

The Soldier's Tale Music/Drama Unit (Years 5-8)

Introduction

This was one of my ways of introducing classes to the music of Stravinsky. The class developed the play from the story of Stravinsky's drama, after first imagining stories inspired by some Soldier's Tale props and tidbits of information. The story was divided into small scenes, with small groups of students being responsible for different scenes. They worked on them individually, and then as a class to work out how best to link them together. The file with the script seems to have vanished, but I did have a printed version and have scanned it into this post. The asterisks in the script indicate where the sound operator needed to play a track from the CD. They selected their own extracts for the dances.

Content	Possible Strategies	Resources
Creative Writing/Drama	★ Students write and act out stories they write based on given stimuli: Igor + picture of him; Soldier; Devil; violin. Stravinsky's Soldier's Tale as Background	Pic of Igor CD of Soldier's tale
Learning about Music	★ Stravinsky Code	Stravinsky Code
Creative music-making - composing and performing	★ In groups or individually - compose own Soldier/Devil music	Classroom percussion instruments
Music/ Drama performance	★ Tell them real story of the Soldier's Tale - Listen to recording ★ Practice Play adapted from original, particularly change-overs from group to group ★ Performance of Play with props to an audience	Adapted play Props for play Compilation Tape of Stravinsky music for play
Performance Evaluation	★ Class evaluation of own performance and that of other groups. Note potential improvements for next time	Evaluation sheets
Listening/Music Appreciation	★ Listening Activity with Devil music	Listening Tape and Activity Sheets
Movement/ Dance	★ Create Princess and Devil's dances to go with Stravinsky's music	Soldier's Tale CD or tape

The Soldier's Tale by Igor Stravinsky

Group 1

Joseph marches home in time with music
Butterfly flutters by
Joseph rests by the stream

Joseph: It's great to be on holiday from the army

Joseph looks through the things in his bag
He pulls out his rifle.
He pulls out a photograph of his girlfriend

Joseph: Ah yes... the photo of my sweetheart waiting for me back home

He pulls out his violin and begins to play in time with music

The butterfly returns pursued by the devil disguised as a man with a butterfly net

Devil: I'll give you this book in exchange for your violin

Joseph: OK

Group 2

Devil: Come back to my house and teach me the violin

Joseph: I can't stay for long, I'm on my way home, but I will come. I'll teach you the violin if you teach me how to use the book

The Devil and Joseph go to the Devil's house in a coach pulled by horses. They teach each other how to use the book and the violin. Background Music.

Joseph sets off on his way home in time with music

Group 3

Joseph marches home in time with music

Joseph: Ah, here I am back in my home town

Townswoman: Oh no - it's a ghost. She faints.

Other people: She's right...it is a ghost.

They all run off.

Joseph: Why do they all think I'm a ghost...even my girlfriend pretends not to know me

Joseph looks miserable

Group 4

Joseph is sitting in his miserable position when the Devil comes along

Devil: *Do you know who I am? I am the Devil. You weren't in my house for three days, but for three years. Your family and friends thought you were dead.*

Joseph: *What will I do now? I have no family, I can't stay in my home town. I don't even have my violin to cheer me up*

Devil: *Why don't you use the book?*

Joseph reads the book, then becomes an umbrella merchant.

The Devil walks by one day

Devil: *How are you going with the book?*

Joseph: *I've become an umbrella merchant, and have made heaps of money. But what is money without friends and family to share it with?*

Joseph counts his money, then looks miserable again. The Devil moves to the side

Group 5

Along comes a man from another town.

Man: *Hello there. Why are you looking so miserable? I'll tell you something to cheer you up. The Princess is lying in her bed and won't get up. The King has said that anyone who can persuade her to get up will be able to marry her. This is your big chance, young man.*

Joseph: *I could make the princess feel better. If only I had my violin.*

Joseph goes over to the devil.

Joseph: *Please give me back my violin for one day.*

Devil: *Your violin? I will lend it to you, but I will return in one day to reclaim MY violin*

Group 6

The Princess is lying in her bed. Joseph is there with his violin. He begins to play. The Princess slowly gets out of bed, and begins to dance.



Group 1 Dance

Group 2 Dance

Group 3 Dance

Joseph and the Princess are married.

Group 7

The devil returns. He takes Joseph aside

Devil: *I've come to claim my violin. Hand it over.*

Joseph: *Let me play it one last time. I'll play a dance for you.*

Joseph plays the Devil's Dance. The Devil become exhausted

Devil: *Stop playing, I can't dance any more*

Joseph: *I will stop if you let me keep the violin*

The Devil nods. Joseph stops and the devil falls exhausted to the floor.

Devil: *OK, you can keep the violin, but only if you remain in the kingdom of your new princess. If you ever return to your home town, then I will take back the violin.*

The Devil leaves. Joseph goes to sit with his new princess

Group 8

Joseph and the princess are sitting in their palace.

Princess: *Joseph, we have been married for several months now. You know all about my family and live here with all of us. I know a lot about your family - you talk about them all the time. Let's go and visit your family in your home town.*

Joseph: *No, my princess, we cannot.*

Princess: *Please let us go there.*

Joseph: *No....we cannot go there.*

Princess: *Joseph: If you truly loved me, you would let me meet your family*

Joseph: *(to the audience) What harm can it do? The Devil cannot remember me after all this time. (to the Princess) Ok, my princess, we will go.*

Joseph and the princess set off in time with the music.

The Devil appears and rubs his hands and gives a wicked laugh.