

Schools Activity & Resource Pack

This story

Is growing all the time

The roots are yours and mine

Plant your feet into the ground

Feel your arms branching out

Till the whisper becomes a shout -

Let the wild world into your heart!

Welcome

Welcome to The Lost Spells activity and resource pack, filled with ideas and activities for you to engage your pupils. The pack contains a range of activities that can be tailored for Key Stages 1-3 to deepen their engagement with the wild world of the The Lost Spells, with a focus on creativity, identity, nature, wellbeing, and connection. You can also contribute to our community dandelion garland (see pages 4-5)!

The Story

A girl with no name finds a magical book of spells that conjures up a wild world. Moths appear from nowhere; Owls light up the dark; a Red Fox leads the way down a rabbit hole to a brand new wonderland. On her journey she meets a host of wonderful characters on a fantastical adventure like no other; she learns the dandelion time, meets a boy who turns into a seal, flies with a band of jackdaws and battles with conkers – on a quest to find that which was once lost.



The Cast (From Left-Right)

Toby De Salis - Hare

Paula James - Jackdaw

Miriam Nyarko - Jay

Alex Wingfield - Fox

Lucy Yates - Woodpecker



The Creatives

Based on the book by Robert Macfarlane & Jackie Morris

Music & Lyrics by Mary Erskine & Will Dollard

Book by Matt Borgatti

Featuring original writing by Robert Macfarlane

Directed by Andy Barry

Design by Hannah Sibai

Lighting Design by Sherry Coenen

Sound Design by Daniel Frost

Movement Direction by Dannielle 'Rhimes' Lecointe

Illusion Design by John Bulleid

Puppet Design & Making by Amber Donovan Kahn

Band Leader Toby De Salis

Show Artwork Illustrations by Jackie Morris

Show Artwork Designed by Rebecca Pitt



Andy Barry - Director

Andy is a theatre maker and director based in Manchester.

He began his career as a storyteller in schools and currently

leads the award-winning Royal Exchange Theatre Elders

Company and is Associate Director for Goblin.

The Elders programme at the Royal Exchange Theatre in

Manchester is recognised nationally and internationally and

Andy has travelled to Japan and Korea with the British

Council to share his approach to creating theatre with older

people, as well contribute to numerous conferences and

publications.

In 2021, Andy was listed in The Stage 100, a list celebrating

individuals who went above and beyond in helping the

theatre industry survive the Covid 19 crisis. In the same

year, he was also nominated for a Manchester Culture

Award in the category: Creative Care in Covid 19.

"Bringing The Lost Spells to the stage has been a huge and exciting creative challenge. Many people will know and love the books, and we really wanted to honour the poetry and illustration, but also a play is very different to a book. We wanted to find creative or surprising ways to bring characters to life, rather than just saying 'well Fox needs a tail' or 'Hare needs to twitch his nose.' Lots of creative elements combine to create the quality of each animal. It might be about the instrument suiting that animal character - Woodpecker is a drummer. Or the types of fabrics we chose for the costume, so for Seal, we really looked at the skin of seals, and tried to find a fabric for the actor's coat that reflected this. Or, it might be about how characters move in the space, so for Hare's first entrance we worked with movement director to find ways to create a sense of bounce."

Challenge: Move like a Wild World Character

(KS1+ Music, Drama, Dance)

Create the movement for one of the characters from the book or the stage production. Try different ways of moving - in straight lines and curves, short and sudden movements versus slow and meandering. Imagine your feet are covered in paint - what kind of footprint pattern would your character make? What type of musical instrument would the character play and does this change or add to the way you move?



Designing the Wild World

Hannah Sibai - Set & Costume Designer

Hannah Sibai is a British/Syrian designer based in Yorkshire. She trained at Wimbledon School of Art and has designed over eighty productions across the UK and Europe, working across various mediums including theatre, film, music videos and installations. Hannah regularly collaborates with directors, writers, choreographers and composers to create design-led work from the earliest stages of development. She often leads design workshops for arts organisations, community centres, festivals, schools and universities.

