

Teacher Resources Pack

Cinderella: the AWESOME truth

Written and Directed by Sarah Punshon



Produced by Polka Theatre's
Creative Learning Department



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London SW19 1SB

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Dear Teacher/Parent/Carer

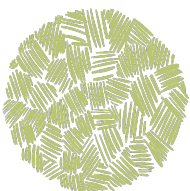
We are so pleased that you came to visit us at Polka Theatre for our Winter Production of *Cinderella: the AWESOME truth!* We hope you enjoyed seeing the production at our brand-new venue!

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 ages 6 -11 years.

We would love to hear what you thought 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



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A Note From The Director

Cinderella: the AWESOME truth is a brand new retelling of the classic story for a contemporary young audience. Like all One Tenth Human shows, it was created in collaboration with artists, children, and scientists, playfully grappling with big ideas.

Knowing that children today face unprecedented pressure over their looks, plus rising levels of obesity, we asked scientists what helps people, particularly children, have a healthy relationship with their bodies. The answer was to concentrate on what your body can *do*, not how it looks. Plus, to practice giving yourself compliments about all the amazing things that make you, you: the awesome things you can do, your kindness, curiosity, bravery or fun. Sometimes that's surprisingly hard, and you need your friends to help you out.

Our team of theatre-makers ran workshops with more than two hundred school children in years 3 and 4. We asked them what they knew about the story; what they liked about their friends; what they enjoyed doing; what it might mean to be "ugly" or "beautiful"; and (importantly) what kinds of music they liked!

All these ideas came together in a series of workshops with actors, designers, and puppeteers, finding ways to explore some of the pressures children face today; and how to overcome them.

We split the character of Cinderella and merged her with the Ugly Sisters, creating two step-sisters called Cindy and Ella: who both sometimes worry they're ugly, but who are both actually awesome. We discovered that pressures on boys and men are becoming almost as bad as those on girls and women, so we developed the character of Prince Francis, who is small, shy, quiet, and badly needs to discover his own awesomeness; and Dandini, the Prince's best friend, who is non-binary, defying gender stereotyping.

Our Fairy Godmothers are puppets, inspired by the emojis, filters, and YouTube tutorials the children had told us were such big parts of their lives. And Sas the Squirrel arrived when we realised that for many children, the main characters in Cinderella were "the mice": so we decided we needed an even bigger, more joyful rodent involved....

The show is an entertaining, joyful, bold Christmas show: but we hope it also provides a helpful way into conversations about some big issues. Thank you for joining us. We hope you have fun.

Sarah Punshon (writer & director)
Toni-Dee Paul (co-creator)
Felix Hagan (composer & lyricist)

with enormous thanks to: Tigger Blaize, Riana Duce, Carys Gaylor, Professor Sarah Grogan, Ali Kahn, Jameela Khan, Juliet Okotie, LJ Parkinson, Yana Penrose, Professor Viren Swami, Ed Thorpe, Phil Yarrow, and the staff & pupils of Stanley Grove Primary School (Manchester) and Bowerham Primary School (Lancaster) who were vital to the devising and development process.



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Warm Up Games & Ice-Breakers

The following *Cinderella: the AWESOME truth!* themed games can help develop a range of skills with your class such as speaking and listening, turn-taking, confidence and teamwork. It also encourages the use of drama as a tool for learning in a creative, safe and fun way!

Name and AWESOME Action

Like a lot of drama warm-ups, this game works best in a circle, but can still work great if everyone stands behind their desks. Each person takes a turn to say their name whilst making an AWESOME action. Explain to your group that the action they make whilst saying their name should be something their body likes to do (e.g. a star-jump, wiggling their hips or nodding their head). Everyone takes their turns and the group copies back each name and AWESOME action all together.

Having a Ball! Name Game

Pretend you have a big ball that you can throw and catch across the circle. Using your name first, you send that imaginary ball across the circle to another person by saying their name (e.g. Cindy to Ella / Ella to Dandini / Dandini to Francis'). Try to ensure that everyone gets the ball – you can ensure this by everyone having a hand up at the start of the game and putting their hand down after they 'catch the ball'. Once you have had a few practices, try to make it speedier and keep a solid rhythm to the ball being passed around!

The sun shines on any who...

Someone stands in the middle of the circle and says a statement that is true about themselves. They might have blue eyes, dark hair, 2 brothers and 3 sisters, a pet squirrel, like to eat sausage rolls or don't like boxing – it can be anything they like! Before each true statement, the person starts with 'The sun shines on anyone who..' and then finishes the sentence with their fact about themselves. All the people who the statement is true for must swap places in the circle. The person in the middle must try to take one of their places so they are part of the circle again. This should leave someone new in the middle of the circle to start again with 'The sun shines on anyone who...'

Try these Tongue Twisters

Cindy clocks the striking clock tick tick tick tick!
Squeaky squeaks from squeaky squee would like a squeezy, squishy, squeaky squeeze!



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Warm Up Games & Ice-Breakers

Squeaky Squees

Whilst moving around the room like the Squeaky Squirrel (or doing this on the spot!), you will lead the below chant and each time select a different letter. Everyone will then get 10 seconds to create a frozen image with their bodies of something beginning with the letter you choose (e.g. for the letter 'C', the group could become Cindy or Cake). After 10 seconds, everyone will freeze and show their character or object! You can then go around the room and choose some children for the rest of the group to guess what they are! Once you have had a few goes, try to get the group to join in with the chant as well!

