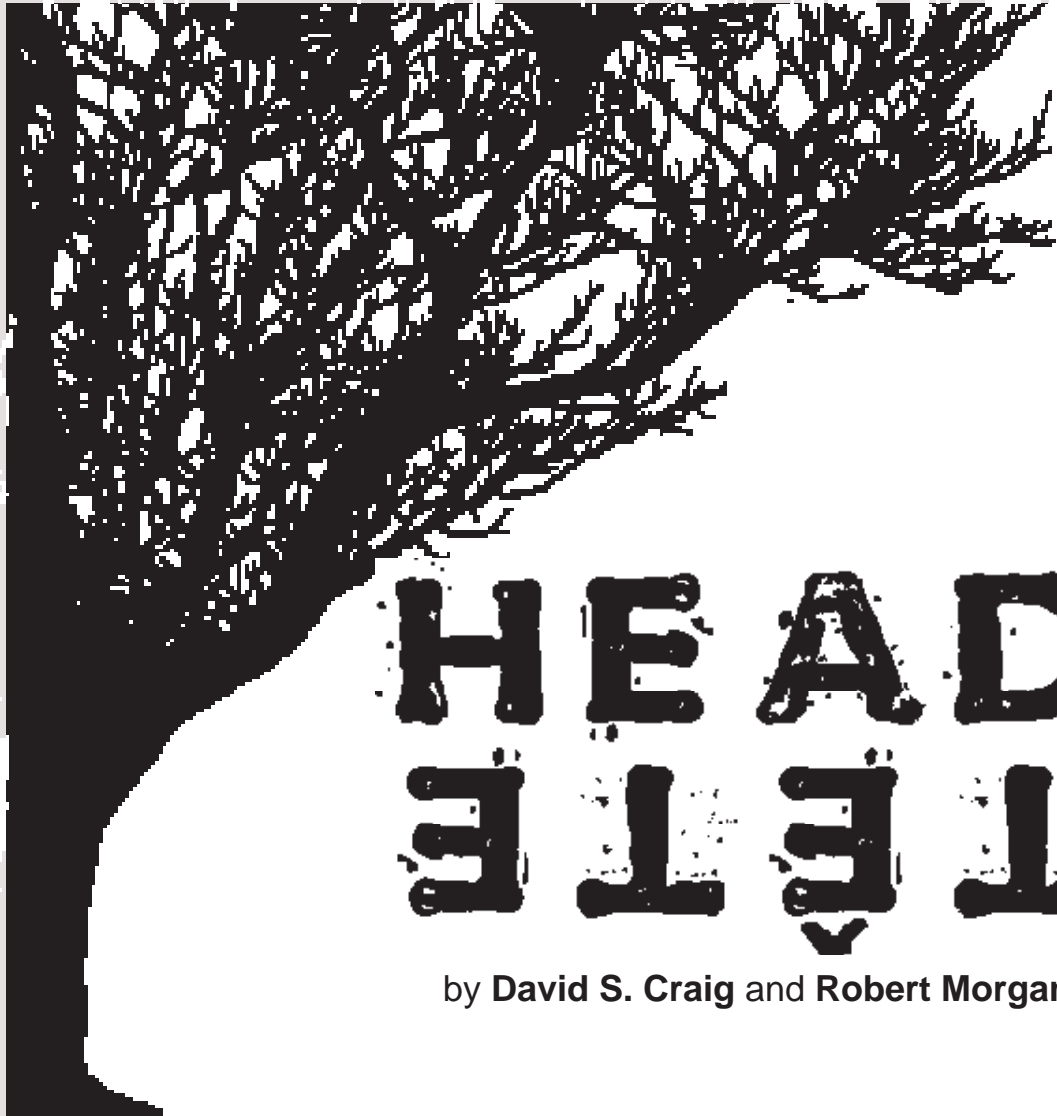


THEATRE DIRECT

Exceptional Theatre for Young People



HEAD A THE

by **David S. Craig** and **Robert Morgan**

for Teachers and Parents
February - March, 2011

Theatre Direct Canada
in the Artscape Wychwood Barns
601 Christie St., Studio 174
Phone: 416-537-4191
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www.theatredirect.on.ca

HEAD TÊTE

“In English, the expression ‘head to head’ denotes competition, conflict. In French, the literal translation is ‘tête à tête’ which means an intimate meeting between friends.

Head à Tête is the journey
from one to the other.”

(Playwrights David S. Craig and Robert Morgan)

Synopsis

The set is a dark and barren landscape. We are told that this was once a beautiful garden, but no one has been here for thousands of years... until now.

Two strangers meet in this place, both looking for something... warmth? food? companionship? someone to play with?

