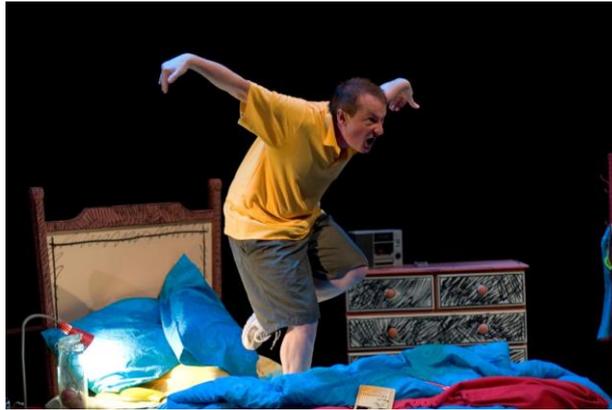


monkey
baa theatre
company



I am Jack

*Adapted for the stage by Eva Di Cesare, Tim McGarry
and Sandra Eldridge*

Based on the book by Susanne Gervay

Teacher's notes:
Learning experiences for
students from Stages 2 & 3

Terrace 3, 1-25 Harbour Street, Sydney, NSW 2000
Ph 02 8624 9341 Fax 02 8209 4977
www.monkeybaa.com.au

Vision To inspire young minds and excite the inner child.
Mission Creating exceptional theatre experiences for young people by bringing to life uniquely Australian stories.



Background

Since 1997, Monkey Baa Theatre Company have adapted Australia's most well-loved stories for young people, bringing them to the stage and touring them around the country (and internationally), working with schools, arts and children's organisations across remote, regional, rural and metropolitan Australia.

Our co-Founders and Creative Directors, Sandra Eldridge, Tim McGarry and Eva di Cesare, have adapted fourteen classic Australian stories for the stage – from *The Bugalugs Bum Thief* to *Hitler's Daughter* to *Pete the Sheep* – winning awards and inclusion on the NSW Board of Studies.

In 2012 we moved into the brand new **Lend Lease Darling Quarter Theatre (LLDQT)** in Sydney, opening up a whole new world of possibilities for engaging with our core audience - people aged 3-18. In October 2013, we welcomed our millionth audience member!

Our work invites young people to question and challenge their values, expectations and understanding of the world, and their place within it. The common thread weaving throughout is the belief that young people's interests are valued and respected.

We are committed to inclusion; it lies at the very heart of who we are and why we were founded. We strive to ensure that young people - wherever they are located or whatever their economic circumstance - have the opportunity to experience quality arts education programs that reflect their own, or their community's, experiences of life in this country.

All of our children loved the stories and were absolutely spellbound by the performance. I was so happy to see them transported into the story, making connections between what they had read and what they were watching. It made the experience so rich for them...

School teacher, Nungarring

Monkey Baa has three key approaches to community engagement – to engage, perform and inspire. For many of our young audience members, a Monkey Baa performance is their first (and sometimes only) experience of live theatre. As participants in the program and observers of the production, they have an opportunity to reflect on their world and gain greater empathy for their community.

Unlike most theatre companies offering programs for young people, we focus on developing plays and workshops for children aged 3-13, and professional development opportunities for Primary School teachers. As presenters of other companies' work (at LLDQT) at least 50% of our program is aimed at Primary school students.

The kind of works Monkey Baa creates require the audience to participate, allowing the children to be co-creators. Unlike television or a large-scale theatre production, Monkey Baa's form of theatre requires the audience to be part of the work. This level of engagement creates a profound learning experience: the children literally walk out of the theatre more intelligent than when they walked in.

Jackie French (Australian Children's Laureate 2014-2015 & Monkey Baa Patron)

For more information check out our website www.monkeybaa.com.au

I AM JACK

Presented by Monkey Baa Theatre Company

Based on the book by Susanne Gervay

Directed by Sandra Eldridge



Synopsis:

Jack is smart, funny and is being bullied. What starts as an off the cuff joke during a handball competition, soon turns into a set of circumstances whereby Jack is no longer safe in the playground. But with the use of self-expression through photography, Jack begins to make sense of his world; of his relationships with others, and most importantly, with himself.

