‘My dear young fellow,’

the Old-Green-Grasshopper said gently.

‘there are a whole lot of things in this world of ours you haven’t started wondering about yet.’

Roald Dahl
James and the Giant Peach
INTRODUCTION

This winter fly away on an amazing expedition with Roald Dahl's hero James, his new-found garden bug friends and one gigantic peach. Join the adventurers as they journey through the sky on an across the world voyage. Have they bitten off more than they can chew in the shark infested waters of the Atlantic Ocean, or will it be plain sailing through the enchanted Palace of the Cloud Men? End this juicy tale with a trip to New York City and find out if everything turns out peachy at the Playhouse for James.

CAST AND CREATIVES

Glowworm/Ensemble
James/Ensemble
Earthworm/Ensemble
Aunt Spiker/Spider/Ensemble
Grasshopper/Old Man/Ensemble
Aunt Sponge/Ladybird/Ensemble
Centipede/Ensemble

James Gow
Chris Lew Kum Hoi
Dyfrig Morris
Jess Murphy
Robert Pickavance
Beverly Rudd
Paksie Vernon

Director
Max Webster
Designer
Fly Davis
Composer/Musical Director
Adam Pleeth
Movement/Puppetry
Josie Daxter
Lighting Designer
David Holmes
Sound Designer
Peter Rice
Casting Director
Polly Jerrold
Assistant Director (Birkbeck Trainee)
Tyrrell Jones
Company Stage Manager
Jane Thompson
Stage Manager
Michelle Booth
Deputy Stage Manager
Katie Turner
Assistant Stage Manager
Katie Hilditch
**ROALD DAHL TIME LINE**

1916
Roald Dahl was born in Wales.

1924
8 year old Roald Dahl is caned at school for putting a dead mouse in a jar of gobstoppers.

1924
Roald Dahl is sent to boarding school. He later wrote about his experiences there in his book *Boy: Tales of Childhood* - published 1984.

1946
Roald Dahl’s first short story is published.

1939
Roald Dahl joins the Royal Air Force fighting in World War II. He rose to the rank of Squadron Leader, and was considered a ‘flying ace’.

1934

1961
Roald Dahl’s first children’s novel *James and the Giant Peach* is published. Written in 1961 it is regarded as his first classic novel for children. Dahl explained that it was the cherry tree in his garden which inspired the story. He wondered what would happen if the cherries just kept on growing and growing. Instead of a cherry he settled on a peach as the subject of his story.

1964
*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* is published.

**ACTIVITY 1**

Take a leaf out of Dahl’s book…
Ask your class to look out of the classroom window and write a short story about the first thing they see. How can we create something weird and wonderful in our writing from the everyday things we find around us?
1967
Roald Dahl writes the screenplay for the James Bond film *You Only Live Twice*.

1968
Roald Dahl co-writes the screenplay for *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* with director Ken Hughes.

1971
The film version of *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* starring Gene Wilder is released.

1978
Roald Dahl and Illustrator Quentin Blake collaborate for the first time on the publication of *The Enormous Crocodile*.

1982
Publication of *The BFG* and *Revolting Rhymes*.

1983
Roald Dahl marries Felicity ‘Liccy’ Crosland in the same year that his book *The Witches* is published.

1984
Publication of *Boy* (the stories of Roald Dahl’s childhood).

1986
Publication of *Going Solo* (Roald Dahl’s autobiographical retelling of his young adulthood).

1988
One of Dahl’s last stories *Matilda* is published.

1990
Roald Dahl dies aged 74.
In his writing Roald Dahl created his very own language called ‘Gobblefunk’. When Dahl couldn’t find a word for exactly what he was trying to describe he would make one up. Many of these are now featured in the Oxford English Dictionary. We can use this method as a way of exploring language constructs with students, and as stimuli for creative writing.

“Words,” he said, “is oh such a twitch-tickling problem to me all my life.”

Roald Dahl
James and the Giant Peach

**Activity 2**

Dahl’s Definitions
Using the list of Dahl’s Gobblefunk words on the next page, and the accompanying worksheet ask students to work in pairs to try and decipher the meanings for the words and present these back. They can then compare their choices to Dahl’s and discuss what made them choose the definitions they came up with.