Through their interaction we see their hopes, fears, curiosity, and need for belonging shine through minimal dialogue. One speaks only French, the other only English but their communication is clear. The audience experiences their journey from misunderstanding to agreement, aggression to collaboration, all surrounding the central, magical tree bearing limited but delicious fruit.

Characters

Please	an English-speaking wanderer
Moitié	a French-speaking wanderer



Sections of this Study Guide

Head à Tête is a simple tale which touches on some large issues; explore some of these varied topics through the activities and information throughout the guide. For help, further study, or an in-school workshop, contact our Education Department: Education@TheatreDirect.on.ca.



About the Play

Learn about the play, the history of this production and the cast, crew, and artistic team who bring the story to life.

Head à Tête Synopsis & Characters **Pg 2**

Production History **Pg 4**

About the Playwrights **Pg 4**

Director's Notes **Pg 5**

Cast and Crew **Pg 6**



Conflict Resolution and Problem Solving

In this play, there are times when the characters come head to head in competition; these exercises explore cooperative-competitive play and ways to work through disagreements, share ideas and find agreement.

Pre-Show Video: Neighbours **Pg 7**

Conflict Resolution **Pg 8**

Problem Solving Activity using Dotmocracy **Pg 9**

Trashballs: Cooperative-Competitive Games **Pg 12**



Communication

The characters in this play literally do not speak the same language, yet they find a way to communicate and even collaborate. The following activities explore non-verbal communication.

Feelings and Emotions Activity **Pg 13**

Improvised Orchestra **Pg 15**

Communication Games **Pg 16**



Environmental Stewardship

When resources are scarce, we need to work together. Here are some activities for appreciating, sharing, and conserving our resources.

Quick Questions about Conservation and Stewardship **Pg 17**

Love your Trees **Pg 17**

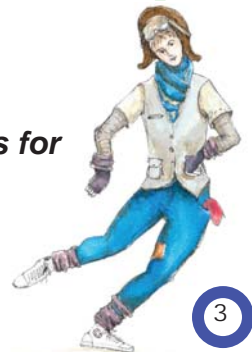
Our Tree: Interview with the Designer **Pg 18**



Further Study and Helpful Links

We couldn't fit everything into this guide! Check out these links for even more great ideas!

Resource List **Pg 19**



Production History

notes from David S. Craig



The play was inspired by the conflict between America and the USSR during the Cold War in the 1980's. Robert and I felt the rivalry (posturing, chest beating) was similar to school yard games and worked with noted Quebecoise director Alain Gregoire on an allegory that would reflect male violence. The central image was to be a tree which provided light, heat, shelter and food, which would represent the world. As the work progressed, we realized that the conflict came out of fear and the fear came out of intimacy. Thus the play became a pendulum swinging from a desire for intimacy, intimacy, a fear of betrayal, anger, isolation, a desire for intimacy... etc. Hence the title. 'Head to head' is a conflict between rivals. 'Tête à tête', the literal translation, is an intimate meeting between friends.

About the Playwrights

Head à Tête was written by two of Canada's leading playwrights, David S. Craig and Robert Morgan. We are fortunate that these artists have devoted so much of their time and talents to theatre for young audiences (TYA), providing relevant theatrical experiences for school-aged audiences for decades. David and Robert were the first performers of Head à Tête, premiering in 1983.

To read about these artists, please see their online biographies:

Robert Morgan: www.sparrowintheroom.org/robertmorgan.html

David S. Craig: www.roseneath.ca/staff



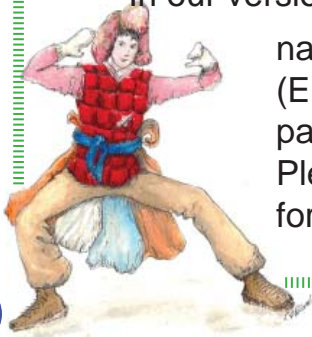
What's in a Name?

In the play Head à Tête, neither of the two characters refer to themselves by name. The audience members are free to imagine names for each character. On a production level, and for the script, it was necessary for those creating the play to have some sort of names for each character.

The original script, as devised and performed as two men, called the characters Adam (English-speaking) and Yves (French-speaking).

In our version, the director decided to call the two characters as they (mistakenly)

name each other during the course of their conversation: Please (English-speaking, an offer of sharing) and Moitié (French-speaking, part of a whole). In this guide, we'll be referring to the characters as Please and Moitié - it may be a fun exercise to create your own names for these two characters for your own in-class use.



Director's Notes

an interview with Thomas Morgan Jones



As a director what do you love about Head a Tete?

I love the innocence of the characters.

I love the challenge of working on a play that is over fifty percent non-verbal.

I love how much play is present in the script and how that informs us in rehearsal: here I mean play in terms of how the characters interact, how they listen, how they handle conflict, and how they resolve conflict.

