Teaching Arcadia
Acknowledgements

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ILLUSTRATIONS USED IN **TEACHING ARCADIA – EMC APPROACHES**

**Introducing Arcadia**
‘Et in Arcadia Ego’
Page 9: Claude Lorrain: *Pastoral Landscape* (1645) and Nicolas Poussin: *Spring (The Earthly Paradise)* (1660-1664)
Page 13: Nicolas Poussin: *Et in Arcadia Ego (Les Bergers d’Arcadie or The Arcadian Shepherds)* 1637- (1638) and Giovanni Francesco Barbieri (Guercino): *Et in Arcadia Ego* (also known as *The Arcadian Shepherds*) (c. 1618-1622)

**The Romantic and Classical**
‘Two Different Responses to the World’
Page 24: Claude Lorrain: *Landscape with Sacrifice to Apollo* (1662-3) and Salvator Rosa: *Landscape with Mercury and the Dishonest Woodman* (after 1649)

**From Classical to Romantic – Landscape Gardening**
Page 30: Thomas Hearne’s illustration of the Beautiful, drawn for Richard Payne Knight’s poem ‘The Landscape’ (1795)
Page 32: Wimpole Hall in Cambridgeshire England by Jan Kip and Leonard Knyff (early 18th century, Thomas Hearne’s illustration of the Beautiful and his illustration of the Picturesque, drawn for Richard Payne Knight’s poem ‘The Landscape’ (1795)

**Exploring the Final Scene**
**Continue to Dance**
Page 103: Nicolas Poussin: *Dance to the Music of Time* (1634-1635)

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An Overview of Teaching Arcadia

Teaching Arcadia – EMC Approaches provides resources, practical, critical and creative approaches on key areas of the play, especially those that often prove difficult, along with comprehensive teachers’ notes on the activities. It does not offer a scene-by-scene route through the play and is intended to supplement and enrich your own scheme of work.

The material is divided into eight sections, each with teachers’ notes, student activities and resources. The outline below provides guidance on when you and your students might tackle the different sections.

References to the play text are to the edition published by Faber & Faber.

Introducing Arcadia
- When: at the start of the play
- Aim: to explore the title of the play, with a focus on the pastoral
- Resources: no additional resources needed

The Romantic and Classical
- When: early on in the study of the play
- Aim: to explore the dichotomy of the two views of the world, and to introduce analysis of how this dichotomy is present in the play, whether it be through the characters’ views of the world, or through landscape architecture.
- Resources: access to extract from Handel’s Music for the Royal Fireworks (for example, http://youtube/27W4HKQLGFK) and to Schubert’s Unfinished Symphony (for example, http://youtube/OMNRHF7POJM); acetates or tracing paper

Patterns in Arcadia
- When: early on in the study of the play
- Aim: to reveal the method by which the play is structured, as well as to examine the way in which repetition adds to the meaning of the play.
- Resources: no additional resources needed

Exploring Structure
- When: during and towards the end of the study of the play
- Aim: to give an overview of the play, and to see how and why it is structured as it is. These activities also encourage the students to think about how the theatricality of the play and how its use of props adds to its meaning. The students will begin to analyse reasons for the doubling of events and characters and time zones.
- Resources: no additional resources needed

Science in Arcadia
- When: to be done during the study of the play
- Aim: to introduce the main theories that are used as metaphors in the play; to introduce the scientists and mathematicians behind those theories, and to show, through various activities, the relationship between the science, the maths and the play itself.
- Resources: hot cup of coffee and cream; box (size of a large matchbox) and ten red and ten yellow balls or tokens that will fit into the box; leaves (optional)
Exploring Comedy

- **When:** to be done either during or at the end of studying the play. The ‘warm-up’ activity on page 87 could be used as part of your before reading work on the play.
- **Aim:** to analyse the nature of the comedy used by Stoppard and the techniques he employs.
- **Resources:** no additional resources needed

Drama Activities

- **When:** ‘Six Characters’ activity can be done during reading. Final scene activities best done at the end of studying the play
- **Aim:** to explore Stoppard’s use of language, through drama, to create character, theme and genre
- **Resources:** a space in which to move around

Exploring the Final Scene

- **When:** to be done at the end of the play
- **Aim:** to tie together the various preoccupations of the play, with the starting point of a painting by Poussin
- **Resources:** no additional resources needed
Introducing Arcadia

Teachers’ Notes

‘ET IN ARCADIA EGO’

The aim of this session is to explore the title of the play, with a particular focus on the pastoral. This activity can be done as an initial introduction to the play or at any time during the students’ study. The images are also available to show in colour on a whiteboard. The activity is divided into four stages, with students given additional material to explore at each stage.

