FISHAMBLE

The Leap

Classroom Activity Pack



A complimentary teachers' resource for The Leap by Gavin Kostick

Subject Areas: English, Drama, Art and SPHE

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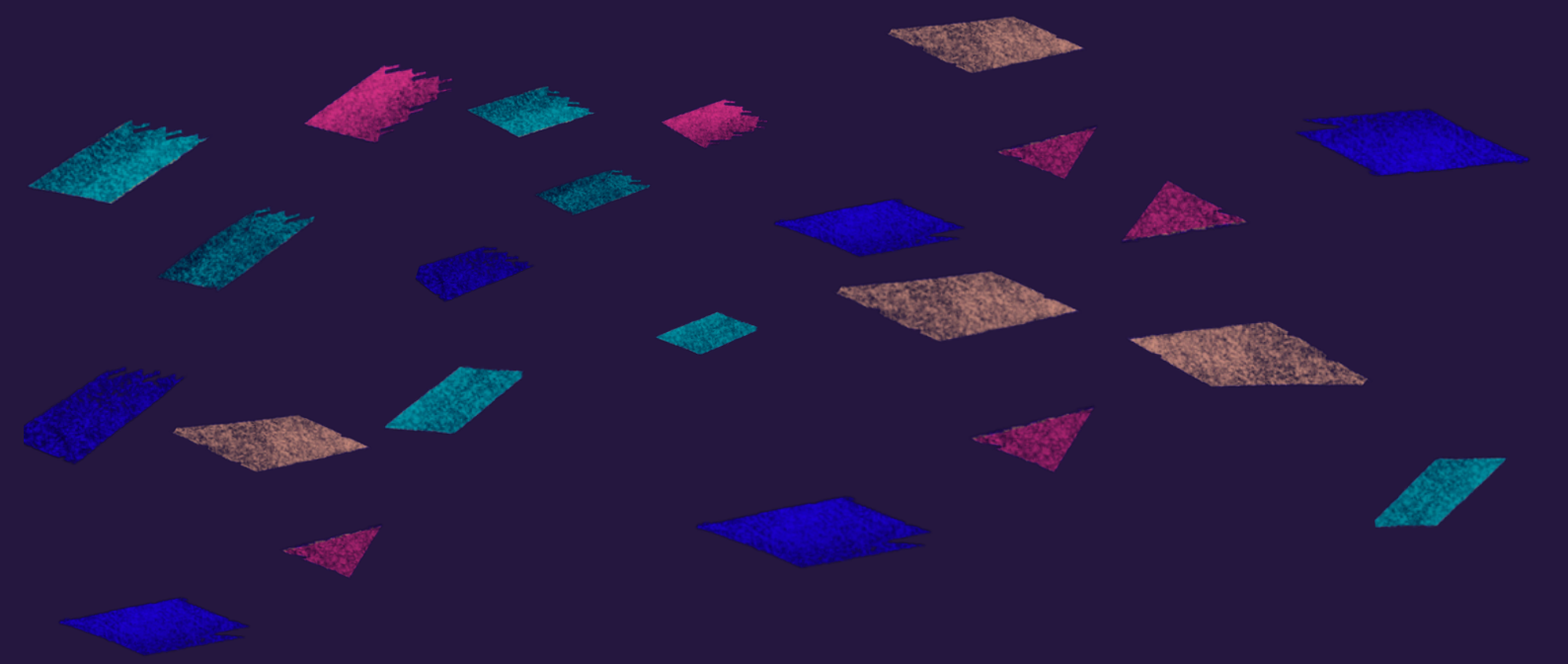
INTRODUCTION

It was an accident!

When Wendy jumps off the family piano and shatters her mam's favourite glass table, she doesn't just break the glass, she cracks open a whole other world. With the shards packed into her backpack and emotions bubbling inside her, Wendy follows her dad through a trapdoor and into another world. The Leap takes us to a place where ancient wrongs may be righted, new worlds are created and a girl's sad heart may be cured. It might be possible to piece together what's been broken. But only if she chooses.

