For over 130 years Regions has been proud to be a part of the Middle Tennessee community, growing and thriving as our area has. From the opening of our doors on September 1, 1883, we have committed to this community and our customers.

One area that we are strongly committed to is the education of our students. We are proud to support TPAC’s Humanities Outreach in Tennessee Program. What an important sponsorship this is — reaching over 25,000 students and teachers — some students would never see a performing arts production without this program. Regions continues to reinforce its commitment to the communities it serves and in addition to supporting programs such as HOT, we have close to 200 associates teaching financial literacy in classrooms this year.

Thank you, teachers, for giving your students this wonderful opportunity. They will certainly enjoy the experience. You are creating memories of a lifetime, and Regions is proud to be able to help make this opportunity possible.

Jim Schmitz
Executive Vice President, Area Executive
Middle Tennessee Area
Dear Teachers,

Thank you for choosing to bring your students to the performance of *I on the sky*, performed by Montreal-based DynamO Théâtre.

Timeless themes of separation, community and empathy resonate through poetic imagery and powerful movement, without a single word spoken.

*I on the sky* focuses on exile and the hope left by those who disappear, on ghosts that haunt us all. It speaks of being open to others and resiliency, an unfathomable ability that allows us to move forward. It deals with life going on. With no spoken lines, *I on the sky* leads audiences into a world of movement, imagery and music, where poetry sways reality.

We are grateful to the many contributors to this guidebook, with special acknowledgement for the work of DynamO Théâtre. In this guide you will find background information, inspiration for short activities, and interactive classroom lessons to foster the most thoughtful personal and curriculum connections for your students.

Enjoy,

TPAC Education

*Wherever I find myself, the sky will always be the same.*
Against the backdrop of a constantly changing sky, a young woman sits on a park bench. Her only piece of luggage is a small suitcase in which she keeps some sheet music and a few objects belonging to people with whom she had to leave behind. She remembers events that led her to flee her homeland. The crowd of strangers moving by considers her with indifference and contempt, until her path crosses that of a young runaway, in exile herself. She discovers a fragile tie in a faraway land.

### Scenes

1. The Exile
2. Tossed by a tempest
3. On a park bench in a strange country
4. Finding reassurance and comfort, the exile plays the piano
5. First contact with a runaway
6. Recalling her past as a concert pianist, her fiancé and her family
7. Seeing the runaway and hooded youths
8. Recalling her last concert
9. Experiencing the indifference of the people
10. Witnessing the life of the runaway
11. Alone again in the park
12. Recalling her happy love affair
13. Remembering the death of the one she loved
14. The runaway consoles the Exile
15. The exile is reconciled with her past
16. The exile decides to move forward in this new life
Discussion Starters/Short Activities

• Explain to students that you will be attending the performance of *I on the sky* at TPAC. Give students a few minutes to read and think about the following description. Then, ask students to offer their comments and observations beginning with the words “I wonder....”.

  Against the backdrop of a constantly changing sky, a young woman sits on a park bench. Her only piece of luggage is a small suitcase in which she keeps some sheet music and a few objects belonging to people with whom she had to part company. Through flashbacks, she remembers events that led her to flee her homeland. The crowd of strangers moving by considers her with indifference and contempt, until her path crosses that of a young runaway, in exile herself. She discovers a fragile tie in a faraway land.

• Imagine that you were exiled from (forced to leave) your home in the middle of the night. You only have time to grab whatever can fit into an average small suitcase. What would you take? What would be the most difficult to leave behind? Why?

• *Wherever I find myself, the sky will always be the same.* What meaning does this have for you? What feelings might this evoke for someone in an unfamiliar place?

• In *I on the sky*, the main character (an exile) encounters a runaway. Compare and contrast their possible circumstances. Assign each half of the class to write a monologue for one of the two characters, beginning with the sentence “*Wherever I find myself, the sky will always be the same.*” If time allows, revise and rehearse the monologues to share verbally as reader’s theater.

• After seeing the performance of *I on the sky*, identify the 5 types of conflict in this piece.
Lesson One

Expressing Poetry Without Words

In this activity, students will communicate emotions, situations and ideas using only body shapes, movements and facial expression.

INSTRUCTION

1. Begin by forming a circle with space between each student. Tell students you will call out a series of words and short phrases. Their job is to convey each word with a whole body statue showing gesture and facial expression. They should respond immediately and intuitively – their bodies are doing the talking. (Students will need to be reminded that their responses must be silent and still). Watch one another and discuss: What are some strategies you noticed that made the meaning very clear?

