

Baboró

International Arts Festival for Children

Arts in Education Resources 2018

# IS THIS A DAGGER?

## THE STORY OF MACBETH

**ANDY CANNON & RED BRIDGE ARTS  
SCOTLAND**



3rd Class to  
Transition Year

# IS THIS A DAGGER? BEFORE YOU GO

## Pre-performance activities for the classroom

### BACKGROUND/LEAD-IN

#### Performance style and themes:

- Simple staging with 3 key set items: a stool, a bucket and a biscuit tin plus simple props
- Storytelling and being inventive with simple props
- Direct address with audience
- Tells Shakespeare's Macbeth in an accessible and fun way!

#### Start with a synopsis of the story

Prepare your class for the performance by **reading them the synopsis of the story** (like the one below) and talking to them about what they are going to see. Understanding their expectations will help you to explore their reactions after the performance.

#### A very brief summary of the story of *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare

Macbeth is Shakespeare's only thriller. At times, it is a bloodbath. A story of power, ambition and ultimately loss. Macbeth is a story **about a man's ambition to be king and what happens as a result.**

Macbeth and Banquo are both generals in King Duncan's army. They fought a huge battle and cross a wasteland together. From nowhere, three witches appear. They tell the men their separate fates: Macbeth will become the Thane of Cawdor and then king. Banquo's sons will be kings. After their unlikely prophecies, the witches vanish.

Consumed by ambition and spurred to action by his wife, Macbeth murders King Duncan and takes the Scottish throne for himself. He is then wracked with guilt and paranoia. Forced to commit more and more murders to protect himself, he soon becomes a tyrannical ruler. Lady Macbeth cannot stop thinking about King Duncan's death, she becomes deranged and dies. A large army marches on Macbeth's castle, and Macbeth is killed by Macduff.

### PRE-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY

#### **Activity: Think, Pair, Share**

Group discussion

#### **Would you like to rule your country?**

Ask the pupils to imagine they could be the king/queen of their country. Would you like to be? Why/Why not? Discuss their thoughts in pairs and then share their ideas with the rest of the class.

## AFTER YOUR TRIP

### Post-show activities for the classroom

#### POST-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY

#### **Activity: Expressive Arts**

Telling a story with simple props

In *Is this a Dagger?* Andy uses a handful of props to assist him in telling the tale. This activity will help pupils tell a well-known story or fairy tale using a small number of props to bring it to life.

#### **Warm up – Pass the Prop**

- Sit the class in a circle and pass an everyday object round. Each person must show a **short mime where they make the object into something completely different**. The class guesses what each one is.
- This can also be talked through: 'This is not a 'spoon', it's a .....
- Encourage the children to be more and more creative with their ideas!

#### **Telling a Story Using Objects (can be a multi-day activity)**

- Start with a **familiar and simple story** such as 'Red Riding Hood'
- Discuss and write up on the board the **key characters** in the story
- Brainstorm as a class the **main events** of the story you have chosen. If there are lots of ideas, write them all on the board and then decide as a class on six key events
- Create a **simple story board** using these events
- Brainstorm a list of **possible props** that could be used for each character and more that would help illustrate each event in the story
- Split the class into groups of 3 or 4 pupils. Each group will work together and choose 3 or 4 objects that they can use to tell their story. The objects should represent key characters or help tell a key event in the story
- Groups gather their objects (this can be a homework exercise)
- Groups practice telling the story using the objects – ensure that each member of the group has a role to play in telling the story (one can be the director if they don't like performing)
- **Each group performs the play for the class.**

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

<http://www.theatreinschoolsscotland.com/isthisadagger.html>

