

Beloved Burger by Rhiannon Tise

Director's Notes

Focus:

Sustainable Diets - The impact food consumption has on the planet's resources.

Learning outcomes:

- I know what a sustainable diet is.
- I understand the impact the food we eat has on the rest of the world, including its role in climate change.
- I recognise the impact of diet and exercise on my body

Big questions learners will explore.

- How does eating meat every day impact myself and the world around me?
- What steps can I take straight away to implement a more sustainable diet for me and my family?
- Who is responsible for the diet and lifestyle choices that we make on a daily basis?

Synopsis / Story version

Here's your plate, here's your planet - what are you going to eat?

When you hear about a problem - a big, big problem, something like climate change for example - it's so easy to think there's nothing little old you can do to make a difference and you might as well carry on just as you have been doing. This is a story about someone who thinks just that; but then decides, actually, she is going to change her ways to help with a very big problem.

The story version in italics below has been created by Jonathan Hall a Primary Deputy Head Teacher for you to read out loud to your class either on the day or some time before to introduce your class to the play.

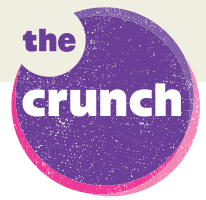
Lucy - like all of us - doesn't think much about the food on her plate. Or rather she does (she certainly complains when it's Mum's shepherd's pie instead of burger and chips), but she - like the children in her class, like all of us for that matter - doesn't really stop to think about where that food has come from. And what it costs in terms of the earth's resources to produce that big fat burger she craves.

Then, that night, in her dreams she meets Eartha; the strange, mysterious and beautiful Eartha, the guide of the rainforest, who takes her to an amazing place - a place of trees and waterfalls, of colourful birds and exotic animals; the jaguar, the Macaw and the Tamarind monkey. Eartha tells her that not only is the rainforest home to all the animals and birds and plants, it also keeps the earth from getting too hot. But to Lucy's horror she sees that this beautiful place is under threat from the frightening destructive forces of humankind, slashing and burning to clear space to grow soya beans.

Why soya beans? To feed cows.

Why feed cows? To make burgers.

The very same burgers that she and her friends crave.



But then the day takes a very strange turn as she is visited the Super Burger Man, on his mission to share the joys of eating meat. Is she still dreaming? Dreaming or not, Super Burger Man takes Lucy to Peter's farm where the cows that produce her burgers are farmed. But his mission to sell her the idea of eating meat backfires as Lucy finds not only are these cows breathing out methane gases harmful to the environment making it hotter and hotter, but as people demand more and more meat - more and more cows are needed, so more and more soya beans needs to be grown. And in order to grow the soya beans to feed the cows more land is needed and that means cutting more and more of the rain forest down, and remember the rain forest keeps the earth cool.

Super Burger man is big time wrong.

It's now clear to Lucy something has to change. And despite the size of the problem she realises change has to start somewhere – so it might as well start with her.

So - she has a veggie burger.

Which - you know what - isn't half as bad as she feared. In fact - dare she say it - she actually prefers it to a regular burger. And then when Lucy changes...her friends start to change... One child, one group of friends one class, one school...

The changes increase.

But are the changes going to be enough? And would you change? Like Lucy did?

Here's your plate, here's your planet- what are you going to eat

Top Tips for putting on your Play in a Day.

Before you start:

1. Read and familiarise yourself with the play and decide on roles prior to the day. You know your pupils better than anyone; who will want speaking parts? Who can take a leadership role in a group movement piece? Who works well with who? You may want to pre-prepare the lines printed on card for pupils to hold. I suggest numbering/naming these cards so they know when to say their line.
2. Decide how you want to stage the play; where will it be performed? Where will you position your audience? Do you need to put the pupils somewhere when they are off stage? (*see staging configurations for ideas*)
3. Look at the requirements of the script in terms of costume and props so you are prepared on the day. Props and scenery could be made in advance as part of a cross-curricular approach.
4. You can always use pupils for roles other than acting. For example, someone could be in charge of costume and props, another could be responsible for the music or sound effects.

