



THE
SNOW
QUEEN

ALPHASHOWS
Pre-Show Activities

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and give to all teachers BEFORE the show day]

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ABOUT THE PRE SHOW ACTIVITIES



Alpha honours and highly respects the work that teachers do with children and we can only hope that our brief visit at your school will help to brighten your day, and help to make learning

and the classroom even more fun. Teachers have a phenomenal capacity and we look forward to meeting you and your children and being at your school. We believe in peak states, emotional

truthfulness, high energy and enthusiasm in general being the most effective ways of learning, we sincerely hope that the show is useful to you in that and many other ways.

THE OUTCOME

ALPHASHOWS' outcome for our performances in schools are:

To provide an intense, memorable, high quality and high impact musical, that engages children the entire time. We hope to give them an experience of what 'theatre' is that encourages further participation in arts and theatre in the future.

To make specific spiritual and physical truths about our world and ourselves available in a metaphorical format to encourage learning at the soul level.

To give performers an opportunity to work in a full time performance based job, and have them give a real experience of 'being a performer' to children by answering questions and generally being happy, accessible, fun and cooperative with children and teachers.

To provide the most outstanding role models of truthful and humble human beings within the stories and in real life.

To provide a launching pad for creativity, writing, drama, music, and fun in the classroom. To create enthusiasm and encourage children to be in the peak state for learning.

To have an artistic theatrical performance that expands a student's soul to enable greater capacity in all learning areas (including learning areas not specifically covered by the shows).

To have an artistic theatrical experience that is of the highest quality possible, as close to a show at a big theatre in a capital city as we can.

To make available our shows to anybody who wishes to invite us for as low a cost as we can.



ABOUT THE SHOW 'THE SNOW QUEEN'

OVER ARCHING VALUES THEME:

ALIGNMENT & COURAGE

The Alpha Show of Snow Queen presents the classic fairytale in a larger than life and spectacular production, with our largest set and most engaging adaptation from a fairytale, that takes this well known story (that Disney separately adapted into the popular movie 'Frozen') and enhances the meaning for modern audiences. The theme of coming into alignment with your true purpose and desires is brought forth as a clear message throughout the show to emphasise and highlight the core theme. The entire script subtly and powerfully brings forth the importance of having courage in the face of what you fear, and letting that go to find our alignment with all that we want to create for ourselves and the world. This means the story can continue to move on and keeps the audience engaged, whilst still allowing the learnings to occur at a deeper level.

Our childhood experiences can sometimes lead us to fear being who we are, especially if we think doing so will cause harm to ourselves or others. We develop this irrational fears from many sources, but in our story, it is the fear of the father of Elsa that imprints on her those fears and causes her to believe it's best to rid herself of all emotion and hide away from the world in isolation - supposedly to prevent hurting others. This is a fairly common emotion, expressed in less dramatic ways - being taught that we should play small or not step out and attempt to reach for our dreams because others might be upset with us.

As siblings, Elsa & Anna represent two different ways we can develop neurotic behaviour to try to deal with unexpressed and unhealed emotions from childhood. Elsa chooses to isolate, Anna is lost in naive and childish fairytale fantasies, which leaves her vulnerable to manipulation and narcissism. Both have lessons to learn.

Elsa & Anna for the first time exemplify the importance of courage and alignment without it being filtered through the power of 'romantic' love - but love for each other as siblings. The first time ever, an Alpha show does not end with a male and female falling in love and 'getting married'. Instead, they come into alignment with their true purpose and true love for each other, and each find their salvation.

SYNOPSIS OF THE STORY & CHARACTER BREAKDOWNS

The story morphs together various important elements from the original fairytale as well as the Frozen movie, and other sources such as popular movies like Lord of the Rings, Harry Potter and Matrix which all contains hidden messages and meanings to help awaken us to new realities.

The most important element of the fairytale was how a magic mirror could affect people's perceptions. The fairytale focussed on Kai & Gerda, who are characters in our story, but we focus on their children so it's almost like a sequel to the original fairytale. Unlike the movie, however, we do not have Anna & Elsa be 'princesses', just ordinary girls that have normal issues to deal with. Nobody becomes royalty at the end, in the traditional sense, so in that way the story becomes more accessible to Australian children. Elsa becomes instead an 'elected' leader and Anna goes into training to be the 'next Clever Princess'.

Our story follows the journey of Anna & Elsa as they face up against the Snow Queen, the personification of the fear of Elsa in what she is afraid of becoming. We decided to have an actual villain character (unlike the movie) as it's a tradition for Alpha, and adds to the engagement of the audience. But even better, it provides a sounding board for the characters for the 'opposite' of what is true and what the show is trying to teach, and it also provides an opportunity to reveal another truth - that in life, many will try to manipulate and control us (sometimes unseen forces) and will use our neuroses, fears, and things we don't want to face about ourselves as a way to control us through that fear. So the Snow Queen is trying to ensure Elsa never becomes the leader of Arendelle and instead wants to sabotage her and hide her away, to become like her, a 'Snow Queen'. So she tempts and tricks her with a magic mirror which Elsa agrees and leaves. Only by Anna (with help from her friends) coming to find her does she come back and find the truth.

We had to find the purpose behind why this story needed to be told as it has already been told in other ways and the movie is super popular, however, we had to find the reasons for why Alpha should tell the story, to take the lessons of the fairytale and include them along with some of the broader themes introduced by Disney - and then take them further to empower a new generation in the skills for how to 'align with your potential' and why it's important to come together as a community again for learning, growth and connection - to move past fear and into courage, to become all of Who You Are. We also knew we wanted to tell a story about the power of love that is not related to romantic love, indeed, it is the power of the love between two sisters that ultimately leads to redemption for all.

These powerful metaphors move us at a deep level beyond what we consciously perceive. The show also has a great pace and energy, with lots of standard Alpha gags that audiences love and some new comedy that we've never tried before! With some familiar and some very original Alpha characters in the show, such as the much beloved Snowman Olav, Bac the Reindeer as well as other characters new and old, we know you'll find the whole show hilarious and entertaining! Plus, in our version, we've included additional powerful female figures from the fairytale, including the 'Clever Princess' who guides Elsa and Anna and teaches them how to be powerful on their own, and of course, a villain that represents temptation and negative influence that often is quite palpable in our lives today - the actual Snow Queen.

How the show addresses our outcomes:

The show is loud, entertaining and lots happening. It also has different parts that will appeal differently to various age groups and genders – allowing ‘down time’ for some as well. Children seeing this show will want to see more.