   Hey!    Bye.    Stop!
   Wait a minute…    Come here.    Get out of here!
   Welcome!     I don't know you…
   Nice to meet you…     Leave me alone!

2. Instruct students to imagine working on a large stage. How must we adjust our gestures to convey meaning to the last row of the audience? This time, you can make gestures that move instead of statues. They must “read” from a distance. Call out the phrases again. Half of the circle “performs” while the other half watches, alternate between groups, ask the watching group to comment on strategies that made the meaning clear.

3. Divide the class in four lines. Tell students that they are going to convey an image in whole body movement that travels across the space. (The first students in each line will travel together across the room, followed by the second set of four, and so on.) Call out the phrases so that everyone gets a chance to try each phrase. Notice how other groups solve the challenge:

   Neither coming nor going
   Upon softly falling snow
   Miles to go before I sleep
   Like a leaf in a windstorm
   At the mercy of the waves

4. Reflect on choices the students made to represent the phrases. What themes were explored in this set of phrases? Were there any particularly successful interpretations? Pick one or two of the phrases to brainstorm further. How would a performer add more visual meaning to the phrases? Ask for specific suggestions, such as use particular video imagery, artwork, props, costumes, lighting.

5. Explain to students that they will be viewing a full length, wordless performance I on the sky. Share the short description of the performance and the comments from the director. Encourage students to notice the methods used by DynamO Théâtre to convey the story, mood and meaning without words.
Understanding Immigration, Exile and Empathy

“The Arrival” by Shaun Tan

In this activity students will refer to “The Arrival” by Shaun Tan as a basis to explore empathy, immigration and exile.

MATERIALS
• Chart paper to chart student response.
• Writing journals for students
• The Arrival Animation – Shaun Tan (or copies of the graphic novel for students to view) [https://vimeo.com/74292820]

INSTRUCTION

Activity I (approximately 20 - 25 minutes):
1. Ahead of time, post the statement where all can see “Wherever I find myself, the sky will always be the same.”
2. Explain to students that “The Arrival” is a wordless graphic novel about the experience of immigration. The video animation is a short excerpt of the novel. As a class, view the vimeo animation of “The Arrival” by Shaun Tan (appx. 10 mins)
3. Give students 3-5 minutes to create a quick write regarding their initial thoughts/analysis of the images/story.
4. With a partner, students share their thoughts and reactions.
5. Teacher should also point out here the use of a picture book and illustrations to relay theme; perhaps spend a minute or two eliciting student’s thoughts on that vs text.

Activity II (approximately 20 minutes):
1. Ask students to take 1 minute to think about what they already know regarding the words immigration and exile. (This website is recommended for more context: [www.unhcr.org/55df0e556.html])
2. As a class, create a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting immigration and exile.
3. Ask the students to take 1 minute to think about examples of situations of exile; encourage students to connect to historical events, personal events, and current events.
4. Students take turns sharing as teacher charts responses in the examples column.
5. Guide a discussion regarding situations of exile and elicit student thoughts on what types of feeling/emotions are experienced by individuals in such stressful situations; charting in “Emotions/Feelings” column.
6. Share the description of I on the sky and this statement that the performing company provides as a subtitle: “Wherever I find myself, the sky will always be the same.”
7. How do the examples and responses in the chart relate to this statement?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of Exile</th>
<th>Emotions/Feelings</th>
<th>Coping Mechanisms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Extension Activity I (approximately 10 – 15 minutes):
1. Display the following prompt: Discuss a time when you were forced to deal with something that was unfair. How did you feel? Did you wish someone else understood? How did you cope with (or handle) the situation?
2. Ask students how they think the father of the immigrant family felt about their separation in “The Arrival”, and how did he cope with those emotions?
3. Discuss how students’ personal experiences may/may not be similar to the experience of the immigrant family in “The Arrival”. Ask students to share some of the ways they coped with their stressful situation; whether positive or negative and add them to the coping mechanism column of the class chart.

CLOSURE
What does it mean to “walk a mile in someone’s shoes?”
Exit Ticket: Students will write, on an index card, one time when they “walked a mile” or showed empathy. Ask one or two students to share their thoughts, if time allows.