This one man show explores the often overlooked insidious taunting and teasing that bullies are so adept at inflicting on their victims and the roles that family and schools can play in responding. Jack takes us on a touching and sometimes comical journey as he moves from victim to victor. For 8-14 year olds. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L56LjStfGw0&feature=youtu.be>

The production:

Monkey Baa creatively developed Susanne Gervay's book *I Am Jack* into a stage play in 2007. The production premiered in Sydney and toured throughout rural NSW in 2008. In 2009, the work was performed at Sydney's Seymour Centre, Melbourne's Arts Centre and Brisbane's Garden's Theatre. The production was remounted in metropolitan Sydney in 2010, 2012, 2013 and 2014.

In early 2014, *I Am Jack* completed a very successful tour of the United States of America, where – with a few changes to language – it was very well received by school students, their teachers and families.

The Monkey Baa performance of 'I Am Jack' was incredible! There was a very definite point in the play where the children became silent because they were no longer laughing at the bullying. They got that it was not funny any more - it has gone way past that point. What was especially wonderful was to hear the conversation with the kids after the play. "I was bullied and no one cared", "Why don't people care?", "Why do people bully?", "What can we do to stop bullies?"....

The tour included 42 performances in 14 theatres in 19 States over 8 weeks and Monkey Baa Theatre Company has been invited to return to the USA in 2015.

From the Author:

I Am Jack was inspired by my wonderful, crazy family and the people I love. When you read this book, I am inviting you inside my home to meet fantastic characters - the Nanna who is obsessed with buying bargains, the step-dad who is the best dish washer in the whole world, the sister who loves dogs, the Mum (me) who does the best star jumps possible and of course Jack.

I remember the time I was afraid to go to school because 'the gang' surrounded me and stole my lunch. No one played with me. It was lonely and scary. I didn't feel I could ask my parents for help. They were both working so hard and tired all the time, so how could I bother them? I love being an author because I can share my imagination, thoughts, experiment with words, create new meanings.

I used to be a teacher, which I loved too. I absolutely love my kids, except when they are making a huge mess inside the house... I wrote *I Am Jack* for my family, the people I care about and for you.

Monkey Baa developed one of my books into a cracker of a play, and as I travel around the country ... years later, I'm still meeting kids in far flung areas for whom it was the theatrical experience of their lives.

Morris Gleitzman, Author & Monkey Baa Patron

***I Am Jack* Teacher Resource Materials**

These materials are aimed at supporting teachers of Stage 2 and Stage 3 students with pre and post performance activities. The learning experiences presented in these materials support an integrated approach to the use of theatre and drama in the classroom as well as a drama art form approach to appreciating and responding to performance.

All six key learning areas are targeted in the *I am Jack* resource materials – English, Creative Arts, Personal Development Health and Physical Education, Science and Technology, Human Society and Its Environment and Mathematics. The connections made within each Key Learning Area are purposeful and focused, allowing for easy assessment opportunities.

These materials are designed to be ‘teacher-friendly’ guiding you through step-by-step learning experiences for your students. Relevant outcomes are listed throughout, with a summary provided at the end. Activities are suitable for all Stage 2 and 3 students, with adaptations included in the activity notes where necessary.

In addition, suggested classroom management strategies for doing drama in the classroom have been included to assist with the implementation of the dramatic activities in this resource kit.

Due to the emphasis on bullying, care should be taken with the implementation of these activities. Bullying is a sensitive issue in all schools and can have long-term effects on students. Please take care when implementing all activities that no students are being isolated or identified as either a bully or a victim.

Classroom Management Suggestions for Drama

Drama in the classroom can be used to support learning in a variety of key areas, by giving students the opportunity to explore ideas and issues in a meaningful and realistic manner. Drama has been shown to assist with the development of self-esteem, communication skills, problem-solving abilities, and in the development of focus and team building through fun activities.

