



Reader's Theater

GRADES
K-3

AFTER READING THE AUSTRALIAN-BASED STORY “CROCODILE and Ghost Bat Have a Hullabaloo” to my second-grade students, we created a Reader’s Theater. I started with sequencing questions like, “What happened in the beginning of the story?” and “What happened next?” Then I gave them only three tasks: make the ears and nose, then wear a sign that names the animal. I encouraged them to memorize their parts, but it was okay if they read them. The students took their theater “on the road” to other classes and were a big hit.

READER’S THEATER

HULLABALOO: AN AUSTRALIAN FOLK TALE

Characters:

Crocodile
Ghost Bat
Red Kangaroo
Narrator
Namarrkun

Narrator: One time at twilight, Red Kangaroo told all the animals to come to a party.

Red Kangaroo: Come at twilight because some animals sleep during the day and some sleep at night.

Narrator: The animals came at twilight because the crocodiles don’t like to meet at night and bats don’t like to meet during the day.

Red Kangaroo: All animals come on! Everyone please sit down and enjoy all the yummy food!

Narrator: All the animals sat at the table and enjoyed the food. They were talking, eating and having a great time. Until?

Crocodile: Please pass the stew, Ghost Bat.

Narrator: Ghost Bat did not hear Crocodile.

Crocodile: PLEASE PASS THE STEW, GHOST BAT!

Ghost Bat: Oops, I am sorry. I didn’t hear you.

Crocodile: I find that hard to believe.

Narrator: Ghost Bat was getting angry and wanted to say something that hurt Crocodile’s feelings.

Ghost Bat: At least I don’t let my food rot before I eat it.

Narrator: Now that was not the best thing to say, because right then, at that very moment, everyone at the table starting taking sides. Some were quarreling and thinking Ghost Bat was right and Crocodile should apologize and some other daytime animals were thinking Crocodile was right and Ghost Bat was really being a mean bat. Everyone was yelling and a big HULLABALOO was started!

Namarrkun: Stop fighting!

Narrator: Namarrkun is the thunder and lightning. He throws lightning to the ground. His voice is loud and all the animals are afraid of him.

Namarrkun: Stop name-calling. Stop pushing. Stop kicking. Stop the hullabaloo or I will make lightning.

Narrator: Namarrkun was even angrier. The animals went and hid in the forest because they didn’t want to be shocked.

Namarrkun: Animals, while you are hiding you need to think about how you were acting towards each other. You were not nice to each other.

Narrator: Now anytime you hear thunder and lightning, you will remember not to make a hullabaloo anymore.

Paige Lomas

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“CROCODILE AND GHOST Bat Have a Hullabaloo” is one of 12 stories in *Rhinos & Raspberries: Tolerance Tales for the Early Grades*, Teaching Tolerance’s free children’s book. Order your own copy for free by returning the order card inside the front cover.

Flag Day

THE FOCUS OF THIS LESSON IS BASED ON THE CONCEPT THAT our individuality helps make America a wonderful and diverse nation. Students will gain an appreciation for their own individualities and differences.

You'll need some standard-sized pieces of red, white and blue construction paper, a large sheet of white, butcher-block paper, markers and crayons. Begin the lesson by holding a discussion on the topic of diversity. Discussion questions may include the following:

What is diversity?

What are some differences we have in this classroom? (eye color, hair color, skin color, religion, favorite food/music/sport, etc.)

What kind of diversity can be found in this school? In this city? In this state? In this country?

Next, discuss the concept of diversity as it relates to individuality. Emphasize the point that differences make us who we are. Our differences make us unique and we are going to celebrate them in this classroom.

Distribute one sheet of red, white and blue construction paper to each student. Instruct them to decorate the sheet with words and pictures that reflect their individuality. They may include such things as favorite food/music/sport, hair color, family heritage, language spoken at home, etc.

When the students have finished decorating their sheets of paper, assist them in taping their red, white and blue sheets to the large sheet of white paper to form a large American flag. You may need to use filler sheets to fill in the gaps to make a complete flag. When this happens I usually write the name of the class, year, and key words such as "diversity" and "individuality."

Once the flag is completed, allow each student to come up

and share his or her contribution to the flag. Close the lesson by explaining the concept that each person in America contributes to its diversity just like each student's sheet of paper contributed to the American flag.

