UP LIT | Word Play

MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES with RANDA ABDEL-FATTAH Education Resources: Grade 7 - 12

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 and QCAA Senior English Syllabus.

For more information contact UPLIT.

T +61 7 3255 0254

E info@uplit.com.au

UPLIT.COM.AU

Curriculum Links

The following activities are designed to complement the Australian Curriculum Year 7 – Year 10 in English, History, and Civics and Citizenship, and the QCAA Senior English Syllabus. Specific curriculum links have been noted at the end of each activity.

About the Author

Randa Abdel-Fattah was born in Sydney in 1979. She is a Muslim of Palestinian and Egyptian heritage. She grew up in Melbourne and attended a Catholic primary school and Islamic secondary college. Randa has worked as a lawyer, human rights advocate and community volunteer with different human rights and migrant and refugee resource organisations. Randa has used her opinion editorials in newspapers and TV and radio media appearances as a medium for expressing her views about racism, multiculturalism, human rights, the occupation of Palestine and asylum seekers. She is a regular guest at schools around Australia addressing students about her books and the social justice issues they raise. Randa has also been a guest at international writer's festivals. She recently completed her PhD in the Department of Sociology at Macquarie University, researching Islamophobia, racism and everyday multiculturalism in Australia. Randa lives in Sydney with her husband and three children. She has just released her latest novel, *When Michael Met Mina*, which was inspired by her PhD fieldwork examining issues of race in Australia.

Class Activity
Asylum Seeker Process Drama

The following process drama helps students appreciate the journies of asylum seekers.

Hand each student a piece of paper. Ask them to draw or describe the place where they feel most at home. It may be tangible or not, e.g. with their family. As they are working, encourage them to think about why this idea of home is so important to them, and why it is valued.

Inform students that they must now leave that place or person forever. They have thirty seconds to say goodbye. Students can buddy up and enroll their partner to say goodbye to, say it outloud all together, or write it down.

After thirty seconds, tell students it's time to pack their bags. They may select only what fits in a small backpack. Students write down the items they will take with them.

Ask students to move through a doorway or other division in space, and pass you their lists on the way through. For each student, select one or two items to cross off their list, giving reasons such as "dropped while running from the guards," "taken as a bribe," "fell off the boat," "sold to pay the people smugglers."

Play students one of the animations from the series *Seeking Refuge.*
(Available at http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01k7c4q and
http://www.abc.net.au/tveducation/series/SEEKINGREFUGE.htm)

Separate the class into two groups. Instruct one half of the class that they will now play the "locals" of the refugees' new country. This country's language is made up only of the words "wah" and "wim." The other half of the class is to play the refugees arriving in their new country. The language of the refugees includes only the words "tee" and "tah." Ask the refugee group to separate into families and give each family a task they must complete. E.g. Find the bank, Buy vegetarian food, Get to the job office. The only objects they have with them are the ones on their list (minus any crossed out). Students play the assigned roles while attempting to complete their task using only the given language.

Debrief from the process drama. Discussion points:

- Were your initial priorities of what to take from home useful to you? What would you have changed?
- Emotional reactions to the *Seeking Refuge* video.
- Difficulties faced by people arriving in a new country.
- How these challenges would be amplified by the threat of persecution.

How values, including freedom, respect, inclusion, civility, responsibility, compassion, equality and a 'fair go', can promote cohesion within Australian society (ACHCK052)
Reasons for, and effects of, international migration in Australia (ACHGK058)
Explore and reflect on personal understanding of the world and significant human experience gained from interpreting various representations of life matters in texts (ACELT1635)

12 Merivale Street
(PO Box 3453)
T +61 7 3255 0254
E info@uplit.com.au

Class Discussion
Refugees: Contextual Information

When Michael Met Mina explores contemporary attitudes to refugees, particularly Muslim refugees, in Australia.
Discuss students' existing knowledge and perceptions of refugees.

Michael's attitudes to refugees changes dramatically through his relationship with Mina. Discuss how personal connections can increase our empathy and understanding of other people and groups. View personal accounts of refugees, for example:
You Can't Ask That: Refugees available at http://iview.abc.net.au/programs/you-cant-ask-that/LE1617H006S00
Seeking Refuge available at http://www.abc.net.au/tveducation/series/SEEKINGREFUGE.htm

Identify and explore ideas and viewpoints about events, issues and characters represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1619)
How values, including freedom, respect, inclusion, civility, responsibility, compassion, equality and a 'fair go', can promote cohesion within Australian society (ACHCK052)
How groups, such as religious and cultural groups, express their particular identities; and how this influences their perceptions of others and vice versa (ACHCK053)
Reasons for, and effects of, international migration in Australia (ACHGK058)
The freedoms that enable active participation in Australia's democracy within the bounds of law, including freedom of speech, association, assembly, religion and movement (ACHCK061)
Interpret and compare how representations of people and culture in literary texts are drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1633)

12 Merivale Street
(PO Box 3453)
T +61 7 3255 0254
E info@uplit.com.au

Group Activity
Character Analysis

Break the class into groups and assign each group a character from the book. Ask students to draw a silhouette of their character, taking up most of the page space. Encourage them to keep the shape simple and include one or two characteristic physical features or items of clothing as part of the outline. E.g. hairstyle, silhouette of clothing, signature possession.

Ask students to draw a light pencil line vertically down the centre of the page. The left side represents the character at the beginning of the novel, and the right side represents the character at the end of the novel.

Students are to fill the sheet with the following:

- Physical descriptions or drawing/colour - Along the silhouette outline.
- The character's outward persona, i.e. the personality they show to most of the world. Include descriptions, actions, and quotes of things they've said or ways other characters describe them – Outside the silhouette to the edge of the page.
- The character's inner world, i.e. their private thoughts, feelings, fears, values and beliefs. Include quotes – Inside the silhouette.

Ask students to share their character analysis. Discuss what pieces of information were communicated directly by the author (direct characterisation) and which were revealed through action, speech, and thoughts (indirect characterisation).

Discussion points:

- What were the biggest changes in each character?
- Which character changes the most through the story?
- Find examples of inner conflict, where thoughts, feelings, words, and/or actions do not align.
- Do the collected attributes of each character create complexity?
- How does complexity and development in characters help readers empathise?

Explore the ways that ideas and viewpoints in literary texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts may reflect or challenge the values of individuals and groups (ACELT1626)
Understand and explain how combinations of words and images in texts are used to represent particular groups in society, and how texts position readers in relation to those groups (ACELT1628)

Independent Activity
Augmented Stories

Discuss what students believe will happen after the end of the story. Consider:

- Will Michael and Mina stay together?
- Will Mina and Paula stay friends?
- Their studies and careers.
- Their relationships with their families.
- Continuation or change of their political beliefs.

Students choose one of the following topics from which to write an additional chapter of the book. For example:

- Michael introducing Mina to his parents.
- Mina giving Nabil advice on his first day of school.

Create literary texts that adapt stylistic features encountered in other texts, for example, narrative viewpoint, structure of stanzas, contrast and juxtaposition (ACELT1625)

Further Resources

Additional teaching resources can be found at http://www.panmacmillan.com.au/9781743534977/