

This book belongs to

SLINGSBY

- Journey In Wonder -



The Young King

By *Oscar Wilde* and Adapted by *Nicki Bloom*



ACTIVITY BOOK

Created by *Hannah McCarthy-Oliver*

Design by *Andy Ellis*

Materials have been created to support younger student audiences.

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

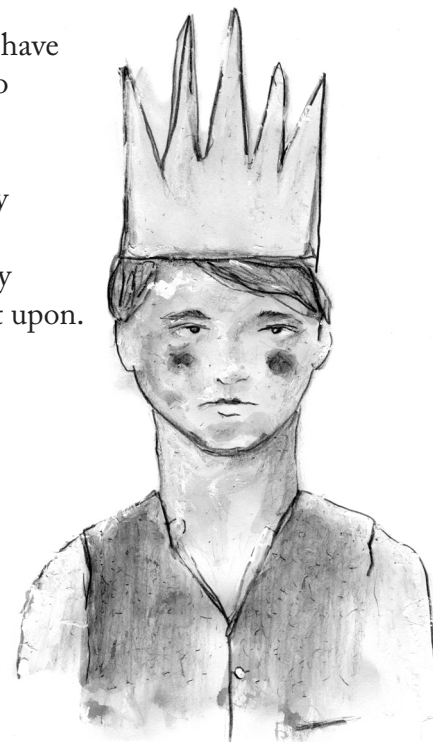
Welcome to **The Young King** Activity Book. We are very pleased to have worked with Hannah McCarthy-Oliver to develop these activities so that you can get the most out of your theatre experience. The most important thing for you to remember is that your memories of your time in the theatre are unique to you. As we make each new Slingsby show, we think a lot about the experience we want our audience members to have. However, we know that the real meaning of a story lives within you, and the things you think, feel, remember and reflect upon.

Enjoy the world and the story of **The Young King**.

Andy Packer

Artistic Director

Slingsby



MESSAGE FROM THE EDUCATIONAL ADVISOR

I have so enjoyed putting together these activities for you and I hope you have fun working through them. Slingsby's **The Young King** is such a special show and there is much to learn from the story. I hope your whole experience will be positive and give you plenty to think about, both in terms of creativity and the themes of the show.

Included in this book are activities for before and after the show.

There are web links mentioned throughout these resources and you can access them all easily by visiting the address below. We'd love you to send through some of your responses and designs to us. We're really interested in discovering what you think and posting your work to share with other audience members. Thanks for coming along!

Hannah McCarthy-Oliver

Education Advisor

Slingsby

All links in this Activity Book are online at www.slingsby.net.au/tyk_education

SYNOPSIS

Listen to this short version of **The Young King** story read by our Storyteller here:
<https://soundcloud.com/slingsbytheatre/the-young-king-synopsis>

Once there was a princess who dearly loved a poor woodland man. For this, she was banished by her father, the King. The couple had a baby. But he was stolen away in the night. The Princess and her woodlander died, brokenhearted. The baby boy was raised by a goatherd in a deep forest.

Years passed and the King neared the end of his life. He called for his grandson to be brought to the palace. "You are not a young goatherd," he said, "you are the Young King".

And the Young King gladly threw aside his rough goatherd's cloak and staff. He embraced the glittering riches of the palace. For his coronation, the Young King demanded the most rare and costly silks and jewels for his robe, sceptre and crown.

On the eve of his coronation, in his velvet-canopied bed, the Young King was visited by three dreams. In the first, pale, crooked children bent over looms of golden thread to weave the King's robe. In the second, a slave drew his last breath diving for pearls for the King's sceptre. And in the third, a deep mining pit of disease and famine brought forth rubies for the King's crown. The Young King awoke in deep distress.

He shunned the robe, sceptre and crown and reached instead for his humble goatherd's cloak and staff. He made a circlet of briar thorns for his head. His courtiers beseeched him: "how shall the people know you are King?" The townsfolk laughed, then grew angry: "don't you know, from your luxury comes our living?"

In turmoil, the Young King walked away from the palace to the edge of the city. He walked to where the forest began. And as the woodland welcomed him, he felt his heart and his step lighten. He turned to face the people one last time. And the sunlight beamed down and wove about him a robe brighter than gold, and his staff blossomed with lilies whiter than pearls, and his circlet of briar bloomed with roses redder than rubies. And he, and all the world around, knew he was King.

Synopsis written by Jane Goldney

Do you know the meaning of these words?

