

Materials Required

- Name labels
- Headlines
- Pre-selected mementos
- Pens
- Worksheet 1: Questions
- Worksheet 2: Images of young people

Introduction

- Outline the roles and responsibilities for participants and workshop leader
- Discuss the desired outcomes with the participants
- Outline working practice and what behaviour and attitude will be expected throughout the session to encourage a fun and creative atmosphere

It is important to stress that the drama sessions will work in a safe and imaginative way, and participants will be expected to contribute and listen without judgement or criticism from others.

Warm Ups: Clap Rhythm; Bob, Bob, Bob; I Am a Gnome

1.1 Chair of Truth

This exercise is designed to encourage participants to reveal information (in particular what they think about school, their experience of it, and the environment in which it is situated) without them feeling exposed. It is emphasised to the participants that there are no right or wrong answers, they are free to answer as they like, and their responses will not be commented on.

- Place a chair in the middle of the room.
- Explain that you will make several different statements.
- The more the participants agree with the statement, the closer they move towards the chair; the more they disagree, the further away they move.
- Start with some easy statements to check everyone understands the exercise:
 - Today is (insert correct day of week)
 - The weather is really warm today
 - It's really cold outside today
- Here are some example statements you may like to use below:
 - I ate breakfast at home today before coming to school
 - I know coming to school will be a really positive experience
 - I feel happier at home than at school
 - If I had a problem at school I would have someone to talk to
 - I often find myself on my own
 - If I do well at school I can make lots of money in the future
 - I can only be really happy if I'm rich
- Note observations and ask participants if they would like to share with the group why they have chosen to stand where they are. This will help you get into a general discussion about personal, future, and career aspirations. What do we understand by being successful? What does success look like? Can we only be happy and fulfilled if we are rich?
- This important discussion can be revised at the end of the programme to see the progression of participants' thinking and if their ideas and thoughts on the subject have change by the end of session five.
- Without moving, ask participants to think about the kind of job they might like to do when they have left school. Perhaps they would like to make a difference to their community by undertaking a role of service, or a job that enables them to travel, or a creative career such as a photographer, artist, musician etc.
- Suggest a variety of successful role-models and take ideas from the participants. Current examples might be:
 - Rio Ferdinand – born in Peckham, south-east London and grew up on a council estate. Rio is a successful England footballer of mixed Caribbean and Irish descent.
 - J K Rowling – the successful author of the Harry Potter series, (now also feature films,) who came from a humble background in Scotland.

This is a great opportunity to find out what participants understand by the word 'aspire' and to have 'aspirations' not just in terms of career but also personal aspirations, hopes and dreams.

1.2 Strike a Pose

- Ask participants to walk around the space and, on the clap of a hand, strike a pose, which you'll explain as they are walking.
- Pose 1: *'Demonstrate what it would be like if you achieved your dream job. How would it feel to have achieved your ambition? What would it look like to be fulfilled and happy?'*
- Clap your hands once and wait until everyone has come to a freeze and struck a pose.
- Ask participants to remember this pose.

- Pose 2: *'Someone has put an obstacle in your way; a barrier preventing you from achieving your dream. The obstacle is a large brick wall. Demonstrate how it would feel not being able to achieving your dream. How would this obstacle make you feel?'*
- Clap your hands once and wait until everyone has come to a freeze and struck a pose.
- Ask participants to remember this pose.

- Pose 3: *'Demonstrate in a short mime how you intend to deal with the obstacle. Will you take down the wall brick by brick? Climb over it? Dig underneath it or smash it to bits?'*
- Clap your hands once and wait until everyone has come to a freeze and struck a pose.
- Ask participants to remember this pose.

- Encourage participants to share their mimes with the group. Note the commitment and determination and strength it takes to bring the wall down.

- Pose 4: *'Demonstrate your ultimate dream, now that you have overcome the barrier. Add an action to symbolise what your ultimate job or ambition is.'*
- Clap your hands once and wait until everyone has come to a freeze and struck a pose.
- Ask participants to remember this pose.

- Ask for volunteers to present all four of their poses in order to the group. Discuss the poses and any observations. You can now assess the level of ambition and self-esteem within the group. Participants are asked to disclose their career ambitions and what jobs they would like to do in the future; this information can lead into a discussion about the possible obstacles that might prevent them from achieving their goals. What might the wall have represented in the exercise? What things might prevent you from achieving your ultimate job in the future? (eg education, competition, family and friends, environment, finance etc).

