



TEACHER RESOURCE PACK

FOR TEACHERS WORKING WITH STUDENTS
IN GRADES 3 – 7

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INTRODUCTION TO THIS RESOURCE PACK

This resource pack is designed to deepen students' engagement with *Small Acts*, both before and after watching the performance. It supports students to explore kindness, friendship, difference, and inclusion through drama, storytelling and creative literacy tasks.

For teachers, this pack will:

- provide material to guide discussion about the book
- give you strategies to explore the learning potential offered by a theatre visit and how to develop children's responses
- enable you to use drama to develop literacy, particularly with reluctant writers
- increase your confidence in using drama in the classroom

Teachers can adapt activities to suit the needs of their class. Many tasks encourage students to **work in role, improvise, reflect, discuss** and **write creatively**.

Many of the activities are teacher led and will require the teacher to go into role. This is not about performance, or being an actor, more about speaking from a different perspective to enable the students to enter the fictional world.

Facilitating whilst in role encourages students to explore the themes more deeply and extends the impact of the theatrical experience back to the classroom.



CURRICULUM LINKS

This pack supports the **Australian Curriculum** in:

- **English (Language; Literature and Literacy):** Speaking, listening, reading, and writing for meaning; exploring character, narrative and point of view.
- **The Arts (Visual Arts & Drama):** Role-play, improvisation, performance-making.
- **Science (Biology)**
- **Personal and Social Capability:** Empathy, inclusion, resilience, ethical behaviour.
- **Health and Physical Education**
- **Humanities and Social Sciences (Civics and Citizenship)**



ABOUT SMALL ACTS

SYNOPSIS OF OUR ADAPTATION

From acclaimed authors Kate Foster and Kate Gordon, a special story about being kind to others... and yourself.

There are people everywhere who need help, who might seem okay on the outside but aren't on the inside. People whose whole entire day can be changed... Josh wants a friend but he doesn't know how to find somewhere to belong... Ollie wants to express herself but doesn't want to be noticed...

Small Acts introduces two kids with great hearts who know that helping others can start with one small act of kindness. Josh has a plan to start with just that. So does Ollie. What Josh and Ollie don't know yet is that they need each other to make their plans work.

KEY THEMES IN OUR SHOW

- Kindness
- Friendship and trust
- Courage to stand up for others
- Neurodiversity and understanding difference
- Empathy and inclusion
- Finding your place & people
- Emotions/feelings

ABOUT THE SHOW

In our original adaptation, students reflect on how small, thoughtful actions can change a day, a friendship or a whole community.

As the book is over 40,000 words long, we have to choose which parts of the story we can include in our 40 minute stage play.

The show is performed by two actors. Both performers play multiple roles using a variety of drama techniques such as: naturalistic acting, direct audience address, audience interaction, puppetry, mime and movement, plus song, music, and sound effects to support the story.

BEFORE SEEING THE PLAY

THESE ACTIVITIES ARE DESIGNED TO EXPLORE THE STORY AND THE THEMES IN THE BOOK. THEY WILL HELP STUDENTS TO ENGAGE WITH THE PLAY.

Based on feedback, teachers see a **huge increase in student engagement** in the performance when students are familiar with the story. Therefore, we strongly recommend you spend some time reading the book before our visit.

BEFORE READING

ACTIVITY 1: QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR STUDENTS

Looking at the [front cover](#), answer the following questions:

1. What do you think this book might be about?
2. Do you think this is a fiction book (a story) or a non-fiction book (facts)?
3. Is this a book you want to read? Why/why not?
4. What do you think about the illustrations on the front cover?
5. What period of history do you think this book is set in?

Short on time before our visit?

Ask each student to read a specific section of the book and summarise it for the rest of the class. This way all students will have an overview of the story before we perform the adaptation.



AFTER READING

ACTIVITY 2: RECALL THE STORY

With the whole class, go around in a circle with each child taking it in turns to recap a part of the story. By the time everyone has spoken the entire story must have been retold. Each child may say as much as they can remember. Try and piece the story together in chronological order.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

1. Did you enjoy this story? Why/why not?
2. What did you like about the style of writing?
3. Who would you recommend this book to?
4. Which parts made you smile?
5. How did “Small Acts” make you feel as you were reading it? Did it evoke any specific emotions or reactions?
6. What does kindness mean to you?
7. What is a “small act of kindness”? Can you give examples?
8. How does it feel when someone is kind to you?
9. How does it feel to be left out? What helps you feel included?

