

Words In The News

Teacher's pack

Lesson plan and student worksheets
with answers

Royal Shakespeare
Company's new theatre
– 9 August 2006



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Level: Intermediate and above

Topic: New theatre for Royal Shakespeare Company

Language: Vocabulary of news report

Aims: Reading skills – Understanding a short news report
Language skills – Practising the vocabulary of theatre and film
Speaking skills – Practising speaking fluency

Materials: Worksheet 1 – Comprehension questions
Worksheet 2 – Vocabulary matching task
Worksheet 3 – Grammar/language focus – theatre and film vocabulary
News story – Available online at:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/newsenglish/witn/2006/08/060809_theatre.shtml

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LESSON STAGES

A Stimulate student interest in text

Generate interest about today's topic by asking students to call out names of any Shakespearean plays they know. Write their suggestions on the board. You will use these suggestions later in the lesson.

(possible answers):

Romeo and Juliet
Macbeth
King Lear
Midsummer night's Dream

B Pre-teach essential vocabulary

Elicit/present key vocabulary that students need either to understand the key points in the text or to understand and/or answer any questions that you'll set them later in the lesson. The vocabulary is from Words in the News (so you can elicit the vocabulary by using the explanations provided online or below).

You could either pre-teach the vocabulary at this stage of the lesson or you could use the vocabulary building activity from further down in this lesson plan. Have students working in small groups together and ask them to try to match the vocabulary with the definitions. Encourage them to work with the other groups to pool their knowledge.

When they have done as much as they can, if they have dictionaries, ask them to look up the words to check their answers and to find out the definitions of any words they were not sure of. If they don't have dictionaries, check their answers and give them help with any words they don't know.

Whichever method you use to elicit/present the vocabulary, you should then model it (say it clearly, highlighting the word stress) and get them to repeat the words after you.

marathon

long-running, going on for a long time

to inaugurate

to start something new, usually with a ceremony

long-term temporary

even though the building isn't permanent, it's still supposed to serve for a long time

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landmark

important

a shell

a building, structure

a proscenium arch

the shape of the stage of an ancient theatre

a thrust stage

a stage extending into the audience

public subsidy

money from government funds

alienating

unfriendly, making you feel isolated

its roots may lie in the Renaissance

it may originate from a period in European history over 400 years ago

C Written record of vocabulary

Write the words on the board, eliciting spelling as you write. Elicit and show the word stress of each item and word class, if appropriate. Give students some time to copy your boardwork into their notebooks

You can listen to how the words are pronounced by going to this day's Words in the News page and clicking on the link **Listen to the words**:

Boardwork:

marathon (adj)

to inaugurate

long-term temporary

landmark (adj)

a shel

a proscenium arch

a thrust stage

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public subsidy

alienating (adj)

its roots may lie in the Renaissance

D Set a scanning question.

Tell the students they are going to read a text about a new theatre. Give them a time limit (1 - 2 minutes) to read the text quickly to find the answer to the question on the board.

It's not important that the students understand every word of the text at this stage. The point of this task is to get them interested in the text and to read it quickly once.

Boardwork

How many of our plays are mentioned in the text?

Romeo and Juliet
Macbeth
King Lear
Midsummer night's Dream

E Check answers

Elicit students' answers and highlight the correct answer on the board (paragraph 1 mentions 'Henry the Sixth').

F Set specific information questions

Hand out worksheet 1 or use the online quiz. Students complete the worksheet to help them understand the text in more detail. Give them a time limit (5 - 6 minutes) to read the text in more detail and to answer the questions.

G Check answers

Elicit True or False answers. Direct attention to a particular paragraph if an answer is wrong to try to elicit the correct answer (see worksheet 1 and answer key).

H Vocabulary consolidation/building

Before the lesson, make enough copies of worksheet 2 so that there is 1 worksheet for every 4 – 5 students. Cut up the vocabulary and explanations.

In class tell students to match the correct word with the right definition.

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I Check answers

Elicit answers. If an answer is wrong, ask other students to try to elicit the correct answer.

J Language focus

Hand out worksheet 3 which focuses on theatre and film vocabulary. Ask students to complete the table by putting the words into the correct verb columns.

K Check answers

If an answer is wrong, ask other students to try to elicit the correct answer (see worksheet 3 and answer key).