Developed with support from The Ark's Children's Council & touring to DEIS schools in Dublin with support from the North East Inner City Initiative.
Fishamble is supported by The Arts Council, Dublin City Council and Culture Ireland.
This classroom activity pack can be used to further explore the themes and experiences of watching The Leap with your class.

Pupils will have the opportunity to react and respond creatively to the performance through various activities. Many of these are cross-curricular, containing elements of the Drama, English, and Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curricula.



A Note from The Playwright.

I hope you enjoy The Leap. For those of you who are interested in writing, this is how I wrote it.

I wanted to get the play out. The Leap openly talks about things that are hard to talk about. I am able for people to say and do things in The Leap that I am not sure were or could be managed in real life. This is the truthfulness of theatre. It is not true to the facts, but it is true to the feelings.

But I couldn't get the play out.

I have a friend. So I thought to myself, 'I will send my friend five pages a day until it is done.' He is the sort of person who doesn't mind getting five pages of a play every day.

Then I thought to myself, 'I will make this a priority.' So I set myself the task that first thing each morning I would write and send the pages. No more no less.

This turned out to be an excellent way of writing. It meant I felt good all day, that I had done my work before breakfast. It also meant that I could daydream in the day about the next instalment. I recommend it to you.

The Leap turned out to be 45 pages long, and so it took me nine days.

Gavin Kostick

ACTIVITY ONE



Time: 30 minutes
Resources: Pens and Paper
This exercise can be given as a written exercise or in a class group discussion
Subject Area English: (Emotional and Creative Writing) SPHE (Self Reflection)

MY LITTLE PONIES

In the play Wendy is playing with her My Little Pony set which she has mixed feelings about. She still enjoys playing with them but she is also starting to feel like maybe she's too old for it.

Ask your class to think about what things they are going to miss most from childhood. You can use the below prompts for this excercise.

- What are the things you miss most about being a younger child?
- Are there any toys or games that you still enjoy even if you feel like you're "too old" for them? How did it make you feel? Why did you stop playing with them?
- Why do you think we sometimes feel pressure to "grow out" of these things?

For Home: Ask a sibling, friend, parent or guardian about the thing they miss playing with most from when they were a younger child?

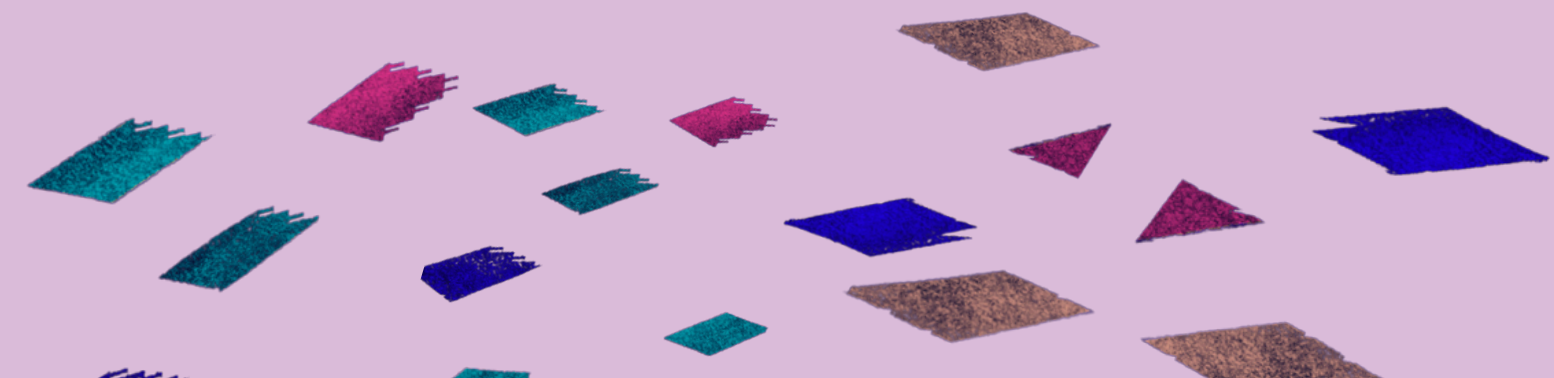
ACTIVITY TWO

Time: 1 hour
Resources: Dark Paper, Scissors, flashlight/ lamp, Wall, Light colouring pencil, Tape, Skewers or lollipop sticks
Subject: Visual Art, Drama

SHADOW PUPPETS

The play uses shadow puppets to create people, animals, scenery and even a different world. This helps add another element to the storytelling. We are able to see illustrations of what Dad and Wendy are seeing while they tell us.

