

Anzac Day

In this unit students will use movement and storytelling to develop and present a performance which explores issues on the theme of Anzac day.

They will:

- consolidate and extend belief in roles
- manipulate drama elements to enhance meaning
- show the consolidation and extension of movement and language skills
- critically evaluate drama.

Drama forms

- movement
- storytelling

Resources

- Krok, Lois (1992). *The Anzacs* (Big Book). Jacaranda Wiley, Milton, Qld.
- Krok, Lois (1992). *Letters from Gallipoli*. Jacaranda Wiley, Milton, Qld.
- Variety of music and songs about war. e.g. *1916, He was only 19, Bring him home, Gallipoli, Goodnight Saigon, And the band played Waltzing Matilda, Universal Soldier*.
- Australian War Memorial website: <http://www.adfa.oz.au/awm>



Learning activities

Getting started

- Brainstorm. *What is Anzac day? Why do we have it?* Students read big book, *The Anzacs*, and discuss images. They interview family members who have lived through a war and report to the class. They listen to a guest speaker e.g. a returned soldier. *Consider his motivations and how the experience of war affected his life. What does he think of war now?*
- Research life in the trenches, origin of term *diggers*, Aussie inventions at Gallipoli, the financial impact of war on Australia, Simpson and his donkey and the concept of mateship. Learn more about Simpson and his donkey in *Letters from Gallipoli* by Lois Krok. Students write a letter that Mabel may have written to Arthur.
- Students visit the War Memorial in Canberra in person or via its Internet site or the local RSL display. They observe the dioramas. Students try on a trench coat and helmet, walk through a trench and listen to the sound effects. Students find known names on the Memorial Wall. Students take photographs.

• Taking on roles in situations • Developing drama • Performing

- As a whole class listen to a variety of music and songs about war, e.g. *1916, He was only 19, Bring him home, Gallipoli, Goodnight Saigon*. Choose the most suitable piece for what the group would like to express.
- In small groups experiment with movement and a limited number of props to portray scenes and images to tell a story, e.g. *roving, a billabong, marching, a gangway, travelling by ship, waving farewell, fighting on the battlefields, a hospital and a graveyard*.



- In groups and as a whole class explore and develop movement in response to music showing the soldiers' feelings about defending their country, how those who were left behind were affected and the horror of war.
- Select the most suitable movements. Discuss and decide on roles, use of props (if any) and movement sequences from beginning to end.
- Refine and rehearse movements using varying levels.
- Class competition for best costume design. Organise "parents and friends" committee to sew costumes. Dye costumes khaki.
- Organise dress rehearsal. Perform piece at assembly. Record on video.

Responding

- Students watch video and discuss quality of movements used to depict the message of the music. *Are the movements coherent and convincing? What is the mood of the piece?*
- Students discuss the performance with members of the audience. *What was the impact? What was effective? Why?*

Assessment of students

- Observe students' drama work and their process of working.
- Analyse students' oral and written comments, drawings and other responses to their drama work.
- Consider the following questions about students' learning in drama:
 - ♦ How well are they able to consolidate and extend belief in roles? How effectively do they use voice and gesture to characterise and communicate the roles? To what extent are they showing a serious commitment to their roles? To what extent are they able to depart from stereotypes and create new and challenging roles?
 - ♦ What evidence is there that students are manipulating drama elements to enhance meaning in their work? How are mood, focus, contrast and tension being developed and used in their work? To what extent are new techniques being sought out and tried? How is the use of symbol becoming more evident in their work? How effectively are students working together?
 - ♦ Which movement and language skills are being consolidated and extended as they perform? Which movement and language skills need further development?
 - ♦ How well are they able to critically evaluate drama? What else are they learning through their drama experiences?

Extension activities

- Students explore other historical events in a similar way, consolidating and extending movement work developed in this unit, e.g. develop scenes about the European settlement of Australia from the viewpoint of indigenous inhabitants, convicts in the hull of a ship, members of the crew of the First Fleet, etc.
- Students hot-seat characters developed in historical scenes and investigate their views and opinions about events.

