



City of Wagga Wagga

Museum of the Riverina

presents

the Great Verandah



A free touring museum theatre experience

EDUCATION KIT-STAGE 3

Introduction

Enter the world of *Verandah*, a young girl living in the Riverina during the 1930's in the midst of terrible social and economic hardship. The Great Depression saw unemployment sky rocket, a scarcity of basic commodities and families in peril. Yet whilst being forced to battle on and make do the people of the Riverina and all over Australia demonstrated tremendous community spirit and ingenuity.

WHAT?

The Great Verandah is a free touring museum theatre performance for stage 3 students, addressing learning outcomes from a variety of curriculum areas including HSE, English, Creative Arts and Science and Technology. Through the engaging world of live theatre this education program connects young minds with local history depicting experiences and stories from the Riverina during the Great Depression.

WHERE?

At your School

WHO?

Schools within the Wagga Wagga Local Government Area

WHEN?

Available on Wednesdays from April - August 2011

WHY?

A theatre performance including elements of puppetry, object handling, video, classic 1930's tunes and poetry from the great Riverina poet Dame Mary Gilmore this program provides an interactive and multi-sensory learning experience guaranteed to excite your students' curiosity. Give your students the chance to embark on a learning journey back to this significant era in our history and explore key themes of courage, loyalty, resourcefulness and resilience.

HOW?

For bookings contact the Museum of the Riverina

Phone: 6926 9654

(Tues - Sat 10am - 5pm, Sun 12pm - 4pm)

Email: museum@wagga.nsw.gov.au

HOW MUCH?

Free

Program duration: 45 minutes

Maximum number of participants: 35 students

Requirements: 4m x 4m performance space, power point outlet

Set up time: 60 minutes

Pack down time: 30 minutes

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Develop critical literacy skills by appreciating the different contexts, perspectives and interpretations of local history
- Develop visual literacy skills through exposure to a variety of visual mediums including theatre performance and multimedia presentation
- Define the term 'Great Depression'
- Investigate the social and political climate of the 1930's
- Become aware of and appreciate historically significant sites within Wagga Wagga and the Riverina e.g. Tent Town and Dixieland
- Understand the global nature of the Great Depression
- Become familiar with daily tasks and job types common in the 1930's
For example:
 - Night-cart, toilet collector
 - The iceman, ice delivery man
 - School procedures such as the daily pledge
 - Manual washing tasks including boiling, rinsing and wringing out clothes
- Investigate elements associated with the local and cultural history of the Riverina
- Recognise some of the social impacts of the Great Depression
For example:
 - Children having to leave school prematurely to support the family income
 - Parents changing employment type due to lack of employment opportunities
 - The increase of travelling male workers, seeking employment to support their families and consequently the absence of father figures in the family home
- Become familiar with poetry from the Riverina poet, Dame Mary Gilmore
- Develop dramatic performance skills and become familiar with examples of theatrical techniques
- Investigate key themes of courage, loyalty, resourcefulness and resilience inherent to the Great Depression era and relate these to their own life experience



Crampton St, Wagga Wagga in flood, circa 1930's. Museum of the Riverina, Wagga Wagga collection.

Curriculum Links

Human Society and its Environment (HSIE) - Stage 3

Change and Continuity	Significant Events and People	CCS3.1 Explains the significance of particular people, places, groups, actions and events in the past in developing Australian identities and heritage.
	Time and Change	CCS3.2 Explains the development of the principles of Australian democracy.
Cultures	Identities	CUS3.3 Describes different cultural influences and their contribution to Australian identities.
Environments	Relationships with Places	ENS3.6 Explains how various beliefs and practices influence the ways in which people interact with, change and value their environment.
Social Systems & Structures	Roles, Rights and Responsibilities	SSS3.8 Explains the structures, roles, responsibilities and decision-making processes of State and Federal Governments and explains why Australians value fairness and socially just principles.



Macleay St, Wagga Wagga, circa 1936. Museum of the Riverina, Wagga Wagga collection.