Alpha’s Snow Queen addresses the causes behind the desire to not be in alignment with your true self and desires. Fear controls many of our behaviours, and this fear is not something we are born with. If we can catch this fear early on in a child’s education, we can help them release it and not grow up with it. Fear that lives in us for years becomes like a comfortable friend that we will fight (often with anger) to never let go of. By teaching children about how to let go of these fears that get projected on to us by others in the world (such as what happens to Elsa in the show), we can help them clear out the root causes of not being in alignment with the true selves. Once the fear goes, all that remains is your true self.

The cast contains 4 females and 2 males, who play characters that are energetic, and appeal to both genders through humour and strength, and a bit of silliness.

The actors chosen represent people who are talented and professional in their field. They play characters that illustrate great ways to learn and live, who play full out and make the most of the events that happen to them.

The fairytale nature of the show will give some great lead in to the study of stories and fairytales, literacy, the theatre experience etc. Because the shows always contain great anchors for positive emotional states, these can be used back in the classroom to encourage full participation, humility, love and truth, which will always foster higher levels of learning.

As the students implement the ideas in the show (specifically about releasing negative emotions to begin to truly, in your heart, come into alignment with your true self and your desires), it will have a run on effect on other learning areas which will have a positive impact on every area of their schooling life. Imagine children who now have the skill of how to make all their wishes actually come true.

The lights and sound in our shows are the top of the range, and we spend months creating and painting the sets, and the full costumes etc. With 6 cast, it makes what we can set up in your school quite remarkable in a short time – the final result will be as close as you can get to a theatre, right in your school – especially if you have a dark hall!

After the show you will have an opportunity to book one of our other shows. Please consider doing so as ‘stacking’ the shows every year has a cumulative effect on the soul condition of students that is hard to measure. By having it only once or every second year, this positive effect on your students (and entire school community) is very much lessened. We work hard to ensure our shows all tour every year, at different times, so there’s always a show for you to book for the following year. We suggest not booking more than 1 show a year, as the stacking effect seems to be maximised when it is an annual visit.

The content is delivered through a wide range of engaging and accessible dramatic techniques: including, of course, pantomime-styled sequences, physical comedy, audience interaction in the form of questions, witty dialogue with humour that appeals to children (including the occasional bit of toilet humour!), stylised movement, stage combat with real swords and weapons, choreography, modern music interweaved in the story, dramatic lighting and effects, high quality sound and sound effects, magnificent costumes and big realistic sets.

PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

Fairy Tales, Folk Tales and other Stories

Learning Area: Literacy

Outcome: To create an understanding of the origins of fairytales and classic stories, and to dispel myths about the common held beliefs about where these stories originated from. To connect children in with the archetypal nature of these stories to ensure they have a strong connection to the show in advance. To explore stories from different cultures

Materials: Discussion in classroom and the internet

Information:

Fairy tale, or wonder tale, is a kind of folktale or fable. In these stories we meet witches and queens, giants and elves, princes, dragons, talking animals, ogres, princesses, and sometimes even fairies. Marvellous and magical things happen to characters in fairy tales. A boy may become a bird. A princess may sleep for a hundred years. Objects too can be enchanted — mirrors talk, pumpkins become carriages, and a lamp may be home to a genie.

The oldest fairy tales were told and retold for generations before they were written down. French fairy tales, like Sleeping Beauty were the first to be collected and written down, but now we can read fairy tales from almost any culture. When these stories were studied together, something amazing was discovered. From countries as distant and different as Egypt and Iceland similar fairy tales are told. Both Egypt and Iceland have "Cinderella" stories, as do China, England, Korea, Siberia, France, and Vietnam; and the list doesn't stop there. There may be a thousand versions of the Cinderella story, each with a unique telling which carries cultural information about the time and place the story was told. One thing is for sure; people everywhere like stories in which truth prevails over deception, generosity is ultimately rewarded, hard work overcomes obstacles, and love, mercy and kindness are the greatest powers of all.

Activity: Read old folk stories or fairy tales and then ask children to retell them in a modern setting.

Interesting Web Addresses Relating to Fairy Tales, Folk Tales and other Stories:

Alpha Shows Website

<https://www.alphashows.com.au>

Interactive Grimm Brothers Website

<http://www.grimmfairytales.com/en/main>

Aesop's Fables

<http://www.umass.edu/aesop>

Australian Aboriginal Dreamtime Stories

<http://www.dreamtime.net.au/dreaming/storylist.htm>

Discuss the fairytale 'The Snow Queen'

Learning Area: Literacy

Outcome: To provide an expanding awareness of fairytales and their origins and purpose

Materials: Discussion in classroom and writing

Information:

"The Snow Queen" (Danish: Snedronningen) is an original fairy tale written by Danish author Hans Christian Andersen. The tale was first published 21 December 1844 in New Fairy Tales. First Volume. Second Collection. 1845. (Danish: Nye Eventyr. Første Bind. Anden Samling. 1845.)[1] The story centres on the struggle between good and evil as experienced by Gerda and her friend, Kai.

The story is one of Andersen's longest and most highly acclaimed stories. It is regularly included in selected tales and collections of his work and is frequently reprinted in illustrated storybook editions for children.

Below is a summary, for full text go here: <https://www.alphashows.com.au/snow-queen-original-fairytale-versions/>

The Story:

An evil troll, called "the devil", [2] has made a magic mirror that distorts the appearance of everything that it reflects. The magic mirror fails to reflect the good and beautiful aspects of people and things, and magnifies their bad and ugly aspects. The devil, who is headmaster at a troll school, takes the mirror and his pupils throughout the world, delighting in using it to distort everyone and everything; the mirror makes the loveliest landscapes look like "boiled spinach." They attempt to carry the mirror into heaven in order to make fools of the angels and of God, but the higher they lift it, the more the mirror shakes with laughter, and it slips from their grasp and falls back to earth, shattering into billions of pieces, some no larger than a grain of sand.

These splinters are blown by the wind all over the

Earth and get into people's

hearts and eyes, freezing their hearts like blocks of ice and making their eyes like the troll-mirror itself, seeing only the bad and ugly in people and things. There was only one way to get it out.



Years later, a little boy Kai and a little girl Gerda live next door to each other in the garrets of buildings with adjoining roofs in a large city. One could get from one's home to the other's just by stepping over the gutters of each building. The two families grow vegetables and

roses in window boxes placed on the gutters. Gerda and Kai have a window-box garden to play in, and they become devoted to each other as playmates, and as close as if they were siblings.

Kai's grandmother tells the children about the Snow Queen, who is ruler over the "snow bees" — snowflakes that look like bees. As bees have a queen, so do the snow bees, and she is seen where the snowflakes cluster the most. Looking out of his frosted window one winter, Kai sees the Snow Queen, who beckons him to come with her. Kai draws back in fear from the window.