After the performance: Compare and contrast I on the sky with The Arrival.
Experiencing Exile in a Class Dramatization

In this activity
Students will warm-up their thoughts and bodies by creating statues that represent themes from the play
Students will bond with an assigned “family” of 4-6 through visual art, pantomime and physical tableau activities
Students will reflect on the feelings of being exiled or having a member removed

OBJECTIVE
In this lesson students will be able to:
• use the body as a means of expression
• work cooperatively as an ensemble, both with and without words
• analyze experiences of exile

MATERIALS
• Suitcase with multiple colored scarves (one scarf per student, one color per group of 4-6 students)
• Large paper tablets and markers for groups to draw on
• Attention getting device for “cueing” during the activity (a tambourine is described below)
• A large space for students to move with a clearly defined “border,” e.g. use colored tape to form two areas on the floor.
• Recordings of instrumental music. Two tracks, to be used in Part 2.

INSTRUCTION
Activity I (approximately 10 minutes):
1. Review understanding of the terms Exile, Immigrant, Empathy
2. Ask students to spread about the room, and to create individual statues that represent or express the words home, journey, exile, sky, connection.

Activity II (approximately 45 minutes):
1. From a prop suitcase in center of circle of students, empty multiple scarves on the floor (there should be enough scarves so that groups of 4-6 students can be made by finding others with the same color scarf). Students choose a scarf, don it in some way and then are guided to find “family” members who have the same colored scarf.
2. In their family groups, ask students to 1) discuss the home they might live in together and draw it; 2) pantomime a family meal, and 3) form a tableau that portrays a typical day for the family.
3. Each group shares their drawing, pantomime and tableau with the others, who act as an audience and simply “notice what they notice” about the family.
4. Group members now separate and mill about the space independently. Tell students that when they hear the tambourine shake, they will find their family members and create an impromptu, more abstract tableau before the tambourine stops. After glancing at other tableaus, group members go back to milling about the space independently. This cycle repeats multiple times. Encourage students to visualize things about their family to show in their tableaus (“imagine family vacations or holidays with this group”, for example).
5. On the last round, “tap out” a member of each group, informing them to exit the taped area and make an independent statue this time. Once the tambourine starts, the group members will likely search for their missing member, but will ultimately be forced to create a tableau without them.
6. Everyone returns to a sitting circle to discuss the activity...specifically what it felt like to be exiled or to have a member of your family exiled.
Closing
The lesson closes by reuniting the group and asking them what one word might describe their bond? This is now their family name!

NOTES: There is some flexibility in materials within this lesson. The scarves do not have to be scarves, for example. Stickers, necklaces and anything “wearable” will work. Likewise, what the students draw on and draw with (listed as tablet and markers), is flexible too. Students could draw on a chalkboard or white board or paper large enough for the audience to see.

PART TWO ---add movement

Activity I (approximately 5-10 minutes):
1. Reunite the “families” created in the previous lesson.
2. Ask each group to create a tableau inspired by the connecting statement “Wherever I find myself, the sky will always be the same.”
3. Each group will share their final image, and audience members will make observations.

Activity II (approximately 35-45 minutes + 15-25 for sharing and reflecting):
1. Groups will now create a movement piece inspired by the same statement, in essence bringing their tableau to life in a 5 minute performance to further examine unit themes.
2. Explain and hand out the following “Rules of Play” so that students have written guidelines while creating.
3. Tell students that as a final activity their will share their movement pieces.
4. Allow 15-25 minutes for the performances. Following each one the audience will reflect on each one, sharing observations about the stories and choices in creating the piece. Ask: In what ways did the absence of words influence you as you created your piece? How did it affect you as an audience?

RULES OF PLAY

- The title of today’s warm-up (“Wherever I find myself, the sky will always be the same”) will also be the title of your movement piece—allow it to further inspire what you create.
- Group members are no longer bound to playing families. One person must serve as the exiled and they will carry a prop suitcase (backpack, travel bag) as indicator. Others members serve the story your group wishes to tell in any way.
- NO WORDS can be spoken. The piece must be conveyed entirely through movement. Don’t feel you must dance, however. This is absolutely not about dance technique. This is about body language, space, tempo, connection (or not) and what all of those things say without words.
- There will be some level of improvisation to the final performance, but try to use the rehearsal time to craft a definite beginning, middle, end. If you are stuck, talk through the story you want to tell first and then create 3 tableaus that express that beginning, middle, and end. Then, work to find how those moments connect to each other.
- While you create, two tracks will be playing. You may do your final piece without music. Or you may choose one of the two tracks. Up to your group!
- Performers can certainly make entrances and exits—there is no need to keep everybody on stage the entire time—again, whatever serves the story you wish to tell.
- You may use chairs if you wish (levels are always nice). You may use your scarves if you wish (or other simple props that happen to be in the room). Exiled member has the suitcase to use as the group sees fit.
- Have fun! Don’t stress! Tell a story—without words!
Immigrants and Refugees Today

