

On the Queen of Colours

Erfreuliches Theater Erfurt

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE 

Teachers Notes
HOUSE: ED 09

SUITABILITY
Years K – 4

DATES
July 7 – 10

Introduction

These teacher's notes have been designed to assist you with classroom preparation and extension work in relation to the production of *The Queen of Colours*. We hope that this resource will assist you to further enjoy your performing arts experience back in the classroom. The activities are designed for students from Years K-4. Drama educator Mathew Clausen, has prepared the notes.

Included in these notes are a number of activities that you can use with your students. These activities provide an opportunity for students to explore the broad themes and style of the performance.

Syllabi written by NSW Board of Studies have been used as a guide for the planning of these activities. You should consider rephrasing the questions and activities to suit the particular terminology, curriculum foci and outcomes used in your school. Some websites are suggested in this kit. It is recommended that before setting activities based on these, that teachers first visit the sites and assess the suitability of the content for your particular school setting.

B. Classroom Context and Curriculum Links

Accompanied by engaging live music, *The Queen of Colours* is a strikingly original adaptation about the importance of colour in our lives. This performance explores how our expression of life experiences is closely related to colours and how they make us feel.

The Queen of Colours provides wonderful opportunities for teachers to make links between their performing arts experience and classroom activities at school. Some of the key messages in this performance include the power of imagination and the importance of creativity.

Curriculum Links: Creative Arts / English / LOTE

C. Performance Event Description and Synopsis

Full of kaleidoscopic wonder and colourful energy, *The Queen of Colours* is a whimsical story about unleashing creativity and choosing not to simply colour within the lines. A tiny Queen who lives alone in her castle becomes bored with her black and white world. So the Court Painter and the Court Musician magically bring colour and adventure to her. But what happens when the colours take over? Based on the much-loved children's book by German author Jutta Bauer, this inspiring production is a pageant of shadow puppetry, video projection, music and live paintings that literally jump from the page.

Pre Performance

Activity One - Representing Colour

Curriculum Links

Drama/English/Visual Arts

1.1 The following activity will help your students to express their thoughts and feelings about different colours. Seat the class in a circle. Firstly, ask each student to name their favourite colour and maybe give a reason why the colour is a favourite for them. Create brainstorm lists of objects that are linked to certain colours. For example, red - letter box, fire engine, apple and so on.

1.2 Play the following game with your students. Ask your students to move through the room in different ways, for example, crawling, rolling, hopping, jumping, walking on knees etc. When you say a colour name they have to act out the physical activity described below:

Red - pretend to be a log fire

Yellow - pretend to be a banana being peeled

Green - pretend to be a green tree frog jumping from branch to branch

Blue - pretend to be a blue wave of water landing on a beach

1.3 Ask your students to work with a partner. Each pair must choose one other colour that has not been listed in the activities so far. Allow each pair a few minutes to create a physical representation of an object that would be in the colour the pair have chosen. When each pair is ready ask them to show their representation to the rest of the class so that they can guess what colour the object is.

Pre Performance



Activity Two - Colour in Motion

Curriculum Links

Drama/History/Studies in Society

2.1 In this activity your students will visit the website *Colour in Motion*. You might also show the website videos to the whole class if you have the facilities for this. While some of the online information is too advanced for junior primary students, these web links contain animations and information that can be adapted for your classroom context.

Colour In Motion

<http://www.mariaclaudiacortes.com/#>

Open the website and allow the main page to load. Ask your students to view the animations for each colour by clicking on the middle door. Music accompanies each animation so make sure the volume levels are adjusted to allow for this.

Once your students have viewed the animations ask them to recount the images they remember for each colour. Ask your students to describe the sorts of feelings that they might have felt when listening to the music for each animation.

2.2 If your students have access to computers ask them to click on the third door to the right on the main page of *Colour in Motion*. Click on the Kaleidoscope option. This is a fun activity that lets your students mix colours and animation to create changing patterns.

2.3 Ask your students to bring in a toy, item of clothing or other object that is in their favourite colour. Have a show and tell session where each student describes their item and explains where it came from and why they like it.

Pre Performance

Activity Three - Colour Days

Curriculum Links

Drama, English, Visual Arts, Music

3.1 In this activity your students are to work together to create a colour day. You might choose one colour for one day or hold several colour days over the school term. You can begin this activity by teaching your students the names of colours in different languages (see the web link below). This link also provides some fun lists of objects in different colours and work sheets that could be used on your colour day.

I Love Colours

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/colors/red.shtml>

Once the class has voted on their chosen colour for the colour day divide the class into teams who will contribute to the colour activities.

- Coloured Decorations - ask one group to create decorations to turn the classroom into the chosen colour. Put coloured cellophane on the windows, coloured place mats on desks etc.
- Colour and Language - Adjectives and Nouns - Ask one group to create a list of as many names of objects in the colour chosen for the day
- Coloured Snacks - Ask one group to create a colour food menu. They might be able to bring in some coloured snacks to share.
- Stories About Colour - Ask one group to make up a short drama play about the chosen colour.
- Coloured Music - Ask a group to choose music tracks that they feel best represents the chosen colour.
- Positive Colour Affirmations - Ask a group to write a list of statements beginning with, *(name of colour) is important in our world because....*

Post Performance



Activity Four - Performance Evaluation and Reflection

Curriculum Links
English/Drama

4.1 This activity is an opportunity for your students to share their responses to the performance. The questions provided cover all aspects of the performance and you are encouraged to select those questions that will be relevant for your students. The questions could also form a scaffold for written responses.