1.3 Images of Young People from Around the World

- Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- Show images of young people from around the world involved in various activities. It is important that the images are of people the same age as the participants. (This material will need to be pre-selected from resources or the internet, or use Worksheet 2 if suitable.)
- Ask participants to think about the differences and similarities between themselves and those pictured. Use the visual aids to assist in a discussion regarding the variety of education that might be available to the people in the images and the possible aspirations of other young people from different social and economic backgrounds.



1.4 Fantasy Character Biographies

- Working in groups of five, each group of participants will select a picture of a young person from the previous exercise.
- Explain that they have two minutes to think about the picture and come up with as much biographic information as possible.
- Provide each group with Worksheet 1 (or you can create your own) to record their thoughts. The worksheet asks the participants to think further about the lives (biographies) of the people in each picture. It is intended to view and challenge the participants' prescriptive views of themselves and others.



1.5 Biography Headlines (*optional exercise*)

- Pre-select newspaper headlines from the weekly news stories or make up new ones. Examples might be:
 - 'Successful millionaire gives money to old school'
 - 'Londoner to be first to go into space'
 - 'Local man receives Nobel Peace Prize'
 - 'Sentenced to ten years in jail: community say it's not long enough!'
 - 'It was tough, but they made it: success from poor beginnings'
 - 'Police hunt for gang leader'
- Place a selection of headlines in the middle of the room.
- Ask each group to pick the headline they think relates to their picture and ask them to explain their choice.

1.6 Image of Achievement

- Using everyone in the group, ask participants to create a short rehearsed improvisation of a special moment in the life of the young person pictured when they achieved something. The scene should last no more than two minutes. The scene should capture the 'moment of glory' (whatever it might be).
- Give examples to assist in generating ideas. Participants must also decide on a title for the improvisation.
- Each group will then present their improvisation and discuss their ideas with positive criticism encouraged from the rest of the groups.

1.7 Inspiration Wall

- Share with the group something that has been an inspiration to you. It would be helpful to pre-select three personal objects or mementos that have inspired you in some way (a piece of music, an image and a piece of text etc).
- Bring the group together for a final, intimate sharing of private personal items. Ask participants to each bring in something for next week to place on an Inspiration Wall. A wall of images to be displayed somewhere in the school to represent 'dreams for your life', to inspire other young people to think about their dreams, hopes and aspirations for the future. They may be pictures, photographs, or images from magazines which demonstrate what each participant would like from their future. Alternatively they could be personal achievements which they feel good about such as sports certificates, which may inspire others.
- Objects and valuable items can be photographed, scanned or photocopied for the Inspirational Wall.

Materials Required

- Home poem by Jennifer Burns (provided).

Introduction

- In a circle, recap on the previous lesson
- Set objectives for session
- Recap on how participants might need to behave to ensure a safe and creative atmosphere

Warm up: Opposites

2.1 Personal Journeys

Encourage participants to think about their daily routine and in particular their journey to and from school.

- Ask participants to find a space on their own and sit with their eyes closed, and start to visualise their routine.
- Guide them through the visualisation by asking questions for them to think about. For example; What time do you get up? Do you wash first then get ready for school? What do you have for breakfast? Who makes your breakfast? Once you leave home do you get in to a car, step into a lift, walk to a bus stop? What do you notice as you make your journey each day? What do you see and what do you smell? Is there anything that is familiar that you see each day? How do you feel about your journey and the environment?
- State that you will walk around the room and when you tap someone on the shoulder, they should keep their eyes closed and voice one thing they saw on their way to school that day, starting the sentence with 'On my way to school, I see...'
- Walk around the room and one-by-one tap each of the participants on the back until everyone has had a turn.
- Note down what is said for later in the drama.

2.2 A Very Special Wish

- Continuing with the guided visualisation, read out the following:

During your journey to school you find a special box. The box is very precious indeed, and on the lid it says: "Congratulations, you have now been granted one wish," in smaller writing you can just make out some small print which reads "You cannot wish for money or more wishes".



