

THUMBELINA

A new version of the Hans Christian Andersen tale. A story of a girl just trying to build a safe home.

TEACHING GUIDE

Spectacle en anglais
Tout public
Niveau scolaire CM2 - 5e
Réservations
mail@drama-ties.com -
06 95 81 00 55

drama
ties

www.drama-ties.com

CONTENTS

ORIGINAL TALE AND OUR ADAPTATION

page 2

WHAT IS BRITISH PANTOMIME?

page 3

SCENE BY SCENE SUMMARY

page 5

MEET THE CHARACTERS

page 6

VISUAL ELEMENTS OF THE SHOW

page 9

THE THEMES

page 11

FOCUS ON: IMMIGRATION

page 12

INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO THE PLAY

page 14

AFTER THE SHOW

page 15

WRITE TO US!

page 16

ANSWER PAGE

page 17

crafting

21
activities

cultural
background

vocabulary

acting out

scenes

grammar

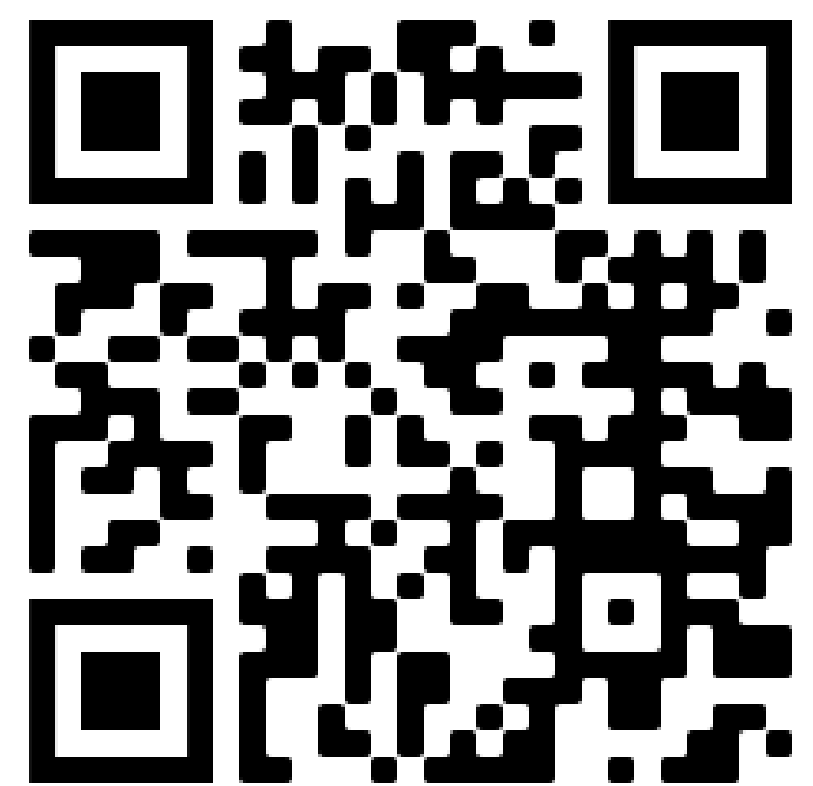
creative
writing

ORIGINAL TALE AND OUR ADAPTATION

Thumbelina was written by Hans Christian Andersen in 1835. Since then, there have been many different versions, but the original story is about a tiny girl that emerges from inside a flower when it blooms. She leaves her home and meets many different animals, all wanting something different from her. After many misadventures, she is rescued by a bird and meets a tiny flower-fairy prince who she falls in love with. The main themes of the original tale are kindness, greed, and peer-pressure. In Drama Ties' version, these same themes are explored, as well as the added themes of immigration and self-discovery. To learn more about Hans Christian Andersen and the different adaptations of the story, a simple internet search will guide you to lots of different publications and short videos!

Our synopsis:

Lina, a young girl, packs her bag and flees her disaster-stricken land. On her journey she meets a toad-like woman who wants to marry her to her son. She manages to escape and falls in love with a dangerous person who promises her everything. They introduce her to their friends and they all express their disgust at her appearance, persuading them to leave her. Heart-broken, Lina runs away again and finds true friendship in a mouse-like man, who suggests she marry his friend who will love her and keep her safe from harm. Lina likes this friend but they have nothing in common, Mr Mole likes the darkness and the quiet, whereas Lina likes sunshine, flowers and music. With a heavy heart, Lina says goodbye to her mousey friend and continues on her journey, looking for somewhere to call home. Eventually, and when she least expects it, in a field of flowers, far far away from where she came from, she meets someone completely different, and yet just like her. The Flower Prince. Lina has a new home. Thumbelina and her Prince enjoy teaching each other about their different lands. They live happily ever after.



Check out the different steps of the creation of OUR Thumbelina on Youtube!

WHAT IS BRITISH PANTOMIME?

Drama Ties' version of *Thumbelina* uses the Pantomime tradition and aesthetics. Pantomime in England is a much-loved tradition. It is a particular type of a musical comedy production and most often performed at Christmas time.

There are certain conventions that are used, which makes it a pantomime:

Audience participation

The audience are encouraged to call out, join in with and respond to the actors.

Slapstick

Clown-style humour with exaggerated physical actions.

Staging

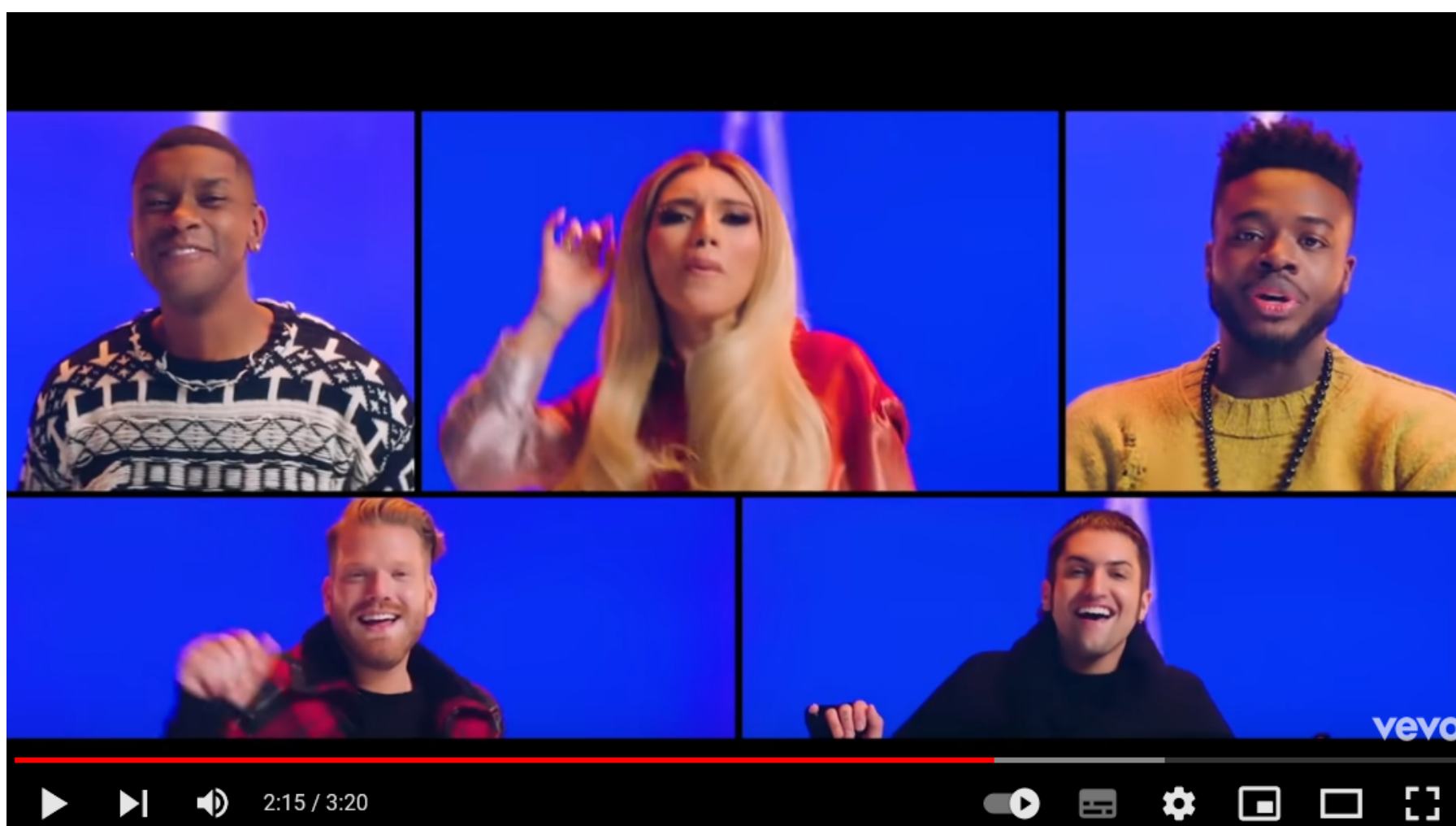
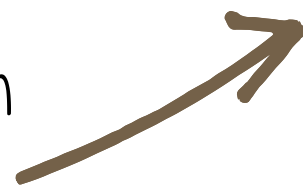
The good characters enter from stage right (côté jardin) and the bad characters enter from stage left (côté cour). This dates back to medieval times when the right side of the stage symbolised heaven and the left side symbolised hell.

