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Study Guide



Apples & Oranges

A Play by Chris Bullough

Study Guide written by Jennifer Tupper



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Preparing the Students

Theatre Etiquette

Before the Performance

Some students have never attended a theatrical performance before, and may need some guidance as to what standards of behaviour apply. Others may need a refresher.

The important point to emphasize is that when they are watching the play they are in a partnership. They contribute as much as to the enjoyment and interest of the performance as the performers do. The performers appreciate audience response. Laughter, sighs, thoughtful silence, applause all let us know we're reaching you. The unspoken back-and-forth communication of thought and feeling is what theatre is all about.

Before the play, brainstorm with your class what they would appreciate themselves if they were performing in front of a large audience. Make a list of do's and don'ts in class and agree to try to be the highest quality audience possible during the performance.

In-class preparation is very important! Ask any actor – if the students are thinking about the issues when they walk into the auditorium, they are the most intelligent, responsive, engaged audiences a performer can wish for. You can help prepare your students to really benefit from what the play has to offer.

In the Performance Space

Sound carries: speaking aloud, gum chewing, moving about is not only disturbing for the other audience members, it distracts the performers. They can see and hear you from the stage. They rely on your focus, attention and respect to what they do best.

- **There is no photographing or recording permitted**
- **Please turn off and put away your cell phones, pagers, music players and headphones (iPods, MP3 players). Please remember to turn off watch alarms as well.**
- **Do not leave your seat until the play is over.**
- **In the case of an emergency, please leave as quietly as possible. If you plan to return, please wait for a teacher to re-seat you.**

Should any students be continuously disruptive, the Stage Manager may ask that they be removed from the audience. They may be refused the privilege of attending other Concrete Theatre performances.

Post Performance Wrap-up

Like a good meal, theatre should be digested. Create a time and a comfortable environment to review the production with your class. Follow up on the issues raised in the pre-show prep. Take advantage of the activities and discussion points suggested in the study guide. Create your own follow-up.

Teachers- We'd Love to Hear From You!

Invite your students to describe, written or graphically, what the play made them think about, and how it made them feel. Interview each other and send us letters, e-mails and drawings of your in-class activities.

At the back of this Study Guide there is a Feedback Form for teachers to fill out. Please take a few minutes to comment on the performance and let us know how the experience was for your students. We trust you will find *Smokescreen* a moving and thought-provoking theatrical experience.

Caroline Howarth
Mieko Ouchi
Artistic Co-Directors

Irene Kunda
Booking Coordinator

Debbie Giesbrecht
General Manager

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The Players

Director: Mieko Ouchi
Set Designer: David Fraser
Costumes and Props: Lisa Hancharek

The Cast: Patricia Darbasie
Julie Golosky
Sara Vickruck
Scott Shpeley

Stage Manager: Lester Lee
Sound Technician: Josiah Hiemstra

About the Playwright

Chris Bullough

Chris Bullough is an Edmonton based actor and Playwright. Born in Thunder Bay and raised in Fort McMurray, Chris moved to Edmonton in 1995 to attend the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Acting) program at the U of A. Since graduating in 1998, Chris has become a familiar face on the theatre scene working with many professional and independent companies in Edmonton and across Western Canada, including: Workshop West Theatre, Theatre Calgary and Globe Theatre in Regina. Chris's play's (all co-written with Jared Matsunaga-Turnbull) have been produced by Ground Zero Theatre, Theatre Network and the Edmonton Fringe Festival. Their most recent collaboration *Penelope Vs. The Aliens!* was produced at the Citadel Theatre in 2007 and by Quest Theatre in 2008. Chris was recently commissioned by Concrete Theatre to expand his short play *Apples and Oranges* to a one act play suitable for touring to young audiences.

