

Composer Study, March 26-27, 2020

Try to narrate what you remember about Rodgers and Hammerstein and the two musicals we have studied—*Oklahoma* and *South Pacific*.

You may have noticed that we seem to be traveling along a westerly path from one musical to another. Today we are going to learn about a country even further west, [Thailand](#). The name of Rodgers' and Hammerstein's fifth musical is *The King and I* for Thailand has a king.

The story is based on the memoirs of a British governess hired by the king of Thailand in the 1860s. He

wanted [his children](#) to study European ways and to help them understand modern points of view. [Anna Leonowens](#), a widow with a young child, accepted the position and taught his children for six years. Back in those days, very few jobs were available to women. One of them was teaching and, without a husband, Anna needed to support her family.

The first two items on our listening queue are different versions of the same song, “Getting to Know You.” The first is a recent stage production of the musical and the second is from the 1956 film. What do both have in common? How are they different?

The third is an instrumental called “The March of the Siamese Children.” Instrumentals have no lyrics. The purpose of the song is to introduce the king’s children. He had many children for it was the custom of the king to have many wives.

The fourth is “Getting to Know You.” Anna is trying to make the king’s children comfortable with her.

All four songs are very short. You can listen to all four and pick your favorite. Narrate why it is your favorite.