- Let participants think about what they would like to wish for.
- Ask them to open their eyes and mime closing the box and burying it in the ground.
- Ask participants to come together in a large circle, standing up.
- Ask each participant to disclose what it was that they wished for but no-one may comment or respond to what is said.

This is a great opportunity for all participants to start to find their voice in a non-threatening way.

2.3 Journey Sights and Sounds

- With everyone staying in a circle, read aloud (from the previous exercise) the many things the young people see on their journey to school each day.
- Ask participants to create a repetitive action and sound that best describes what they see. This is a great exercise to encourage participants to think abstractly and steer clear of conventional thinking.
- Go around the group and ask each participant to demonstrate their action and sound. The volume will naturally increase as all the participants become involved and the action builds. Stand in the centre of the circle and mime the turning of an imaginary dial. The participants must respond both vocally and physically to the imaginary dial as it is turned up and down.
- You may like to repeat this exercise using different techniques. For example, the same repetitive action and sound may be demonstrated in slow motion, speeded up, or demonstrated as large or small as possible.

2.4 Likes and Dislikes About Home

- Put participants into pairs and ask each pair to find a space in the room and sit down. Each pair must select someone to be A and someone to be B.
- Explain that A has two minutes to tell their partner a total of five things about their home; three things they like, and two things they dislike. B must remember their partner's facts. The roles of A and B are then swapped over.
- Once the four minutes are up, pick each pair in turn to stand up and volunteer their partner's information to the rest of the group. Each pair should have the opportunity to share their facts. This disclosing of information is not to be commented on.

2.5 Home is...

- Bring participants to a sitting down circle and encourage a discussion about what 'home' means to them. What does home represent? Can it be a physical place or somewhere far away? Do you consider home is where you were born or where you live now, and why?
- Read aloud the poem by Jennifer Burns (shown on the right).
- Use the poem to continue a discussion about home. Is this poem happy, and why? What is most memorable about the poem? Are there any particular sentences you liked? How does it make you feel about your own home?
- Split everyone into five groups (you may like to number each participant 1–5) and ask each group to find a space in the room. Each participant must come up with one sentence about what home means to them, starting with 'Home is...'. What makes us feel like we are home? It could relate to a sound, smell or object.
- Once each participant from each group has a sentence, the group must now think about how best to present their poem. Using each sentence they must stage their poem, being as creative and imaginative as possible.
- Let each group present their work after a short rehearsal time. Encourage participants from other groups to give positive criticism after each performance.

Home

*Home is pictures of memories on the wall.
Home is sleeping in my own bed.
Home is waking up to the smell of mum's cooking.
Home is sharing the holidays with family.
Home is playing the piano in the living room.
Home is a warm place to be.
Home is sweet.
Home is a place for me.
Home is filled with love.
Home is blessed from heaven above.
Home is where my heart is.
Home has a strong foundation.
It can weather any storm.
Home is where I belong.
When I go away,
I know I can come back to stay.
Home is a beautiful place.*

2.6 Participants' Sharing Time

- Sitting in a circle as a group, encourage participants to bring their personal objects and images (as requested in the previous lesson) into the circle.
- Going around the group, ask each participant to hold up the item they have brought in to put on the Inspiration Wall and discuss their choice. This exercise can be very revealing as memories and personal stories are shared. At the end of the session, select a few volunteers to take responsibility for starting the Inspiration Wall.

Materials Required

- Pens
- Examples of Emily's work
- Wallpaper / Marker pen
- Sheets of A3 paper
- Coin
- Worksheet 3 – Outline of figure
- Worksheet 4 – Outline of superhero

Introduction

- Recap on last week's session and outcomes
- Remind participants of rules and behaviour established from previous sessions.

Warm Ups: Shark Attack; Pass the Squeeze

3.1 Good Qualities

- Ask participants to sit in a semi-circle and place a large sheet of wallpaper in the middle.
- A volunteer then lies on his or her back, whilst you draw around the outline of their figure with a marker pen.
- Ask participants to think about a special person in their lives. It might be a family member, a friend or someone in the community. It is important that participants are specific about one person in particular. Ask participants to think about why he or she is important. Is it because of a particular thing they do or say, or a way they behave that makes them so special? It could be an act of kindness, a good deed or an encouraging word.
- Participants do not disclose who the special person is but think of one word that best describes them.
- Ask each participant to voice their chosen word and then strike a frozen image (at the top of the paper) that best demonstrates the word. Examples might be: loving, understanding, sensitive, genuine etc.
- Write down each word in the middle of the outline gradually filling the wallpaper. The sheet now represents our 'best self'; all the wonderful qualities possible. Participants are encouraged to hold their frozen image until the whole group is involved, forming a huge tableau. The tableau encompasses all the elements and qualities of the special and wonderful people in our lives.

