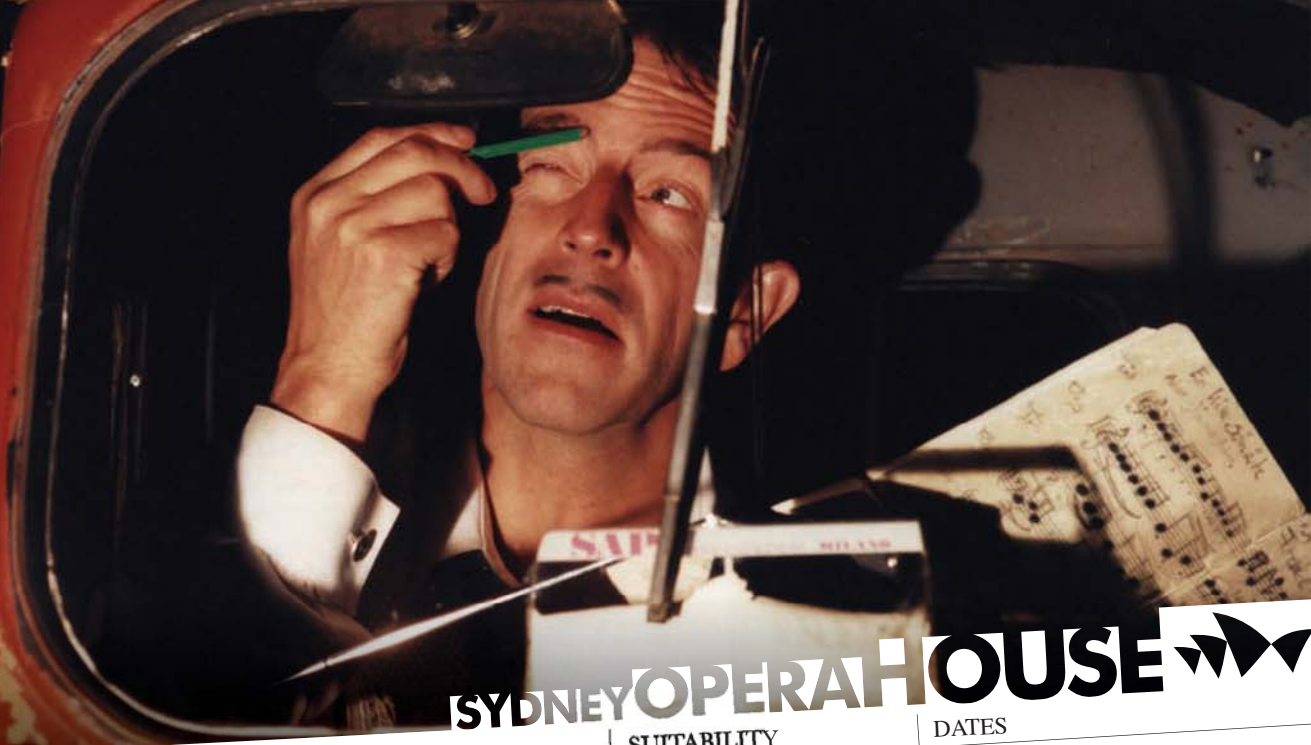


"YOU  
MUST WALK  
ALONE THROUGH  
THE FOREST..."  
A GRIMM TALE  
MEETS FOWL PLAY!

# SONATINA



**SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE** 

Teachers Notes  
HOUSE: ED 08

SUITABILITY

Years 4-6

DATES

May 5 & 6

# Introduction



## A. Introduction

These teacher's notes have been designed to assist you with classroom preparation and extension work in relation to the Gruppe 38 Theatre Company's production of *A Sonatina*. 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 4-6. 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

