

Clowning Around

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What's Included...

This slideshow helps guide the educator through an Inquiry Unit or project which connects clown with humour and the media.

The inquiry is broken into Four Parts:

A: An Introduction to Clown

B: Initial Thoughts - *What's So Funny?*

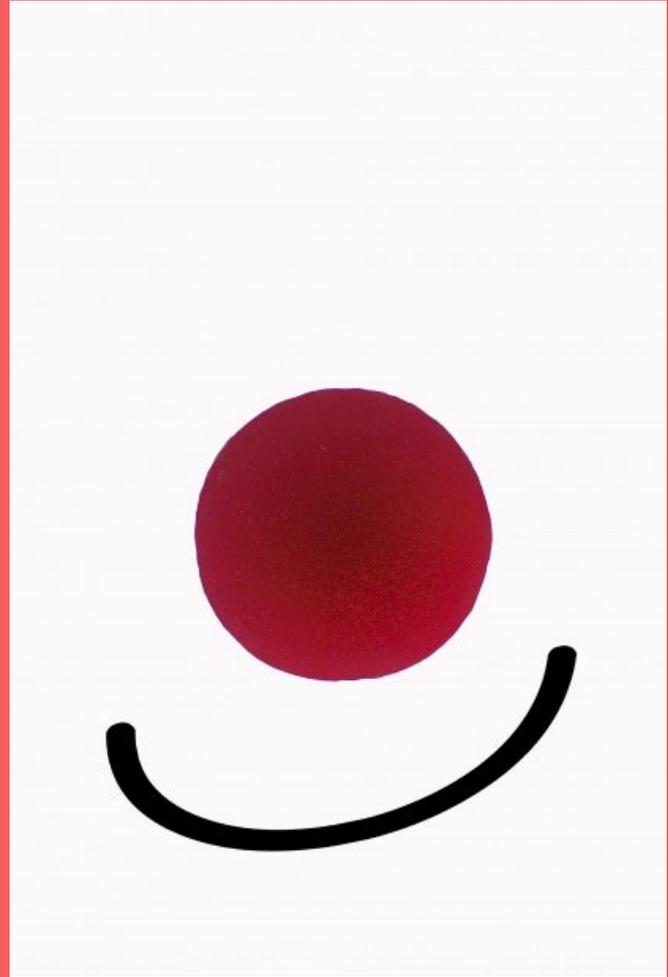
C: Deeper Connections - Clowns in the Media

D: Application - Make Us Laugh

Part A: An Introduction to Clown

What is clown?

Brainstorm what you think clown and clowning is. Feel free to create a mind map or Jamboard.



Vocabulary

Clown: An unsophisticated comic entertainer who playfully acts like a fool in order to make people laugh.

Naive: A person or character who does not have very much experience or wisdom. They are seen as innocent and do not realize how unskilled they are.

Fool: A silly person who does not have good judgment or common sense.

Vocabulary

Gesture: A physical movement used to communicate or emphasize an idea, feeling, or attitude. Also known as body language. This includes using body parts and/or facial expressions.

Exaggeration: Making something bigger, more extreme, and more dramatic than it really is.

Expectation: A strong belief that something will happen or someone will accomplish something.

Take to the audience: A purposeful look towards the audience to show them a feeling/emotion. This generally happens during a failure or an accomplishment.

A Brief History...

- The clown began as a jester. Their purpose was to entertain people of higher status (i.e. Kings and Pharaohs) .
- Jesters were usually seen as being lower status.
- Most jesters would paint their face and dress up in silly costumes in order to exaggerate their foolish character.
- The jester would act naive and foolish, making themselves look silly and ridiculous in order to entertain others.
- Eventually, clowns were introduced into the circus due to their playful, naive nature and ability to spread joy and laughter.
- Clowns grew in popularity and are now seen worldwide in different forms of theatre, performances, and other media sources.

What is clown?

- Many clowns wear the smallest mask in the world: the red nose.
 - This allows their character to become an exaggerated version of themselves.
 - The red nose looks ridiculous to some, which offers an opportunity for playfulness and silliness.
- In most situations, a clown will live in a world of surprise and confusion.
 - This allows them to face their challenges with open hearts and wide imaginations.
 - This means they are able to live in the present and not worry about future or what is next.
 - This allows them to expand their imaginations (and ours) to new places never thought possible.
- Most clowns embrace and exaggerate their emotions wholeheartedly.
 - They are encouraged not to hold back their self expression. This makes them honest and captivating.
 - They often take moments to pause and share these exaggerated emotions with the audience. This creates connection and comedy.

What is clown?

- Sometimes, a clown is a character who explores the world which seems to reject them.
 - They usually exaggerate their own failures and drag out these failures with their playful, simple-minded nature.
 - They mostly thrive off of their own struggles.
 - Many times, they think they are in control but the audience can clearly see they are not.
- Clowns can be social misfits.
 - They might not understand the established order and status of things in the world, which makes them confuse these orders/statuses leading to foolish and comedic situations.
 - They might think they are clever and their ego allows this, however they are quickly confronted by their own limitations.
- Clowns often embrace their emotions.
 - They tend to connect with their foolish and playful side as they celebrate mistakes and failures.
 - They often take risks that we might be too afraid to take due to our fear of failure. This allows the clown to show the audience the foolish/playful side of life.

Part B: Initial Thoughts -
What's So Funny?

Initial Thoughts



Thinking about the play *What's So Funny?* and what we have learned about clown; what vocabulary can we use to describe the parts of clown we saw?

Part C: Deeper Connections - Clowns in the Media

Not all clowns wear red noses!

- SpongeBob SquarePants is an example of a clown we see in the media.
 - He stars in his cartoon SpongeBob SquarePants
- SpongeBob has a childlike energy which we can see through his favourite pastime of jellyfishing (catching jellyfish like butterflies) and blowing soap bubbles into different shapes.
- He is naive in nature and overly optimistic about his life and the world, even though he is of low status.
- His biggest goal is to obtain a boat-driving license, but he continues to fail at this and never succeeds.



Clown in the Media

1. SpongeBob is naive. He believes that he can accomplish anything, but in reality he is not very wise and is very unskilled. This also makes him very honest and playful.
2. SpongeBob is foolish because he gets himself into silly situations that typical people or characters would not get themselves into. This causes him to fail at many things.
3. SpongeBob's failures create an expectation from the audience that he will try something and exaggerate his efforts in dramatic ways, however in the end he will not be successful.

SpongeBob Fails His Driving Test



Where else do we see clown in the media?

- Who is the clown? Where are they from?
- Describe their features.
- Use vocabulary to describe what makes them a clown.
- Provide an image of this clown.

Part D: Application -
Make Us Laugh!

It's Your Turn! Make Us Laugh!

Individually: Create a comic strip

Now that we have discussed clowning and humour, it is your turn to make us laugh.

Please create a funny comic strip for us all to enjoy.

Group: Create a clown scene

Now that we have discussed clowning and humour, it is your turn to make us laugh.

Please create a short scene about a clown who gets themselves in a foolish situation (max. 5 minutes long).