3.2 The Special People in Our Lives

- Ask participants to get into pairs and decide who will be either A or B.
- Say the following: *'You will have two minutes to tell your partner about the special person you chose. It may be a memory of an event or moment shared. You must discover two new words to describe the person or the qualities you most admire. You may refer to the sheet of paper if you need to, or ask your partner for help'.*
- After two minutes, ask each pair to swap over. Each participant should now have a total of three carefully chosen words that best describe the special person in their life.
- Hand-out pens and Worksheet 3, (the blank outline of a figure, similar to the outline drawn at the start of the session). Ask each participant to write down their three words on the worksheet.

3.3 Personal Achievements

Now participants have identified the qualities they most admire in other people, you will try to identify what qualities other people most admire about the participants.

- Ask participants to think of a personal achievement. It might be something as simple as learning to swim or winning an award or certificate (you may like to refer to the end of the last session). It is helpful if you take some examples from volunteers.
- Ask the group for suggestions to help determine what unique personal qualities it took to gain the achievements. Examples might be: determination, strength, and courage. Write the chosen words on Worksheet 3.
- Hand-out Worksheet 4 (outline of the superhero character), and encourage participants to write down the three words that they hope other people might admire about them.

3.4 Superheroes

Referring to both handouts, each participant now has the beginnings of a very special character. Six wonderful qualities that together encompass the participant's potential to become their 'best self'.

- Ask each participant to strike a pose that best demonstrates their superhero character, and on the clap of the hand the participants must freeze.
- With eyes closed, ask participants to think about how their 'best self' super character might make an impact in their family, in the classroom, in the school and in the world! This encourages participants to visualise themselves as successful, healthy and happy adults, achieving their aspirations, hopes and dreams for the future, surrounded by supportive and loving people. Participants may like to also create a superhero name to add in front of their own surname.
- On the count of three, ask participants to create a walk for their superhero character and begin to move in different directions around the room. As they pass another participant they must shake hands, introduce themselves as their superhero, and disclose something about what they hope to achieve in the future (other than job or career ambitions).
- To celebrate how fabulous we are and the amazing potential we have within us all, you should mime taking a group photo of the super heroes. If you have access to a camera then you could take a real photo which could be placed on the Inspiration Wall.
- Remind participants that we all have the potential to be amazing and do remarkable things – it's important not to forget that it's not how good you are; it's how good you want to become! You might like to discuss how the behaviour and attitude of others affects not just individuals but communities as a whole.



3.5 Synopsis

- Read the Synopsis of *Sky's the Limit* to the class. This will enable a discussion about the characters in the story. Who are they? What are their aspirations and what might their barriers be? You will notice that the synopsis does not have an end. Participants may like to discuss ideas for the end of the play or, depending on time, create a short rehearsed improvisation demonstrating the events to end the play.

Materials Required

- Leaf cut outs
- Pens
- Bunch of keys
- Copies of *Scene 1 Sky's the Limit*

Warm Ups: Sleeping Pirates; Count to One Minute

4.1 Dream Song

- Ask participants to come together in a circle.
- The following text is sung or spoken to the group (any simple melody will work well):

*Dream, dream, dream forever,
Dare to dream and you shall ever
Be, more, ambitious to dream,
Dream again, carry the dream.*

- Take the song line-by-line until the group become familiar with the melody. You may like to add additional rhythm work by clapping hands and tapping feet.
- The group must then be split into four teams, taking up a position in each corner of the room. Each team is to create a movement for each line that will fit the song as it is chanted out loud by the group.
- Stand in the centre of the room and, acting as a conductor, raise your arm high above your head. On the command 'Go', each group starts to chant the song (in a soft voice) and demonstrate the moves, gradually making their way, as a team, towards you. The closer the teams get to you, the louder the chant must get.
- When each team is almost at the centre of the room and the volume is at its loudest, drop your arm suddenly. It is on this signal that the participants must work together to all respond and stop abruptly. It may take a few practices to develop the discipline needed. The first attempt usually erupts in giggles, but push participants to encourage them to keeping working on the exercise, until they can stop all at the same time on the arm command signal.

