

THE TURN OF THE SCREW

BENJAMIN BRITTEN

VISUAL ARTS: Costume Design

Students will

- Create original artwork from a visual stimuli
- Use artistic expression to create costume designs for characters

Copies for Each Student: *The Turn of the Screw* Synopsis, “The Characters”

Copies the Teacher: *The Turn of the Screw* Synopsis, “The Characters” and “Costumes Designs and Sketches”

Getting Ready:

Decide which section(s) of the lesson you wish your group to complete.

Gather materials:

- Drawing paper
- Rulers
- Pencils
- Drawing materials (map pencils, markers or colors)

Instructional Time: One 45-minute class period

Introduction

Have the students read *The Turn of the Screw* Synopsis and “The Characters”. Discuss each character’s description and show the students the sample “Costumes Designs and Sketches” used for the characters from different versions of this popular work.

Guided Practice:

As a class, ask students to list the differences that can be seen in the sample costumes compared to today’s society. Then, ask students to think about the time we live and how the characters would be dressed in the 21st century.

Independent Practice:

Have each student choose a character from the opera. The student will create a modern-day costume design for their character. Depending on your grade level, the ability of your students, and time constraints, you may choose how much time the students will have to work on their projects. You may also want to show the students the musical excerpts listed on “The Characters” sheet.

If time allows: Have the students create a 3D version of their character in modern dress.

Evaluation:

- Did the students discuss each character?
- Were the students able to list the differences between the costumes used for the characters from different versions of this popular work?
- Were the students able to create modern-day costume design for their chosen character?
- If time allowed, were the students able to create a 3D version of their character?

TEKS – Arts

Middle School

§117.202 c. 1 Foundations: observation and perception. The student develops and expands visual literacy skills using critical thinking, imagination, and the senses to observe and explore the world by learning about, understanding, and applying the elements of art, principles of design, and expressive qualities. The student uses what the student sees, knows, and has experienced as sources for examining, understanding, and creating original artworks. The student is expected to: (A) identify and illustrate concepts from direct observation, original sources, personal experiences, and communities such as family, school, cultural, local, regional, national, and international; (B) understand and apply the elements of art, including line, shape, color, texture, form, space, and value, as the fundamentals of art in personal artworks using art vocabulary appropriately; (C) understand and apply the principles of design, including emphasis, repetition/pattern, movement/rhythm, contrast/variety, balance, proportion, and unity, in personal artworks using art vocabulary appropriately; and (D) discuss the expressive properties of artworks such as appropriation, meaning, narrative, message, and symbol using art vocabulary accurately.

§117.202 c. 2 Creative expressions. The student communicates ideas through original artworks using a variety of media with appropriate skills. The student expresses thoughts and ideas creatively while challenging the imagination, fostering reflective thinking, and developing disciplined effort and progressive problem-solving skills. The student is expected to: (A) create original artworks based on direct observations, original sources, personal experiences, and the community; (B) apply the art-making process to solve problems and generate design solutions; and (C) produce artworks, including drawings, paintings, prints, sculptures/modeled forms, ceramics, fiber art, photographic imagery, and digital art and media, using a variety of materials.

§117.202 c. 4 Critical evaluation and response. The student responds to and analyzes artworks of self and others, contributing to the development of the lifelong skills of making informed judgments and reasoned evaluations. The student is expected to: (A) create written or oral responses to artwork using appropriate art vocabulary; (B) analyze original artworks using a method of critique such as describing the artwork, analyzing the way it is organized, interpreting the artist's intention, and evaluating the success of the artwork; (E) understand and demonstrate proper exhibition etiquette.

High School

§117.302. c 1 Foundations: observation and perception. The student develops and expands visual literacy skills using critical thinking, imagination, and the senses to observe and explore the world by learning about, understanding, and applying the elements of art, principles of design, and expressive qualities. The student uses what the student sees, knows, and has experienced as sources for examining, understanding, and creating original artwork. The student is expected to: (A) consider concepts and ideas from direct observation, original sources, experiences, and imagination for original artwork; (B) identify and understand the elements of art, including line, shape, color, texture, form, space, and value, as the fundamentals of art in personal artwork;

(2) Creative expression. The student communicates ideas through original artwork using a variety of media with appropriate skills. The student expresses thoughts and ideas creatively while challenging the imagination, fostering reflective thinking, and developing disciplined effort and progressive problem-solving skills. The student is expected to: (A) use visual solutions to create original artwork by problem solving through direct observation, original sources, experiences, narrations, and imagination; (D) create original artwork to communicate thoughts, feelings, ideas, or impressions; (E) collaborate to create original works of art; and (F) demonstrate effective use of art media and tools in drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, fiber art, design, and digital art and media.

(4) Critical evaluation and response. The student responds to and analyzes the artworks of self and others, contributing to the development of the lifelong skills of making informed judgments and reasoned evaluations. The student is expected to: (B) evaluate and analyze artwork using a verbal or written method of critique such as describing the artwork, analyzing the way it is organized, interpreting the artist's intention, and evaluating the success of the artwork; (C) construct a physical or electronic portfolio by evaluating and analyzing personal original artwork to provide evidence of learning; and (D) select and analyze original artwork, portfolios, and exhibitions to form precise conclusions about formal qualities, historical and cultural contexts, intentions, and meanings.

