AS YOU LISTEN TO THE MUSIC AND FOLLOW THE LYRICS, THINK OF RESPONSES TO THESE QUESTIONS:

• What do you think the title of the play “Fiddler on the Roof” means?

• What does “this” refer to in the question asked by Tevya? Why do we do this if it is so dangerous? What do you think of the answer he supplies himself?

• What family values do you notice? How do the composer and lyricist choose to present these values musically?

• What do you think of Tevya’s comment: Among ourselves we have always gotten along pretty well.
Tradition Lyrics

(Tevye)
"A fiddler on the roof. Sounds crazy, no? But in our little village of Anatevka, you might say every one of us is a fiddler on the roof, trying to scratch out a pleasant, simple tune without breaking his neck. It isn't easy. You may ask, why do we stay up there if it's so dangerous? We stay because Anatevka is our home... And how do we keep our balance? That I can tell you in one word... Tradition."

(Chorus)
Tradition, tradition... tradition

(Tevye)
"Because of our traditions, we've kept our balance for many, many years. Here in Anatevka we have traditions for everything... how to eat, how to sleep, even, how to wear clothes. For instance, we always keep our heads covered and always wear a little prayer shawl... This shows our constant devotion to God. You may ask, how did this tradition start? I'll tell you - I don't know. But it's a tradition... Because of our traditions, everyone knows who he is and what God expects him to do."

(Tevye & Papas)
Who day and night
Must scramble for a living
Feed the wife and children
Say his daily prayers
And who has the right
As master of the house
To have the final word at home?

(All)
The papa, the papas... tradition

(Golde & Mamas)
Who must know the way to make a proper home?
A quiet home, a kosher home
Who must raise a family and run the home
So papa's free to read the holy book?

(All)
The mama, the mama... tradition

(Sons)
At three I started Hebrew school
At ten I learned a trade
I hear they picked a bride for me
I hope... she's pretty

(All)
The sons, the sons... tradition

(Daughters)
And who does mama teach
To mend and tend and fix
Preparing me to marry
Whoever papa picks?

(All)
The daughters, the daughters... tradition

(Tevye)
"And in the circle of our little village, we have always had our special types. For instance, Yente, the matchmaker... "And Nahum, the beggar..." And most important, our beloved Rabbi..." "And among ourselves, we get along perfectly well. Of course, there was the time when he sold him a horse, but delivered a mule, but that's all settled now. Now we live in simple peace and harmony and..."

Tradition, tradition... tradition

(Tevye)
"Tradition. Without our traditions, our lives would be as shaky as... as a fiddler on the roof!"