Famous songs

There is almost always at least one famous song that is revisited with funny lyrics. A popular choice is "12 days of Christmas".

Have a listen to the original version
online:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oyEyMjdD2uk>



Or to this modern version by
famous band Pentatonix:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUHmQANFNs>



Our version on the next page!



Sound extract 1

On your first day in this land, I will give to you a slice of my famous cream pie!

On your second day in this land, I will give to you two teddy bears

On your third day in this land, I will give to you three water pistols

On your fourth day in this land, I will give to you four red roses

On your fifth day in this land, I will give to you my lovely son

On your sixth day in this land, I will give to you six smelly socks

On your seventh day in this land, I will give to you seven yellow dusters

On your eighth day in this land, I will give to you eight cans of soda

On your ninth day in this land, I will give to you nine loads of washing

On your tenth day in this land, I will give to you ten toilet rolls

On your eleventh day in this land, I will give to you eleven silver spoons

On your twelfth day in this land, I will give to you twelve polka dots

Activity 1: What 12 things would you choose to replace the original items in the song The 12 days of Christmas?

Cross-dressing

There is always a Dame - a man dressed up as an extravagant woman. Often unattractive! A Pantomime Dame wears many bright colours, with a lot of jewels, feathers, glitter, and other fancy accessories. They have wild hairstyles and crazy make up.

Activity 2: Have a look at these photos of Pantomime Dames. Choose one secretly, and describe it to your class. Can your classmates guess which one you have chosen?

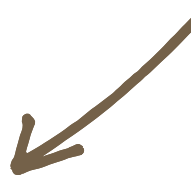


SCENE BY SCENE SUMMARY

Activity 3

- Read and discuss
- Which words help you understand that Thumbelina is on a journey?

before OR
after the
show!



SCENE ONE

A simple home

A joyful melody turns into the sound of riots. Thumbelina's mum calls for Thumbelina to pack a bag and escape imminent danger.

SCENE TWO

Green countryside

Thumbelina meets a woman called Toad. She is glamorous and utterly ridiculous, but she thinks she is fantastic. Toad is looking for a wife for her son, and so charms Thumbelina with her charisma and song. Thumbelina has fun but soon realises she is falling into a trap and runs away.

SCENE THREE

The city

Thumbelina arrives in a very trendy place, nothing like she has ever seen before. She meets Harley who is mysterious and alluring. Thumbelina falls under Harley's spell.

SCENE FOUR

The city

It becomes clear that Harley is mostly interested in simply using Thumbelina as a fashion accessory. Thumbelina's heart breaks and she decides to leave.

SCENE FIVE

Woodland

Lina goes to sleep under a tree. A mouse arrives and decides to watch over her to keep her safe while she sleeps. Mouse is extremely kind and caring, but often falls asleep himself! When they are both awake, they enjoy writing a song together and become great friends. Mouse invites Thumbelina to live with him for a while.

SCENE SIX

Woodland

Mouse sends Thumbelina to meet a friend of his, Mr Mole. Once at his door, she wonders whether she should knock and meet him or not. Something tells her it is not a good idea. She finally decides not to meet him and continues on her journey to find a home. Soon her bird is well enough to fly away and she has to say goodbye to this new companion also.

SCENE SEVEN

A field of flowers

Thumbelina meets someone entirely new, someone entirely different, and yet in some curious way, someone just like her. After enjoying learning all about each other... they live happily ever after!

MEET THE CHARACTERS



LINA

Lina is a simple girl. She is full of joy and very kind, she likes reading and singing, she loves nature and her family. She is young and vulnerable, and when she is forced to leave her family, she is unprepared for the challenges of a world away from home. Lina is based on the character of Thumbelina in the original story.

Activity 4: Imagine your own version of a girl named Thumbelina. Make an ID card: date & place of birth, middle names, surname, signature, photo. You can even add hobbies!



TOAD

Toad is a beautifully revolting woman! She is very self-confident and dreams of finding a good wife for her son. She is always searching for the best word to describe something. She is our pantomime Dame! Toad is based on the character of the toad in the original story.

Sound extract 2

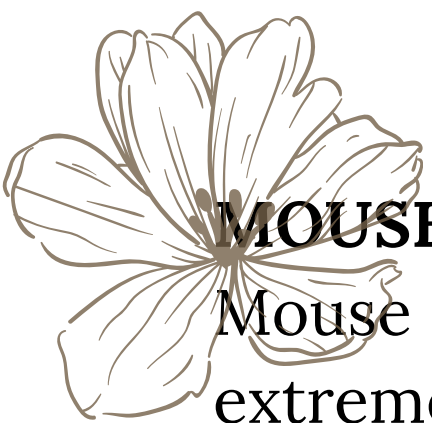
“Well, hello there darlings! Am I not the most beautiful woman that you’ve ever seen? No, that’s not what I mean, it’s the wrong word, what do I mean... Glamorous? Luxurious? Elegant? Glittery?”

“The problem I have is my son! He is pathetic. No, that’s not what I mean, it’s the wrong word, what do I mean.... Lazy! Passive! Pitiful!”

Activity 5: Read each word and like Toad, find three synonyms for each of them:

Funny – Serious – Angry – Dirty – Tired – Kind





MOUSE

Mouse is silly and nervous, but also very sweet and extremely kind. He loves to invent games and cheer people up when they are feeling down. He and Lina write a friendship song together!