Incorporating drama in a primary school classroom presents a number of challenges for teachers, but reaps many rewards for all involved when attempted. The following suggestions are designed to provide ideas and are intended as a guide only. When doing drama in the classroom, ensure:

- A clear workspace is available for the drama activity. If desks cannot be moved in the classroom, try to use the hall or outside open area.
- You talk to the students about the creation of a ‘safe space’. In this space students don’t laugh at each other, but support and encourage (forming a circle at the beginning and end of a session or sitting with eyes closed are simple ways to focus students for a drama session)
- Incorporate a reflection session at the end of every drama activity. This allows the students to consider what has been done and take more meaning away from the activity than it just being fun (which it will be!)
- Be firm with the students. If a student does not follow instructions, they should be removed from the activity. This will allow the other students to see that you as the teacher are assisting in maintaining the safe space for them to work.
- Always begin every drama session with a warm-up. This could include a focus activity, drama game or pure physical warm-up. There are good books and websites available with suggestions of warm-up activities and drama games.
- Don’t be afraid to participate in the activities yourself. The students like to see you as the teacher taking a role in an activity. This can also allow you to help any improvisations or role plays flow and move forward more easily. (Dorothy Heathcote’s work on *Mantle of the Expert and Teacher in Role* discusses this in more detail.)

Activities for Stage 2 and Stage 3 Students

Themes: *Bullying, Family relationships, Friendship*

These activities provide suggestions only, and teachers are strongly encouraged to adapt or alter suggestions to suit their schools and individual classrooms. Each group of activities should be completed together, however the order of activities within the notes can be altered. Adaptation (where required) for Stage 3 students is included. These adaptations would also be appropriate as an extension to the more experience Stage 2 students.

Pre Performance

<i>Topic/Theme</i>	<i>Learning Experiences</i>	<i>Curriculum Area</i>
Introduction to 'I am Jack'	<i>If students have not read the novel</i> 1. Discuss the title 'I am Jack'. Brainstorm what the play may be about. Identify the key themes: bullying, family relationships and friendship. Compile a list of ideas to be used later for comparison post-performance.	English (Talking & Listening)
	<i>If students have read the novel</i> 1. Discuss with students the key elements of the story they believe would be important for including in a theatre production of the novel. 2. Consider expectations e.g. how much of the novel could be portrayed, what special effects may be necessary etc.	English (Reading)
	<i>For both groups</i> 1. Look at examples of play scripts with students and consider how 'I am Jack' may be represented as a script. Attempt to put some scene headings into order to have in mind when seeing the performance. (<i>These can be referred back to later.</i>)	English (Writing)

<i>Topic/Theme</i>	<i>Learning Experiences</i>	<i>Drama Area</i>
Introduction to performance	1. Elicit from students their past experiences of theatre performances. Discuss expectations in relation to being an audience member in this style of professional performance.	General
	2. Brainstorm with students the differences between 'drama' they would do in their classroom and the 'drama' that is viewed as theatre performance. Also consider the difference to what they think theatre performance is versus the television they may watch at home.	Theatre
	3. Discuss the link between theatre and storytelling – that live theatre provides another medium for telling a story. Brainstorm other ways that stories can be told (books, radio, television, face to face etc).	Storytelling

Post Performance

Evaluation & Response

Topic/Theme	Learning Experiences	Curriculum Area
Evaluation & Response	1. Students discuss response to the performance considering themes, issues and personal impact.	Drama (Appreciating)
	2. Students to write a review of the performance with language and structure appropriate to publishing in a newspaper. It would be important to discuss the style of writing appropriate for newspapers and provide students with some examples of theatre reviews as a model for their work.	English (Writing)
	3. Publish the written reviews. Consider placing best reviews in the school newsletter or submitting them to the local paper. Students could also submit their reviews on the Monkey Baa website (www.monkeybaa.com.au) in the 'Your Say' section.	English (Writing)
Physical response to performance	1. Establish a 'safe space' where the following activities will take place. Ensure all students understand the importance of respecting all interpretations by their peers during these activities.	Dance (Composing)
	2. Conduct physical warm-up with students. (<i>Refer 'Classroom Management Strategies' at the beginning of these notes.</i>)	
	3. Ask students to move freely around allocated space. When teacher calls out the name of a character or event, students are to freeze in a position they feel embodies that character or event for them. <i>NB - Due to the nature of the topic (bullying), this activity could provide examples for an interesting discussion on the stereotypical attitude to how a bully/victim behaves.</i>	Drama (Appreciating)

