



HLF Rebuilding Bodies and Souls

‘The Town that didn’t Stare’ activity

Suitable for: 7-11 years

Time length: 1 hour

Objectives:

- To learn and use basic drama techniques such as facial expression, voice, movement and characterisation
- To learn how to use freeze frames and improvisation as narrative techniques
- To perform a short scene to an audience
- To be able to draw inspiration from the story of McIndoe, the Guinea Pig Club and the town that didn’t stare.
- To be able to develop a character and consider the GPC story from the perspective of their fictional character
- To be able to explore empathy and consider how we react to those who may seem strange or different to us.

Materials and equipment:

Selection of costumes, hats and accessories for children.

Drama source material- photographs, extracts of stories.

How to

Begin by talking about how East Grinstead became the town that didn’t stare. How the children were scared and confused by the appearance of the airmen, but recognised that the airmen were war heroes and should be treated with respect and not stared at.

Introduce activity

Warm up activities

Examples:

- Students stand in a circle. Go round the circle and everyone says name with an action (possibly something they enjoy).
- Play the Stop Go Jump Touch the floor game.
- A, B, C game (then replace A, B, C with action and sound)

The town that didn't stare activity

- Ask the children to walk around the room filling the space.
- Ask the children to make eye contact
- Ask the children to smile at people as they walk past
- Ask the students to shake hands
- Ask the children to avoid making eye contact
- Then ask the children to act as though they are afraid when they see someone walking towards them. **How did they feel when people seemed scared to look at them?**
- Divide the group into smaller groups of around 5-6 children.
- Read the extract from 'Love and War'
- Each group will create a freeze frame (**What is a freeze frame?**) imagine they are sat on a bus and they see the Guinea Pigs. In this freeze frame they are afraid- **what will their facial expression be? How would they react?**
- Bring the freeze frame to life. **What might they say?**
- This time each group will create the same freeze frame but will be friendly and welcoming to the Guinea Pigs.
- Bring the freeze frame to life. **What might they say to welcome the Guinea Pigs?**
- Ask the groups to share their short scenes to the rest of the class.

Summarise the session and share findings with the group.

If needed play the count to twenty game to finish off.

Suggested questions after activity

How did it feel when you were scared of the guinea pigs?

Which freeze frame or story did you prefer?

What do you think is the best way of reacting when we see people who look different or we perceive as scary?

What can we learn from the story of the town that didn't stare?

Have you ever been in a situation like this? What happened?

For you, what is the most memorable aspect of the story?

One thing you have learnt today?