Banished, woodlander, goatherd, coronation, sceptre, eve, canopied, looms, forth, shunned, circlet, briar, beseeched, luxury, turmoil, lilies, rubies.

If not, check a dictionary or ask your teacher.





CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

The Young King by Oscar Wilde
Adapted for the stage by Nicki Bloom



Character List

Young King	A boy raised in the forest by a humble goatherd, who discovers he is heir to the throne of the Kingdom.
Old King	Grandfather of the Young King, who banished his own daughter for falling in love, and having a child, with the wrong man.
Princess	The daughter of the Old King who falls in love with a woodsman and gives birth to the Young King, but dies after he is stolen from her. The Princess was an artist and she wore the scent of lilies.
Woodsman	A free man who lived in the forest and fell in love with the Princess. The Young King's father.
Goatherd	A man living a simple life deep in the forest, tending goats. He discovers the Young King as a baby left on his doorstep and raises him as his own son.
The Hunters	A band of ruffians working for the Old King who find the Young King living in the forest and bring him to the palace.
The Pages	Attendants who dress, bathe and take care of the Young King at the palace.
Weaver	A craftsman suffering under terrible workhouse conditions, weaving the gold silk for the Young King's robe.
Master of the Galley	The captain of a slave ship searching for pearls to decorate the Young King's sceptre.
Diver	A young slave forced to repeatedly dive underwater to search for the most beautiful pearl for the Young King's sceptre.
Death	A personified force that brings death to men toiling in a mine pit.
Avarice	A personified force that greedily refuses to share three simple grains of corn, angering Death, which results in the murder of all the men in a mine pit.
Courtier	An attendant at the palace (higher status than the Pages) who attempts to convince the Young King to ignore his dreams and put on the robe, sceptre and crown that were created for his coronation.
Soldier	One of the Old King's guard who mocks the Young King for bringing shame on the kingdom.
The People	The citizens of the kingdom who follow the Young King as he leaves the palace and call on him to change his mind and wear the robe, sceptre and crown befitting a king.

ARE YOU READY TO JOURNEY IN WONDER?

Soon you will meet the Young King in his world of performance and exploration that Slingsby Theatre Company has created at the top of the Myer Centre in Adelaide. Before you see the show, here are some questions you might like to think about, answer and discuss.

What is a play?

What is a theatre?

What is an actor?

What is a director?

In theatre, what does a designer do?

Have you been to see a live theatre show before? YES/NO If yes please list what shows you have seen.

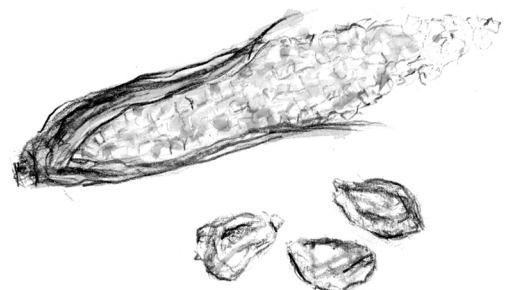
In your own words, what do you think **The Young King** will be about?

What day, date and time are you going to see the show?

What do you need to remember to do before you see **The Young King**?

How do you think audience members should conduct themselves when in a theatre?

Why do you think this is important?





This is Mr Oscar Wilde, the author of the story **The Young King**.

He was born in Dublin Ireland on the 16th October 1854 and is regarded as one of the greatest writers of the English language. He studied at Trinity College in Ireland and Oxford University in England.

In his short lifetime, he wrote nine plays, many poems, one novel, lots of short stories and essays. His work is imaginative, witty and often very emotionally moving.

He lived an opulent life indulging in art, beauty and pleasures of the senses. Eventually this led him to the wrong side of the law and he was sent to prison for two years, where his health suffered terribly. Oscar Wilde died from meningitis on 30th November 1900 aged just 46, with little money and a sad heart.

The Young King is one of the short stories contained in Wilde's publication of stories for young people, *The House of Pomegranates*.

In Wilde's original story, the young king is crowned in a church, and it is God who decides that he shall be made king. The young king does not want to wear his fancy robes and jewels. He does not condone the sacrifice made by the poor, who struggled to create them. God shows his approval of the young king's heart and this is shown by a beautiful light which illuminates him through a stained glass window. In Slingsby's show, the young king is crowned by nature in the forest.

You can watch some other Oscar Wilde stories on YouTube. Here are some links.

