



Fields and Fields and Fields by Jonathan Hall

Director's Notes

Focus:

Agro Biodiversity - The variety of different types of agricultural produce found on earth and what this means for human health. In the context of this play this refers to different types of food.

Big questions learners will explore

- What is the impact of biodiversity on my everyday life?
- Who is responsible for the diet and lifestyle choices that we make on a daily basis?
- What are the effects of climate change and population growth on food production?

Drama Skills: Ensemble work, multi-roling, interesting ways of staging, movement.

Rehearsals

Starter Activity - The Agreement Line

Great for: Getting students thinking and sparking discussion.

An agreement line can be a good way to get students thinking about the themes and issues within the play or even about what a character thinks or does.

Ask your students 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 students to explain why they have chosen their position. After hearing from several students, 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.

Agreement Line Statements

- It doesn't matter how my food is made as long as it tastes good
- I know exactly where my food comes from and how it is made
- It is important to buy locally grown produce when you can
- There will always be enough food, we don't need to worry
- I should know more about the food that I eat

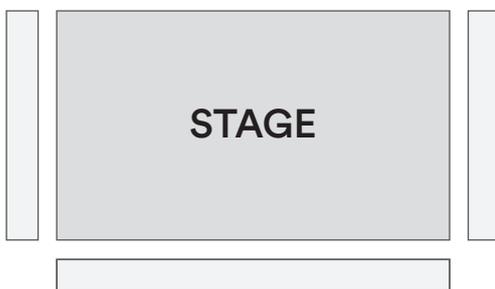
Tip: This activity can also be used to measure learning. Ask the students how much they think they know about the topic of the play you've chosen. e.g. "How much do you know about Food Security?". Encourage students to be as honest as possible. Take a photo of the students on the agreement line prior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

Staging Ideas/Interpreting the play

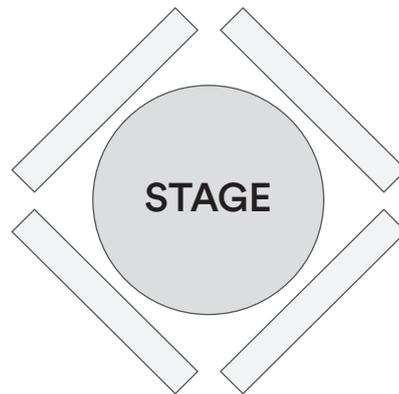
Many of the playwrights have outlined some ideas for staging and included stage directions but don't let this limit you. If you have a student in your class that would like to take on a design or directing role these plays are a great opportunity for creative freedom and problem solving in terms of presenting ideas to an audience.

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.

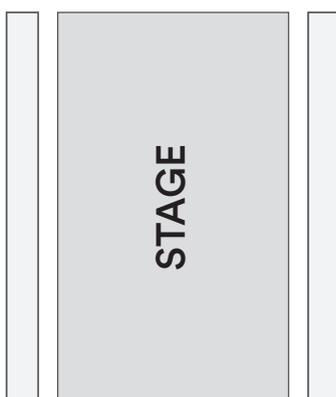
Thrust



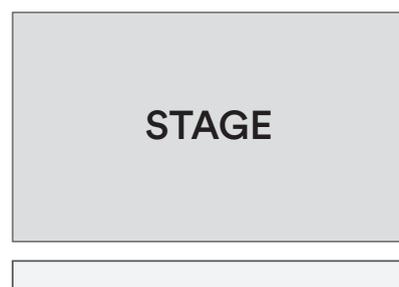
In the Round



Traverse



End on





KS3 Curriculum Links

These plays cover a wide variety of curriculum links that you can focus on throughout your exploration of the topic you have chosen. It is an opportunity to do some cross curricular work with other subjects and get the most out of the script as you can.

Science

Each of these plays link directly to the science curriculum for KS3 and if the Science and Drama departments worked together on this project the students would benefit hugely from the skills and knowledge they could develop across both subjects.

Starting with:

- developing understanding of the nature, processes and methods of science through different types of science enquiries that help them to answer scientific questions about the world around them
- being equipped with the scientific knowledge required to understand the uses and implications of science, today and for the future.

Whilst working on these plays students will ask questions and develop a line of enquiry based on observations of the real world, alongside prior knowledge and experience.

A focus on nutrition and digestion enables students to learn:

- content of a healthy human diet: carbohydrates, lipids (fats and oils), proteins, vitamins, minerals, dietary fibre and water, and why each is needed
- calculations of energy requirements in a healthy daily diet
- the consequences of imbalances in the diet, including obesity, starvation and deficiency diseases
- the tissues and organs of the human digestive system, including adaptations to function and how the digestive system digests food (enzymes simply as biological catalysts)

Students can also explore:

- Relationships in an ecosystem; the interdependence of organisms in an ecosystem, including food webs and insect pollinated crops
- the importance of plant reproduction through insect pollination in human food security
- how organisms affect, and are affected by, their environment, including the accumulation of toxic materials
- the variation between species and between individuals of the same species means some organisms compete more successfully, which can drive natural selection
- changes in the environment may leave individuals within a species, and some entire species, less well adapted to compete successfully and reproduce, which in turn may lead to extinction
- the importance of maintaining biodiversity and the use of gene banks to preserve hereditary material.

Geography

The national curriculum for geography aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places – both terrestrial and marine – including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes.

These plays focus mainly on Human and Physical Geography ensuring students:

- understand how human and physical processes interact to influence and change landscapes, environments and the climate; and how human activity relies on effective functioning of natural systems.

PSCHE

Topics that could be explored in lessons; Diet and nutrition, healthy living and exercise.

And more broadly: Human rights, Global Issues, Citizenship and the economy.

Drama

As there is no KS3 national curriculum for Drama there is a lot of freedom in the skills you explore; these are included in the breakdown on each play and can prepare students for GCSE Drama, A Level and beyond.

The current AQA GCSE specification states that top grade students should be able to:

- Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of drama to generate, explore and develop ideas.
- Show a thorough critical awareness of work in progress in terms of performance, their own contribution and that of others.
- Demonstrate a high degree of insight and sensitivity in working in a group to produce a performance.
- Demonstrate a sensitive awareness of the relationship between texts and dramatic styles and of social context and genre, generating, exploring and developing their ideas.

Topic in more detail - Undernutrition/Overnutrition

Jonathan Hall's play explores the theme biodiversity by telling the story of a village in modern India and a village in Ireland during the potato famine in the mid-19th century. Currently only twelve plant species provide approximately 75% of our total food supply and only fifteen mammal and bird species make up more than 90% of global domestic livestock production. Therefore, the pressure and demand for these is very high. Fields and Fields and Fields demonstrates what could happen if we continue to not be diverse in our food production.

Genetic diversity in crops reduces the odds of crop failure and protects against the spread of plant diseases and attack by plant pests. Genetic diversity therefore helps ensure a nutritious variety of food. As agriculture continues to rely on fewer and fewer species and varieties of crops and livestock, we need to preserve the genetic diversity of crops and domestic animals.

Biodiversity is essential for food security and nutrition; with the decrease of biodiversity, we lose the potential to adapt ecosystems to new challenges such as population growth and climate change.

This play gives just one example of how our demand for food affects the supplier and how the need for biodiversity can prevent lack of food.



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: Population Health - Professor Angela McFarlane

<http://youtu.be/BAvetS9nnOQ>

In this presentation Professor Angela McFarlane, CEO of The College of Teachers talks about biodiversity, and the Irish Potato famine. This presentation inspired Jonathan Hall to write his play.