By the following spring, Gerda has learned a song that she sings to Kai: Roses flower in the vale; there we hear Child Jesus' tale! Because roses adorn the window box garden, the sight of roses always reminds Gerda of her love for Kai.

On a pleasant summer day, splinters of the troll-mirror get into Kai's heart and eyes while he and Gerda are looking at a picture book in their window-box garden. Kai becomes cruel and aggressive. He destroys their window-box garden, he makes fun of his grandmother, and he no longer cares about Gerda, since all of them now appear bad and ugly to him. The only beautiful and perfect things to him now are the tiny snowflakes that he sees through a magnifying glass.

The following winter, Kai goes out with his sled to play in the snowy market square and — as was the custom — hitches it to a curious white sleigh carriage, driven by the Snow Queen, who

appears as a woman in a white fur-coat. Outside the city she reveals herself to Kai and kisses him twice: once to numb him from the cold, and a second time to make him forget about Gerda and his family; a third kiss would kill him. She takes Kai in her sleigh to her palace. The people of the city conclude that Kai died in the nearby river. Gerda, heartbroken, goes out to look for him and questions everyone and everything about Kai's whereabouts. She offers her new red shoes to the river in exchange for Kai; by not taking the gift at first, the river lets her know that Kai did not drown. Gerda next visits an old sorceress with a beautiful garden of eternal summer. The sorceress wants Gerda to stay with her forever, so she causes Gerda to forget all



about Kai, and causes all the roses in her garden to sink beneath the earth, since she knows that the sight of them will remind Gerda of her friend. However, a while later, whilst playing in the garden, Gerda sees a rose on the sorceress's hat, then remembers Kai and begins to cry. Gerda's warm tears raise one bush above the ground, and it tells her that it could see all the dead while it was under the earth, and Kai is not among them. Gerda flees and meets a crow, who tells her that Kai is in the princess's palace. Gerda goes to the palace and meets the princess and the prince, who is not Kai, but looks like him. Gerda tells them her story, and they provide her with warm clothes and a beautiful coach. While traveling in the coach Gerda is captured by robbers and brought to their castle, where she befriends a little robber girl, whose pet doves tell her that they saw Kai when he was carried away by the Snow Queen in the direction of Lapland. The captive reindeer Bae tells her that he knows how to get to Lapland since it is his home.



Vilhelm Pedersen illustration

The robber girl frees Gerda and the reindeer to travel north to the Snow Queen's palace. They make two stops: first at the Lapp woman's home and then at the Finn woman's home. The Finn woman tells the reindeer that the secret of Gerda's unique power to save Kai is in her sweet and innocent child's heart:

“

I can give her no greater power than she has already," said the woman; "don't you see how strong that is? How men and animals are obliged to serve her, and how well she has got through the world, barefooted as she is. She cannot receive any power from me greater than she now has, which consists in her own purity and innocence of heart. If she cannot herself obtain access to the Snow Queen, and remove the glass fragments from little Kai, we can do nothing to help her...[3]

”

When Gerda reaches the Snow Queen's palace, she is halted by the snowflakes guarding it. She prays the Lord's Prayer, which causes her breath to take the shape of angels, who resist the snowflakes and allow Gerda to enter the palace. Gerda finds Kai alone and almost immobile on a frozen lake, which the Snow Queen calls the "Mirror of Reason", on which her throne sits. Kai is engaged in the task that the Snow Queen gave him: he must use pieces of ice like a Chinese puzzle to form characters and words. If he is able to form the word the Snow Queen told him to spell she will release him from her power and give him a pair of skates. Gerda runs up to Kai and kisses him, and he is saved by the power of her love: Gerda weeps warm tears on him, melting his heart and burning away the troll-mirror splinter in it. As a result, Kai bursts into tears (which dislodge the splinter from his eye) and becomes cheerful and healthy again with sparkling eyes and rosy cheeks, and also recognizes Gerda. He and Gerda dance around on the lake of ice so joyously that the splinters of ice Kai had been playing with are caught up into the dance. When they tire of dancing they fall down to spell "eternity," the very word Kai was trying to spell. Even if the Snow Queen were to return (although it is never said from where), she would be obliged to free Kai. Kai and Gerda then leave the Snow Queen's domain with the help of the reindeer, the Finn woman, and the Lapp woman. They meet the robber girl, and from there they walk back to their home, "the big city."

Kai and Gerda find that everything at home is the same and that it is they who have changed; they are now grown up, and are also delighted to see that it is summertime.

At the end, the grandmother reads a passage from the Bible:

"Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 18:3).

Activity:

Discuss the elements of the fairytale, the characters etc, to familiarise your children with the various elements. Read them the story of the original fairytale (in this guide). Discuss expectations about the show because of the fairytale.

Further on in this guide is the entire Hans Christian Andersen's fairytale written in 1836 which we based our show on which you can read to your class to familiarise them with the original story (albeit the Alpha show is quite different in some aspects).

Hans Christian Andersen in depth

Outcome: To familiarise with a well known writer from the 19th century and analyse his life to become aware of how life experience can influence art and every facet of a person's creations.

After completing this lesson, students should be able to:

- ◆ know Andersen's nationality, language, and time period
- ◆ summarise the plots of two of Andersen's stories
- ◆ identify the main characters of four of Andersen's stories
- ◆ explain the theme of at least one of Andersen's stories
- ◆ express their reactions to a story by Hans Christian Andersen

Materials: Discussion in classroom and writing

Learning Area:

Literature and Language Arts > Genre > Fables, Fairy tales and Folklore

Art and Culture > Subject Matter > Folklore

Literature and Language Arts > Place > Modern World

Guiding Questions:

Who was Hans Christian Andersen? What are some of his most well known stories?

What are some typical characteristics and themes of Andersen's stories? How do we feel about Andersen's stories?

Have older children (Year 5+) prepare a research essay or project on Hans Christian Andersen, answering the following question along the way:

“How did Hans Christian Andersen's life influence and reflect in his work as a writer of fairytales, most notably The Snow Queen? Contrast and consider how people's repressed sadness, hurt and anger can influence what they consider to be 'truth'.”

The project should also focus on facts about his life that they have researched etc.

Information:

Like many of his beloved fictional characters, Hans Christian Andersen came from humble origins. Born in a one-room house to a shoemaker and a washerwoman, Andersen lost his father when he was 11 and left home at age 14 determined to become famous. Teased by school mates for his awkward appearance and bullied by a teacher who told him his writings were fit only for the trash can, Andersen persevered with almost desperate devotion to his art and ultimately became known throughout the world as a genius of the literary fairy tale genre.

Andersen's stories are steeped in melancholy and longing, often featuring humble characters who long for love and acceptance into a higher realm of society or more glorious existence. A mermaid pines for a human prince; an ugly toad travels from the bottom of a well to seek something "higher"; a starving child imagines ever more beautiful tableaux of prosperity as she freezes to death. Many of Andersen's stories feature personified objects such as darning needles or candles that have thoughts, intentions, and feelings.