I love that there are three languages: English, French, and body language.

What do you think children are going to like the best about the play?

One thing is the physical comedy that is present throughout the play. The characters are constantly chasing each other, falling, competing over food, dancing, hiding, and playing. Even their conflicts hold a kind of humour that makes the conflict not about violence, but rather problem solving. The joy in the physicality of the play is totally contagious, and I often find myself laughing right out loud (even though I see the play again and again in rehearsal).

What is the most challenging part about directing this play?

The most challenging thing about this play is one of the things that I love most about it: the energy. This play is so incredibly full of energy! The characters think and react very quickly; they have immediate and outward reactions to everything that happens around them. A sound, a movement, a breath, a word: each of these things can set off a flurry of actions and reactions from each character. In the theatre we often say that because audiences are so intelligent and quick, we need to stay one step ahead of them in the storytelling to make sure that audiences stay engaged. In such a fast paced script, that means that we are sprinting to stay ahead!

The play has French and English, as a director, do you have to understand both languages?

As the director of the play it has helped enormously that I read and speak French, but I would say that a director who does not speak French could also direct the play in a beautiful way. In the play, because the characters do not speak each other's languages, the verbal communication becomes less about language, and more about intonation, facial expressions, and physical actions that accompany the spoken word. As director and actors we have needed to understand what Moitié is saying, but it is only one small part of how we are trying to communicate what she is saying to the audience.

Read the full interview online at TheatreDirect.ca!



Cast and Creative Team



When you see the play, you'll probably only meet three people: the two actors and the stage manager. They'll be representing the work of many others whose behind-the-scenes brought this play to life. During the play, look and listen for clues as to what other jobs might be needed to put a play together.



Sharmila Dey & Michelle Polak,
Performers

These are the actors you'll see on stage. They think about how their characters will move and speak and work with the director to bring those characters to life on stage.

Thomas Morgan Jones, Director
The director works with the actors and production team to create a unified vision for the production. He leads rehearsals, choreographs movement, and worked with the designers to create ideas for sound, set, lighting, and costumes.



Debashis Sinha,
Sound Designer
Deb works with the director before and during the rehearsal period to find and create sounds that will work well to help tell the story or convey a mood during the play.

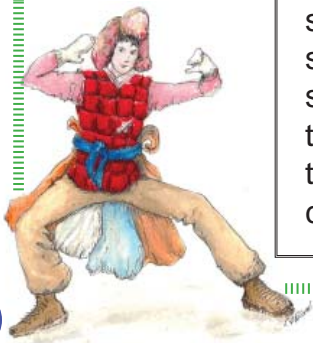


Lindsay Anne Black,
Set and Costume Designer
Lindsay Anne creates ideas for the look of the play starting with sketches and models before designing plans for the final pieces. She has to work with the director's vision and make sure everything will fit in our travel van!

Katherine Arcus,
Stage Manager
Katherine's job is to make sure that everything runs smoothly: rehearsals, the sound and lighting, and the tour schedule. She's the one who keeps the communication flowing.



and more...
lighting designer, theatre technicians, production managers, set builders and painters, artistic director, front of house manager, general manager, volunteers, tour coordinator and someone to write this guide!



Pre-Show Videos: Interviews

To learn more about the production process, check out these videos from Theatre Direct's website. You'll see interviews with the actors, director, and set/costume designer.

Head à Tête Interviews
by Theatre Direct
Running Time: under 10 minutes
www.TheatreDirect.ca



Pre-Show Video: Intro to Conflict and How it can Grow

There are certainly issues of possession, sharing, and territorialism that the characters encounter in Head à Tête. You might like to start a conversation about conflicts, how they can arise, and how they can get out of control by watching this classic video produced by Canada's National Film Board over half a century ago. It's available for free online.



Neighbours / Voisins
by Norman McLaren
Running Time: 8 min 5 sec
www.nfb.ca/film/neighbours_voisins

In this Oscar®-winning short film, Norman McLaren employs the principles normally used to put drawings or puppets into motion to animate live actors. The story is a parable about two people who come to blows over the possession of a flower.

Fair Warning:

There is some violence in this film, and while it is all comically animated, the two neighbours transition from mild-mannered father-types into savage, war-painted fighters.

Please preview the video - especially the part from 6min 30 on - before showing it to your students.

(Synopsis and activity from nfb.ca)

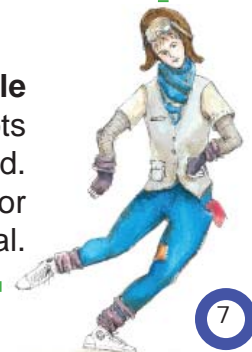
In your Classroom: Analyze the characters' points of view for validity and fairness, then analyze their actions. Examine how countries/regions in conflict often lose sight of what they are fighting for. Discuss options for peaceful resolutions to territorial/ownership disputes. How can these strategies be used in the students' lives? Are there ways we can practice fair fighting now to avoid serious conflict later?

