

BACKSTAGE THEATRE PRESENTS

LÚMINARIA

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CLASSROOM ACTIVITY PACK

Clár Éire Ildánach
Creative Ireland
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HOW TO USE THIS ACTIVITY PACK

This pack contains a series of creative **SPARKS**.

Inspired by the world of the play, and drawing on its themes, these sparks offer possibilities for further engagement as well as provocations for in-class discussion of the play's ideas and issues.

The sparks draw on:

DRAMA

MUSIC

VISUAL ART

CREATIVE WRITING

SCIENCE

WELLBEING

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

(with broad curricular themes often overlapping).

Instructions for each spark are left deliberately brief, to allow you to dive right in, to interpret the activity according to your own expertise, to make your own curricular links, to contract or expand based on how much time you have available, and to tailor it for your age group.

All activities can be undertaken before or after seeing the show. And, while closely connected to the world and story of *Lúminaria*, many of the sparks can be adapted and used as standalone activities in the classroom, whether your class have seen the play or not.

DEBRIEF

The *Debrief* box offers questions and prompts that might be useful to spark discussion.

MAKE IT YOUR OWN

Make It Your Own contains ideas for how you might expand, enrich, or personalise the activity according to the needs of your classroom.

ABOUT THE SHOW

Join Lúna on an adventure into the sky as she tries to find the light to protect her mother and the citizens of Lúminaria from darkness.

This play for children sees Lúna embark on a celestial journey, encountering a host of characters from the natural world, facing her fear of the dark, and making profound discoveries about light and shade, happiness and sadness.

AGE RANGE

6+

Senior Infants and up

This Classroom Activity Pack was written and designed by Kate Heffernan

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SPARK 1

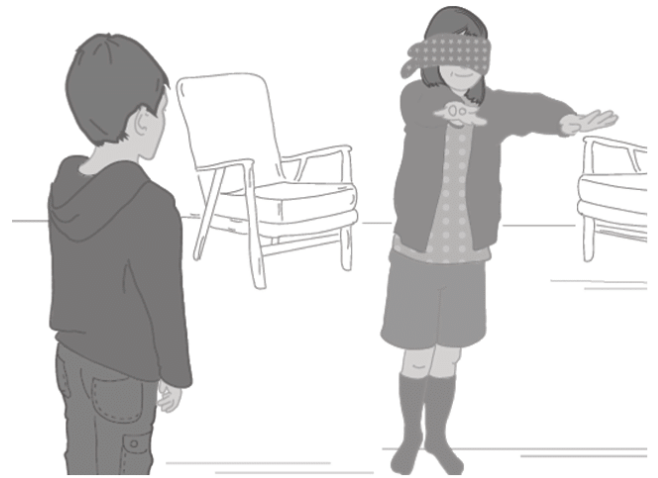
A GUIDE IN THE DARK

DRAMA

“I learned don’t be afraid of the dark, because there’s always gonna be someone beside you.”

~Audience Member

In the play, Lúna faces her fear of the dark. In this activity, children work in pairs to learn that it can be ok when there is no light. The aim of this drama game is to help blindfolded players to feel confident in their ability to move around in the dark.



YOU WILL NEED

- » Blindfolds
- » An open room with not too many obstacles

STEPS

1. Everyone finds a partner, one will be A, the other B
2. A puts on a blindfold, stands still, with one arm held out, hand outstretched, with palm facing downwards
3. B places one finger under A's outstretched palm. This is the only contact between them
4. A and B do not speak to one another
5. All of the Bs lead the As around the room, taking care to keep them safe, to not let them bump into any obstacles or other pairs
6. After a time, they swap, A leading a blindfolded B around the room

DEBRIEF

- » What did it feel like to be blindfolded?
- » Were you scared?
- » Did you feel less scared as time went on?
- » Did you trust your partner?
- » What did they do that helped you trust them?
- » Did you know where you were being led?
- » What did it feel like to be the leader?

MAKE IT YOUR OWN

- » Before the game, B can have a practice by leading A around the room while talking, and holding A's arms at the hand and elbow. This will build up A's confidence for the minimal contact and no speaking when the game begins.
- » For older children, consider doing this activity outdoors, or on a longer circuit, with B deciding where A should be led, and the final destination revealed in surprise for A.