• Stage 1: Two Paintings: Claude Lorrain’s *Pastoral Landscape* (1645) and Nicolas Poussin’s *Spring* (*The Earthly Paradise*) (1660-1664)

Students might highlight the fact that both paintings include blue sky, lush, rolling hills and present an idyllic rural or pastoral image. Some students may pick up on the allusions to the Biblical story of Adam and Eve in Poussin’s painting and so begin to question the image of paradise: the Christian Garden of Eden is one in which the pastoral is marred by the presence of the apple, and, by implication, the serpent. This is a paradise where the pursuit of knowledge leads to death. Interestingly Nicolas Poussin’s Neoclassical painting *Spring* (1660-1664) was used as the front curtain of the original production of Stoppard’s *Arcadia*; a point worth sharing with students as they study the play.

• Stage 2: Two Definitions and Two Poems: Christopher Marlowe’s ‘The Passionate Shepherd to his Love’ (c. 1595) and a translation of Theocritus’ ‘Idyll XII’ (attrib.) (c. 320-260 B.C.)

As the students read the extract from Marlowe’s poem, they should begin to see links between it and Claude Lorrain’s pastoral – the idyllic representation of the rural landscape.

• Stage 3: Two More Paintings: Nicolas Poussin’s *Et in Arcadia Ego/The Arcadian Shepherds* (1637-1638) and Giovanni Francesco Barbieri (Guercino)’s *Et in Arcadia Ego* (also known as *The Arcadian Shepherds*) (c. 1618-1622)

Poussin and Guercino’s paintings share the title *Et in Arcadia Ego*, and are also both known (in some variants) as *The Arcadian Shepherds*. As these two paintings are added to the mix, any student who did not pick up on the dark undertones in *Spring* will now begin to see the idyllic image of Arcadia as flawed: it is a flawed paradise. Poussin’s painting shows shepherds discovering a tomb, engraved with the Latin phrase ‘Et in Arcadia Ego’. There are varying interpretations of this phrase. The phrase has no verb, so the word ‘et’ could be translated as ‘even’ or ‘also’. Therefore, it has been translated either as ‘I, who am now dead, also once lived in Arcadia’ (i.e. the dead person was once in the shepherds’ rural idyll), or as ‘I, too, am in Arcadia’ (the speaker being either the shepherd, or the dead person, or the viewer – as Lady Croom states). It is generally accepted that it means ‘Even in Arcadia I (am there)’, which, given that it is on a tomb, suggests that death is always present, regardless of what paradise we live in. It is this interpretation that is prevalent in the play where death cuts through the happiness, wealth, stability, beauty, intellectual prowess and time. Stoppard apparently wanted to call his play ‘Et in Arcadia Ego’, precisely because he wanted the idea of death in the title, but it was seen as rather wordy and not very catchy.

• Stage 4: Quotations from *Arcadia*

A Variation

An alternative way of organising the activity would be to divide the class into groups and to give each group of students a different cluster of material to explore and feedback on, either in whole class discussion or in sharing groups.
**Introducing Arcadia – Student Activities**

In this activity you will be exploring some images and extracts from literary texts.

**‘ET IN ARCADIA EGO’**

**Two Paintings (page 9)**

Your teacher will give you two paintings to look at. The titles of the paintings are: *Pastoral Landscape* and *Spring (The Earthly Paradise)*.

1. Study the two paintings and jot down what comes to mind as you look at them.

**Two Definitions and Two Poems (pages 10-12)**

2. Read the definitions below, then read the seventeenth-century poem ‘The Passionate Shepherd to his Love’ and ‘Idyll XII’, the translation of a classical Greek poem.

