



THE RED BALLOON

adapted by Hilary Bell

based on the film by Albert Lamorisse

Education Resource

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TO THE TEACHER

These resources have been prepared to support you in using *The Red Balloon* as a play to study and perform in your school.

You can use it as a whole or take exercises or parts of it to jump into exploring the play with your class.

It covers style, structure, themes, and context of the play.

It has exercises to help you and your students stage scenes from the play.

Words formatted **like this*** have an entry in the glossary at the end of this resource.

AUSTRALIAN PLAYS TRANSFORM

Australian Plays Transform (APT) is Australia's national play development and publication organisation. It hosts the world's largest online showcase and searchable database of the best Australian playwriting. APT seeks new voices for new times, develops plays that change the national story, links them to production, publishes them and promotes them here and around the world.

<https://apt.org.au/teaching-resources/>

This resource was developed by Donna Hughes in 2026.

ABOUT THE PLAY

The Red Balloon is adapted for the stage by Hilary Bell. It's a beautiful homage to the original 1956, Oscar-winning film by Albert Lamorisse.

The play is set in the rundown, drab streets of post-World War II Paris. It follows the story of a young, friendless Pascal who rescues a large helium-filled balloon whose string is tangled in a streetlamp. The boy soon discovers that the balloon is sentient and possesses a mind of its own. Pascal and the balloon, navigate the streets together playing childhood games and searching for an adventure.

Unlike the film, the play, introduces some memorable and roguish street creatures, including a cat, a pigeon and a rat who observe the boy and the balloon wandering the streets. They add commentary, narration and humour to the play.

The audience watches the boy and balloon develop an unlikely and loyal friendship, until a gang of jealous bullies hunts them down and bursts the balloon. This scene packs a surprisingly emotional punch, and Pascal is left to cry. Then a strange and unexpected thing happens: all the colourful balloons in Paris escape, and gather around Pascal. He gathers them up, holds on tight, and they float into the sky, rising above the world and the horrible boys below.



Photo from the 2015 Black Swan production.

From Stage Whispers, review by Kimberly Shaw (2015).

Photographer: Gary Marsh

<https://www.stagewhispers.com.au/reviews/red-balloon>

ABOUT THE PLAY

Characters

Pascal
Blue Girl
Red Balloon
Blue Balloon
Cat
Pigeon
Rat
Headmaster
Club-footed Man
Schoolchildren (voices only)
Blue Girl's Aunt
Grandmother
Congregation (voices only)
Bullies Bo



Photo from the 2015 Black Swan production.

From Perth Arts Live, review by Cicely Binford (2015).

Photographer: Gary Marsh

<https://pertharts.live/2015/10/14/review-the-red-balloon-black-swan-state-theatre-company/>

CONTEXT: ABOUT THE FILM

The Red Balloon is a simple film that runs for only thirty-four minutes. The film uses French subtitles, and dialogue is kept to an absolute minimum, making the film universally understandable. The movie showcases the ability of a story to be told powerfully, through images, music and colour. *The Red Balloon* is the only short film to ever win an Oscar outside of the Short Film categories.

The music in the film becomes a type of narrator capturing the journey of the young Pascal, his playful adventures through the streets of Paris and the imagination of a child.

As if captured by a magical force, the balloon is personified and becomes Pascal's unconditionally devoted friend. The balloon fills the boy's loneliness and makes up for his position as an outsider in his community.



Still from *The Red Balloon* (1956)
From <https://cinemontage.org/albert-lamorisses-red-balloon/>

The vivid red colour of the balloon becoming a symbol of escapism, hope, imagination and beauty. It also becomes the envy of a group of 'bully boys' who pursue Pascal with the intent on stealing the balloon and destroying it. They chance upon the boy outside a pastry shop, take the balloon to a vacant block, throwing stones and aiming slingshots until it deflates slowly and is smashed by the foot of one of the boys. The impact of the destruction of an inanimate object is surprisingly devastating.

The end of the film is resonant. After the bullies have disappeared, it's as if the balloons of the world have heard of red balloon's death. They fly out from windows, the hands of small children, shops and congregate around the boy. He reaches for their strings and is hoisted into the air. This is a profoundly moving, tender and memorable film.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Hilary Bell writes for stage, radio, screen and music theatre.

