

Planning for *The Treasure of Trivandrum Drama*

The Key Question:	How can vast resources best be used, and who decides?
The Pre-text:	<p>We discovered this in a current news item:</p> <p>Government authorities in Trivandrum, Kerala, India had just broken into one of two treasure vaults underneath a Hindu temple and discovered a treasure of offerings to the god Vishnu amassed over several centuries, including masses of jewels, chests of coins, and jewel-encrusted statues, initially estimated to be worth approximately \$18 billion. A quick internet search confirmed the news item, and revealed other details, such as that there was another treasure vault, Chamber B, so-far unopened, whose contents were unknown. Soldiers had been placed around the temple to prevent stealing and looting. The traditional guardian of the temple was the Maharajah of Travancore, 91-year-old Sri Uthradom Tirunal. The temple had been opened twice in recent history: in 1908 by archaeologists, when it was reported to be full of cobras, which frightened off the invaders; and in 1933, by the Maharajah's father – and Sri Uthradom had been present as a nine year old boy. No snakes were found in 1933, but it was then closed without anything being removed. The present Maharajah was reported to have opposed this third re-opening, and was 'worried about the consequences now the world knew about the treasure'.</p>
The Hook:	Investigating the richest treasure ever discovered – and untangling a mystery.
Subsidiary questions:	<p>Who needs the treasure the most?</p> <p>Should Treasure Vault B be opened?</p>
The 5 Ws:	
What's happening?	The world's biggest ever treasure has been discovered in a Hindu temple and there is controversy about who owns it and what should happen to it.
Who's it happening to?	The people of Trivandrum (Travancore), India, including the priests in the Hindu temple, the Maharajah, and political leaders.
Where is it happening?	Trivandrum, Kerala, India.
When is it happening?	Now (and in the past, in 1933).
What's at stake?	<p>For the poor of India: alleviation of poverty and child labour. For all the local citizens: possibilities of immediate wealth.</p> <p>For the priests and their followers, and the Maharajah: their ownership of the treasure, protection of its sacredness, and guardianship of the religious offerings.</p> <p>For the State and Federal Governments: opportunities for infrastructure - new hospitals and roads.</p> <p>For the tourist industry and for historians: opportunities for a fantastic</p>

museum of the world's richest treasure.

Focusing the action:	On the edge of the event: after the treasure vault is opened. The students will be enrolled as television reporters following the story, investigating people's opinions and negotiating with the titular guardian of the treasure, the Maharajah.
The teacher-in-role:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Charru, a Producer, India Television (main role, throughout)2. Indian child worker (day 4)[3. if available another teacher-in-role as her mother]
Space:	A large open space with enough chairs for all the students and teacher, and room to move around and re-organise that furniture.
Time:	five 1½ hour sessions on consecutive days.
Resources:	12 sentences about the find cut into two for the treasure hunt (lesson 1); the two letters from the Maharajah (lessons 2 and 4); simple percussion instruments and/or kathakali music (lessons 4 and 5); websites on Trivandrum's treasure.
Connected curriculum areas:	English, Geography, History, Dance.

The Unit as planned
(see also Teacher's prompt notes)