The Fir Tree, (in the story of that name) for example, looks forward to being decorated as part of the Christmas celebration and feels sad when her trimmings are stripped away. Andersen has a keen eye for social pretensions and vanity, and many of his stories satirize these human failings. A pea, for example, smugly considers itself the "most remarkable" of its pod because it is about to burst after festering in gutter water in Five Peas from the Same Pod. The emperor of The Emperor's New Clothes is so fearful of being thought stupid that he allows himself to be fooled into ludicrous behavior by a pair of charlatans. Thus, Andersen infused the stock figures of traditional fairy tale with human weaknesses and strong personal emotions.

Andersen's story endings are frequently unhappy. A starving child dies alone in a freezing ally; a toy soldier is reduced to a lump of melted metal; a little fir tree is thrown in a fire. Rather than redeem his characters' sufferings by an ultimate acquisition of love and riches, Andersen shows how goodness and integrity can ennoble the last moments of a lonely and poverty-stricken life. The starving child does not truly die alone, nor does the toy soldier's love remain eternally a secret, for we, the readers, know the stories and feel pity for the child's privations and sympathy for the soldier's love. The traditional fairy tale shows how bad luck can change into dazzling successes. Andersen, in contrast, portrays the luminous spiritual dignity of even the most relentless ill fortune.

Andersen was born in 1805 in Denmark. His stories have been translated into more than 80 languages and are known throughout the world. The well-known aphorisms "ugly duckling" and "emperor's new clothes" come from his stories of the same titles. The Snow Queen has been made into one of Walt Disney's most popular movies. Andersen's stories, either singly or in collections, have been published in thousands of editions, many with lavish illustrations.

The Activity after reading Snow Queen to a class:

Read aloud, or have the class read, The Snow Queen (above). Ask students to recall the main characters and some of their important actions. Many of the students will have seen the Walt Disney movie, Frozen, which was also adapted from the original fairytale but changed quite a lot. Ask them to describe some of the key differences between the movie version and the original text, and then after the Alpha show, you can also contrast the differences in our version.

Divide class into small groups and have each group create a skit based on their section of the story. Encourage students to elaborate a bit on their section. For example, the students acting out The Snow Queen's transformation to a Daughter of the Air might want to show students doing good deeds and making the Daughters of the Air happy. Have each group present their skit to the whole class.

Discuss the ending of the story with the students, in which The Snow Queen sacrifices her own life in order to let the Prince go on living. Ask the students to guess why Andersen might have created this ending rather than the happier ending that the movie has. What was Andersen trying to teach or show with this ending? Ask students to suggest other possible endings, for example, what might have happened if the Prince had sacrificed his life for The Snow Queen?

Distribute storyboards to students with spaces for each main section of the story, and ask them to work in pairs to sketch a picture and write 2–3 sentences summarising what happens in each

section of the story. For grades 4 and 5, have students write a book review based on their summaries and their reactions to the story.

Skills acquired whilst performing these tasks:

Compare and contrast

Critical analysis

Critical thinking

Discussion

Fairy tale analysis

Gathering, classifying and interpreting written, oral and visual information

Interpretation

Logical reasoning

Making inferences and drawing conclusions

Representing ideas and information orally, graphically and in writing

Vocabulary

More details on his life over the page:



ABOUT HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN:

The Danish writer, famous for his fairy tales, which were not meant merely for children but for adults as well. Andersen used frequently colloquial style that disguises the sophisticated moral teachings of his tales. Before achieving success as a playwright and novelist, Andersen was trained as singer and actor. Many of Andersen's fairy tales depict characters who gain happiness in life after suffering and conflicts. 'The Ugly Duckling' and 'The Snow Queen' are Andersen's most intimate works.

"He now felt glad at having suffered sorrow and trouble, because it enabled him to enjoy so much better all the pleasure and happiness around him; for the great swans swam round the newcomer, and stroked his neck with their beaks, as a welcome." (from 'The Ugly Duckling')

Hans Christian Andersen was born in the slums of Odense. His father, Hans Andersen, was a poor shoemaker and literate, who believed he was of aristocratic origin. Andersen's mother, Anne Marie Andersdatter, worked as washerwoman. Although she was uneducated and superstitious, she opened for his son the world of folklore. Later Andersen depicted her in his novels and in the story 'Hun duede ikke'. Anne Marie declined into alcoholism and died in 1833 in a charitable old people's home. Andersen's half-sister Karen Marie may have worked as a prostitute for a time; she contacted her famous brother only a few times before dying in 1846.

Andersen received little education. As a child he was highly emotional, suffering all kinds of fears and humiliations because of his tallness and effeminate interests. Andersen's hysterical attacks of cramps were falsely diagnosed as epileptic fits. Encouraged by his parents he composed his own fairy tales and arrange puppet theatre shows. His father loved literature and took Andersen often to the playhouse. "My father gratified me in all my wishes," wrote Andersen in *The True Story of My Life* (1846). "I

possessed his whole heart; he lived for me. On Sundays, he made me perspective glasses, theatres, and pictures which could be changed; he read to me from Holberg's plays and the Arabian Tales; it was only in such moments as these that I can remember to have seen him really cheerful, for he never felt himself happy in his life and as a handicrafts-man."

In 1816 his father died and Andersen was forced to go to work. He was for a short time apprenticed to a weaver and tailor, and he also worked at a tobacco factory. Once his trousers were pulled down when other workers suspected that he was a girl. At the age of 14 Andersen moved to Copenhagen to start a career as a singer, dancer or an actor – he had a beautiful soprano voice. The following three years were full of hardships although he found supporters who paved his way to the theatre. Andersen succeeded in becoming associated with the Royal Theater, but he had to leave it when his voice began to change. When he was casually referred as a poet it changed his plans: "It went through me, body and soul, and tears filled my eyes. I knew that, from this very moment, my mind was awake to writing and poetry." He then began to write plays, all of which were rejected.