Hilary's plays have been produced nationally around Australia, by The Sydney Theatre Company, Ensemble, Belvoir, Griffin, State Theatre Company of South Australia, Black Swan, Deckchair, La Boite, NORPA, The National Theatre of Parramatta, Sydney Opera House, City Recital Hall, Arts Centre Melbourne, Vitalstatistix, NIDA and The Darlinghurst Theatre Company. Internationally she's been produced in Europe, in the USA by companies including Atlantic and Steppenwolf, in London by The National's Connections programme, and at the 2024 Edinburgh Fringe/House of Oz.



Wolf Lullaby, written in 1995 won her the Jill Blewett Award and the inaugural Philip Parsons Young Playwrights Award. Other plays include *Fortune*, *The Falls*, *The White Divers of Broome*, *Victim Sidekick Boyfriend Me*, *Perfect Stranger*, *Splinter*, *The Bloody Bride*, Inscription Award winner *Memmie Le Blanc*, and Australian Writers Guild (AWGIE) winners *The Anatomy Lesson of Doctor Ruysch*, *The Red Balloon* and the AWGIE-winning *Summer of Harold*. She has adapted Chekhov's *The Seagull*, Moliere's *The Hypochondriac*, Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* and Shakespeare's *A Comedy of Errors*. Collaborations include *The Mysteries: Genesis* (with Lally Katz), and she was associate writer on Paul Capsis' play *Angela's Kitchen*, which won Best New Australian Work at the Helpmann Awards 2010. Other awards include the Aurealis Fiction Award, the Bug'n'Bub Award, the Eric Kocher Award and a Susan Smith Blackburn Prize nomination.

She also writes lyrics and libretti for opera, musicals and song cycles. Recently, Hilary and Greta Gertler Gold's *Picnic at Hanging Rock: The Musical* opened Off-Broadway.

Hilary is the creator of several picture books. With artist Matthew Martin, she made 'The Marvellous Funambulist of Middle Harbour'. Her collaborations with illustrator Antonia Pesenti include the best-selling, ABIA-nominated 'Alphabetical Sydney'. As well as a musical, the book inspired the Museum of Sydney's exhibition Alphabetical Sydney: Creative Lab.

She has written audio scripts for the State Library of NSW exhibitions Dead Central and Quick March!, and for the Museum of Contemporary Art's exhibition. She is a member of 7-ON Playwrights, a collective of mid-career dramatists who collaborate on multi-voice projects.

Hilary is a graduate of the Juilliard Playwrights' Studio, NIDA, and the Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS). She was the 2003-04 Tennessee Williams Fellow in Creative Writing at the University of the South, Tennessee, and in 2012 the Patrick White Playwriting Fellow at the Sydney Theatre Company.

To find out more, visit Hilary Bell's website: <https://hilarybell.org/>

RESOURCES

Essays

An essay on the film: by Michael Koresky (2008)
<https://www.criterion.com/current/posts/655-the-redballoon>

Albert Lamorisse's 'The Red Balloon' an essay by Nancy Frazen
<https://cinemontage.org/albert-lamorisses-red-balloon/>

Production Reviews

The Red Balloon | Black Swan State Theatre Company by Cicely Binford
<https://pertharts.live/2015/10/14/review-the-red-balloon-black-swan-state-theatre-company/>

The Red Balloon - Stage Whispers by Kimberley Shaw
<https://www.stagewhispers.com.au/reviews/red-balloon>

Arts Review
<https://artsreview.com.au/the-red-balloon/>

Australian Stage review by Nerida Dickson
<https://www.australianstage.com.au/201510067475/reviews/perth/the-red-balloon-%7C-black-swan-state-theatre-company.html>

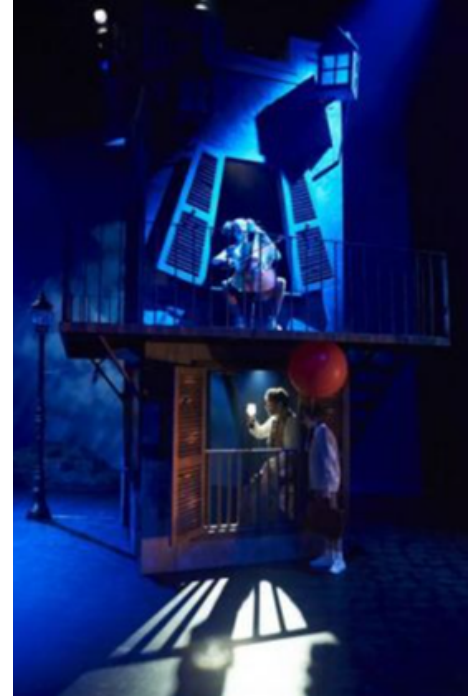


Photo from the 2015 Black Swan production.