Curriculum Links

Creative Arts - Stage 3

Music	Listening	MUS3.4 Identifies the use of musical concepts and symbols in a range of musical styles.
Drama	Making	DRAS3.2 Interprets and conveys dramatic meaning by using the elements of drama and a range of movement and voice skills in a variety of drama forms.
	Performing	DRAS3.3 Devises, acts and rehearses drama for performance to an audience.
	Appreciating	DRAS3.4 Responds critically to a range of drama works and performance styles.

Science and Technology - Stage 3

Learning processes	Designing and Making	DMS3.8 Develops and resolves a design task by planning, implementing, managing and evaluating design processes
	Using Technology	UTS3.9 Evaluates, selects and uses a range of equipment, computer-based technology, materials and other resources to meet the requirements and constraints of investigation and design tasks.

Curriculum Links

English - Stage 3

<p>Talking and Listening outcomes</p>	<p>Learning to Talk and Listen</p>	<p>TS3.1 Communicates effectively for a range of purposes and with a variety of audiences to express well-developed, well-organised ideas dealing with more challenging topics.</p> <p>TS3.2 Interacts productively and with autonomy in pairs and groups of various sizes and composition, uses effective oral presentation skills and strategies and listens attentively.</p>
<p>Reading outcomes</p>	<p>Learning to Read</p>	<p>RS3.5 Reads independently an extensive range of texts with increasing content demands and responds to themes and issues.</p> <p>RS3.6 Uses a comprehensive range of skills and strategies appropriate to the type of text being read</p>
<p>Writing outcomes</p>	<p>Learning to Write</p>	<p>WS3.9 Produces a wide range of well-structured and well-presented literary and factual texts for a wide variety of purposes and audiences using increasingly challenging topics, ideas, issues and written language features.</p> <p>WS3.10 Uses knowledge of sentence structure, grammar and punctuation to edit own writing.</p>

Pre IncurSION Activities

1

ACTIVITY 1

Brainstorming – Activating prior knowledge

You will need:

Butchers paper

Markers

Instructions:

Students work in pairs to brainstorm words describing what they think the Great Depression in the 1930's was like. Students then share their thoughts with the rest of the class.



Onlookers in Fitzmaurice St, Wagga Wagga,
during 1930's flood, 26 June 1931.
Museum of the Riverina, Wagga Wagga collection.

Pre IncurSION Activities

2

ACTIVITY 2

Exploring the Great Depression - Worksheet

You will need:

Worksheets

Recyclable materials e.g. paper, string, buttons and lids

Instructions:

Students to complete instructions as per worksheet below.



3 year old Betty Portors taken in garden at family home standing with her toy pram, teddy bear and pet kangaroo, circa 1932. Museum of the Riverina, Wagga Wagga collection.

EXPLORING THE GREAT DEPRESSION- WORKSHEET



Question 1

People in the Great Depression had to reduce their spending, reuse worn goods, recycle materials and rethink the way they lived. Today Australians dispose of over 17 million tonnes of waste into landfill each year.

Describe three ways you could reduce your consumption, reuse and recycle?

North Wagga Primary School 1st & 2nd class photograph, circa 1933. Museum of the Riverina, Wagga Wagga collection.

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(iii) _____

Question 2

Between 1929 and 1933 the average wage fell by 19%. For a worker today on an average weekly wage, that would equate to \$238 in lost earnings every week.

a) How would this affect your family today?

b) Describe two ways this would affect your family's spending habits?

(i) _____

(ii) _____

Questions 3

Children in the Great Depression had to make their own fun. They played games such as hopscotch and marbles.

In small groups invent a new game using only recyclable materials such as paper, string, buttons and lids. In the space below include the following information:

- Name of your game
- Set of rules for players
- Recyclable materials needed to play your game

Take turns to present your game to the rest of the class.



School children playing at 'Bryngwran' Coreinbob School, Tarcutta, circa 1929.
Museum of the Riverina, Wagga Wagga collection.

It is important when facilitating drama activities with your students that you spend time preparing their voices, bodies and imaginations through fun and invigorating warm-up exercises. This prepares students to enter the realm of theatre. Examples of warm up exercises include stretching, tongue twisters, humming, yoga, dancing and drama games. Refer to the useful links section of this education kit for warm up ideas.