About the Director

Mieko Ouchi

Actor, writer, director and filmmaker, Mieko Ouchi received her professional training through the University of Alberta BFA Acting Program. Theatre work includes roles in plays at the Citadel Theatre, Workshop West Theatre, Northern Light Theatre, Concrete Theatre, Alberta Theatre Projects, Lunchbox, Persephone Theatre, Prairie Theatre Exchange, The Globe, The Tarragon and the National Arts Centre. Film/television work includes the series regular role of Nori Sato in Global TV's new series *The Guard* and roles in the series pilot *The Orange Seed Myth and Other Lies Mothers Tell* (1998 AMPIA nomination for Lead Performance Female), *Fear Itself*, *A People's History of Canada*, *Trouser Accidents*, *For The Love of A Child*, *Two*, *Silent Cradle* and the lead in Anne Wheeler's *The War Between Us* (Atlantis/CBC). She has written and directed the award-winning documentary *Minor Keys* (NFB/CBC's The Nature of Things), *Shepherd's Pie and Sushi* (NFB), as well as the multi award-winning shorts *Assembly*, *Paper Cut*, *By This Parting* and *Samurai Swing*. Mieko's first full-length play as a playwright *The Red Priest (Eight Ways To Say Goodbye)* was a finalist for both the Governor General's Award for Drama and won the Canadian Authors Association Carol Bolt Prize for Drama in 2005. Her second play *The Blue Light*, has enjoyed productions across the country and has been translated into French, Japanese and Russian. A Co-Founder and current Artistic Co-Director of Concrete Theatre, Mieko has directed award winning productions of *Nami Namersson*, *The Viking Who Liked To Name Things*, *The Incredible Adventures of Mary Jane Mosquito*, *Are We There Yet?*, *The Plum Tree* and *Naomi's Road* for Concrete. In 2003, Mieko received the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal for her contribution to the arts community in the City of Edmonton.

About Concrete Theatre

Concrete Theatre is an award-winning professional theatre company committed to creating, developing and producing artistically excellent and culturally diverse Theatre for Young Audiences that explores issues relevant to the lives of young people and their families. Concrete Theatre is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT) and engages, under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement, professional artists who are members of the Canadian Actors' Equity Association. Concrete Theatre is a non-profit organization and a registered charity.

About the author of this study guide

Jennifer Tupper is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Regina where she works with pre-service and in-service teachers in the areas of social studies and curriculum. Before teaching at the university level, Jennifer taught students in the k-12 system in Edmonton. She has been involved in curriculum development projects in both Alberta and Saskatchewan.

A note from the playwright

Apples and Oranges was born out of Concrete Theatre's *Sprouts* Festival in 2004. Up until that point I had written many skits, monologues and a one act play with my friend Jared Matsunaga-Turnbull. *Sprouts* offered the perfect environment for me to explore my Irish roots and to venture into the world of playwrighting on my own.

My Grandfather on my Mothers' side immigrated to Canada from Northern Ireland in the early 20th century. He was a member of The Orange Institution, more commonly known as the Orange Order or the Orange Lodge, a Protestant fraternal organization with a bloody history and a reputation for inciting hatred against Catholics and people of other religious denominations.

My Grandfather died when I was 9 but in the short time that I knew him I grew to love him very much. I remember him as a kind and loving man, tender and full of life even during the final months of his bout with cancer which eventually took his life. The thought of my Grandfather being associated with a group that was intolerant of people with different beliefs was hard to reconcile.

I am not an expert in Irish history and I don't pretend to understand it or the religious/political complexities that followed my Grandfather and his contemporaries to Canada. But I am interested in raising some basic questions to generate discussion - How can people who are so loving condone hatred? Where does that come from? How can it be stopped?

It was important to me that the play be as entertaining as it was thought provoking. As a child, I enjoyed reading Dr. Seuss and as I matured, I came to appreciate the simple yet profound messages seamlessly woven into his silly, and highly enjoyable dialogue and narratives. This style, along with elements from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and my coming to terms with my Grandfather's affiliation supplied the inspiration for my story.

In 2005 I was commissioned by Concrete Theatre to expand the 10 minute version of *Apples and Oranges* I had developed for the *Sprouts* Festival into a 45 minute play suitable for touring to elementary schools.

Play Overview

This play is about difference, fear, misunderstanding, human nature and most importantly, acceptance. It is set in a land inhabited by Papples, a group of people who have much in common, including their reverence for apples. We first meet the Papples at their annual Apple Harvest Festival in the midst of fun and festivities. The festival is in celebration of the apple and the person credited with bringing them the apple, Johnny Apple Seed. It is here that we first meet Connor, a young Papple and the main character in the play. As the Papples dance, Connor spies a young girl and longs to dance with her. Their eyes meet, they dance, and then they kiss. Connor, so overcome by the power of his emotions, collapses, and when he comes to, the girl is gone and he is left holding an orange. The crowd becomes hysterical at the sight of the orange, fearing the worst from it. Once the mayor disposes of the orange, the crowd turns their concern to Connor, wondering if he is alright having had contact with the object of their fear. In his efforts to make sense of the situation, Connor learns from the mayor that the orange comes from the Orange People, the sworn enemies of the Papples. It seems that the Papples are extremely fearful of the Orange People, so much so that they have almost mythologized the Orange People, embellishing the ways they describe them to one another and to Connor. Connor has difficulty with the descriptions and wonders how the Papples know what they do about the Orange People if the two groups do not have contact. He is told it is common sense. Connor determines to find the truth out for himself and departs for the other side of the island where the Orange People live. The Papples decide to prepare for war.

