



MASKING

TEACHERS' PACK

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Trigger Warnings

- A character talking about exam stress, anxiety and panic attacks.
- A character talking about her love/hate relationship with social media.
- A queer male character talking about how homophobia and how micro-aggressions impact his mental health.
- An autistic character becoming overwhelmed and retreating into themselves and becoming non-verbal.
- A character who is a refugee experiencing flashbacks to her frightening journey from her own country to the UK.
- A character experiencing eco-anxiety.
- A character becoming worried about their sister who has started to behave differently and who is experiencing a mental health crisis.
- References to an off-stage character who, during a mental health crisis, has climbed onto the roof of a building at the school. The character is coaxed down off the roof by caring teachers and taken for help at the hospital.
- Extremely brief references to eating disorders, grief, OCD, personality disorders and learning disabilities.

Sensory Warnings

- The play starts with a loud alarm. This is the only time the alarm sounds in the play.
- The play uses recorded voice overs mixed with sound effects and music.
- The cast wear radio microphones.
- The play uses LED stage lights.
- The play uses projected media.
- There is no audience interaction.

PEER PRODUCTIONS



Peer Productions' vision is to use theatre to transform the lives of young people. Founded in 2006, Peer Productions is an award-winning youth arts charity specialising in combining high quality arts practice with peer education. Each year we reach 15,000 young people across the Southeast of England, enabling them to change the way they think about the issues that most affect them and to make positive life choices.

Since the pandemic we have expanded into the digital space. We have developed a unique approach whereby young people are at the centre of every stage of the creative process. We use peer education and theatre to empower three separate groups of beneficiaries: young peer educators, disadvantaged project participants and young audience members. Our work is made with, by, and for young people. We offer:

Training

Peer offers two FREE training programmes for young adults aged 18 - 24 years. Our Peer Actor Development Programme (PAD) offers young people who have completed their level 3 qualifications, a year to hone their practice and develop their craft whilst touring in our productions. A large number of these young actors go on to top Drama schools including LAMDA, GSA, East 15, Rose Bruford, Royal Welsh College, Central School of Speech and Drama, Lipa, Italia Conti and many more. New for 2022, our Peer Employment Pathway (PEP) is for young adults with learning disabilities, and it uses drama to support employability skills.

Plays

We create and tour original educational plays to schools and youth settings which tackle the issues that matter most to young people.

Projects

We create and deliver innovative arts projects for vulnerable, marginalised, or hard to reach young people. Most notably our Generation Girls project for Autistic girls and girls with learning disabilities.

Digital

We produce innovative digital projects exploring the issues which matter most to young people. Most notably 50 Days: Alone Together, our interactive, improvised miniseries exploring the mental health impact of social isolation during the pandemic.



NOTE FROM PLAYWRIGHT & DIRECTOR NINA LEMON

Masking is a brand new play designed to address the impact of modern life on teenagers' mental health.

I have been developing the play over the last two years working with young people who attend our training programmes.

The whole nation's mental health has been negatively impacted by recent global events and young people currently in secondary school have been particularly affected. As Jamie says in the play,



"We've got a school system with more high stakes tests than anywhere in Europe. We're connected twenty-four seven to everyone and everything. We can't switch off. There's been the first global pandemic in over a hundred years. There's wars and censorship and fake news. Everyone's worried about whether to put their heating on and the cost of food and on top of that we're literally living on a dying planet in the grip of climate change! It's not really surprising that our generation would be struggling. It's a sane response to an insane world."

This play doesn't offer any easy answers. There are no easy answers. Instead it asks the audience to consider how they might know when strong feelings, which are common in adolescence, become something that needs intervention. It invites the audience to develop their empathy skills by stepping inside the different characters' heads, discovering what they are masking and what's happening beneath the surface. By doing this we aim to destigmatise mental health and mental illness and bring those conversations to the surface.

We know that young people are most likely to reach out to their peers first if they are struggling and that schools and Child and Adolescent mental health services are often overwhelmed. The play models young people supporting their friends and peers in a range of different ways. We see one student implement a 'shut down' plan for their Autistic friend; using alternative communication methods and offering comforting items to help them to regulate whilst advocating for them. We see another student helping her classmate to use mindfulness techniques when she experiences a frightening flashback; breathe, what can you see, hear, feel? We see friends boosting each other's self esteem, checking in on each other, advising each other when to seek help and even offering a last chocolate bar. These acts of compassion, large and small, are at the very heart of the play.