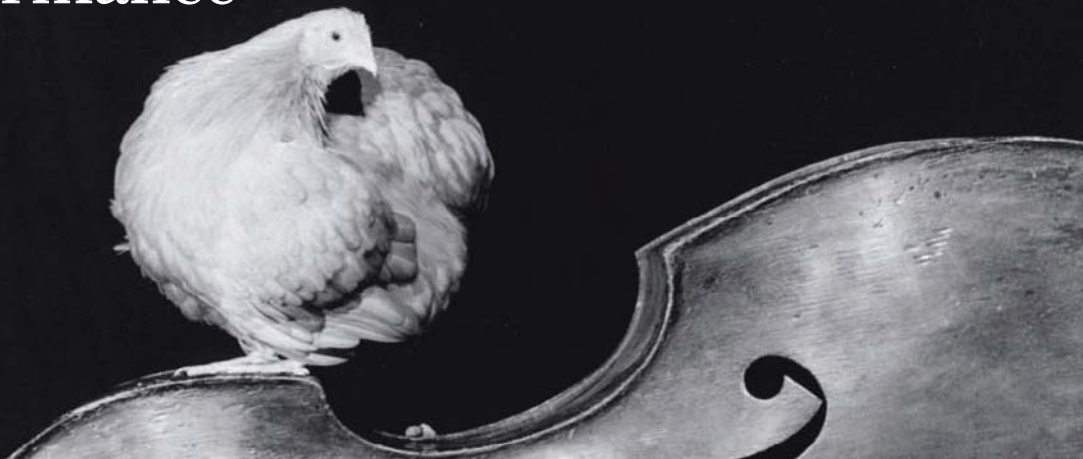
Set as a story within a story, a band of travelling players tells the tale of *Little Red Riding Hood* from the back of its pick-up truck. But this take is very different: the main characters are a newly laid egg, a potato with a cold and a nasty potato masher. The star performer is a live chicken and nothing can happen until she produces the egg.

*A Sonatina* is an inventive reworking of the Grimm Brothers' story. The performance incorporates music, comedy, puppetry and slapstick and provides the classroom teacher with many opportunities for related learning activities that link to the following subject areas:

English: *Listening and Talking (language structures and features), Reading (reading and viewing text)*

Creative Arts: *Drama - Making, Performing, Appreciating*

# Pre Performance



## Curriculum Links

*English/Drama*

### Activity One - Little Red Riding Hood

1.1 In this activity your students will work with a partner. Ask each pair to sit together and in five minutes, recount the story of *Little Red Riding Hood*. Once each pair has finished, ask the class to sit in a circle. Each person will take a turn to tell one sentence of the story. The story should finish by the time it reaches the last person in the circle. After you have finished telling the story, ask your students to respond to the following questions:

- Who wrote *Little Red Riding Hood*?
- When was it written?
- What are the messages in this story?
- Why do you think this story is still popular today?
- Do you know of any different versions of this fairy tale?

1.2 If you are teaching upper primary students you can ask them to complete a short research task on *Little Red Riding Hood* using some of the information from the web link below (please be aware that while this link contains appropriate information for students in primary years it also includes interpretations of *Little Red Riding Hood* that are more adult in theme).

Wikipedia - Little Red Riding Hood

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little\\_Red\\_Riding\\_Hood](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Red_Riding_Hood)

Use the following questions as a guideline for their research:

- Why is the tale *Little Red Riding Hood* called a morality tale?
- List one or two similarities or differences in stories that were written earlier than *Little Red Riding Hood*.
- How did the Grimm's version of this story differ from earlier versions?



## Activity One - Continued

1.3 In this activity your students will choose to play one of the characters from *Little Red Riding Hood*. Ask your students to find somewhere to work individually and to choose one of the characters they would like to play. Instruct the class to adopt a frozen pose as their character. Once they have done this ask them to sit on the floor. Ask for students who play the same character to stand and show their pose. Repeat this until all students have shown their characters. Now ask the class to choose a specific moment from the story where their character might be speaking. This might be to another character or they might be voicing their thoughts out loud. Have the class stand and practise a new pose for the same character but this time they will add a line of dialogue and a movement. Ask the class to sit in an audience formation leaving space for performers. Have groups of the same character stand in front of the class and perform their pose, line and action. This might be all together or one at a time. After every student has shown their character, create mini tableaux by combining different characters in an arrangement and asking the performers to repeat their pose, action and line of dialogue.

# Pre Performance



## Curriculum Links

*Drama/English*

### Activity Two - Fairy Tale Research

2.1 This activity requires your students to access the following websites or you may use your school library to locate printed versions of Grimm's fairy tales:

Grimm's Fairy Tales

<http://www.familymanagement.com/literacy/grimms/grimms-toc.html>

Grimm's Fairy Tales

<http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~spok/grimmtmp/>

Ask your students to read five fairy tales and encourage them to look for ones that they are not familiar with.

2.2 Ask your students to work in small groups. Each student in each group is to draw up a table of four columns. The first column is for character names, the second for challenges the character may face, the third column is for the places where the characters go to in the fairy tale and the fourth column is for any objects, magical or otherwise, that are associated with the character. Allow the class time to draw up their tables and for each person to fill in their own table using the fairy tales they have read. Once they have completed this task each group is to respond to the following questions and then report back to the class:

- List the locations from the fairy tales you have read.
- What are the common challenges facing characters in fairy tales?
- What categories could the characters be grouped under? For example good character or family member or children etc.
- Which characters are common to most fairy tales?
- What messages are common in fairy tales?



