**SCHOOLS CONNECT**

**WORKSHOP**

**KING LEAR**

An opportunity to introduce students to less familiar texts and explore a range of strategies and performance skills.

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| **Warm up**  Start your drama session with warm up sessions and short games to encourage ensemble activities.  Eg.  Walk the room / Grab a group / Create an object beginning with…  In groups create – *A kitchen appliance / A washing machine / The Eiffel Tower*  Walk the room – say out loud the King Lear words and phrases which are posted on the walls. As you walk say the words to people you pass.  *The words will give some idea of the play. What does it suggest to you?*  In groups, create freeze frames with the following titles:   * *A Great King* * *A dangerous crowd* * *An evil princess*   *Drama games play an important role in the rehearsal studio to allow the students to establish a creative energy through collaboration. The freeze frames give a foretaste of the themes of the session.* |

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| **Introducing the story**  Students stand in circle and are called upon to act out the story as the teacher narrates.  **King Lear: Whoosh!**  Once there was a **King of Britain** called Lear. He was a strong and good king and his **subjects** loved him. When he waved the royal wave, they cheered. **King Lear** had **a strong army of soldiers**. They were brave fighters. They also liked to have wild parties.  **King Lear** had a **beautiful queen**. Together they lived in **a grand royal castle**, which had big tall towers and a huge wooden door to keep everyone safe. **Everyone** was very happy in the castle and they enjoyed eating, drinking and dancing.  Whoosh!  **King Lear** and **his wife** had three children. A daughter called **Goneril**. Another daughter called **Regan**. And another daughter called **Cordelia.** Unfortunately, after **Cordelia** was born the **queen** suddenly died. **King Lear** was heartbroken and **everyone** in the kingdom was upset.  **King Lear** grew older and loved his daughters. **Goneri**l grew up to be very beautiful but very wicked. **Regan** grew up to be also very beautiful but even more wicked than her older sister. **Cordelia** grew up to be equally beautiful but she was good and kind. **Goneril** and **Regan** were very jealous of their younger sister.  **Creating Location**  Pairs - Hand out picture of castle.  What kind of place is it? Imagine walking into the picture- where would you go? What would you see? Contrasts – light / dark; warm / cold; narrow / wide; soft/ rough textures; sound / silence; smells etc  Pairs – One partner closes their eyes. The other takes partner on a guided tour of castle.  Go and stand at a point where you felt your partner said or did something you remember and it made an impression on you. Say out loud a key word about the castle. On the count of three move into groups with people close to you and form the walls and doors of King Lear’s castle. Make sure everyone is joined in some way.  *Teacher explains as you walk through this castle you can hear the noise of wind whistling through the corridors and people whispering and plotting behind walls.*  Teacher walks around castle while students create soundscape. |

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| **Script and devised work**  Separate class into 4 groups.   * **King Lear and his servants and advisors.** * **Goneril, her husband and followers.** * **Regan, her husband and followers.** * **Cordelia and her followers.**   Deliver information about opening scene.  **King Lear has called his daughters to the main council room. He has an important announcement to make.**  How will everyone enter?  Ask for words to describe their body language.  Create drum beat to announce each group entrance. |

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| **Developing Physical Theatre**  *Explain that all these characters are described as being like animals or beasts in the play.*  *Goneril is described as being like a* ***serpent****.*  *Regan is described as being like a* ***wolf***  *Cordelia is described as a* ***caged bird.***  *King Lear like an* ***old dragon.***  In your groups create a creature to reflect your character. Everyone needs to be involved. Try to use movement and sounds and explore use of gesture and physical movement to create your animal as a whole group. |

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| **Bring the drama to life**  ***King Lear has decided to divide up his kingdom and pass it over to his three daughters. How much land they get depends on their love for their father.*** ***So they have to say how much they love him.***  *Give leader of each group the line which they will deliver then turn themselves into the creature when Lear’s back is turned.*  Lear: Tell me daughters,  Which of you shall we say doth love us most?  Goneril: Sir, I love you more than word can wield the matter.  *And count Goneril group into creature*  Regan: I am alone your dear Highness’ love.  *Count Regan group into creature*  Cordelia: I love your majesty According to my bond, no more nor less.  *Count Cordelia group into creature.*  Lear: So young and so untender?  Out of my sight!  *Count Lear group into creature.*  *Finally count whole group into creatures with sound and movement.*  *Students collaborate to create tension between characters and establish easy movement between Shakespeare’s dialogue and physical theatre.* |

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| **Review and thinking forward**  *Gather group together. Discussion and questions.*  What does Lear do to Cordelia at the end of the scene?  Why is he angry with her?  Does Cordelia love her father?  Why do you think Goneril and Regan say they love their father best in all the world?  What do you think might happen in the story after this?  *In groups of four create a freeze frame showing a possible future event in the story.*  ***Extension***  ***Writing – what happens next?***  ***Art – paint the creatures you created.*** |

Foolish old man

Villain

Vulgar man

Thou rascal

Milk-livered

Vain fool

Devil

Serpent

Foul fiend

Madman

False of heart

Tell me daughters,

Which of you shall we say doth love us most?

Sir, I love you more than word can wield the matter.

I am alone your dear Highness’ love.

I love your majesty According to my bond, no more nor less.

So young and so untender?

Out of my sight!