

WHAT DOES RED DO ON THURSDAY?



SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE 

Teachers Notes
HOUSE: ED 08

SUITABILITY
Years K-2

DATES
June 18-27

Introduction



These teacher's notes have been designed to assist you with classroom preparation and extension work in relation to the Thalias Kompagnons production of *What does Red do on Thursday?* 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-2. 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.

Classroom Context and Curriculum Links

What Does Red Do On Thursday? is an engaging celebration of the wonders of imagination and creativity and provides the classroom teacher with many opportunities for related learning activities that link to the following subject areas:

Curriculum Links - Primary

Creative Arts: *Drama - Making, Performing, Appreciating*
Visual Arts - Appreciating
Music - Organising sound, Listening

Performance Event Description and Synopsis

What Does Red Do On Thursday? brings the joy of music and visual arts together in a fascinating performance where an artist paints on a transparent canvas to create fantasy worlds full of plants, animals and fairy-tale palaces.

The music of Ravel, Debussy and Shostakovich provide the score that accompanies the artist as he paints. The changes in tempo, rhythm and mood in the music provide moments of surprise and delight as each brush stroke creates a new image.

Pre Performance



Curriculum Links

Drama/Music

Responding to Music

Your students will enjoy the performance much more if they are familiar with the music. The following tracks are used in the performance and are all available in the iTunes online store:

1. *Bolero* by Maurice Ravel
2. *Ma mère l'oye* by Maurice Ravel
3. *Le tombeau de Couperin* by Maurice Ravel
4. *The Counterplan* by Dimitri Shostakovitch:
- 5 *Images* by Claude Debussy

Choose one or two of these tracks for the following pre-performance activities.

1. Rhythm

Ask your students to sit in a circle on the floor. Begin with a simple clapping rhythm and ask your students to copy you. Play with speeding the rhythm up and slowing the rhythm down. Ask your students to talk about how a fast rhythm makes them feel and how a slow rhythm makes them feel. Have different student volunteers start their own rhythm and ask the class to copy.

Ask your students to stand and to copy a rhythm you create by walking. As in the first part of this activity play with speeding the rhythm up and slowing it down to create different types of energy. Ask your students to reflect on how the changes in rhythm make them feel.



Now ask your students to think of a machine that can speed up and slow down using a very strong rhythm. For example a sewing machine or a washing machine. Ask your students to work in pairs. Each pair is to become one machine that speeds up and then slows down. Allow your students time to prepare and then present these to the class.

2. Music and Rhythm

This activity encourages the students to become aware of sounds and rhythms within the music. They will also explore ways to play with these rhythms.

Play your music track. Ask the class to pay attention to the rhythm of the music. Get them to tap their fingers on the floor or table in time to the beat. Here are some fun ways for the class to play with the rhythm:

- Tap your feet on the floor
- Nod your head
- Poke your tongue in and out
- Clap your hands
- Touch your elbows together
- Tap your nose with your finger
- Make an animal noise
- Chant a word for example 'blue, blue, blue'
- Count out loud using one number for each beat.
- Walk around the room taking steps exactly on the beat
- Add a clap for each step you take
- Add a clap for every second step you take
- Take a step, clap, and take another step, clap and repeat.
- Make up your own way of moving through the room to the beat.

3. Music and Instruments

a) Ask the class to lie on their backs on the floor. Explain that they are going to practice the skill of hearing by listening carefully for the different sounds in and outside the class room. As they listen to the sounds ask them to focus on specific sounds and identify what is making the sound.

b) Play your second music track from the list above or play the first track a second time. Ask the class to listen carefully to the music. Encourage the class to use their imagination to create their own images or a 'movie' of the story in the song.

c) Ask the students to listen carefully to the instruments being used. Can they name any of the instruments being used?

d) Ask the class to sit in a circle and share their images and stories.

Pre Performance



Curriculum Links

Drama/Music

Conductors and Painters

2.1 Ask your students to find a space in the room where they can work on their own. Explain to them what a conductor of an orchestra is. You may like to demonstrate how a conductor stands and uses their baton to sustain the tempo or to control the intensity of instruments or moments in the music. Ask your students to stand, play one of the tracks from the performance and ask your students to copy your movements as a conductor.

2.2 Now ask your students to imagine they are artists who paint. They are going to imagine that they are in a spectacular outdoor landscape that they will paint while listening to the music. Ask them to mime carrying their paint box of paints and brushes and their easel. Once they have set up their imaginary easel and paints, play the music track again. As the music plays the students are to paint an imaginary painting with brush strokes and arm movements that respond to the rhythm and mood of the music. Once the track has finished ask each student to describe their imaginary painting to the class.

Post Performance



Curriculum Links

Drama

Performance Reflection

3.1 Ask the class to sit in a circle. Allow some time for each student to talk about the performance. They might like to ask questions or to recount and describe moments they enjoyed.

3.2 Ask the class to stand and to find a space in the room where they are on their own. Ask the class to practice being very still, like they are frozen. Use a command like 'freeze' to help them be precise about when you want them to be still. Allow the class to walk around the room and when you are ready call 'freeze'. Each time you call 'freeze' explain to the class that they are going to hold the freeze for a longer time. See if the class can hold a freeze for 60 seconds.

3.3 Now explain to your students that they are going to freeze as objects they remember from the painting in the performance. Ask the class to walk through the space and when you call 'freeze' the students become the object/animal/image from the performance. Go around the room and when you tap a student they are to say out loud the object they are pretending to be.

Post Performance



Cirriculum Links

Visual Arts

Collage and Music

4.1 For this activity you will need the following art items for each student: glue, sheets of white paper and a variety of shapes cut out of coloured paper.

Ask your students to close their eyes and listen to another music track from the performance or one that you have found that you would like them to listen to. Ask your students to brainstorm images that they saw in their imaginations as they listened to the music. Play the track again and ask your students to arrange the shapes of coloured paper on the white piece of paper in a collage to represent one of the images they saw in their imagination. Repeat the track and ask your students to glue the coloured paper to the white paper. Ask your students to write their name and a title on their collage and display the art works for the class to see. Ask each student to talk about their collage to the class.