

WICKED IDEAS FOR CROSS CURRICULUM CONTENT AND VALUES OF THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The overarching themes in **WICKED** are, amongst others, understanding difference and diversity, ethical principles, being a good citizen, trust, friendship, gender and the social construction and portrayal of gender stereotypes as well as the individual versus the group. These make **WICKED** ideal as a vehicle for the inclusion of Cross Curriculum content in a range of WA subject courses. The lessons below could just as easily be used for English or History e.g. Propaganda.

WICKED The Theme of Popularity (suitable for students year 5 to year 9)

*Pre-teaching activity - Try the quiz 'Are You More Glinda or Elphaba?' This can be downloaded from WICKEDthemusicaleducation.com.au. Below is a summary of the characters in terms of their "popularity" to help teachers familiarise them with students. Teachers may also wish to use the "Popularity" section of the **WICKED: Bullying, Belonging and Integrity** PowerPoint presentation on the website.*

We could not have two more polar opposites in the two **WICKED** witches. Galinda is popular, vivacious, pretty, feminine and confident, and Elphaba is not. By all measures of what makes a person popular, Elphaba would rate poorly, and yet it is she who finds love and friendship, whilst Galinda looks on. These changing fortunes are at the heart of **WICKED**.

In **WICKED**, Galinda pretends to Elphaba that the black "witch" hat is the height of fashion and puts it on her head. Elphaba trusts her and it becomes the hat made famous in Wizard of Oz:

**IT'S REALLY, UH, SHARP, DON'T YOU THINK?
YOU KNOW -- BLACK IS THIS YEAR'S PINK**

Galinda's "joke" is lost on Elphaba. Their backgrounds and aspirations seem so different. Being socially adept, especially in matters of fashion, Galinda is fully aware of the effect the hat will have on Elphaba's peers.

Teachers can use the following stimulus questions as part of a one-off lesson or over a number of weeks in conjunction with other content relating to the theme of "popularity".

- Class discussion: which fashion items would be "acceptable" / "unacceptable" to wear to a party (boys AND girls). What makes them one or the other?
- In what circumstances could any of the items from the "unacceptable" be made to be "acceptable"?
- Why do people tend to follow trends, ignore trends or deliberately buck trends? What qualities do they have that makes them choose that particular path?

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WICKED Identity and Self Concept (suitable for students year 3 to year 9)

Pre-teaching activity: write the following quote from “Defying Gravity” on the board and ask students to discuss what it might mean - I’m through accepting limits / ‘Cause someone says they’re so / Some things I cannot change / But till I try, I’ll never know

Teachers can integrate this activity in a number of ways; as an extended task into a series of 2 to 3 Art lessons, as an end-of-unit activity where either themes of identity or autobiographical texts have been explored, or as a one-off lesson, for example in Health.

- Using a mirror, make a quick sketch of your face using materials of your choice, from the top of your hair to the bottom of your neck. Be careful to draw only what you see, as if you were a different person sketching your face.
- You are going to use this sketch as a starting point to create a 2D image of “your self”. **This image should represent your personality as well as your physical appearance.** As well as colours and other artistic media, you can use photographs, text excerpts, fabrics and other objects that have meaning to you, to create an **autobiographical representation of you.**
- Try to include something surprising or unexpected in your work – consider the things that other people in your class may not know about you. Think about how the artistic media you choose can be combined to express emotions.
- When completed, consider the characters of Elphaba and Galinda from WICKED – how much of their true personality is revealed by their outward appearance?

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WICKED Propaganda (suitable for students in year 7 and above)

Pre-teaching activity: Teachers introduce or revise the idea of propaganda – the act of spreading false or misleading information to further a political cause. Derived from the Latin root propagand, which means “that which ought to be spread,” the word took on its current meaning during World War I, when the first attempts were made to sway public opinion through the media. Discussion questions: How many propaganda techniques can you recognize in the world around you? How can you spot propaganda and protect yourself from being fooled?

Teachers may use this as a cross-curriculum activity in a range of subjects, taking up to 2 lessons depending on whether it is used as a stand-alone activity or in combination with another topic or text. This activity will work best after students have seen WICKED, but it is not essential.

NB: more resources and lesson ideas on Propaganda are available as a PowerPoint at [add direct link](#).

1. Students form discussion groups. Each group is given one of the propaganda tool cards below. Each card has a definition of the propaganda tool and an example of how it is used in **WICKED**.
2. Groups are to discuss the propaganda tool they have been given and come up with **another example** – this may be from **WICKED**, from real life, or an imagined scenario.
3. Each group pairs up with another group – they are to explain their propaganda tool to the other group in their own words and give the example they have devised. When done, these two groups swap cards and repeat step 2.
4. When done, groups share their two devised examples with the rest of the class.

Argument by Generalization: attacking an entire group or class of people (or Animals, in **WICKED**)

The blackboard in Doctor Dillamond’s classroom is defaced with the saying “Animals should be seen and not heard,” an example of Argument by Generalization.

The Fallacy of Extension : (sometimes referred to as Straw Man): exaggerating your opponent’s position to make it an easy target.

*Knowing that Elphaba supports the rights of Animals, Madame Morrible might exaggerate: “The **WICKED** Witch wants to destroy us all by leaving us defenceless against our vicious animal enemies.”*

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Argument from Adverse Consequences: an appeal to fear on the part of the listener.

Rumors are spread that Elphaba is dangerous and evil. The citizens of Oz are encouraged to band together, uniting in their irrational fear of Elphaba.

Argument from Authority: referring to an authority to bolster your case.

“If the Wizard says Elphaba is WICKED, why then it must be true.”

Appeal to Widespread Belief (also called the **Bandwagon Argument**): asserting that since everyone believes something, it therefore must be true.

“Everyone knows witches are evil.”

Slippery Slope Argument: the argument that one action will necessarily lead to another.

“If we allow Animals to have freedom of movement, then soon the entire country will be overrun with talking animals.”

Transfer / strength by association – using the power of a positive symbol (such as a flag or an emblem) to give credence to a person or an idea.

If Glinda were to make a speech in front of the Ozian flag, the audience would be likely to perceive her as patriotic, virtuous and “good.”

Argument by Personal Charm: a speaker’s personal charisma and appeal is used to create trust with the audience.

Glinda uses this constantly: “It’s good to see me, isn’t it?”

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5. The teacher explains that the most basic part of critical thinking is asking questions, including:

Where is this information coming from?

Who gains by it?

What evidence is there to support this?

Is this appealing to my emotions, or to my reason?

6. Students reflect on the different examples given on the propaganda tools cards (or other examples produced by the teacher or students) by asking the questions given in step 5 for each.