SPARK 2

WE GOT YOU

DRAMA

In the play, Lúna realises that she has support when she is left in darkness. In this activity, children work in groups to build trust. The aim of this **drama** game is to help blindfolded players to feel confident that the people around them will be there to stop them from falling.

YOU WILL NEED

- » Blindfolds

STEPS

1. Split the class into groups of 6 or 7 children
2. One player, A, in each team puts on a blindfold
3. The rest of the group make a tight circle around A
4. A gently leans backwards with straight legs, so that as they gradually lose balance, s/he begins to fall backwards.
5. The player standing behind takes A's weight and gently pushes A back into the central upright position
6. A repeats the process, leaning in a different direction, and the team must take A's weight each time
7. The team should stay silent throughout

DEBRIEF

- » What did it feel like to be blindfolded?
- » Were you scared?
- » Did you feel less scared as time went on?
- » Did you trust your group?
- » What did they do that helped you trust them? / What could they do differently to help you to trust them?
- » What did it feel like to be the group, to be responsible for A?

MAKE IT YOUR OWN

- » Allow enough time so that each player can take a turn as A.
- » As trust builds, the circle can become a little less tight, moving a little further away from A.



SPARK 4

SHADOW CHASING, SHADOW TRACING

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

“Even when I go dark, I’m still there in the shadows.”

—Moon

Lúminaria is preoccupied with light and darkness. This physical game demonstrates how we can use our bodies to shape light and create shade.

YOU WILL NEED

- » A sunny day
- » An open space
- » Chalk

STEPS

1. One child is designated the Shadow Chaser
2. The Chaser must “catch” another player by making their own shadow “touch” another player’s shadow
3. Each player caught then joins the Chaser, and the game continues until the last Shadow is caught
4. Discuss how body placement, direction of running, and the time of day and season, can affect the size and shape of the player’s shadow, and make it harder to be caught.
5. At the beginning or the end of the game, help the children to work in pairs to trace their shadows: one as big as they can make it, one as small as they can make it.
6. Use the opportunity for a discussion on sunlight and shadows



DEBRIEF

- » What did you like about the game?
- » What did you find difficult / easy?
- » How do you make your shadow bigger / smaller?
- » Can you make your shadow disappear?

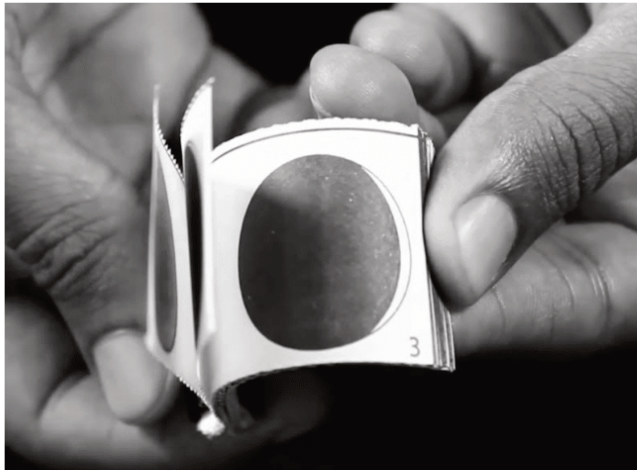
MAKE IT YOUR OWN

- » For younger children, the game can be simplified: the Chaser can step on a shadow to catch another player; and the game can be played as a “tag” version, where the Chaser switches roles with the first shadow they step on, with that child then becoming the solo Chaser.

SPARK 3

MOON MONTH FLIPBOOK

VISUAL ART + SCIENCE



MAKE IT YOUR OWN

- » For older children, print a blank version of the template, use pencils or art materials to colour the phases.
- » Spend time designing a cover for the flipbooks (eg: like the night sky, with black/navy card, using old toothbrushes to fleck with white paint)
- » Find an opportunity during this activity to explore the language of the phases: *Waxing Crescent, First Quarter, Waxing Gibbous, Full Moon, Waning Gibbous, Third Quarter*, etc.
- » As a class, you could host a “Moon Month”, tracking the phases of the moon across a full month, discussing what cycle of the moon you are in on a daily basis, as a way to connect with the natural world. The flipbook making would become one activity of your Moon Month.
- » You could encourage children to look at the sky each night, whether cloudy or clear, and discuss / track their observations the following day as part of the class “Moon News”. These observations and reflections might be collated into a simple magazine at the end of the month (“Moon Monthly”).