From Stage Whispers, review by Kimberley Shaw

Photographer: Gary Marsh

<https://pertharts.live/2015/10/14/review-the-red-balloon-black-swan-state-theatre-company/>

VIEW THE FILM

Watch the film and discuss, using the following prompts:

- The film is largely wordless. How does it tell the story without dialogue?
- How would you describe the relationship between the boy and the balloon?
- How do they develop the relationship between the boy and the balloon in the film?
- How might this relationship be achieved on stage?
- Discuss how **symbol*** is used in the film?
- What design elements have they used to create symbolic meaning?
- How is colour used in the film?
- What does the story suggest about conformity and individuality?
- What moments have emotional impact? Why? How is this achieved?
- How would you stage this ending?

Viewing options

Click any of the links or tiles below

- Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-mGRynunevU>
- Artiflix: <https://artiflix.com/videos/the-red-balloon>
- Plex: <https://watch.plex.tv/en-GB/watch/movie/the-red-balloon>



The Red Balloon 1956

128K views • 5 years ago



AFTER READING THE PLAY

Watch the short interview and listen to the ABC radio interview with playwright Hilary Bell and director Chrissie Parrot, then discuss the questions below.

ABC Radio, Books & Arts: The Red Balloon Takes Flight on Stage

Click the tile to the left or copy the link below

<https://www.abc.net.au/listen/radionational/archived/booksandarts/the-red-balloon/6798540>



Black Swan State Theatre Company, The Red Balloon: interview with Hilary Bell and Chrissie Parrot

Click the tile to the right or copy the link below

<https://vimeo.com/139687778>



The Red Balloon

Sep 2015

Discuss the following questions:

- What reason does playwright Hilary Bell give for adapting the play?
- What is the visual appeal for the director, Chrissie Parrot of this play?
- What adjustments and additions did Bell have to make in order to adapt the film into a stage play?
- How does theatre use low-tech ideas? How can simple props become powerful storytelling tools in performance?
- How did they achieve the mischievous, playful personality of the balloon in the play?
- What happens when an ordinary object is treated as extraordinary?
- Why do the audience feel protective of the balloon?
- How did the creative team want to achieve at the end of the play?
- What non-realistic conventions can you identify?
- What is the Form/Structure of the play?
- How would you use lighting and sound?
- Would you use multi-media at all? Why and what would you use?

STYLE

The Red Balloon incorporates conventions from a range of styles, including storytelling, physical theatre, and puppetry.

Storytelling

Storytelling prioritises engaging the audience's imagination over elaborate sets, using an actor's craft such as voice, body and direct address to create worlds.

- Direct Address: Characters break fourth wall, become “narrators” speaking directly to the audience to heighten the immediacy and guide the audience through the various settings and time periods.

Physical Theatre

Physical theatre techniques prioritise movement and nonverbal modes of communication over spoken dialogue to convey meaning, emotion and narrative.

Techniques and methodology:

- Animal Study: Actors observe and embody the physical characteristics of animals.
 - In *The Red Balloon* three of the characters are animals; a cat, a “**wry philosopher of the streets**”, a rat, and a “**deformed-footed**” pigeon comment on and narrate parts of the story.
- Stylised, Dance-like movement: Exaggerated or abstract movements to express the inner feelings of a character or to create moments that are difficult to convey literally.
 - For example: the passing of time or travel.
- Mime and Gesture work: Stylised nonverbal communication focusing on precise, often exaggerated movements to create characters or emotions.

The Red Balloon is the perfect text to use in the classroom to explore techniques such as:

- [Frantic Assembly](#)
- [Jaques LeCoq's States of Tension](#)
- [Anne Bogart and Mary Overlie's Viewpoints](#)

Dylan Christidis in the 2015 Black Swan production.

From Stage Whispers, review by Kimberley Shaw
Photographer: Gary Marsh

<https://pertharts.live/2015/10/14/review-the-red-balloon-black-swan-state-theatre-company/>



STYLE (cont'd)

Puppetry

Puppetry is a theatrical style that brings inanimate objects to life through manipulation by a puppeteer using strings, rods, shadow, or hand. It's a very old style of performance.

