



Lesson: The Egyptian Cinderella/A Video Project

Lesson by Odette Lozada, English as a Second Language Teacher/P.S. 52 Brooklyn

Grade Level: 4th - 5th

Learning Goals

- To reinforce the opera-learning experience with a student-created and produced media project
- To involve students in various aspects of videotape and stage production through small and large group work

Lesson Preview

Students first read, compare, and contrast a variety of cultures' variations of the Cinderella story. Then using Shirley Climo's *The Egyptian Cinderella*, students research, write, produce, and videotape their own dramatic version, adding elements that they like from the Rossini opera.

[New York State Learning Standards for the Arts](#)

- Standard 1—Creating, performing and participating in the arts
- Standard 2—Knowing and using arts materials and resources

Interdisciplinary areas:

- History
- Visual Arts
- Writing
- Performing arts
- Media studies
- Music
- Literacy skills (purpose, setting, predicting, organizing ideas, composing, evaluating and communicating)



Materials

- Simple furniture (chairs, tables)
- Scenic construction materials (brown paper, cardboard, paints, brushes, markers, etc.)
- Costume materials, sheets
- Ballet slippers (Cinderella's slippers)
- Gold glitter/glue/bows (Cinderella's slippers)
- Videotape and editing equipment
- [Story-structure chart](#)
- [Sample of student-generated Cinderella script](#)
- [Sample photos of the production](#)
- [Sample student self-evaluation essay](#)
- Music resources, including traditional Egyptian music, if possible

Bibliography

- Climo, Shirley. *The Egyptian Cinderella*. Illus. Ruth Heller. Thomas Y. Crowell Junior Books, 1989.
- Climo, Shirley. *The Irish Cinderlad*. Illus. Loretta Krupinski. Harper Collins, 1996.
- Hickox, Rebecca. *The Golden Sandal*. Illus. Will Hillenbrand. School and Library Binding, 1998
- Jaffee, Nina. *The Way Meat Loves Salt*. Illus. Louise August. Henry Holt and Co., 1998.
- Louie, Ai-ling. *Yeh Shen*. Illus. Ed Young. Paper Star, 1996.
- Perrault, Charles. *Cinderella*. Translated by Marcia Brown. Athenaeum, 1972.
- Pollack, Penny. *The Turkey Girl: A Zuni Cinderella*. Illus. Ed Young Little, Brown and Company, 1966.
- Rafe, Martin. *Rough-Face Girl*. Illus. David Shannon. Paper Star, 1998.



Web Resources: Egyptian research:

<http://www.neferchichi.com/>

<http://www.rom.on.ca/egypt/mummy/mum1.html>

<http://tqjunior.thinkquest.org/4368/gods.html>

<http://www.si.umich.edu/CHICO/mummy/Afterlife/Gods/godlist.html>

<http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/egypt/environment/index.htm>

<http://www.seaworld.org/Egypt/irrigation.html>

Time

90 minutes/per session, once a week for 6—8 weeks

Introducing the Lesson(s)

1. Have students read *The Egyptian Cinderella* by Shirley Climo and other Cinderella stories from various cultures.
2. Together, compare and contrast each to the [opera synopsis](#) using the story-structure chart.
3. Have students focus on *The Egyptian Cinderella* version and explain that this will become the basis for their own videotape production of the story.

Developing the Lesson(s)

Explain that the class will now work in teams to produce its own videotape version of the Cinderella story using *The Egyptian Cinderella* as a basis. Help students “brainstorm” the various components of the production process, recording the suggestions on the board. Have students select a team to work on—writing, performing, costumes, scenic design, choreography, music selection, videotaping, directing/staging, and so forth. (Note there can be overlap of teams. Performers can create stage sets, and choreography group can be actors, etc.)



1. Writing. (2—3 90-minute sessions) Have students integrate aspects of the Rossini opera that they like into their own script based on *The Egyptian Cinderella*. (e.g., give the prince a friend, add comedic elements, use music from the opera) Have the writing group read its successive drafts aloud to the rest of the class, making changes to each version, as necessary. ([click to view example from the completed script](#))
2. Staging. (6 90-minute sessions) Supervise the directing/staging and videotaping team (responsible for camera shots) during the staging process.
3. Costumes. Have students construct costumes and accessories during the process.
4. Production. (sessions as needed, typically over 8 week period) Suggested schedule Monday–Thursday performers rehearse specific scene, Friday, scene is taped. All students participate either as actors and/or crew members.
5. Scenic design. Before filming, have students research Egyptian life using the Internet (see above resources) and library resources. The information should become the basis for the stage designs.
6. Video and editing. (Videotaping for 6 weeks twice a week for 90 minutes each session; editing time as needed, or executed by an adult)
7. Music selections. Ask the music teacher to assist in the music group's selections as well as integrating the music during rehearsals. If possible, have students listen to traditional Egyptian music as part of their research.
8. Choreography. The student group may adapt steps from the New York City Opera/*La Cenerentola* dance as well as create its own, teaching the movement to the rest of the class.

Extending the Lesson

1. Have students research and write a report on Egypt and ancient Egyptian daily life.
2. Show students different videotape versions of the opera or Cinderella story to contrast and compare. Examples include:

Yeh-shen: A Cinderella Story from China. Fox Video 1992

Cinderella: A Dance Fantasy VIEW, Inc. 1985-1998

A Tale of Cinderella Warner Home Video 1996



Assessing the Lesson

- Students self-evaluate with open-ended evaluation essays. (Appendix O)

Deeper-Thinking Questions

Have students discuss/debate and/or journal on the following questions:

- *How did your understanding and/or feelings about the Cinderella story change after completing the production?*
- *Which part of the work in teams was easiest for you, and why? Which was the hardest aspect, and why?*
- *What aspects of your own culture and/or heritage would you use in your own version of the Cinderella story?*

Curriculum Tie-ins

English Language Arts: Students draft, peer-review, then self-edit and revise (studying professional examples as a basis) the following:

Reviews of the performance

Press releases

Invitations and theatrical synopsis for guests for the final viewing

Math:

- Students create a production schedule and budget.
- Students calculate the amount of music necessary to cover the length of each scene.



Music: Students create and perform simple underscoring/background music with drums, maracas and cymbals for the ballroom scene.

Science: Students study the physics of light for camera and the stage.

Social Studies: Students research daily life in ancient Egypt, learning about people's relationship to the environment as reflected in their religious and agricultural activities. (e.g., reliance on the sun and water to grow crops)

Technology/Media studies: The entire class (not just the videotape team) learns how to use the videotape camera. Reproduce and distribute copies of the instruction manual and have students study it. From their reading, ask students to identify and use the various parts of a video camera. Also have them make decisions about various camera shots: head shots, two-person shots, close-up, pan, zoom, and so forth for the staged scenes.

Visual Arts: Students create programs, posters, and flyers for the videotape production. Students carefully consider how text and images can best be designed to communicate something specific about their production, paying particular attention to color, line, shape, composition, and handwriting.