Ask the class to create their own animal shadow puppet and introduce it. You can then come together and create small scenes. You can make the shadow bigger or smaller by moving the puppet closer to or farther from the light.



STEP 1
DRAW YOUR ANIMAL

Use a light colour pencil to draw a simple outline of an animal on the dark paper. The simpler the better for shadows!

STEP 2
CUT IT OUT

Carefully cut your animal out with the scissors.

STEP 3
PLACE ON STICK

Tape your animal on to the end of your skewers or lollipop sticks.

STEP 4
SET YOUR STAGE

Turn off the lights and place a lamp/flashlight facing the wall.

STEP 5
PERFORM

Hold your shadow puppets up to the light and introduce them to the group.

ACTIVITY THREE

Time: 30 minutes
Resources: A Clear Space
Subject Area: Drama

In the play we see Wendy uses her motions to act out the action backwards. Just like a rewind button. Ask the class to try this.
Examples include: Making tea or getting out of bed.

This will require splitting the classroom into two groups and allowing yourselves some room to move.

FORWARDS

Have the first group come up with some actions and mimes that they want to be identified

BACKWARDS

Have the second group name the actions and mimes and then repeat these back in reverse.

ACTIVITY FOUR

Time: 20 minutes
Resources: A Clear Space
Subject Area: Drama

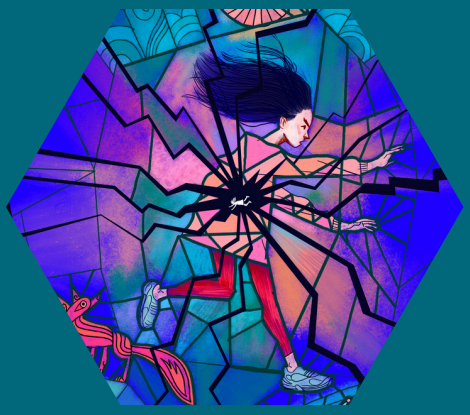
This will require splitting the classroom into two groups and allowing yourselves some room to move.

SIZE AND SHAPE

Ask the class to stand in a circle. The first person decides an item to mime and you pass it around the group but play with the size and weight as it is passed along.

Example: The first person decides it's a ball. It is a ball for the whole group but each person can decide what weight and size it is. You could receive it as a large light ball and pass it on as a tiny pea size ball that is really heavy.

ACTIVITY FIVE



Time: 30 minutes
Resources: Pens and Paper
This exercise can be given as a written exercise or in a class group conversation
Subject Area English: (Emotional and Creative Writing) SPHE (Self Reflection)

HOW WE SEE EACH OTHER

At the start of the play we see Wendy struggling to talk to her Dad about how she feels. In theatre when characters talk directly to the audience it is called 'breaking the fourth wall'. In The Leap doing this lets Wendy and Dad tell us how they are feeling even when they aren't telling each other. As they go along on their adventure they spend time together and see each other in a different way, they take time to listen to each other and learn from each other.

Ask the class to split up into groups and create examples of how some parents and young people may do this to each other.

Do you think your parents/guardians see you differently to how you see yourself? How is it different?

Do you think your parents/guardians see themselves differently to the way you see them? How is it different?

How does it feel when you are being listened to? And not just heard?

How can we help each other feel listened to and seen?

Wendy was very angry and smashed her Mum's coffee table thinking it would make her feel better. Do you think it did make her feel better?

What do you like to do when you are angry and frustrated?
Does it help?

By talking about these things we can help each other feel what they are feeling and understand and process them.

ASKING FOR HELP

If you or anyone else has been affected by anything brought up in The Leap or the exercises there are resources and supports available:

Jigsaw

Offer free therapy and expert mental health support for young adults.

Childline

24/7 Call and online chat service for all young people under 18