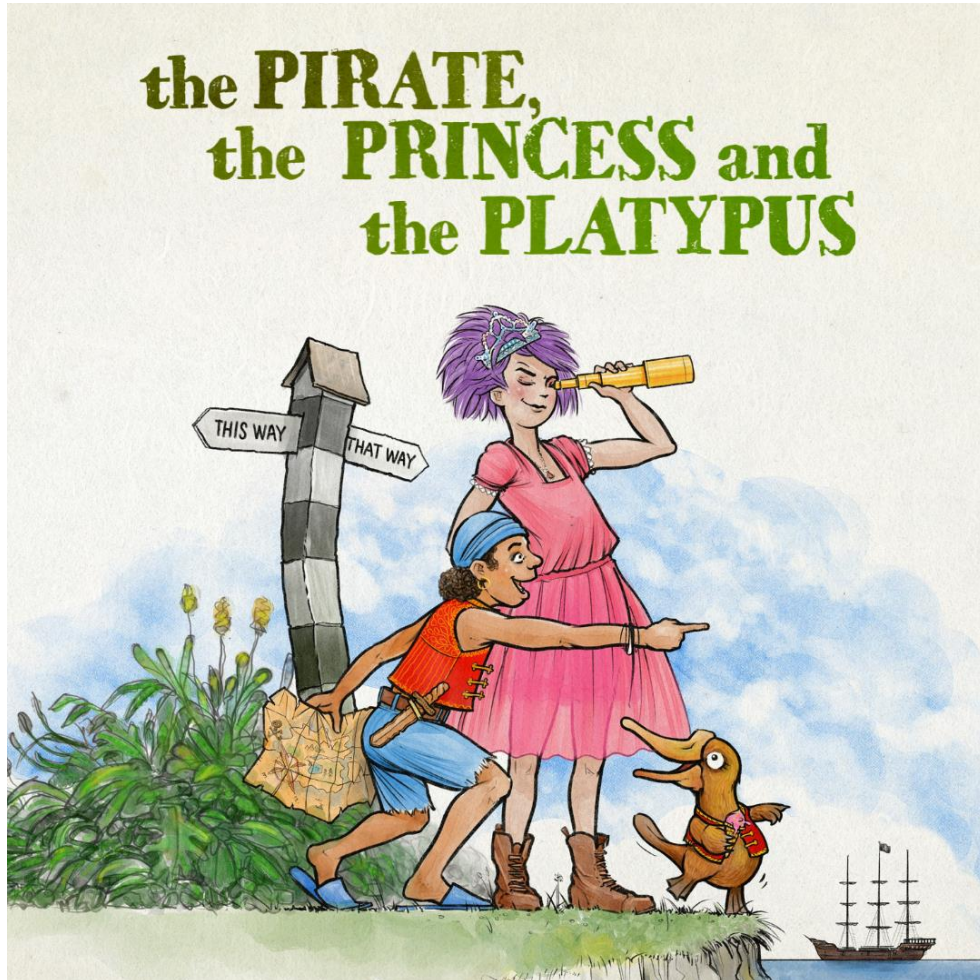


Teacher Resources Pack



A Polka Theatre production

Written and Directed by **Daniel Clarkson**
and **Richard Hurst**

POLKA

Dear Teacher/Parent/Carer

We are so pleased that you came to visit us at Polka Theatre for **the Pirate, the Princess and the Platypus**. We hope you enjoyed seeing the production and visiting our redeveloped venue.

Here are a few **activities** to do with your children and young people after you have seen the performance. These exercises are creative and drama based, which is good for **developing speaking** and **listening skills**, as well as expanding **concentration** and **imagination**.

The activities are suitable for children in **KS2** or ages **7 - 11** years. Please pass on any of the activities to your children to do at home to encourage and engage **creative minds**!

We would love to hear what you think about these exercises and how your children got along. Please send any feedback to creativelearning@polkatheatre.com.

We look forward to seeing you again soon,

Polka Theatre's Creative Learning Team

**Key
Curriculum
Links for
KS2
(ages 7 - 11)**

A Pirate and Princess explore **identity** and what it means to embrace yourself for who you are. Links to **PSHE Education Programme of Study** and core theme of **Health and Wellbeing**. Developing a **positive** sense of self and to recognise and celebrate **strengths**. Making informed choices that improve **physical and emotional health**.

