

**m6**  
theatre company

# Nest



**M6 Theatre Company**

# Activity Pack





**These activities have been designed to maximise the potential learning opportunities following the show.**

This pack can be downloaded from

[m6theatre.co.uk/shows/nest/](http://m6theatre.co.uk/shows/nest/) where you can also download production shots (also included in this activity pack) and the song. You can use the photographs to make a display or sequence them to talk about the story.

All the activities are suggestions, please adapt them to best suit your children.

We would love to see any work or displays you create. Please email photos to [admin@m6theatre.co.uk](mailto:admin@m6theatre.co.uk)

**Teachers' Note:** Males and female crows look identical. There is no good way to tell them apart. By casting 2 females in the roles, we hope to offer you the chance to discuss different types of families if you wish to.





# Post-Show Questions



After the performance, give the children a few moments to talk to their friends about the show.

Take it in turns to share a memory of the story, no matter how small.

## **What happened in the story?**

How would you describe it to someone who hadn't seen it?

Who did you meet?

What did you see?

What did you hear?

## **The characters in the story**

Who was in the story and what were they like?

How did they look?

What did they wear?

Make lists of how the characters were the SAME and DIFFERENT.

Which was your favourite character?

What did the characters learn through the story?

## **How did you feel when you watched the story?**

Did your feelings change at different parts?

Did anything surprise you?

Did you have a favourite part?



# Activities



## Things!

Can you remember what things Birtle brought into the nest?

What were they used for?

Why were they so big?

(We worked on a scale of 1:6 in the play, so we sized everything to be 6 times bigger than it is really)

What other things might Birtle have brought in and what might the crows have used them for?

## What's Important?

In the story, Piper and Birtle are about to become parents. They collected lots of things to make sure the baby birds would have 'everything they need', but all the things made their nest too heavy and put the eggs in danger!

We all like toys and things - but what do we really need? Make a list of all the things that are most important, things that make us happy, things that would make the world a better place for everyone. Is there anything you could do as a class to make your school a better place to be?



# Activities



## Do Some Drama

A fun and engaging way to warm up is to play the STOP/GO game. It develops attention and receptive skills.

Walk carefully around the room, without bumping into anyone and listen out for two instructions, STOP and GO. When everyone is comfortable, the instructions are reversed, STOP means GO and GO means STOP. CLAP and JUMP can be added when the children are ready.

## Using Our Imaginations

Now imagine you are in a bubble. Bubbles can float. Imagine the bubbles floating into the sky. As you look down, you can see the world underneath you.

What can you see from high above the world?

What could the birds in the story see from their tree?



# Activities



## Feeling Statues

When were Piper and Birtle happy, sad, angry, frightened?

Make a list of all the different feelings that were in the play. In a circle the children can create 'emotional statues' by putting the emotion on their face and in their bodies. This can be extended by half the group creating statues of an emotion and the other half guessing. It is good to ask how they can tell what the feeling is – what happens to our faces and bodies when we feel a certain emotion.

## Soundscapes

In the story, Birtle and Piper copied the sounds of the traffic on the busy road under their tree. They made sound of cars, motorbikes, ambulances, planes etc. You could try this as a class.

Discuss in pairs, small groups or with the whole class what sounds can be heard in a city.... or any location. One person could act as a conductor and bring in different sounds at different times.



# Activities



## Miming Actions

Birtle and Piper copied some actions too. You could try some:

- Typing on a laptop
- Using a mobile phone
- Watching TV
- Driving a car
- Riding a motorbike
- Being an aeroplane

You could make up your own actions and see if the class can guess what you are miming.

## Acting Out the Story

Tell the story, altogether, one sentence at a time.

Sit in a circle or mark out a story square. Narrate the story, one sentence at a time and in turn, the children are invited to take part as characters, objects or even eggs! To change the players and to make sure everyone gets a turn, say whoosh to clear the performance space.

Working in pairs, bring moments of the story to life, and share the scenes with the rest of the class.



# Crow Facts and Stories



We based the characters in the story on crows. Crows are members of the corvid species. Corvids is the name given to the family of birds which includes crows, ravens, jackdaws, rooks, magpies, and jays.