Sound extract 3

Friendship is like dough – it takes time for it to grow

Friendship is like a good book – full of stories to keep you hooked

Friendship is like the sun – it makes a rainy day fun

Friendship is like your favourite song – you can't help but sing along

Friendship always unlocks – the most precious treasure box

Friendship is like spaghetti – it's good but sometimes it's messy

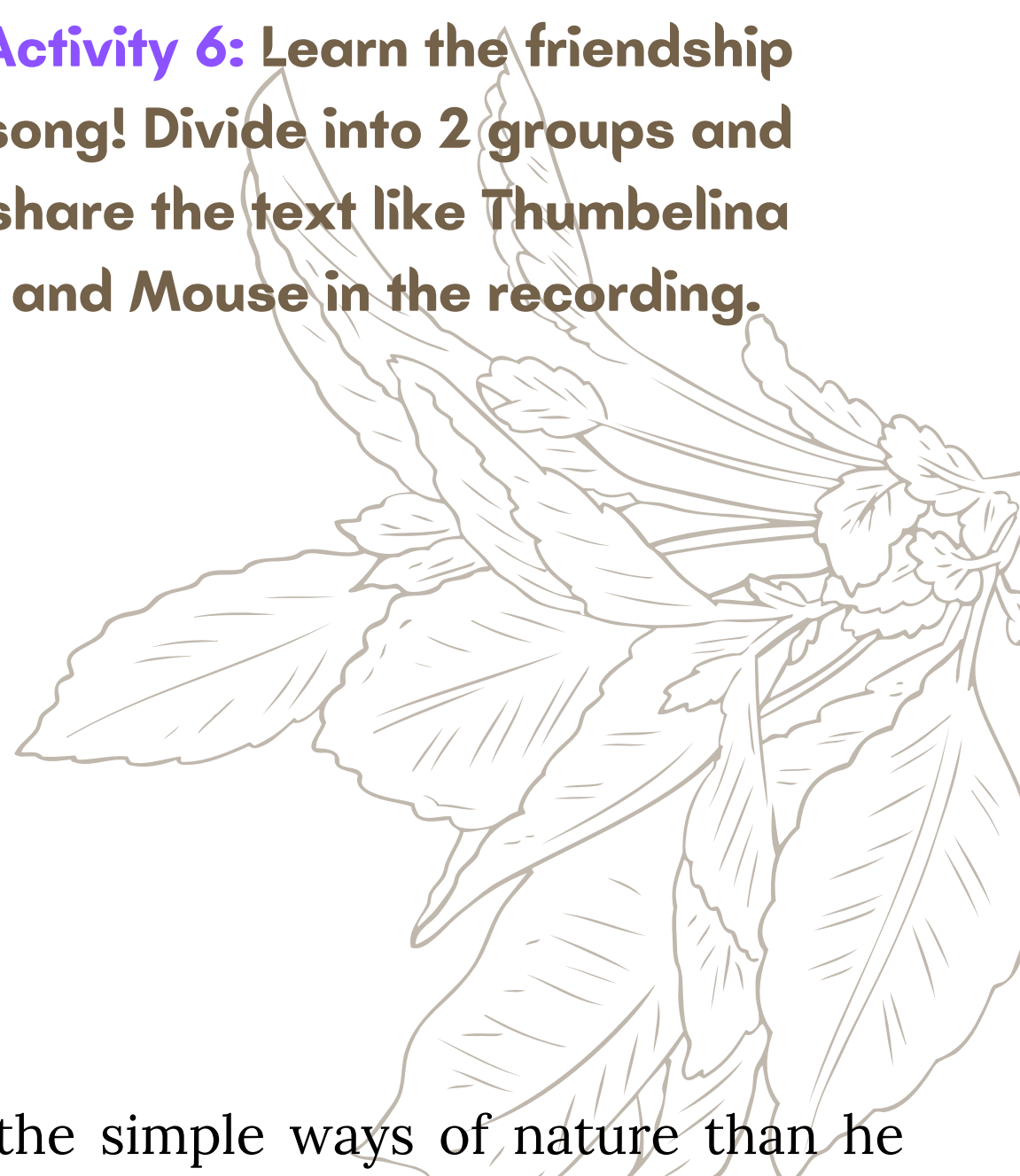
Friendship is like lemonade – it's better when it's home made

Friendship is like a tree – it's as strong as you and me

learn the song before you
come see the play so you
can be able to sing along
during the show!



Activity 6: Learn the friendship song! Divide into 2 groups and share the text like Thumbelina and Mouse in the recording.



FLOWER PRINCE

The prince much prefers the simple ways of nature than he does the riches of the palace. He is happy and loved, and also an important part of a traditional pantomime! He enjoys to banter with Thumbelina:

Sound extract 4

FLOWER PRINCE Oh, you do like to sing don't you?

LINA Do I like to sing!? Oh I am sure I like to sing more than you do!

FLOWER PRINCE Oh that's not possible, oh no you don't!

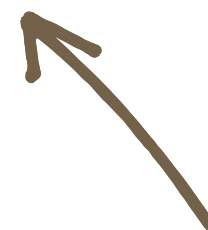
LINA Oh yes I do!

FLOWER PRINCE Oh no you don't

LINA Oh yes I do!

FLOWER PRINCE Oh no you don't

LINA Oh no I don't!



Activity 7: Listen to this traditional pantomime extract of text. With a partner, practice the text increasing the intensity with each line, teasing your partner. Imagine a new situation that you can use the phrases Oh yes I do/Oh no I don't for. Add some gestures and perform your exchange to the rest of the class.



HARLEY

Harley has a magical energy and catches the attention of everyone. They are androgynous and an epicurean, a stark contrast to those that identify with a clear personality/class/gender. Harley is based on the character of the cockroach/beetle in the original story.

Activity 8: Read these phrases and fill in the gaps with the correct pronoun.

- 1- My mum makes the best cookies, always adds extra chocolate chips!
- 2- Footballers often smell bad after a match, that's why take showers straight away!
- 3- What did the doctor say, were concerned?
- 4- Toad has a lazy son and wants to find a wife for
- 5- Everyone that looks into Harley's eyes, falls in love with immediately.
- 6- When found Lina sleeping, Mouse decided to watch and protect

Activity 9: Get acting!

1. Imagine a character that you would like to play. It can be a character from Thumbelina or a new character.
2. One idea is to base the character on an animal, like in Thumbelina. Think about the characteristics of this animal-human. How do you walk/talk?
3. Altogether, walk around the room trying different ideas until you are happy with a character that you have created (teacher: you could shout 'FREEZE!' occasionally and have a look at their frozen characters).
4. In partners, each with your own character, prepare a very short scene where the two characters meet for the first time. Remember to think about how each character feels? (Afraid, reassured, in love, or something else....)
5. Present your mini scenes to the class!