## Activity Two - Continued

2.3 In this activity your students will use their body shape and movement to create some of the objects and locations in fairy tales. Ask your students to practice being objects in locations by finding a space where they can work individually. Use the following list of objects and ask your students to use their bodies, movement and vocal sound to create:

- A creaky gate to a farmyard
- A gnarled old tree in a dark forest
- A shiny poisonous apple
- A full moon
- A babbling brook

Ask your students to list four or five locations from their lists that they would like to create in groups. Seat the class as audience leaving space for performers. Ask volunteers to come to the front of the audience one at a time and adopt a pose, movement and sound to represent an object in the location. Keep adding volunteers until the location is complete and then try creating another location.

2.4 Ask the class to choose one character from the fairy tales they have read. They are to use their imaginations to extend their knowledge of the character beyond the information contained in the fairy tale they have read. Each character is to write a short letter using one of the following intentions:

- To have problem solved by magic
- To purchase something that will change their lives for the better
- To complain about a neighbour and their strange ways
- To ask for help in looking for someone or something that has gone missing.

Allow your students time to finish their letters then ask the class to sit in a circle. As teacher you will adopt the role of narrator of all fairy tales. You have called the characters here so that they can express their needs and wishes. Ask each student to stand and introduce themselves as their character to the class. Each character is then to read their letter aloud to the class. You might like to ask the character a few questions to elaborate the information in the letter and the students are to respond in role.



## Activity Two - Continued

2.5 Ask your students to work in groups of three. They are to create a short role play where they act as the characters they played when reading their letters out loud. They are to imagine that one month has passed since they wrote their letter and their situation has changed either for the better or for the worse depending on their ideas about their characters. Ask the groups to set their role play in a fairy tale location where it is likely the three characters might meet and exchange information. Allow the groups time to prepare and then have each group show their work to the class.

# Post Performance



## Cirriculum Links

*English/Drama*

### Activity Three - Performance Reflection

3.1 This activity is an opportunity for your students to share their responses to the performance. Before your students complete the following drama activity, ask them to recount the performance. In their recount, ask them to identify and describe the moments they liked the most.

3.2 Ask the class to divide into pairs. Each pair is to create one or two images 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.

3.3 The following questions can be used as a guideline for a discussion or written review of the performance.

1. What are the names of the instruments that were used in the performance?
2. How was the play within the play similar to the tale of *Little Red Riding Hood*?
3. What were some funny moments in the performance? Can you explain why they were funny?
4. What did you like about the set in the performance?
5. What sounds and music were used? Can you think of words to describe the sorts of feelings or moods the music/ sounds created?
6. Why do you think the performers chose to tell the tale of *Little Red Riding Hood* as a story within a story?

# Post Performance



## Curriculum Links

### *Drama*

#### **Activity Four - Mirror, Mirror**

4.1 Ask your students to work in pairs. This activity will use the idea of a magic mirror as the basis for drama work. Ask the pairs to stand opposite each other with enough space between them so that they can see their partner's entire body without having to look up or down. Ask the pair to name each person either 'A' or 'B'. 'A' will start a mirroring exercise by moving only their left arm in slow and smooth movements. 'B' will mirror this movement but using their right arm. Allow the pair to practice this for a while and then call 'freeze'. Ask the leader of the mirror work to change from 'A' to 'B'. 'B' continues using their right arm and 'A' mirrors the movement. 'B' may also include use of their left arm as well so both arms are being used. Continue with the swapping of leaders and try adding other types of movement to be mirrored until the pairs are confident enough to move around the room together.

4.2 Divide the class into groups of about five or six. Each group is to use the members of the group to create a magic mirror. This mirror can see the future but its answers are often in rhyming riddles. Encourage the group to create both the frame of the mirror and to have some group members who will transform from the reflective surface to the image and voice of the spirit of the mirror. Give each group a question that will be asked of the mirror by a class volunteer later in the lesson. Keep the questions simple. Allow each group time to prepare and encourage them to use movement, vocal sound including chanting and repetition to create a magical atmosphere. Once each group has finished their preparations ask the class to sit in front of the performance area. Each group will take it in turn to show their magic mirror to the class. Ask for a volunteer from the audience to approach each mirror. At first the mirror will reflect the movements of the volunteer until they ask their question. The mirror will then reveal its spirit self and respond to the question with the group's prepared riddle.



### Activity Four - Continued

4.3 Each group will now be given time to prepare a short play that uses fairy tale characters in a journey that includes a magic mirror. This will take more than one lesson to prepare and present. Encourage your students to consider the selected elements of drama; *role/character, situation, time and place, tension, focus, mood and atmosphere, space and rhythm* in their preparations depending on the age group. Allow the groups time to prepare and then show the work to the class. Give feedback on effective use of focus and concentration, engaging tension, convincing and original characters and/or imaginative use of space.

