

This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing.

Introduction

This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing by Finegan Kruckemeyer, is presented by **The Everyman** and **Graffiti Theatre Company** as part of **Play It by Ear**, a programme of shows performed on The Everyman stage, and available as an audio stream.

Triplet sisters are left in the forest by their woodcutter father. From this fairy-tale beginning, three resolutions are made – one sister will walk one way, one the other, and the third will stay right where she is.

Twenty years later, having circumnavigated the globe, and fought Vikings, and crossed oceans, and tamed wilds, and achieved greatness, the three meet again, as women.

What follows is a series of fun creative prompts for teachers, parents and carers of children to support the listeners enjoyment of the episodes and a deeper engagement with the piece.

Episode One

Art

In part one of this series, we are introduced to our three main characters who are triplets, identical triplets who are not really identical at all.

Following the character descriptions below, encourage the listeners to create lollipop puppets of the character they have just met.

Materials needed: lollipop sticks, card, craft paper, glue, pens.

- Step one: Cut out shapes to create the head, hairstyle and body.
Step two: Draw faces.
Remember to give each character lots of personality.
Step three: Glue on the hairstyle.
(You can add crepe paper, pipe cleaners, wool etc if you wish to add texture to the hair)
Step four: Glue each body onto a craft stick.
(If you want to use these puppets for performance remember to think about both sides).
Ensure you leave enough space to be able hold them also.
Step five: Glue each head to the tip of the lollipop stick.
Step six: Decorate the puppets.
Add details to help us distinguish between Albienne, Beatrix and Carmen.



Artwork provided by Rionagh Aged 6

Please add to your puppet collection as the play continues, adding characters as they appear, ready for your own performance by the end.

Character Descriptions

“Albienne for instance, enjoyed cake very much and by age nine, her body had become that of a true cake appreciator, round like a gateau and warm like a brioche.

Beatrix, in the middle, enjoyed the expelling of energy and the world within which to do it, and would run around outside from sunup to sundown. And so she was a child of the sun through and through, with blonde hair and brown skin and freckles on her nose.

Carmen found the world to be a heavy thing, and carried it upon her shoulders. It was like a school backpack that you know holds important contents, but that you sometimes wish you could just leave on the bus and never have to pick up again. The world she carried made her shoulders small and her eyes dark, though her heart was as large as her sisters – it was just a little smothered by world-carrying, that was all.”

Creative Writing: This is a story told.

In *This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing*, the writer, Finegan Kruckemeyer uses narration to help draw us in and allow the world of the play and its events to form in our mind. It begins as most stories told, with “Once Upon a time”. Provided below is a prompt for you to write your own story using a very similar technique. Fill in the blanks and see what fantastical worlds appear.

Prompt

Once upon a time there was a ____.
Every day, ____.
Until one day ____.
Because of that, ____.
Because of that, ____.
Until slowly ____.
Soon ____.
When finally one night ____.
And once upon a time ____.

Drama/Movement: Seasonal Walk-an imaginary journey.

Feel free to add music to help set the stage.

Start by inviting the children to find their own space in the room.

Ask them to imagine it is Springtime and it's a lovely sunny day.

Remind them that it is always good to bring a raincoat and umbrella with us as Ireland's weather can be temperamental; maybe even our wellies to be sure.

Off we go and skip in the sun.

True to form, it begins to rain but only a little...

We can smell the newly blossomed flowers and hear the baby animals.

Oh look, a huge puddle has formed in front of us and we all jump in, splashing everyone who passes us.

We notice that it is getting hotter, the sun has come up and we need to take off our coats.

Summer has arrived and we definitely need to apply sunscreen.

What do we like to do on sunny days?

Eat ice-cream, build sand castles, swim in the sea?

After a few minutes of play, notice that the wind is picking up and suddenly it's...

Autumn and the leaves are falling off the trees.

We might need to make sure we put back on our raincoat.

Once dressed, off we go.

Encourage the children to play in the fallen leaves, kicking them up and watching them swirl.

Let that develop for a little while then ask them to notice that it is getting colder.

We might need to put on a hat, scarf and some gloves...