QUICK ACTIVITY:

Make a Kindness Wall in your classroom. Students write or draw one small kind thing they could do for someone else this week. Display them to inspire your class before the show.



AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

DRAMA & LITERACY ACTIVITIES

BELOW ARE ACTIVITIES TO EXPLORE THE STORY, THEMES AND CHARACTERS.

ACTIVITY 1: ROLE ON THE WALL – JOSH & OLLIE

Use Resource A to complete this activity.

Draw two large outlines on paper – one for Josh, one for Ollie.

Internal influences:

- Inside the outline write words or draw images that describe the character's inner traits, feelings, and thoughts. Ask the students questions like:

How does this character feel?

What are they thinking?

- Write these responses inside the outline.

External influences:

- Outside the outline write words or draw images that represent the external factors influencing the character. Ask the students questions like:

How are they affected by:

Friends?

Family?

School?

Discuss how Josh and Ollie are similar and different. What helps them connect?

EXTENDING THE ACTIVITY

To extend the activity we can explore how the characters relate to each other.

1. Whole-Class Discussion:

Reflect on how friendship and support were portrayed in the story. Ask students to share examples of how they have supported their friends or received support.

2. Friendship:

Discussion Questions:

- How does Ollie show friendship to Josh?
- What actions does Josh take to support Ollie?
- How does Ollie reciprocate Josh's friendship?

Group Activity:

Split the class into small groups and have each group create a short skit showing an act of friendship between Josh and Ollie. Encourage creativity and empathy in depicting their relationship.

3. Creative Writing – Letters:

Ask students to write:

- A letter from Josh to Ollie OR Ollie to Josh, expressing their gratitude for the support they have received.
- A note to Millie, explaining how her actions affected Ollie
- A letter to themselves: What small act of kindness will I do today?

This helps students understand the reciprocal nature of support in friendships.

4. Personal Reflection:

Ask students to think about a time when they supported a friend or when a friend supported them. Have them write a short paragraph or draw a picture about this experience.

ACTIVITY 2: HOT SEATING

In pairs or small groups, students choose a character: Josh, Ollie, Millie or Mr Parham.

One student sits “in role” as the character. Other students take turns asking the character questions about their life, experiences, and feelings. For example:

- What is your name?
- What makes you happy?
- What was the hardest part of your story?
- What does kindness mean to you?

Reflection: After the hot seating, discuss as a class what they learned about the character. Highlight the importance of understanding and empathy.

ACTIVITY 3: KINDNESS FREEZE FRAMES

Students work in groups to create Freeze Frames showing a “small act of kindness”:

- Helping a friend
- Standing up for someone
- Sharing something
- Inviting someone to join in

Each group creates 3–4 “moments” and presents to the class. Use Thought Tracking – tap each student and ask: What are you thinking?

ACTIVITY 4: KINDNESS CLUB!

Josh and Ollie start the Kindness Club. Invite your class to invent their own club:

- What is the club’s name?
- What is its goal?
- What small acts will you do this week?
- Make posters or write a club charter.

ACTIVITY 5: POETRY OR ART

Create a class Kindness Poem:

- Write a line each: “Kindness is...”
- Combine lines into one big poem and display it.

Or: Draw a picture showing a chain reaction of kindness.

ACTIVITY 6: REFLECTION CIRCLE

In a circle, ask:

- What did you learn from Small Acts?
- How did it make you feel?
- What’s one thing you’ll do differently this week?

Optional: Keep your Kindness Wall going all term!



TEACHER PACK LINK:

Walker Books have created an excellent teachers pack [HERE](#)

FEEDBACK & EXTENSION

Thank you for welcoming Small Acts into your classroom. We hope your students keep their kindness ripples going for a long time to come!

We love seeing your students’ work! Please share photos, drawings or writing with us on social media and tag us: [@meerkatproductions](#)

Use Resource B for students to feed back on the production.