# Post Performance



## Cirriculum Links

### *English*

## Activity Five - A Fractured Fairy Tale

5.1 In this task your students will write a short fractured fairy tale. The following link provides some amusing examples that you can share with your students:

Fractured Fairy Tales ( Text versions)

<http://www.brownielocks.com/fracturedfairytales.html>

Grimm's Fairy Tales by the Hank Pank Players (Audio versions)

<http://www.angelfire.com/il2/grimm/>

5.2 Ask your students to discuss the similarities and differences between fairy tales and fractured fairy tales. Ask them to think about characters, plot and message. Each student will write their own fractured fairy tale. Allow your students time to develop their ideas and to draft versions of their stories. They should draw on the list of characters, locations and objects they created in activity three to help them with their ideas.

5.3 Divide your students into groups. Each group will listen to each group members fractured fairy tale read aloud. Once the group has finished reading all the stories aloud ask each group to vote for the one story they would like to read aloud to the class. Allow each group time to prepare their story. They might like to convert the story into a radio play or a performance that uses freeze frames. If they choose these options, each group should appoint one person to act as narrator to link the various aspects of the presentation and story telling together.

# Post Performance



## Cirriculum Links

*Drama/English*

### Activity Six - The Musicians of Bremen

6.1 In this activity your students will use another of Grimms fairy tales, *The Musicians of Bremen* as the basis for Drama and English work. The following websites provide you with versions of the story and some illustrations. You may like to ask your students to visit these sites or if you have access to a Smartboard or data projector, share them as a class.

Folk Tales - The Musicians of Bremen

<http://wneo.org/WebQuests/TeacherWebQuests/trunkofelmtree/folktales.htm>

Flash Animation and Text - The Brementown Musicians

<http://www.brementownmusicians.com/flash/story>

Photo of Statue - The Four Musicians of Bremen

<http://www.pbase.com/image/88815560>

6.2 Allocate one of the four animals in the story to each of your students or you might let them choose from either the donkey, the dog the cat or the rooster. Ask them to find a place in the room to work individually and to sit for a moment and think about how they might use body movements to become the animal they will play. Ask them to practice these movements individually. Then ask your students to practice the sounds their animal might make. Have groups of students stand and show their animals until everyone has had a turn.

6.3 Part of the comedy of this story is the fact that the animals believed their singing was nice to listen to when in fact it was not. The image of the animals standing on top of each other is also a comic device in this story. Ask your students to form groups of four and to choose a song they all know that they will sing one verse of using the voices of the characters they are playing. While it would be too dangerous to ask your students to physically stand on top of each other, ask them to use balance, physical contact, body language and facial expression to create an amusing image that shows the four animals in their performance group. Allow each group time to prepare and then ask each group to show their work to the class.



## Activity Six - Continued

6.4 In this activity your students will divide into groups of six and prepare a short role play. The role play will tell the story of *The Musicians of Bremen* using action, dialogue and song. Your students may need to revisit the story to familiarise themselves with the key events. Some members of the group will need to play the robbers and could also act as narrators to link the various scenes. If they choose to act as narrators, ask them to devise an interesting characters, maybe someone from the town of Bremen, in the same way *A Sonatina* had a character who then narrated the story. Your students will need more than one lesson to prepare their performances. When they present their work ask them to respond to the following questions:

- Give one example that explains how one of the groups used space effectively.
- Describe a funny moment. What made this moment funny?
- What was the climactic moment of the story?
- Evaluate one performer and give two examples that tell us they were a good performer.

# References



## Online Resources

All Family Resources, Grimms Fairy Tales, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little\\_Red\\_Riding\\_Hood](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Red_Riding_Hood), 1999-2005

Brownie Locks and the Three Bears, Fractured Fairy Tales, <http://www.brownielocks.com/fracturedfairytales.html>, 1999 - 2008

Entechnevision Inc, The Bremontown Musicians, <http://www.bremontownmusicians.com/flash/story>, Feb 2008

Hanky Pank Players, Grimm's Fairy Tales, <http://www.angelfire.com/il2/grimm/>, 1999-2008

Haswell M., The Four Musicians of Bremen, <http://www.pbase.com/image/88815560>, Feb 2008

Unknown, Folk Tales, <http://wneo.org/WebQuests/TeacherWebQuests/trunkofelmtree/folktales.htm>, Feb 2008

Unknown, Grimms Fairy Tales, <http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~spok/grimmtmp/>, Feb 2008

Wikipedia, Little Red Riding Hood, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little\\_Red\\_Riding\\_Hood](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Red_Riding_Hood), Feb 2008