On the day:

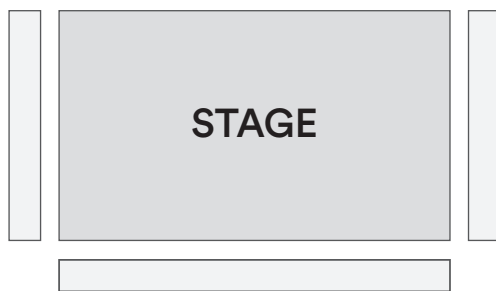
1. Use the warm ups to get pupils ready for the day. Explain what the play is about and how we can teach others through theatre. Get them excited by the project.
2. Assign roles quickly and make sure everyone always has something to work on, whether that's their section of the play or helping create a prop or piece of costume.
3. Set out where the audience will be when rehearsing so the pupils are aware of their performance space and how it will be performed.

4. If you have extra help in the room (TA's) use them to create the movement sequences whilst you work with pupils with speaking parts or vice versa. The videos for movement are really useful and pupils can learn straight from the video.
5. Make the play your own, be creative and take ideas and suggestions from your pupils too. Enjoy it!

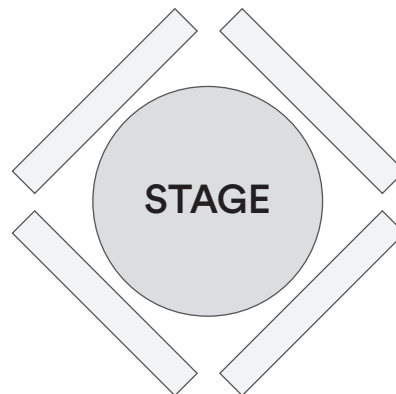
Staging Ideas

You may have a stage in your school hall which is great but don't feel you must use it. There are many ways you could stage your play. The audience could be sat on the stage with the pupils performing on the hall floor for example. Below are a few examples of ways you could stage the performance. You will need to consider what is available to you and what you need from a performance space- do you need a hidden off stage area for example.

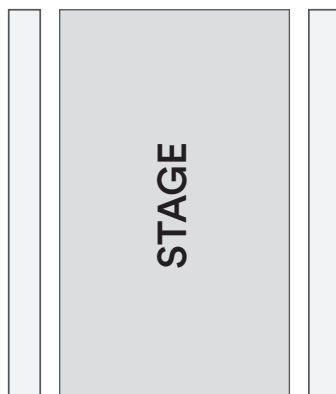
Thrust



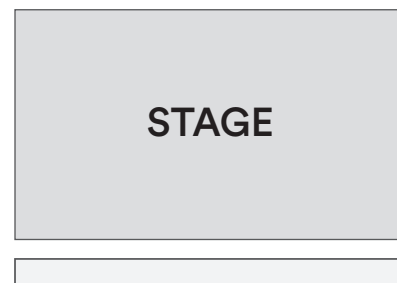
In the Round



Traverse



End on



Rehearsals

Stage Directions Game

Great for: Warming up the pupils and creating an understanding of stage directions.

All pupils gather in the middle of the space. Explain to them this is centre stage. We always say the actor is the most important person on the stage, therefore the stage directions are their left and their right as they face the audience. Upstage is behind them (usually the furthest away from the 'audience') and downstage is in front of them (closest to the 'audience'). Call out each stage direction one by one, the pupils have to run to that location as quick as possible, last one there is out. This student can then call out the next instruction to keep them involved. This should familiarise pupils with the stage directions on the stage and help you later on with blocking the play. There are some fun instructions to add in too. Round of applause: Clapping round in a circular motion or turning around as they clap. Scrub the stage: Bending down the mime scrubbing the stage floor. Hang a light: reaching up to adjust a light. Take a Bow: over the top bowing and curtseying. You can create your own call and response instructions to add in. e.g. You say "Romeo, Romeo" the pupils reply "Wherefore art thou Romeo?". This can be a really useful tool to gather pupils in a particular area of the space at any time throughout the day hopefully make your job a lot easier!

Runner Beans (and other beans!)

Great for: Warming up pupils.

Pupils find a space in the room, walk around the space being careful not to bump into anyone else. Teacher to call out instructions. Runner Bean: pupils run on the spot. Baked Bean: pupils curl up in a ball on the floor. Jumping Bean: pupils jump up and down. Broad Bean: pupils stretch their legs and arms out as wide as they can. Coffee Beans: pupils imitate coughing.

Agreement Line Activity

Great for: Getting pupils thinking and sparking discussion and debate.

