

Pride & Prejudice^{*}

by Isobel McArthur after Jane Austen (*sort of)

Teacher Worksheet: Session 1 Outline

In this session the group will learn how to bring the story of *Pride and Prejudice** (sort of) to life physically. They will be asked to create their own movements and tableaux and transitions (or linking movements) between these. By the end of the session, students should be able to have a physical interpretation of the story that can be practiced with music.

Links to the curriculum

PE: Perform dances using a range of movement patterns, sustained physical activity Interpretation of a character emotions and feelings, and showing this physically Active listening and evaluation techniques

What the group will need

Space to move around and dance on the spot.

Warm up

Simon Says (Stage Directions Version)

A game for helping your students learn stage directions. This game follows the usual rules of "Simon Says." Students should only do what the caller says if they say, "Simon says." If they do not put "Simon says" in front of the instruction, and the student does it anyway, they are eliminated. The teacher calls out stage directions, such as downstage right or centre. Students can only move to those places on the stage if the teacher says "Simon says" in front of it. Any students who move there otherwise are eliminated. Try to keep the calls coming quickly to keep the game interesting.

Task 1

Introduce physical storytelling and how we create still pictures to tell a story using our bodies. The children just need to find a space to get ready to be creative with the storytelling task.

*** this would work well as a group exercise with them creating a group image/ tableau. They can all become different characters in each picture they make together ***

Make sure that the images they create are frozen- as you can link these together later.

Age: 7 to adult

Group size: Pairs

Time: 15-20 minutes

Skills: Improvisation

Status is the key to great improvisation

In pairs, create a still image where one of you has a higher status than the other. Show your image to the others and let them guess who is "high" and who is "low".

- Discuss why there may be areas of disagreement
- Make another image showing high and low status in a different way
- Try to make an image where you have equal status and see if the onlookers agree!

After all tableaux's have been created, lead a re-cap to remember them all together. You may need to pause in between sections of the re-cap if the group need a little longer to get into each picture.

Task 2

During the time in which *Pride and Prejudice* (1797) is set, social status played a major role in affecting relationships and interactions with other members of society. In this time, a person's value depended on their possession of a fortune.

In *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen, the effect of social status is shown through the relationships and statuses of Mr. Darcy, Elizabeth Bennet, Mr. Collins, and Lydia Bennet. Darcy

shows the effects of superiority on relationships in his pursuit of Elizabeth. In the beginning, he believes he is too good for Elizabeth and even refuses to dance with her at the Meryton Assembly.

2-3 min to create each transition depending on the group

Picture 1- Mr Darcy (high status)

Picture 2 The Bennett Family (medium status) Picture 3 Servant (low status)

Task 3

Think of the physicality of individuals – facial expressions and posture.

Once all the transitions have been made, lead a run through of all the transitions and pictures to do together. You may need to pause in between sections of the re-cap if the group need a little longer to get into each picture. Hopefully it should be running together as a smooth piece by this point.

Rehearsal

You can rehearse this as many times as you have time for or would like to with your group.

****A nice way to extend the task for older groups is to add lines from the story or a narrator to their piece, to give a really polished performance.****

Evaluation Question:

Something to think about at the end of this session and a different way for teachers and pupils to reflect on the session:

What is special about seeing a story brought to life using status?

How does it make it more accessible for an audience?

Students can either write down their answers or you can do this as a class discussion.