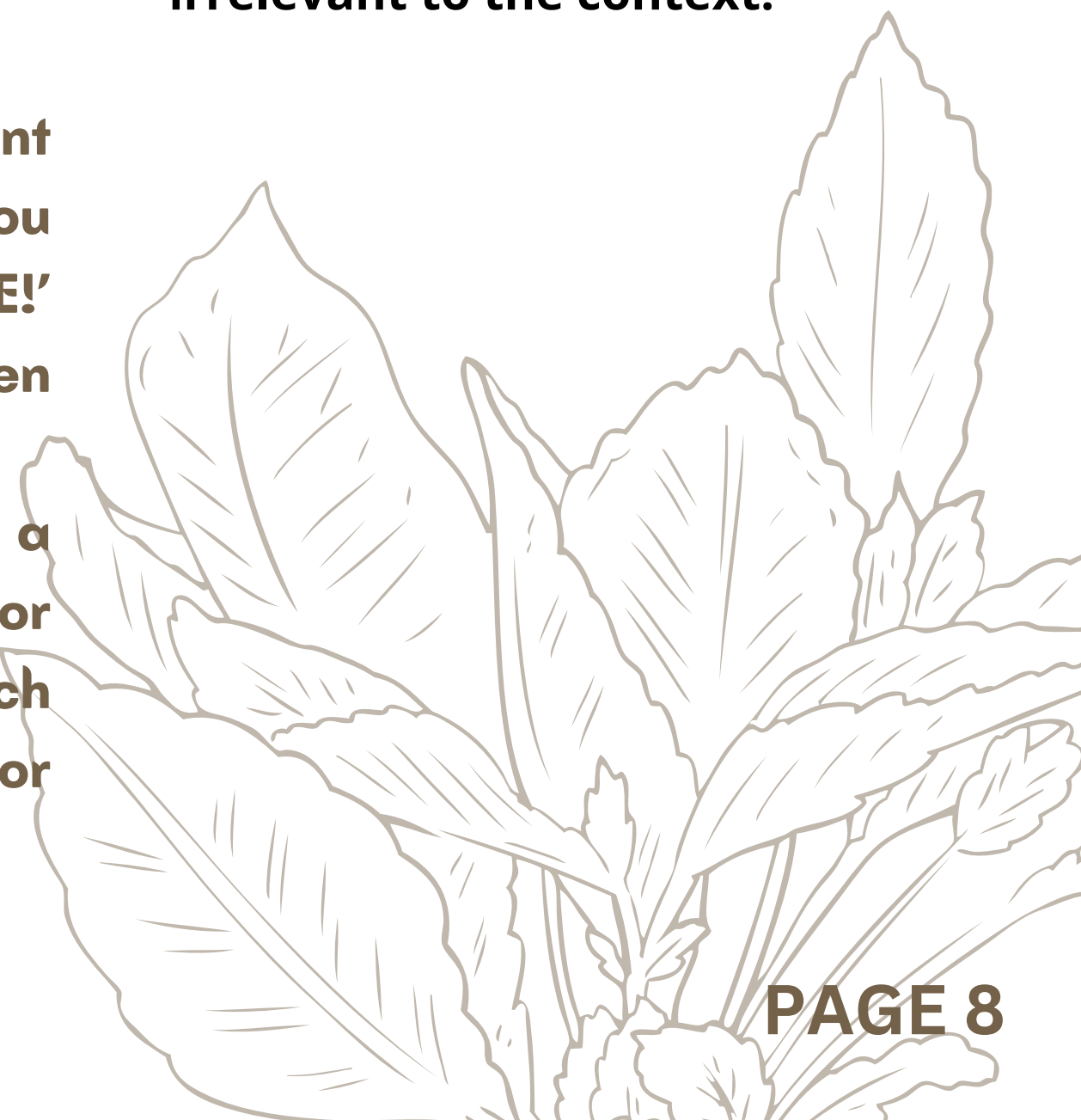
Let's revise our pronouns!

Lina and Toad identify as **girls** and use the pronouns **SHE/HER**.

Mouse and the Flower Prince identify as **boys** and use the pronouns **HE/HIM**.

Harley **does not identify as a specific gender** and prefers the pronouns **THEY/THEM**.

Remember! They/them are used in front of plural nouns or noun groups, but we can also use the singular they/them when referring to a generic person whose gender is unknown or irrelevant to the context.

