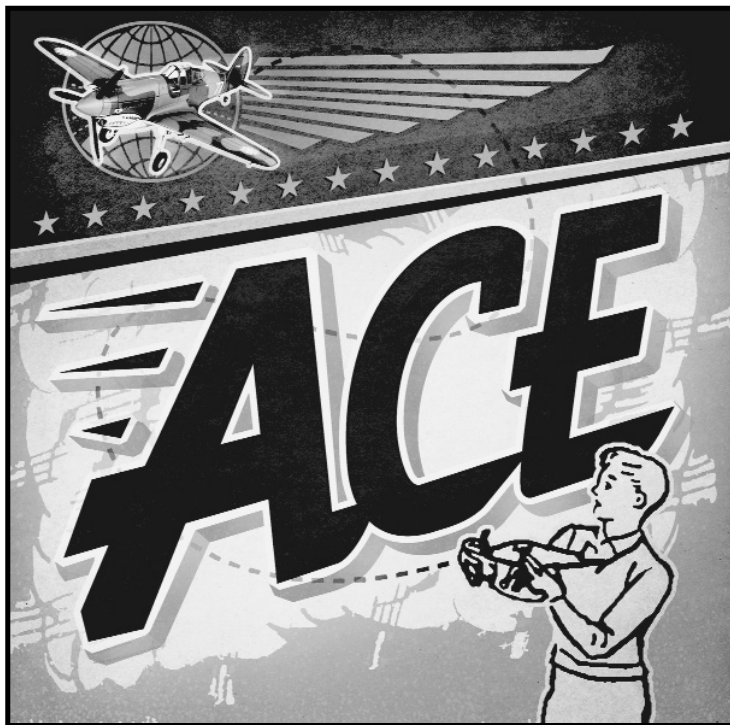
**Music by Richard Oberacker**  
**Book and Lyrics by Robert Taylor**  
**& Richard Oberacker**  
**Directed by Stafford Arima**

MAJOR SUPPORT PROVIDED BY A.G. EDWARDS

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# the 11

At The Rep, we know that life moves fast—okay, really fast.

But we also know that some things

are worth slowing down for. We believe that live theatre is one of those pit stops worth making and are excited that you are going to stop by for a show. To help you get the most bang for your buck, we have put together

**WU? @ THE REP**—an IM guide that will give you everything you need to know to get at the top of your theatergoing game—fast. You'll find character descriptions (**A/S/L**), a plot summary (**F2F**), biographical information on the playwright (**B4U**), historical context (**B4U**), and other bits and pieces (**HTH**). Most importantly, we'll have some ideas about what this all means **IRL**, anyway.

## CU@therep!

### The Teacher's Lounge



In an effort to make our educational materials more accessible to students and easier for educators to incorporate into the classroom, we have adopted a student-oriented format. We hope that you will circulate this guide among your students in the weeks preceding your visit to The Rep, encouraging them to browse it before and after class and as time allows, using it as a launch point for both pre- and post-performance discussions.

You may also want to visit our website, [www.repstl.org](http://www.repstl.org), for additional information including educational games, activity suggestions and behind-the-scenes information.

Any materials, either from this guide, or from our website may be reproduced for use in the classroom. As always, we appreciate your making live theatre a part of your classroom experience and welcome your feedback and questions.

**NEATO!**

Show Me Standards: CA 2, 3, 5, 6, 7; FA 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; SS 2, 6 and Illinois Learning Standards: 1, 2, 5, 16, 18, 25, 26, 27.

## MIHYAP: TOP TEN WAYS TO STAY CONNECTED AT THE REP

**10. TBA** Ushers will seat your school or class as a group, so even if you are dying to mingle with the group from the all girls school that just walked in the door, stick with your friends until you have been shown your section in the theatre.

**9. SITD** The house lights will dim immediately before the performance begins and then go dark. Fight off that oh-so-immature urge to whisper, giggle like a grade schooler, or yell at this time and during any other blackouts in the show.