In 1822 Jonas Collin, one of the directors of the Royal Theatre and an influential government official, gave Andersen a grant to enter the grammar school at Slagelse. He lived in the home of the school headmaster Meisling, who was annoyed at the oversensitive student and tried to harden his character. Other pupils were much younger, 11-year-olds, among whom six years older Andersen was definitely overgrown. His appearance drew also unwanted attention – he had a long nose and close-set eyes. Collin arranged in 1827 a private tuition for Andersen. He gained admission to Copenhagen University, where he completed his education. In 1828 Andersen wrote a travel sketch, *Fodreise fra Holmens Kanal Til Østpynten af Amager*, a fantastic tale in the style of the German Romantic writer E.T.A. Hoffmann. Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's *Children's and Household Tales* had appeared between 1812 and 1815, but they were based on original folktales. Andersen's poem 'The Dying Child', was published in a Copenhagen journal and the Royal Theatre produced in 1829 his musical drama. *PHANTASIER OG SKISSER*, a collection of poems, was born when Andersen fell in love with Riborg Voigt, who was secretly engaged to the local chemist's son. "She has a lovely, pious face, quite child-like, but her eyes looker clever and thoughtful, they were brown and very vivid," Andersen remembered in *The Book of My Life*. Riborg married the chemist's son, Poul Bøving, in 1831. A leather pouch containing a letter from Riborg was found round Andersen's neck when he died. Also Edvard, Jonas Collin's son, and Henrik Stempe in the 1840s were for Andersen other objects of unfulfilled dreams.

"I do wish that I were dead," Andersen said to one of his friends in 1831, expressing not his feelings about his failed love for Riborg but also echoing the melancholy of Goethe's Werther from *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774). Andersen never met Goethe, who was still alive when Andersen made his first journey to Germany. The visit inspired the first of his many travel sketches. From 1831 onwards he travelled widely in Europe, and remained a passionate traveller all his life. Andersen wrote sketches about Sweden, Spain, Italy, Portugal, and the Middle East. During his journeys Andersen met in Paris among others Victor Hugo, Heinrich Heine, Balzac, and Alexandre Dumas. A *Poet's Day Dreams* (1853) Andersen dedicated to Charles Dickens, whom he met in London in 1847. And in Rome he met the young Norwegian writer Bjørnson.



As a novelist Andersen made his breakthrough with *The Improvisatore* (1835), using Italy as the setting. The story was autobiographical and depicted a poor boy's integration into society, an Ugly Duckling theme of self-discovery in which Andersen returned in several of his works. The book gained international success and during his life it remained the most widely read of all his works. E.B. Browning wrote warmly to her future husband of the novel and her last poem was written for Andersen in 1861, shortly before her death. Only a *Fiddler* (1837), Andersen's novel, was attacked by the philosopher Søren Kierkegaard in his book *Af En endnu Levendes Papirer* (1838, *From the Papers of a Person Still Alive, Published Against his Will*). "The joyless struggle that is Andersen's in real life now repeats itself in his writing," he wrote. Kierkegaard, the 'Ugly Duckling' of Danish philosophy, used a number of pseudonyms, none of whom 'agreed' with one another.

A little later, Andersen took his revenge with the play *En Comedie i det Grønne* (1840), which included an unpractical philosopher.

Andersen's fame rests on his *Fairy Tales and Stories*, written between 1835 and 1872. *Tales, Told for Children*, appeared in a small, cheap booklet in 1835. In this and following early collections, which were published in every Christmas, Andersen returned to the stories which he had heard as a child, but gradually he started to create his own tales. The third volume, published in 1837, contained 'The Snow Queen' and 'The Emperor's New Clothes.' Among Andersen's other best known tales are 'Little Ugly Duckling,' 'The Tinderbox,' 'Little Claus and Big Claus,' 'Princess and the Pea,' 'The Snow Queen,' 'The

Nightingale,' and 'The Steadfast Tin Soldier.' With these collections, inspired by the great tradition of the Arabian Nights on the other hand, and Household Tales, collected by the brothers Grimm, Andersen became known as the father of the modern fairytale. Moreover, Andersen's works were original. Only 12 of his 156 know fairy stories drew on folktales.

Andersen broke new ground in both style and content, and employed the idioms and constructions of spoken language in a way that was new in Danish writing. When fairy tales at his time were didactic, he brought into them ambiguity. Children and misfits often speak truth; they serve as Andersen's mouthpiece in moral questions: ""But he has nothing on at all," said a little child at last. "Good heavens! listen to the voice of an innocent child," said the father, and one whispered to the other what the child had said. "But he has nothing on at all," cried at last the whole people. That made a deep impression upon the emperor, for it seemed to him that they were right; but he thought to himself, "Now I must bear up to the end." And the chamberlains walked with still greater dignity, as if they carried train which did not exist." (from 'The Emperor's New Suit,' 1837) Ugliness of the hero or heroine often conceals great beauty, which is revealed after misfortunes. In psychoanalysis this kind of figure is sometimes interpreted as a symbol of the inner self of soul, which has to be released from its prison.

Andersen's identification with the unfortunate and outcast made his tales very compelling. Some of Andersen's tales revealed an optimistic belief in the triumph of the good, among them 'The Snow Queen' and 'Little Ugly Duckling', and some ended unhappily, like 'The Little Match Girl.' In 'The Snow Queen' the author expressed a longing for ordinary life – he never had such. In the story the youngest of six mermaid precesses longs after the land above the sea, but the fulfillment of the dream causes her much pain. "She knew this was the last evening she would ever see him for whom she had forsaken her kindred and her home, given up her lovely voice, and daily suffered unending torment – and he had no idea of it. This was the last night she would breathe the same air as he, or look upon the deep sea and the starry blue sky; an everlasting night without thoughts or dreams waited her, for she had no soul and could not gain one." (trans. L.W. Kingsland) Andersen's tales were translated throughout Europe, with four editions appearing in the UK in 1846 alone. His works influenced among others Charles Dickens ('A Christmas Carol in Prose,' 'The Chimes,' 'The Cricket on the Hearth,' 'The Haunted Man and the Ghost's Bargain'), Willam Thackeray and Oscar Wilde ('The Happy Prince,' 'The Nightingale and the Rose,' 'The Fisherman and His Soul'), C.S. Lewis, Isak Dinesen, P.O. Enquist, whose play, Rainsnakes, was about Andersen, Cees Noteboom, and a number of other writers. Elias Bredsdorff has complained in his book Hans Christian Andersen: The Story of His Life and Work(1975), that Andersen's tales have been bowdlerized and sweetened by Victorian British translators.

Andersen's last unfilled love was the Swedish opera singer Jenny Lind, whom he met first time in 1840. Jenny was the illegitimate daughter of a schoolmistress. According to her own words, she was at the age of nine "a small, ugly, broad-nosed, shy, gauche, altogether undergrown girl". At eighteen, she had made her breakthrough as a singer with her powerful soprano. 'The Ugly Duckling' become Jenny's favorite among Andersen's stories. However, 'Andersen's 'The Nightingale' is considered a tribute to Jenny, or "the Swedish Nightingale" as she was called. "Farewell," she wrote him in 1844, "God bless and protect my brother is the sincere wish of his affectionate sister, Jenny." Andersen never married. Between the years 1840 and 1857 Andersen made journeys throughout Europa, Asia Minor, and Africa, recording his impressions and adventures in a number of travel books.

