



Integrating The Arts into Your Curriculum

STUDY GUIDE
***DON QUIXOTE: comienza la
aventura/the adventure begins***
Adapted from the book by Cervantes

**TOUCHSTONE
THEATRE FOR YOUTH**

Written by Cora Hook, Touchstone Ensemble
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Don Quixote

by Miguel de Cervantes

Overview of Story

Don Quixote is a middle-aged gentleman from the region of La Mancha in Central Spain. After reading book after book on the age of chivalry, he decides to take up his lance and sword to defend the helpless and destroy the wicked. Don Quixote persuades a simple-minded laborer, Sancho Panza, to join him in his adventures, by serving as his squire. In return for Sancho's services, Don Quixote promises to make Sancho the wealthy governor of an island. Don Quixote rides the roads of Spain in search of glory and grand adventure. He gives up food, shelter, and comfort in the name of his ladylove, a local farm girl, whom he envisions as a princess, Dulcinea del Toboso. The story chronicles the many adventures and people Don Quixote and Sancho Panza meet on their journey.

Don Quixote challenges us to think about the meaning of ideal love and honor, and the importance of following our dreams, however difficult that may be.

Academic Standards The study guide addresses many of the skills outlined in the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Reading, Writing and Speaking. Specific standards that are addressed include:

- *Read and understand works of literature*
- *Explore the use of literary elements, including characters, setting, plot, theme and point of view*
- *Summarize main ideas and themes /draw conclusions*
- *Make inferences about concepts*
- *Identify words from other languages and cultures*
- *Analyze drama as information source, entertainment, persuasion or transmitter of culture*

Vocabulary

Introduce key vocabulary, teaching it in the context of *Don Quixote*. Ask students to expand on the definitions by giving their own meanings for each word.

Knight-errant : *a knight traveling in search of adventures in which to show his military skill, honor, and generosity.*

squire: *a servant to a knight*

chivalry: *the system of knighthood; the code of honor for knights*

quest: *a search or adventurous journey*

windmills: *machines with long, flat arms that are moved by the wind to create power*

quixotic: *foolishly impractical in the pursuit of ideals; idealistic*

Spanish Vocabulary

Introduce these Spanish words that have significance in the story of *Don Quixote*. Encourage students to use these words in their discussions and writing about the play.

verdad: true

amigo: friend

peligroso: dangerous

caballero: knight

perezoso: lazy

loco: crazy

Discussion / Writing Activities

- *From the horse's mouth ...* Begin a discussion about point of view. For example, Don Quixote saw the windmills as giants, but Sancho Panza saw them for what they really were. Challenge your students to take a different point of view: "Pretend that you are Don Quixote's horse, Rocinante, and that you can talk! Since you are always with him, write about one of Don Quixote's adventures from Rocinante's point of view."

- *It's all in how you see it!* Don Quixote saw the windmills as evil giants. Ask students to think of everyday objects that might be seen as something else – especially by someone who has never seen them before, for example, a person from outer space. Here are some suggestions to stimulate their thinking:
 - A fire hydrant thought to be a _____.
 - A helicopter thought to be a _____.
 - A roller coaster thought to be a _____.Ask students to draw a picture and/or write about an everyday object that could be seen as something else by a person who is not familiar with it.

- *Who is your hero?* In Miguel de Cervantes' time, romances of chivalry were very popular. People liked to imagine heroes with extraordinary abilities who participated in fantastic adventures. Don Quixote so admired the heroes of his books that he wanted to be like them. What sorts of heroes appeal to you today? Describe your hero or heroine and tell why that person inspires you. (You can choose a real hero or a fantasy hero).