Connor arrives in Orange Land and finds that the Orange People are also in the midst of a festival, a celebration of oranges. He spots the girl he kissed earlier and approaches her. She also sees him, but rather than moving to kiss Connor again, she puts him in a headlock, screams for help and waits for the Orange People to come running. As she waits she talks to Connor, and it becomes clear that she has many misunderstandings about Papples. She also touches an Apple that Connor has in his pocket and faints straight away. Connor is certain he has killed her because he cannot seem to revive her. He hears the Orange People approaching and quickly runs back to his side of the Isle where he finds the Papples preparing for war.

Because Connor believes he has killed the young girl, he seeks out the Papple Mayor and confesses his crime. He also tells the mayor that the Orange People are not monsters at all, but human beings just like the Papples. The mayor dismisses these claims as nonsense and continues to prepare for a fight. Because no one will listen to him, Connor runs back to Orange Land to warn the Orange People that they are about to be attacked by the Papples. The Papples are in hot pursuit and Connor is forced to hide in the bushes where he once again encounters the young girl, who he learns is named Ceili. Through talking with each other, Connor and Ceili learn that they are not so different after all. Meanwhile, the Orange People are in search of Connor and the Papples in search of Ceili. It is the Papple Mayor who finds the two young people first and believes that he is about to save Connor from Ceili. Connor tries to stop the Mayor from harming Ceili and the Mayor attempts to convince Connor that he has been

bewitched by the young lady. When the Mayor of Orange Land arrives, he too attempts to turn Connor and Ceili against each other. When this tactic fails, the two Mayors turn on each other, each backed by their respective armies. To make their point that there is little difference between Papples and Orange People, Connor and Ceili take a bite from the other's fruit, pretend to faint, and then get up. They have demonstrated that no harm will come from eating the other's fruit and that to carry on hating because of perceived differences is fruitless. Thus, the two young people transcend the history of hatred between the Papples and the Orange People.



Characters

Papples

A group of people who revere apples. They have great fear of and contempt for the Orange People who they believe to be vastly different from them.

Orange People

A group of people who revere oranges. They have great fear of and hatred for the Papples who they believe to be vastly different from them.

The Mayor of the Papples

The Mayor is determined to keep his people separate from the Orange People, who are the sworn enemies of the Papples. He believes that Orange People are very different from him, and because of this, should be feared. He works to maintain this (mis)understanding amongst his people through the stories he tells about the Orange People. Throughout the play, he demonstrates narrow mindedness and reluctance to change his way of thinking.

The Mayor of Orange Land

Like the Papple's Mayor, the Mayor of Orange Land demonstrates persistent narrow mindedness regarding the Papples. He is also determined to keep his people separate from the Papples and achieves this partly through feeding on the fear and superstition of 'others' who are different.

Connor

A young Papple and the central character of the play, Connor is courageous, willing to ask difficult questions, and ultimately accepting of difference. Through his encounter with Ceili (and the feelings he experiences for her), Connor begins to question the stories he has been told about the Orange People, seeking the truth for himself at great personal risk.

Ceili

Ceili is an Orange Person, so different from the Papples. How she comes to be at the Apple Harvest Festival is unclear, but her presence there and her interaction with Connor begin a very important chain of events. Like Connor, Ceili has learned to be distrustful and fearful of the Papples and it is only because she is willing to question the truth that she learns to find similarities in differences.

Themes Emerging in the Play

Note to Teachers:

This play contains many themes of varying complexity. Depending upon the group of students you are working with, you may wish to explore these themes in greater or less depth. There are also many similarities between the events of the play and historical and contemporary realities. For example, the fear and distrust that the Papples express for the Orange People might be likened to the fear and distrust experienced by First Nations people in Canada from non-First Nations people at the time of colonization or even today. There are also similarities between the play and other real conflicts involving two 'different' groups, like the Israel-Palestine conflict, or even the Rwandan Genocide. While some of these topics may not be appropriate for younger students, there are opportunities to discuss reasons for conflict, fear and hatred with them. If you are teaching older students, then perhaps here is an opportunity to link the play to real life experiences.

While this is not an exhaustive list of the themes emerging throughout the play, it does represent some of the more salient themes. After students have seen the play, you may want to have them compile their own list of themes from the play and examples to support each.

Fear of Others is often unfounded

Both the Papples and the Orange People fear each other, yet there is little evidence to substantiate the fear. Rather, such fear is often the product of tradition, becoming so much a part of a way of thinking as to be commonsense.

