

EMMA & GILL RESOURCE PACK



Catherine Wheels and Lung Ha Theatre Company's show, *Emma & Gill*

This pack is designed to enhance your pupils' experience of watching *Emma & Gill*. It provides you with some helpful information that we suggest you share with your students before they watch the performance and some activities to complete in the classroom after the show.

CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE LINKS

To help you tie in the performance and activities into your lessons, we have identified the relevant Curriculum for Excellence links.

LITERACY ACROSS LEARNING:

- As I listen or watch, I can identify and discuss the purpose, main ideas and supporting detail contained within the text, and use this information for different purposes. LIT 2-04a
- I can select ideas and relevant information, organise these in an appropriate way for my purpose and use suitable vocabulary for my audience. LIT 2-06a
- I can show my understanding of what I listen to or watch by responding to literal, inferential, evaluative and other types of questions, and by asking different kinds of questions of my own. LIT 2-07a

I can convey information, describe events, explain processes or combine ideas in different ways. LIT 2-28a

EXPRESSIVE ARTS:

- I have experienced the energy and excitement of presenting/performing for audiences and being part of an audience for other people's presentations/performances.
EXA 0-01a / EXA 1-01a / EXA 2-01a
- I can respond to the experience of drama by discussing my thoughts and feelings. I can give and accept constructive comment on my own and others' work.
EXA 0-15a / EXA 1-15a / EXA 2-15a / EXA 3-15a

HEALTH AND WELLBEING ACROSS LEARNING:

- I am aware that positive friendships and relationships can promote health and the health and wellbeing of others. HWB 2-44b
- I am aware of how friendships are formed and that likes, dislikes, special qualities and needs can influence relationships. HWB 0-44a / HWB 1-44a

BEFORE YOU WATCH THE SHOW: INTRODUCING EMMA AND GILL

Emma & Gill is a show made by Catherine Wheels and Lung Ha Theatre Company. It's an unusual theatre show because the actors on stage are not playing made-up characters, they are actually playing themselves - well an exaggerated 'version' of themselves. They use their real names and the story is inspired by their real-life experiences. Emma is an actor in Lung Ha Theatre Company and Gill is the Artistic Director of Catherine Wheels Theatre Company. Some of things that happen in the show have been created for dramatic effect or to make the show more exciting and fun, but everything is inspired by the real Emma and Gill.

Catherine Wheels and Lung Ha Theatre Company decided to make this show because they wanted to tell the story of Emma and Gill's different experiences growing up, looking at the similarities and differences in their lives.

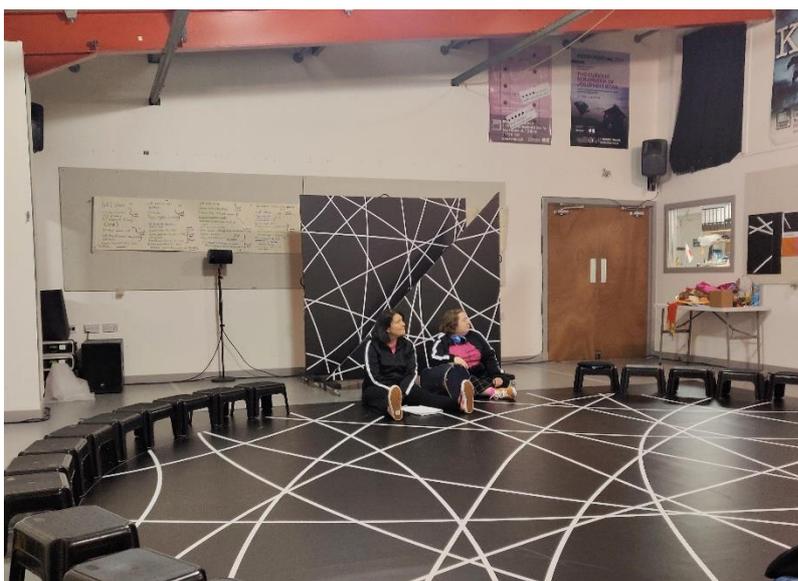
ABOUT THE STORY

Emma & Gill tells the story of two friends who are making a theatre show together. The show is supposed to be all about Emma and her experience as an autistic person. Gill is directing the show, and they're both performing in it.

As the story unfolds, it becomes clear that Gill doesn't know as much about Emma or autism as she thinks she does. Gill thinks Emma is a bit sad and tragic. She thinks that Emma is not normal – not like Gill and everyone else. She doesn't realise that Emma has lots of hidden talents and interests, and that *maybe* they have more in common than Gill would think.

THE SET

This photo, taken in rehearsals, shows the layout of the set. The audience sits around the performance area, on different levels of seating. They are very close to the performers.