**8. SED** Before the performance begins, turn off all cell phones, pagers, beepers and watch alarms. If you need to text, talk, or dial back during intermission, please make sure to click off before the show resumes.

**7. TMI** Not to sound like your mom, but "if you need to go now, you needed to go then." Leaving the theatre during the performance is disruptive, so take care of any personal needs before the show starts.

**6. RTM** When you arrive at the theatre, read the production program. It's like a deluxe version of liner notes and a free souvenir, all in one.

**5. P-ZA? NW!** Though your ability to eat ten slices at one sitting may impress your friends, no one wants to listen to you chew, slurp, or smack, so please leave all food, drink, and gum outside the theatre.

**4. TLK-2-U-L-8-R** We know that you will be dying to discuss what you see onstage with your friends, but please wait until intermission. Any talking—even whispering—is very distracting for both the actors onstage and the audience seated around you.

**3. LOL** Without you, we really wouldn't have a show. It's your job to laugh when a scene is funny or maybe even shed a tear or two in a tender moment. However, since you are not the audience at *The Jerry Springer Show* please refrain from inappropriate responses such as talking, whistling, making catcalls or singing along with the performers.

**2. SOP** While it's great that you want a celeb picture of your day at The Rep, the theatre is off-limits to the paparazzi. Flash photography interrupts the performance and along with videorecording is prohibited by Actors Equity rules. You can sneak a peek at production photos on our website, [www.repstl.org](http://www.repstl.org).

**1. LLTA** Let the actors know that you respect their work by remaining for the curtain call at the end of the performance. Show your appreciation through applause.

# AS/L

When ten-year-old BILLY LUCAS is moved to a foster family, he soon begins experiencing a whole new life—both in reality and his dreams.

Billy's mother, ELIZABETH LUCAS, is being treated for complicated physical and emotional problems.

When Billy's mom is admitted to the hospital, the DOCTOR and NURSE keep an eye on him until he has a place to go.

MRS. CRANDALL works for the St. Louis Department of Child Welfare and is assigned to Billy's case.

LOUISE and EDWARD MILLIGAN are a very kind couple who have always wanted a child of their own, and they do their best to care for Billy when he comes to live with them.

The PRINCIPAL and TEACHERS at Billy's school have had problems with Billy's behavior and grades.

The BULLY and his SIDEKICK give Billy nothing but trouble at his new school.

Another new student, EMILY, is also looking for some friends.

The STORE OWNER sells Edward a toy airplane that has some very odd effects on the family.

After Billy receives a gift from his foster father, a mysterious Army pilot named ACE begins to visit him in his dreams.

In his dreams, Billy learns of the life and career of JOHN ROBERT ANDERSON, a gifted World War I Army aviator.

The beautiful, young RUTH WHITLOW quickly falls for John Robert's charms.

COLONEL WHITLOW is not only Ruth's father, but John Robert's commanding officer.

LIEUTENANT SANDERS likes to give John Robert trouble, but he's there for his fellow men when times get tough.

TENNAMAN and COOPER fly alongside John Robert in battle.

Feisty, French ANIQUE provides entertainment for the soldiers at a local tavern.

The son of John Robert and Ruth, YOUNG CHARLIE seems to enjoy planes as much as his father.

The JUDGE presides over Elizabeth's wedding at the courthouse.

Charlie's SERGEANT gives him his first experience as a pilot.

MAJOR GENERAL CHENNAULT is looking for pilots to fill the positions in his special air fleet.

TIM, ARNIE and MYRON all join Charlie in the special air fleet.

# EN

RICHARD OBERACKER AND ROBERT TAYLOR'S brand-new musical *ACE* gives us a glimpse into the history both of a nation and one small boy through the dreams and day-to-day life of Billy Lucas, a 10-year-old boy from St. Louis. Billy hasn't had it easy, even as young as he is. As the show opens, Billy's mother is being rushed to the hospital in both physical and emotional distress, and her son is whisked away to a foster family. Mrs. Crandall, a well-meaning social worker, delivers Billy to Louise and Edward Milligan, a couple who desperately wants a child of their own. Suddenly and without much explanation, Billy is thrust into a new home, a new school and a new family, and he is understandably confused and frightened by the situation.