Michèle Sadeek, Whitby, ON

You might also want to read Dr. Seuss' *The Butter Battle*

"Dr. Seuss chronicles the feud between the Yooks and the Zooks from slingshots through sophisticated weaponry, until each side has the capacity to destroy the world.

The language amuses, the drawings are zesty and humorous, and the demand for this book will be large."--School Library Journal.



Engaging in Conflict Resolution



When we find ourselves feeling that something is unfair, that something has been taken from us, or that something is just not right, we can all get angry. Instead of throwing a tantrum or being mean to everyone (those things don't really solve any problems), we need to try to sort things out so that everyone gets a fair go and something of what they want.

In the play, we see some conflicts arise between Please and Moitié. Sometimes they find a solution they are both happy with, sometimes they go back and start again, trying to find a compromise.

Conflict resolution is difficult, but there are some things we can do to help the process:

There are 4 things that you need to do.

Understand - allow everyone to share their point of view, without interruptions; hear all sides of the story.

Avoid making things worse - no put-downs, fighting, or making nasty remarks.

Work together - make "I" statements to share how you feel, take turns speaking, engage in active listening.

Find the solution - brainstorm together to think of ways in which you could resolve the conflict. Sometimes it's helpful to have a mediator to assist in getting these ideas clearly expressed.

When you have come to a solution that both of you can agree with, then you have to be responsible for carrying it out. Work together to decide the best ways to try to do this. Your mediator can help you create a plan of action.

If things don't work out then you need to go through the whole process again to see how it could be improved.

Conflict resolution is not easy. It takes everyone involved to work together willingly and to accept and carry out what has been decided.

See the Resources section at the end of this guide for Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation resources. Thanks to Australia's Child and Youth Health Website for help with this article. www.cyh.com



A New Way to Problem Solve: Dotmocracy Exercise



Moitié: (realizing that she is dividing the stage in two) La ligne.
Please: A line?
Moitié: La ligne.
Please: O.K., there's a line. And it goes right down here.
Moitié: Ici. La ligne est ici.
Please: Right down here.
Moitié: Non ici.
Please: Here.
Moitié: Ici....Et toi, reste la bas.
Please: Yeah, and you stay over there.

View the Dotmocracy rules and Sample Sheet on the following pages.

Please and Moitié have a lot of things to figure out together about how they are going to share their space. They argue about who can go where, about how much fruit each can have, about sharing their belongings.

What sorts of rules do Please and Moitié invent to help them live in their space?

(ex. the line, saying 'please', sharing the food by dividing in half, etc.)

- use Dotmocracy sheets to write these ideas, post at the front of the class.

Which of these rules (for Please and Moitié) do you think are good ones?

- conduct a dotmocracy vote to practice. As students raise hands to respond to one of the rules ideas, the teacher can fill out the appropriate dot for them. Collect a few responses to each posted idea.

What rules would be good ones for our classroom?

- divide into small groups of 3-4, giving each group 2 dot-mocracy pages; each group should come up with two classroom rules that the class might agree upon. ("every Friday we order pizza for any student who brings money on the day"; "The desks are assigned to students and assignments are changed each week"; etc.

- follow the dotmocracy process and adopt all rules that the students have agreed upon. Decide to have a review period of one day (for some) and one week (for others) as appropriate.

For examples of Dotmocracy sheets filled out for this exercise, go to www.TheatreDirect.ca or contact education@theatredirect.on.ca.



Write and draw one idea:

Large rectangular area with horizontal dashed lines for writing and drawing.

Facilitator:

Event:

Signatures

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____
- 7 _____
- 8 _____
- 9 _____
- 10 _____
- 11 _____
- 12 _____
- 13 _____
- 14 _____
- 15 _____

Do you agree?

Fill your one dot below & sign on the right:



Strong Agreement



Agreement



Neutral



Disagreement



Strong Disagreement



Confusion

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Date/time:

#

Rules for Dotmocracy



www.dotmocracy.org/rules

The Rules posted at Dotmocracy.org (seen below) are good for community group use. You can modify them for use in your classroom, perhaps allowing the teacher to act as the 'neutral' facilitator.

