

**WY PLAY
HOUSE**

JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH

By Roald Dahl
Adapted by David Wood



TEACHER RESOURCE PACK

JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH

- 3 Introduction/Cast and Creatives
- 4 Roald Dahl Timeline
- 6 Roald Dahl's Revolting Words
- 9 Exploring the Narrative
- 13 Interview with Fly Davis (Designer)
- 14 Inside the Peach
- 16 Staging the Rhino Scene
- 18 Creative Education: Primary at West Yorkshire Playhouse



'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

Director
Designer
Composer/Musical Director
Movement/Puppetry
Lighting Designer
Sound Designer
Casting Director
Assistant Director (Birkbeck Trainee)
Company Stage Manager
Stage Manager
Deputy Stage Manager
Assistant Stage Manager

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

Max Webster
Fly Davis
Adam Pleeth
Josie Daxter
David Holmes
Peter Rice
Polly Jerrold
Tyrrell Jones
Jane Thompson
Michelle Booth
Katie Turner
Katie Hilditch



ROALD DAHL TIME LINE

1916

Roald Dahl was born in 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

Roald Dahl leaves school. He later wrote about his adventures into adulthood in his book *Going Solo* - published 1986.

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.

1983

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

1982

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

1978

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

1984

Publication of *Boy* (the stories of Roald Dahl's childhood)

1986

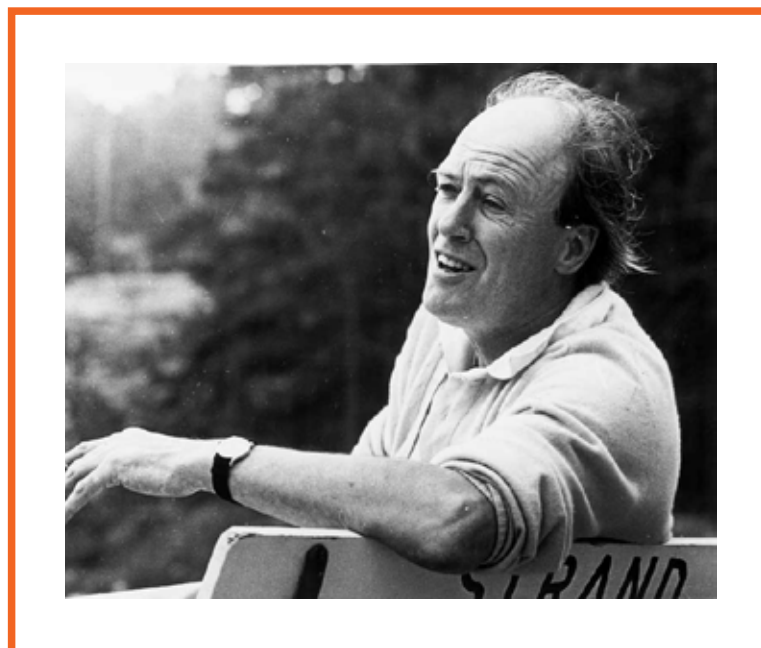
Publication of *Going Solo* (Roald Dahl's autobiographical retelling of his young adulthood)

1988

One of Dahl's last stories *Matilda* is published.

1990

Roald Dahl dies aged 74.



ROALD DAHL'S REVOLTING WORDS

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
Strumdiddlyumptious – 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

muddled – 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

WORD	YOUR DEFINITION	DAHL'S DEFINITION
G@BBLEFUNK		Roald Dahl's made up language
B@BBLEMENT		
CHATBAG		
GLUBBAGE		
SRUMDIDDLYUMPTIOUS		
ROTSOM		
BOGGLEBOX		
FROTHBUNGLING		
GLORIUMPTIOUS		
JUMPSQUIFFLING		
MUGGLED		
QUOGWINKLE		
LIXIVATE		
SNOZZCUMBER		
TROGGLEHUMPER		
SWATCHSCOLLOP		
KIDDLES		
JUMBLy		

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.

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 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

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'.

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.

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.

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.

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.

EXPLORING THE NARRATIVE

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.

EXPLORING THE NARRATIVE

As the sun rises, James, the Grasshopper, Spider, Centipede, Earthworm, Ladybird and Glow-worm see the distinctive skyline of New York City peeking above the clouds.

The giant peach begins to fall from the sky but is impaled upon the tip of the Empire State Building.

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 niks 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.



James and the Giant Peach – model box

INSIDE THE PEACH

ACTIVITY 7

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 I



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.

CREATIVE EDUCATION

PRIMARY AT WEST YORKSHIRE PLAYHOUSE

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
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