He wrote and rewrote his memoirs, The Fairy Tale of My Life, but the standard edition is generally considered the 1855 edition. During his travels abroad, Andersen was able to be more relaxed and take more liberties than in Copenhagen, where everybody knew him. At the age of sixty-two Andersen went to Paris, where he visited a brothel – it was not his first visit or last. "Then went suddenly up into a meat market – one of them was covered with powder; a second, common; a third, quite the lady. I talked with her, paid twelve francs and left, without having sinned in deed, though I dare say I did in my thoughts. She asked me to come back, said I was indeed very innocent for a man." (from Hans Christian Andersen: The Life of a Storyteller by Jackie Wullschlager, 2001) Andersen died in his home in Rolighed on August 4, 1875. Edvard Collin and his wife were later buried with Andersen. However, their family members moved the Collins' bodies after some years to the family plot in another cemetery.

A Summary and Analysis of Hans Christian Andersen's 'The Snow Queen' Fairy Tale

By Dr Oliver Tearle (Loughborough University)

Hans Christian Andersen's influence on the fairy tale genre was profound. Although 'The Snow Queen', 'The Emperor's New Clothes', 'The Little Mermaid', and 'The Ugly Duckling' have the ring of timeless fairy stories, they were all original tales written by the Danish storyteller in the mid-nineteenth century.

First published in 1844, 'The Snow Queen' (divided into seven parts) is perhaps the most celebrated of all of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales. But what does this story mean? You can read 'The Snow Queen' here before proceeding to our summary and analysis.

'The Snow Queen': summary

First, let's begin with a brief plot summary of 'The Snow Queen'. A hobgoblin has created a mirror which magnifies ugly and evil things, and shrinks good and pretty things. When hobgoblin's associates took the mirror up into the sky to see what the angels looked like in it, it fell and smashed into millions of pieces.

Some of these pieces got into people's eyes and distorted their view of the world; some pieces became windows; some pieces even made it into people's hearts and turned those hearts as cold as ice. But many pieces were left scattered about the world.

Two small children – a boy, named Kay, and a girl, named Gerda – live as neighbours and love each other as if they were brother and sister. But one day, the Snow Queen appears outside Kay's house and shortly after that, a piece of the hobgoblin's magic mirror gets caught in his eye and reaches his heart, turning it to ice. Thereafter, he starts to behave badly towards Gerda and can only see the ugliness in things.

Kay takes his sledge into town, where the Snow Queen appears to him again and takes him under her wing, and they ride off on her sledge together. Gerda wonders what happened to Kay, fearing him dead. She throws her prized red shoes into the river as an offering, in the hope that Kay will come back in return.

But it doesn't work, so Gerda gets in a boat and soon drifts out into the world beyond her home, where she meets an old lady who befriends her. Gerda talks to the flowers in the woman's garden, in the hope that they will tell her where Kay is, but they speak to her in riddles.

Autumn comes, and Gerda continues on her way in the world. She meets a crow, who tells her that Kay is in the palace of a princess. But when Gerda travels to the palace, the prince is not Kay, although his appearance is similar. The prince and princess give Gerda a coach and warm coat, so she can continue her journey.

However, Gerda is captured by robbers, and taken to their castle. There she meets a little robber girl, whose doves tell Gerda that Kay was taken by the Snow Queen to her palace further north. The robber girl helps to free Gerda from the castle.

With the help of a reindeer, a Lapp woman (from Lapland) and a Finn woman (from Finland), Gerda travels north to the colder parts of Scandinavia, until she reaches the palace of the Snow Queen, where the Snow Queen has Kay under her spell. The only way to free him from it is to remove the shard of the magic mirror that has turned his heart to ice. Kay is nearly blue with cold, and it's only the Snow Queen's attention to him that keeps him from freezing.

The Snow Queen flies away to warmer countries, deserting Kay. Gerda turns up and recognises Kay instantly despite his changed appearance, but he sits still and cold and unresponsive. Upset, Gerda cries warm tears that drop onto the frozen Kay, and seep through to his heart, thawing it.

When Gerda sings a song they both know, he recognises her, and bursts into tears. His tears wash out the grain of glass from the magic mirror that was lodged in his eye, and he returns to his old self. Reunited, Gerda and Kay return home, growing up together and yet retaining their childlike innocence, as spring turns into summer.

'The Snow Queen': analysis

'The Snow Queen' is, fundamentally, a story about good and evil. But what is most noteworthy about this fairy tale – perhaps even more so than in Andersen's other major fairy tales – is that the evil character at the centre of the story, namely the Snow Queen herself, doesn't get her comeuppance at the end of the tale. Nor does the hobgoblin who created the mirror which allows Kay to be transformed in the first place.

One of the reasons why Andersen's fairy stories have endured, perhaps, is that they have decidedly bittersweet 'fairy-tale endings': the good may end happily, but the bad don't necessarily end unhappily. The Snow Queen isn't heard of again after she flies off to warmer climes, abandoning poor Kay.

Of course, the mirror and the ice are loaded with symbolism and significance in the story. The mirror represents unhealthy cynicism which destroys youthful innocence: it's significant that, when Kay becomes 'infected' with the grain of glass from the magic mirror, he wants to go off and play with the older boys, suggesting that wide-eyed wonder and childhood innocence are being replaced by surly

adolescence, which involves disrespecting the kindly grandmother who reads stories to him and Gerda, and neglecting Gerda herself.

But the glass doesn't infect everyone: Gerda is able to retain her innocence even as she grows up, as is Kay once he is saved by Gerda. By the same token, Kay's cynicism isn't his own fault: it's just his rotten luck that the grain of the mirror gets caught in his eye.

This suggests that a person's individual circumstances shape their views and their personalities, and that they aren't necessarily to 'blame' for how they behave. But they can be cured of it, if they are shown love by their friends and those close to them.

This, of course, is what the tears that Gerda sheds over the frozen body of Kay represent. They spring from genuine sadness that she has lost him, and their warmth is enough to thaw his icy heart and bring him back.

Here, the gender roles are noteworthy: unlike 'Sleeping Beauty' or 'Snow White', it's not a male character saving and waking a female character, but a heroine who rescues her male friend from the stasis (death?) he has been condemned to by the evil witch character (i.e. the Snow Queen).

But what does love triumph over in 'The Snow Queen'? 'Cold reason' might be one answer. When Kay is 'infected' by the grain of glass from the magic mirror, he does lose the ability to see the beauty in everything around him. But seeing a worm in the rose when there is one isn't nasty cynicism: it's just realism.

The problem stems from losing all appreciation of the rose's beauty, but blind romanticism and idealism are just as flawed (and arguably, just as dangerous). Nor is there anything wrong with being fond of maths (another 'skill' Kay picks up following his encounter with the mote of glass).