"As set and costume designer on *The Lost Spells*, it's my job to bring to life all of the different places, characters, and themes of the script. I work with the director to make sure the space and costumes are not only really functional for the actors to wear and use, but also look great for an audience to look at. My designs are heavily inspired by the colours in the illustrated book and the costume designs are all in the same palette as the animal paintings, but the shapes are more human, with the addition of some ears and feathers. I've been inspired by the musical types and instruments the characters play - for example Woodpecker is a rebel who plays the drums really loudly, so I've made her a 1970s punk!"



WOODPECKER



FOX



HARE



JACKDAW



JAY

Challenge: Design Your Own Costume

(KSI+ Art & Design, Design & Technology)

Create your own costume design for a character featured in the production or a new character inspired by *The Lost Spells* book. What clothes might they wear? Think about the outline or silhouette the clothes create and your choice of colours, textures, or any movement in the fabric. What do your choice of costume say about the character? One way to help you think more deeply about their character is to imagine what items you might find in their pockets or their bag.

Dandelion Garland

(KS2+ English, Art & Design, French, PSHE, SMSC)

The dandelion flower has many names. In this scene below from *The Lost Spells*, Hare tells Jay about some of the different names for the dandelion flower and Jay comes up with some ideas of her own. What names can you think of? Do you have any nicknames? Do you know where your name comes from or what it means? What does it mean to you?

ACT I, SCENE 5

HARE BLOWS DANDELION SEEDS

HARE: 'Scatterseed'

JAY: They're flying everywhere! Like Tiny Parachutes.

HARE: 'Tiny Parachutes', that's a good one.

JAY SNEEZES

HARE: 'Sneeze-maker', 'Evening Glow', 'Sun of the Grass'.
Now you try one.

JAY: Ummm... Puffball Head?!

HARE: Yes

JAY: - Fallen Stars of the Football Pitch.

HARE: Yes!

JAY: - Yellow Dangly Janglies!

Matt Gorbatti - Writer

Matt founded acclaimed theatre company *Goblin* in 2013. With a focus on work for young people he has written, developed and directed shows at venues, festivals & schools, including Southbank Centre, The Royal Albert Hall & National Theatre. Matt has an M(Phil) in Playwriting from University of Birmingham. As a Creative Producer Matt has worked for various organisations and festivals all around the world.

"Adapting a book of poetry into a story/narrative that would work on stage took a lot of thinking about - so me and the composers looked at what the books did - inspiring creativity, fostering a love of nature and connecting readers to the natural world which is being lost in front of our eyes - all of which we tried to weave into the narrative, alongside the wonderful and characterful language and art."

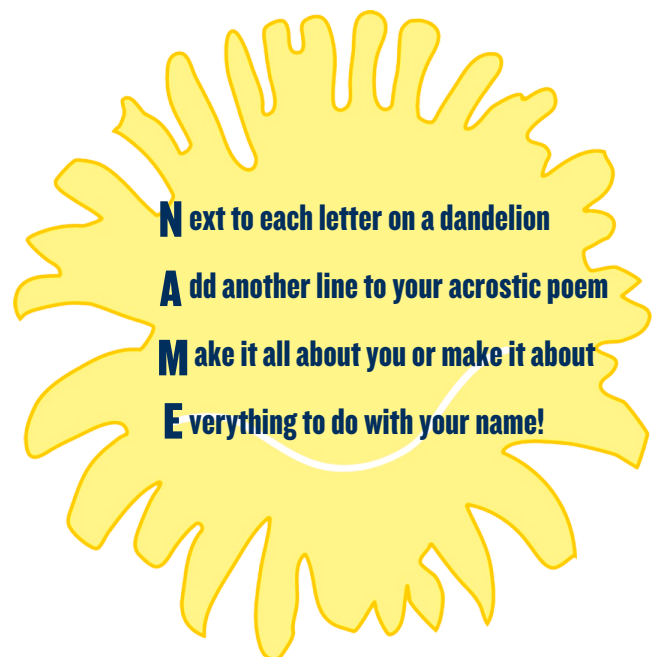
Common Dandelion

Scientific name: *Taraxacum officinale*

The common dandelion is a most familiar flower. A favourite game involves counting down the clock whilst blowing the fluffy seeds from its head. These flowers are also a vital early source of food for bees and other pollinators - so let them grow!