4.2 Ask the class to divide into pairs. Each pair is to create one or two frozen images of moments from the performance. Each image can include the use of limited sound, word and movement. Allow time for your students to prepare their images for presentation to the class. When each pair presents their work, ask the class to identify the moment from the performance and to describe the action.

4.3 The following questions can be used as a guideline for a discussion about the performance:

1. What describing words would you choose for the Queen?
2. What was the Queen trying to do with the colours? Why?
3. How did the story end?
4. What were some funny moments in the performance? Can you explain why they were funny?
5. What did you like about the use of colours in the performance?
6. What are the names of the instruments that were used in the performance?
7. What sounds and music were used? Can you think of words to describe the sorts of feelings or moods the music/ sounds created?

Post Performance



Activity Five - Colours and Meaning

Curriculum Links

Drama/English/Visual Arts

5.1 Ask the class to sit in a circle on the floor. Talk with the class about the ways in which colours can have different messages. For example, green can mean 'go', it can represent feeling jealous and it can also mean that somebody might be feeling sick. Name a few colours and ask the class to share the meanings that are connected to these colours. You might like to re-visit the website from Activity Two, *Colour in Motion* and the animations to help stimulate discussion about this.

5.2 The following exercise will help your students develop skills of concentration and focus while encouraging them to develop their skills of physical expression. Ask your students to find somewhere in the room to work on their own. Ask you call out names of different colours your students are to hold a frozen pose as either something that is that colour, for example a yellow haystack, a green apple or a purple cloak, or as a person in a situation where the colour is part of the moment, for example a girl is in a shop matching red nail polish with her red lipstick. You may need to make some suggestions before your students create their own ideas.

5.3 Ask your students to choose a partner and then find somewhere in the room to work on their own and to act out the following short scenes. In the scene, the actors must say the name of the colour as many times as they can:

Red - A mother warns her child that the heater is hot

A policeman holds up a red stop sign and asks a driver to stop

A singer is singing in front of an audience and forgets her words and feels very embarrassed

Blue - Two pilots fly an airplane against a blue sky

A brother and sister build a snowman and their hands become blue with cold

A husband and wife paint their bedroom blue so they can feel more relaxed.

Yellow - Two friends are on a sunny beach building a sandcastle with the golden yellow sand.

A father helps his son or daughter prepare for a night bike ride by giving them a yellow safety vest and helmet to wear.

Two tired bush walkers walking through dark, thick bush land suddenly find a field of yellow flowers. This makes them feel much better.

Post Performance



Activity Six - Colour Poems

Curriculum Links
English/Drama

6.1 Sit the class in a circle. Begin a medium paced clapping rhythm for the group to copy. Alter the speed of the rhythm. Ask your students to talk about how our feelings can change depending on how fast or slow a rhythm. Repeat the clapping exercise but ask your students to close their eyes as they clap. They should use their hearing to copy as you speed up or slow down the rhythm. At various times maintain the speed of the rhythm and ask your students to imagine a colour that suits the rhythm at that point in time. Ask for volunteers to share their experiences.

6.2 Ask your students to work in pairs. Each pair is to create a poem about a colour of their choice. The poem can be in any structure. Ask your students to think about the rhythm and colour activity (6.1), and to try to build some of the different rhythms into their poems.

A selection of sample colour poems from other school is included below. You might like to share some of these with your class before hand as examples.

Songs for Teachers.com

<http://www.songs4teachers.com/colorpoems.htm>

TheHugoMaynellPrimary School

<http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/40903026a/colour.htm>

BBC - Northern Island Schools

http://www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/schools/4_11/potato/pdf/spring2005/pr01.pdf

6.3 Divide the class into groups of three or four. Ask each group to read out aloud each person's poem. Each group must choose one of their poems to perform for the class. Once each group has selected their poem, help them to create the images in the poems. Ask them to use the same sorts of freeze frames that they practiced earlier in this exercise. They will also need to appoint one person as reader of the poem. Allow the groups time to prepare and then ask groups to perform.

Post Performance



Activity Seven - Fantasy Artist

Curriculum Links
Drama/Visual Arts

7.1 This activity is a little more advanced and might not be appropriate for junior primary levels. Focus this activity on one artist and their paintings. You will need to find images of the artists work to show your students. These can be sourced on line or in your library.

Talk to your students about the sample art works. Ask them to focus on the objects and characters in the paintings.

Ask your students questions about the use of colour and what the artist might be trying to achieve.

7.2

Ask your students to find somewhere in the space to work on their own.

Ask them to imagine they are an artist at an outdoor location. They need to make up a name for their artist character.

Ask your students to pretend to be this artist and to mime putting up their easel, canvas and tray of paints.

Ask them to imagine a landscape that they have arrived to paint.

Play some appropriate music to accompany your student's mime. When they have finished, ask for some volunteers to speak to the class as their artist and describe their paintings and the choices of colour.

References

BBC - Northern Island Schools

www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/schools/4_11/potato/pdf/spring2005/pr01.pdf April 2009

Cortes, Maria Claudia - Colour In Motion

www.mariaclaudiacortes.com/# April 2009

EnchantedLearning.com - I Love Colours

www.enchantedlearning.com/colors/red.shtml April 2009

O'Flynn Consulting - Songs for Teachers.com

<http://www.songs4teachers.com/colorpoems.htm> April 2009

The Hugo Maynell Primary School - Colour Poems

<http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/40903026a/colour.htm> April 2009