For those of you who have previously used my play *Hidden* this play offers a different approach. Whereas *Hidden* focused primarily on interventions in serious self harming behaviours for the whole community, 'Masking' zooms in on young people (we see no adults on stage) asking them to consider how they can build connections and find joy in this uncertain world as well as how they can know when they need to ask for help.

I am extremely proud of this play and the young people in it and hope that your young people enjoy watching it as much as we have enjoyed making it.

SUPPORTING YOUR STUDENTS

Masking is a new play by Peer Productions' Artistic Director Nina Lemon designed to address the impact of modern life on teenagers' mental health.

Before the play, schools will be sent two resources: the Teacher's Pack and Lesson Slides. The slides have been designed for use in the classroom with the Teacher's Pack containing further information and prompts to support the delivery of the lessons. Worksheets for use in the classroom are included at the end of this Teacher's Pack. The lesson plans use the play as a starting point for further discussion and learning so should be delivered once the play has visited your school.

The Teachers' Pack contains seven, one hour lessons with each lesson exploring a different character in the play. We understand some schools may not have allocated seven hours of lesson time to follow up after the play so have also designed a condensed one hour lesson. Alternatively, teachers can choose which lessons to deliver depending on the learners' needs. Further information, resources and support are listed at the end of this pack.

Before the Play

- Forewarn all learners about the play's content and make sure that they understand the trigger and sensory warnings which we have provided.
- Signpost learners making sure they know who they should go to within your staff team if they are affected by what they see.
- Speak individually to students who may be particularly vulnerable and give them choices. They should be allowed to opt out, sit in a specific place where they can leave easily, or have a designated safe space that they can go to if they feel that they are too upset to watch the play.

During the Play

- Support your students to listen respectfully and pay respect to our young actors.
- If behaviour does escalate from some students to a point where it impacts our ability to deliver a performance, we expect teachers to manage the audience behaviour and to work with us to keep your students engaged.

After the Play

- Allow your learners an opportunity to talk about the play, the characters, and the stories.
- Use the lesson plans within the Teacher's Pack after the play has been delivered
- Signpost learners to places they can go in school and beyond if they are impacted now or in the future by the topics explored in the play.

CHARACTERS

NB: In a bid to try and avoid cancelling shows due to covid or other illness 9 actors share 7 roles. Some roles are shared between two actors to allow for a viable understudy plan.



Jamie is Deputy Head Prefect at the school and has been left in charge to keep the students under control in this classroom. Jamie is suffering from anxiety and exam stress. In their monologue they describe a panic attack they recently had and the pressure they feel doing his exams and having come out of the pandemic.



Alex is a student at the school who identifies as gay. He is also good friends with Dom. Alex feels as though he should be grateful for the changes that have happened over the past years in support of the LGTBQIA+ community. However they are still faced with these small and often daily challenges that he finds frustrating.



Holly is a student at the school who enjoys posting regular updates on her Instagram account. She is very aware of the dangers behind social media but has also found it to be a tool for self expression and networking. Holly has also had a recent ADHD diagnosis.



Nadia is a student at the school who is good friends with Rosie and Holly. She has only been in the UK for 14 months and was forced to leave her home country after her mother wrote an article. As a consequence of this, Nadia is now suffering from PTSD and we see her experience a flashback within the play. Nadia also worries that she does not always fit in with her new friends.



Dom is a student at the school, is good friends with Alex and is seen by the others as a bit of a class joker. He has been worried about his sister, Nancy. Nancy has been struggling with her mental health recently and experiences a mental health crisis in the play when she is seen on the roof of the school.



Rosie is a student at the school who has eco-anxiety. Despite her own efforts at helping the planet she feels that there is not enough being done. Rosie is also good friends with Nadia and Holly. Rosie has been worried that her friendship with Holly is not as close as it used to be since Nadia joined the school.



Billy is a student at the school who has been diagnosed with Autism. In the play we see them experience a shut down. Billy is good friends with Holly who knows how to support Billy and tells the rest of the class that not all autistic people are the same.

LESSON 1: JAMIE'S STORY



Objectives:

- To understand Anxiety and how it can affect people.
- To understand how we can help manage exam stress and other pressures.