TRYING TO UNDERSTAND and help the boy, the Milligans offer to help Billy with his schoolwork, introduce family dinners and discuss their lives. In an attempt to bond with Billy, Edward even brings home a model airplane. The night of this unexpected gift, Billy has another surprise—the appearance of a World War II Army pilot in his dreams. This pilot, who asks to be called Ace, takes Billy back in time to meet John Robert, another young military pilot. Ace shows Billy a military base and a flight through the sky with John Robert before he fades into the morning light and disappears.

THE NEXT DAY at school, Billy is harassed by a bully and his sidekick on the playground. Seeking escape, Billy sits by himself away from the other children, until he is approached by Emily, another new student. Emily is a little strange, and much more friendly and outgoing than Billy is used to, but the two soon come to understand that it is better to have a friend than always to be alone.

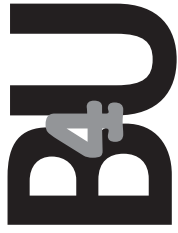
LATER THAT NIGHT Billy rushes to bed after dinner, anxious to see if he will meet Ace again in his dreams. Just as he'd hoped,

as he drifts off Ace appears, this time showing Billy John Robert's meeting with his Colonel's daughter, Ruth Whitlow. John Robert and Ruth discover that though they're meeting on a military base in Teaxs, they share the same hometown of St. Louis. The two talk the night away, and end up taking a thrilling, early-morning flight in John Robert's plane. Billy is excited to find out what will happen next, but just as quickly as he appeared, Ace disappears and Billy is again awake.

AT SCHOOL the next day, Billy informs his new friend about his strange dreams. Emily is intrigued and offers to try and help Billy discover the cause of his nightly adventures. Through the next few dreams, the two investigate the events of Billy's dreams as they see John Robert marry Ruth, have a run in with Lieutenant Sanders, another pilot, and have a baby with his beloved wife. The dreams are exciting and fun, until suddenly Billy is confronted with a terrible scene. One night Ace shows Billy a bloody air battle in which John Robert is killed. Billy is horrified and afraid to see any more, so the next day he puts the model airplane in his closet, hoping it will stop the visits.

WHEN BILLY TELLS Emily about the dream, she is concerned for her friend, but urges him to get the plane back out and continue the journey with Ace. Clearly he is trying to show Billy something, and the journey isn't over yet. Reluctantly Billy summons his courage and embarks on the next dream voyage with Ace. He has been flashed forward in time to see the childhood of John Robert's son, Charlie. The boy loves planes, just like his father, and Ruth hopes that her son will follow in her husband's heroic footsteps. Another dream shows that more years have gone by and Charlie is a young man. The adult he will become and people he will meet are a shock to Billy as he begins to encounter people from his own past—and hopefully, his future.





IN *ACE*, through the eyes of both John Robert and Charlie, we catch a glimpse into the history of the United States Air Force. This special branch of our armed forces actually started in 1907 as a small aeronautical division of the US Army. Since the close of the Civil War, the US Signal Corps had been acquiring air balloons, dirigibles and airships, and running test flights. In 1908, the first casualty was experienced when Lieutenant Thomas Selfridge was killed in a plane crash on a flight with Orville Wright. After further testing improved the safety of the plane, the Army accepted the model as the first Army airplane, named "Airplane No. 1," and on May 26, 1909 two Lieutenants made their ascent to become the first Army pilots.

AFTER A FEW YEARS of fiscal help from Congress, the Army air division began to grow. In 1913 the 1st Aero Squadron was created as the first military unit of the US Army devoted entirely to aviation and air combat. When World War I broke out in 1914, this Squadron represented the entire air strength of the US military. Comprising 12 officers, 54 men and six aircraft, it was a tiny force compared to the air fleets of European powers. By December of 1916 plans began calling for a considerably larger air unit. Twenty-four squadrons were being formed for various Army organizations, but the 1st Aero Squadron remained the only fully organized and equipped section until the US entered World War I.