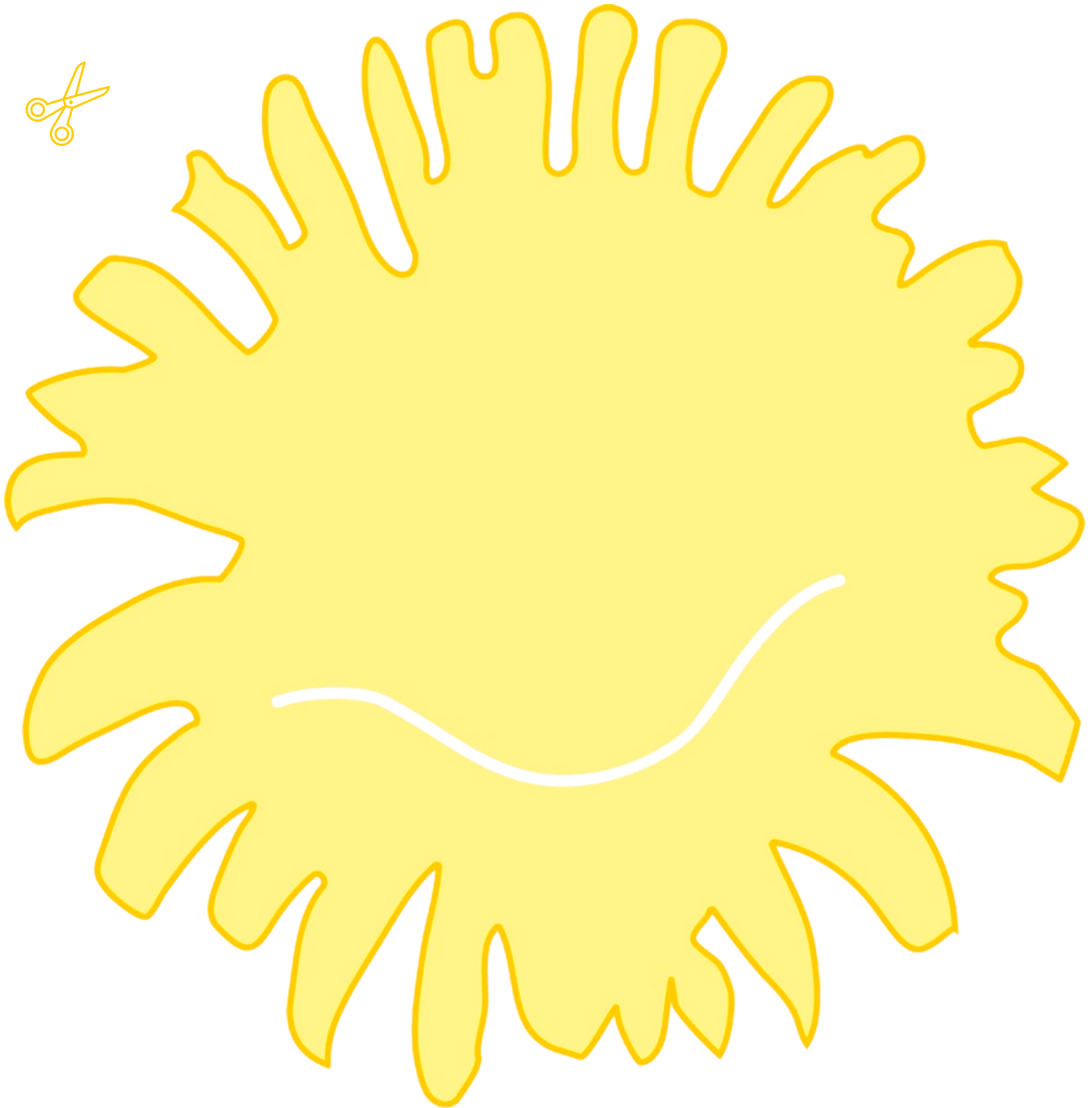
Challenge: Create An Acrostic Poem from Your Name

Use the letters of your name to create an acrostic poem, writing one line of the poem on each petal of a dandelion flower. You can either draw your own dandelion flower, or cut out and use the blank template on the next page. Once the dandelions have been created from each person's name, the dandelions display them to create a garland, exploring the names and identities that make up your class, community, or family.