Starter: Discussion (10 mins)

In pairs ask students to discuss what they can remember about Jamie. What was he doing in the play? Encourage students to think back to Jamie's monologue and ask what happened to Jamie before the school lockdown.

Task 1: Under Pressure (10 mins)

In small groups ask students to write a list of all the pressures or worries they currently have. Do they think Jamie also faces any of these pressures?

Task 2: Exam Stress (20 mins)

In small groups ask students to discuss what exam stress is and feedback into a group discussion. Encourage students to think about the causes, effects and ways we can manage exam stress. In their groups, ask students to complete the *Exam Stress Worksheet*.

Extension Task/Homework: (20 mins)

Ask students to create an exam survival guide. This could be split into three sections - what to do before, during and after exams.

Jamie is Deputy Head Prefect at the school and has been left in charge to keep the students under control in this classroom. Jamie is suffering from anxiety and exam stress. In their monologue they describe a panic attack they recently had and the pressure they feel doing his exams and having come out of the pandemic.

What is exam stress?

This is different for everyone and can mean different things to different people. It often brings a variety of emotions including being: worried, stressed, overwhelmed, anxious and irritable. Many young people worry about what will happen if they fail their exams and how this will affect their future. Others worry about not having enough time or having the discipline and focus to be put in the hours of revision. A lot of young people feel pressure from those around them and many put pressure on themselves.

What causes exam stress?

- Feeling like you are not ready.
- Feeling like you are not prepared.
- Worrying about how you will perform.
- Pressure from others including friends and family.
- Pressure from yourself.
- Worrying about your future.
- Comparing yourself to others.
- Having difficulties at home.
- Having difficulties in friendships/relationships.
- Experiencing mental health problems.

How does exam stress affect you?

- Exam stress can affect thoughts, feelings, behaviours and the physical body.
- Emotions include - anxiety, worry, overwhelm, upset, exhaustion, frustration, boredom, disappointment, confusion, feeling lost and isolation.
- Some people might become irritable and easily annoyed.
- Thoughts include - not feeling good enough, worrying about the future, fear of disappointing themselves and others, not being able to cope, feeling as if things are pointless.
- Physical effects include: shaking, crying, feeling sick, headaches, change in eating habits, sweating and being tired.
- Exam stress can lead to mental health issues such as anxiety.

What can we do to cope with exam stress?

- Making time for things you enjoy
- Getting enough sleep
- Drinking enough water
- Eating a healthy and balanced diet
- Creating a revision schedule and sticking to it
- Mindfulness practice
- Talking to others
- Asking for help if you are struggling.

What is a panic attack?

This is when your body faces an attack of fear, anxiety or stress and can affect you both mentally and physically. During a panic attack physical symptoms may include some of the following: a racing heartbeat, nausea, feeling shaky, feeling faint and struggling to breathe. They can happen to anyone at any time. Some people notice they are triggered by something and others may only experience it once in their lifetime. During a panic attack it is useful to focus on your breathing and to try and stay grounded. You may need to rest, or eat and drink something once the attack has passed.

LESSON 2: HOLLY'S STORY



Objectives:

- To understand how social media can affect self-image.
- To understand the positive and negative impacts of social media.

Starter: Discussion (10 mins)

In pairs ask students to discuss what they can remember about Holly. What was she doing in the play? What do the other characters think about Holly?

Task 1: My Profile (20 mins)

Show students the Instagram posts which can be found on the *My Profile Worksheet*. Ask students to discuss what they know about this person from looking at their post. Each post is a different person. What do they think was happening at the time the photo was taken? Feedback as a group before showing students the second part of the worksheet which has information about the people in the photos. Ask students to reflect if their initial thoughts were accurate. The purpose of this exercise is to show students that it isn't always easy to judge someone from appearances and if we do this judgement may not always be accurate.

Task 2: Impacts of Social Media (15 mins)

In small groups ask students to come up with a list of positives and negatives about social media.

Extension Task/Homework: (15 mins)

Ask two students or two small groups to come up and debate with one another. This can be done multiple times with the following debates. If being set as a homework task, students could write up a persuasive speech for the side of the argument.

Editing of photos should be allowed on social media V Editing of photos should be banned on social media

Social media being good as a news source V Social media being bad as a news source

Everyone should have social media V No one should have social media

Further Notes:

Holly is a student at the school who enjoys posting regular updates on her Instagram account. She is very aware of the dangers behind social media but has also found it to be a tool for self expression and networking. The people around her have made assumptions about her character from the content she posts but she challenges these assumptions in the play when she supports her friend Billy through a shutdown. Holly has also had a recent ADHD diagnosis.