- *Let's pretend!* In order to appear convincing as a knight, Don Quixote put on armor, renamed his horse, chose a heroine, and changed his name. If you were going to pretend to be a hero, what might you need to do to be convincing? For example, if you were going to pretend be an astronaut, what would you have to do to become a realistic astronaut? Choose a hero and write about what changes you would make to turn yourself into that hero.
- *Crazy or Idealistic?* Don Quixote might be seen as not simply crazy, but more like a person who wants to accomplish a greater good and who refuses to compromise his ideals. Examples of such people include Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi, and Bernardo de Galvez (a general in the American Revolution who fought back the British). Ask students to discuss whether or not Don Quixote deserves to be put in the company of world idealists.
- *Opposites:* Don Quixote was tall, thin, loved to read and rode a skinny horse called Rocinante. Sancho Panza was short, pudgy, loved to recite proverbs and rode a little donkey named Dapple. In many ways they were opposites. Make a list of all the ways that Don Quixote and Sancho Panza were opposites. Then discuss ways that the two characters were similar and make a list of those characteristics.
- *The Love Connection:* Don Quixote never meets his Dulcinea. What do you think would happen if they ever did meet face to face? Write a scene that takes place between Don Quixote and Dulcinea. Act it out!
- *Think about it!* Reading books on chivalry influenced Don Quixote. What books influence you? Do you ever imagine being one of the characters in a book you have read? Let's talk about it.

Art Activities / Projects

- *Exploring the Spanish countryside:* Don Quixote and Sancho Panza traveled through rural Spain in search of noble adventures. Use a map, globe, picture books or the Internet to explore the setting of rural Spain. Working alone or with a partner, ask students to draw a picture of what the Spanish countryside would have looked like in the days of Don Quixote. Have students share their drawings with the class by describing the features they included in their pictures.
- *Mural Magic:* Review the key adventures of Don Quixote: the Giant Windmills, the Battle with the Sheep, the Battle of the Knight of the Mirrors, and the Battle of the Knight of the White Moon. Divide the class into groups and have each group sketch out one of these scenes on paper and develop a title for their scene. Using butcher paper, direct the students to draw and/or paint each adventure to make a mural or story map of Don Quixote's adventures. Divide the mural into 4 sections to follow the story line and display in the classroom or hallway.

- *Caricature Fun:* Don Quixote and Sancho Panza are exaggerations of everyday people – caricatures. For example, Don Quixote is tall and thin and has his head in the clouds. Sancho is short and chubby and has his feet on the ground. Explore the idea of “caricatures” drawing from students’ past reading and viewing experiences (Dr. Seuss, cartoons). Show some drawings of caricatures. Challenge students to draw caricatures of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza and to share their drawings with the group.

- *Design it!* Stories often have lessons or messages about love, friendship, ideals, and dreams. Discuss the lessons in Don Quixote. If Don Quixote and Sancho Panza lived today, what message would they have for young people? Encourage students to design a tee shirt, a poster, a CD cover, or a bumper sticker with a message from our heroes in *Don Quixote*.

Links

www.school.discovery.com/lessonplans/programs/greatbooks-donquixote/

Click on the *links* icon for wonderful links to sites about Miguel de Cervantes, Don Quixote, chivalry, and Spain. Includes links in both Spanish and English.

www.csdl.tamu.edu/cervantes

This site contains a digital archive of photographic images on Cervantes’s time and the works suitable for teaching. Includes links in both Spanish and English.

www.sispain.org

Information about Spain – listing of many sites about Spain today.

The original production of Don Quixote: La Aventura Comienza/The Adventure Begins premiered at Touchstone Theatre in March, 2004.

Director:	Jennie Gilrain
Original text by:	Cervantes
Adapted and written by:	Cora Hook
Cast:	Bill George, Rafael Canizares, Theresa Epp
Puppets created by:	Mario Donate and Carlos Ruiz
Shadow puppets by:	Nathaniel Washam
Original Set Design:	Daniel Marcus
Touring Set Design:	Ensemble Members
Costumes by:	Erica Hoelscher
Sound Designer	Bill George
Lighting Design:	Lisa Jordan
Production Manager	Lisa Jordan