- Visible vs Invisible Puppeteers: many modern productions use visible puppeteers. Consider *Warhorse*, *The Lion King* and *The Life Pi*.
- Skilled puppeteers create an illusion of life through three key principles: breath (subtle movement/vocalisation), focus (eye-contact and where the puppet gazes), and weight (how it interacts with gravity).



The National Theatre's *War Horse* production, 2024

Photographer: Brinkhoff Mögenburg
from School Travel Organiser magazine, June 2024
<https://www.schooltravelorganiser.com/news-and-ideas/more-dates-for-national-theatres-iconic-war-horse-show/72489.article>

ACT 1 SCENE iii

(p.8)

But rather than float off, the BALLOON hovers by the window.

[...]

It seems that the BALLOON can speak – a deep, Serge Gainsbourg-type voice:
BALLOON: Bonne nuit. (Good night)

PASCAL touches its surface.
It responds by rubbing itself on his head, making his hair stand up with static.

STRUCTURE

Linear Structure

- The play moves forward in time, giving it a **linear*** structure.
 - There are no distinct scenes, however, the play moves to multiple locations.
 - It's clear that time jumps forward – hours and days pass.
- e.g. ***“He catches the bus to school twice. He goes to bed. He attends church.”***

THEMES

When addressing themes, it's always important to consider how they are explored in the text. The following themes are provided using extracts for you to reflect on and discuss. You may have other themes to add to this list.

Loneliness

The image of Pascal depicted as a small figure in a vast landscape immediately positions him as insignificant and isolated in comparison to the scale of the city. The Cat's monologue further explores his loneliness by describing the place as battered and weary where survival has replaced connection and people keep their heads down. Pascal is described as no one special, a child who moves through the world without recognition or friendship. He also stoops to pat the Cat but is oblivious to the monologue, which deepens the sense of his solitude.

ACT 1, SCENE i

(p.1)

Six-year-old PASCAL alone, with satchel. A small figure in a vast landscape.

Apart sits a CAT, a wry philosopher of the streets. The two of them look out over the city.

CAT: Paris. The City of Love they used to call it, the City of Light. Perhaps they will again. But my Paris is battered and weary. It's in no mood for gay colours, it can't afford frivolity. My Paris hopes only to survive from one day to the next. The people keep their heads down and stay out of trouble. Me, I laugh in the face of Trouble. We cats have nine lives, so I'm completely fearless. But it's understandable, after what they've been through: you can still see where the bullets ricocheted off the walls, when the tanks rolled in and the bombs fell. My Paris is a city still trying to pull itself to its feet. Where the mice are so thin, even the most enterprising cat still goes to bed hungry.

PASCAL, oblivious to the monologue, briefly stoops to pat the CAT.

CAT: And this boy? He's no one special. Lives with his grandmother, eats, sleeps, goes to school. Nobody notices him. Nobody plays with him. Just one more of the city's lonely souls.

THEMES (cont'd)

Naivety/Innocence

In the short excerpt below, Pascal has just rescued the balloon from a lamppost, an act that the Cat suggests is dangerously unaware. Through the Cat's voice, the world is seen as threatening. Visibility invites ridicule and envy, envy, and even harm. This creates a sense of foreboding for the audience. Pascal's joyful act of carrying the balloon becomes a symbol of innocence and sits in stark contrast against the Cat's streetwise cynicism.

ACT 1, SCENE i

(p.2)

CAT: Does he know nothing of the world?
Does he not care that this thing will make him a target for ridicule, envy – even danger?
Much safer to go through life unnoticed.
If you want everyone to stare, what better way than by holding a big round red rubber balloon?

Imagination

The balloon becomes more than an object – it speaks, plays mischievous games and becomes a loyal companion to Pascal. The balloon rubs itself against Pascal's head so that his hair sticks up with static. They laugh together. The audience are positioned to see the balloon as **sentient***, and we are invited into Pascal's imaginative world.

ACT 1, SCENE iii

(pp.8-10)

We are in his bedroom, in pitch dark: nothing but PASCAL's face illuminated by the big red BALLOON. He looks at it with wonder.

PASCAL: Ballon?
It seems that the BALLOON can speak – a deep, Serge Gainsbourg-type voice:

BALLOON: Bonne nuit.

PASCAL touches its surface.

It responds by rubbing itself on his head, making his hair stand up with static. PASCAL laughs, quickly smothering it so as not to wake up Grandmother.

He hides the BALLOON under his blanket and sleeps.