To talk about and share our **opinions** on **identity** and how it may affect us
To consider the importance of **friendship** and treating others with **kindness**

To recognise the importance of **being yourself**

To appreciate how we all have **similarities** and **differences** to others

We could not be more excited about bringing this story to life.

We live in a world where we are increasingly divided and polarised, and where our public and private behaviour is policed and judged. Gender, race, income, nationality and a hundred other things are used to hem us in. And in doing that, we're showing our children a world of division.

Through a new original show, filled with laughter, colour, magic, excitement and song, let us show that we can be whatever we want to be, whether it's a Princess, or a Pirate, or both.

Let's see too that friendship and kindness towards others can be the strongest bond that unites us, and how important it is to support each other whatever our differences. Even when others want to be one thing, you can still be what is true to you, you can be just as happy being who you are.

As the Platypus, a beaked mammal, who hatched from an egg shows us, that's pretty great too!

Richard Hurst and Daniel Clarkson

Co-Writer and Director



Can you share a bit more about yourselves and how you came to work together?

Daniel: We first worked together on **Potted Potter**, which was easily several hundred years ago now, in a mystical time known only as the early noughties.

Richard: After spending over an hour in rehearsal discussing which is the funniest card in a pack (the three of clubs, obviously) we realised that we shared the same comic viewpoint and decided we had no choice but to create lots more silly shows together.

D: We also shared a love of baked goods, and that is a bond that can never be broken.

R: That's fair, the longevity of our working relationship owes a surprising amount to carrot cake!

Would you rather be a pirate, a princess, or a platypus?

R: This is actually the hardest question of all, because pirates, princesses and platypuses all have a lot going for them.

D: This is true, princesses got to eat the finest food and live a life of luxury where people attended to their every whim. They didn't necessarily have a lot of choices in some areas, but they were protected.

R: On a pirate ship, though, you had a loads of freedom, and all decisions were made democratically in a pre-democratic society. Oh and there was a lot of barbecue. But no personal hygiene!

D: And a platypus is by far one of the world's most interesting animals amid some serious competition, and is definitely the best swimmer out of all our characters. However, their diet leaves something to be desired.

R: I think if pushed, I'd choose the pirate.

D: I'd go princess every time. Strange neither of us said platypus?

R: Yeah, it was the venomous spines they have in their elbows that put me off.

D: Venomous what now? I'm changing my answer.

Find The Captain

This activity is great for improving and encouraging focus at the beginning of the lesson. The children are encouraged observe others and work together as part of a team to create one still image..

How to lead the activity

This activity starts with the children standing up in a space within the classroom.

Ask the children to begin by closing their eyes. The teacher will tap one child gently on the shoulder and this will be the child who is The Captain.

The teacher will ask the children to open their eyes again and start walking around the room in neutral. The teacher will explain that they have elected one child in the room to be The Captain. The Captain will decide when they want to freeze in position and everyone else has to try freeze at the same time.

The teacher may want to encourage the children to be alert and observe everyone in the class as the aim of the game is for everyone to be frozen at the same time. The teacher will then ask the children to guess who they think the Captain is.

This game can be repeated as many times as the teacher would like, each time electing a new child to be The Captain!



Pirate or Princess?

This activity is great for encouraging children to experiment with how they can express a character physically and vocally. The children have the opportunity to experiment with how to move in a space as a character and react quickly to instructions being told, improving improvisation skills.

How to lead the activity

Start this warm up activity standing up, in a space in the room.

Ask the children to start walking around the room in neutral. As they are walking around the room, ask them to imagine that they are either a Pirate or Princess. Remind the children that they should keep this to themselves.

The teacher will then ask the children to think about the physicality of their character (either a Pirate or a Princess). How does this character walk and hold themselves? The children may want to think about what their character is wearing and how this could affect their posture and stature.

The teacher will then ask the children to add vocalisation to their character. The teacher may want to prompt the children to think about pitch and volume, do they speak in a low but really loud voice? Does their character make a particular noise or have a certain greeting?

Once the children have built their characters physically and vocally, the teacher can ask the children to speak to another character as they are walking around the room. Encourage the children to ask questions and get to know the other characters.

At any point the teacher can stop the interactions and ask some pairings to feedback one thing they have found out about the character they are talking to. The teacher can remind the children that they should never come out of character and that when they are speaking to the class they are still either a Pirate or a Princess!



Four Corners

This activity encourages imagination and creativity whilst working in a team to achieve a common goal. The children have the opportunity to explore elements of physical theatre by encompassing storytelling primarily through physical movement.