To facilitate a Dotmocracy session that is reliable, accountable, fair for all participants, and which promotes useful results, follow these rules:

1. The official Dotmocracy facilitator(s) are authoritative and responsible for the Dotmocracy process, but maintain neutral opinions on the session's content.
2. Each participant may only fill in one dot per Dotmocracy sheet.
3. Participants must sign each sheet that they dot.
4. Participants may dot as many or as few sheets as they please during the session.
5. There are no changes to an idea's text inside the idea box once dotting has started on that sheet.
6. Participants have the right to keep their dotting choices secret and their comments anonymous.
7. A Dotmocracy sheet should only be removed from the dotting process by the official facilitator(s).

When a facilitator fails to follow these rules, it degrades the process. Just like in sport and law, rules promote fairness and reliability. The design of the Dotmocracy sheets, in combination with these rules, has been refined to ensure participants' ideas and opinions will be collected in a transparent, constructive, and accountable manner. Following these rules will help you to build trust with participants and observers in both the Dotmocracy process and in yourself as a Dotmocracy facilitator.

Required Posted Information

For each Dotmocracy session, the following information should be posted for all participants to easily read:

1. The basic process instructions.
2. The preamble and references to any related information materials.
3. The question(s) to be addressed.
4. An explanation of where and when a copy of the complete results will be accessible.
5. A statement describing how the results will be used by the hosting organization(s).
6. The hosting organization(s) name and contact details.
7. The official facilitator(s) name and contact details.

Posting this information provides a consistent explanation about the session and who is responsible for it.

Go online to see sample Dotmocracy Sheets filled in for exercises in this Study Guide:
www.TheatreDirect.ca



Trashball Games: Cooperative Competition



As Head à Tête's director, Thomas Morgan Jones, points out, *Please and Moitié* learn about each other through play. While they are, at some points, competing against each other, they are also building a structure around how to best get along, how to share and come to a shared understanding. This happens during children's play, too! This activity allows participants to work together to create cooperative or competitive games that they create on the spot.

Make a "Trashball"

Provide each student with two sheets of newspaper, a plastic bag, and about 6' of masking tape.

Scrunch up the paper into a ball, wrap ball in bag removing excess air but not making the ball too tight, wrap ball around two or more equators with tape.

Voila! A soft ball for everyone!

Create a One-Person Game

Bring students to a large open space and instruct them to spread out from each other and work on their own to create a one-person game. Show a couple of examples (balancing, throw-spin-catch, etc) and allow students time to try out a few different ideas.

Have students find a partner and teach their partner their one-person game.

Create a Two-Person Game

With those partnerships, have each pair create a two-person game. Encourage them to create rules and goals.

Get in groups of four and teach the two-person game to another pair.

This can continue on until a whole-group game is created (requires good teamwork and cooperation within the group and can be quite empowering for the class). Note that as the group size increases, the number of trashballs available increases as well, i.e. an eight-person game could use only one trashball or up to eight.

Debrief the Activity

Did you find inventing a new game easy or difficult?

Was it more or less difficult when more people were added to the group?

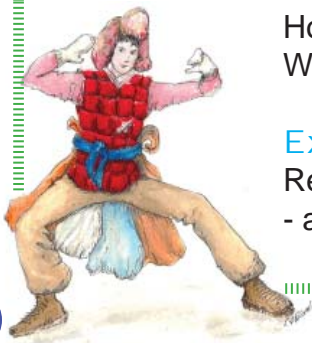
How did you solve any disagreements that arose?

How did you avoid arguments or disagreements?

What makes a good game?

Extension

Record the rules of your newly invented game(s) to practice procedural writing - and for posterity, of course!



Feelings and Emotions



It is important for all of us to be able to identify and communicate how we are feeling. Beyond “good”, “bad”, “sad”, “happy” children and adults all have a wider range of emotions. The list of words on the following page may help your class get started toward being able to identify this range of emotions.

How are you Feeling? Check-in

Have each child select two words that describe how they are feeling at that point in the day. You can do a How are You Feeling check-in at the beginning or end of each day or week, with all students, or just a few at a time. Choosing two feelings to share and composing a sentence (written or orally) about *why* he is feeling one of those emotions allows for sharing and some privacy as well. Students can share their sentences with the large group, with a partner, or in their personal journals.

Remember: It is important to allow students to feel comfortable identifying with feelings/emotions of all kinds. Feelings shouldn't be judged; it is the actions that we take to express these feelings that could be positive or negative, not the feelings themselves.

Emotions Toss

Have students stand in a circle and instruct each one to choose a feeling or emotion in their minds (this could be one from the day's How are You Feeling Check-in). Go around the circle and have each person share their emotion word. Encourage students to find synonyms if too many people have chosen the same words.

Now go around the circle again and have students make facial expressions (or full-body gestures) that convey their emotion. They can also change the tone and speed of their voice to help give a sense of the feeling.