THEMES (cont'd)

Envy & Destruction

The scene below explores envy as a destructive force. The balloon is bright, joyous, and playful, and it draws the gaze of some bullies, whose numbers have doubled- suggesting that envy can amplify. The bullies steal the balloon, and the situation escalates to violence (hurling sticks and stones). Their initial curiosity is transformed into an urge to possess and destroy. The relentless chase and the indifference of Cat and Rat deepens the sense of despair and destruction.

ACT 3, SCENE i

(pp.20-21)

PASCAL goes in [to the pastry shop], and the BALLOON decides to hide.

BALLOON: Hee hee.

But as it sneaks around the corner, the BULLIES – their number now doubled – are waiting. They snatch it and vanish.

When PASCAL comes out with his pastry, he assumes it's the same game. He is happy to wait, he won't go looking, he'll enjoy his pastry. But he can't resist. He jumps around the corner –

PASCAL: Boo!

... Nothing there.

Stumped, he looks in all directions. It's really gone.

He drops his pastry.

Panic.

A burst of shouting and laughter, and he sees his BALLOON rising, attached to a long rope. His relief turns to distress – it's dodging flying sticks and stones.

PASCAL: Ballon!

BALLOON: Pascal!

It manages to descend to him, in a hail of stones, over the wall, and he frees it from the rope and runs.

Chase.

The sounds of PASCAL's panicked breath, his shoes ringing on cobblestones, followed by the shouts and clatter of the BULLIES.

The PIGEON, RAT and CAT watch the action.

RAT: Want to hide from a gang of bullies? Then don't carry a gigantic red bouncing rubber balloon.

PIGEON: Does he think he can fit through that fence while he's holding onto it?

RAT: Squeeze behind that drainpipe? Sorry love: no.

PASCAL, breathless, seeks refuge in a doorway but is roughly ejected by a broom. Everywhere he turns, the clatter and shouting of the ever-increasing gang gets closer.

CAT: They'll take his balloon.

RAT: None of our business.

CAT: Someone should do something.

THEMES (cont'd)

Survival & Hope

In the end, the bullies capture the balloon and destroy it. This leaves Pascal heartbroken. We see him left in a 'barren, ugly and empty' world. But in a surprising turn of events, the Blue Balloon dances before him, and is joined by a multitude of colourful balloons. Their collective lifting of Pascal becomes a powerful metaphor for resilience, survival and hope: he is literally carried out of despair. The scene allows hope to coexist with grief as he drifts away from the "bleakness giving way to the beauty of a freer, wider view of the world."

ACT 3, SCENE i

(pp.25-26)

[Pascal] picks up the skin of the balloon. He tries vainly to see if it can be stretched back into shape, have breath blown back into it. But it's beyond repair. A bit of rubbish blows past. All is barren, ugly, empty.

He slumps, heartbroken, and cries.

Drifting over the rubble nearby is the BLUE BALLOON. PASCAL doesn't see it, lost in his grief.

The CAT now approaches, and nudges him.

CAT: Look.

The BLUE BALLOON dances before him, hovering over the dust. PASCAL recognises it, and looks around for its owner. It's joined by a pink balloon. And a green, a yellow, a purple, an orange. Balloons of all colours arrive singly and in groups, in clusters and rows toward PASCAL, who sits astonished on the rubble, still holding the skin of the dead balloon.

His despair gives way to bafflement as they proffer their hundreds of strings.

He takes them in both hands. The cluster of balloons pulls him to his feet.

As PASCAL reaches on tiptoes to grab the highest string, his feet leave the ground.

He looks down, only to see the hill of rubble and weeds shrinking below him.

He swings up and over the familiar streets, the school, church, steps, the hill.

The CAT leaps onto a rooftop to watch.

CAT: Au revoir, mon ami. Bon voyage!

The BULLIES, GRANDMOTHER, HEADMASTER, AUNT are looking up, along with the RAT. The BLUE GIRL laughs with delight, waving from her window.

We never lose sight of the red balloon, diminishing as PASCAL ascends. It remains a spot of bright colour in a monochrome landscape.

The PIGEON flaps past, open-beaked and lost for words, but PASCAL soon leaves it below.

All of Paris is spread beneath him as he drifts over spires and rivers, the bleakness giving way to the beauty of a freer, wider view of the world.

ACTIVITY ONE: VIEWPOINTS

Divide students into groups of 5 or 6. Read the stage directions from *The Red Balloon* below.