L Follow-up activity: Speaking

Spilt the class into small groups of 3 or 4 students. Tell each student to make a secret note of 4 or 5 plays or films they've either seen recently or really liked.

Each person in the group takes it in turn to describe some of the details of one of their films, without saying the name of the film. For example, 'It's a play, a musical (it's also a film). It's a love story. It's based on a Shakespeare play. It's a love story about a girl and a boy from two rival families... (West Side Story).

The rest of the group try and guess the film or play title. When a student calls out the correct title, s/he gets a point and the next student then describes her/his film or play. The winner is the student with the most points at the end.

While they are speaking, move around the room listening to them unobtrusively. Make a note of any errors you hear.

Circulate, while they are working, giving help with grammar and spelling, if necessary and unobtrusively making notes of any errors you hear.

M Feedback

Give praise for content (e.g. students who were good at describing their films or plays)

Give praise for correct English you heard. Give feedback on incorrect language you heard.

You could write some example phrases or sentences on the board and elicit from students which ones are correct and which ones are wrong and why.

WORKSHEET 1

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Are the following sentences true or false?

- | | | |
|----|--|-----|
| 1. | The reviewers will be watching one of Shakespeare's shortest plays – Henry the Sixth. | T/F |
| 2. | The play will be the first one to be performed in the Royal Shakespeare Company's new theatre. | T/F |
| 3. | The Courtyard will be used as the Royal Shakespeare Company's theatre for a short time until its new theatre is ready. | T/F |
| 4. | Critics of Elisabeth Scott say that the 1932 theatre she designed didn't look very impressive. | T/F |
| 5. | The New Courtyard theatre has a different kind of stage, with the audience in front and on the sides of stage, rather than only in front of the stage. | T/F |
| 6. | Most people think traditional stages help audiences get much closer to the actors and the action on the stage. | T/F |

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WORKSHEET 2

VOCABULARY MATCHING TASK

Match these words and phrases to their definitions

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. marathon | A. to start something new, usually with a ceremony |
| 2. to inaugurate | B. the shape of the stage of an ancient theatre |
| 3. long-term temporary | C. important |
| 4. landmark | D. it may originate from a period in European history over 400 years ago |
| 5. a shell | E. a building, structure |
| 6. a proscenium arch | F. long-running, going on for a long time |
| 7. a thrust stage | G. money from government funds |
| 8. public subsidy | H. even though the building isn't permanent, it's still supposed to serve for a long time |
| 9. alienating | I. a stage extending into the audience |
| 10. its roots may lie in the Renaissance | J. unfriendly, making you feel isolated |

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.

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WORKSHEET 3

LANGUAGE FOCUS – Theatre Vocabulary

The words below are associated with film and theatre (some are from today's text). Some of the words can be used about films, some only about theatre and some others can be used to when talking or writing about both film and theatre. Put the words into the correct category, and add three more words of your own. The first one has been done for you:

a critic	a premier	a stage	be on location	a theatre
the rushes	an audience	a play	the stalls	a screening
a soundtrack	the circle	a cartoon	a trailer	the gallery

Film	Theatre	Both film and theatre
1.	1.	1. a critic
2.	2.	2
3	3.	3.
4.	4.	
5.	5.	
6.	6.	

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ANSWER KEY

WORKSHEET 1

1. False – Paragraph 1 says 'As the critics settle down to a marathon premiere of Shakespeare's three-part Henry the Sixth'.
2. True – Paragraph 1 says 'the play is inaugurating the Royal Shakespeare Company's new home.'
3. False – Paragraph 1 say 'The Courtyard is a temporary structure but long-term temporary'.
4. True – Paragraph 2 says 'It's been said she designed something more like a plain suburban cinema than a landmark theatre.'
5. True – Paragraph 3 says 'Gone the proscenium arch ... to be replaced by a thrust stage - the audience sitting on three sides.'
6. False – Paragraph 4 says – 'Proscenium arch theatres are now held to be alienating.'

WORKSHEET 2

- | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 6. | 7. | 8. | 9. | 10. |
| F | A | H | C | E | B | I | G | J | D |

WORKSHEET 3

Film	Theatre	Both film and theatre
1. be on location	1. a stage	1. a critic
2. the rushes	2. a theatre	2. a premier
3. a screening	3. a play	3. an audience
4. a soundtrack	4. the stalls	
5. a cartoon	5. the circle	
6. a trailer	6. the gallery	