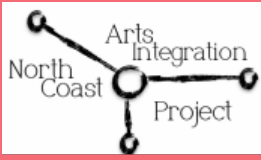


Tafadzwa Bob Mutumbi Study Guide



Actor and Storyteller from Zimbabwe

Increasing student engagement and understanding of core content through arts integration



Tafadzwa Bob Mutumbi

Tafadzwa Bob is a Performer, Storyteller, Theatre maker, Poet, Writer, Director and Voice-over artist.

He is a graduate of Theory X Theatre Initiative's three-year acting program in Harare, and Dell-Arte International in Blue Lake, CA. He coordinated the Annual Young Africa Arts Festival and worked as Arts Coordinator for Young Africa Chitungwiza. Tafadzwa Bob aspires to create inspiring works that are innovative and functional and bring about social transformation.

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BEFORE THE SHOW

What do students need to know before the performance?

2

DURING THE SHOW

How should we act as audience members for this show?

3

AFTER THE SHOW

How were we inspired?



Zimbabwe

Tafadzwa Bob is from Zimbabwe, a country in southern Africa.



Shona

Tafadzwa Bob speaks a language called Shona.



Audience Participation

His stories will include audience interaction!

BEFORE THE SHOW

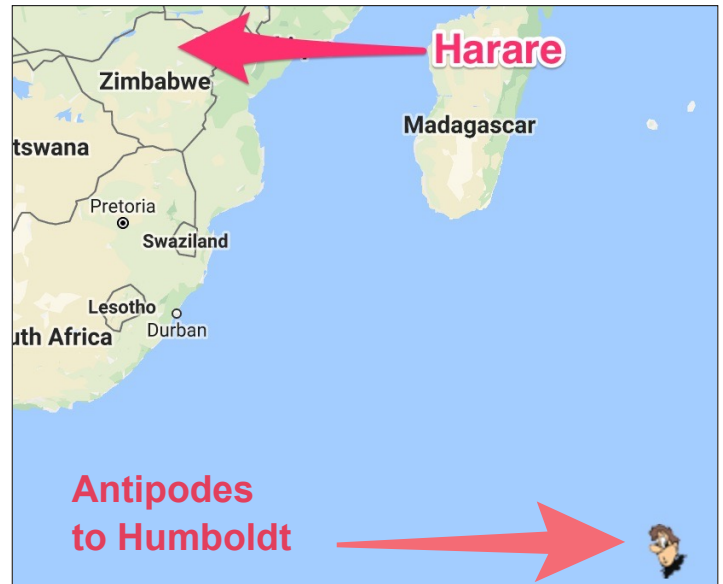
1

Tafadzwa Bob is from Zimbabwe, a country in southern Africa.

- Zimbabwe is close to the antipodes, or the exact opposite side of the planet, from where we are.

- Storytelling is a strong part of

Zimbabwe's social and cultural heritage. It is used as an effective tool to transmit history, knowledge, experience, folktales, religious beliefs and folkloric traditions. It is also used to inculcate social responsibility and provoke dialogue on social and human morals. The storytelling tradition incorporates singing, dancing, exaggerated characterization and loud responses from the audience.



Tafadzwa Bob speaks a language called Shona.



Harare's skyline.

In the Shona storytelling tradition, the storyteller starts by shouting "Paivapo!" /pa-EE-vah-poh/ which can be loosely translated to "There once was."

The audience shouts back "Dzepfunde" /zehp-FOON-day/ which can be loosely translated to "Yes we are listening...Yes go on."

CLASS RESOURCES

Click [HERE](#) for more details about the stories Tafadzwa Bob will tell and the Zimbabwean tradition of storytelling.

Pre-Visit Activity Ideas

Geography Connection

Students will be prepared to best appreciate Tafadzwa Bob's visit if they have an idea of how far away his home is. Using a globe or sites like antipodesmap.com students can see that Zimbabwe is on the other side of the planet from where we are.

Science Connection

The animals in Zimbabwe are different than here. Some animals that will be part of the story might be a hippo, a baboon, and a hare. What sounds do these animals make? Are they like any animals here?