Ask them to become the ‘strangers’ on the street through an exploration of Viewpoints, focusing on [Bogart and Landau’s expansion of Overlie’s viewpoints](#), this activity looks at **topography***, which is the onstage pattern or design a movement creates.

- Direct your students move in grid like formations in the space, forming straight lines only through the space.
- Now ask the students to consider a variety of **Tempo*** – moving fast or slow.
- Ask them to explore the Viewpoint: **Kinesthetic Response***. Direct them to change tempo and walk in an opposite direction as an impulse or response triggered when they move in close proximity with someone else
 - You could vary the kinesthetic response: Ask your students to walk alongside a person as an impulse or response triggered when they walk in close proximity to another.
- Once you have done this. Consider the Viewpoint, Gesture. Now focus on a **Behavioral Gesture***. For this scenario we are wanting to perform an ordinary, everyday action someone might do while walking on a street:
 - e.g. pulling a collar up around your neck to keep warm, opening an umbrella, looking at your wristwatch for the time.
- Now break the gesture into 3 or 4 parts and perform them over and over again so that we can see the breaks in the movement.
- Add in the Viewpoint: **Duration*** to one part of your movement.
 - Draw the movement out over the duration of 8 counts.
 - Explore duration, making parts of the behavioral gesture shorter or longer.
- Now explore: Topography, Tempo, Kinesthetic Response, and Behavioral Gesture to come up with an interesting street scene. This combination of Viewpoints to explore and create staging/blocking in a scene is called **composition***.

ACT 1, SCENE iii

(p.6)

Street.

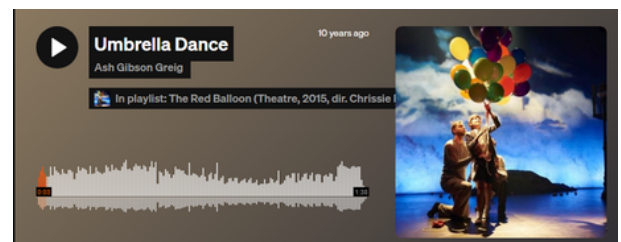
Light drizzle.

Everywhere, up go umbrellas.

A dance, as PASCAL with his BALLOON requests shelter from strangers. He is accepted by some, rejected or ignored by others.

Listen to the wonderful sound design for *The Red Balloon* by Ash Gibson Greig on [Soundcloud](#), and using The Umbrella Dance to inspire the movement.

After this you might want to add Pascal to the scene, moving from umbrella to umbrella.



Click the tile above or copy the link below

<https://soundcloud.com/ash-gg/umbrella-dance?in=ash-gg/sets/the-red-balloon-theatre-2015-dir-chrissie-parrott>

ACTIVITY TWO: BRINGING A PUPPET TO LIFE

Bringing a puppet to life: three principles

Watch with the class:

1. Gyre and Gimble video [Bringing a Puppet to Life](#) with National Theatre London

Answer the following questions:

- What are the three principles of bringing an inanimate object to life?
- How do you give breath to an object?
- What can the breath tell us about the story or the character?
- What is focus in puppetry? What can a change in focus tell us about the character?
- What is weight? What is the effect of adding weight to a puppet?
- Why is it important for the puppeteer to give all their focus to the puppet/object?



Bringing a Puppet to Life | Gyre & Gimble
Masterclass | National Theatre
National Theatre • 129K • 10y ago

Click the tile above or copy the link below
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vXT3gPef8zo>

Visible puppeteers & suspension of disbelief

Watch with the class:

1. MTC's resource [Bringing the Puppets to Life](#), for their production of *Storm Boy* by Colin Thiele, adapted by Tom Holloway.

2. National Theatre London's [video on War Horse Puppetry](#).

Discuss the following:

- Notice that both companies do not 'hide' the puppeteers: they are completely visible on stage. What techniques do each of the creative teams use to get their audiences to **suspend disbelief*** and observe the puppet- not the puppeteer(s)?