Theatre Design

Topic/Theme	Learning Experiences	Curriculum Area
Theatre Design	1. Discuss with students the set used for the performance of 'I am Jack'. Consider scene changes (transitions), use of specialised equipment, lighting and props. Brainstorm a list of ideas regarding important aspects of set design e.g. Realistic space for actors to work in, appropriate design for storyline, suitable for space available.	Drama (Theatre)
	2. Students to select a favourite scene from the performance. They need to consider any special or unusual effects required for that scene. Students are to design a set for the selected scene. (<i>Encourage students to create their own and not reproduce the set from the production.</i>)	Science & Technology (Design & Make)
	3. Students to make a model (using an open box as the theatre) for their designed set. Students should explain their design to the class justifying their choices and describing how they have overcome issues within the selected scene (this can be a small group activity).	Visual Arts (Making) English (Talking & Listening)

Visual Representations

Topic/Theme	Learning Experiences	Curriculum Area
Visual Representations	1. Students to discuss their reaction to the performance and decide on the character in which they are most interested.	Drama (Appreciating)
	2. Students to create an artwork representing a critical event in 'I am Jack' for their chosen character. <i>NB Students should be encouraged to plan their work (design) and use multi-media material where possible.</i>	Visual Arts (Making) Science & Technology
	3. Students to explain their artwork to the class justifying their choice of material and style. <i>NB Having examples of a variety of artworks in various styles would assist students in exploring various media and techniques for their artworks.</i>	Visual Arts (Appreciating)

Character Development

Topic/Theme	Learning Experiences	Curriculum Area
Character Development	1. Students to be allocated a character from the play (<i>important to ensure all characters are included</i>). Students are to design and make a mask that they feel represents the chosen character. Consideration should be given to choice of colour and line as well as decoration for each mask. Students to be encouraged to plan their mask as a design before constructing the original.	Science & Technology (Design & Make) Visual Arts (Making)
	2. Students to physically explore the way the mask they created may move. Consideration should be given to the age of the character and their mood. Once students are confident with their character, they should start to respond while moving around to the other masked characters in which they come into contact. e.g. Jack/Anna – friendly, Jack/George – not friendly. Stage 3 Adaptation: <i>For Stage 3 students (or to extend the more experienced in Stage 2), students can be asked to recreate and perform their favourite scenes in mime using the masked characters.</i>	Drama (Making) Drama (Performing)
	3. Students to consider a critical event in the play for the masked character they created. Students are to develop, practice and perform a character monologue discussing this event with the audience. Stage 3 Adaptation: <i>Students should write the monologue down as an English activity.</i>	Drama (Making & Performing) English (Writing)

Social Groupings

Topic/Theme	Learning Experiences	Curriculum Area
Social Groupings	1. Discuss with students what would be meant by the term 'social groupings'. 2. Elicit from students the various social groupings present in the play e.g. family, friends (school and out of school).	English (Talking & Listening)
	<p>Family <i>NB It is recommended that teachers use their discretion when conducting this activity and to skip it if a discussion of these groupings may be embarrassing or distressing to any students.</i></p> 1. As a whole class consider different family types and composition e.g. both parents, single parents (mother or father), single children, siblings 2. Students to consider their own family members and allocate each a colour. Using multimedia, students to create a collage of these colours they feel represents their family and its composition. Stage 3 Adaptation: <i>Students should research family groupings from different cultures. This can be done in the library or on the internet. Students should discuss the different colours selected for their families and how they might be different if the grouping structure had been changed.</i>	HSIE (Time & Change) Visual Arts (Making) HSIE (Identities)
	<p>Friends</p> 1. Students to work in groups to develop a list of potential friendship groupings to tally. e.g. playground friends, classroom friends, family friends, sporting team or dance class. 2. Revise the procedure for tallying with Stage 3 students and discuss how to tally with Stage 2. 3. Students to interview classmates and build tally (<i>if possible, interviewing students in a different class would be helpful to increase group numbers and vary results</i>). 4. Model the translation of the tallied numbers into a column graph. Students to then create their own graph to depict the various friendship groups represented by the students they interviewed. Stage 3 Adaptation: <i>Stage 3 students construct a picture, line, bar or pie graph depending on experience level.</i> 5. Groups to report their results to the class.	Mathematics (Data) English (Talking & Listening)