Questions for students to consider?

- Why do people post on social media?
- Are we seeing accurate representations of people?
- Is it possible to know someone from looking at a photo?

Positives of social media:

- Marketing
- Staying connected with friends - particularly throughout the pandemic.
- Self expression
- Allows people to follow their favourite celebrities.
- Sense of community
- Self promotion
- Learn about new things
- Can help raise awareness or draw attention to something

Negatives of social media:

- Bullying
- Distortion of Reality - e.g. editing of photos
- Encourages unrealistic body expectations
- Censorship
- Fake news
- Live news - people recording events, some of which can be graphic and are posted with no consideration of impact.
- Virtue signalling - expressing an opinion intended to demonstrate you have good character and conscience or to do what is considered morally correct
- Addictive

Using social media:

It is also important to remind students of the importance of staying safe online. There are good things about social media but it needs to be used safely. Remind students that they are able to block people, control if their posts are visible to the public or just their friends and to think carefully about the material they are accessing. It is also important to remind them that once something has been posted on social media it is very hard to completely remove something.

LESSON 3: ALEX'S STORY



Objectives:

- To understand LGBTQIA+ and what it means.
- To understand how those who identify as LGBTQIA+ can be affected by mental health issues.
- To understand how to support those who identify as LGBTQIA+.

Starter: Discussion (10 mins)

In pairs ask students to discuss what they can remember about Alex. What was he doing in the play? Do they remember what upsets Alex in the play?

Task 1: What is LGBTQIA+? (15 mins)

In small groups ask students to define LGBTQIA+ (acronym for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual people). In groups create a mind map looking at some of the challenges those who identify as LGBTQIA+ face.

Task 2: Scene Extract (20 mins)

Ask students to look at the scene extract between Alex and Dom. In pairs devise a short scene in response to this extract. Include a conversation about what Alex is upset about and what Dom can do to resolve it. Scene extract can be found with other lesson resources at the end of this pack.

Extension Task/Homework: (15 mins)

Using the gingerbread template, ask students to fill it in with all the different things that form their identity. This can be a combination of writing and drawings. Things that they might want to include: gender, name, hobbies, interests, ethnicity, languages, sexuality

Definitions:

Bisexual - Someone who is attracted to both men and women or to more than one sex/gender.

Non binary - An umbrella term for people whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably within 'man' or 'woman'.

Intersex - A term used to describe a person who may have the biological attributes of both sexes or whose biological attributes do not fit with societal assumptions about what constitutes male or female.

Asexual - A person who does not experience sexual attraction.

Further Notes:

Alex is a student at the school who identifies as gay. He is also good friends with Dom.

Challenges for those who identify as LGTBQIA+:

- Many find it difficult to come out to their friends and family.
- Many are worried about what other people might think or their friends treating them differently.
- Discrimination and homophobia.
- Discovering their identities.
- Bullying - may experience biphobic or transphobic bullying or hate crime.
- Struggle to find a sense of belonging.
- Higher risk of suffering from a mental health problem.
- Fear of rejection.

What is Alex upset about?

Alex feels as though he should be grateful for the changes that have happened over the past years in support of the LGTBQIA+ community. However they are still faced with these small and often daily challenges that he finds frustrating. Challenges that appear as assumptions or micro aggressions from other people. For example, in the play Dom assumes that gay people would not play rugby. This micro aggression annoys Alex.

Micro aggression is a term used for commonplace daily verbal or behavioural input that communicates hostile, derogatory, or negative attitudes towards culturally marginalised groups. It can be intentional or unintentional.

LGBTQIA+ and Mental Health:

Those who identify as LGTBQIA+ are more likely to experience a mental health problem because of the issues they face. However, it is also important to remember that embracing LGTBQIA+ identity can also have a positive effect on wellbeing. It can mean an increase in confidence, having a sense of community, improved relationship with friends and family as well as encouraging self-expression and self-acceptance.

How can we help?

Do not discriminate against those who identify as LGTBQIA+ or make inappropriate comments. If you see or hear someone using hurtful language don't be afraid to call them out. If you are not sure of something don't be afraid to ask. You could have an open and honest conversation with the person and ask them what you can do to help them. You could also ask them to help educate you. It is also important to we support those who identify as LGTBQIA+ to be their true and authentic selves by making them feel comfortable to express themselves. Be conscious of the language you use, try to understand, support where you can - for example ensuring policies and safeguarding is inclusive.