MEET THE CHARACTERS

Gill is a forty-something theatre director from East Linton. She loves to tell stories and could make theatre out of just about anything. Gill is one of the most fun people you'll ever meet, and she spends a lot of her time playing and making people laugh. She is *extremely* talented and has been known to show off from time to time! When she's not making theatre, you might find her walking her dog on the beach, skinny-dipping in the sea or having a snack from the fridge that she keeps in her bedroom.

Emma is a twenty-something actor from Edinburgh. She loves to eat ice-cream for breakfast and she's very bright. Emma can often be quite anxious and at first seems shy, but she has lots of hidden talents. She's mad about history and knows all of the kings and queens from William the Conqueror to Elizabeth II off by heart! She also writes plays, can sing and plays the tenor horn. She's got her own YouTube channel too.

Dennis is Emma's tenor horn. He's tuned to E-Major and these days he's quite worn on account of being so old. Before Emma was born, he used to belong to her mum. Dennis is very special to Emma because when she plays Dennis, it helps to keep her anxiety at bay.

AFTER THE SHOW: EXPLORING THE THEMES OF THE SHOW

There are lots of interesting themes that appear throughout *Emma and Gill* that you might want to explore as a group. Here are some prompt questions to help kick off your discussion...

Friendship

Friendship is an important theme in *Emma & Gill*. Throughout the story we learn that friendship can be complicated, and sometimes even good friends can get on one another's nerves.

Discussion Prompts: *What did you notice about Emma and Gill's friendship in the show? What makes a good friend? Does a friend always need to be similar to you? Is it always easy to get along with your friends?*

Autism

Autism is central to the story of *Emma & Gill*. In the show, Emma says autism is a difficult thing to describe. She says the way she likes to explain it is with her headphones, like this:

'Take two fingers and touch the back of your head. There are two wires there that connect your brain to your body. They look like the wires of my headphones. Now it's really easy for headphone wires to get tangled. It's the same with autism. These two wires at the back of my head are tangled just like the headphone wires. But they could get tangled in hundreds of thousands of different ways. And that's why everyone with autism is different from everyone else with autism'

Discussion Prompts: *After watching the play, what do you know about autism? Does everyone who has autism have the same characteristics? Do you have any questions about autism?*

Challenging 'normal'

In the show, Emma and Gill talk a lot about what it means to be 'normal'. At the beginning Gill introduces herself as being 'normal' and tells us that Emma is 'not normal' – because she is autistic. As the story develops, we learn that Gill might not be as normal as she thinks...

Discussion Prompts: *What does it mean to be normal? Is there such a thing as being normal? Can we be different and still be normal?*

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

ROLE ON THE WALL

This is a group exercise that will help you to explore the characters we meet in the show.

- Choose one of the characters from the show.
- Draw a large outline of a person on a big piece of paper (or on the board), leaving plenty of space to write inside and outside of the outline. Write the character's name at the top of the page.
- As a group, think about all of the different things they can remember about the character you have chosen. Write down all of the 'known facts' in the space outside of the outline (e.g. age, occupation, location, appearance...) and write down all of the other information inside the outline (e.g. likes/dislikes, hopes/fears, motivations, personal qualities...).
- Repeat the exercise for another character in the show.

TOP TIP: After you've completed the role on the wall for each character, you might want to compare and contrast the characters as a class. What are their differences and similarities? What do/don't they have in common?

OBJECT IN THE MIDDLE

In the story we find out that Gill is a theatre director and she loves to tell stories. At one point in the show, she says 'I could make theatre from anything'. This game will help us – like Gill – to use our imaginations and turn everyday objects into something unexpected.

- Stand together in a big circle and place an object in the middle of the room (the object can be anything e.g. a tennis racket)
- Each person takes a turn to go into the middle of the circle, pick up the tennis racket and mime something, using the object in an imaginative way. (e.g. the tennis racket becomes a hair brush).
- As each person takes their turn, the rest of the group can try and guess what the object has become.

Top Tip: Once your class has had a few turns at the game, you can introduce some rules to encourage some healthy competition!

Rule One: The same idea can't be repeated during the game. For example, if someone has already mimed the tennis racket as a hair brush, no one else can use that idea again. If someone repeats an idea by accident, they would then be out of the game and sit down.

Rule Two: If you hesitate when it's your turn, and spend too long thinking about your idea, you're out of the game and need to sit down.

The winner of the game is the last person standing!

CREATING YOUR OWN CHARACTER

In *Emma & Gill* we meet Dennis, the tenor horn. We find out that Dennis is Emma's old pal, who helps to calm her down when she's feeling anxious. Even though Dennis is actually an inanimate (or 'man-made') object, he still becomes a character in the show.

This activity will help the pupils create and write about their own characters, like Dennis!

- Choose a man-made object that will inspire your character. (If it helps, choose an object in the classroom, or an object that you have at home).
- If your object had a name, what would it be? Write their name on a piece of paper.
- On the same piece of paper, write the answers to the following questions:
 - What does your character want more than anything else in the world?
 - What is your character most afraid of?
 - Where does your character live?
 - What are their likes and dislikes?
 - Do they have any friends, what are they like?
- As a group, share all of the characters that you have created.