4.2 Yes, Let's!

- Ask participants to find a space on their own in the room.
- Ask each participant to think about the things they might want to do in the future. The two girls in the play are asked by the one-eyed man to think about their dreams for the future. Salinder would like to rock climb but Susan hasn't really ever thought about her future. Encourage participants to be really creative and imaginative. Examples might be to climb to the top of a mountain and eat a packed lunch, swim with dolphins, ride on a camel into the desert and sleep under the stars, bungee jump from a bridge...
- Then ask participants to begin walking round the room in different directions at a speedy pace. Shout out (whilst walking) 'Let's dream' and the group (all together) shout back 'Let's dream'.
- Shout again 'Let's dream' and this time the group responds by shouting 'Yes let's!'
- A volunteer is selected and shouts 'Let's...(insert dream)'.
- Then the whole group must demonstrate the dream at the same time. For example, if swimming with dolphins is the dream, everyone mimes taking a ride on a dolphin in the sea. The exercise is repeated until all the participants have had the opportunity to say their dream aloud.

4.3 The Dream Tree

In the play, Susan and Salinder are asked to write down their dreams on the leaves of the tree with a magic pen.

- Using pens, ask each participant to decorate a leaf, and write down three of their most important dreams for the future. The first must relate to the participant's dream job or career. The second; a personal aspiration or hope, and the third can be of their choice.
- The leaves could either be used to decorate the Inspiration Wall or be collected and put into a special box. The act of writing the dreams down is very important. There is something very special about telling everyone what it is that we hope for our future.



4.4 The Role of the Director

- Discuss with participants the role of the director and comment upon the creative process so far; the development from the synopsis to the first scene (it's important that participants understand the paper-to-stage process).
- Take suggestions as to how a director might direct the first scene. What might it look like on stage? Where would the characters enter and exit from?
- Split everyone into groups of three. One is expected to take on the role of the director and the other two to perform. Each group finds a space in the room and rehearses the first scene. It is important that participants don't get hung up on the text, so scripts will not be used and participants will make up the dialogue. Participants may like to add in other things that they see on their way to school (refer back to the second lesson). The participant who is in role as the director assists with giving staging instructions and may also like to call out stage directions.
- Bring the group together to share the session's work. Allow enough time for each group to perform the scene and encourage constructive criticism after each one.

4.5 Narrative Work

Before moving on to look at the first scene from the play, it is useful to recap on the synopsis for *Sky's the Limit* and discover what participants can remember of the narrative and characters.

You can then ask for volunteers to read Scene One. It is helpful if you read the stage directions to establish where the scene takes place, etc.

After hearing the scene, lead a discussion with participants. Example questions might be:

- What do you think might have happened before the scene starts?
- How did the girls meet and how long have they known each other?
- How might going to different secondary schools affect the girls' friendship?
- What might the very next scene be?

Introduction

- Recap last weeks session
- What do we need to do, how might we need to behave to have a successful drama session? (take suggestions)
- Outline of today's session – what to expect (be imaginative and creative!)

Warm-Ups

Participants select two of the following warm-up games of their choice:

- Bob, Bob, Bob
- Sleeping Pirates
- Shark Attack
- Count to One Minute
- Clap Rhythm
- I Am a Gnome
- Opposites
- Pass the Squeeze

5.1 The Story So Far

- This exercise is to help participants recap on the synopsis of the play. It may be useful to prepare for this section in advance adding to the synopsis as necessary.
- Read aloud the synopsis of *Sky's the Limit*, giving added emphasis to the words in bold below.
- Improvise the synopsis and the participants respond by demonstrating the following, each time the word is said aloud:

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Salinder | – Participants run to the far left of the room |
| Susan | – Participants run to the far right of the room |
| Old oak tree | – Participants pair up and form the branches of the tree, joining in some way. |
| Climb the rocks | – Participants drop to the floor and imagine scaling the face of a cliff |
| One-eyed man | – Participants hunch over, walk with a limp and cover one eye shouting 'heal!' |
| Wolves | – Participants on hind legs and 'howl!' |
| Kennington Park | – Participants lie down on the grass and enjoy the sunshine |

- Before starting the exercise it is helpful to recap the 'freeze rule' and introduce it into the game unexpectedly.
- Encourage participants to really concentrate by alternating between the above with pace and demanding quick responses. Those who lose concentration or don't respond in time must sit out at the side of the room and observe.

