



Here is some informational material that you may wish to use after the performance in your classroom to help extend the adventure of **DADA** for your students.

“Why not beforehand?” you may ask. Given the playful nature of the show, we believe it is wise to leave it up to the students to enjoy the discovery. In other words, it is important to keep the element of surprise. There are three performers in **DADA**, two of whom are identical twins, and they use their physical similarity as part of the act. If you could avoid revealing to the kids that three different people are performing, we would greatly appreciate it.

After the performance, the kids will be all the more motivated to complete their various projects.

It would, however, be helpful to explain to younger children who are about to see their first performance that listening is of paramount importance when attending the show. This is especially important to remember in a performance that is punctuated with humour and stunning physical feats: kids must be able to go back to listening.

We invite students and their teachers to write to us with feedback on the show. The younger ones may send us drawings.

Enjoy the show!

A SHORT HISTORY OF L'AUBERGINE

Co-founded in 1974 by Paul Vachon, Josette Déchène and Lina Vachon, the company of L'Aubergine has carved out a unique niche by specializing in clowning theatre performances.

To date, L'Aubergine has produced some fifty theatrical creations for young people and family audiences, leaving a lasting impression on hundreds of thousands of spectators. **DADA** was created in 2013.

A SHORT HISTORY OF DADA



According to the Larousse French dictionary, **DADA** can mean any of the following: Favourite occupation or idea, choice topic of conversation; pet peeve, hobby.

The director's original idea and starting point: Leopold Minute, a clockmaker by profession, has been repairing, adjusting and reconditioning watches, clocks and alarm clocks for his customers for several years. He works with great intuition and attention to detail, always on the lookout for the perfect solutions to mechanical problems.

Split between his passion and his pastime, Leopold is lulled and rocked to sleep, but for a few seconds, by the ticking sounds in his shop, almost hypnotized...

A SHORT HISTORY OF TIME

The first instrument used to measure the passage of time was the sundial. The oldest models were found in Egypt. The sundial's operation is simple and silent. It is the movement of the shadow cast by an object over the course of the day which indicates the solar time. However, these devices were not very reliable because they depended on sunshine. This means that on cloudy days, no shadow was visible. The daily duration of sunlight, which varies from one season to another, also distorted measurements. Besides, a sundial only works during the daytime, and not at night.

In 1500 BC, time was measured with a clepsydra, or water clock. This was the first system that enabled humans to tell time accurately, as it did not depend on external events. It is made up of a vessel with a hole in it to let the water it contains flow into another vessel with graduated marks on it to indicate time scale. Over time, several improvements were made to the clepsydra.

Then, in the seventh century, the hourglass appeared, where water had been replaced by sand. The hourglass is less accurate than the clepsydra, but it works even in cold temperatures. Its disadvantage is that it only measures a specific duration and must be flipped upside down often. It is still used today in the kitchen to prepare hard-boiled eggs, and also to measure duration in some board games. "Candle clocks," or thin candles with graduated markings on them that disappear as the candle burns, have also been used to tell time.

The first mechanical clocks appeared in the seventeenth century. They did not necessarily feature a dial, and many had an hour hand only. But back then, the clock lacked precision. It became much more precise when equipped with a pendulum.



A person who makes, repairs or sells time-measuring devices (watches, pendulums, clocks, etc.) is called a watchmaker. Watchmaking is considered a craft because a watchmaker is self-employed and practices manual labour that requires specific skills and often meticulous care and patience.

ELEMENTS OF DRAMA

DADA is a collective creation.

Collective drama creation relies on collaboration to produce an act as a group. The actor turns into a creative artist and uses acting to express his or her own experiences. The director channels everyone's ideas and brings them together into a whole.

Other creators are also part of the team and express themselves with different elements of drama, which are, for **DADA**:

Set Design: The scenic artist designs the visual environment of the stage (the set).

Lighting Design: The lighting designer highlights (quite literally) the work of the set designer and enhances the appearance of the stage. He or she creates different moods and environments on stage by targeting certain areas with several spotlights fitted with coloured gels.

Sound Design: The composer creates a sound environment that emphasizes the characters' actions or emotions. This can be achieved through original musical pieces and/or adaptations, as well as sound effects that evoke certain situations.

Props: All of the props used in the show have been specifically selected or designed to help tell the story. They can be either useful or playful. Given the acrobatic feats of the performers, they must also be safe.

Costumes: Costumes underline the characters' natures. They must be created in connection with the set design and allow the performer to be physically at ease.

LIVE SOUNDSCAPE

In **DADA**, the artists use conventional music instruments in addition to various objects that produce sound, the latter being referred to as "non-conventional."

Musical instruments are classified according to their method of sound production: winds, brass and percussion.



THE ACCORDION

The accordion belongs to the bellows-driven free-reed aerophone (or "squeezebox") instrument family. The sound is produced by thin sheets (free reeds) that are made to vibrate when air blows through them. This air comes from the movement of the bellows operated by the accordionist. The musician expands and compresses the central bellows placed between the two sides of the instrument, each of which has a keyboard where the notes are played with keys. Each key corresponds to one reed. The length of the reeds determines the pitch of the sound. The longer they are, the lower the tone they produce will be; high-pitched sounds are therefore produced by shorter reeds.

It's called an "accordion" because one simply has to press a key for a harmonious "accord" to resonate.