Crows are very clever and adaptable. They may not at first appear to be the most spectacular bird but as we learn more about them, we realise just how special they are.

Planning for the future isn't only something that humans do. Crows not only plan for future events but also consider what other crows are thinking. Like Birtle and Piper, when a crow hides food, it looks around to see if it's being watched. If it sees another animal is watching, the crow will pretend to hide its treasure, but will really stash it in its feathers. The crow then flies away to find a new secret spot.

**While several species use tools, crows are the only non-primates that make new tools. In addition to using sticks as spears and hooks, crows will bend wire to make tools, even if they have never encountered wire before.**

In Aesop's fable, 'The Crow and the Pitcher' a thirsty crow drops stones into a water pitcher to raise the water level to take a drink. Scientists tested whether crows really are this smart. They placed a floating treat in a deep tube. The crows in the test dropped objects into the water until the treat floated within reach. They didn't select objects that would float in the water, nor did they select ones that were too large for the container. Human children gain this understanding of volume displacement around the ages of five to seven.





# Crow Facts and Stories



Crows have adapted to life in a human-dominated world. They watch what we do and learn from us. Crows have been seen to drop nuts in traffic lanes, so the cars will crack them open. They will even watch traffic lights, only retrieving the nut when the little green man sign is lit and it is safe to cross the road!

Some people have been lucky enough to receive gifts from crows for leaving them food. There is a wonderful story of a little girl who has an amazing collection of gifts she has collected from her friends, the crows.

Article: The Girl Who Gets Gifts From Birds

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-31604026>





# Trees



**We chose to set the play in a city tree because trees are amazing and can really help us in the fight against climate change.**

## How Do Trees Help Us?

- Reduce harmful pollutants in the air deposited by industry and transport.
- Absorb carbon emissions released into the air. Trees can store up to 25% of the world's carbon.
- Reduce the risk of flooding by drinking so much ground water.
- Cool our cities and towns. Trees lose moisture from their leaves, cast shade, and reflect heat upwards.
- Provide a home for wildlife. Trees don't just provide homes for birds and squirrels. Oak trees can support over 280 species of insects.

### Short Film: The Life Cycle and Inhabitants of an Oak Tree

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/ks1-science-the-life-cycle-and-inhabitants-of-an-oak-tree/z3w77yc>

## How Do Trees Help Our Health and Wellbeing?

- Improve air quality by intercepting harmful particles.
- Reduce stress. Urban residents experience less anxiety when they have a view of trees.
- Aid recovery. Hospital patients with a view of greenery have been shown to recover more rapidly and require less pain killing medication.
- Alleviate depression. Taking part in nature-based activities helps people who are suffering from mental ill-health.
- Shade us from the sun. Dappled shade provides a useful barrier to harmful ultra-violet radiation.



# Trees



## What Can We Do?

- **Become an Eco School**

The programme aims to rally and unite young people to make realistic but dynamic change, creating positive impacts for our planet now, supporting educators to teach young people the skills and knowledge needed to benefit and improve our planet throughout their lifetimes.

<https://www.eco-schools.org.uk/>

- **Apply for a Free Tree Pack**

**The Woodland Trust** offer free tree packs for schools and communities every March and November (to coincide with tree planting season).

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities>

- **Join the Trees for Learning Scheme**

City of trees work with schools across Greater Manchester, greening school grounds by supplying free trees and organising a 'how to plant a tree' day with pupils. They provide trees, tools, and the expertise. All they need from schools is permission, space to plant and enthusiastic children! This scheme is open to all schools within Greater Manchester.

<https://www.cityoftrees.org.uk/schools>

**If your school does decide to plant some trees, develop a wildlife garden or support a new generation of Eco Warriors, do let us know. M6 will help spread the word about the wonderful work you are doing for our town and future generations.**



# What 3 Words



**What 3 words would you use to describe how it felt to watch the play? Please send the words to M6 – we'd love to read them!**





## Learn the Song



We've made a little nest  
Done our very, very best  
To make it cosy, safe and  
warm

High up in our tree  
We've made a home for you  
and me

We've got everything we need

Download  
Song





# Production Shots



Use the photographs on the following pages to help retell the story.

**Use them for a display or to sequence the events in the story**

(credit: Lewis Wileman)