Dandelion template

Cut out and use the template below or create your own dandelion flower design and add your acrostic poem to it.



Once you've created your dandelion poems, Watford Palace Theatre invites schools, families, and community groups to send their completed garlands to the theatre to be displayed in the foyer, creating one big garland celebrating the names and identities of our local community.

You can email your dandelions direct to the Take Part Team at takepart@watfordpalacetheatre.co.uk or post/deliver by hand to the theatre: Take Part, Watford Palace Theatre, 20 Clarendon Road, Watford, WD17 1JZ



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The Tree of Life

(KS2+ English, SMSC, PHSE, Art, Design & Technology)

Draw the outline of an oak tree with roots, the ground, a trunk, branches, leaves, flowers, and acorns.

The Roots (where you come from & your family)

Write down or add pictures about anything to do with where you come from on the roots, such as your hometown, country, etc. You could also include details like where your family are from, other places you grew up in, or clubs or spaces where you feel at home.

The Ground (the life you live today and activities you engage in)

Add things you choose to do on a weekly basis to the ground. These should not be things you have to do, but rather things you have chosen to do for yourself like your hobbies and interests.

The Trunk (your skills, values, and abilities)

Add your skills and values to the trunk. You could start with values at the base of the trunk, adding skills and abilities further up.

The Branches (your hopes and goals)

Add your hopes, dreams, and wishes to the branches. These can be things you want for yourself, big and small, but also hopes, dreams, and wishes you have for others or for the whole world. Think about things you would like to see happen right now and things you hope for in the future. Spread them around the various branches.

The Leaves (important people in your life)

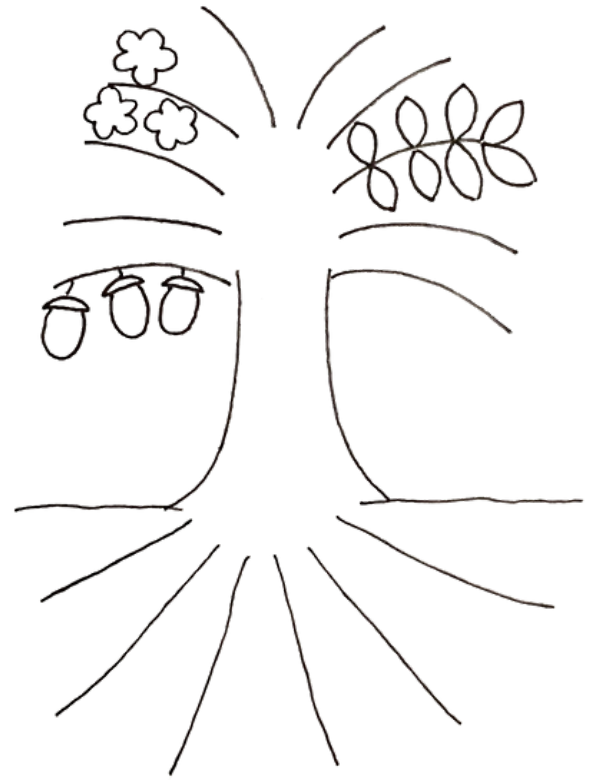
Add the names of those who are important to you. They could be your friends, family, pets, heroes, etc.

The Flowers (gifts given to you by other people)

Add any gifts that have been passed on to you by others to the flowers. You could begin by looking at the names you wrote on leaves and thinking about the impact these people have had on you and what they've given to you over the years. Think beyond things like money and possessions and include qualities people may have taught or fostered in you, like courage, generosity, kindness, etc.

The Acorns (gifts you would like to give to others)

Write down the gifts you wish to pass on to others on the acorns.



Extension Exercise: Connecting through writing

Think of the people named on the leaves and think of the values, skills or abilities you have included on your trunk that they may have helped you to gain. Write to them and tell them how much they mean to you.

Mycelium and Mycorrhizal Networks

Most of us are familiar with mushrooms, but did you know that the majority of fungi exists below ground in the form of mycelium? Mycelium are tiny threads that bore into tree roots and grow into large networks called mycorrhizal networks, from the Greek words for fungi (myco) and root (rhiza). Through these networks, trees share water and valuable nutrients with one another, and the fungi keep some carbon and sugars for their own growth. There's even research suggesting that trees can communicate with each other through these mycorrhizal networks!