ABOUT MEERKAT PRODUCTIONS

At Meerkat Productions our goal is to provide a theatrical experience that makes students and teachers alike lean forward and engage rather than sit back and watch passively. We want the memory of our performance to be long lasting; we want the work we do to be inspirational and we want you to be counting down the days until our next visit!

Our Book Week shows aim to support Literacy in the classroom, and we have found during our 20 year history that most Primary school teachers identify an impact, particularly in engaging lower ability children as well as increasing enthusiasm for and motivation to write.

OTHER SHOWS

DID YOU KNOW MEERKAT PRODUCTIONS ALSO OFFERS OTHER IN-SCHOOL PERFORMANCES?



BOOK WEEK: YOUNGER READERS BOOK ADAPTATION



ANTI-BULLYING: BULLY BULL RING



STORYTELLING & PUPPETRY: GOOD THINGS COME IN THREES



MINDFULNESS, MANAGING ANXIETY, RESILIENCE: MR HUFF



CHRISTMAS SHOW: RUDOLPH'S RECRUITS

**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT OUR WEBSITE
MEERKATPRODUCTIONS.COM.AU
OR GIVE US A CALL ON 1300 308 311**

RESOURCE A

CHARACTER EXPLORATION & FRIENDSHIP – JOSH & OLLIE

ACTIVITY 1: ROLE ON THE WALL – JOSH & OLLIE

Draw the Characters

On a big piece of paper, draw two large body outlines:

- One for Josh
- One for Ollie

Inside the Outline = What's Going on Inside?

Write words or draw pictures inside each outline to show how Josh and Ollie feel and think.

Ask yourself:

- What are they feeling?
- What are they thinking about?
- What do they care about?

Outside the Outline = What's Influencing Them?

Write or draw pictures outside each outline to show the outside world influencing them.

Ask yourself:

- How are their friends and family affecting them?
- What's going on at home?
- What's school like for them?

Similar or Different?

After you've filled in the outlines, discuss or write:

1. What's the same about Josh and Ollie?
2. What's different?
3. What helps them connect and become friends?

Write your thoughts below:

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES: EXPLORING FRIENDSHIP & SUPPORT

1. Whole-Class Discussion

Let's talk together!

- How was friendship shown in the story?
- What are some ways you've helped a friend, or a friend has helped you?

You can write down some ideas here:

2. Friendship in the Story

Group Skit:

In small groups, create a short skit that shows an act of friendship between Josh and Ollie.

Be creative! You can:

- Act out a moment from the play
- Make up a new scene where they help each other
- Use props or simple costumes

Describe your group's skit idea here:

Use the space below or write it on a separate page:

4. Personal Reflection

Think about your own life:

- When have you supported a friend?
- When has a friend supported you?

Draw a picture or write a short paragraph about this time.

My story:

My picture (if you choose to draw):

3. Creative Writing – Letters of Support

Choose one or more of the letters below to write:

- A letter from Josh to Ollie (or from Ollie to Josh) saying thank you for being a good friend.
- A note to Millie, explaining how her actions made Ollie feel.
- A letter to yourself: "What small act of kindness will I do today?"

RESOURCE B

Here are some phrases that people might use to describe the experience of watching a piece of theatre.

For each pair, please mark a point on the scale towards whichever is closest to your experience of watching the performance today.

My concentration was wandering	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I was completely absorbed by what was happening
I didn't feel like I was learning anything	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	My eyes were opened to some new ideas
It didn't really get me going	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I was gripped by the sights and sounds of the performance
There wasn't much sense of atmosphere	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I noticed a real buzz in the audience
I didn't feel much connection with the characters/story	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I felt I could really identify with the characters/story
It felt like time was passing slowly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I hardly noticed the time passing
I was mostly in my 'comfort zone'	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I felt challenged and provoked
I felt tired and uninterested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I felt lively and enthusiastic
I didn't feel much connection with other audience members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It felt good to be sharing the experience with other people
There wasn't really much that touched me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I found aspects of the performance very moving
The performance didn't really hold my attention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I was often on the edge of my seat
There was nothing much new for me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It got me thinking about things differently
I felt flat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I felt tense and excited
I don't feel much urge to discuss the performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I will be talking about the experience for some time to come
It didn't say much about my life or experiences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Some aspects of the performance seemed relevant to my own life