

Matilda the Musical

Year 4

Spring 2

Unit Overview

Lesson One - Tim Minchin and When I Grow Up

- This theme introduces children to Tim Minchin's adaptation of Matilda, Matilda the Musical.
- Play the 'Tim Minchin Introduces When I Grow Up' video. Here Tim talks through how he was first asked to compose the songs for the show and introduces the children to the first song they are going to learn.
- Play the 'When I Grow Up' video. Having seen Tim talking about the song, and now having seen the song what do the children think of it? What are the lyrics about? How does the medley make them feel? What lyrics stand out to the children?
- Using the PowerPoint lyrics, sing through the song as a class. Invite confident children to have a go with singing Lavenders solo at the start or Ms Honey and Matilda's solos at the end.
- At the very end of the song Matilda sings a section from 'Naughty', the song we are going to learn next lesson. She sings 'Just because I find myself in this story, doesn't mean that everything is written for me'. What does this phrase mean? What is Matilda trying to put right?

Lesson Two - Naughty

- To start the lesson sing through When I Grow Up from the previous session.
- Play the 'Tim Minchin Introduces 'Naughty' video. Discuss the importance of having a 'Key' song for the lead role. What should the key song tell the audience? Why should a main character have a song early in the musical?
- Watch 'Naughty' from Matilda the Musical. When the children have finished watching it, discuss the song. Why does Matilda feel she has to be a little bit naughty? What is Matilda's life like at home? What parts of the song are the most catchy and why? What is a hook?
- Sing through Naughty with the words. There are some particularly tricky bits here, so be very careful. Watch for the timing after 'Gory' - 3 beats, 'Story' - 4 beats and 'Surely' - 7 beats before the introduction of 'Sometimes you have to be a little bit naughty. I think it's a good idea to clap these beats so the children get a feel for it.
- In 'The Slip of a bolt' section make sure the children really enjoy the secrecy aspect of this. It's almost a whisper, making sure her parents don't hear what she's up to.

Lesson Three - The School Song - Playing with Phonetics

- In this lesson, the children will learn the 'School song' from Matilda the Musical, precocious in its creation and stylised in its delivery.
- Play the 'Tim Minchin Playing with Words' video for the children. When the video has finished, play discuss the importance of word play and rhyme in songs. Off the top of their heads, can the children think of a line in any song that contains rhyming words. It is most likely they will think of a great deal with a little time given to them. This is because rhyming words help the songs to sit comfortable with us. However, in this song Tim Minchin goes the extra mile to achieve lyrical brilliance. Play 'The School Song' for the children. Make sure you stop the video half way through 1.50m, when the children finish singing 'Just you wait for Phys-Ed'. Don't let it play too much further or the secret code will be released too early.
- The next task for the children is to guess what code is hidden within the song. Play it through a number more times to see if anyone works it out. If children are struggling give them clues, such as; "You're looking for word play! 'The next part of the code comes on every four beats'. If the children can't get it, start saying the words yourself but emphasising the letters at the start of each 4 beats.

- **A**-ble to survive this mess by **B**-eing a Prince or a Princess you will soon **C**, there's no escaping trage-**D**.
- Some children will start to recognise the code. Tim Minchin is spelling out the Alphabet phonetically throughout the song!
- Play the next part of the video and the code is revealed in it's entirety.
- Have a go with singing the song, making sure to emphasise the letters of the alphabet during the second version.
- I like to hand out foam letters to the children and get them to raise their letter when it comes. Great for a live performance to really impress the audience.

Lesson Four - Composing a Phonetic Song

- Today the children will become Tim Minchin! Well, theoretically of course!
- Using the School Song as a stimulus, the children will have a go at creating the lyrics to their own 'Phonetic Code Song'.
- Using a sheet of paper they are going to write their first name phonetically. For example, Toby would write Tee - Oh - Bee - Why, or Sophie would write Ess - Oh - Pee - Aitch - Eye - Ee. It is important to remind the children of the difference between the letter and it's phonetic sound. The phonetic sound it hugely important otherwise this task will not work.
- The children are going to attempt to write a phrase that hides their phonetic name within it.
- Give the children the following example, or even think of your own:

TOBY

TEE - OH - BEE - WHY

**"The Team that Toby's on tends to Open up defences
They'll beat anyone on their day that's why they are undefeated!"**

The phonetic sounds of Toby's name are shown in red here:

**"The TEE-eam that's Toby's on tends to OH-pen up defences
They'll BEE-at anyone on their day that's WHY they are undefeated."**

SOPHIE

ESS - OH - PEE - AITCH - EYE - EE

**"A Message came from overseas for the people digging up ancient trees
Our eyes on you eating up the lifeblood of the world!"**

**"A MESS-age came from OH-verseas for the PEE-ople digging up AITCH-ient trees
Our EYE-s on you EE-ating up the lifeblood of the world!"**

Lesson Five - Revolting children and Quiet.

- Today the children will sing the songs Revolting Children and Quiet.
- As in the previous weeks, play the introduction videos and then let the children have a go at singing through the songs.
- Revolting children is a complex song and would take a great deal of practice to master, but allowing the children to have a go, once again let's them explore the mind of Tim Minchin a little further. His use of rhyme is very apparent here. Maybe they can try and spot the deliberate spelling mistakes! Text speak!
- Quiet is an incredible monologue showing Matilda spilling out her many thoughts to her audience. Notice how she looks directly at the audience when she is singing. Matilda knows she is different and this is a perfect example of a child trying to understand their own mind and why everyone else around them might think of them as strange.
- There are two hugely opposing parts to the song. The start is the angular, rambling monologue. Rambling but also articulate. The second part of the song is a smooth, peaceful lilt. This is no coincidence. Matilda is trying to block out all the outside noise of the world and put herself in the eye of the storm. Where everything is quiet and she can focus, take a breath, understand, articulate, consider and not just SHOUT! Discuss with the children how there is a link to social media here. Many people on social media just simply write comments without thinking. These can be hurtful because there is often no thought behind them or any thought is impulsive and bred from emotion rather than context and substance.
- Quiet is Tim Minchin's favourite song so it is well worth investigating and letting the children perform. See if they can really let their emotions loose. Showing the contrast between the two sections.

Lesson Six - Performance and Boomwhackers

- To finish this scheme the children could perform the songs to an audience. I have always found Matilda assemblies go down a storm and elicit a great response. You will also see some children you don't expect, completely let themselves go and shine in the spotlight.
- I have also created 3 Boomwhacker videos for the children to have a go at. Hand out Boomwhackers, one per child and see if they can play their Boomwhacker in time with the beat.