LESSON 4: ROSIE'S STORY



Objectives:

- To understand the term eco-anxiety.
- To understand what we can do to help.

Starter: Discussion (10 mins)

In pairs ask students to discuss what they can remember about Rosie. What was she doing in the play? Do they remember what upsets Rosie in the play?

Task 1: What is Eco-Anxiety? (30 mins)

Ask students to come up with their definition for Eco-Anxiety. Watch the two videos provided in the lesson slides. One video is 5 minutes and the other 25 minutes.

Task 2: What can we do? (15 mins)

In pairs or small groups create a mind map about all the different things we can do to help reduce the effects of climate change. Students may want to break these into two groups: collective action and individual action. Then ask students to create another mind map of all the things we can do to look after our mental health if we are worried about climate change.

Extension Task/ Homework (15 mins)

Research an organisation or individual that is fighting climate change. Identify what they are doing and how this is helping. Students can prepare a presentation that they can show back to the class.

Further Notes:

Rosie is a student at the school who has eco-anxiety. Despite her own efforts at helping the planet she feels that there is not enough being done. Rosie is also good friends with Nadia and Holly. Rosie has been worried that her friendship with Holly is not as close as it used to be since Nadia joined the school.

What is Eco-Anxiety?

Eco-anxiety or climate anxiety are terms used to describe the chronic and overwhelming fear of environmental disaster. It can manifest in people in different ways. This includes but is not limited to: panic, anger, grief, numbness and a sense of loss and despair.

Eco-anxiety can feel different for young people around the world depending on where they are. For some we hear about it on the news or on social media but for others it is happening right in front of them. It is important to listen to people's fears and not criticise them, instead try to understand them and help them be in the now.

What can we do?

- Recycle.
- Eat less meat.
- Use renewable energy.
- Cycling schemes.
- Reusable cups and bottles.
- Public transport.
- Start an eco society.
- Voice fears and concerns through student council.
- Electric cars.
- Household changes - only boil what is needed in the kettle, put a blanket on before the heating, ensure house is well insulated, have a shower rather than a bath.

Managing Eco-Anxiety

Those who experience Eco-Anxiety find it helpful to talk to people who understand how they are feeling and there are groups available for individuals to join. There are also groups that look at ways to take action against climate change and some find being actively involved can also help. As with any mental health problem, looking after your physical health is also important. Making sure we get enough sleep and eating a balanced with help with general wellbeing. Those who suffer from Eco-Anxiety also find that being outside in nature can help as it reminds them of the things they love about the environment. Another technique is to use grounding meditations which help bring you into the present. These can also be done outside to help you feel connected to nature.

LESSON 5: NADIA'S STORY



Objectives:

- To know what a refugee is.
- To understand the impact that past trauma can have on our mental health.

Starter: Discussion (10 mins)

In pairs ask students to discuss what they can remember about Nadia. What do the words 'refugee' and 'past trauma' mean?

Task 1: Past Trauma (15 mins)

In pairs, ask students to discuss what they think happened to Nadia before she came to this school. Look at Nadia's monologue for reference. What impacts do they think this would have had on Nadia's mental health?

Task 2: Nadia's Diary (20 mins)

Students should write a diary entry for Nadia for one of the following days:

- The day she left her country
- The day she arrived in the UK
- Her first day at school on the UK.

Extension Task/Homework: (15 mins)

Create a storyboard for Nadia's journey to the UK. In each image there needs to be a thought bubble for Nadia that says how she is feeling or what she is thinking.

These can also be performed as freeze frames with a thought track or narration. A thought track is when the character says how they are feeling or what they are thinking.

Further Notes:

Nadia is a student at the school who is good friends with Rosie and Holly. She has only been in the UK for 14 months and was forced to leave her home country after her mother wrote an article. As a consequence of this, Nadia is now suffering from PTSD and we see her experience a flashback within the play. Nadia also worries that she does not always fit in with her new friends.

What is a refugee?

A refugee is a person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster. In Nadia's case, she was forced to leave as her Mum was going to be persecuted for an article she had written.

What is past trauma?