TOP TIP: To build on this exercise, try writing a short story about the day in life of your character. What's the first thing they do when they wake up? What do they have for breakfast? What sort of things did they get up to during the day? Did they come across any big challenges or struggles? What has changed by the end of the day?

WORD SEARCH

There are 20 words in this word search that relate to the show. Can you find them all?

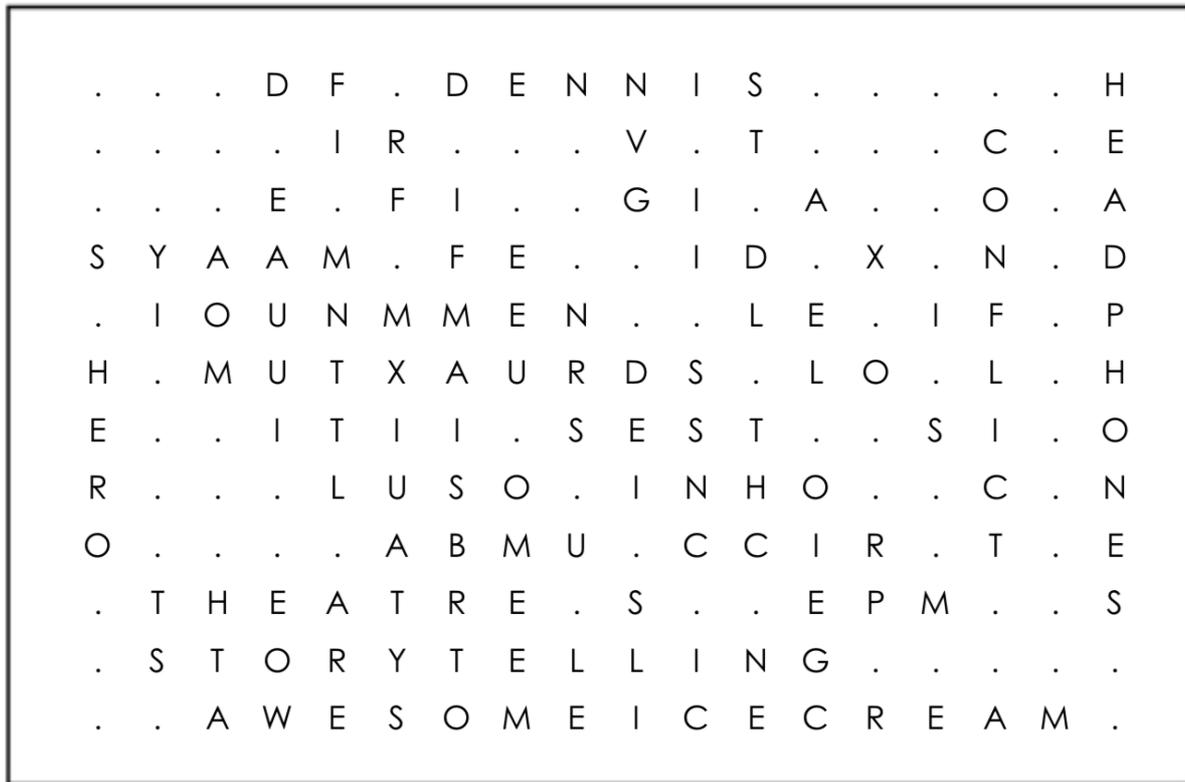
W W X D F N D E N N I S O I T T Q H
B O C G I R G Y V V R T I N E C L E
U B R E W F I L J G I P A J Z O Z A
S Y A A M I F E Y C I D H X W N Y D
A I O U N M M E N H Z L E M I F V P
H C M U T X A U R D S Q L O X L B H
E B H I T I I C S E S T K E S I U O
R N W C L U S O R I N H O V A C C N
O X V R G A B M U W C C I R R T K E
C T H E A T R E M S V A E P M G K S
N S T O R Y T E L L I N G P N G E G
V R A W E S O M E I C E C R E A M A

ANXIOUS
AUTISM
AWESOME
ICE CREAM
DENNIS
DIFFERENCE
EMMA

FRIENDSHIP
GILL
HEADPHONES
HERO
CONFLICT
MUSIC
SIMILAR

STORM
STORYTELLING
TAXI
THEATRE
VIDEOS
YOUTUBE

Word Search Answers



FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information about Catherine Wheels

<https://www.catherinewheels.co.uk>

0131 653 5255 / admin@catherinewheels.co.uk

For more information about Lung Ha Theatre Company

<http://lungha.com>

0131 221 9568 / info@lungha.com

Would you like to find out more about autism?

National Autistic Society

<https://www.autism.org.uk>

Helpline for advice & support: 0808 800 4104

Scottish Autism

<https://www.scottishautism.org/>

Autism Advice Line - 01259 222 022