Gobblefunk — Roald Dahl language
Babblement — a nice gossipy conversation
Chatbag — someone who talks too much
Glubbage — rubbish
Srumdiddlyumptious — delicious or lovely
Rotsome — when something is off or rotting
bogglebox — a school for young boys
frothbungling — stupid
gloriumptious — gloriously wonderful
jumpsquiffling — something absolutely huge
muggled — to be a bit confused
quogwinkle — an alien from outerspace
lixivate — being squashed and turned into liquid at the same time.
snozzcumber — the BFG eats these — a vegetable
trogglehumper — a nightmare
Swatchscollop — disgusting food
Kiddles — children
Jumbly — mixed up
# Revolting Words Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD</th>
<th>YOUR DEFINITION</th>
<th>DAHL’S DEFINITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gobblefunk</td>
<td></td>
<td>Roald Dahl’s made up language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Babblement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chatbag</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glubbage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Srumdiddlyumptious</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotsom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogglebox</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frothbungling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloriumpitious</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jumpsquiffling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muggled</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quogwinkle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lixivate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snozzcumber</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trogglehumper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swatchscollop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiddles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jumbly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ROALD DAHL'S REVOLTING WORDS

ACTIVITY 3
Scrumdiddlyumptious Sentences
Now we have discussed Dahl's Gobblefunk words, and his definitions for these, ask students to construct a sentence for each of the words in the list.

ACTIVITY 4
Generating Gobblefunk
Ask students to create their own Gobblefunk words to describe something, and write this in the style of a dictionary definition. We can use this as an opportunity to look at the format in which definitions are presented in a dictionary, and how we can most effectively use a dictionary when writing and learning new vocabulary.

CHALLENGE
See how many Gobblefunk words students can use as you work through the activities in this Teacher Resource Pack.
James Henry Trotter lived with his Mother and Father in a beautiful cottage by the sea. (Family Photo). He always had lots of other children to play with too!

One day James’s Mother and Father whilst on a shopping trip in London, were both suddenly eaten up by an escaped rhinoceros from London Zoo.

EXPLORING THE NARRATIVE

ACTIVITY 5

Putting it together...
The story of James and the Giant Peach has been divided into 17 sections below. Cut these into small strips and mix them up, asking students to piece the story together into its linear narrative in pairs. Come back together as a group to discuss the choices we made.

ACTIVITY 6

Freeze-frames
Once students are familiar with the narrative, ask them to create freeze-frames in groups of 4 or 5 for the section(s) they are given. They can then perform the whole story of James and the Giant Peach as a class. Ask one or more members of each group to read out the paragraph for the accompanying freeze-frame.
James finds a hole in the side of the peach and climbs inside, where he discovers a group of giant talking insects! A Grasshopper, a Spider, a Centipede, an Earthworm, a Ladybird and a Glow-worm. ‘We’ve been waiting for you!’ they say to James.

When Aunt Spiker and Aunt Sponge discover the giant peach they decide to use it as an opportunity to make lots of money. They start to charge people to come and see the peach. One day Aunt Spiker and Aunt Sponge are counting their money, and they order James to go outside and pick up the rubbish left behind by the tourists who have come to see the peach.

On the way back to the house, James tripped and spilled the bag onto the fruitless peach tree outside his Aunts’ house. The crocodile tongues work their magic on the peach tree and one peach grows to the size of a large house.

One hot summer afternoon James was crying in the bushes at the end of the garden when he stumbled across a strange Old Man. The Old Man gave James a bag of tiny magical glowing-green crocodile tongues.

James was sent to live with his two horrible aunts: Aunt Spiker and Aunt Sponge in a ramshackle house on the top of a high hill. They would call James ‘you disgusting little beast’ or ‘filthy little nuisance’.
Together James, Grasshopper, Spider, Centipede, Earthworm, Ladybird and Glow-worm decide to escape from the clutches of the mean Aunts Spiker and Sponge. Centipede bites through the stem of the peach with his powerful jaws, releasing it from the tree, and it begins to roll down the hill, squashing Spiker and Sponge flat.

The peach rolls through villages, houses, and a famous chocolate factory before falling off the cliffs and into the sea.

At sea, the peach is attacked by a swarm of sharks. Using the blind Earthworm as bait, James, the Grasshopper, Spider, Centipede, Ladybird and Glow-worm lure over five hundred seagulls to the peach. The seagulls are then tied to the stem of the peach using Spider’s web. The seagulls lift the peach high into the air and fly away from the shark-infested waters.

As they fly through the sky James, the Grasshopper, Spider, Centipede, Earthworm, Ladybird and Glow-worm encounter the Cloud-Men, who control the weather.

The Cloud-Men appear from the cloud and pelt the giant peach with hail damaging the flesh of the fruit, and causing it to leak its peach juice.
James, the Grasshopper, Spider, Centipede, Earthworm, Ladybird and Glow-worm emerge from the peach and tell the people of New York the tale of their fabulous adventure and they are given a welcome-home parade.

Following their adventures in the giant peach: Centipede became Vice-President-in-Charge-of-Sales for a shoe manufacturer, Spider set up a factory making ropes for tightrope walkers, Glow-worm became the light in the Statue of Liberty’s torch, Grasshopper joined the New York Symphony Orchestra, and Ladybird married the Head of the Fire Department.