   **Pastoral** – a work of art, literature, music or a musical play that depicts the countryside in an idyllic way. Pastoral scenes were popular in Classical Greece and Rome and again from the 15th to 18th centuries. They were frequently peopled with shepherds and shepherdesses or with mythological figures such as nymphs and satyrs.

   *adapted from The Hutchinson Dictionary of Ideas, 1994*

   **Arcadia** from Gk Arkadia, a mountainous district in the Peloponnese. Used as a name for an ideal region of rural contentment.

   *adapted from OED*

3. In pairs, share your understanding and first thoughts about the poem and the translation, using the definitions of Arcadia and pastoral to help you. For example, what kind of world is being depicted in these poems? How would you describe the mood or tone of this world?

4. Still working with your partner, try to make links between the paintings and the poems, particularly the landscapes and the type of characters each depicts.

5. Join up with another pair and compare the connections you’ve noticed between the paintings and the literary texts.

**Two More Paintings (page 13)**

6. Now look at the second pair of paintings from the first half of the seventeenth century. They are both called *Et in Arcadia Ego*.

7. How do these paintings alter or complicate your impression of the way the other paintings of this era depicted Arcadia?

**Quotations from Arcadia (page 14)**

8. Now read the extracts from *Arcadia* on page 14.

9. Work in pairs to find any links between these extracts and the paintings and poems you have just studied. You may want to think about:

   - mood
   - ideas
   - themes
   - subject

10. Pool all your ideas as a class, to give you an overview of the concept of Arcadia. You can use this overview as a reference point for your class discussion as you study the play.
RESOURCES FOR ‘INTRODUCING ARCADIA’
Two Paintings (1)

Claude Lorrain: *Pastoral Landscape* (1645)

Nicolas Poussin: *Spring (The Earthly Paradise)* (1660-1664)
Two Poems
The Passionate Shepherd to His Love

Come live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That hills and valleys, dale and field,
And all the craggy mountains yield.

There will we sit upon the rocks,
And see the shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow rivers to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

There I will make thee beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroider’d all with leaves of myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Fair linèd slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs;
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me, and be my love.

Thy silver dishes for thy meat
As precious as the gods do eat,
Shall on an ivory table be
Prepared each day for thee and me.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May-morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my love.

Christopher Marlowe c1595
Theocritus: Idyll XII (attrib.)
(c. 320-260 B.C.)

Art come, dear youth? two days and nights away!
(Who burn with love, grow aged in a day.)
As much as apples sweet the damson crude
Excel; the blooming spring the winter rude;
In fleece the sheep her lamb; the maiden in sweetness
The thrice-wed dame; the fawn the calf in fleetness;
The nightingale in song all feathered kind-
So much thy longed-for presence cheers my mind.
To thee I hasten, as to shady beech,
The traveller, when from the heaven’s reach
The sun fierce blazes. May our love be strong,
To all hereafter times the theme of song!
‘Two men each other loved to that degree,
That either friend did in the other see
A dearer than himself. They loved of old
Both golden natures in an age of gold.

O father Zeus! ageless immortals all!
Two hundred ages hence may one recall,
Down-coming to the irremeable river,
This to my mind, and this good news deliver:
‘E’en now from east to west, from north to south,
Your mutual friendship lives in every mouth’
This, as they please, th’ Olympians will decide:
Of thee, by blooming virtue beautified,
My glowing song shall only truth disclose;
With falsehood’s pustules I’ll not shame my nose.
If thou dost sometime grieve me, sweet the pleasure
Of reconcilement, joy in double measure
To find thou never didst intend the pain,
And feel myself from all doubt free again.

And ye Megarians, at Nesaea dwelling,
Expert at rowing, mariners excelling,
Be happy ever! for with honors due
Th’ Athenian Diocles, to friendship true
Ye celebrate. With the first blush of spring
The youth surround his tomb: there who shall bring
The sweetest kiss. whose lip is Purest found,
Back to his mother goes with garlands crowned.
Nice touch the arbiter must have indeed,
And must, methinks, the blue-eyed Ganymede
Invoke with many prayers-a mouth to own
True to the touch of lips, as Lydian stone
To proof of gold-which test will instant show
The pure or base as money changers know.’

*translated by Edward Carpenter*