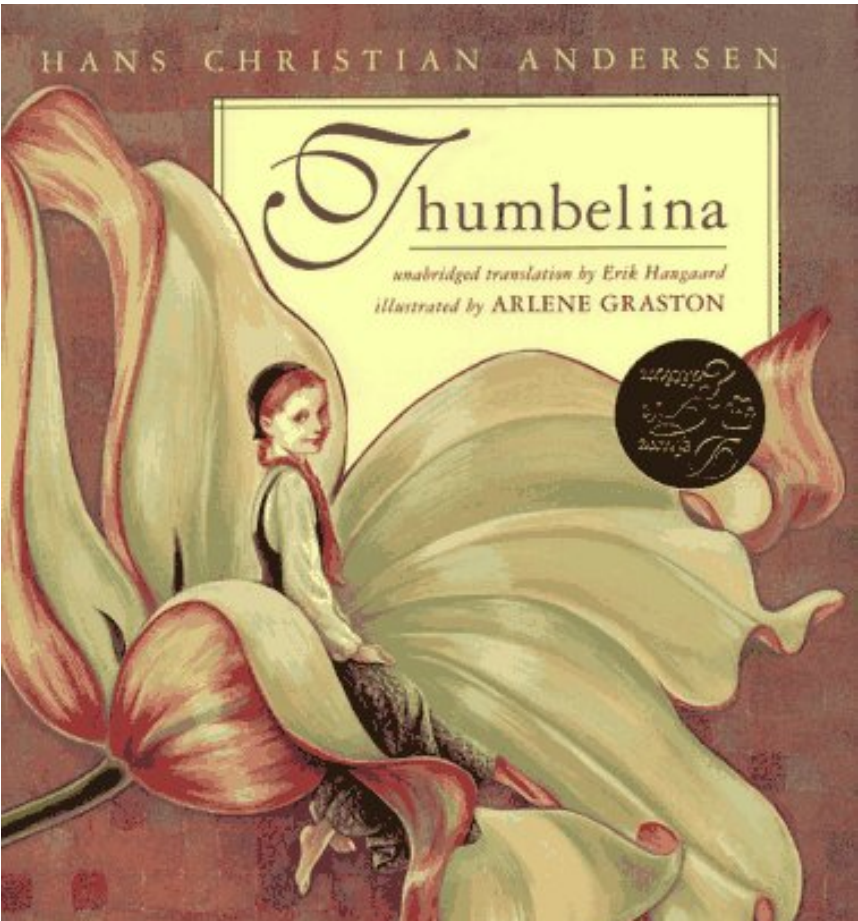
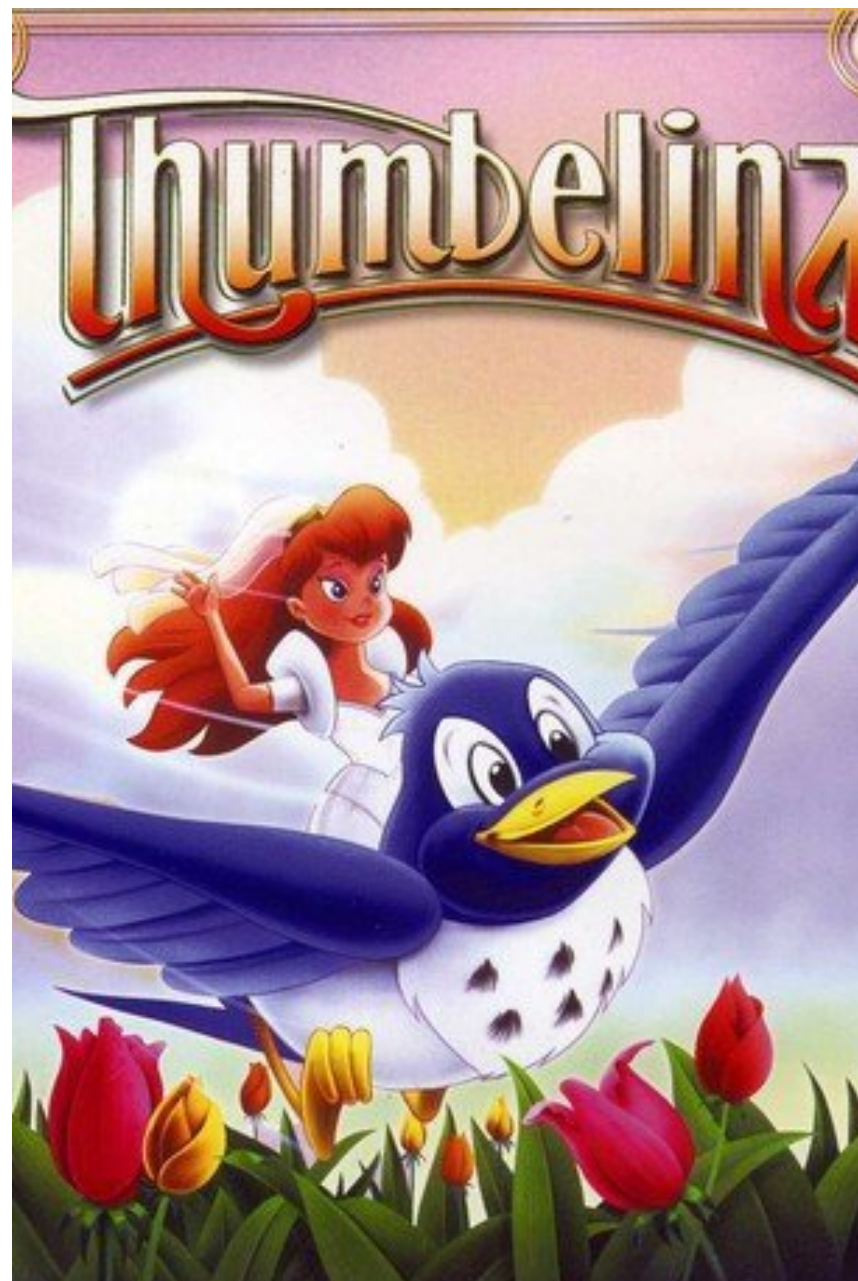
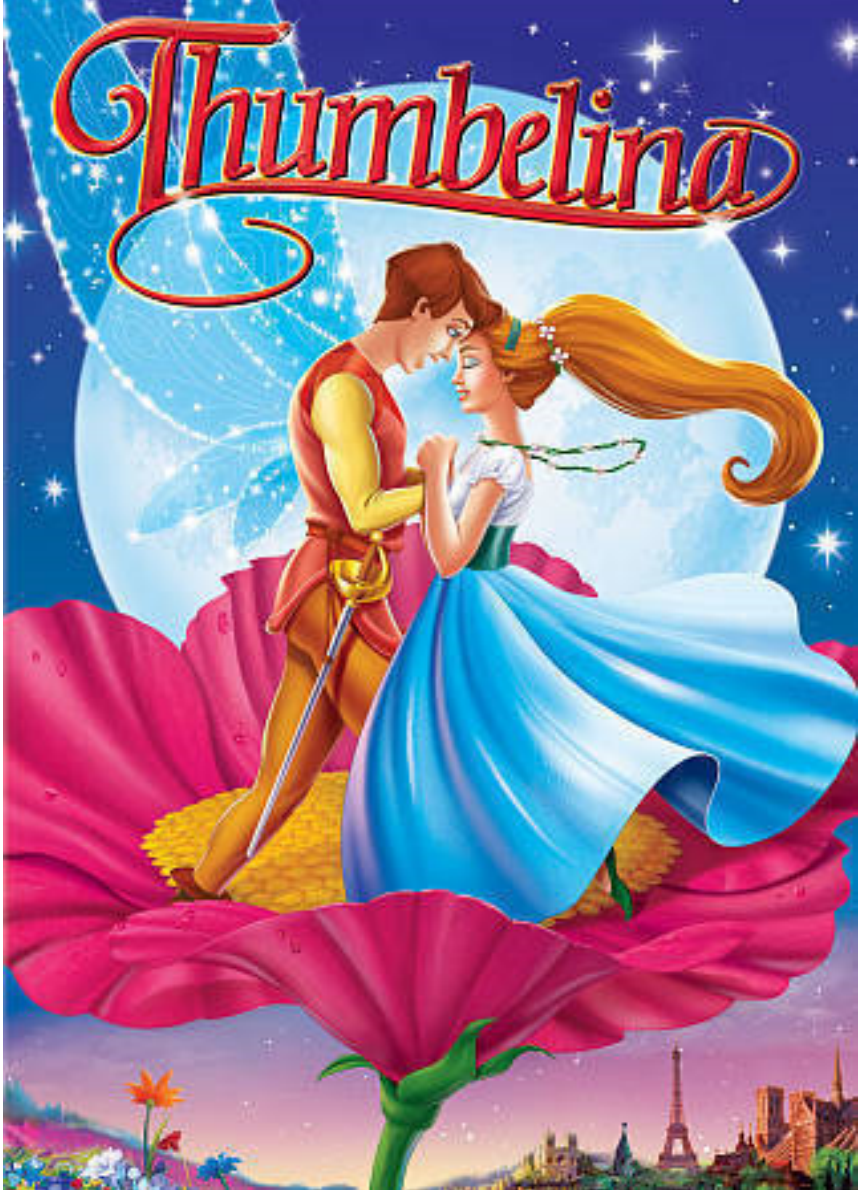
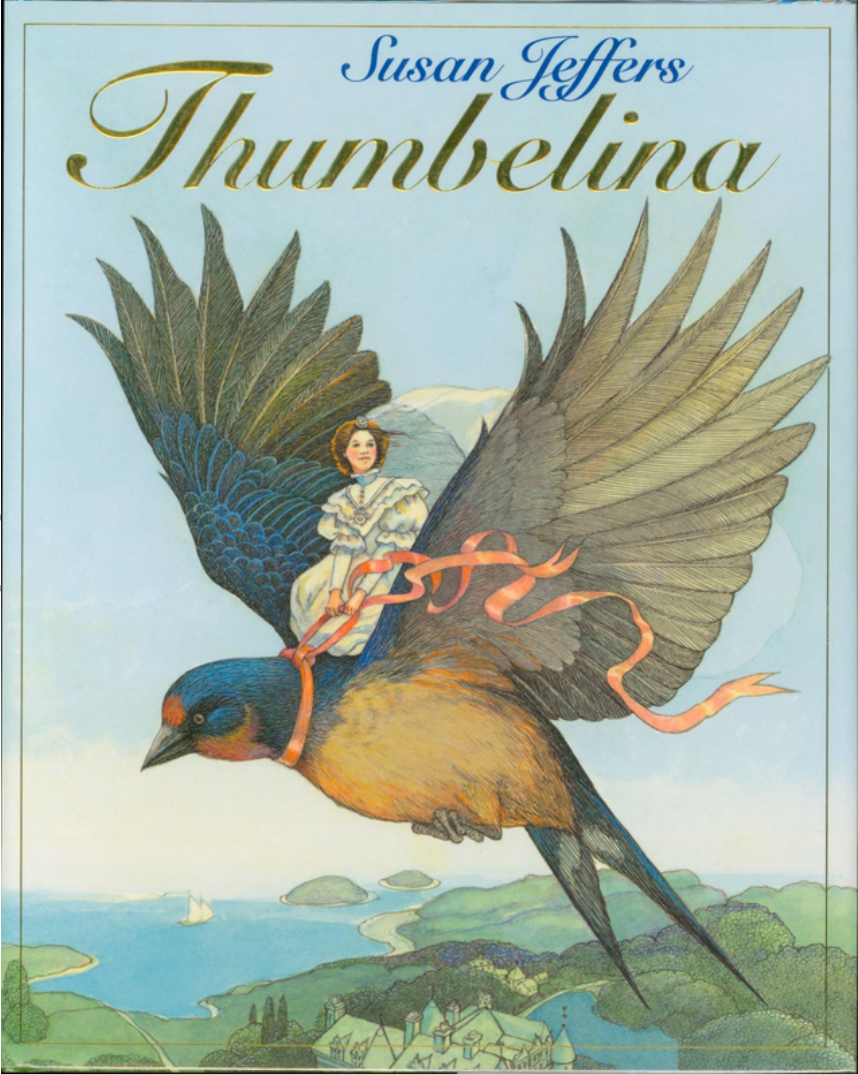
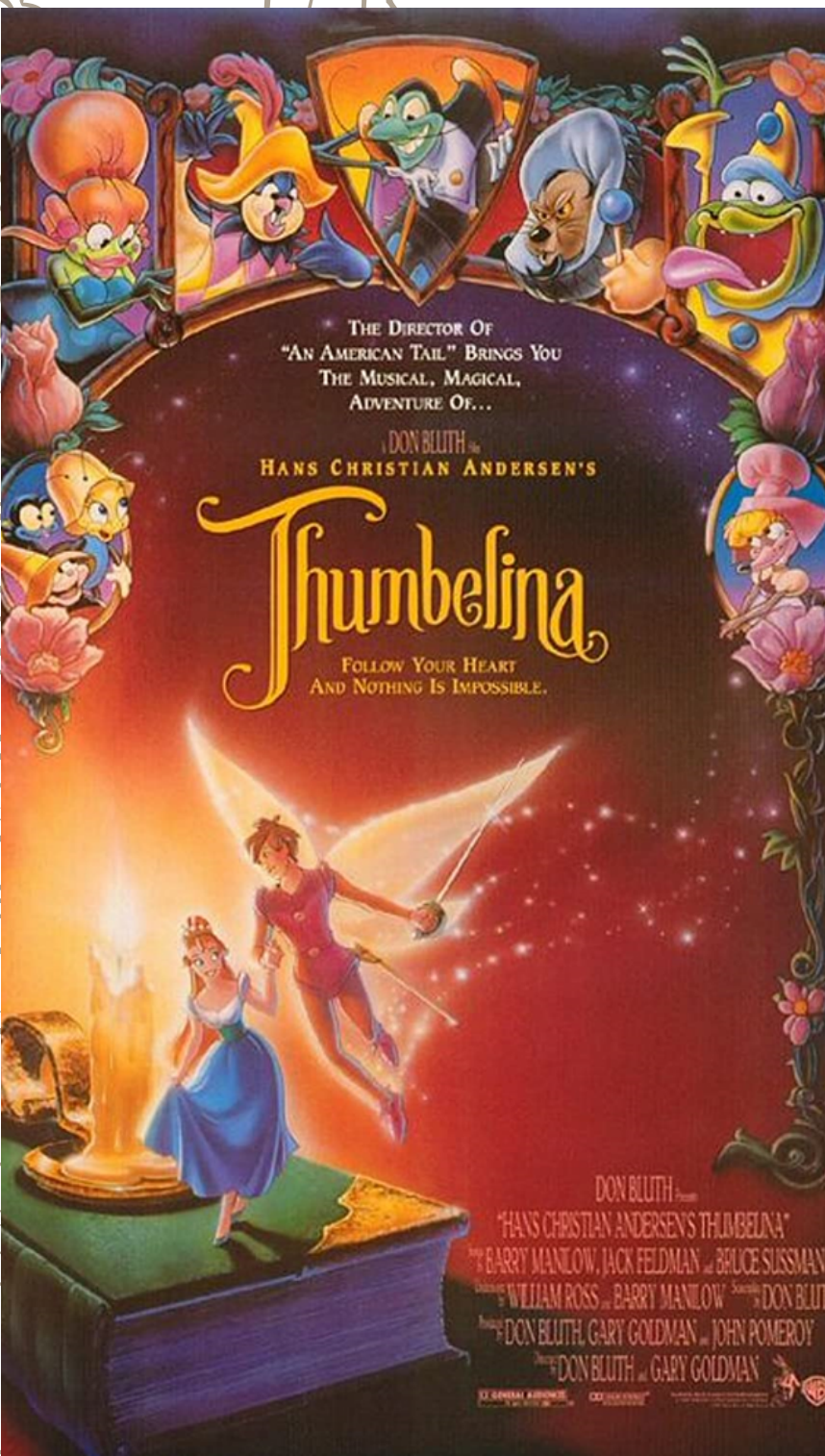