James lived out the rest of his life in the giant peach stone in Central Park, which became an open tourist attraction and the ever-friendly James had all the friends he ever wanted.
INTERVIEW WITH FLY DAVIS
DESIGNER FOR JAMES AND
THE GIANT PEACH

HOW DID YOU BEGIN WORKING ON JAMES
AND THE GIANT PEACH?

The director Max (Webster) and I had a clear starting
point, we were very keen on setting the play in the time
it was written, the swinging 1960s. This meant we could
use all the flavours of that era for example; the colours
and patterns.

WHAT WERE YOUR INSPIRATIONS WHEN
DESIGNING JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH?

I thought back to when I was younger and how I
would create and enter into other realms as means
of escaping the real world. It always came from the
simplest thing – a duvet at the end of a bed propped up
to make a den, I would add a torch to make it cosy, and
of course there was always the classic cardboard box.
You could transform it into a boat, a house, an elephant,
a tunnel, anything.

Something being made from very little really stuck as a
key source of inspiration. From that, our concept grew:
James has created a cardboard theatre with his friends to
share his story with us. Essentially it is a craft based world
where James’ experiences are explained by utilizing
random objects that he has encountered in his life.

HOW WILL YOU BRING THE PEACH TO LIFE
ON STAGE?

We explored various ways of presenting the peach
on stage; painting a giant peach on the wall, having a
ferris wheel peach, an enormous blow up peach like
a bouncy castle but nothing was ever big enough. In
the end the most natural solution was to have various
playful representations of the peach, but once James
is inside it, it’s like you are in a tardis. In my imagination
the peach itself wouldn’t even fit in the theatre. This way,
without a literal peach on stage – it can be as big as your
imagination will allow.

Max and I were also very inspired by Roald Dahl’s actual
writing room. It was such a deliciously cosy looking
space full of nik nacks and things with comfy chairs. This
was what we wanted the peach to feel like, a very inviting
and friendly sanctuary, a world away from the life of the
brutal aunts.
What Lies Within
Ask students to read the interview with designer Fly Davis on the previous page, and think about designing how they think the inside of the peach should look and feel using the outline below. We can use this as an opportunity to research some of the ideas mentioned in the interview (e.g. ‘the swinging 1960’s’ and ‘Roald Dahl’s actual writing room’).
Activity 7
What lies within
STAGING THE RHINO SCENE: PART 1

ACTIVITY 8

Thought Shower
Ask students to read the paragraph from Roald Dahl’s *James and the Giant Peach* below. How might we go about staging this very tricky scene? In small groups students can write a ‘thought shower’ that notes the methods we might use to show this (e.g. puppets, masks, freeze-frame, animation etc.)

‘...one day, James’s mother and father went to London to do some shopping, and there a terrible thing happened. Both of them suddenly got eaten up (in full daylight, mind you, and on a crowded street) by an enormous angry rhinoceros which had escaped from the London Zoo.’

Roald Dahl
James and the Giant Peach
STAGING THE RHINO SCENE: PART 2

ACTIVITY 9

From Page to Stage
In small groups ask students to devise a short version of this scene using their ideas from Activity 8 which lasts no longer than a minute. Perform these for the class.

ACTIVITY 10

A Live Action News Report
Using the short scenes that students have created depicting the 'rhino scene'. Ask them to structure a television News Report presenting this shocking story.

Ask students to think about/use the following elements when creating their report.

- Narrator/News reporter: to describe the action.
- Live action/re-enactment: this is the scene that they have devised in Activity 9.
- Interviews: who might we interview in this scenario? (e.g. Eyewitnesses, a London Zookeeper, James, Aunt Spiker and Aunt Sponge).

ACTIVITY 11

Newspaper Article
Using the same part of the story, ask students to write a Newspaper article reporting on the event. What facts can they find out from the first few pages of Roald Dahl's story to help extend/support their article? They can use quotes from the interviews they created as part of their Live Action News Report. Ask them to draw an image to support this article.
From long term annual projects such as *Primary Players: Shakespeare Festival*, to bespoke workshops and training in-school to support your curriculum, we can work in partnership to cater for the specific needs of your group. Workshops and projects can take place at the Playhouse or at your school for Foundation, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

Enhance your students’ experience of these magical productions with a Creative Education workshop in your school led by one of our Primary specialist practitioners.

**INSIDE THE PEACH: DRAMA AND STORY MAKING WORKSHOPS**

This half day practical drama workshop will delve into the themes, characters and creative world of the play, and find out how we bring the wonderful whizz-bang-tastical words of Roald Dahl to our stage.

Suitable for: Key Stages 1 and 2.
Cost: £150 +VAT (max 30 students)

**CONTACT**

For more information or to book contact Elvi Piper (creative Education Coordinator) on elvi.piper@wyp.org.uk or 0113 213 7290