Yet this isn't how Andersen intends to analyse or scrutinise his tale: he clearly was a Romantic who was unhappy with the way the world really was and felt that love and beauty should triumph over intellectualism and rationalism.

If the ultimate message of the fairy tale, when reduced to its core elements, is trite (love and beauty triumph over scientism and realism; love, if you will, conquers all), and if that message even rings a little hollow to those of us who have spent a little time in the 'real world', then such flaws are easily swept away by the captivating beauty of the tale itself, with its use of icy landscapes, clear and powerful symbolism (the mirror, the tears, the snow and ice itself), and refusal to follow the 'prince + peasant girl = marriage' formula beloved of many writers of fairy tales.

'The Snow Queen' is often regarded as a precursor to, and major influence on, the 2013 hit animated film Frozen. But although the film followed Andersen's tale in the early stages of the movie's development, the two narratives and characters ended up being very different.

Nevertheless, the influence of 'The Snow Queen' can be seen in many works of children's literature: the Snow Queen's temptation of Kay almost certainly influenced C. S. Lewis, whose White Witch similarly tempts Edmund away from the other children in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (Both Andersen's Snow Queen and Lewis's White Witch appear arrive into a snowy world and wear an inviting warm fur coat.)

And Lyra's voyage to the frozen north to find her male friend and brother-in-all-but name, Roger, in Philip Pullman's *Northern Lights* echoes the journey that Gerda makes in Andersen's fairy tale. Both Lyra and Gerda convince adults to help them in their quest through being kind and generous, so others feel compelled to help them in their pure quest to find their friend.

Curiously, and by way of conclusion, it's worth noting a bit of biographical interest. Andersen may have been inspired to create the figure of the Snow Queen after the noted Swedish opera singer Jenny Lind, with whom Andersen became infatuated, rejected his advances.

Andersen became Kay, the innocent boy who was 'led on' by the beautiful and bewitching, but ultimately cold, Snow Queen who reels the hapless boy in only to desert him once she has stolen his heart.

Question Time

Learning Area:

Literacy / Theatre / Music / Performing Arts / Science & Technology / Art / Values Education

Outcome: To prepare the students for asking quality questions after the show and in life.

Materials: Discussion in classroom and writing

Information:

At the end of each show, when time permits, Alpha's performers come back on stage to give the children an opportunity to ask questions.

If you have specific children who did not get their questions answered, you are more than welcome to bring them to us whilst we are packing up, to talk to us. We welcome and encourage the performers to have the maximum possible contact time with students. We are also very happy to provide autographs and personal messages to each child.

You may have had actors in your school before who answer questions after their performance.

Here is how we do it differently:

- ★ It is almost 'part of the show'.
- ★ We have a voiceover introduction and 'pump-up' music before the actors come back out on stage. It is always important that children are in a 'peak state' to ask and answer questions
- ★ The actors will come out in costume, but as 'themselves' (not in character). They will remain energised and enthusiastic, rather than showing fatigue (even if the Actors themselves are fatigued at all)



Activity:

Get the students to brainstorm various question 'areas'. There are multiple types of questions to ask, that coincide with the possible Learning Areas above. Then brainstorm 1 or 2 great questions in each area.

You may want to also run the 'sensory acuity' activity below.

It's important to reinforce the purpose of the question time. Ask them what they think their focus should be during the time. If they ask a question that is silly, the purpose of that would be to make people laugh. If they ask a question where the whole audience finds out some really great valuable information, the purpose is to provide a worthwhile and beneficial experience for the whole audience. We reward 'clever questions' so the more preparation, the more reward!

You can then follow up with a discussion about how a great truth in life is the importance of questions and how they effect our lives.

The quality of life is in direct proportion to the quality of the questions we ask, especially those we ask on a consistent basis

So mastering this area of our life is imperative. If we're always asking a question like 'why do I always get it wrong', our brain comes up with an answer ('cause you're an idiot!'). If we ask quality questions like, 'How can I do my best and have fun at the same time?' you'll always come up with a better answer!

EXAMPLES of QUESTION AREAS POSSIBLE TO ASK US ABOUT:

- ★ So **Literacy questions** are about the story, how we told it, the script, the humour, our version of the story and our choices we made.
- ★ **Theatre questions** are about the show, bringing theatre into a school, the lighting etc.
- ★ **Music questions** are about our song selections, the live singing, how we learnt to sing etc.
- ★ **Performing Arts** questions are about acting, role playing, creating a character, character choices, how we got cast, auditions, the experience of being an actor.
- ★ **Science & technology questions** are about the set, how we built them, the construction methods we used, how long it took, how we planned to do it, what skills were needed etc.
- ★ **Art questions** are about the costumes and the set painting.
- ★ **Values Education questions** are about the embedded messages in the show, the role models of the performers and what we hoped the children learnt during the show about how to live life with passion, enthusiasm and success.



Below are some examples of good questions and also some examples of questions we've received in the past (some not so good!). Great questions (ones where we'll answer something really useful to the experience) are marked with an *

Rehearsals and Preparation

- *How long does it take to rehearse?
- Where do you rehearse the show?
- *Who makes up the dances?
- *Who writes the shows?
- Was it hard to learn your lines?

The Set-up

- *How long does it take to set the set up?
- *Who made/painted the sets?
- What's behind the set?
- Where did you get the costumes?
- How do you get changed so quickly?
- *Where does the smoke come from?
- *How do the lights/music/sound work?
- Were the swords real?

Snow Queen Specific

- ***Why was the Snow Queen so mean?
- How did the magic work?
- ***Why was Kai so scared of the Snow Queen?
- ***Why did Elsa not use her powers? Why was she afraid?
- ***Why did Anna get engaged the same day she met Hans?
- ***What does it mean to be in 'alignment' with who you are or the things you want?
- ***Why were you saying to not isolate and hide away?

The Company

- **What other shows does Alpha do?
- How many shows have you done?
- *Which show are you doing next year?
- ***Why do you do shows like this in schools?

Whose idea was it to perform in schools?

*Do you perform anywhere in the school holidays?

The Performers

- *How did you all get to be in the show?
- *What acting training have you done?
- *Where/How did you learn to dance/sing?
- How old are you?
- *How does it feel to be an actor?
- *Do you get scared/nervous?
- Have you ever been on TV?
- *What other shows have you been in?
- *What is your favourite thing about performing?
- What is your favourite colour?
- What is your hair like?

Please note: "Question Time" sessions are an extra value in addition to the show your school has purchased from Alpha, provided free of charge - as a result, we cannot guarantee that we will have time - especially if we have another school to go to afterwards, or if it is already too close to the end of your school day. If this is the case, please feel free to allow children to speak to the performers as they pack up as long as it is safe and a teacher can supervise

Alpha-Writing

Learning Area: Literacy

Outcome: To engage children in passionate creative writing in response to the Alpha Show.