Music & Sounds of the Wild World



Five Senses Mindfulness

(KSI+ SMSC, PHSE)

In *The Lost Spells*, there is a moment where Jay holds the acorn and connects with nature by using her senses. To ground everyone in the present moment, get them to think of the following:

Five things they can see (e.g. a chair, a window, clouds, a picture, a pen)

Four things they can feel (e.g. the wind, the pencil in my hand, clothes against my skin, ground under my feet)

Three things they can hear (e.g. birds chirping, breathing, traffic noise)

Two things they can smell (e.g. food in the cafeteria, clothes detergent)

One thing they can taste (e.g. toothpaste).

For further wellbeing activity ideas visit: <http://www.yogaatschool.co.uk/>

The Human Orchestra

(KSI+ Music, Drama, English, Science & Nature, Oracy, PHSE)

First, invite your class or group to create the sounds of the human world. What sounds might they hear? Split into smaller groups to create different sounds like voices, traffic, construction. They can then be conducted like an orchestra, (louder, quieter, completely silent etc). The sounds could build into a crescendo and then dissipate.

Now repeat with the exercise with sounds of the wild world: birds noises, insects and animals, the weather or the breeze through the trees, or the sound of running water in rivers and streams. Conduct the sounds.

How do these two different sound worlds make you feel?

Extension Exercise: Soundscape the Story

Split into two groups and get some to act out a scene from the story while the rest of the group create a soundscape to accompany the action. Which sounds are relevant?

Further inspiration for sounds can be found at: <https://www.naturesounds.tv>

Challenge: Create Your Own Wild Song

(KSI+ Music, English)

The Lost Spells is full of songs that bring the wild world to life. Using a moment from the story, an animal character from the book or the play, or the natural world as your starting point, create your own lyrics and turn them into a song!

Check out the show trailer featuring the song 'Jackdaw' here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gV5N0d2JrtA>

Instruments Played by the

Cast in the Show:

Acoustic guitar

Electric guitar

Bass guitar

Double bass

Drums

Trumpet

Saxophone

Oboe

Melodica

Mandolin



More Drama Game Ideas

I Went on a Journey into the Wild World and I Packed...

(KS1+ Drama, English, Oracy)

A variation on the memory game “I Went to Market...” where you get to imagine Jay packing her bag before venturing out into the wild world. What items might she take? What might be useful? What would you want to take with you?

See how many items you can think of and remember, by going around the circle and each person repeats the list and adds one more item of their own - e.g. “I went on a journey into the wild world, and I packed... my toothbrush, a good book, a compass, and a pair of binoculars.”

Owls in the Woods

(KS1+ Drama)

Everyone flies and swoops around the space like owls.

If the leader calls out “fly into a tree!”, everyone gets into pairs and one person become a tree while their partner hides behind them pretending to be an owl in the branches.

If the leader calls out “sit in the nest!”, everyone gets into threes with one person sitting on the floor with two other people making a nest around them with their arms outstretched.

If the leader calls out “Red Fox is coming, safer by the... [suggest somewhere safe, like by the smartboard, or by a tree]!” everyone gets as close as they can to the safe place, object, or person, without touching it/them and ensuring they get there safely without any pushing.



Pass the Bird

(KS1+ Drama, Oracy)

In your hand, imagine holding a small, frightened bird, and whisper your name softly to it. Gently pass it to the person next to you, until everybody has held it in their hand. The last person to hold the bird and tell it their name, can then open their hand and gently encourage it to fly away. Careful handling and acting will make the bird come alive! Variation: instead of whispering your name, whisper the name of a species of bird you can think of.

Find out more about birds at: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds - <https://www.rspb.org.uk/>

British Trust for Ornithology - <https://www.bto.org/>

Birdspot bird identifier - <https://www.birdspot.co.uk/>



Other Useful Links

<https://www.puffinschools.co.uk/resources/ks2-resource-pack-the-lost-spells-an-explorers-guide/>

<https://www.thelostwords.org/resources/>

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/discover/nature>

<https://goblintheatre.co.uk/>

<https://watfordpalacetheatre.co.uk/> <https://polkatheatre.com/> <https://www.theatrebythelake.com/>