Waxing Crescent, First Quarter, Waxing Gibbous, Full Moon, Waning Gibbous, Third Quarter, Waxing Crescent
— *The Light-Fixers’ song*

The town of Lúminaria revolves around the phases of the moon, and the three days each month when its citizens are left without any moonlight (the word month comes from the word “moon” as every 28 days it completes its cycle of phases). This **visual art** and **science** activity animates the changing face of the moon for children, and offers an opportunity to explore the language of its phases.

YOU WILL NEED

- » Moon phases template (*choose version most suitable for your age range, and download from [here](#)*):
 - 8 page complete version
 - 8 page blank version
 - 28-day complete version
 - 28 day blank version
- » Scissors
- » Small bull dog clips

STEPS

1. Print the moon phases template on light card / heavy paper for each child
2. Allow them to cut each phase into strips, and stack in order
3. Secure the flipbook with a bulldog clip on the left-hand side

SPARK 6

RAIN, RAIN, COME AND PLAY

MUSIC + DRAMA

The actors in *Luminaria* use props to create the sound of the wind and weather effects. In this drama and music activity, the class will create the sound of a rainstorm using only their bodies. The group creates a wind, it gathers up some rain and turns into a thunder shower, which thrashes and blows until it quiets again to a gentle rain, a soft breeze, and then a quiet day.



MAKE IT YOUR OWN

- » Reflect on whether it accomplished the goal of sounding like a rain storm
- » For an extended activity, group the children and give them time to create their own “soundscape” (Jungle? School yard? Factory? Desert? Beach?). Ask each group to share

DEBRIEF

- » Are there other elements we could add to make it sound more realistic?
- » What other sounds could be created using just our bodies?
- » How did the actors and creative team create sound effects in *Luminaria*?

YOU WILL NEED

- » A large room

STEPS

1. Ask everyone to sit with you in a circle on the floor
2. You will begin an activity, then the person to your right will join in, then the person to his/her right will join in, etc. until it creates a wave all around the circle. Once it reaches back to you (the leader) you begin a different activity, and this creates a second wave
3. Tell the children that they are to carefully copy the movements of the person to their left, and not switch activities until that person switches. Try to encourage them to not focus on “the leader”, but instead on the person to their left
4. After the big crescendo, repeat all the activities in reverse order as the storm dies down

ACTIONS

- *Silence*
- *Rub hands (Wind)*
- *Tap one finger on palm (Raindrops)*
- *Tap two fingers on palm (Light Rain)*
- *Snap fingers (Rain Showers)*
- *Clap hands (Heavy Rain)*
- *Slap floor (Thunder)*
- *Clap hands (Heavy Rain)*
- *Slap floor (Thunder)*
- *Clap hands (Heavy Rain)*
- *Snap fingers (Rain Showers)*
- *Tap two fingers on palm (Light Rain)*
- *Tap one finger on palm (Raindrops)*
- *Rub hands (Wind)*
- *Silence*

SPARK 5

CLOSER, CLOSER

DRAMA



“I’m lost ... I’m trying to find the light but it seems I’m only getting closer to the dark.”

— *Lúna*

On Lúna’s difficult journey to the moon, she does not know exactly what way she should go or what she should do. But, there are people and forces guiding her without telling her. This **drama** game demonstrates how a group can guide an individual through only applause.

DEBRIEF

- » Did you find this activity difficult / easy?
- » What would make it easier / more challenging?
- » What does it feel like to try and complete a task without clear instructions?
- » How did you feel when you were standing outside the door?
- » Were you surprised that A got it so quickly?
- » Can you imagine what it might have been like to be Lúna setting off on her adventure?

YOU WILL NEED

- » A room with a door

STEPS

1. One child, A, is invited to leave the room. A should not be able to hear the conversation inside the room.
2. When A leaves, the group privately decide a task A must do when they return (eg, come to the middle of the room and do a dance, walk in and turn on a light switch, place a tissue in the bin, write on the blackboard, etc.)
3. A returns to the room and must figure out what the task is following the cues of the group, but the group are only allowed to communicate through applause (the game follows the same principles as “hot and cold”, varying from no clapping when A is very far away from figuring out the task, to wild applause when A gets closest).