Storm Boy | Bringing the puppets to life
melbtheatreco • 2.5K • 6y ago

Click the tile above or copy the link below
<https://www.mtc.com.au/education/education-hub/bringing-the-puppets-to-life>



War Horse puppetry

Britclip • 16K • 4y ago

Click the tile above or copy the link below
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qtWRsqJlOs>

ACTIVITY TWO: BRINGING A PUPPET TO LIFE (cont'd)

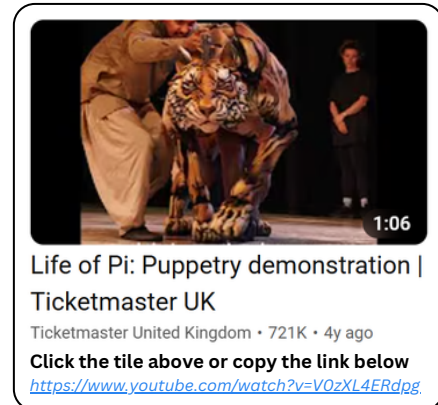
Research & Preparation

Watch with the class:

1. National Theatre London's [*Puppetry demonstration for the production Life of Pi*](#)

Answer the following questions:

- How do the puppeteers prepare?
- What is their research process?



EXERCISE: PUPPETRY IN PRACTICE

Divide students into groups of 3. Provide each group with a single balloon and string.

- Two students per group become puppeteers, using the techniques of **breath**, **weight**, and **focus** to bring the balloon to life.
 - Encourage students to use the balloon and string as extensions of the character
- The final group member plays the character of Pascal.
- Provide the students with the following short excerpt from the play (over the page).

You might ask the students to perform just a small part, or all of the excerpt.

ACTIVITY TWO: BRINGING A PUPPET TO LIFE (cont'd)

ACT 2, SCENE i

(pp.9-10)

PASCAL goes in [to the pastry shop], and the BALLOON decides to hide.

The BALLOON prefers playing to obeying. It hovers near to PASCAL, who grabs for the string but misses.

The BALLOON chuckles.

PASCAL: Ballon! Ici!

The BALLOON ducks in amongst the audience.

BALLOON: Coucou.

PASCAL can't see it, he turns about in frustration.

PASCAL: J'ai dit, viens ici!

The BALLOON drifts back into sight.

BALLOON: Bonjour.

PASCAL: Ach!

He grabs at it, but it leads him a dance.

PASCAL tries a new tactic: pretending not to care.

*He continues on his way, the BALLOON following behind.
He suddenly turns and grabs once more at the string.*

But the BALLOON evades him.

BALLOON Oh, non, non, non, non, non.

The BALLOON is happy to accompany him, but not to be held by the string.

PASCAL accepts this.

The BALLOON rubs itself on his head, electrifying his hair.

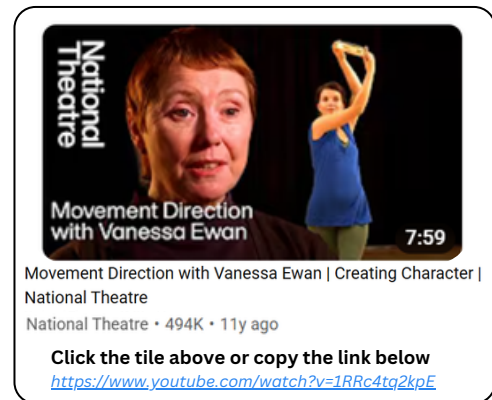
The two friends proceed side by side – and out of sight.

ACTIVITY THREE: ANIMAL WORK

Several theatre practitioners incorporate animal work into actor training, using it to unlock physicality, non verbal expression, create heightened qualities and to non-verbal expression, create heightened qualities and break habits.

Watch the video from the National Theatre London on [Movement Direction with Vanessa Ewan](#). The whole video is worth watching, but at 3:08 minutes, the director moves through a series of animal studies to create character.

Many plays demand that the actor embody animal traits to play a character. For example: *Animal Farm* by George Orwell, adapted into a play by Van Badham.



Ask the class to choose from the following characters: CAT, RAT or PIGEON.

- Show the students some videos of these animals in action.
- Ask the students to observe and then write down as much as they can about the animal:
 - How is your animal shaped? Think about the curve of its back. How does this affect the way it moves?
 - Does your animal have fins, hooves, paws or hands?
 - Does your animal have a tail?
 - Does it have fur, feathers, scales? Is its skin smooth, bumpy, hot or cold?
 - Can you see its ears? Its nose? How do they move?
 - Where are the eyes located? Does this mean they shift their heads to look at others?
 - What do they lead with when they move? What's the tempo? The weight?
 - Consider how they move from one place to another and then how they stop and why they might stop? To check for danger? For prey? To smell the air?
- Then ask them to focus on **physicalising** these aspects, fully committing to becoming that creature.
 - Think about how they would interact with each other.
 - Consider how they might respond to a threat.
- Now think about the attributes of the animal you might **keep in human form**.
 - An element of their walk.
 - A gesture that might be influenced by your animal behaviour.
 - The tempo of movement.
 - A facial expression.
 - How you might respond to another person – you might retreat or be aggressive.
- Move through **percentages**:
 - 100% human; 100% animal
 - 80% animal.
 - 50% animal.
 - 20% animal.
 - 10% animal.
- **Choose a scene or section** from the play and consider how you would block the movement of the scene to convey the CAT, PIGEON and RAT.