Differences amongst people should be celebrated

Differences make us unique and there is a need to celebrate rather than be afraid of differences amongst individuals and groups of people. The Papples and Orange People see difference as bad and it is this belief that fuels their hatred of one another.

It is important to be open to new ways of thinking

Connor realized that the Papple's way of thinking about the Orange People made little sense. Because he was open to thinking differently, he was able to see that the Papples and Oranges weren't so different after all.

Acceptance of tradition is not always positive

The Papples seem to accept the tradition of conflict with the Orange People although it is based simply on the perceived differences between the two groups. Such acceptance may entrench hatred, fear and conflict in a people's way of being.

Feelings of love can help us overcome our fears

Because of the emotions Connor experiences for Ceili, he is willing to both question and overcome his fear of the "other", in this case the Orange People.

Background Information

At their Apple Harvest Festival, the Papples celebrate not only apples, but the man they attribute with bringing them the apple, Johnny Apple Seed. Johnny Apple Seed is a historical figure who indeed was known for spreading apple seeds around some of the United States. What follows is some information that you may wish to share with your students, along with a discussion of the importance of apples both symbolically and practically.

The Story of Johnny Apple Seed



Born John Chapman on September 26th, 1774, Johnny Apple Seed was known for his kindness and compassion. It was his hope that one day no one in America would be hungry, and he believed that planting apple trees was one way to achieve this. As a pioneer nursery man, he created apple orchards in Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Indiana and Illinois. He was said to walk barefoot everywhere he went, living and sleeping in the outdoors. It was said that he wore a cooking pot as a hat, taking it off to cook his meals, and that his clothes were made from sacks. While very successful in business, Johnny chose to live a simple life. He died at the age of 70 after almost fifty years of planting and tending to apple trees.

Apples as Symbols

- ~ a symbol of knowledge (this is why we give apples to teachers)
- ~ a symbol of forbidden fruit (as with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden)
- ~ a symbol of new beginnings (as with Thanksgiving day celebrations)
- ~ a symbol of gravity (an apple fell on Sir Isaac Newton's head)
- ~ bad apple is a term often used to describe a child who constantly misbehaves
- ~ In Snow White, the apple was used for deception

Questions to Guide Viewing

The purpose of these questions is to help prepare your students for viewing the play and discussing it afterwards. They act as a guide and may be adapted as needed depending upon the levels and needs of your students.

Grades k-3

1. Why do you think the Papples love apples so much?
2. What happens when Connor is left holding an Orange?
3. How do the Papples feel about the Orange People?
4. Why do you think they feel this way?
5. Can you think of reasons why the Papples should NOT be afraid of the Orange People?
6. Who is Johnny Apple Seed and why is he so important to the Papples?
7. Why does Connor go to Orange Land? What does he find there?
8. How does the girl react to Connor's Apple?
9. What does Connor believe he has done to Ceili?
10. Why does the Papple mayor try and convince Connor that the Orange People are so bad?
11. What do Connor and Ceili learn about each other?
12. Do you like the ending of the play? Why or why not?

Grades 4-6

1. Why are Apples so important to the Papples?
2. How does Connor come to be holding an Orange?
3. Why do the Papples react to the Orange the way that they do?
4. How do the Papples describe the Orange People? Do you think that they are being fair? Explain.
5. Who is Johnny Apple Seed and why is he so important to the Papples?
6. Why does Connor struggle to accept what he is being told about the Orange People by the Papple Mayor?
7. What does Connor learn when he arrives in Orange Land?
8. Describe the meeting between Connor and Ceili? What does it suggest about the beliefs of Papples and Orange People toward each other?
9. Why does Connor believe he has killed Ceili?
10. How do the Papples react to Connor's news? Should they react this way? Explain.
11. What do Connor and Ceili learn about each other?
12. How did you feel about Connor's speech at the end of the play?

Activities

Purpose:

The following activities are designed to enhance students' viewing experiences. The first activity is an excellent one to engage students in before they see the play, and the second and third activities are useful after watching the play. Please feel free to adapt these activities to suit the needs and levels of the learners in your classroom!

Activity #1: Celebrating Me ~ Celebrating We: A Multicultural Canada

Rationale: Because a central theme of the play is acceptance, this activity will help students not only identify features that make them unique, but also those they share with other classmates. Over the course of the activity, students should be encouraged to appreciate differences, accepting and celebrating each other. They should also be encouraged to make connections to the diversity of Canadian society.