VISUAL ELEMENTS OF THE SHOW

I/ THE POSTER

Creating the visual for a new play is very important. It should show the important themes but not give away too many surprises! Our poster was made with real wild flowers collected and pressed by the writer, interposed with a drawing commissioned from an artist in London. After trying many different examples, a slogan was chosen to go underneath the hand-written title.

Activity 10: Have a look at these posters for different adaptations of Thumbelina. What similarities can you see, and what differences? Do they help you imagine what these different versions of Thumbelina may be like?



Activity 11: Now it's your turn! Imagine and create your own poster for a new version of Thumbelina. It can be inspired by these examples, or be something completely different. What materials will you use? What emotions do you want to show in your poster? What slogan will you choose?

2/ THE BIRD PUPPET

The bird is a very important part of the story. It represents freedom, hope, and responsibility. We decided that our bird would be represented by a puppet. For an actor, there is something magical about creating, bringing to life, and building a relationship with a puppet.

What is the difference between a puppet and a marionette? Both terms refer to an object that is manipulated by an operator, however the term marionette usually refers to a specific type of puppet – one that is manipulated by strings attached to a wooden bar.



The puppet in this show is made from recycled house-hold materials, with the exception of the professionally made head. The cast spent some time together experimenting with different ideas until we found the perfect puppet for our story!

The body of our bird is made from one large egg box, two bottle tops, some bits of wire, and some craft paper and craft tape. The head of our bird was made by an artist. She used papier mâché, beads for the eyes, some acrylic paint, a stick, and a spring.

Activity 12: You can try too! Collect some objects and see what different types of birds you can bring to life. Any recycled objects will work, with plenty of craft tape, and imagination!



Episode 3 of the creation of OUR Thumbelina on Youtube is all about the bird puppet!

THE THEMES

Thumbelina is on a journey, searching for a safe place to call home, searching for a friend and searching for herself. Along the way she is confronted with many different ideas about what these things really mean.

Activity 13: Read these words listed on the right below. Do you understand all of them? These are the different themes in the play. Find the words in the wordsearch!

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

- KINDNESS
- BEAUTY
- LOVE
- NATURE
- ADVENTURE
- EXPECTATIONS
- GREED
- VANITY
- LONELINESS
- HAPPINESS
- FAMILY
- HOME
- IDENTITY
- FRIENDSHIP
- TRUTH
- FEAR
- DISCOVERY
- JOURNEY

Activity 14: Now see if you can construct your own word equations. Here are some examples:

- FAMILY + HOME = PROTECTION
- NATURE + DISCOVERY = ADVENTURE
- EXPECTATIONS + VANITY = LONELINESS

Remember! There is no right and wrong, we all feel different things, that's what makes us so interesting!