GLOSSARY

Behavioral Gesture

One of the Viewpoints, behavioral gesture is a realistic gesture belonging to the physical world we observe every day.

Composition

Composition is a technique for creating staging by utilising the Viewpoints to structure performance.

Duration

Duration is how long or short something lasts. This can be physical, vocal or internal.

Kinesthetic Response

Is a spontaneous, gut level physical reaction to external stimuli or motion.

Linear

Things that progress sequentially from one stage to the next.

Sentient

Having the ability to feel, perceive, or experience sensations consciously.

Suspension of Disbelief

The act of intentionally setting aside logic to accept a fictional premise.

Tempo

Tempo is how slowly or quickly something occurs, which can be physical, vocal or internal.

Topography

One of the Viewpoints, topography is the onstage pattern, floor design, or landscape that movement creates.

Viewpoints

Viewpoints is a set of names given to certain principles of movement through time and space; these names constitute a language for talking about what happens onstage.

OUTCOMES

At the end of this Education Resource students will:

- Interpret and analyse the drama text *The Red Balloon* adapted by Hilary Bell.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the use of puppetry in theatre.
- Experiment with simple puppets and gain an understanding of the basic principles of puppetry.

CURRICULUM LINKS: The Australian Curriculum

DRAMA

Senior Secondary	
Creating and Presenting Drama	Students develop and refine their expressive skills to present drama that conveys meaning and engages audiences.
Analysing and Responding to Drama	Students analyse and evaluate how the elements of drama are used to convey meaning in different contexts. v9.australiancurriculum.edu.au

Years 9-10	
AC9ADR10E02	Develop and refine drama that explores a range of perspectives, challenging assumptions and stereotypes.
AC9ADR10E04	Analyse and evaluate how drama from different contexts influences understanding of the world.
AC9ADR10C01	Improvise and devise drama, and interpret scripted drama, using elements of drama and conventions to shape and manipulate dramatic action and convey intended ideas, perspectives and/or meaning.
AC9ADR10E01	Investigate the ways drama elements, narrative structures and performance styles can communicate meaning.

Years 7-8	
AC9ADR8C01	Improvise and devise drama and/or interpret scripted drama, manipulating elements of drama and applying conventions relevant to the style/form
AC9ADR8D01	Develop performance skills relevant to selected drama styles and/or forms
AC9ADR8E01	Investigate ways the elements of drama and/or conventions are used to communicate ideas, perspectives and/or meaning in drama created and/or performed across cultures, times, places and/or other contexts

CURRICULUM LINKS: The Australian Curriculum

DRAMA (cont'd)

NSW - HSC	
Topic 4: Approaches to Acting	Developed by Mary Overlie and adapted by Anne Bogart and Tina Landau, Viewpoints is a technique of improvisation that uses specific physical "viewpoints" (such as spatial relationship, shape, and tempo) to create movement and stage compositions.
Metholodology	Jacques Le Coq emphasises physical theatre, the "journey" of learning and spontaneity. (7 levels of tension, neutral mask, clowning, buffoon, commedia dell'arte and chorus.
Curriculum Application	Students explore this practitioner-based approach to develop physical performance skills, collaborative devising, and a more spontaneous stage presence.

VIC - VCAA (Units 1-4)	
Eclectic Performance Styles	Emphasises creating, devising, and performing, which often uses Viewpoints as a tool to create and shape dramatic action and meaning.
Playmaking Techniques	Viewpoints can be used as a technique in the development of devised work and in interpreting scripts.

WACE	
Unit 3	This unit focuses on the realisation of drama text, context, forms and styles through the application of selected appraoches including: Anne Bogart and Tina Landau
Unit 4	This unit focuses on the realisation of drama text, context, forms and styles through the application of selected approaches including: Frantic Assembly Jacques Le Coq