Post IncurSION Activities

1

ACTIVITY 1

An introduction to Puppetry

Instructions:

1. Movement is the essential attribute of any puppet and movement defines what puppetry is. To begin we need to think about how we move. Start by walking around the space. Now imagine that you are very happy, sad, afraid, confused, old, shy.....How did the way you walk change?
2. Try the exercise again but now focus on not only the way your walk changes but how your breath changes. Do you sigh when you are sad, take short breaths when you are afraid, breath with difficulty when you are old? Breath is very important in puppetry because it creates the illusion of life.
3. Now we are going to develop the hand as a puppet. Place your hand on a flat surface. Concentrate on your breathing. Slowly bring the rise and fall of your breath into a gentle movement of your hand, so that your hand appears to breathe. Your hand is now a puppet.
4. Try breathing as if your hand puppet is asleep, snoring, then starting to stir and yawning it begins to move until the puppet is fully awake. Experiment with different breathing rhythms connected to an emotional or physical state e.g. panicked, shocked, sighing, yawning, relaxed, excited.
5. Explore the boundary between the puppet as a dead object and when it is alive. How much or how little movement is required to animate the puppet?
6. Each of your hands is now a puppet but with very different, distinct 'characters'. Find the different way each hand moves. Does one hand walk energetically on two finger legs whilst the other shuffles slowly like a spider on all five bent fingers? Find a different sound/quality of breath that each puppet has. Make the different characters very defined.
7. Act out a little scenario with your puppets. Maybe one puppet is sleeping and snoring and the other one wakes him up. What happens next? Remember to keep each hand alive all the time, at the same time.

*"Things have a life of their own"
the gypsy proclaimed with a harsh accent.
"It's simply a matter of waking up their souls".*

Gabriel Garcia Marquez,
One Hundred Years of Solitude

Post Incursion Activities

2

ACTIVITY 2

Constructing a puppet from newspaper

You will need:

Lots of old newspapers

Rolls of masking tape

A variety of recycled objects (such as paper cups, plastic containers and cardboard boxes)

N.B. You can also use pens, pencil cases, rubbers and other school paraphernalia

Instructions:

1. Take one sheet of newspaper and roll it up into a tube. Fold the tube 5cm from one end so that it can stand on one foot. At the other end of the tube make another fold 5cm away from the end to make a head. Hold the puppet at the foot fold with one hand and the head fold with the other.

2. Slowly bring your newspaper creature to life. Give it breath. Now think about your puppet's eyes. Where is the puppet looking? Be very specific. The eyes of the puppet establish an essential communication with the audience and let the audience know what the puppet is thinking or feeling.

3. Experiment!

- How does your puppet move/walk?
- How can your puppet express different emotions?
- What voice emerges?
- Can your puppet jump, dance, fly?
- Allow two different objects to meet and interact
- Do they like each other? Are they shy? Afraid? Excited?

4. With the recyclable containers and newspapers create a character puppet. Use tape or glue to add ears, eyes, noses, tails – whatever you need.

Post IncurSION Activities

2

ACTIVITY 2

Constructing a puppet from newspaper *continued...*

5. What sort of personality is suggesting itself through the puppet's form?
6. When the class has finished their puppets allow the little characters to meet and greet in small groups around the room.
7. Try a more formal theatrical structure and include two or three characters meeting at a given location or given situation. Ideas include: Waiting at a bus stop, performing surgery, stealing a valuable diamond, exploring a new planet....*your imagination is the limit!*

These scenes can be staged on a table top. Give students 7-10 minutes to come up with a small scene to show the class. Students should determine who they are (profession), where they are (location) and what they are doing (situation).



Post IncurSION Activities

3

ACTIVITY 3

The Great Riverbank Rally

You will need:

The Great Riverbank Rally image located in the Image Library section of this education kit.

Instructions:

Ask students to sit in a large circle. Show students The Great Riverbank Rally image and discuss what is happening in the photograph. Refer to the caption for assistance. Students and teacher then play the “and then” game.

1. Using one or two sentences the teacher starts the class story by describing an event / action associated with the image e.g. “My father was so angry at the Government because he thought that people who lived in the city were being treated better than we were in the country and then...”
2. The next student in the circle describes what happens next in the story using one or two sentences and finishes with “and then...”
3. Each student repeats this task until the final student in the circle is reached.



