



SHAW CREATIVE JOURNEYS

2019/20 TEACHER'S RESOURCE GUIDE THEATRE WORKSHOP

VOYAGES

THEME INTRODUCTION

Arts education is about handing our students the materials and space to explore, interpret, and create meaning through mentorship with practicing artists. Through the arts we have the ability to share and express highly personal and specific ideas and narratives. All of us have traversed personal and cultural voyages, both literal and imagined, and the Voyages program is about equipping students with the artistic tools to reflect on the movement, dynamics, and feelings of these voyages. Through the metaphor of the voyage, artists can access a rich trove of stories about global history, movement, and transformation. Across sea, land, through time, and into space, humans have been sailing, marching, drifting, trekking, and wandering—willingly and unwillingly—for all of history. Considering the myriad motivations and pressures behind such voyages speaks to our past and holds lessons for our futures. Through the languages of visual and theatre arts, students will be guided to reflect upon the nature of voyages, and then reflect outwards to connect, share, and continue exploring.



THEATRE WORKSHOP

90 minutes

Prepared by: Paneet Singh

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

This year's theme of "Voyages" explores concepts of diversity and inclusion. In this theatre workshop, students will learn about physical theatre and delve into themes surrounding human migration.

STUDENTS WILL

- Explore and experiment with creative expression through movement;
- Use their bodies and faces to portray both self-chosen and assigned characters;
- Use mental awareness and physical control to move their bodies as directed;
- Participate in creative decision-making and improvisation;
- Gain a better understanding and empathy towards human migration by exploring the concept through theatre;
- Reflect on and describe their emotional experience of a theatrical exercise as an observer and as an active participant;
- Support and work with other classmates in a creative and safe environment.

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR STUDENTS

It is important that the students understand that the workshop is not just about free time away from math class, but that each exercise has a purpose. To help your students thrive in the workshop, we ask that you stay in the class and participate, either physically or through active observation. A big part of acting is that there are no wrong choices as long as you are present and constructively participating.

Some students are intimidated by the notion of getting on stage and acting. To help quell this apprehension, the students can be made aware before class that no one is expected to memorize lines or put on a big show in front of all the students, but rather it is a time to focus inward on one's own choices and explore one's own creativity in a group setting.



MEET THE INSTRUCTOR

Paneet Singh is a Vancouver-based playwright and filmmaker whose work often involves looking into intimate, lesser explored stories in history. His most known works are his original site-specific stage plays *The Undocumented Trial of William C. Hopkinson* (2016) and *A Vancouver Guldasta* (2017). A graduate of Vancouver Film School, some of Paneet's other stage and screen credits include *Shackled* (2013, Writer/Director), *Menage* (2016, Director), and *Burning Point* (2017, Story Editor). Paneet is also currently developing a script for a feature film. Paneet is a co-host of the South Asian history podcast "The Nameless Collective."

WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

The workshop will begin with introductions of the instructors, the classroom, and the program. After this, the class will engage in a quick discussion about migration in Canada, challenges often faced by migrants, and the benefits migration brings to Canadian society. Students will be taken through a warmup routine for their voices and bodies. The class will start with some basic spine rolls and shake-outs to loosen up. We will warm up our mouths with tongue twisters and vocal exercises. Finally, we will take turns in warming up our imaginations with a round of **“Name and Gesture”** in which the instructors and students can get to know one another.

Following warm up, we will begin an exercise called **“Cheese It!”** In this game, children will be given prompts of actions from the instructors and will be encouraged to explore their own interpretations of the prompts individually. This game will encourage not only creative decision-making and exploring movement, but will also encourage cultivating a supportive, creative environment as students will all have their own individual interpretations of the prompts. The prompts will focus mainly on scenarios related to human migration. Older students will be challenged to contribute their own prompts that are both actable and related to human migration.

The students will then learn about **tableaus**, and will create multiple tableaus through their own interpretation of instructor-given prompts. The tableaus will be done in pairs, small groups, and then finally the entire class will work together to create a large tableau together.

The class will then collectively participate in **“Storytelling through Tableau.”** In this exercise, the instructors will narrate a story from Canadian history or a contemporary example of human migration, and students will improvise with tableaus to take on different characters and create scenes using their understanding of tableaus and improvisation.

The class will end in a circle, where students will be encouraged to reflect on their experience as both participant and observer in any exercise or game we did in the workshop. We will dismiss class by **“Popcorn Clapping”** out and taking a big bow.





ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Books

Chan, Arlene. *Righting Canada's Wrongs: The Chinese Head Tax and Anti-Chinese Immigration Policies in the Twentieth Century*. Toronto: Lorimer, 2014.

Lawson, Julie. *White Jade Tiger*. Toronto: Dundurn Publishing, 2016.

Films

Kazimi, Ali, dir. *Continuous Journey*. National Film Board of Canada, 2004.

Websites

bbbpress.com/dramagames
dramaresource.com/drama-games

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Tableau

A group of models or motionless figures representing a scene from a story or from history; a tableau vivant.

Improvisation

Creating and performing (music, drama, or verse) spontaneously or without preparation.

Character

A person in a novel, play, or movie.

EXTENDED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

A great follow up exercise for both primary and intermediate students is to play a simple game of "One Word Story" on the way home on the bus, or upon returning to class. In this game, the students can continue to work on the improvisation skills they developed during the workshop. The students go turn by turn saying one word after another, in order to tell a cohesive story. The challenge is that no student may say more than one word at a time. For example, if the first student says "Once" the next student could say "Upon." The third student could say "A" and the fourth could say "Time." This continues around the group with everyone in order getting a chance to say a word.

First allow the students to create any story they would like to, and in a follow up round, challenge them to recall to the best of their ability the story which was told during the tableau exercise during the workshop.