5.2 Emotions

- Bring participants to a circle and ask them to stand with their backs into the circle. On a start command, each participant must turn into the circle and strike a freeze pose that best describes an emotion of their choice. Encourage participants to use their whole body not just the face.
- Hold for ten seconds. Then select a volunteer who repeats the exercise and the other participants observe and notice where the tension is in the body and face. Encourage the group to be very specific about their comments, noticing all of the detail. Introduce 'body language' and discuss how even the slightest change to the image (such as looking down, clenching a fist etc) makes us read what the person is thinking and feeling in a different way.
- Repeat the exercise with a few other volunteers to highlight not just different emotions, but also the different presentations of the same emotion.

5.3 Dressing Up Box

This exercise provides a great introduction to character work.

- Following on from the previous exercise, ask the participants to find a space on their own in the room.
- Ask participants to think for a moment about the character of the one-eyed man. What might he look like? What would he be wearing? What does he sound like? How old is he? Why does he only have one eye? Are the wolves in the story his pets? Encourage descriptive words that would help to visualise him.
- Lead a guided process as the participants take on the physicality of the character bit-by-bit; transforming themselves and making decisions on their own as to how the character stands, holds himself, walks and talks etc. Take your time with this exercise and don't be tempted to rush through it. You may like to use the example dialogue (shown to the right).
- Encourage participants to be very specific about their movements and try to not lose any facial expression now that the character is in motion.

This exercise can be repeated through the same process with the other characters in the play. You may like to include other characters who are not so physically different from the participants to see how they respond.

Imagine there is an old wardrobe in front of you. Open the handles. The doors are squeaky, and inside is a box. There is a mask of the old man's head inside the box. Take out the mask and slowly put it on. As you do so, you begin to transform your face into that of the old man, wrinkles, warts and all! On a coat-hanger in the wardrobe is the costume of the old man, but the arms and legs are separate. Carefully take out the left arm and like an old glove, slip on the arm and begin to transform your body into that of the old man. Repeat for each of the other limbs. The last section of the character's costume, the body, must be put on. Imagine a suit that has a zip down the middle. Slowly climb into the suit, adopting the physicality as you begin to zip the suit up. You have now completely transformed yourself. Take a walk around the room and interact with others as you do so.

5.4 Rehearsed Improvisation

- Split the class into small groups. Participants will now spend the last part of the session rehearsing a short improvisation to be performed to the group. Each group must decide on a section from the synopsis that they think would be the most interesting to stage. Working as a team, everyone in the group must be used in some way.
- Using everyone in the group, ask participants to create a still tableau using everyone in the group that best demonstrates the action. Encourage participants to encompass all of the previous body language work. Give the tableau a title.
- Select a few groups to volunteer their tableau image for discussion. You may like to 'spot' individual characters (by tapping them on the back) to find out information such as what the characters are thinking and feeling. Participants can be asked to vocalise their thoughts in one sentence. You may also like to use this opportunity to introduce subtext as the characters may be thinking and feeling something quite different from what they display in their body language.
- Set an allocated time for participants to develop their image into a scene with dialogue and moving action. Encourage participants to be very specific about their choices. Allow enough time for all groups to perform and have feedback.

Summary of Work Covered

To conclude, you may like to summarise the work covered in the sessions and discuss participants' learning.

- Started to think about what we might want from our future after leaving school
- Created images of hopes and dreams for the future, barriers to be aware of, and what they might be
- Our environment; the journeys we take each day and what we might change if we had the power in the future
- What home means to us and what and where our home might be in the future
- The special people in our lives, the qualities that we most admire about them
- The qualities that make us special, that other people might admire about us
- Created superhero characters and we realised the huge potential we all have to become our best selves
- We've shared our achievements; the things that make us feel good about ourselves and created an Inspiration Wall to inspire other people.

All of the ideas during initial process workshops for the play provided the inspiration for *Sky's the Limit*. You may like to continue to work through the play or watch the DVD of the process with your participants.