Materials: Writing materials

Information: Alpha shows can inspire much enthusiasm and creativity. Harness this energy to create amazing creative writing!

Activity:

For K-2:

Storytelling. Seat them in a circle and using one of our story starters below, begin the story. One by one in the circle, the children can contribute a line to the story, each taking the story in their own crazy direction.

- ie. 1) Once there was a rabbit who loved to dance.
 2) He would dance all around his little house.
 3) Then he fell and broke his leg!
 4) So he couldn't dance any more.
 5) He was so sad that his friend, the frog, wanted to cheer him up.
 6) He said, "Why don't we try doing something different? What about knitting?"
 and so on and so on.)

For Gr 3-4:

Choose a character and write an entry in their diary



Alpha-Writing (continued...)

For Gr 5-6

1. Write a newspaper article about the events of the story, 'Extra Extra, princess falls asleep for 100 years!' "Australia's most wanted - Evil Witch Maleficent"
2. Write your own Fairytale, play or pantomime, brainstorm the elements of these stories ie
Characters: an evil magical person, a good magical person, a mother, a wolf, a prince, a princess, a cow, a king, a narrator, a grandmother, a boy/girl, a fairy, a goblin, a bossy person
Place: a castle, a dark wood, a cottage, a cloud in the sky, up a tree, in the city,
Events: falling asleep, getting married, running away, meeting a magical creature, finding treasure
Then put it all together! Remember the happy ending!
3. Choose from one of our 'Story Starters' to create their own fairy tale.

Story Starters:

- ★ Once upon a time, in a deep dark wood, in a teeny tiny cottage with a straw roof, lived a big rat. His name was Claude.
- ★ Deep, deep down in the ocean as I was minding my own business...
- ★ Way back in the back hills where even the ants didn't go, I remember...
- ★ In old grandmother's trunk there was a ...
- ★ There once was a rabbit who loved to dance
- ★ My grandmother used to tell me home is where the heart is. I did not understand what she meant by that until one stormy night when ...
- ★ Long ago, in a faraway place, there was a land filled with wonder. In this fantastic place there was a little girl. She was very special, for she had magic...
- ★ It started out just like any other school day. I finished the last soggy pieces of cereal from my bowl full of milk. (I always pour too much!) But as I grabbed my coat and ran out the door, I couldn't believe my eyes!

Alpha Shows Performance Style

Learning Area: Literacy / Performing Arts / Theatre

Outcome: To develop an understanding of Alpha's traditions, our conventions and how to be an ideal audience to enrich the experience of an Alpha Show. **This section is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED for all teachers to use with all students to ensure maximum value.**

Information: Alpha Shows allow the students to be free and to yell out and talk to the characters.

Alpha's versions of stories are usually significantly different than anything they have seen before. Explore the value of doing this with your children, and how using theatre and our special format of theatre helps bring new life to classic stories.

Energy and Pace

You may like to look at how the energy and pace of the show varied considerably, to parts with only dialogue, to lots of songs, to slow bits, to parts where a LOT was happening all at once... this is all part of the theatre experience and also necessary for children to have parts where they can tune out for a moment and chat to each other, and to let it integrate into their subconscious, and take a break! The structure of the shows is all done on purpose. Generally Alpha shows are high energy and pace, to ensure children don't get bored. They are far more impatient than an adult audience, as they pick up on the crux of a scene immediately and don't always need all the details.

Therefore, we always speak fast, move each scene along quickly etc (which can sometimes be too fast for adults!).

HOWEVER, you could prep your children in advance to ensure they are listening at the right times, and not taking advantage of the style of the show which allows them essentially to do what they like. You can use the following activity for this purpose or your own way of teaching awareness of when to listen and when to actively participate. **This is up to you – as the actors will not 'punish' children for being loud and having fun during the show.** If you think they should listen, prepare them to do so in advance (not at the show by shooshing as this is too distracting)

Activity: Screaming & Listening

To get an idea of what an Alpha show is like

Ask a simple question, like, 'do you think Arthur can do it?'. Prepare them in advance, to yell yes at the tops of their voices, scream, do 'wohoo's' or whatever else. And then visibly and physically 'cut' them, and see how fast they can stop and listen again. As soon as you 'cut' them, tell them some hard to remember information, and test to see who remembered it. This is a great game for preparing them for what an Alpha show is like and how they'll be yelling out at some points, and listening at others.

Activity: Sensory Acuity Game

You should also promote the skill of 'sensory acuity' so they know when it is NOT time to 'yell out'! Sensory acuity is a useful skill in all areas of life!

You could play a game where children pair up and one tells a story and the other, without speaking, gives the storyteller cues about what they're feeling, whether they like the story or hate it, or other things. You, as the teacher/facilitator, can come round holding up cards behind the storyteller like "You need to go to the toilet" to tell the non-talker what to 'act out'. After it's over you can see how much the storyteller picked up about the other person, by using their skills of 'Sensory Acuity'.

Alpha's audience participation elements

Learning Area: Literacy / Performing Arts / Theatre

Outcome: To become very familiar with the specific chances to participate in the show

Information:

Alpha Shows borrow from the pantomime genre many traditions which increase the level of audience participation eg. "He's behind you" and "Ohhh no you're not" etc. as well as 'booing the villain'. The cliché's and most traditions of pantomime are always honoured by Alpha shows - and we also have created new ways for an audience to interact with us, most specifically, with the 'closed eye processes' in the show as well as other fun creations we've had over the years.



Discuss how we use this as a tool to create fun in stories in ways not possible with other formats, especially non-live formats (you wouldn't bother booing a villain in a TV show, as they can't hear you! How boring is that!). Vocal participation by children is important in our shows, and whilst our stories will structure it and educate how it works during the show in the best way possible, initially children may not realise they can yell out - especially if your group is very well behaved, it may be a new experience for them!

You can encourage and let them know it is part of the experience to join in with the singing, dancing, the booing and being a part of the story by answering questions - we'll remind them during the show as well.

On the other hand, some children will take the opportunity too far, and whilst our shows are structured in the best way possible to control over-the-top participation, you may like to also discuss how your children should recognise when to yell-out and when not to. As mentioned, it's a great skill to learn for life in general! The activity above will help with this.

If you want to know more about the history of pantomime, visit this website. Note however, that Alpha shows are not really a pantomime, we just borrow a few techniques from the genre. We discourage the use of the word 'pantomime' in conjunction with the show.

Visit the following website for more info on pantomime genre:

<http://www.its-behind-you.com/history.html>