Ask your pupils to stand in the centre of the space.

Explain that there is an imaginary line running down the centre of the space, one end of the line represents 'Agree' and the opposite end of the line represents 'Disagree'. The middle of the line is 'Don't Know'.

Explain that you are going to read out a series of statements. If they agree with the statement, they should go and stand at the end of the line that is 'Agree'. If they disagree they should go and stand at the end of the line that is 'Disagree'. If they are not sure or don't know what they think they should stay in the middle.

After they have taken up their positions, ask your pupils to explain why they have chosen their position. After hearing from several pupils, give your group the opportunity to change their position if they have changed their mind following what others have shared.

Repeat the process for each statement.

The Agreement Line statements

- If other meat became scarce I would be happy to eat insects
- Eating meat isn't harming anyone
- Advertisements for processed foods should be banned just like cigarette advertising
- I should be able to eat whatever I want to as long as I don't get fat
- It's my parent's' responsibility to make sure my diet is healthy and well balanced
- Doing exercise is more important than eating healthily

Tip: This activity can also be used to measure learning. Ask the pupils how much they think they know about the topic of the play you've chosen. e.g. How much do you know about Food Security. Encourage pupils to be as honest as possible. Take a photo of the pupils on the agreement line prior to working on the play and revisit the question afterwards. This can create a before and after photo sequence and show a change in the understanding of the chosen topic.

Curriculum Links

This play would work well as part of topics on Healthy Eating, Climate, Farming, the Rainforest or a study of a South American country.

English Spoken language

- All pupils should be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama.
- Pupils should be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role.
- They should have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

Science

Pupils should:

- Explore examples of human impact (both positive and negative) on environments and the negative effects of population, development and deforestation.
- Recognise the impact of diet, exercise, drugs and lifestyle on the way their bodies function
- Learn how to keep their bodies healthy and how their bodies might be damaged by an unhealthy diet

Geography

Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes.

Locational knowledge

Pupils should:

- locate the world's countries, using maps concentrating on their environmental regions, Key physical and human characteristics, and major cities
- identify the position and significance of latitude, longitude, Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle, the Prime/Greenwich Meridian and time zones (including day and night)

Place knowledge

Pupils should:

- understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of a region of the United Kingdom, and a region within North or South America

Human and physical geography

Pupils should describe and understand key aspects of:

- physical geography, including: climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle
- human geography, including: types of settlement and land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water

PHSCE links: World food supply, Third World issues, Diet and Nutrition, Caring for the Planet, Rainforests, Global warming.

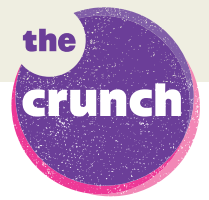
Topic in more detail - Sustainable Diets

The United Nations Food & Agriculture Organisation (UN FAO) defines sustainable diets as:

“Those diets with low environmental impacts which contribute to food and nutrition security and to healthy life for present and future generations. Sustainable diets are protective and respectful of biodiversity and ecosystems, culturally acceptable, accessible, economically fair and affordable; nutritionally adequate, safe and healthy; while optimizing natural and human resources.”

What this ultimately means is eating more plants, wasting less food, eating less meat, eating less processed food and eating food that meets a credible certified standard.

The play concentrates mainly on meat and the impact that a meat-heavy diet has on an individual and a global scale: on our personal health, the rainforest and the farmers involved, and ultimately on climate change. It suggests, by the end of the play, that we should see meat as a treat, something to be consumed once or twice a week. This is an action that can be taken now and something your pupils can try straight away.



Further Reading and Useful Sources

- World Health Organisation (www.who.int) - particularly the pages on nutrition and diet, physical activity and health, climate change, food safety.
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (www.nice.org.uk) - particularly the lifestyle and wellbeing section

The Future of Food: Sustainability - Kath Dalmeny

<http://youtu.be/KJJj4qjUO3k>

In this presentation, Kath Dalmeny of Sustain: The Alliance for Better Food and Farming talks about sustainability and food. This was one of the sources of inspiration for Rhiannon Tise's play.

Population Health - Professor Tim Lang

<http://youtu.be/SW0upTpIxN4>

In this presentation Professor Tim Lang, Professor of Food Policy at City University London talks about the future of food. This was one of the sources of inspiration for Rhiannon Tise's play.