The Selfish Giant - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=btNVUWkg7M>

The Happy Prince - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QIwupcYwimY>

The Star Child - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zOplh4tTvLc> (AUDIO)

DREAMS

Dictionary.reference.com gives these definitions for the word DREAM:

A succession of images, thoughts, or emotions passing through the mind during sleep.

An involuntary vision occurring to a person when awake.

An aspiration; goal; aim.

The Young King has many dreams, and he uses them to guide his actions.

When you sleep, do you dream? YES/NO

Do you daydream? YES/NO

Are your dreams in colour or are they black and white?

Can you remember any of your dreams? If yes, please write about one you remember:

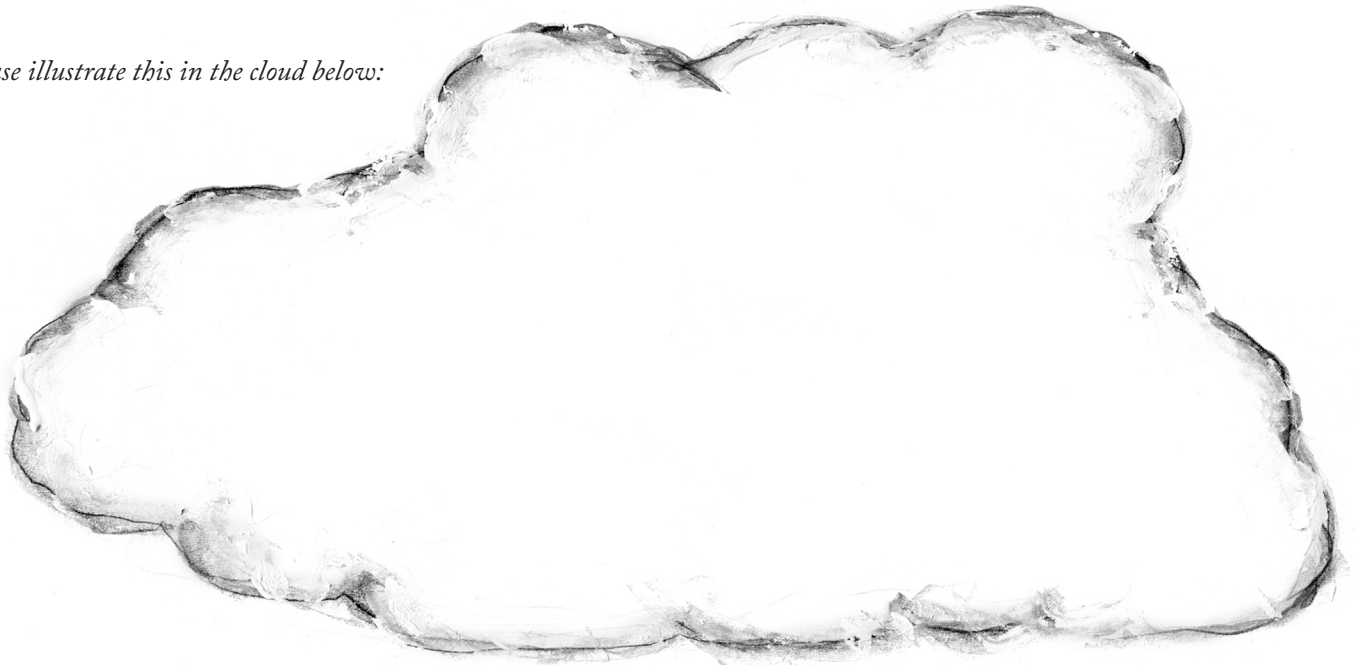
Do you think this dream was trying to teach you anything about your life? YES/NO

If yes, please explain?

What type of person do you dream of becoming one day?

What is your dream for the world?

Please illustrate this in the cloud below:



HOW WILL THEY KNOW YOU ARE KING?

In the following questions, think about what makes a King (or Queen) and how you might behave as a ruler.



Who are you? *(Describe your own character and personality)*

If YOU were told you were going to be crowned King or Queen... How would you feel?

What type of King or Queen would you be?

What would you like about being the ruler of a kingdom?

What might be some of the challenges of being a King or Queen?

How would you treat the citizens of your kingdom?

What rules would you make?

What would the consequences be if your subjects broke your rules?

IN THE SPACE BELOW... DESIGN YOUR CROWN AND SCEPTRE

If you worked in a theatre company, what job would you like to have? (CIRCLE)

You may need to go online and research what each of these roles are before you make your decision.