Winter is coming.

Snow begins to fall.

Ask the children what they like to do in the snow, build snowmen, throw snowballs etc.

It's time to go in now. Our hands are frozen.

We end the walk with a cup of hot chocolate sitting in a cosy chair by the fire.

Encourage the children to finish the game cross legged on the floor. This is a nice place to move into a gentle reflective activity like drawing or group work or if you wish to add another game invite the children to jump to their feet and shake off the exercise and you are ready to move on to the next game or activity.

Episode Two

Art

In this episode, Beatrix transforms the lighthouse into a submarine by making the most of the things around her.

Encourage the children to create their own unconventional sailing vessels.

Creative writing

When Albiene goes to war against the Vikings, the playwright adds numerous superlative adjectives to immerse the listeners in the action of the scene.

“Narrator: And that day (and for six days afterwards) the biggest, bashiest, bloodiest, roaringest, nastiest, wobbiest, saddest, excitingest battle takes place, with yelling and screaming and horses and boats and blood and hair-pulling and a thousand different noises.”

Can we follow Finegan’s style of writing and describe;

- A day at the seaside
- The Circus comes to town
- The Ghost train
- Christmas

Think about sounds, feelings and images which spring to mind and add **-est** to see what effect it has.

Drama

Creative Objects

Begin by going on a nature walk. Collect an unusual or interesting object (one each). Place them in a pile and circle around.

Instruct the children to enact/mime a novel use for the object and say,

“This is not a _____ it is a _____” You can leave the final blank, blank and just mime the action and see if the rest of the participants can guess what it is.

Example:

Child: “This is not a twig, it is a_____” (miming brushing teeth)

Other players guess “toothbrush” and the game moves on to the next person.

Episode Three

Art

Beatrix brings colour and laughter to the “boring people” of the city. Invite the children to do the same. Create a black outline drawing and then add colour. What happens to the image...?



Creative Writing

Finegan uses a lot of poetry throughout the play. Encourage the children to become poets themselves by writing **Bio Poems** for the “Boring People” we meet in the city.

Bio Poem

_____ (Characters First name)

Is _____ (Four traits that describe the character)

Lover of _____ (Three people or things they love)

Who feels _____ (Three feelings they have and when they are felt)

Who gives _____ (Three things they give)

Who fears _____ (Three fears you have)

Who would like to see _____ (Three things they would like to see)

Who lives _____ (The town or a brief description of where they live)

_____ (Characters last name)

Drama

During the play Carmen approaches the animals in the wood and asks for their help to make it her home too. She has, however, previously behaved appallingly towards them.

Improvise a scene where the animals in the wood hold a town meeting to discuss if they should help her.

Episode Four

Art/Creative Writing

Follow the recipe for writing your own **Hero's Journey**.

Ingredients: 1 sheet of A4 paper.
Handful of pens.
Lashings of imagination.

Method:

1. Explain to the children that they are going to write their own hero's journey.
2. Ask them to divide the page into six equal parts.
3. In box one: Draw an image of your hero/the main character of the tale. Give them a name and an age.
4. Box two: Draw an image of what the character wants most in the world.
5. Box three: Draw an image of who might help them along their way.
6. Box four: Draw an image of what is standing in their way, an obstacle they face.
7. Box five: Draw the image of what they do to overcome the obstacle.
8. Box six. Draw an image of how the story ends.

NOTE: Numbers are for guidance only and do not need to be included on the page.

ONE	TWO	THREE
FOUR	FIVE	SIX

Drama

Following on from the story which the child or children just created, encourage the children to enact the story in some way. They can add text, use puppets or like in the play have one person be the narrator as everyone else perform the roles.

Episode Five.

Art

Cherry Blossom Tree

On a blank page trace the child/children's hand and arm as far as the elbow. This will form the base of our cherry blossom tree. Once completed ask the child to place the blossoms on the tree by dipping their fingers into pink, white and red paint. The resulting images should be like our triplets, the same but different.