A traumatic event or events that have happened in the past. These events can be stressful, distressing or frightening. Events can happen at any age and sometimes the effects are clear straight away and on other occasions may take some time to show.

Trauma and Mental Health:

Some effects of trauma include but not limited to:

- Flashbacks - reliving parts of the event but feeling as if they are happening now
- Disassociation - you might feel numb, spaced out and detached from your body
- Sleep problems
- Low self esteem
- Feeling anxious and unable to relax
- Mental health problems such as PTSD, anxiety, self-harm.
- Can lead to physical problems such as high blood pressure, fatigue and headaches.
- Day to day life becomes difficult. For example, relationships, trusting people, keeping down a job, or coping with change.

What is PTSD?

PTSD stands for post-traumatic stress disorder. It is an anxiety disorder caused by very stressful, frightening, traumatic or distressing events. It may be caused by a one off-event or by repeated exposure to a number of events. Some events that can cause PTSD include but not limited to: being assaulted or sexually abused, being in an accident, war, natural disasters and losing someone close to you.

Symptoms of PTSD:

- Flashbacks
- Nightmares
- Physical sensations - sweating, shaking, crying
- Constantly being alert
- Avoiding situations or feelings
- Feeling nowhere is safe or that you can't trust anyone

How can we help?

- Be aware of any triggers.
- Give the person affected time and space to talk - don't rush them.
- Do not dismiss feelings or experiences.
- Avoid any sudden movements or sounds.
- Encourage them to be in the present - ask about surroundings or the five senses.

LESSON 6: BILLY'S STORY



Objectives:

To understand what Autism is.

- To understand what Neurodivergence is.
- To understand how we can support those who identify as neurodivergent.

Starter Activity: (10 mins)

In pairs ask the students what they can remember about Billy. What happens to Billy in the play?

Task 1: What is Autism and Neurodivergence? (15 mins)

Ask students to create a mind map for each of these words. Think about what they mean. Do they know anyone who is Autistic? What about characters we see on TV or books?

Task 2: Supporting Neurodivergence (20 mins)

Watch the video on shut downs. Ask students to cut out the words from the *Supporting Neurodivergence* worksheet. Using the table place each word in the relevant column.

Extension Task/Homework: (15 mins)

Ask students to think about a space. It could be a school, shop or a space they want to make up. Their task is to design the space and think about what they can do to make the space inclusive of Neurodiverse people.

Further Information:

Billy is a student at the school who has been diagnosed with Autism. In the play we see them experience a shut down. Billy is good friends with Holly who knows how to support Billy and tells the rest of the class that now all autistic people are the same.

What is Neurodivergence?

Neurodivergent can be used to describe someone who thinks and behaves differently compared to those who are neurotypical. This means their brain processes information differently. Neurodivergence includes but not limited to: Autism, ADHD, OCD, Dyslexia and Dyspraxia. It is important to remember that those who identify as neurodiverse or autistic are all different. Being neurodivergent is not an illness that can be cured but a way in which people think and behave. There are different strategies that can be used to support someone who is neurodiverse in their everyday lives.

What is Autism?

Autism is a processing difference that can have an impact on many areas of a person's life. Autistic people often experience differences in how they process information, their sensory environment and how they interact with other people. People with Autism may experience the following:

- difficulty communicating with others.
- senses may become overloaded also known as sensory overload- bright lights or loud noises for example become overwhelming or uncomfortable.
- taking more time to process information or needing it to be given it in a different way.
- struggle to understand how people think or feel.
- find new or unfamiliar situations stressful.

What is ADHD?

ADHD stands for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and can affect behaviour in people. Those with ADHD may seem restless, impulsive and have trouble concentrating. Those who have trouble concentrating but are not restless or impulsive may have ADD which stands for attention deficit disorder.

Difficulty concentrating may show itself as being unable to focus on tasks, difficulty listening, struggling to be organised and having a short attention span. Hyperactivity may show itself as fidgeting, not being able to sit still, unable to wait or interrupting conversations.

Symptoms of ADHD tend to be noticed from a young age but it possible to be diagnosed as an adult if symptoms were not recognised at a young age. ADHD can be managed using medicine or therapy. A GP or specialist will be able to discuss which medicine of course of treatment would be best. There are also educational and support programmes available to those who have ADHD and those who care for people with ADHD.