Music Connection

Clapping together is a great way to contribute to a song. In the Zimbabwe tradition, people dance and clap while a song is sung. Here are some links to music from Zimbabwe. See if you can clap with the rhythm of the music.

1. [Chiwoniso Maraire](#) - "Vana Vanogwara"
2. [Mbira DzeNharira](#) - "Nharira"
3. [Stella Rambisai Chiweshe Shiri](#) - "Nhengure"

Theatre Connection

It is possible to make your voice sound different than it usually sounds by speaking higher or lower. How high can you speak? How low? Pick a simple sentence and have small groups try speaking in a high-pitched voice, a medium-pitched voice, and a low-pitched voice. Try the same with loud and quiet, etc. Take a moment to have one half of the group be the audience and watch as the others show what they have practiced.



DURING THE SHOW

2

Audience Participation

Being an audience member for Tafadzwa Bob means that students sit and listen carefully to the story but ALSO respond loudly and clap along when invited to do so!

Teach empathy and respect through role-play

The following are suggestions for how to develop appropriate and respectful audience behaviors in students:

Ask for several student volunteers to play the part of the performers, and work with them to find something to perform - a poem to recite, rhythm instruments to play, or a song that they like off the radio. Ask them to go outside the room, while you talk with the class.

Tell the class that they are going to be part of an experiment. When the performers come in, their job is to not pay attention. They should not get silly, but they can talk to one another, move their bodies in their seats, and not make eye contact.

Have the volunteers come in and perform. After a few minutes, stop and ask the performers to share how it felt to not have people paying attention. Then discuss what being a good audience looks like (for young students, a Yes/No chart is helpful), referring to a rubric or set of school rules as appropriate. Then practice as a class by having the same volunteers leave the room and come in to a respectful audience. When

done, have the performers reflect on how it was a different experience, and have students share what they noticed this time about the performance that they didn't the first time. Point out specific behaviors that various students displayed.



Rehearse audience behavior often, and explicitly point out positive examples. Starting a weekly tradition where you host an open mic for even 15 minutes of student performing and audience practice, doing show and tell, or partnering with a fellow teacher to put on performances/share the latest from the classroom while practicing audience behaviors will all build skills and stamina.

Develop a rubric for being an expert audience

As a class develop a routine for getting student attention and signaling audience behavior, as well as a rubric that connects to your school's code of conduct.

Example:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Bodies	Few bodies are under control and sitting tall Few students give supportive applause at the end of the performance	Most bodies are under control and sitting tall Some students give supportive applause at the end of the performance	All bodies are under control and sitting tall All students give supportive applause at end of performance
Voices	Many students are talking	Some students are talking	No students are talking
Attention	It takes 10 or more seconds to come to attention Focus and attention is not sustained during performance	It takes 5 – 10 seconds to come to attention Focus and attention somewhat sustained during performance	Students takes less than 5 seconds to come to attention Focus and attention is well sustained during performance

AFTER THE SHOW

3

Reflection, follow-up & integrated activities

- In discussing a performance, it is often more

productive to ask the question “What did you see/hear?” or “What do you remember most about the concert?” or “What do you think it meant (and why)?” rather than “Did you like the performance?” The first three questions lead to observation and interpretation of the performance, encouraging recall of details, while the fourth question encourages more judgmental responses. Discussion of which aspects of a performance remain in one’s memory often reveals the themes at the center of a work.

- Have students describe a memorable moment from the performance in various ways such as verbally, in writing, by drawing, or through movement. Ask students if the performance differed from what they expected. What kind of feeling or mood did your students have during the performance? Discuss other kinds of dance and music. Has music or dance ever evoked any other emotions in your students? Before the performance, make

sure to inform students that you will be completing this exercise so they can pay close attention to important details.

- If there are aspects of the performance that students did not understand discuss it or prompt them to do research and share what they learned with the class.

- Bring a Zimbabwean storytelling approach to a familiar story: Pick a favorite story book and try reading it with a big exaggerated voice and facial expressions for each character. Notice the difference between everyday speech and storytelling speech. Pick a song that everyone knows to sing at the beginning and the end. Pick parts of the story to repeat and say together.

