

An illustration of a man with brown hair, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and dark trousers, standing on a sandy beach. He is looking out at the ocean with his hand to his forehead. The ocean has white-capped waves. In the sky, there are white clouds and a flock of birds flying. On the beach, there are several items scattered: a blue hat with a white star, a blue anchor, a green bottle, a red object, a blue object, and a white object. The scene is bright and sunny.

Paddle Boat
Theatre Company:
A little Man's Holiday

Show title:

A Little Man's Holiday

A Little Man's Holiday retells the much loved children's picture story-book 'The Man Whose Mother Was a Pirate'. Taking the audience on a magical journey from The Little Man's dull city dwellings to the high seas on a swashbuckling adventure. Through the use of puppetry, music and mime, we present these larger-than-life characters and invite you into an enchanted world.

The performance will be accompanied by a workshop with the audience, so they can tell the difference between port and starboard, hoist the main sails and walk the plank in style...and maybe learn some literacy along the way.

Who We Are

PaddleBoat Theatre Company has been formed by a group of soon-to-graduate Drama students from Exeter University who have a passion for providing affordable, high quality and imaginative drama performances and workshops for schools in the local area and beyond.

Katy Dash - Artistic Director

Katy Dash is in her final year of studying drama at Exeter University. Throughout her degree she has enjoyed studying Lecoq and Clowning, Physical Theatre and Applied Theatre. Her passion lies in children's theatre and the power of storytelling in performance.

Harriet Brown - Musical Director

Harriet is in her final year studying Drama at Exeter University. She has enjoyed performing throughout her time at University, and hopes to continue making community and children's theatre beyond Graduation. The use of theatre to enrich and prompt learning is something she is passionate about. Her key interests lie in creating interdisciplinary performance; including physical theatre, puppetry and live music.

Rachel Norris - Workshop Co-ordinator

Rachel, who is also about to finish her Drama degree at Exeter University, is passionate about providing exciting learning experiences, through the use of drama techniques, to spark imagination and creativity in children. As well as

PaddleBoat, Rachel works as a facilitator for 'DoorStep Arts' in the Torbay area, running drama groups for ages 7-13. This is new adventure for her, and she is very keen to create workshops of value and integrity, that explore relevant themes for children.

Michael Smith - Producer

Michael Smith is in his final year, studying drama at Exeter University. Michael enjoys adaptation, and exploring means of story telling. His comic timing is invaluable to the PaddleBoat team and he is an imaginative performer. His ability to bring to characters to life is a natural instinctive quality; he hopes to be able to share this with audiences and inspire them to explore acting and performing also.



Characters for the Performance

Little Man

Little Man loves to daydream about adventures at sea. He is terrified of his boss, Mr. Fat, but he has to use all his courage to ask for a holiday.

Mother

Little Man's mother is a real chatterbox! She used to be a pirate, and is constantly telling Little Man all her swashbuckling tales. She dreams of going back to the sea and smelling the salty air again.

Mr. Fat

Mr. Fat is always grumpy. When he's not telling Little Man off, he's getting annoyed because he can't do his crossword. Secretly he wishes he didn't have to work in the city.

Old Man

The Old Man that Little Man and Mother find on their adventures is as old as the hills. No one knows how he got on the island in the first place, but he's always been there. He loves to make up riddles and rhymes to confuse pirates that land on the Island.

Themes from the performance

Imagination:

Everyone loves to daydream. Sometimes it's good to be able to let your thoughts wander off and imagine you were on an adventure. Little Man loves to do this when he's in the city.

Getting over your fears:

Little Man is very timid and scared. His boss always shouts at him and he never gets a word in when his Mother is around. Throughout the performance we see Little Man get more and more courageous!



Extension Activities:

What role would you like to play?

Be a Dramatist

When we see a play the story is told to us by living characters on stage in dialogue form, rather than a narrative story.

1. What are the problems encountered by the dramatist when adapting a story for the stage? Why isn't it enough just to use the words as spoken in a story?

2. How has our version of A Little Man's Holiday changed from the book 'My Mother Was a Pirate'?

3. Tell the story from the point of view of different characters.

4. Write a poem based on the characters. Firstly, mind-map lots of words to make up a word bank. Then use one of the following ways of writing a poem:

- A narrative poem with rhymes.
- A shape poem, for example in the shape of a tree.
- An alliterative poem using words which begin with the same letter.

5. Write a sequel to Little Man's adventure. What other adventures could he go on?



What role would you like to play?

Be the Designer

The first thing the designer has to do is read the script. Then they will talk with the director of the production and agree on what the design will look like. Then the designer does a drawing of what the set and costumes will look like. Each character in the play will have a different look and style of clothes.

