

The Fly

Lesson Plan: Design a Costume

Written by Olga Bezrukova for L.A. Opera

Duration: 50 min

Grade Levels: 6th Grade

Subjects: Visual Arts

Standards:

California State Board of Education

Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards- Music

5.2 Identify career pathways in music.

Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards- Theater

4.2 Identify examples of how theatre, television, and film can influence or be influenced by politics and culture.

Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards- Visual Arts

2.3 Create a drawing, using varying tints, shades and intensities.

2.4 Create increasingly complex original works of art reflecting personal choices and increased technical skill.

2.5 Select specific media and processes to express moods, feelings, themes, or ideas.

4.2 Identify and describe ways in which their culture is being reflected in current works of art.

5.2 Research how traditional characters (such as the *trickster*) found in a variety of cultures past and present are represented in illustrations.

Preparatory:

1. Copies of **Worksheet A**.
2. **Poster board for each group, art supplies (paper, construction paper, colored pencils, water color, crayons, markers, etc)**
3. Optional: Copies of an article describing the job of a costume designer. (for example: <http://www.artsalive.ca/en/eth/design/costume.html>)

Procedure:

1. The teacher will have a class discussion on what a costume designer does. The teacher will keep track of students' ideas by writing them on the board. Teacher may use an article to supplement the discussion: <http://www.artsalive.ca/en/eth/design/costume.html>
2. The teacher will give **Worksheet A** to the class and read the assignment.
3. The teacher will divide the class into four groups (depending on a class size, this could be modified into 8 groups).
4. In groups, the students will research and brainstorm ideas for the costume design for a "man-fly." (note to teachers: the costume can have elements of the fly as well as other thematic ideas)
5. The teacher will assign a theme to each group.
6. The groups will draw their own original costume designs, depending on the theme assigned.
7. As a group, students will present and discuss their textual ideas to the class.
8. For extra credit: Students may write an essay on the job of a costume designer, as well as what they learned in the process.

Goals:

1. To introduce students to costume design.
2. To introduce students to the ways in which themes can affect the design.
3. To allow students to research and brainstorm in groups.
4. To introduce and connect historic ideas with an artistic medium.
5. To give students an opportunity to express original ideas.
6. To make students aware of how our society and events in our culture can have an affect in design.
7. To introduce students to the career of costume design.

Assessments:

- 1) The allow students to research a topic.
- 2) Students will be able to work in groups to research and brainstorm ideas for design project.
- 3) Students will be able to use discussed points and ideas to come up with original concept.
- 4) Students will be able to present their designs in front of class.
- 5) Students will be able to describe the elements and textual ideas used for the design based on the assigned theme.
- 6) Extra Credit Assignment: students will be able to write about their experiences as well as research the career of a costume designer.

Worksheet A**Assignment:**

You are a team of costume designers. A big opera theater company has hired your team to design the costume for one of the major characters, Seth Brundle, for a new opera based on the movie, *The Fly*. Seth Brundle is a scientist who invents telepods that are capable of transporting inanimate subjects. He is on the brink of finalizing his invention: a machine capable of transporting living beings through space. He transports himself, but he doesn't know there is a fly in the telepod during the transportation. This causes the DNA of the fly to combine with those of Seth. **Seth Brundle is now going through a transformation; becoming the 'MAN-FLY.'** Is he a genius? Is he a mad scientist? Or maybe both??? Is he going to be the new superhero, or a villain?

Your job as a costume designer team is to work with the theme(s) the director wants to portray in this production. There are two distinct themes the director wants to explore. In groups, design a costume for each of the themes. The theme should reflect the design of the costume for the scientist, Seth Brundle.

Group #1 and/or 3

Director #1 wants to explore the theme: Science and discovery are happening faster than we as a society can control. (ex. The "fly" side of the scientist is getting out of control).

Questions for discussion: We may feel very enthusiastic about these discoveries, but is our society and culture ready for these inventions? Where are they taking us? Are we embracing these new technologies? Are we living in the future, or is future happening sooner than we can handle? How does this mirror our culture?

Group #2 and/or 4

Director #3 wants to explore the theme: The man-fly will have the superior powers beyond that of a normal man or fly, mutations give unforeseen results. (Superhero theme)

Questions for discussion: The original story of *The Fly* was written during the Cold War. During the Cold War, there was nuclear testing, when governments would test out nuclear weapons. (Nuclear weapons- devices that possess massive destructive potential, due to splitting of the nucleus of an atom into parts, also known as nuclear fusion). Is science the way to world domination? Does ability to control nuclear weapons make one country better? How does this mirror our culture?