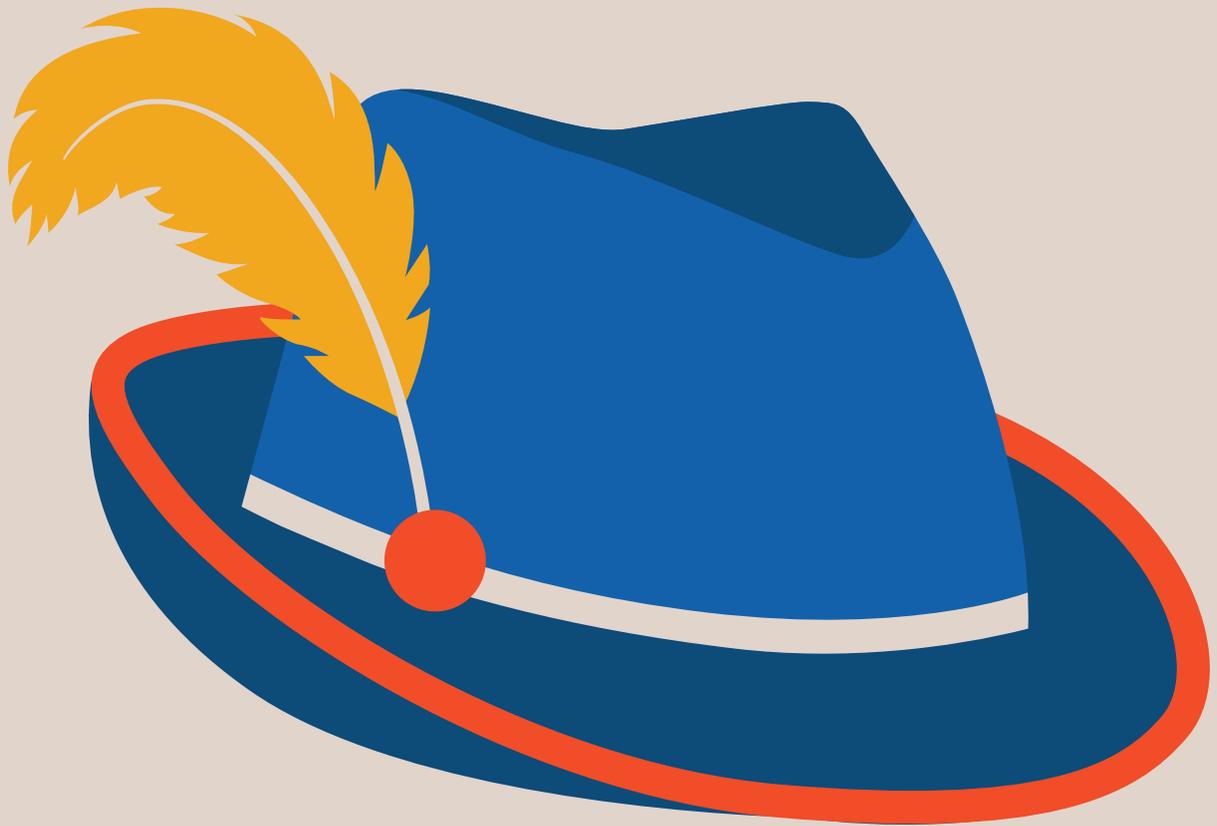


Technology of Costume

Technology and Drama



L1

**Clothes make
a statement.
Costumes
tell a story.**

Mason Cooley

This activity takes a group of students from the design of costumes to their use on stage. Involving a group of students in the design and development of costumes is great for showing them that drama and theatre are not just for those with the personal confidence to be standing on the stage.

Incorporating the technology curriculum into a creative process sends the message that processes and decision-making are vital parts of an artistic pursuit or career.

Begin by developing short scenes from the play where these characters interact.

See 'Adapting the Bard for Young Actors' from the English kit.

Method

Seven steps for costume design

① Find out a little bit about the play

This will be a short gloss over the plot but concentrating on the characters that the costume designs are for. Don't worry about narrative storylines that don't concern the specific characters as there are multiple narratives that don't overlap too much. Keep it simple.

② Meet with the Director (probably you as the Kaiako)

Have a talk to the kids about ideas that you already have about the setting of the play as this will inform later steps.

③ Sketch Your Costume Design Ideas

Now is where the costume begins to come to life! With a definite direction and a functional understanding of the character you will be dressing, you can move forward with conceiving individual parts of the outfit and the look as a whole.

Encourage the costume team to think deeply about the look and feel of the costumes.

- Colours
- Fabric samples

④ Complete initial measures of the actors

⑤ Assemble, make or hire the costumes

There are a few options here.

- You can ask parents and caregivers to give some of their time and talent.
- Gather costumes from home.
- As a last resort, you could go to a local costume shop. This will of course depend on your budget and tikanga. If you want the design team to have full agency in the process, this should be avoided unless they are in every step of the selection of the readymade costumes.

⑥ Costume Fittings

This is an exciting bit for costumiers and actors alike. Costume makes the process increasingly 'real' for performers and adds ihi to the rehearsals and performance and it will also give the costume team an opportunity for some praise in their work.

There may have to be some tweaks at this stage.

⑦ Watch the dress rehearsal

Make sure the costumes allow the actor freedom of movement and are flattering, character appropriate and generally awesome.

Watch the play in performance and bask in the warm feeling of a job well-done.

Extra Resources

Original ideas from

 <https://costumesanduglysweaters.com/costume-design-process/>

These are adapted from the way in which an adult would approach the task of developing costume but simplified for youngsters.

These things should be considered at all times when thinking about designing costumes for a play.

Costume helps an audience in several important ways:

- Tells them about setting — Time, Place, Season.
- Is a cultural indicator.
- Informs about a character's age and social status.
- Informs about a character's personality.
- Defines relationships between characters.
- Makes the character more believable.
- The tone and style of the play are reflected by what the characters wear.

As a practice we can look at several characters from Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's dream*. Shakespeare is a good choice as you can set the play in any era and cultural location.

Shakespeare's plays have been adapted to settings of baseball teams, prisons, basically anywhere and anywhen that connects the audience to the action.

It's also handy that there are **HEAPS** of pictures to refer to on the web.

Students don't need to understand the play to understand the character. At Level One of the curriculum Shakespeare will be well beyond them but serves up very broadly sketched characters with strong emotional bases.

Suggested characters to work with:

Titania

Queen of the Fairies. Powerful. Beautiful. A product of the forest and the supernatural world.

Puck

A mischievous servant to the King of the Fairies. Young-spirited and crafty. The forest and the supernatural. There should be links between the costume designs of the fairy characters.

Nick Bottom

An arrogant actor and craftsman. Rough and simple but thinks he is the best actor in the area, if not the world.

Oberon

King of the Fairies. Proud. Cruel. Powerful in word and deed.

Curriculum links

Technology

Planning for practice

Outline a general plan to support the development of an outcome, identifying appropriate steps and resources.

Brief development

Describe the outcome they are developing and identify the attributes it should have, taking account of the need or opportunity and the resources available.

Nature of Technology

Characteristics of technology

Understand that technology is purposeful intervention through design.

Drama

Communicating and interpreting

Share drama through informal presentation and respond to ways in which drama tells stories and conveys ideas in their own and others' work.