Crowds gather at 'The Great Riverbank meeting' at Wagga Wagga, 28 February 1931. Approximately 10,000 people attended. Museum of the Riverina, Wagga Wagga collection.

Post IncurSION Activities

4 ACTIVITY 4 Perform a skit

You will need:

Images located in the Image Library section of this education kit.

Instructions:

Divide students into groups of 3 - 4.

Students choose an image and use this as stimulus material in order to develop a small skit to run for approximately 2 minutes.

Before starting the activity discuss with students possible scenarios for each photograph and how students could develop a short skit e.g. they could use dance, song (e.g. rap song), mime etc.

Student groups then perform their skit to the rest of the class. After each performance discuss with the class what was happening during the skit and relate back to the Great Depression era in the Riverina.

5 ACTIVITY 5 The Great Verandah - Worksheet

You will need:

Worksheets

A4 paper (Question 4)

Instructions:

Students to complete instructions as per worksheet below.

THE GREAT VERANDAH - WORKSHEET

Question 1

a. What was Verandah's blanket called?

b. What was sort of material is it made out of?

Question 2

Name 3 ways our day-to-day life in 2011 is different to life in 1931?

Hint: Think about transport, household duties and school

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(iii) _____



Question 3

Draw your favourite scene from the performance of "The Great Verandah".

Question 4

Think about how much has changed since the Great Depression. Back in the 1930's video games, the internet and mobile phones were unheard of. Write a letter to Verandah, in this letter include information about how you communicate with others (e.g. internet, mobile phone) and how you entertain yourself (e.g. sport, music, video games, television and movies)



Links, Artist Info, Evaluation

Useful links

Skint! Making do in the Great Depression

http://www.hht.net.au/whats_on/past_exhibitions/mos/skint_making_do_in_the_great_depression

The Great Depression

<http://www.cultureandrecreation.gov.au/articles/greatdepression/>

<http://resources.mhs.vic.edu.au/thursdayschild/depression.htm>

Drama warm up activities

<http://www.primaryresources.co.uk/pshe/pdfs/dramawarmups.pdf>

<http://wilderdom.com/games/icebreakers.html>

https://www.blake.com.au/v/vspfiles/downloadables/D1_Drama_Activities.pdf

Introducing Virginia Anderson - Performance Artist and Writer

Virginia has had 14 years professional acting experience, working with many diverse theatre companies within Australia. She was awarded the 1992 Canberra Repertory Scholarship and a Professional Development Grant to continue her studies at the Ecole de Mime Corporel Dramatique de Paris in France in 1993. She has acted, directed and written performances for Questacon, Floriade, Old Parliament House and the National Theatre Festival in Canberra, as well as being an actor-in-residence for the National Playwright's Festival. In 1997 Virginia was awarded the Canberra Times Critics' Circle Award.

Evaluation

We value your feedback and would very much appreciate if you would fill in an evaluation form to be provided by Virginia at the conclusion of the performance.

Image Library



'The Great Riverbank meeting', at Wagga Wagga, February 1931. Here citizens of the Riverina protested against the "city centric" government of the time for neglecting people in regional areas during the Great Depression. They demanded the same rights and access to basic resources as their fellow city dwellers. Approximately 10,000 people attended. N.B. St Michaels Cathedral in background. Museum of the Riverina, Wagga Wagga collection.



Wagga Wagga in flood, circa 1930's. Museum of the Riverina, Wagga Wagga collection.



Employees of Willis Bricks (Wagga) Ltd., Chaston Street, Wagga Wagga, circa 1930's. Museum of the Riverina, Wagga Wagga collection.



Gissing children, corner Trail and Gurwood Streets, Wagga Wagga, circa 1930's.
Reproduced with kind permission from the Gissing family private collection.



Gissing children, corner Trail and Gurwood Streets, Wagga Wagga, circa 1930's.
Reproduced with kind permission from the Gissing family private collection.



Museum of the Riverina is assisted by the NSW Government through Arts NSW



www.wagga.nsw.gov.au/museum