THE ARMY'S air service made a respectable showing during WWI, despite representing less than 10 percent of the total air strength of the Allies. However, the problems that were caused by the Air Service units being dispersed among several Army organizations soon made necessary the creation of higher power organizations. In 1920, the Army Reorganization Act made the Air Service a combatant arm of the Army. Air units were placed under the command of area commanders and were used primarily in

support of ground forces. The Air Service was renamed the Air Corps in 1926, but its status as part of the Army remained unchanged. It was not until 1945 and the beginning of US involvement in World War II that the Air Corps would see significant change.

WITH PRESIDENT Franklin D. Roosevelt's command of the country during WWII came a leader who acknowledged the rising importance of a powerful air force. The German air force had rapidly conquered its enemies in the first years of the war and the US Air Corps found itself in a time of strengthening. During the years of US participation in the war, the US Army Air Corps grew from 26,500 soldiers and 2,200 aircraft to 2,253,000 soldiers and 63,715 aircraft. At the same time of this great expansion came new organizational leaders and new, independent structure for this air force within the Army. In 1941, the Army chief of Staff established the Army Air Forces to control the Air Corps and the Air Force Combat Command. In another reorganization, 1942 saw the US Army divided into three separate commands—Army Ground Forces, Services of Supply and Army Air Forces. The air unit which was tiny compared to its European counterparts had now become a major military power.

FOLLOWING SUCCESS in WWII, demobilization immediately reduced the numbers of the air units, but left untouched the organization of the new United States Air Force (USAF). This new group began restructuring during peace time following the war and divided into the Air Transport Command, Strategic Air Command, Air Defense Command and Tactical Air Command. Now composed of strategic, tactical, defense and airlift units, the National Security Act of 1947 recognized the independence of a new organization and formally created the Department of the Air Force that we see today.



# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

In ACE we are introduced to many members of the Army and Air Force, but for those with little or no knowledge of the workings of the US military, it can be confusing to understand the many ranks and positions the characters hold. Ruth's father, Colonel Whitlow, is obviously a Colonel; John Robert is a Lieutenant, as are Sanders, Charlie, Arnie, Myron and Tim; and Chennault, of the special air service group, is a Major General. Below are the main rank distinctions of the Army. It is important to recognize that these levels are very important, and soldiers give a great deal of authority and respect to those of higher rank.



## Enlisted

- Private*
- Private First Class*
- Specialist*
- Corporal*
- Sergeant*
- Staff Sergeant*
- Sergeant First Class*
- Master Sergeant*
- First Sergeant*
- Sergeant Major*
- Command Sergeant Major*
- Sergeant Major of the Army*



## Officers

- Second Lieutenant*
- First Lieutenant*
- Captain*
- Major*
- Lieutenant Colonel*
- Colonel*
- Brigadier General (1 star)*
- Major General (2 star)*
- Lieutenant General (3 star)*
- General (4 star)*
- General of the Army (5 star)*

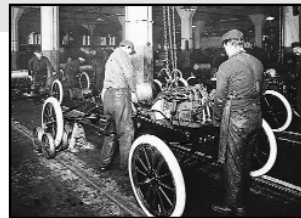


## TIMELINE EVENTS



**1912** More than 1,500 people lose their lives in the sinking of the Titanic.

**1914** The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria signals the beginning of the First World War.



**1915** The one-millionth Ford Model T is built with the new moving assembly line.

**1919** Women earn the right to vote when the 19th Amendment is ratified.

**1920** The Volstead Act becomes effective and makes the consumption of alcohol illegal.



**1927** Charles Lindbergh makes the first transatlantic flight.

**1929** The stock market crashes, signaling the beginning of the Great Depression.

**1935** The Social Security Act is approved to provide funds for the elderly.



**BELLIGERENCE:** hostile attitude or disposition, quarrelsome

**ACE:** a pilot earns the title of “ace” after successfully downing five enemy aircraft

**R.F.C.:** the Royal Flying Corps was the air fleet of the British military during World War I

**“THE YELLOW GAS”:** mustard gas, a sulfur agent employed in chemical warfare, first used successfully by the German Army in WWI