Creative writing

Most Fairy Tales include the following elements;

- Once Upon a Time
- Numbers three or seven
- Heroes
- Magic
- Enchanted creatures
- Faraway places
- Good characters
- Bad characters
- Happy endings

We see many of these throughout *This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing*. See if the listener can identify which ones were used and where/why? Finegan Kruckemeyer also drew directly from multiple established stories such as Hansel and Gretel, The Three Little Pigs and even Cinderella.

Encourage the children to choose three stories they know and see if they can draw from them and create their own stories, including some or all of the elements above. Remind them of the story structure provided in the Hero's Journey above, if they need it.

Drama

Now that the children have listened to the entire play encourage them to build some shadow boxes of the scenes, or locations they loved the most. They could also draw and paint some backdrops and put on a puppet show with the lollipop puppets from part one of these resources.

Diving Deeper into This Girl Laughs...

1. My Voice, My words

Exercise One: Listening/Not Listening

Divide the group into half.

Line A lines up on opposite sides of the room, facing each other, at either end of the room. The As will be given the instruction to talk to the person opposite them for 1 minute on something which interests them.

The line B on the opposite side are given the instruction to not listen to what the person is saying to them. To disengage. Allow it to proceed for 1 minute only.

Ask the group how they felt about the exercise.
How did it feel not to be listened to?

After you have finished discussing, ask the group to get into As and Bs as before. The Bs are to talk about something which is fairly normal and every day. The As are to listen carefully to everything said to them and to show a real interest in what is being said. Again allow it to only continue for 1 minute and discuss how they felt about the exercise this time.

Exercise Two: I've got something to say

Follow on with a group discussion on what sort of voices are usually listened to and heard.

Once we have created a list ask the group if they agree or disagree with the following quote from the play.

"And everyone stares at this shouty person who has climbed out from under a bridge, and they say nothing – because it's an unnerving thing to be told big information by little people."

Open it up for discussion. Why do people find it unnerving to be told big information by little people? Do you feel your voice is heard and listened to? Think about who listens to us when we have something to say? Parents, grandparents, teachers, friends?

Divide into groups of three, allocating each player a number between 1 & 3:

1. The "little person" who has something to say
2. The "big person" they need to speak to
3. The "guide" it is their job to observe and point out if 2s are actively listening and if 1s are speaking **to** or **at** the listener.

Make sure everyone gets the chance to play all three roles and experiences what it is like to be listened to and heard.

2. The world of our own.

Provide each child with some pens, colours and large sheets of paper.

Encourage the children to close their eyes and imagine one of the environments or “settings” in the play that they would like to explore more. Maybe one they would like to live in? The lighthouse submarine perhaps? The little house in the woods? The village on wheels?

Ask them to think about what sort of things were nearby? – mountains, the ocean, other houses? What would make this the best place ever to live? What would it need for you to be super happy?

Once they have identified a few places ask the children to mark them on the page to create a map of the place they have imagined. They can add signposts to different amenities they would love nearby e.g. Swimming Pool 2 Km that way etc.

Once completed the individual maps can be joined to create a wonderful imaginary place.

Open a discussion on what their ideal community would look like, and what things they would need to be content.

3. Too Much, Too Little, Just Right...

The following exercises explore personal space and our need, like Carman, to sometimes have some space of our own to kick our shoes off and relax.

Divide the group into two lines (Group A and Group B) facing each other. Ask each member of the group to ensure they begin with maximum distance between them and the person opposite. Once everyone is ready explain that As are going to begin by stepping towards B's one step at a time very slowly. Bs are asked to observe themselves and their comfort level as A approaches.

Note: At any time, B is encouraged to ask A to stop if they begin to feel uncomfortable by holding up their two hands palms facing As. Exercise is repeated swapping roles.

Discuss with your partner what it felt like when people got too close or when they were too far away? What did it feel like when it was just right?

Listen to scene Eight: Carmen and The Man again...

Ask the children if Carmen was good at setting boundaries for herself?
What might she have done to not allow so many people "use her toothbrush" or eat all her biscuits?
Did she handle it well in the end?
Could she have done something different?

For more information about Graffiti and our work supporting children and young people to find themselves and be themselves through creativity, or to contact us, visit www.graffiti.ie. We'd love to chat.