How to lead the activity

This activity starts with the children standing up in a space in the room.

The teacher will ask the children to think of four settings within **the Pirate, the Princess and the Platypus**.

If the children are stuck, four good settings to use for this activity might be:

Pirate Ship

Tower

Princess' bedroom

Castle

The teacher will decide which corner of the room will represent each setting. The teacher will then call out a setting and the children have to move quickly to that corner of the room and recreate the chosen setting using only their bodies.

To make this game more challenging, the teacher may want to set a countdown of 30 seconds or one minute which will encourage the children to think quickly and work in a team more efficiently.

The teacher can adapt this game as time goes on by saying the setting and a number. The number will represent how many people have to make the setting. For example, if the teacher said Pirate Ship and 5, the children will have to get into groups of 5 and make the Pirate Ship.



Sea Soundscape

This activity is great for getting children to experiment vocally. The activity encourages children to listen to others and be in tune with one another, whilst improving confidence to experiment with their voice.

How to lead the activity

This activity starts with the children sat either on the floor or on chairs, in a circle.

The teacher explains to the children that they are going to use sounds to create a picture of the pirate ship at sea. The teacher will act as the conductor whilst the children use their voices to 'paint' a sound picture of the pirate ship at sea.

Ask one child to volunteer to start the sea soundscape. The children will then take it in turns to go round one by one and add to the sea soundscape until it builds to one imaginary picture. The teacher may want to ask the children to think about what sounds can be heard at sea. Some examples may include:

Waves splashing against the rocks

The pitter patter of rain drops on the water

The creaking of the sail on the pirate ship

Voices of pirates on the ship ("Arrrr!" or "Ahoy!")

The sound of fishes/sharks/dolphins in the water

The teacher may want to direct the children by starting the sea as calm and peaceful to a storm brewing and the sea becoming rough.

The teacher can also control the shape of the sound by raising their hand to increase volume or lowering their hand to decrease volume. Play around with your own class orchestra, making the Sea Soundscape as dramatic as you like!



Agree/Disagree

This activity encourages children to share and challenge opinions. Through engaging in discussion and debate they are supported to consider what it means to develop a positive sense of self and how accessible it is to maintain this. This activity also promotes confidence in sharing ideas and speaking to a wider group.

How to lead the activity

This activity starts with everyone standing up in a space in the room.

The teacher puts a sign at one end of the room saying AGREE and a sign at the other end of the room saying DISAGREE. They tell the class that the centre is neutral or 'I don't know' and there is an invisible scale between the two signs.

The teacher reads out the below statements (or use your own). The children will go and stand on the scale wherever feels right for them. If they agree 100% they stand by the AGREE sign, if they almost agree they stand near the sign etc. Start with some funny statements to get the children familiar with the set up.

Below are some examples you may want to use:

Chocolate is the best food ever
Sundays are the best day of the week
The school day should be shorter
The city is better than the countryside
Friendships are important to me
I'm always kind to people, even those I don't know well
I feel I can express myself without judgement
I feel that it's important to do activities /hobbies I genuinely enjoy

After reading each statement, the teacher may want to lead a discussion asking why the children are standing in particular spots. Does anyone want to move places after hearing what others have to say?

What's In The Treasure Box?

This activity improves improvisation skills, encouraging children to put themselves out of their comfort zone and think on the spot in a performative setting. The children will appreciate the importance of saying "yes" when improvising, building trust and confidence in partner work.

How to lead the activity

This activity starts with the children standing in a line to one side of the room.

The teacher explains to the children that there is a magical treasure box in the middle of the room. The child who volunteers to go first will open this treasure box up and start to act out whatever they imagine to be in the box. The children can experiment with their physicality whilst miming, as well as using sound to create their object/scene.

The teacher may want to suggest to the children to think about the weight of the treasure box and how easily their object is to get out of the box. There is no limit to their imaginations!

The next child will then decide when the time is right to come into the space and tap this person on the shoulder. The teacher will explain that this freezes the child in the middle of the room and the child entering the space then creates a new scene based on how their partner is frozen.

The next child can then choose who they want to tap on the shoulder and the pair freezes. Whoever has been tapped on the shoulder leaves the space and the child has to freeze in position of the previous person. They would then begin a completely new scene, with the most recent child in the space, taking the lead. It is important to emphasise that there is only 2 people at one time doing this activity.

The teacher can also call freeze at any point to encourage new children to enter the space.