<i>Lesson step/ drama phase</i>	<i>Learning experiences</i>	<i>Roles</i>	<i>Use of space Resources</i>
Lesson 1 Preliminary discussion 5 mins	Explaining the unit, laying down the rules, outlining the basic structure, engaging the students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The drama is about treasure It involves solving a mystery and resolving problems It is set in India. 	Out of role	<u>Drama room</u> <i>At the talk chair</i>
1. Introductory focus game Optional –only if time 10 mins	a. Hunters and thieves game: 'thieves' pass a 'treasure' around surreptitiously, while 'hunters' try to spot who has it b. Variant (Baa Baa): thieves pass treasure while chanting nursery rhyme in unison, but have to change to next line every time the treasure is passed.	Students in game roles: Thieves and hunters	Object as 'treasure' <i>Whole class moving in cleared space</i>
2. Themed focus exercise – introducing the content 30 mins	Half-clues (sentences from news items that formed the pre-text, cut in half) are previously hidden round the room. Students are HUNTERS finding all the clues Students collaborate to find written fragments hidden round the room until everybody has one. Find the other half of your sentence and pair up with that student. Now put the sentences into order so they make a story.	Students in game roles: Hunters	Fragmented Trivandrum quotes [see attached] <i>Whole class moving</i> <i>Groups round table or floor space</i>
3. Presentation exercise 15 mins	In groups of six, students prepare freeze-frame NEWS PHOTOGRAPH – opening the temple – based on the information in the story. Five minutes to prepare. One group at a time, students show and view the pictures (with thought-tracking).	Students as actors	<i>In separate spaces for groups of 6 app.</i>
4. Starting the role-play, building belief 25 mins	a. Students to be treasure hunters, but in a different way – television media reporters. b. Introduce teacher-in-role convention, enrol students as 'India TV reporters'. Give out press cards with Indian name and photograph. c. Introduce teacher-in-role as India TV Producer Charru, then students background themselves, formally enter studio, and introduce themselves publicly to each other. d. First major task – interview the Maharajah to find out more – too old to leave Palace, so prepare interview questions to film and send him. e. Students present interview questions to camera for the Maharajah.	In-role reporters Teacher-in-role: Charru	<i>Firstly in talk chair.</i> <i>Seats in formation as 'ITV studio' ; whole class, seated</i> Press cards Reporters' notepads <i>Class in pairs presenting to 'the camera'</i>

5. Reflection 5 mins	What do students think the Maharajah will say? What have students enjoyed about today? What do they think they have learned?	Out of role	<i>Talk chair</i>
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Lesson 2 Preliminary discussion 5 mins	What have students remembered about yesterday's drama? Today the drama will be all in role as reporters in the studio and in a market.	Out of role	<i>Talk chair</i>
1. Enrolment and task-setting 15 mins	a. Enrol with press cards and formal entry to studio. Charru reports: still waiting for Maharajah's (imminent) reply. b. Meanwhile, reporters must get vox-pop interviews with citizens of Trivandrum on their views of the treasure and what should happen to it – explain vox-pop, and introduce street markets.	In-role reporters Teacher-in-role: Charru	<i>ITV Studio</i> Press cards and notepads
2. Experiential role-play 15 mins	a. Students divided up into pairs: A and B . As stay in studio and work out good vox pop questions (possibly using their notebooks). b. Bs remove press cards, leave studio and find a place in a Trivandrum street market, and a reason for being there. Two minutes to build belief in role-playing in street market, using occupational mime (see glossary). c. Then Bs move to interview them. Allow at least 5–7 minutes for interviews.	In-role reporters and citizens Teacher-in-role: Charru	<i>Into space outside studio as 'market'. Each student in their own space. Then pairs.</i> Notepads.
3. Role-play consolidation and theme development 15 mins	a. Return to studio – As put press cards back on. Bs report back what they have heard from the citizens. b. Towards the end Charru (or a messenger) interrupts with the arrival of the 1 st Letter from the Maharajah. The letter is read. The Maharajah mentions Chamber B, and challenges the reporters [See Maharajah's 1 st letter]. Charru leads discussion on the Maharajah's request, and demands more vox-pop interviews.	In-role reporters Teacher-in-role: Charru	<i>ITV studio</i> 1 st Letter from the Maharajah (see resources)
4. Experiential role-play 15 mins	a. Students divided up into pairs: A and B . Bs stay in studio, comprehending the Maharajah's three choices [NB, this can alternatively be done out of role in the talk chair] and working out good vox pop questions. b. As remove press cards, leave studio and find a place in the Trivandrum street market, and a reason themselves for being there. Two minutes to build belief in role-playing in street market, using occupational mime (see glossary). c. Then As move to interview them. Allow at least 5 – 7 minutes for interviews.	In-role as reporters and citizens Teacher-in-role: Charru	<i>Into space outside studio as 'market'. Each student in their own space. Then pairs.</i> Notepads.