FOCUS ON IMMIGRATION

Immigration and seeking asylum has been an important topic for centuries. Whether it be those who fled religious persecution by King Louis XIV, African-American slaves seeking freedom, the evacuation of Vietnamese families following the end of the Vietnam war, the economic collapse of Venezuela, ongoing conflict in Syria, or more recently the military invasion of Ukraine. Let us not forget the worldwide issues of those fleeing stigma and discrimination due to emotional and sexual orientation, family estrangement, and countless other common struggles.

There are currently 65 million refugees trying to flee ongoing war, environmental disasters, economic destitution, or political persecution. That's more than the total number of refugees that fled nazi persecution during World War II.



Activity 15: Can you match these following words with their definitions?

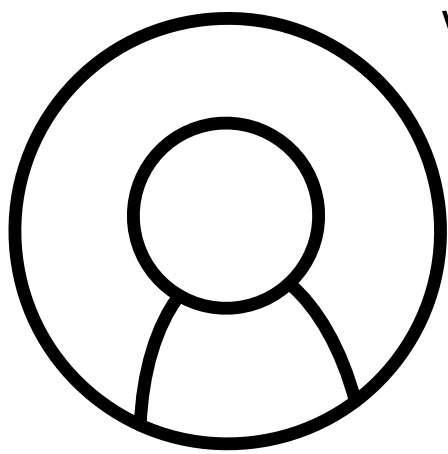
immigration - an immigrant
- a migrant - a refugee
- an expatriate

- a. A person that moves from one country to another for employment purposes.
- b. A person who has been forced to leave their country to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster.
- c. The action of moving to live permanently in a different country.
- d. A person living in a country different to that of his or her birth.
- e. A person who moves from one country to another in search of better living conditions.



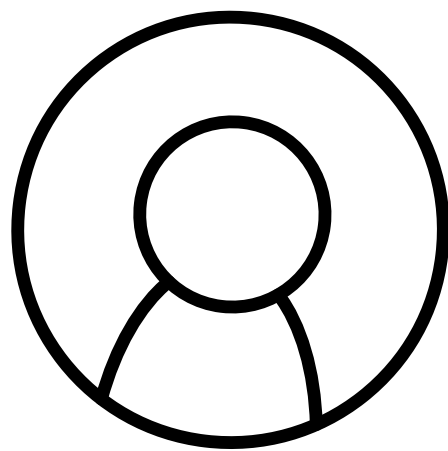
Do you think we can tell someone's country, culture, or personality by the colour of their skin? By their clothes?

Activity 16: Read these profiles and decide if the individuals are immigrants, migrants, refugees or expatriates.



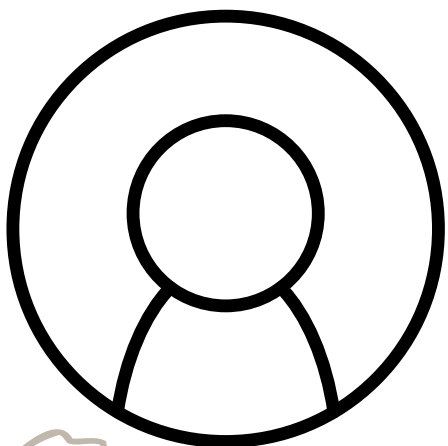
The Kantor family

were forced to live in a basement due to their religious beliefs, after 18 months they escaped to a neighbouring country with the help of kindhearted neighbours.



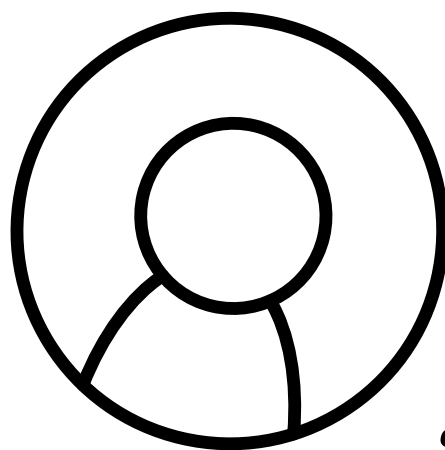
Mr Smith

works for Total and has moved from London to work in the head offices in Courbevoie.



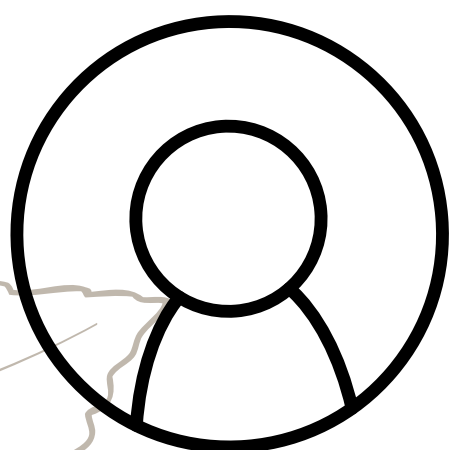
Ryan

worked in a mine from the age of 9. At the age of 18 he decided to travel to Portugal and continue his education.



Jessica

was rejected by her family due to her sexuality and didn't feel free to be herself in Somalia. She moved to Berlin and joined a dance company, where she was able to express herself truly.



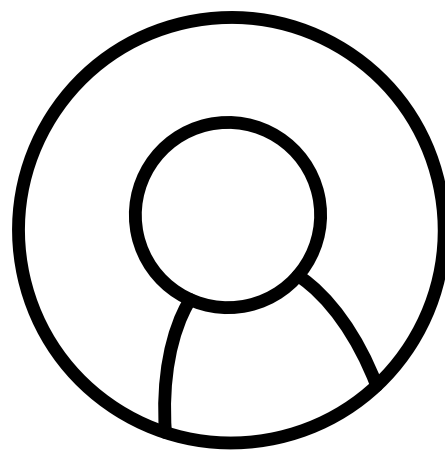
Jane

fell in love with cheese, and a French man, and moved from England to Paris.



Marie

was born and grew up in Paris. She has always loved spicy foods and hot weather, and after spending some time in Sri Lanka, she decided to stay and live there permanently.



Lila and her mother

moved to Poland to live with her aunt because their house was hit by a bomb and her father was badly injured.

INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO THE PLAY

At Drama Ties we firmly believe that making links between school subjects is a very valuable experience and helps students find personal meaning in what they are studying, encouraging a diverse and altruistic future.

HISTOIRE/GEO

The story of immigration in different countries

EDUCATION AUX SEXUALITES

There can be in-depth exploration of some of the significant themes:

What is a healthy friendship?

What is a healthy romantic relationship? Is being

someone's trophy a good thing or a bad thing?

How to respect our peers' views but not necessarily be influenced by them?

MUSIQUE

Our friendship song was co-written with students during the creation process. You could write your own friendship song inspired by the song in Thumbelina, or other well-known friendship songs (examples: A Duo from An American Tail or I'd do anything from Oliver!)

ARTS PLASTIQUES

Make a puppet or a poster with recycled or raw material

AFTER THE SHOW

Now that you've seen the show, here are some ideas of follow up tasks.

We really hope that
you enjoyed the
performance!

Activity 17: Sketch a
map of the invented
places in the show,
and draw
Thumbelina's
itinerary on it.



Activity 18: Think about which character
you identify with the most. Why?

Activity 19: Can you
list all the objects
you saw during the
show?



Activity 20: At the end of her
journey Thumbelina writes a
letter to her mother at home,
what does she say?

Activity 21: Fill out our questionnaire:

If this show was ...

A COLOUR

A SOUND

A SMELL

A MATERIAL

A WORD

AN OBJECT

AN ANIMAL

A PLACE

A SONG

... it would be... because...

We would LOVE to see your
work! Please send them to
us. You will find our contact
details on the next page.