1. Draw a set design for one of the scenes in the play. What materials would you use if you were going to build it?
2. Make a 3D model of the set for one of the scenes in the play. Use a shoebox (on its side) to make a model for the stage.
3. Make paper dressing dolls with costume pieces which can be put on or taken off for any of the characters.
4. Make a mobile of the characters in the play.
5. Design a costume for your favourite character.
6. Make finger, stick or hand puppets to act out the play.
7. Try creating your own stage pictures of the play using collage.



What role would you like to play?

Be an Actor

Actors have to have excellent memories - remembering their lines and remembering their moves. They must also be good at speaking and singing clearly so that the audience can always hear what they are saying - otherwise they won't be able follow the story!

1. Imagine that you are a TV reporter and interview the characters in front of the class. It could be to solve a problem, ask questions about the adventure or character's background.

2. Acting out the story: Narrate the story to the pupils. Ask volunteers to come out and play the parts. If there are a lot of children, you can involve them in the minor roles, for example, as animals / more narrators.

3. Form points from the story with your bodies! Try being the ship, palm trees on the island or buildings in the city.

4. Make up a pirate's hornpipe dance that could be performed by Mother and Little Man on their adventures.

5. Make up your own version of the opening scene from Little Man's story. In groups, prepare and present your scene to the rest of the class. Write your script down and illustrate it. Think of the music, movement, accents, characters moods, props. What is your unique twist on the opening scene?



Classroom drama activities

Storytelling Activities

Activity name:

Sentence Circle

Aim:

To encourage group work, creativity, listening skills and story-telling skills

Description:

Children sit in a circle and tell a well known story sentence by sentence. Start with the facilitator saying a sentence and go clockwise with each child having a turn to add a sentence.

Development:

Asking the children to create a new story from scratch, passing around a hat with pieces of paper with connective words written on them for the kids to pull out when it's their turn to start their sentences.

Examples:

Suddenly, Unfortunately, But,

Tips:

1. Do this in small groups. If they run out of pieces of paper and haven't finished the story ask them to come up with their own or choose one of the previous words.

2. Use an object to pass around that way if someone can't think of one they can just pass the object along.



Classroom drama activities

Storytelling Activities

Activity name:

Present Box

Aim:

To get the children to use their imagination and communication skills and to invite quick thinking and specificity in their actions. Also to think about characters, what present might this character want or not

Description:

Sat in a circle the facilitator mimes putting down a box. He or She explains that this box is a present from one character to another. This could be a present from Mother to Little Man, for example. The facilitator, always miming, opens the present and takes out an object. He or She uses this object and the children must correctly guess what it might be before the facilitator can put the object back in the box, re-wrap the present and pass it on to the next person. This continues around the circle until everyone has had a go.

Development:

Add facial expressions. Does this character like receiving this present or not? Is it a good present or a unthoughtful one? How do you communicate this without talking?

Tips:

Explain that you have a present from whichever character and you have to go and get it. Go to a corner of the room or a draw and bring back an imaginary box, don't just pull it out from nowhere; this ruins the magic. If someone can't think of anything just pass the present on.



Classroom drama activities

Storytelling Activities

Activity name:

Mime Scene

Aim:

To be able to highlight key moments in a story structure. To embody characters and emotions through understanding situations and circumstances from multiple perspectives.

Description:

In groups of 3-5, choose a scene From Little Man's story and try to act this out using no words, just gestures and body language. (The scene shouldn't be very long just a moment from a story). Perform these to the rest of the class and ask the observers to guess which scene they are doing and who is playing which character? How could they tell? If they couldn't tell what would make it more clear?

Ideas:

Little Man asking for a holiday. Mr. Fat's hunt for treasure. Mother's first adventure as a pirate. How the Old Man first arrived on the island.

Development:

Add dialogue to the scene between the characters. What might happen before or after these scenes? How might the characters be feeling?

Tips:

You could either set the fairytale and ask each group to individually chose a moment or the children could secretly pick their fairytale in their individual groups to make it more challenging.



Classroom drama activities

Storytelling Activities

Activity name:

Journey

Aim:

To help the children understand the complexities in the story that they can then explain in their story writing. To guide the children through the structure of a story.

Tips:

Add in adjectives to give the children more a more vivid picture of what action they should mime.

Description:

Retell the story Little Man or A well known fairy-tale whilst the children are walking around the space. Ask the children to act out what you are saying. For example, 'Little Man and Mother waded through cold rivers' the children walk around the space as if wading through water.

Development:

Add in choices for the character. Does Little Man pluck up the courage to go and ask Mr. Fat for a holiday? We want to see this choice being made.