<p>5. Role-play consolidation and further theme development</p> <p>20 mins</p>	<p>a. Return to studio – Bs put press cards back on. As start to report back what they have heard from the citizens.</p> <p>b. Charru interrupts passionately to contradict all the three choices with her own proposal: that the Maharajah is out of touch and that the money should be spent on India's greatest shame: child labour exploitation. She leads a discussion [NB, this can alternatively be done out of role in the talk chair] and persuades the reporters to help persuade the Maharajah. She says she knows a very poor mother and child labourer, who works in a sweet factory and sweatshop owned by the Maharajah's relative, whom she will bring to the studio tomorrow for interview. She urges them to do some research about child labour conditions in India.</p>	<p>In-role reporters</p> <p>Teacher-in-role: Charru</p>	<p><i>ITV studio</i></p> <p>Notepads.</p>
<p>6. Reflection</p> <p>5 mins</p>	<p>What do they think the Maharajah will say?</p> <p>What have students enjoyed about today?</p> <p>What do they think they have learned?</p>	<p>Out of role</p>	<p><i>Talk chair</i></p>

Lesson 3 Preliminary discussion 5 mins	What research have students done on child labour? Today the students will mostly be in-role as reporters interviewing the poor family, but firstly they will learn at first hand about child labour exploitation.	Out of role	<i>Talk chair</i>
1. Presenting: frozen effigy (see glossary) 30 mins	Students divided into groups of 4/5, and asked to depict a typical scene of child labour and exploitation, including children and adults. Five minutes preparation. Then each scene is shown starting with a freeze-frame, which is brought to life, including stopping and thought-tracking, and discussion with the audience groups.	Students as actors	<i>In groups each in its own space</i>
2. Preparing for role-play 5 mins	Back briefly in the talk chair, some discussion adds questions for the child labourers; the teacher explains she will change into second teacher-in-role as a labouring child [and introduces assistant if available – to play the mother].	Out of role	<i>Talk chair</i>
3. Role-play – hot-seat teacher-in-role 25 mins	a. Briefly, into the studio, with press cards and notebooks. Students rehearse questions for the poor family. b. Then teacher steps from Charru role, out of the studio into the ‘interview room’, and assumes Child role [Assistant takes Mother role in a second ‘interview room’, and the reporters are divided into two groups]. c. They make their way there and interview the teacher[s]-in-role, and take notes.	In-role reporters Teacher-in-role: - as Charru - as child - [Assistant as mother if available]	<i>ITV studio Notepads. Then if two teachers-in-role, each half group in an ‘interview room’: semicircle of chairs with one facing – teacher-in-role seated.</i>
4. Role-play: reporting back and theme development 20 mins	a. The reporters are recalled to the studio and Charru takes her place. They share what they have heard of the lives of the poor family. b. The group decides to challenge the Maharajah respectfully. The reporters in pairs work out what to say to the Maharajah to get him to change his mind and allow the treasure to be used to help alleviate child poverty, and tactfully to raise the question of his family’s possible complicity in exploitation. c. Students present questions to camera for the Maharajah.	In-role reporters Teacher-in-role: Charru	<i>ITV studio Notepads.</i>
5. Reflection 5 mins	How might the Maharajah respond? What have they learned? What have they enjoyed about today’s drama?	Out of role	<i>Talk chair</i>