Add in a real or imaginary (mimed) ball to toss or roll across the circle. As the ball is tossed from person to person (remember to make good eye contact) the thrower says their emotion word, putting as much of their acting into the emotion word as they can. A “lazy” ball might be tossed more slowly than an “excited” ball.

Modifications and Extensions:

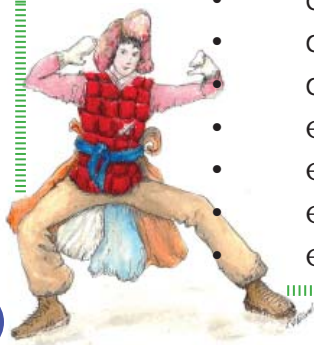
- Create a pattern with the ball tossing so that each person gets the ball once. Rehearse the pattern, then try reversing it. If this is successful, add in two balls, one in either direction, for a challenge.
- If tossing/rolling isn't working, walk over and give the ball to someone else in the circle.
- If using a mimed ball, try changing it into different shapes, other objects - inspired by different emotions - that can be passed.



Feelings and Emotions



- accepting
- aggressive
- agreeable
- alert
- angry
- annoyed
- anxious
- ashamed
- beautiful
- bored
- brave
- bullied
- calm
- chaotic
- cheerful
- compassionate
- competitive
- conceited
- confident
- confused
- content
- controlled
- controlling
- cooperative
- courageous
- cowardly
- creative
- curious
- defeated
- demanding
- depressed
- destructive
- detached
- discouraged
- disgusted
- empathic
- empowered
- envious
- excited
- expressive
- faithful
- fearful
- frightened
- frustrated
- glad
- grateful
- greedy
- grieving
- guilty
- happy
- hatred
- helpful
- helpless
- hopeless
- ignorant
- impatient
- important
- insecure
- insensitive
- inspired
- interested
- intolerant
- irresponsible
- irritated
- isolated
- jealous
- joyful
- judged
- judgmental
- lazy
- likable
- lively
- lonely
- lost
- loved
- loving
- miserable
- mistrusting
- negative
- obsessed
- panicked
- passionate
- passive
- peaceful
- perfectionist
- pitiful
- pleased
- possessive
- powerful
- procrastinating
- proud
- punished
- rage
- rejected
- resistant
- responsible
- ridiculous
- sad
- secretive
- selfish
- sensitive
- shy
- sorry
- stubborn
- timid
- tolerant
- understanding
- unforgiving
- unhappy
- untrusting
- vicious
- violent
- wise
- withdrawn
- worthy



In Class Musicians: The Improv Orchestra

Exercise provided by Abbey Jackson



This activity will help students develop their communication and group problem-solving skills through musical improvisation.

Bring students into a circle or semicircle and have the teacher face the class, making sure to be seen by everyone. Give out small rice shakers to some members of the class and ask students to bring out their pencil cases and use their hands against desks as drums. Pens against desks can also make an interesting sound.

With the teacher as the conductor the students begin to make a rhythmic beat as guided by the teachers/conductors facial expressions and hand gestures (hands go up to symbolize greater volume, waving hands bring in another student instrument...etc). Be sure to establish clear “group start” and “group stop” gestures.

Have the group start slowly; having only some students starting with a simple beat and slowly bringing in more instruments. Let the students decide for themselves to stop or start a certain noise or technique. Collaboratively the students will be able to decipher what works and what doesn't. Remind the students to work with each other's sound and style.

After the teacher takes the role of conductor ask a student to volunteer as leader of the class. The activity might have to be practiced a couple of times for the students to fully create their own sound and find personal direction. This exercise exemplifies the importance of paralinguistic communication in everyday language; as students improvise they use group work skills to develop a musical piece. Allow students to switch/share instruments with each other.

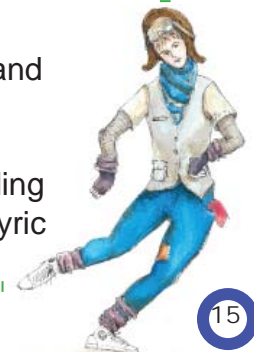
Afterwards, discuss with the class what sounds they enjoyed from the piece. How did they decide what sounds they made? Why did they make these sounds? What would they like to add in the next piece? What instruments would they like to add?

Extensions

Find materials (beans, rice, toilet paper rolls, egg cartons...etc) to make instruments. Students will develop their own musical sound with this activity, to use in the improv orchestra. For instrument ideas, visit: Kinderart.com and Familyfun.go.com

While playing their instruments, students can also dance to their homemade beats and create group directed choreography.

If the teacher believes the class is prepared, ask some students to volunteer by adding lyrics or verbal noises into the song, make sure to remind them to create their own lyric or sounds to create original music rather than re-creating known songs.