**AERODROME:** an airfield equipped with control tower and hangars as well as accommodations for passengers and cargo

**JOIE DE VIVRE:** (French) joy of living

**FOKKERS:** planes named for Dutch-born American aircraft designer and manufacturer who revolutionized aerial warfare by synchronizing a front-mounted machine gun to fire through the propeller of a plane

**HUN:** a barbarous or destructive person, also used as a disparaging term for a German, especially a German soldier in World War I

**MENCKEN:** Henry Louis Mencken, journalist and founder of The American Mercury

**WINCHELL:** Walter Winchell, a newspaper and radio journalist who broke the journalistic taboo against exposing the private lives of public figures when he invented the gossip column at the New York Evening Graphic

**PYLE:** Ernie Pyle, journalist who earned a Pulitzer Prize in 1944 for his work as a war correspondent and writing from the view of the common soldier



**1941** Pearl Harbor is bombed and begins the US involvement in WWII.

**1947** Commercial television is first introduced to the public; Jackie Robinson becomes the first black professional baseball player.

**1948** The US introduces the Marshall Plan to help war-torn countries rebuild.

**1951** Transcontinental television begins with a speech by President Harry S. Truman.

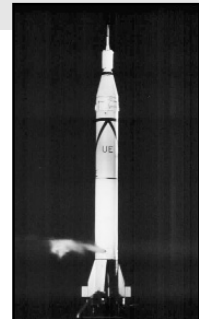


**1954** Senator McCarthy begins televised hearings into communist allegations.



**1954** Racial segregation is ruled unconstitutional in public schools by the US Supreme Court.

**1955** Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat on a public bus in Montgomery, Alabama; Dr. Jonas Salk develops a vaccine for Polio.



**1958** Explorer I, the first US satellite, successfully orbits the Earth.

**1959** Alaska and Hawaii become the 49th and 50th states.

**1963** President John F. Kennedy is assassinated in Dallas, Texas.



*ACE* shows us a growing and changing America from the beginning of World War I to the 1960s and the building of the St. Louis Arch. Looking back over several generations like this is an interesting way of comparing the details of a developing culture. Think about the differences in the societies Billy experiences through his dreams of his father's and grandfather's lives, and through the realities of his own life. What changes do you see both in the world at large and in individual lives? How might the characters' lives have been different if they had lived at a different time? What do you think the world will be like 20, 50 or 100 years from now?

## JOHN ROBERT

As Billy looked back on the life of his grandfather, he saw a world that he was certainly not used to. In the early 20th century, technology, government and culture were wildly different than what Billy knew in the 1950s. In John Robert's lifetime, America earned its status as the world's most industrialized nation. The introduction of the moving assembly line in 1914 led to a mass production of automobiles that was previously unheard of. The lower price and higher availability of cars gave the average American a chance to purchase one of Ford's Model Ts and caused a great change in the way society ran its business. While men were off fighting in the First World War, back home women were struggling in their own fight for independence. The first suffrage parade was held in 1910 and the 19th Amendment gave women the right to

vote in 1919. Also ratified in 1919 was the 18th Amendment which established Prohibition in the United States. This movement made illegal the manufacture, sale and transport of "intoxicating liquors" and led to the development of bootleg operations and speakeasies, in turn launching the careers of famous criminals like Al Capone.

## CHARLIE "ACE"

After John Robert died in the war, Ruth was forced to raise her son alone. When Ace was young, Prohibition continued and made the early 1920s a dangerous time. Though women were allowed the right to vote, they were still discriminated against regularly and had few options when it came to a career. Since Ruth had the support of her family, the first several years of her life with her son were successful, but like the rest of the country, the end of the '20s and into the '30s brought a time of great hurt with the Great Depression. After WWI, America experienced a great cultural surge with families enjoying new cars, radios and appliances purchased on credit. The New York Stock Exchange was booming, until Black Thursday, 1929, when the market crashed. The depression that this event started would last for much of the next decade. Most of the country was suddenly plunged into the depths of poverty, which is why Ace was forced to find a way to pay for his own college dream. The onset of World War II, along with President Roosevelt's New Deal plan would slowly but surely pull the country back onto its feet, though the war

certainly had ill effects on the people as well. Many young men were obliged to travel overseas to serve their country so women were needed to fill jobs on the home front, beginning the first great adoption of women into the work force. Rationing decided everything for families, from what they ate to where they shopped and what toys were available for their children.