Correlates:

Gardner's Intelligences: Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical

Bloom's Taxonomy: Understand, Analyze, Apply, Evaluate

Online Resources

<http://christinasmith.com.au/folio/index.php?gallery=TURN%20OF%20THE%20SCREW&image=flora-miles-costumes.jpg>

<http://merrickcostume.blogspot.com/2008/08/master-harold-and-boys.html>

<http://www.jeromekaplan.com/show/the-turn-of-the-screw.slideshow/10>

<http://www.paularies.com/turn-of-the-screw.html>

The Turn of the Screw

Synopsis

Setting: Bly, an English country-house

PROLOGUE

The Prologue introduces ‘a curious story, written in faded ink’, the personal account of a young governess, sent to instruct a boy and a girl in the country, long ago...

ACT ONE

On her journey to Bly, the Governess ponders her position’s uncertainties: the orphaned children, the old housekeeper, and her instructions not to contact her charges’ only relative.

The children – Miles and Flora – together with the housekeeper, Mrs. Grose, welcome the Governess; Mrs. Grose assures her they are clever and good. The Governess feels at home. When she receives a letter from Miles’s school dismissing him as ‘an injury to his friends’, Mrs. Grose’s protestations and the sight of the children playing reassure her; she decides to ignore it.

Enjoying a warm summer evening in the grounds, the Governess sees a figure on the tower whom she at first imagines to be the children’s relative. But it is not. She suspects it may be a madman or intruder. As the children are playing indoors, the Governess sees the man again, gazing in at the window. Mrs. Grose identifies him as Quint, the master’s former valet and Miles’s companion, who ‘made free’ with the Governess’s predecessor, Miss Jessel. Both are now dead. Horror-struck, the Governess fears that he has come back for Miles, and swears to protect the children. Mrs. Grose offers her support.

During the children’s lesson, Miles sings a strange song; he asks the Governess if she likes it. Sitting by the lake with Flora, the Governess sees her staring at Miss Jessel, who has appeared on the other side. Sending Flora away, the Governess believes that both children are lost.

At night in the garden, Quint calls to Miles, and Miss Jessel to Flora. The Governess comes upon them as the ghosts disappear, and asks Miles what he is doing. ‘You see, I am bad,’ he answers.

ACT TWO

Quint and Jessel converse, she accusing him of betrayal, he speaking of the friend he seeks. The Governess admits that she is lost in a labyrinth.

In the churchyard, the children emulate choirboys. The Governess tells Mrs. Grose that they are complicit with Quint and Jessel. She has a disconcerting conversation with Miles and thinks he is challenging her to act. In the schoolroom, the Governess finds Miss Jessel, who says to her that she cannot rest. She writes a letter to her employer telling him what has occurred.

In Miles’s bedroom, she tells him that she has written to his guardian. Quint calls to him. The candle goes out; Miles says that it was he who extinguished it. Quint’s voice is heard encouraging Miles to retrieve the letter. He complies.

During Miles's piano practice, the Governess realizes that Flora has slipped away – to meet, she suspects, Miss Jessel. She and Mrs. Grose go in search of her.

At the lake, the Governess accuses Flora of seeing Miss Jessel, who remains invisible to Mrs. Grose. Flora denies it, and Mrs. Grose leads her away. The Governess fears she has lost the housekeeper's support.

After a horrendous night with Flora, Mrs. Grose prepares to remove her; she also informs the Governess that Miles has stolen the letter.

The Governess confronts Miles. Quint – at first unseen, then visible – warns him to remain silent. She forces Miles to name who made him take the letter. Miles blurts out 'Peter Quint, you devil!' collapsing in the Governess's arms. Realizing he is dead, she sings the strange song he once sang to her.

Synopsis Courtesy of © Glyndebourne Productions Ltd

The Turn of the Screw

The Characters

Prologue: (tenor) Sets the stage for the story at the beginning of the opera. The same singer often plays Peter Quint later in the opera.

Governess: (soprano) Travels to Bly house to care for two children, Miles and Flora. She is hired by their uncle with strict instructions not to contact him or to abandon the children. After getting to know the children, she senses something is amiss in the house. She sees the figures of a man and a woman who turn out to be the ghosts of former Bly house employees lurking around the property. The Governess vows to do all she can to protect the children.

Miles: (treble) A young boy who lives at Bly house. He has been expelled from school for reasons unknown, though he appears at first to be a well-mannered, kind child. Miles is haunted by the ghost of Peter Quint, his Uncle's former valet who had a close relationship with the boy.

Flora: (soprano) Mile's sister, a young girl who lives at Bly house. She too, appears to be a sweet child at first, but begins acting out as the Governess suspects that like Miles, Flora is also haunted by the ghost of her former governess, Miss Jessel.

Mrs. Grose: (soprano) The housekeeper at Bly house. She works with the Governess to care for the children, though she remains unsure of the Governess' theory that the children are haunted by the ghosts of Peter Quint and Miss Jessel.

Miss Jessel: (soprano) The children's former governess who had a close relationship with Peter Quint. Her ghost haunts Bly house.

Peter Quint: (tenor) The former valet of Bly house. His ghost haunts Bly house, and in particular, the child Miles, with whom he had a close relationship before his death.

Links to Musical Excerpts:

Act 1 Scene 4: The Tower – Stephanie Varnerin, Armel Opera Festival Szeged, 2013.

The Governess goes for a walk around the grounds of Bly house and spots the figure of a man on top of a tower.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PYPfaW7lq4U>

“Malo” – Thomas Parfitt & Miah Persson, Glyndebourne, 2011.

Miles sings the Malo Malo song to the Governess.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VRB8lklo3c>

Excerpts – LA Opera, 2011.

Excerpts from the opera.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsZo399Lluw>

The Turn of the Screw
Costumes Designs and Sketches

Costume design by Christina Smith



The Turn of the Screw

Costume design by Micha Merrick



Costume design by Jerome Kaplan



The Turn of the Screw

Costume design by Paula Ries

