INSPIRATION AND CREATION with ANNA FIENBERG
Education Resources: Prep – Grade 6

The following resources have been developed to take your Word Play experience from festival to classroom. Written and compiled by qualified teacher, Ella Peile, UPLIT’s Children & Young Adult Coordinator, the suggested classroom exercises and activities below are designed to reflect key learning areas outlined in the ACARA Australian Curriculum.

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Curriculum Links

The following activities are designed to complement the Australian Curriculum Foundation to Year 6 in English and Visual Arts. Specific curriculum links have been noted at the end of each activity.

About the Author

Anna Fienberg has written more than forty well-loved books for children and young adults. Her career began when she worked as an editor at School Magazine, a NSW children’s literary journal, which published her first story. That story became her first book and she went on to win many awards for her novels and picture books, including the Children’s Book Council of Australia award for The Magnificent Nose and other Marvels, the Victorian Premier’s Prize for Ariel, Zed and the Secret of Life, and the CBCA Honour Award for Horrendo’s Curse. Her novel for young adults, Borrowed Light, was also selected as a CBCA Honour Book and a 2001 American Library Association Best Book for Young Adults.

Anna’s books have been published all over the world and her ever-popular Tashi books, illustrated by Kim Gamble, have become an animated series for television, recently shown on the ABC. Her most recent books are The Complete Adventures of Figaro and Rumba, Tashi and the Wicked Magician, and Wicked’s Way.
Preparatory Discussion
Inspiration and Creativity

What is inspiration? What is creativity? Discuss the idea that inspiration is generally seen as coming from somewhere, whereas creativity is generally seen as being an internal or personal quality.

Although creativity is sometimes considered innate, it is in fact a skill that anyone can learn. Creative thinking involves approaching tasks from different angles, using non-traditional resources or methods, and solving problems in a fun way.

Encourage students to think broadly about the areas in which they may be creative. E.g. the arts, science investigations, problem solving, telling stories and jokes, creating strategies in sports and games, cooking. Ask them what helps them feel creative at these times – is it an internal state, a physical environment, listening to music, collaborating? Students could then create a Y chart describing how their ideal creative environment looks, feels, and sounds.

Preparatory Activity
Wicked’s Way: Vocab List and Word Search

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wicked</th>
<th>Secret</th>
<th>Island</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adventure</td>
<td>Danger</td>
<td>Pirate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scoundrel</td>
<td>Tightrope</td>
<td>Treachery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasure</td>
<td>Funambulism</td>
<td>Vanished</td>
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</tbody>
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Understand how to spell one and two syllable words with common letter patterns (ACELA1778)
Understand how to use letter-sound relationships and less common letter patterns to spell words (ACELA1485)
Incorporate new vocabulary from a range of sources into students’ own texts including vocabulary encountered in research (ACELA1498)
Independent Assignment
Inspiration Journal

Remind students that they can look for inspiration anywhere. Since ideas tend to develop over time, it is a good idea to keep a record of your sources of inspiration by creating and “Inspiration Journal.” They may wish to visualise their collection as chatting away with each other in the journal to help them develop ideas, or as bubbling away together as in a stew.

Their journal can include anything they consider inspiring, i.e. things that make them think, or that generate a strong physical or emotional response. For example, photographs, drawings, found objects, tickets or receipts from inspiring talks or films, quotes, poems, song lyrics, thoughts and ideas.

Student journals should be primarily for the student and not require margins, ruled paper, etc.

Suggestions for finding inspiration:
- Listen to music and imagine it as the soundtrack for a story. What is that story about?
- Think about two very different things. How could they relate to each other?
- Practise automatic writing. There are no rules, just keep writing for a set amount of time.
- Practise transformation: What would this [object/animal/sound] be if it was a [person/place/colour]?

Use and experiment with different materials, techniques, technologies and processes to make artworks (ACAVAM107)

Classroom Activity
Adventure Map

This activity can be done as a class or in groups. It would suit Wicked’s Way, the Tashi books, or The Complete Adventures of Figaro and Rumba. You will need an A3 sheet of paper for each group, or the class could work collaboratively on the board.

Map the key places in the story by writing the place name or drawing the landscape (e.g. mountain, river, road.) Focus on places where major events happen and places that are returned to or referred to multiple times.

Where did the characters start their story? Place a coloured dot for each character. Trace the character’s journey through the story using a dotted line, colour-coded for each character.

Mark key moments of action with a star or drawing.

Create and display artworks to communicate ideas to an audience (ACAVAM108)
Identify some features of texts including events and characters and retell events from a text (ACELT1578)
Classroom Discussion and Activity
Characters

Ask students to list as many character names from Fienberg’s books as they can remember. Using think-pair-share, ask students to choose two names and discuss why those names suit the character. E.g. Wanda sounds like wonder and also wander, Honey is sweet, Soh Meen is grumpy (“so mean”), etc.

If reading Wicked’s Way, discuss the use of Will and Wicked as character names. What does each name mean? What do you think the author is communicating by the change in name? Discuss whether people are inherently good or bad, and why otherwise good people sometimes make bad choices.

Students could then create character profiles, drawing or colouring in images of the characters and filling in the rest of the page with quotes, actions, and descriptions of the character. For Will/Wicked, vertically divide the page.

Alternatively, students could use the descriptive character names as inspiration for their own story. Decide on the character’s dominant personality trait and create a suitable name. Then create a foil for the character, and appropriate name. Provide students with a situation, and ask them to place their two characters in this situation. Consider how they got there, how they would respond, and how will they get out of the situation? Will they be adversarial or will they be forced to work together?

For the Tashi books, images and descriptions are available at http://tashibooks.com/Characters.html

Discuss how authors create characters using language and images (ACELT1581)
Discuss the nature and effects of some language devices used to enhance meaning and shape the reader’s reaction, including rhythm and onomatopoeia in poetry and prose (ACELT1600)
Create texts that adapt language features and patterns encountered in literary texts, for example characterisation, rhyme, rhythm, mood, music, sound effects and dialogue (ACELT1791)

Further Resources
Tashi Series

Additional teaching notes can be found at http://tashibooks.com/Teachers.html