## BILLY

After WWII, many of the returning soldiers started or expanded families with those they had left behind. This surge of new children, or "baby boom," created the Baby Boomer generation. Though his father never actually returned from the warfront, Billy is still considered part of this group. The end of WWII pulled the nation out of one of the worst economic crises in history, and in the years after the war America thrived. Music introduced the new rock 'n' roll sensation, and Elvis Presley became an instant phenomenon. Television was the entertainment of choice as mass production enabled many to bring the new media into their homes. Shows such as *Lassie* and *I Love Lucy* were favorites, but television also brought national attention to the news.

Historic events like the integration of public schools and the fight for civil rights lead the headlines, as well as the sudden and frightening "red scare." A strong anti-communist sentiment dominated the American public. Senator Joe McCarthy made accusations of communism against numerous people in the government as well as private citizens. Like his father and grandfather, Billy was living through another time of great social change.

## YOU

In the new millennium, you are also living in a time of change. Instead of black-and-white TV, you can get your entertainment from high-definition wide-screen plasma sets, lightning-fast internet connections or small-but-mighty iPods. Computers and technology now dominate almost everything we do and allow us to make everything from cooking to working to shopping easier and faster. We too have a war in the newspaper headlines, but this war saw the most destructive attack on American soil in our country's history. Like John Robert, Ace and Billy, our lives are defined by the society and culture of the world in which we live.



- What other major historical events and innovations have you experienced in your life so far? What else do you think we can accomplish? What will the world be like in the next millennium?



## AIRPLANES

BILLY'S WHOLE adventure begins with the gift of an airplane. John Robert finds his freedom and destiny in an airplane, but Charlie is forced into a plane against his wishes. The symbolic nature of these airplanes means something different in each character's life, but overall gives them each a way to find themselves. John Robert is able to achieve his dreams when he flies; he finds his true nature in the air. Charlie may have wanted his life to go in a different direction, but he is able to connect with the father he never knew when he chooses to follow his mother's dreams. For Billy, the toy plane represents a discovery of his heritage and a way to finally understand his family and his problems.

## DREAMS

THE DREAMS in the play are both literal and figurative for many of the characters. Billy's nightly adventures take him into the world of his past and help him to connect with his own dreams of a better future. Charlie had dreams of his own, but decided to follow his mother's dreams for him, instead taking his life in a very different direction. Elizabeth's dreams of becoming a famous journalist were put on hold when she experienced a very real tragedy, but perhaps she will be able to find them once again with the help of her son and his dream experiences.



## WAR

IN THIS PLAY, wars of many kinds separate people from those they love. The First World War is the reason John Robert and Ruth meet but is also the reason they are parted. World War II separates Charlie and Elizabeth both physically and emotionally as she is unable to forgive him for leaving. The psychological war within Elizabeth rages because she cannot control her grief. This internal war ends up separating another family as Elizabeth's despair causes her to lose Billy.

## FAMILY

*Ace* shows us many different families, each of which is tested in some way. Families are ripped apart and pieced back together, sometimes better off but sometimes a little worse for the wear. Billy finds family in his mother, his foster parents, his friend and his past. Each of these families shows Billy something about himself and helps him discover what his future will become.



# face 2 face

RICHARD OBERACKER and Robert Taylor's brand-new musical *Ace* is a collaboration that has been in the works for years. Drawing from their own personal backgrounds and collective theatre experience, the two men developed *Ace* in celebration and discovery of family—parents, children and friends. The many different characters and situations the authors have developed lead to a rich musical in which each audience member can relate in his or her own way to the material. Exploration of dreams, discovery of memories, healing of wounds, and many other themes all come together in this work, bringing out the message that each individual needs to feel.