1. Ask students to write down words or phrases to describe themselves. For young students who are not yet able to read or write, ask them to take some time to draw what makes them special.
2. Next have students share their words or drawing with one other student. They should pay attention to what is similar and what is different.
3. Lead the class in a large group discussion of their unique characteristics and those that they have in common with others.
4. Working on their own, have students create an identity poem. You may use or adapt the following format:

My name is _____

I like to (2 words) _____

What makes me special is (three words) _____

What I like about others is (three words) _____

I am me, I celebrate we!

5. Have students draw a picture of themselves to capture the words they used in their identity poems.

6. Create a classroom gallery of pictures and poems. Have students walk through the gallery to see what others have created.

Extension: Ask students to consider the importance of celebrating each other, what makes us similar and what makes us different, as they watch the play. Once the play is over, revisit this activity to facilitate a discussion of why the Papples and Orange People did not celebrate each other and the consequences of such beliefs. What might happen in Canada if we hated and feared those who are different from us?

Activity #2: Expressions Through Art

Rationale: This activity is designed to help students identify what they learned from the play after watching it, making connections to their own lives. Art is used as a vehicle for expression to support and encourage creativity.

1. When students have watched the play, ask them to identify one thing they learned from the play.
2. Without sharing what they learned with others, have students create a visual representation of what they have learned. They may choose to do this by creating a collage, a painting, a drawing, etc. Supply them with old magazines, scissors, crayons, paper, paint, pastels...
3. Create a bulletin board display of the students' work.
4. In small groups have students examine the bulletin board display and then discuss what they and others learned from the play.
5. Come back and discuss as a whole class. Help students make connections between what they learned and the play's themes.
6. Now make connections between the play's themes and broader issues of social justice or injustice. This may be where you wish to discuss the historical relationship between First Nations people and Europeans, the internment of Japanese Canadians during the war, etc.

Extension: Work with students to make connections between what they learned from the play, its themes, and their own lives. Have they ever been in a situation where they felt they were not accepted? Have they ever been mean to others they perceive are different? How might we work together to create a society that is more just and caring?

Activity #3: Apples and Oranges ~ Symbols of Culture

Rationale: This activity is designed to help students understand symbols, why and how they represent different cultures / countries.

1. Tell your class the story of Johnny Apple Seed
2. Discuss the reasons why Johnny Apple Seed spent his life planting apple trees and sharing apple seeds with others. In this story, what does the apple symbolize?
3. Explore with students why the Papples celebrated apples and the Orange People celebrated oranges (things they felt had historical significance to them and that were important cultural artifacts).
4. Share an artifact that has some personal and/or cultural significance to you with your students.
5. Have each student bring an item from home that has some personal and/or cultural significance to them.
6. Create a class sharing circle so each student can show their item and discuss its importance.
7. Explain how these items are symbols – things that represent who we are, just as the apples represented the Papples and the Oranges the Orange people.

Extension: Have students explore and research objects that symbolize Canada. These may include the maple leaf, the beaver, snow shoes, the Canada Goose, the canoe, hockey stick, teepee ring, etc.

APPLES & ORANGES TEACHER FEEDBACK FORM / PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

We would like to hear from you, your colleagues and your students!

Concrete Theatre depends on teacher feedback for assessing our shows and planning future programming.

Please copy this form for each of your teachers and mail or fax to Concrete Theatre (address below)

School: _____ Performance Date: _____ Attending Grades: _____

Teacher's name, grades & subjects taught: _____

Please add me to Concrete's Electronic mailing list:

My Email address is _____

1. If you were responsible for booking, how did you find out about this performance? (check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Company brochure/handbill | <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete's booth at the Teacher's Convention |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ATA News ad | <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete's website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Through a teaching colleague | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |

2. Who paid for this performance?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School | <input type="checkbox"/> Parents / School Council |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Board | <input type="checkbox"/> Students |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Both School and Board | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |

3. Did you and your students find the performance and its content...

Enjoyable? Yes No Engaging? Yes No Age-appropriate? Yes No

Informative as a support for curriculum / student learning? Yes No

Comments on the show and how it was received by your students:

4. Did you find the Teacher's Study Guide useful for:

personal/student prep follow-up discussion/activities building links to school programming

Comments/Suggestions:

5. Did you find the Post-show Question and Answer session with the actors valuable? informative?

Yes No **Comments/Suggestions:**

6. What themes, topics, issues, plays or stories would you like to see explored in future works created for students in the grade level(s) you teach?

7. When is the best time to contact you with information about booking next season's productions?

8. Please include any general comments / issues related to the performance and Concrete's work.

Feel free to continue your comments on the back of this form if you need more room.

Please mail, fax or email this Evaluation Form to: Concrete Theatre
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Phone: 780.439.3905 Fax: 780.433.4782 bookings@concretetheatre.ca