Communication Games



Please and Moitié do not speak the same language, so sometimes they need to find other ways to get their meaning across. In the following two exercises, we see how hard it can be to communicate using only language. After doing these activities, ask the participants:

“What was more difficult, leading or following?”

“What would have made things easier?”

“Should the goal be to have our drawings all be exactly the same? Why or why not?”

Try the exercises again where players can see each other and communicate non-verbally, but may only speak in gibberish. Ask:

“Was that more or less difficult for you?”

and talk about how many of us have different skills and things that come to us easily or with difficulty. This is a great opportunity for empathy-building in your classroom!

Draw Like Me

Provide each player with a piece of paper and marker/pencil.

Position each player so that no one can see his/her drawing.

Each player, in turn, states an instruction for everyone to follow.

“Draw a happy sun in the bottom left corner.”

“Draw a long, lethargic snake across the top of the page.”

etc.

After a few rounds, share the drawings.

Extensions/Variations:

- Add more direction, toward more literal (trying to draw the same thing) to abstract (“draw love in the middle of the page”)
- play a couple of rounds with different instructions each time
- share images and use them to spark stories
- can be used for debriefing related to: communication, point of view, and/or making assumptions

Fold Like Me

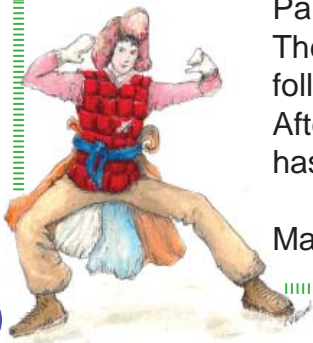
Divide into partners and provide partners with matching pieces of paper (same size, weight, etc).

Partners sit back to back. One partner is the talker, one is the listener.

The talker folds his paper, explaining just what he’s doing. His partner (listener) follows along, folding her own paper. The listener can’t ask any questions.

After the folding is complete (decided by the talker or a time limit), show what each has created.

Make sure to switch roles so that players get a chance to be each role.



Environmental Stewardship: Quick Questions



What was special about the tree in the play?

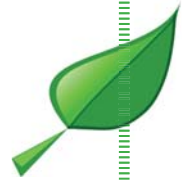
What do we mean when we talk about “limited resources”?

What are some limited resources in your classroom or home?
(computer time, copies of a favourite book, comfy chairs, time to play outside, etc)

When resources are limited, what can happen? How might people react when asked to share? How might their reactions differ if the resource was unlimited?

What are some limited resources in the world today?

Love your Trees



LEAF: Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests
www.yourleaf.org | www.treetours.to

LEAF is located in the same building as Theatre Direct and we're lucky to have such a great resource so close by! LEAF has printable resources about taking care of your trees available on their site as well as fabulous tree tours available.

Take a virtual Tree Tour of a Toronto Neighbourhood

treetours.to/self-guided-tree-tours

Tree Walking Tour in Your Neighbourhood

LEAF will come to your school (or your local park or neighbourhood) and take you on a walking tour of the trees in your area. Contact them online, in person at the Wychwood Barns or at: (416) 413-9244 for more information.

Tree Stories and Legends

SpiritOfTrees.org

This is a charming website with an extensive (perhaps exhaustive) list of stories and legends about trees. You can search the list of stories according to theme of the story or its culture of origin. Some of these are available to print and use right away in your classroom!



Our Tree ... and How it Came to Be



Lindsay Anne Black, our production's set and costume designer has been on a journey of creation, finding the perfect representation of the set's magic tree. We caught up with her to ask about the her tree design process.

What was your inspiration for the tree design?

Before Thom, the director, and I had our first meeting, he sent me some images of willow trees and yew trees that had struck him as appropriate. We had both, independently of each other, come up with the idea of the 'weeping tree' -- an entity that could look healthy, but show some softness, some nakedness, and yet some majesty. Also, the evergreen, which needs fewer resources in order to survive, but which in the case of the yew, has soft needles and beautiful round berries. Once we began collaborating, it became clear that we were both envisioning a 'magical' version of these same two types of tree.

What does the tree represent in the play?

This tree is growing out of nothing. Our tree is growing **DESPITE ALL ODDS**. It, like our two characters, is capable of surviving, reacting to its environment, and adapting. It still provides food to our characters, even though they do not fully understand it, or show it the appropriate amount of respect that it deserves. Our tree is love, care, and respect. I know several people who are currently surviving and giving love, despite all odds. I hope this is a nice tribute to them.

Who do you need to collaborate with in order to create the final design?