WRITE TO US!

To share your work with us, or for more information about shows contact us at:



mail@drama-ties.com

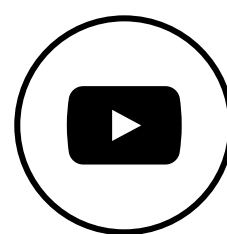
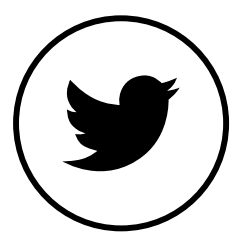
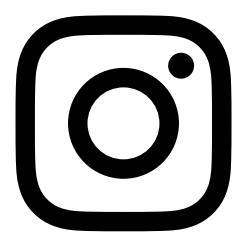
Follow us at -

Instagram: @dramatiestheatre

Facebook: DramaTies

Twitter: @DTTheatreCo

Youtube: Drama Ties Theatre Company



For information about the company and workshops:

www.drama-ties.com



ANSWER PAGE

Here are the answers to grammar and vocabulary activities:

Activity 3: Which words help you understand that Thumbelina is on a journey?

- SCENE ONE: pack a bag and escape
- SCENE TWO: runs away
- SCENE THREE: Thumbelina arrives
- SCENE FOUR: she decides to leave
- SCENE SIX: continues on her journey + say goodbye

Activity 5: Read each word and like Toad, find three synonyms for each of them:

Funny: amusing, hilarious, playful, entertaining.

Serious: strict, severe, thoughtful, concentrated

Angry: violent, aggressive, hostile, forceful

Dirty: grubby, messy, mucky, disgusting

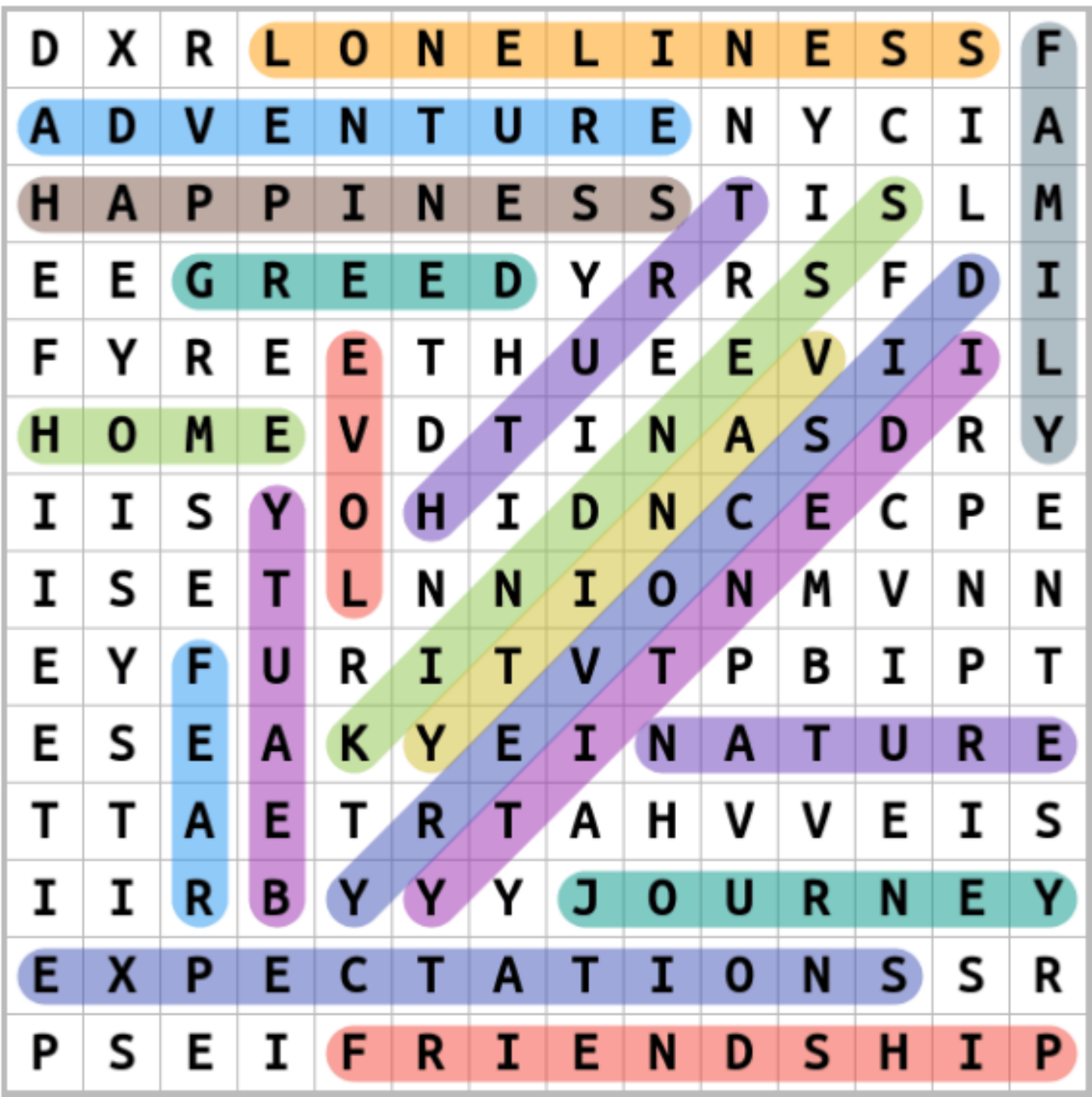
Tired: sleepy, exhausted, worn out, drowsy

Kind: friendly, helpful, considerate, polite

Activity 8: Read these phrases and fill in the gaps with the correct pronoun.

- 1- My mum makes the best cookies, she always adds extra chocolate chips!
- 2- Footballers often smell bad after a match, that's why they take showers straight away!
- 3- What did the doctor say, were they concerned?
- 4- Toad has a lazy son and wants to find a wife for him.
- 5- Everyone that looks into Harley's eyes, falls in love with them immediately.
- 6- When he found Lina sleeping, Mouse decided to watch and protect her.

Activity 13: Read these words listed on the right below. Do you understand all of them? These are the different themes in the play. Find the words in the wordsearch!



Activity 15: Can you match these following words with their definitions?

a (a person that moves from one country to another for employment purposes) = **an expatriate**

b (a person who has been forced to leave their country to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster) = **a refugee**

c (the action of moving to live permanently in a different country) = **immigration**

d (a person living in a country different to that of his or her birth) = **an immigrant**

e (a person who moves from one country to another in search of better living conditions) = **a migrant**

Activit 16: Read these profiles and decide if the individuals are immigrants, migrants, refugees or expatriates.

The Kantor family = refugees

Mr Smith = expatriate

Ryan = migrant

Jessica = migrant

Jane = immigrant

Lilia and her mother = refugees

Marie = immigrant





PARTERNAIRES

Association EMPREINTES
Château de Combreux
77220 Tournan-en-Brie

Foyer Clair Matin Bizot ESPEREM
21, avenue du Général Michel Bizot
75012 Paris

Centre PARIS ANIM' LOUIS LUMIERE
46, rue Louis Lumière
75020 Paris

Centre PARIS ANIM' KEN SARO-WIWA
63 Rue de Buzenval
75020 Paris

DRAMA TIES THEATRE COMPANY

66 bis rue Albert 75013 Paris

Association Loi 1901 – Siret : 428 178 727 00049–

Code APE : 9001Z Licence d'entrepreneur de
spectacles (2ème catégorie) : 2-1070415