RICHARD OBERACKER (Composer, Co-lyricist, Co-librettist) is currently the conductor for Cirque Du Soleil's *KA* at MGM Grand in Las Vegas. His other musicals include *The Gospel According to Fishman*, *Dracula*, *The Game of Love*, *In That Valley*, *A Little Theater*, and *Journey To The West*. Richard would like to thank the following for their invaluable lessons: Barb Amato, Judy Stewart, Charles Peery, Dick Wesp, Roger Grooms, Diane Kvapil, Michael Burnham, Richard Hess, Aubrey Berg, Skip Fenker and Steven Minning. *Ace* is for Donald and Phyllis Oberacker who knew it could be done.

ROBERT TAYLOR (Co-lyricist and Co-librettist) began writing poetry and lyrics around the same time he picked up the violin at the age of eight. His love of music, languages, literature and birds has led him to a lifetime of study and travel. A graduate of Holland's Royal Conservatory, Union College, the University of Bonn and Princeton, he has taught foreign languages and ornithology in New York as well as English and music in China, served as music critic for the Albany *Times Union*, founded and directed several non-profits, worked as a freelance musician and writer in Manhattan and a translator in Europe and Asia, lectured on opera and art history, tried to stay in shape and generally had a great time. Currently in cahoots with Richard Oberacker on three other shows—*Journey to the West*, *Southern Cross* and *Gospel According to Fishman*—Robert tours with Disney's *Lion King*, and is an avid, enthusiastic, and at times woefully reckless bridge player. He dreams of converting his Victorian brownstone in Schenectady, New York into an award-winning Bed and Breakfast.





# SWDNT?

***"I don't need anyone else. I can take care of myself."***

- Billy has been abandoned and decides he would rather be alone than trust anyone again. Why do you think this is? Why might someone be reluctant to put themselves on the line again? Is it worse to be alone or to be hurt by someone else? If you are taking care of yourself you won't have to worry about anyone else, but what is the down side to being alone?

***"All my life there's been one desire just to fly like the birds I see with these wings I am climbing higher In these skies I am free."***

- John Robert follows his dream into the military and into the air. In his position as a pilot, he feels that he has finally achieved his destiny. Do you believe in destiny? Do you think there is truly one place that each person "belongs?" What would be that place for you?

***"...you're not the only one who feels left out and not liked, so don't take it out on me. Especially when I'm a new kid here too, and I have these stupid glasses and my family can't afford really nice clothes for me to go to school in and my hair looks awful today..."***

- Emily's speech emphasizes a very important lesson for Billy. Even though he is experiencing some very tough times in his own life, he has forgotten that the others in his life may be having problems of their own. How hard is it to think of others when you are having a crisis of your own? What should a person do to make sure they see the big picture in life and not wallow in their problems? How might shifting focus from your problems to someone else's be a way to help yourself?

***"We're all given a chance at least once in a lifetime to unlock a very special door, but not many ever find the key."***

- What do you think Ace means by this statement? What is this special door he refers to, and how can it be opened?

***"Billy, no one's 'normal.' Everyone has strange things about them. I bet you do."***

- Emily seems to understand people better than most and here she shows Billy just how well she sees everyone. Unlike Billy, Emily realizes that everyone is different and that "normal" is different for everyone. What do you consider strange about yourself? Is this really strange, or just different? Is it even different? Think about how many others might be experiencing this as well, without you knowing it.

***"...sometimes facing nightmares makes things not so bad."***

- This is probably advice that Emily has heard in many places before. Oftentimes, it seems that fear of a thing can be more harmful than the thing itself. What is it about facing your fears that makes them not so scary? What are other ways a person might conquer fear?

***"I wish it was an offer to go design a rocket or go to the moon but it's not! It's what's left. It's making the best I could out of what was handed to me."***

- What do you think of Ace's statement? Is it better to make the most of the life you are given, or to try and create the life you truly want for yourself? Is the latter even possible?