Depending on your class’s understanding and awareness of current events, lead students in a discussion or research about current refugee emergencies. Sensitivity to personal situations within the class and school community is of the utmost importance. Understanding and empathizing with the personal circumstances faced by immigrants is most relevant to the performance of *I on the sky*.

- Use the *I on the sky* Guided Questionnaire to ask students what they already know about refugees and immigrants.

- Introduce or clarify vocabulary that is commonly used by the media. This short article discusses the difference between the terms Refugee and Migrant. http://www.unhcr.org/55df0e556.html

- Work in groups to explore international migration statistics through interactive maps at the website below. Use the map handout (p.11) to mark the country of origin and destinations for worldwide immigrant groups. http://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/international-migration-statistics

- For up-to-date resources and lesson plans addressing world immigration, we recommend:

*I on the Sky* Guided Questionnaire

1. Is there a difference between a refugee and an immigrant? If there is, what does it involve?
2. What are some reasons that can force individuals and their families to claim asylum in a foreign country?
3. True or false: unaccompanied children who leave their country of nationality without being accompanied by an adult cannot become refugees.
4. True or false: people who are forced to desert their houses due to natural disasters (floods, tsunamis, earthquakes) need to claim asylum in another country.
5. True or false: all countries must accept refugee claims.
6. True or false: developing countries do not accept refugees inside their borders.
7. True or false: all asylum claimants become refugees.
8. True or false: refugees enter the country of refuge with large suitcases and trunks filled with personal effects.
9. What are the reasons that could drive a population to massive exodus?
I on the Sky Guided Questions Answer Key

Answers:
1. There is a huge difference between an immigrant and a refugee. Immigrants leave of their own free will and do so most often for financial reasons to have a better life for themselves and their families. For their part, refugees are forced to leave their country to protect their lives and freedom. As such, they are not protected by the country’s government, which is often responsible for persecuting them.

2. The following reasons can prompt individuals and their families to claim asylum: being persecuted for the color of their skin, their faith (during civil wars, for instance), their social group (such as gays or women) or political views.

3. False. Sometimes children and teenagers are forced to flee their country on their own because their parents were killed or imprisoned. Children may be separated from their parents in the chaos of an exodus or the threat of persecution may be directed squarely at children or teenagers, e.g. when rebel armies kidnap children to make them soldiers.

4. False. Because governments mostly view victims of natural disasters in a favorable light, their situation is very different. They have access to humanitarian assistance on site and can be relocated without having to leave their country.

5. This is true of the signatory countries of the Geneva Convention (Convention relating to the Status of Refugees signed in Geneva Switzerland in 1951) who must accept and protect refugees.

6. False. According to the High Commissioner for Human Rights, developing countries accept 80% of refugees in the world. Why? First, because individuals fleeing their country must often do so on foot or use rudimentary transportation. They look for refuge in a neighboring country, as did Sudanese refugees in Kenya, citizens of Myanmar in Bangladesh or even Afghan refugees in Iran. Another reason is that developed countries are increasingly hesitant in accepting refugees. They bring issues relating to migration into play to justify denying more and more asylum claims.

7. False. For instance, half of claims are accepted in Canada. For a claim to be accepted, claimants must be facing danger in their country of origin, as described in the Geneva Convention. They must show that this is their first asylum claim in Canada, that claimants do not have a refugee status in another country, that they did not pass through a safe country able to provide asylum (the United States of America for instance) and that their presence in Canada does not endanger Canadian citizen (e.g. for reasons of health or criminality).

8. False. People fleeing their country because they fear for their lives or their freedom must often leave in a hurry and only have the clothes on their backs when they leave. If they can, they may try to bring along a small piece of luggage in which they mostly stuff keepsakes and picture albums.

9. Political, ethnic and economic conflicts, famine, insecurity, violence, poverty, environmental degradation and violation of human rights are the most significant causes of massive exodus of populations.
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