PaddleBoat's Workshop Plan

Warm Up (15 mins)

Pirate Games

On the Ship

Aim: To get the children active and present in their bodies; increased spatial awareness

Call out port, starboard, scrub the deck, climb the rigging and get children to copy. (competition)
Add in Ahoy matey (children find a partner) & pirate party (whole group get in circle and do a pirate jig).

Bodies & 3D shapes

Aim: To get children to think about how to use their bodies to visually demonstrate physical objects.

Have 15 seconds to make..... an anchor / ship / palm tree / mr fat / a volcano / sea monster.

Encourage children to think about levels and facial expressions, where appropriate.



Conductor (15 mins) Sentence Circle (10 mins)

Aim: How the use of music can create atmosphere and help children access words to describe what is happening - gives a mood for a moment.

Weave in their ideas - drive for the imagination element of the workshop.

THINK LAYERING - a soundscape circle.

Split group into 3 groups. Appoint a conductor for each small group.

Get all groups to create a soundscape (sea / wind / theme tune or song, for example) for each.

Make sure their conductor, with the help of the team, is thinking about dynamics and creating clear hand gestures.

Whole group - assign a soundscape to each group. Get the conductors to work together to create a collective soundscape.

This will help improve skills of collaboration and imagination.

As a whole group: Describe the sounds using:

Onomatopoeia
Adjectives
Similes
Metaphors

Aim: To transfer performance skills to literacy skills, so children can use these in their story-telling.

Sit in a circle and start by saying a sentence each so you can re-create the little man's journey.

Split into 6 groups.

Give each group a basic, one clause sentences to describe the story

Example:

Little man lives in the city.

Little man worked for mr fat.

Little mans mother used to be a pirate but now all she does is washing.

Little man and his mother went to sea on a ship.

They arrived at the island and met...

Little man is now back in his office but...

Task: Children write new sentence, adding adjectives and connectives to elaborate the story and make it more descriptive, and vivid.

Compile the sentences and 'narrator' facilitator re-reads them to children; improving their learning in recognising what they have created.

Ask them: What is different about your version? Did you like this story and why? What helped you re-write the sentences?

Give them a Tip: Our imaginations need to be communicated clearly when we write a story so the reader can understand us. One way of doing this is including other character's points of view.



Character Statues (20 mins)

Give them a Tip: It is important that we don't just think about our little man, our main character, but we remember the other characters too in order to show the emotions they might be feeling in the story.

Have you ever played musical statues?
What happens when the music stops?

The aim is to guess the other groups' character perspective statue they are presenting.

Give each group a sentence which sets the scene for their freeze frame.
e.g. Everyday mr fat, little man and mother do the same tasks.

Count down from 10 - Children react and form the image.

Each group read out your sentence before you show back your images. But don't tell us who's perspective you are trying to show!

Audience have to guess which point of view the group is embodying.

Ask the other groups step out and reflect on:

- Who are they?
- What are they feeling; how do we know this?
- What is about; what tells you this?
- Can you think of any adjective / onomatopoeia etc to describe their bodies?

Summary: We can see from using our bodies, that we can create images when we can find strong adjectives to describe. This will help our story writing.

2 stars and Wish:

What worked?

Give example here - Anything you wish you could add to the image?

Characterisation through props (20 - 30 mins)

Aim: Exploring how they can create a character from objects through group improvisation and collaboration. Increasing imagination but taking it beyond the context of the performance and creating a 3d character.

Choose 2 props per group.

Characterisation -
Using props from the story, ask: what significance they held.

Encourage children to think about how they can use the props differently.

Task: Create a character to meet on the island that can help them to find the treasure, for example.

Different characters than the ones we have seen.

Create a 'moving clip' using the props to create this new character.

Think about how the character uses the prop to find the treasure map.

Show back to your team for feedback on what they could improve before they show to whole group



Extension Activity - Write your story:

Aim: Extends their recall memory through remembering what they have done physically and being able to translate into words.

Write a letter as if they were mother, to little man about what this character the children have created is like.

Ask children to include:

What did they look like?
What did they smell like?
How did they move?
How did they say hello? Were they awkward? Were they excited to see a new person on the island?
How did they help mother? Were they kind? Or were they mean and led her down the wrong path?

Using all the descriptive words discovered this session.

Creative Tip: Get children to write their letter on tea stained paper as if it was a real old letter.

Roll up and tie ribbon around it.

Come and post the letter to:

PaddleBoat Theatre Company
Flat 2
8 Thurlow Road
Exeter
EX4 7AA

And wait for a response....

For more information about PaddleBoat and the arts provision available through them, please contact:

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