

## Thai-riffic! Teacher's Notes

### Cultural study activities:

#### Cultural Research project

In *Thai-riffic!* the students are given the task of researching a culture (other than Australian) and presenting their findings in interesting ways. You could replicate the same activity in class.

It might help to make the activity more specific – present to the class about **one** interesting event or activity that originated somewhere outside of Australia. For example, you could decide to present about Takraw (also known as kick volleyball) and instead of simply explaining what the game is to the other students, you could run a demonstration of different moves.

#### Explore Thai Culture

*Thai-riffic!* references a number of elements from Thai culture, such as the Songkram festival, Takraw, and Thai shadow puppetry. As a class, you could explore these areas in more detail and learn about their history.

Extend: If you were creating a play about Australian culture, what are some events/sports/features that you would include?

These activities link to the NSW Geography K-10 Syllabus outcomes:  
GE2-1, GE3-1, GE3-2, GE4-1, GE4-3, GE5-3

### Drama Activities:

#### Shadow Puppetry

Shadow Puppetry has a long history of tradition in Southeast Asia. What is shadow puppetry? Can you find some video examples?

Try creating your own shadow puppets and putting on a show for the rest of your class. You could choose a folktale to adapt.

Check out the following online resource that also has cross curricular links with Science:

<http://www.planet-science.com/categories/under-11s/our-world/2012/04/make-your-own-shadow-puppets.aspx>

### **Adaptation**

There were many changes made to the story of *Thai-riffic!* when adapting it from the book to the stage. Do up a list of the similarities and differences you could identify between the book and the play. Once you have a list, have a discussion about why some of those changes might have been made.

Read the playwright's article 'Same Same but Different' about the process of adapting the book.

<http://www.nathanluff.com.au/uncategorized/same-same-but-different#more-1020>

Did this shed any light on why certain changes were made?

You could plan an adaptation for a book you are reading in class.

Imagine you only have 5 actors – what characters would you keep and what characters could you lose?

What are the most important settings you would need to create for the story to work?

You could also take one scene in the book and have a go at adapting it into a script. Remember: a script contains only things we can see and hear – mostly that is dialogue and action, but it might also include sound and video effects. *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* might be a good reference point for what a script might look like.

### **Review**

Write a review of the play *Thai-riffic!* You will need to look at the format for reviews and ensure you structure your review correctly.

Things you might include:

Details about the performance, such as the venue, the dates and key personnel.

A synopsis of the story

Analysis of who the intended audience was

A section that compares and contrasts the book and the play

Your critique – what you liked or didn't like.

The activities above link both to the NSW Creative Arts (Drama) and English syllabuses.

DRAS2.4, DRAS3.4

Drama 7-10 syllabus: 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 5.3.1, 5.3.2

EN2-2A, EN3-1A, EN4-1A, EN5-2A, EN5-2A

## Themes and Play Analysis:

### The theme of 'Identity'

Consider the theme of 'identity' in the play.

In particular look at the following moments:

- Lengy refers to himself as being a 'knock-off Aussie; a fake Aussie from Thailand'.
- Grandma talks about how we can be 'made up of many flavours' and that it is the 'combination of ingredients that makes us interesting'.
- The Takraw introduction talks about the sport being the best of two worlds (volleyball and soccer)

Lead a class discussion:

- How are all these things related to Lengy's identity?
- Is it possible to respect and honour our cultural heritage whilst at the same time embracing a new culture?
- Is Lengy really embarrassed about his Thai heritage, or is it just that he is embarrassed by his family?
- Why is Lengy so excited to be given the name Lengy?
- What is the significance of the folktale featured in the play? In the story, a crocodile traps a bird in its jaws. The crocodile also comes across a rabbit and tries to eat it as well but when he opens his jaws, the bird flies out and scares the rabbit away. The croc ends up with nothing. When Lengy retells the story, he imagines he is the crocodile – who or what is the bird? Who or what is the rabbit?

### Embarrassing Writing Task

Lots of people are embarrassed by their families. What's an embarrassing thing someone in your family has done? Write a short story about it.