The following activities focus specifically on the area of bullying. To prepare your students for these activities it would be helpful to prompt students that you will be talking about bullying and that a couple of ground rules apply. E.g. All students have the right to sit out of any activity; all students need to respect each other and that no-one is going to make anyone else feel bad – it is a safe place; everyone has their own ideas about bullying and these will be respected. (Adapted from ‘Sticks and Stones’ by Katherine Burke, 2005)

Types of bullying

Topic/Theme	Learning Experiences	Curriculum Area
Types of bullying	1. Discuss with students the way in which George and his friends bullied Jack during the play. 2. As a group consider the different ways in which students can be bullied e.g. verbally (direct or indirect), by an individual or group, cyber bullying, sms bullying, physical bullying. 3. Discuss the impact of the different types of bullying on students – are any better or worse than others?	PDHPE (Interpersonal Relationships)
	1. Elicit from students the varying reactions by friends in ‘I am Jack’. Focus on Anna’s reaction (worry and help) versus Christopher and Paul (abandonment). 2. As a class, work on the synopsis of an imagined scene which outlines a conversation between Anna, Christopher and Paul in regard to Jack being bullied. The scene should focus on what they as Jack’s friends could do so assist him. Focus questions could be used to guide the discussion: - In what ways is Jack being bullied? - What do they see Jack doing about it? - How have they responded to Jack being bullied so far? - What are their fears if they try to support Jack? - Who could they talk to to help Jack?	English (Talking & Listening) English (Writing)
	1. Students to work in groups to develop a soundscape to accompany the synopsis. This soundscape could include scripted voice as well as sound effects. A variety of percussion instruments could be used (<i>when available</i>), students should also be encourage to be exploratory with their use of sound including body percussion and the adaptation of everyday items. Each piece should be recorded (<i>where possible</i>) and be no more than 30 seconds long. The aim is for the sounds to bring the read synopsis alive. <i>NB - The soundscape should include an introduction, building to a climax and resolution. One group member to read the synopsis while the soundscape is presented.</i>	Music (Organising Sound)
	1. In their groups, students to ‘perform’ their synopsis and soundscape for the class. 2. At the conclusion of all performances, students should reflect on the differences between interpretations and what this means for performance more generally.	Music (Performing)

Topic /Theme	Learning Experiences	Curriculum Area
Changing the outcome	<p>1. As a class identify at least 3 scenes in the play in which Jack was bullied. Organise students into groups of 3-4 and allocate one of the identified scenes.</p> <p>2. Groups are to discuss and report on what the main issue within the scene is – aim to elicit from students the concept of actions having positive or negative consequences.</p>	Drama (Appreciating)
	<p>3. In their groups students to discuss how the scene could be changed to have a positive outcome. Students to devise 3 frozen images (tableaux) to depict the progression of the scene – groups to perform to the class on a voluntary basis.</p> <p>NB Modelling an example of a frozen tableaux would be beneficial.</p> <p>Stage 3 Adaptation: <i>If students have had some experience with improvisation, they could be encouraged to re-do the scene using improvisation rather than tableaux.</i></p>	Drama (Making, Performing)
	<p>4. As a class discuss the relationship between action and consequence. Students should be encouraged to think about what this means in their own life (personal and school).</p>	PDHPE (Decision-making)
	<p>5. Students are to write a story (narrative) in which actions and their consequences are experienced. These can be either a positive or negative consequences. This activity should incorporate a revision of the narrative structure.</p>	English (Writing)
	<p>6. Students are to publish these stories using technology.</p>	English (Writing)