The designer reads the script a few times, and then joins the process with a lot of ideas of their own. However, those will be filtered through the director (who unifies the design with the movements and words of the actors), the production manager (who controls the budget), and the artistic director (who is responsible for everything that the company presents to the public). Once the design has been agreed upon, the designer and production manager look for builders: the talented craftspeople who will actually build the object from scratch, and who will make sure that it works reliably. The elements that we all need to consider include:

- *functionality (does the tree do everything that the script asks it to do?)
- *look (does the tree's aesthetic -- lines, shapes, textures, colours -- fit in with the rest of the set?)
- *weight (can the actors lift it four times a day without hurting themselves?)
- *noise (how **LOUD** and **OBVIOUS** would the growing mechanism be?)
- *durability (will it break over the course of the run?)
- *size (does it fit in the minivan in which the actors and stage manager will be travelling?)
- *overall impact (will the expense of this set piece be outweighed by its ability to communicate the desired message to our target audience?)

Together, we talked through **ALL** of our options of how to make the tree do everything we wanted it to do, and that has now influenced the final look and design of the tree. This is a very collaborative art!



Special Trees

The tree featured centrally in Head à Tête is an important one to Please and Moitié. It represents a food source, warmth, and a feeling of safety and security. Many of us can think of a special tree that we know of - perhaps one in a park, one we've hung a swing on, one that is just low enough to climb, one that is so huge that it seems to have been around forever...almost everyone has a tree story.

Theatre Direct will be collecting tree stories to share with teachers, families, and students. Have your children write a story or letter telling us about their special tree. We'll post some of these online with any pictures you send.

Special Tree Stories can be sent to: Education@theatredirect.on.ca
Education Department, 601 Christie Street, Studio 174, Toronto, ON M6G 4C7

Resources

The Otesha Project
www.otesha.ca

The Otesha Project is a fantastic group who educate Canadians about environmental stewardship, and making changes toward sustainable, equitable living. They have loads of great resources for teachers and families and might just be planning a bike tour performance near you.

Oteshafy Your School

www.otesha.ca/resources/take+action/guides.en.html#toc_school

101 Ways for a more Sustainable World

www.otesha.ca/resources/issues/101+ways....en.html

2011 Bike Tours from Toronto

<http://www.otesha.ca/bike+tours/index.en.html>

Conflict Resolution Network
www.crnhq.org

Recommended by the York Region District School board, this has loads of resources including a free training manual, 12-skills guide, and fabulous printable posters.

Neighbours / Voisins film by Norman McLaren
Running Time: 8 min 5 sec | www.nfb.ca/film/neighbours_voisins
See page XXXXX of this guide.

Dotmocracy.org

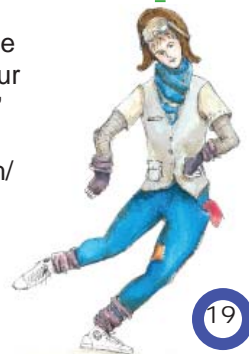
Go here to download printable dotmocracy sheets for your class. They have versions available in both English and French, and geared toward children or adult groups. Perfect for use in your classroom.

Dr. Seuss Books: The Lorax and Butter Battle Book

These are two of Dr. Seuss' more political stories, wrapped in the wonderful, whimsical language that he is best known for. They could be used as an introduction to allegorical storytelling for your class in preparation for seeing Head a Tete. The Lorax is a character who "speaks for the trees" which have been cut down to make widgets. The Butter Battle Book, inspired by the Cold War, outlines an arms race between two groups, the Zooks and the Yooks. Check out Seussville.com/Educators for activities related to these two books.

Find links, videos, interviews, study guides and more at TheatreDirect.ca

Head à Tête | Theatre Direct 2010 -2011 | www.theatredirect.ca



HEAD À TÊTE

By DAVID S. CRAIG and ROBERT MORGAN

Direction THOMAS MORGAN JONES
Set /Costume Design LINDSAY ANNE BLACK
Original music and sound DEBASHIS SINHA

Sharmila Dey as PLEASE
Michelle Polak as MOITIÉ

Stage Manager KATHERINE ARCUS
Production Manager MARC ROCHEFORT

Artistic Producer LYNDA HILL

Study Guide by JESSI LINN DAVIES

FOR THEATRE DIRECT

Artistic Director LYNDA HILL
General Manager BETH BROWN

Production Manager|Technical Director
MARC ROCHEFORT
Education Manager
JESSI LINN DAVIES
Audience and Education Services
Coordinator
KRISTIN RODGERSON
Marketing, Communications | Graphic
Design
BLAIR FRANCOY, BF DESIGN
Financial Services
YOUNG ASSOCIATES

If you have any questions, comments, or feedback to share with the actors,
director, or creative team, please send them to:

Theatre Direct
601 Christie Street, Studio 174
Toronto, ON M6G 4C7
info@theatredirect.on.ca

We would love to hear from you
and receive your play reviews or drawings!

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