

**A 4-week programme of drama activities based on 'After Tomorrow' devised by Mrs L Johnson in Bolton School Girls' Division for a lunchtime drama club run by sixthformers.**

**Week 1 – What do people need?**

- Explain that the remaining sessions will focus on building acting skills whilst exploring some of the themes that arise in the books from this year's Book Award (which will launch later this week). Don't reveal the book just yet as it needs to be kept secret until the launch. This week we will consider the question, 'What do people need?'
- Activity One – 5 minutes  
Split the group into fours/fives. Ask them to come up with 5 things that they need on a daily basis. Once they have their lists, they should produce a **tableau/freeze frame/still image** to depict a group of people who have everything they need. Explain that because tableaux do not involve speech or movement, the facial expressions and body positions need to be extra clear in order to express the characters' emotions. NOTE: DO NOT ALLOW MORE THAN 3 MINUTES TO DO THIS AS THEY WILL FAFF ABOUT - you must keep the pace moving!  
Get all groups to perform at the same time and point out one or two which work well and why (comment on facial expression, body positions and originality)
- Activity Two – 5 minutes  
Repeat Activity One but this time the **tableau/freeze frame/still image** should depict the same group of people in a situation where they no longer have the things they need. Again, get all groups to perform at the same time and comment on how the most successful groups have adapted their tableau to convey the new circumstances.
- Activity Three - 15 minutes (including performance time)  
Now the groups should imagine a scenario which explains how their characters came to lose their things they need and devise a short scene to show what happened. The scene should begin with the girls frozen in tableau 1 and should end with them frozen in the positions of tableau 2. It doesn't matter if the stories are far-fetched and unrealistic – this is about being imaginative!  
In the remaining time, choose any willing groups to perform their scenes.

**\*I recommend that one leader introduces each activity and that you all help the groups whilst they are creating their tableaux /scenes. Your job is to offer ideas and to keep them from arguing and wasting time. Try to ensure that everyone has a fair say and that no one is left out.\***

## Week 2 – Living Newspapers

- Activity One –10 minutes preparatory work +10 minutes performance

Remind girls about last week's session in which they devised scenarios where they no longer had the things they need. This session will explore one of the themes from the book *After Tomorrow* by Gillian Cross. The book is set in a future where the banks have crashed and money is virtually worthless. Food is scarce and some people have resorted to stealing from other people's houses. Several families have fled to France, hoping to find food and safety.

Divide the girls into groups of 4/5. Give each group a newspaper headline (cut them out) and ask them to produce a short 'performance' of that headline. Ask them to use volume, movement, space and voice creatively to present the most interesting and appropriate dramatization they can. Allow 10-15 minutes depending on time remaining.

**\* Remember your job is to offer ideas and to keep them working together. Try to ensure that everyone has a fair say and that no one is left out. I advise that one leader works with one or two groups\***

To end, allow any volunteers to perform their scenes. The remaining girls should try to guess their headline. After each performance comment on what went well - BE POSITIVE! We want them to build confidence!!!

**Thugs raid 1000s of UK homes  
while women and children starve**

**London's supermarket shelves remain  
empty as desperate families flee to  
France**

Channel Tunnel closed off: French claim to have  
no more food to feed starving Brits

**Hyperinflation: Full roast chicken will cost you £120  
as food supplies continue to dwindle**

100s of Brits surviving the winter  
in tents as they are refused entry  
to famished French homes

### Week 3 – Pick me!

- Activity One – 5 minutes

Ask the girls to find a space on their own, close their eyes and imagine that, like the main characters in the book *After Tomorrow*, they are one of the people trying to flee the UK for a better life in France (from last week's session). Prompt them with the following questions: Are you male or female? What is your name? Where are you from? How old are you? What type of personality do you have? What is your job? What has happened to you personally to make you want to run to France?

Give each girl a post-it to write a brief description of their character and stick it on their blazers once finished.

- Activity Two – 5 minutes

Now ask the girls to walk around the space as their character. After a few moments tell them to imagine that they are waiting to board the train that will be taking them to France; everyone is worried/ nervous and would like to find a friend for the journey. The girls should get into groups of 4/5 so that they have someone to travel with. They should introduce themselves to their new 'friends'.

- Activity Three – 15 minutes

Tell the girls that unfortunately the train is almost full and not everyone will be able to go to France. Only **one** person from each group will be selected. To decide, call each group of 'friends' to the hotseat /spotlight (or whatever you want to call it) and ask each character to explain why they should be allowed to travel and/or why one of their new friends should be left behind. They must remain in character at all times and cannot change any of the information that they put on their post-it at the start of the session.

**It is your job (the leaders) to decide who stays!**

The aim is to be able to develop realistic and convincing characters

## Week 4 – Inner thoughts

- Activity 1 – 5-10 minutes

In the story *After Tomorrow*, the main character desperately wants some new spokes to fix his bike. Instead of asking for them, he concocts a plan to steal them.

In groups of 4 girls should label themselves 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b.

1a has stolen something valuable from 2a (this could be money, medicine, anything) These girls should devise a short scene of no more than a few lines each, in which 1a tries to appear calm and supportive of 2a; although 2a does not reveal her true thoughts, she suspects that 1a is up to no good.

(1b and 2b should just give their ideas for the time being but not include themselves in the scene)

- Extension – 5-10 minutes

1b and 2b will now assume the part of 1a and 2a's inner thoughts, using a technique called **'thought tracking'**

1 and 2a will replay their short scenes but this time, after each line they say out loud, their inner thoughts will be revealed by 1b and 2b. Bs can be as creative as they like with their lines. The point is to show that what a person says is not always what they are thinking.

**\* Remember your job is to offer ideas and to keep them working together. Try to ensure that everyone has a fair say and that no one is left out. I advise that one leader works with one or two groups\***

To end, allow any volunteers to perform their scenes. The remaining girls should try to guess their headline. After each performance comment on what went well - BE POSITIVE! We want them to build confidence!!!