This lesson may be extended by encouraging the students to interview members of their family to discover the diversity and individuality that exists there as well.

Kristine Dunkmann

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GRADES
4-6



Write for Us

We welcome submissions of Activity Exchange items from classroom teachers. Submissions (up to 400 words) should include concise information on specific activities. A fee of \$250 is paid for each Activity Exchange item we publish. Longer lesson plans will be considered for publication on the web; payment for these ranges from \$200-\$500. Send submissions to: Teaching Tolerance, 400 Washington Ave., Montgomery, AL 36104. Allow 1-3 months for reply.



DID YOU KNOW that Flag Day was started by a 19-year old teacher in 1885? Use this activity as one to close the school year and celebrate National Flag Day at the same time. Learn more about National Flag Day at www.nationalflagday.com.

Music and Lyrics

RATHER THAN FOCUSING ON CENSORSHIP OF LYRICS, A lyric-based learning program encourages students to analyze songs on their own. It's a far more effective approach to teach students how to be critical thinkers and listeners, thus empowering them to make informed choices as consumers of music.

The critical thinking approach can be applied to any genre of music, including rap, country, blues or pop, and helps students to differentiate between songs and identify those lyrics that contain meaningful social and political commentary.

At the same time, students learn to recognize the destructive power of songs containing excessive profanity and gratuitous lyrics that demean and degrade others and only serve to reinforce or perpetuate harmful societal prejudices and stereotypes.

My 8th-grade essay prompt involves the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and "One," a song from the Irish band U2 (text from King's writings and speeches and Bono's lyrics are online at www.learningfromlyrics.org/onedbq.htm).

GRADES
7-9

DIRECTIONS

Write a well-organized essay that includes an introduction, several paragraphs, and a conclusion. Use evidence from any documents and media in the body of the essay. Support your response with relevant facts, examples, and details. Include additional outside information and related concept words such as empathy, identity and citizenship.

ESSAY QUESTION

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "We may have all come on different ships, but we're in the same boat now." Read the excerpt from his address, "What's Your Life's Blueprint?" In your essay, discuss the meaning of the passage and be sure to explain how it relates to the concepts of diversity and interdependence. You must also discuss the meaning of U2's song, "One."

Remember to explain how the song is related to the essay themes of diversity and interdependence. Finally, discuss the importance of teamwork in school. Identify and discuss specific attitudes, beliefs and behaviors that teachers and students should adhere to in order to support diversity and promote cooperation in the classroom. Be sure to include and fully discuss citations and specific examples from each document and media.

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M.U.S.I.C. - MUSICIANS United for Songs in the Classroom - promotes the educational use of songs by teachers in all content areas. To learn more go to www.learningfromlyrics.org.

'Unbranding' to Encourage an Appreciation of Diversity

I CREATED THIS LESSON SO STUDENTS COULD EXPLORE THE ways branding undermines efforts to build community and encourage diversity, while simultaneously reinforcing damaging stereotypes.

After studying various marketing techniques used to sell products and having discussed the reasons why advertisements often leave people feeling inadequate, we're convinced that we're not smart enough, pretty or handsome enough, not wealthy enough. Students then are ready to investigate the more complex world of branding, especially signature brand labeling, as it relates to youth culture and the marketing of "cool."

I begin the lesson by asking students why they think some experts view the wearing of name-brand clothing as an inviting short cut to developing a personality of one's own. Students discuss how brands set a mood and offer pre-packaged lifestyles.

Then I ask students to write down the brands of clothing they like and choose not to wear, or what brands they do or don't wear based on their family's budget. I ask them to think about the reasons for their choices and prod them with questions like: "Is one brand associated with a 'preppy' or 'nerdy' personality while another is associated with a 'skater' personality?" At this point we discuss the use of stereotyping in advertisements and why marketing hype shapes the search for self.

After everyone has grasped the "secret" dual function of branded clothing (as an advertisement for the brand and as a means of identification for the person wearing it), I propose that we conclude the media literacy unit by "unbranding" ourselves.