Lesson 4 Preliminary discussion 5 mins	Brief recapitulation, then ready to re-enter the studio to hear the Maharajah's second reply.	Out of role	<i>Talk chair</i>
1. Role-play and theme development 15 mins	The reporters enter the studio, and Charru reads out the Maharajah's second letter. The reporters discuss it and decide to take up the Maharajah's latest challenge.	In-role reporters Teacher-in-role: Charru	<i>ITV studio</i> Notepads. 2 nd Letter from the Maharajah (see resources)
2. Explanation and logistics 5 mins	The reporters step out of role, and briefly back to the talk chair, where the organisation for devising and rehearsing the ceremony is explained. The ceremony will be performed the following morning.	Out of role	<i>Talk chair</i>
3. Devising and rehearsing performance for presenting 60 mins	<p>Planning the ceremony – emphasising respect. The teacher teaches basic steps for Kathakali, then in groups the students devise a brief processional ritual comprising procession, dance, and prayer to Vishnu. [This may be done by a school dance teacher, if available, as it was in this unit. If not, the following structure may be used, as it was in the pilot version of the unit.]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Game to practise some skills that will help with the ritual: e.g. Group clap; Group Hah! - low level; medium level; high level. Travelling Hah! as part of Mill and Seethe (see Glossary). Mill and Seethe - on the call take up the position of a Hero, Monster, Prince, Princess, Maharajah, Vishnu, Evil. Mirror Work. Demonstrate/practise a "walk" as per Kathakali dance. Follow the leader; walk in teams around the space. Beat is kept on drums. Show students images of hand positions from Kathakali (many books and websites are available). Allow students to practise hand positions. Ask them to think of how they might combine some of the elements already practised, including walk, hand positions, mirroring, postures into a short ritual sequence of 8 x 4 beats. Include a prayer/chant asking for Vishnu's favour for the chamber to be opened. Allow time to prepare the rituals. Each group shares its ritual with the others, then all are organised into a sequence to make an organic whole. 	Students as actors and dancers	<i>In open space; when in groups in designated spaces maximising their movement potential</i> Kathakali music or percussion instruments
4. Reflection 5 mins	Do students think their ceremony will be convincing enough to persuade the Maharajah and pacify Vishnu? What have they enjoyed about today?	Out of role	<i>Talk chair</i>

Lesson 5 Preliminary discussion 2 mins (or more)	Check with the students that they are ready to perform the ceremony in front of the 'cameras' for the Maharajah. [NB in this school many of the students had quite spontaneously decided to bring Indian or Indian-style costumes, which necessitated some preparatory changing.]	Out of role	<i>Talk chair</i>
1. Presenting: the ceremony 15 mins	a. Students go through a brief rehearsal to ensure they are ready to perform with skill and respect. b. Students perform their ceremony.	Students as actors and dancers	<i>On cleared open space.</i>
2. Reflection and theme development 5 mins	a. Back at the talk chair, the students and teacher discuss the performance. b. Time Jump 1 – just one day forward: The teacher narrates that the Maharajah was pleased with the performance and gave his permission for the money to be spent to alleviate child poverty and exploitation, and also for Chamber B to be opened.	Out of role Teacher as narrator	<i>Talk chair</i>
3. Presenting: frozen effigy 15 mins	What did they find? Students, in groups of 6 as for Lesson 1 Opening of Chamber A, prepare and present in turns a freeze frame followed by ten seconds of the picture brought to life to illustrate what the students think might be in Chamber B. This is performed by each group with thought-tracking.	Students as actors	<i>Students in groups in their own space.</i>
4. Discussion and final theme development	Briefly back at the talk chair, the teacher introduces Time Jump 2 – five years on. Discussion about the labourer's family five years on after being given a share of the treasure money. What changes might have happened for them... would it all be wine and roses? What about the factories and businesses that had depended on the child exploitation?	Out of role	<i>Talk chair</i>
5. Experiential role-play for reflection	a. Straight into pairs: As and Bs - as for Lesson 2 vox pop interviews. As as ITV interviewer (As put on press cards). Bs as the child labourer's parent five years on... what is their family life like and how has it changed? b. Reverse role-plays: B as interviewer (press card), A as child – same questions, but looking towards the future.	In-role reporters and parent or child	<i>Not necessary to revisit the studio at this point: separate pairs of chairs facing each other.</i>
6. Reflection in-role	Back to the studio with Charru, formally seated. Charru asks each reporter, in turn around the group, and very seriously, one after another without intervening comments, to speak 'to camera' one sentence that they had heard from their interviewee that crystallised what had happened to the poor family since they received some of the treasure.	In-role reporters	<i>ITV Studio</i>

	The teacher cuts and winds up the drama.		
7. Final reflection	<p>Back in the talk chair. What did the students like best about the drama? Why?</p> <p>What was most memorable? Were any parts difficult?</p> <p>What have they learned about India... about drama?</p>	Out of role	<i>Talk chair</i>