This activity would continue until everyone has had a go.

Emotion Pie

This activity is great for encouraging children to experiment with how they can express emotion physically. This will benefit the children's ability to openly discuss emotions whilst encouraging them to share ideas confidently to the class.

How to lead the activity

For this activity the children will start standing up in a space in the room.

The teacher will need to prepare the classroom by dividing the room into 6 sections. This could be done with cones, skipping ropes or any suitable resources the teacher may have available.

The teacher will explain to the children that each section represents a different emotion. The children can choose these emotions or the teacher may want to use:

Happy / Sad / Nervous / Brave / Worried / Confident

The teacher may also want to ask the children how these emotions relate to the characters in **the Pirate, the Princess and the Platypus**. Imagine you are the Princess and feel pressure from your family to behave a certain way but you would prefer to be on fun adventures at sea. Would this make you feel sad and worried?

The teacher will then need to clearly label each section with each emotion.

The children will then walk around the space in neutral whilst the teacher plays music at the same time. The teacher will explain to the children that when they cross the line into a new emotion, they have to instantly become this emotion physically in their body.

When the music stops, the children will then freeze and represent the emotion they are standing in. The teacher will then play the music again and the children will continue going round in the circle until the music stops.

The teacher can ask the children to reflect on how it felt to change between emotions. How did it feel to start off as happy then transition to worried? The teacher may want to discuss the process of changing emotions and whether the children can think of a scenario where they change between emotions. How does this make them feel?

This activity can also be extended further by getting the children into small groups and asking them to devise a scene. Each child would represent a different emotion used in the activity. How might this effect the journey of the scene?

Create Your Own Scene!

This activity gives the children the opportunity to express their own creativity and devise their own scene. This will develop the children's independence whilst encouraging them to share ideas confidently to the group.

How to lead the activity

For this activity the children will start standing up in a space in the room.

The teacher will put the children into small groups (5 children or more in each group is recommended). The teacher will explain to the children that their task is to create a new scene based on **the Pirate, the Princess and the Platypus**.

Within each scene the children will have to include:

A freeze frame

A moment of slow motion

A disagreement which is resolved

The teacher may want to suggest to the children that the scene could be an extension of something that already happens in the show. Or it could be something completely different but still includes the characters which are within the theme of the show, such as pirates, princesses and platypus'!

The children can work on these for the duration of the lesson and each group can show back to the rest of the class.

The teacher may want to remind the children to think of their characterisation physically, as well as vocally.



Colouring Sheet!

Can you colour in this image of the Pirate, the Princess and the Platypus?

You can be as creative as you would like - the more colourful, the better!



the Pirate, the Princess and the Platypus Wordsearch!

Can you search and find all these words that are from **the Pirate, the Princess and the Platypus**?

Put a line through or circle them with a pencil when you've found them.

See if you can tick all ten off in ten minutes!

PIRATE PLATYPUS CROG FROG HERO
PRINCESS FRIENDS SHIPWRECK QUEEN MAP

D	C	P	F	R	O	G	R	S	N	A	S
A	B	I	C	F	C	I	C	L	Q	P	S
P	S	R	G	A	P	R	Q	Y	U	L	N
I	P	C	H	M	A	P	U	F	R	A	G
R	R	E	P	K	L	W	E	Y	E	T	F
A	S	H	I	P	W	R	E	C	K	Y	R
T	G	S	A	T	R	K	N	I	P	P	I
E	P	R	I	N	C	E	S	S	C	U	E
W	H	P	B	L	I	C	N	E	R	S	N
M	G	R	O	G	D	A	W	R	E	N	D
C	M	P	L	H	E	R	O	W	E	A	S

We hope these activities have been useful to help bring a bit of **the Pirate, the Princess and the Platypus** back to your classrooms or homes!

We can also provide plenty of opportunities for follow-up activities. Polka's experienced team of actors, directors, storytellers and puppeteers are on hand to deliver a range of workshops in your school.

We can create tailor-made workshops for you and your pupils based on any theme you like, including exploring the themes and production elements of the performance you have just seen!

For more information, please visit our website:

www.polkatheatre.com/schools

Or contact Elysia, Polka's Schools Relationship Officer to request a workshop enquiry form.

We look forward to seeing you at Polka Theatre again soon!

Best Wishes,

Polka Theatre's Creative Learning Team

Created by Jemima Deboo-Sands – Creative Learning Assistant