Actor, Director, Producer, Usher, Front of House Manager, Costume/Makeup Designer, Playwright, Lighting Designer/Operator, Sound Designer/Operator, Composer, Dramaturge, Multimedia Designer/Operator, Theatre Technician, Marketing, Educational Advisor.

While you are online, take some time to research the following things:

The Adelaide Festival, the Adelaide Fringe Festival and Slingsby Theatre Company.

Make handwritten notes of the interesting facts you discover.

Can you also...

Make a list of all the theatre companies in Adelaide?

Make a list of all the theatres you can find in Adelaide?

Compile a list of all the places you can study to gain skills that you need to work in theatre in Adelaide?



NOW YOU HAVE SEEN THE SHOW

In class, close your eyes and sit in silence for at least a minute and try to remember everything you can about your experience of **The Young King**. As soon as you open your eyes... try to **DRAW** your memories.

We would love you to take a close up photo of your picture and send to us via email at **schools@slingsby.net.au**

Some of your work may be posted on our website – please include your name, year number and the name of your school if you are happy for us to share.

SLINGSBY'S THE YOUNG KING – *Written Response*

On entering the theatre (former Dazzleland site) what did you see and do?

What did you like/dislike about this?

Summarise your experience of **The Young King** performance.

What was **The Young King** about? (PLOT)

What did the performance space look like?

Describe the music you heard. How did it make you feel?

What did the costumes look like?

Can you remember who the characters were? Please name them.

Can you write a list of the props/devices used to tell the Young King's story?

SLINGSBY'S THE YOUNG KING – *Written Response*

Describe the Young King character? (Who was he? Describe his personality)

How did Slingsby's **The Young King** make you feel? (Can be a number of emotions)

Was there anything you didn't understand or enjoy?

You could ask your teacher to explain it to you OR you could write us an email and we'll answer your questions.

What did you like about the show overall?

Did you have a favourite part? YES/NO If yes, what was it?

What did you learn from your experience of Slingsby's **The Young King**?

Describe what happened at the end of Slingsby's **The Young King**:

Why did the Young King not want to wear the beautiful robes, crown and finery made for his coronation?

Can you remember his final statement? If yes, what do you think he meant?

What do you think is the difference between watching TV and going to a live theatre performance?

Talk through your answers with your class. In particular share what you think was the most interesting moment of the show.

YOU CAN BE THE KING OR QUEEN OF YOUR OWN LIFE IF YOU REMAIN TRUE TO YOURSELF.

What do you think this means?

Consider the following quotes. *What do you think they mean?*

“This above all: to thine own self be true”. – Shakespeare

“Be yourself... An original is always worth more than a copy.” Anonymous

“Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind.” – Dr Seuss



THE NEXT CHAPTER

Activity

Either individually or in pairs, using WORD or on a separate piece of paper, write the next chapter of the Young King's story. Should be approximately one page in length.

When you have finished this you could... illustrate your story, read it to the class, get into groups of three or four and "act it out" – (rehearse and perform), make a short film or animation, design the costumes or a set for it, create a front cover or devise a dance/drama performance.

Group Performances

In groups of 3 or 4, work together to create your own abridged version of **The Young King**. The performance length should be no more than 2-3 minutes. Your aim is to re-tell the story in this time. Rehearse then perform to the class.

The above performance could either be performed as a "skit" or in a dance/drama format where students move to create physical shapes and gestures to represent the events and messages of the story.

Scripted Performance

Here are some links to two short scripts that are based on other Oscar Wilde stories.

THE HAPPY PRINCE - <http://www.kidsinco.com/2010/07/the-happy-prince/>

THE SELFISH GIANT - <http://www.kidsinco.com/tag/the-selfish-giant/>

In groups of 5 or 6, choose one of the above scripts to perform. Here's a process order that you can follow:

1. Play reading – (read the script in your group).
2. Discuss the plot and work out the "moral of the story".
3. Cast the characters – actors will play one or more characters.
4. Highlight your lines.
5. If required, read the play again with actors reading their allocated parts.
6. Establish the setting.
7. Work out what style/genre you will be performing your play in.
8. Block the script. (Note all movement on your scripts.)
9. Create a back story for your character(s). Who are they? What is their background? How do they walk/talk? What are their likes/dislikes? What are their objectives? Etc.
10. Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse.
11. Work out what technical elements you will be using in your performance. Costumes, music, sets, props, projections etc. and allocate responsibilities.
12. Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse.
13. When you have your final "dress rehearsal" you should wear your costumes, rehearse with ALL technical elements, be ready for your audience AND do not stop if any errors are made.
14. Perform.