I supply each student with a T-shirt. I ask each student to think about what his or her own brand — one that is an original piece of art and that truly reflects individual personality — might look like. No copyrighted logos, slogans or other commercial representations are permitted. Students spend at least one class period designing and sketching their individual brands. Students write a one- to two-paragraph artist statement, explaining the design process, how they arrived at their final product, and what the brand communicates about them. The artist statements and sketches are hung up around the classroom. Finally, using fabric markers, students transpose their sketches onto their T-shirts.

Students wear their T-shirts the last day of TV Turn-Off Week.

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FIND OUT MORE

about TV Turn-Off Week
at www.tvturnoff.org.

Take a Stand

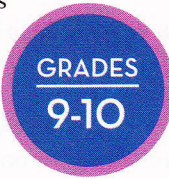
EXPLORING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES RELEVANT TO THE curriculum and students' personal lives is a continuing challenge. In my classroom, I use the Take-A-Stand structure to employ a six-step activity to prompt students both to choose and defend their stands on a topic. This helps students develop a sense of voice and identity, while also engaging in class discussion and the writing process.

PRE-READING

Read and discuss issues related to a given text or theme. I use *The Sunflower*, by Simon Wiesenthal (\$14, ISBN-10: 0805210601) to discuss whether individuals should forgive others after horrific acts. First, I engage students in a "visualization" that asks them to put themselves in some intense, uncomfortable, and binding position. A good way is to use a leading question, such as, "Think of a time when you ..." Let the students select the difficult moment in their personal histories. Then follow with directed inquiries. "Who did this?" "Why did they do it?" After this, direct written responses to the statement: "Forgiveness is not an option." Students must agree or disagree, provide supporting ideas, and relate this back to the text.

PRE-WRITING

Students complete a seven-to-ten minute quick-write in which they express their ideas in response to the question posed.



DISCUSSION

Students engage in a discussion in which they share their ideas and learn those of others. All points are charted and copied by the class.

WRITING

Using the information compiled through the discussion, and referencing the core literature, students write a persuasive essay that includes a thesis and three supporting ideas chosen from the class chart.

DISCUSSION/DEBATE

Pose the most essential questions raised in the reading of the core text. Make participation in discussion of controversial topics optional. Encourage students to use details from their own lives as well as synthesized knowledge from the class exercise.

REFLECT

Once all students have had a chance to speak, allow them time to reflect on their new ideas regarding the topic through either writing or art. By the end of this activity, students should have a greater understanding of the issues evoked by the core literature.

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Understanding Past and Present Labor Injustice through Music



GRADES
10-12

WHEN STUDYING THE IMPACTS OF 19TH CENTURY industrialization, I play several period songs from the American labor movement in which workers lament conditions of the textile mills. The students listen carefully to “Hard Times in the Mill,” “Ten and Nine” and “Weave Room Blues” and then record the complaints evidenced in the lyrics. My students have been working with diaries and political documents all year, allowing them now to focus on the ways music reflects the economic shift during this era of industrialization. We go on to read broader secondary sources and discuss how the factory model impacted working conditions and changed the economic, political and social fabric of the United States in the mid- to late-19th century.

Next I sing a “worker’s lament” that I composed: “The Old High School Just Ain’t What it Used to Be.” It is sung to the

tune of “The Old Gray Mare” and details my grievances as a high school teacher. The students love to hear their teacher caterwaul in front of the class, and they recognize the legitimacy of some of my gripes.

But you might prefer to create your own song based on a familiar tune.

I then assign students the task of writing a song that protests unfair or dangerous working conditions. They may write about their own jobs or they can write about working conditions of the 19th century. At least four working conditions must be described in detail; for each complaint in the lyrics, a desired solution must be expressed; and rhythm and rhyme must be used effectively. Students can work in groups of three and must read their songs to the entire class, and they get extra credit if they sing the lyrics.

Almost all students write about their own jobs and most choose to sing rather than read their songs in front of the class. This lesson leads to a good discussion about the exploitation of young workers as well as any laws that protect them. It also helps the students understand the harsh conditions of past centuries and leads into our next theme — why and how labor unions were formed.

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ORDER AMERICAN HISTORY Through Folk Music: Working & Union Songs (2 CDs for \$22.95) at www.mcneilmusic.com. To receive the lyrics to Judy’s “The Old High School Just Ain’t What It Used to Be,” email us at editor@tolerance.org