Who invented the accordion? The answer to this often-asked question is “somebody.” But a “somebody” who would have “invented the accordion” in his or her workshop has never existed. The various parts of this instrument all have their own history and many manufacturers of instruments have contributed to making the accordion evolve into what it is today.

The accordion has ancient origins dating back to the appearance of the *sheng*, or “mouth organ,” in China around 3000 BC. This is the instrument we see here in the picture.

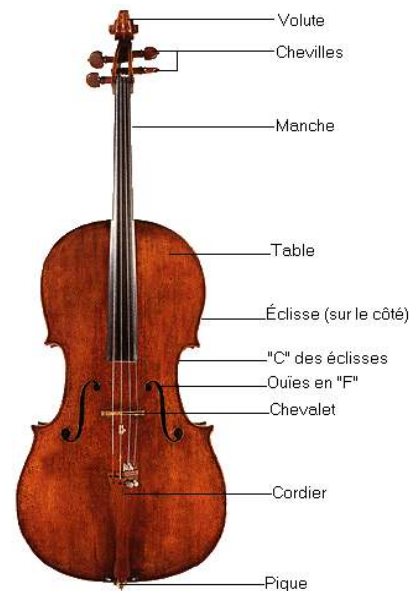


Accordion de Demian

It was on May 6, 1829, in Vienna, that the organ and piano maker Cyril Demian and his sons patented the name “accordion.” Their instrument bore little resemblance to the accordion as we know it today, but it is nevertheless considered the first.

THE CELLO

The cello is part of the violin family, that is, the bowed string family. It has four strings. The cellist makes the string vibrate with a bow, which is a wooden stick fitted with stretched horsehair. The strings can also be plucked, which is called *pizzicato*. The cello is played seated, holding the instrument between the legs and resting on the floor on its endpin.



THE CIRCUS ARTS IN DADA

THE UNICYCLE



The unicycle is composed of three elements: a wheel, a saddle (seat), and a crankset fixed directly to the wheel.

It is most often used in the circus, though some people use it for their travel needs, much like a regular bicycle. Around 1980, unicycling became a competitive sport. Many sports are played on unicycles as well: hockey, long and high jumps, off-roading, mono-basketball, sprinting and endurance running, and more. There are even World Unicycle Championships, or UNICON. The first UNICON event was held in New York in 1984. This event was held in our province in Gatineau (Hull) in 1991, and

then in Quebec City in 1994, when the Quebec team was crowned World Champions in Unicycle Basketball.

Known to increase concentration as well as balance and motor coordination, unicycling plays an important role in the physical and mental development of unicyclists. As a matter of fact, Japan incorporated this discipline in its public school curriculum in 1989.

The unicycle was born by accident, towards the early twentieth century. Its ancestor is the velocipede (or “grand-bi”). The two-wheeled velocipede was risky to use—if the rider braked suddenly, the small rear wheel would rise up off the ground, and the rider would be left balancing only on the large front wheel. This inspired engineers to develop a cycle with only one wheel.



JUGGLING

Juggling is another technique used by the artists of **DADA**. It is the oldest discipline associated with the circus. This exercise of skill usually involves throwing multiple objects into the air and catching them in rapid succession.



The term “juggling” is derived from the Latin word “joculari,” which means “to jest.”

In **DADA**, you will find juggling performances with balls and musical bells. However, jugglers can be very creative and at times even reckless: some use knives, flaming torches, and even running chainsaws. Others enhance their performance with acrobatic or dance movements, or even magic.

Juggling can be practiced alone, in pairs, and even in groups of three or more people.

<http://www.jongle.net/>

Ideas for Learning Activities to Help Develop Skills in the Dramatic Arts

Skill 1: Invent Short Scenes

Invent a short scene where a character is immersed in a fictional world inspired by his or her hobby. Example: A stamp collector who enters the scenes that appear on his or her stamps.

Invent a short scene where the hobby of a character comes to life and takes control of his or her life. Example: Chess game pieces that come alive.

Skill 2: Perform Short Scenes

Using short text excerpts (monologues):

- go from a state of consciousness to dreaming, by playing on contrasts. Example: rhythm: slow/fast; acting emphasis: minimal/maximal.
- interpret short scenes involving a theatrical technique that L’Aubergine appreciates a lot: clowning!
 - Repetition
 - Exaggeration

All elements of drama can be used as a basis for clowning: both physical and vocal elements. Example: the same action repeated several times, exaggerating a little bit more each time (scene of the catapult).

Skill 3: Appreciate Dramatic Works

Did you notice significant similarities or differences in the dramatic language (physical or vocal elements) of the two consciences in **DADA**?

Example: one is flexible and slow, the other is rigid and fast.

Which emotions did you feel during Leopold's nightmare?

Which emotions did you feel during the show?

Were they similar to the emotions of any of the characters?

OTHER FIELDS OF TRAINING

DADA is an artistic work that incorporates different fields of training, particularly music and physical education.

The arts: Music

Suggestions of learning activities related to music:

With an instrument, produce sounds that can express various emotions.

With an instrument, produce various rhythms to express emotions.

With various instruments, find sounds that can accompany different actions (sound effects).

Personal development: Health and Physical Education

Suggestions of learning activities related to health and physical education:

Explore circus arts:

Working on balance; alone or in pairs, on the ground, on a fixed object.

Juggling on the floor.

Juggling with one, two, or three balls.

Those are just a few suggestions for developing and pursuing the adventure of Mr. Leopold in the classroom with your students. Of course, this is meant to inspire you and invite you to make the pleasure last.

Have fun!