Squeaky Squees!
Squeaky Squees!
Squeaky Squeaky Squeaky Squees!
If I were a letter I would be the letter...'e.g. C'

Adaptations

- You can always shorten or lengthen the time you give the group to create these frozen images. To make it more difficult, you can start with 10 seconds and then slowly reduce this to 5 seconds!
- If the group are finding it hard to guess what character or object someone in your group has become, you can try pressing play on the frozen image. The person chosen can then make some sounds or move around the room as the character or object, then those guessing might have more of a clue!
- If you want to make it harder, you can give the children 2 letters each round. You could explain that the first letter would correspond to a verb and the second letter would be a noun. For example, if you chose the letters 'J' and then 'S' you could have some Jumping Squirrels or Jiggly Sausage-rolls!
- Try getting the group to work in pairs or threes to create a group frozen image. They can work together to create a giant squirrel or an enormous toadstool from the forest!



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Spot the Rhyme!

Using these lyrics from Cinderella: the AWESOME Truth, ask your group to spot the rhymes?

So you're feeling kind of unimpressive
Somethings messing with your head
That makes you feel like you're a mess
well, Ella don't stress
cos honey, you're the best.

You could sit and fret about other peoples
ill formed opinions of you
Well, I don't think that's cool
You're body's ace, you fool.
Just look what it can do.

You can run, jump and swim
Feel the breeze on your skin
Climb up trees, dance and spin
Let the good times begin

You can sing, shout and wriggle and giggle right from your guts
You got fingers to wiggle and legs for kicking butts
Cos you don't give a hazelnut if people like your face or not

So Ella, get your squirrel on. And go nuts
Climb up, climb up, climb all the trees
You're getting higher, higher, so do what you please
There's nothing finer, finer than mud on your knees
Believe me (woo-hoo), believe me (woo-hoo)
Life is there for having fun

So better get a wiggle on
And Ella, get your squirrel on
And go nuts



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Rock the Rhyme!

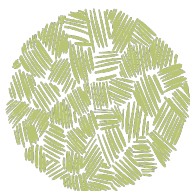
Get your group to practise speaking the above lyrics with emphasis on the rhyming words – can they learn it off by heart? Try adding some actions to help! You can always ask them to keep practising with someone at home before performing it together as a class!

Squeaky Soundscape

As a group, think of the different settings in Cinderella: the AWESOME truth and come up with as many sounds you might hear in these settings e.g. Squirrel making a Squee, Dandini cooking sausage rolls in the kitchen, the wind blowing through the trees in the woods, dancing feet at Prince Francis' Birthday Party! Now think of what body parts can be used to elaborate these sounds e.g. hands & feet, voice with different pitches/volume, beating chest or legs etc. Once you have a few sounds that everyone can create together, you can conduct the group in the Soundscape!

Body Beats

Beats work with rhymes. Every body has it's own rhythm and beat too. Ask each individual to create a simple rhythm with a body part e.g. feet, hips, arms, hands, head. Once they have created a 'body beat' that has it's rhythm to move to, ask them to try and make that beat travel to other body parts. After this moving beat has travelled to 3 or 4 other body parts, they will have created their own routine! They can then practise it and even share it with a partner, learning each others 'Body Beats'. You can let your group know that you are hosting a party like Prince Francis, so everyone has to get ready to bust a move!



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Body Association

This is like the classic word association game but in relation to our bodies and how we feel. Start with a broad topic e.g. 'Party' or 'Fairy tale' then go round in the circle and think of which body parts might be associated to that topic and why. Here's an example, 'My legs dance at a party' - you can ask the group to then add an action for your association and then everyone copies together before going on to the next person. They would have to keep it associating on from the previous example so it could go 'My toes start tapping [at a party]' etc.

Character Traits

In Cinderella: the AWESOME truth, we meet lots of different characters who are all awesome and have many things that make them unique! We met Cindy, Ella, Dandini, Prince Francis, Squirrel and Fairy Godmothers! Ask your group to use these words below to think about how they could describe the characters we meet in the show:

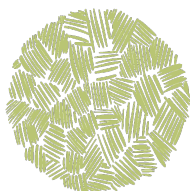
Brave	Shy	Amazing	Strong
Considerate	Funny	Bold	Fearless
Awesome	Kind	Smart	Quiet
Thoughtful	Heroic	Caring	Tough

Ask your group to then use these words or think of more to describe someone they like or admire? Perhaps it is a friend in their class or someone they live with?

You can then use this for the group to reflect about themselves and what things make them awesome! They can write down some words about themselves or think about their skills that make them feel unique. If they are able, it is a nice exercise to share back with your group, either about themselves or the qualities they admire about other people.

Extra Extra! Read All About It!

Help your group to write a theatre review of Cinderella: the AWESOME truth! Use these questions to help prompt them: What was different about this adaptation of Cinderella? How did the technical aspects of the production help convey the story e.g. lights, sound, set design, puppetry? Who was your favourite character and why? Why would you recommend the show to other children? Think about how your group can present this on a page or in a speech!



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Mathematical Magic

Imagine the Equation!

You can adapt these numbers and equations, depending on the level of your group. Create a key like below and ask them to solve these equations!

Cindy = 10 | Squee Squirrel = 30 | Dandini = 40 | Ella = 25 | Prince Francis = 5

Cindy + Dandini = ?

Ella x Prince Francis = ?

Squirrel – Ella x Cindy = ?

Cindy x Prince Francis + Ella = ?

Ella – Cindy + Squee Squirrel = ?

When the Clock Strikes!

Work with your group to see if they can convert these clock faces into digital time? You can always use your own examples. After a few goes, you can try converting from digital to analog!



Digital Time:



Digital Time:



Digital Time:



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Colour In The Squirrel



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Thank you!

We hope these activities have been useful to help bring a bit of *Cinderella: the AWESOME truth* 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:

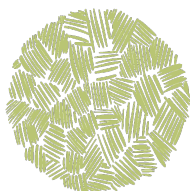
www.polkatheatre.com/schools

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



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