Assessment: Individual Contributions to the Group/Rehearsals AND Individual Performances. A group mark may or may not be allocated.

CREATE YOUR OWN ORIGINAL SHOEBOX THEATRE SCENE FROM THE YOUNG KING

1. Please bring a shoe box to class.
2. Choose a scene from Oscar Wilde's story **The Young King**, e.g. the Young King's Bedroom.
3. Turn the shoebox on its side.
4. Inside, create your own set using craft materials.
5. Don't forget to include the characters in your scene.
6. When finished, take a close up photo and email it to us (including your full name, age and school) at schools@slingsby.net.au and we will share some of your work on our website.

Some other creative ideas:

Using socks or paper bags, make some of the characters from **The Young King** then rehearse and perform a scene from the show.

Instead of building a set inside the shoe box, why not try making your own shadow theatre shoe box? (You can also use a cereal box.) Here's a link which gives you instructions on how to make one:

<http://beafunmum.com/2015/04/shadow-puppet-theatre/>



AN INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR

Andy Packer

What was involved in your job as the director of “The Young King”?

As director I lead the process of making the show. I don't have all of the answers but I have an overall vision, then put together the best possible team to make that happen.

My job is about asking questions. The great French Canadian theatre director Robert LePage has said, *“The actor is there to teach and the director is there to learn”*. I agree, and I also think it relates to the whole creative team. I set challenges and points of inspiration for the team (composer, designers etc.), they then have the responsibility to create their own ideas and suggestions. I'll work with them to make it all fit together.

The director is the filter through which all of the elements are passed. The director is also the audience's representative in the creative process. It is my job to say when things are working, or if they have become boring or too slow or too obvious.

Conflict is often part of creativity. We also spend a lot of time laughing. It really is the best job in the world.

What do you think “The Young King” is about? What lessons can kids learn from this story?

The Young King's story makes me think about what kind of leader I would like to be. Is it better to keep everyone happy and have agreement in a group, so everyone feels comfortable and nothing ever really changes? Or is it better to challenge a group with new ideas and lead them through conflict to a new, positive outcome?

The latter is certainly the harder option. This is the path that The Young King takes. He disrupts the current order of things.

I also think the story has a lot to say about being aware of those less fortunate around us and making changes to improve their lives, even if that means that we have less ourselves.

How did Slingsby bring “The Young King” to life?

The Young King was written as a short story, not a play. Oscar Wilde's language is beautiful and we wanted to retain much of that, but we also needed to adapt it to make sense on stage. So we asked playwright Nikki Bloom to write the story as a piece of theatre.

We also have a fantastic team of Composer, Designer and Lighting Designer who have worked with me as Director to make a whole world for the show, so it really feels like you are stepping inside the story for a little while.

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR

Andy Packer

When you were a boy, what did you want to be when you grew up?

For some time I dreamt of being a fireman...then for a while I thought Evel Knievel's job looked pretty attractive (look him up). Later, through High School I began to dream of being a dancer, then as I entered year 12 I had my sights set on being a Physical Instructor in the Australian Defence Forces (this must have been the result of a conversation with a Careers Officer at school...). Once I got to University I focused my energy on becoming an actor. I still haven't grown up.

Why do you think theatre is important?

There are so many ways for us to be entertained these days and a lot of them involve staring at a screen. And that's not all bad, but theatre remains the only storytelling art form that brings humans together in one space at one time, to see a live performance that will never be repeated exactly the same way again, ever. It's a collective, community experience.

Theatre is also full of endless possibilities. Next year I might be making a show that tells a story in ways we have not even dreamt of yet.

What do you want the audience to experience (think feel and see) when they come to see Slingsby's "The Young King"?

We would like audience members to feel like they've stepped out of their usual lives and into a different world for a while.

Inside this story and this world you can think and feel a whole lot of things, and whatever you feel is okay, because it's just a story.

After it's finished, you don't have to continue feeling sad, or angry, or whatever. But maybe later on, after the show, you might remember how you felt about something, and that might make you think about part of your life, or something that's going on in the world today. And maybe you might see that a bit differently now. Or you might be inspired to change something.

Or maybe you might be inspired to see more theatre! Listen to this short version of **The Young King** story read by our Storyteller here:

<https://soundcloud.com/slingsbytheatre/the-young-king-synopsis>