SPARK 7

DEAR FRANC

WELLBEING

“Any letters for me today?”

—Franc

Franc, *Lúminaria*’s postman, does not behave the way we expect a postman to behave. Instead of delivering letters to people, people send letters to him, telling him their worries. This **wellbeing** activity is a provocation to create a space like Franc has, creating a Worries Letterbox for the classroom, and provoking children to articulate their feelings on paper.



YOU WILL NEED

- » A classroom created “Worries Letterbox”
- » A stack of paper and envelopes

STEPS

1. Spend time creating a letterbox, working together as a class to decide how it should look, what it should be called and where in the classroom it might live
2. Children are encouraged to write their worries on paper whenever they need to, to place the worry in an envelope, and “post” it
3. You should check the box regularly, setting aside time to address worries either individually or as a group

DEBRIEF

- » Is the Worries Letterbox helpful?
- » How does it feel to put your worry down on paper?
- » Is it easier to write it down than approach the teacher?
- » Is there anything we can do as a class to improve the Worries Letterbox?
- » Would it be helpful in your life to have a Worries Letterbox in other places? (for example, at home)?

MAKE IT YOUR OWN

- » Worries might be expanded to encompass feelings in the broader sense—with the children encouraged to write down what they feel sad about, angry about, happy about, excited about etc.
- » In *Lúminaria*, Lúna learns that it is ok to feel sad. In addressing the Worries Letterbox submissions, the aim may not be to “solve” feelings, but to recognise the power in acknowledging and discussing the emotions.

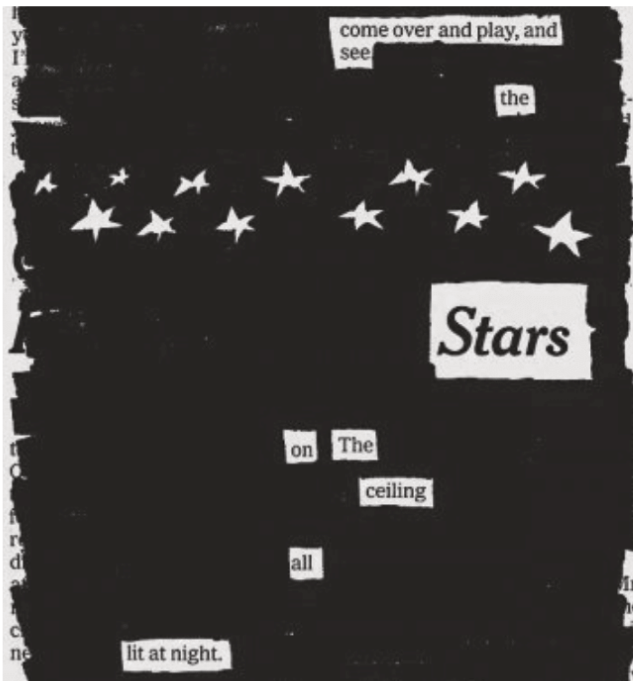
SPARK 8

BLACKOUT POETRY

CREATIVE WRITING

*Lúna: “We can’t have light without dark.”
—Lúminaria*

This found poetry activity for older children explores how we can use light and shade to write our own poems: taking other people’s words, and choosing what to shine a light on, and what to leave in darkness, in order to say something of our own. This **creative writing** activity shows that through the interplay of light and shade, positive and negative space, we can create our own truth.



YOU WILL NEED

- » Examples of blackout poems (see [here](#))
- » A generous collection of articles cut out from magazines and newspapers (with type that is not too small)
- » Pencils
- » Black markers or paint

STEPS

1. Show the children some examples of blackout poems
2. Each child chooses an article from the pile
3. They spend time reading the article, circling words lightly in pencil that they like the sound of, and that they might like to use in their blackout poem
4. In light pencil lines, they start to connect words into an order
5. Using black markers or black paint, they then circle their final word selection and slowly blackout the surrounding words and pictures

DEBRIEF

- » Did you find this activity challenging?
- » What did you like?
- » What changes would you make?

MAKE IT YOUR OWN

- » Blackout poetry is a slow or mindful art making process, and you might like to play some music to help the children settle into the pace
- » The artistic element can be taken a step further by adding patterns, designs, or a drawing instead of just blacking out the text