Making a space more inclusive:

- Avoid heavily patterned walls or floors.
- Have designated quiet work areas.
- Having a chill out room.
- Ensuring there is enough space between furniture and people.
- Providing a variety of work spaces/environments.
- Having a schedule

LESSON 7: DOM'S STORY



Objectives:

- To understand what a mental health crisis is.
- To understand the impact of someone caring for someone struggling with their mental health.

Starter Activity: (10 mins)

In pairs, ask students to discuss what they can remember about Dom.

Task 1: Mental Health (10 mins)

In small groups - answer the following questions.

1. What has happened to Dom in the play?
2. How do you think he is feeling after seeing Nancy on the roof?
3. What would you have done if you were in the room at that time?
4. How do you think things have been at home for Dom?
5. How can Dom's friends support him moving forward?

Task 2: Mental Health Quiz (10 mins)

Ask students to complete the quiz. Can be done with buzzers with groups if an interactive version is preferred.

Answers are as follows

1. 1 in 4
2. Anyone
3. True
4. True

Task 3: Mental Health Circle (10 mins)

Have four large sheets of paper in each corner of the room with one of the following questions on it:

- 1) What do you think can cause a mental health issue?
- 2) Are there any groups of people that are more likely to experience mental health issues?
- 3) What can we do to support our own mental health?
- 4) What can we do to support those around us?

Set a time and allow each group to move around the various bits of papers writing down as much as they can for each question. Feedback as a group at the end.

LESSON 7: DOM'S STORY

Task 4: Devise a Scene (15 mins)

In pairs devise a scene where Person A is struggling with their mental health and tells Person B. Person B will then do something to support them. Encourage students to include the following in the scene

- Signs that Person A is struggling.

Support that Person B can offer.

Extension Task/ Homework:(15 mins)

Ask student to create their own guide or box of self care suggestions that they can go back to on days when they need a bit more support. This can be as creative as they wish. A leaflet, notes, an actual box filled with items or reminders. They can also use the worksheet provided at the end of this pack.

Further Notes:

Dom is a student at the school and is good friends with Alex and is seen by the others as a bit of a class joker. He has been worried about his sister, Nancy. Nancy has been struggling with her mental health recently and experiences a mental health crisis in the play when she is seen on the roof of the school.

What is mental health?

Mental health is similar to physical health but looks at the mind. Like our bodies it is important we look after our minds too. Mental health problems can affect 1 in 4 people each year yet it is something many people struggle to talk about. It is important to encourage conversation around mental health to ensure that those who need support get it and we remove the stigma around mental health.

How can we look after our mental health?

Self care techniques and things we can do ourselves to look after our mental health. Some self care techniques include:

- Eating a balanced diet
- Exercise
- Meditation
- Having a bath/shower
- Reading
- Watching TV
- Colouring or painting - doing something with your hands
- Cleaning your room
- Writing in a diary/journal
- Spending time with family/friends
- Restricting time online

How can we support those that are struggling?

- Listen to someone who is struggling
- Ask what you can to help them - have an honest and open conversation
- Don't judge them or dismiss how they are feeling
- Ensure you are looking after yourself whilst looking after the other person
- Check in on them regularly

What is a mental health crisis?

A mental health crisis is when someone is in need of urgent help. They may be feeling suicidal, self harming, having extreme flashbacks, panic attacks or having an episode of hypomania. In the play Nancy is having a mental health crisis which results in her standing on the school roof.

There are a variety of services and people that can be contacted to help someone experiencing a mental health crisis including 999, Samaritans, Suicide Prevention Hotline UK, Shout, and Mind.

ONE HOUR LESSON

Objectives:

- To understand the key themes within the play.
- To develop an understanding of mental health.
- To understand how we can help others.

Starter Activity: (10 mins)

Ask students to independently think about the play. Ask them to think about the following questions.

- How did it make you feel?
- Could you relate to any of the characters?
- Was there anything you did not understand?
- Any questions?

Task 1: Word Association (10 mins)

Ask students to lay out the character cards in front of them. Cut out the words from the *Word Wall Worksheet*. Place each word under the character it is most relevant for. Ask students to write down any words they don't understand or have questions about.

Task 2: Character Cards (25 mins)

In small groups ask students to look at the character cards and answer the following questions for each character:

- 1) What do we know about this character?
- 2) How do we think they are feeling?
- 3) Is there anything they would like to say but can't?
- 4) What would you do if they were your friend?

Extension Task/Homework: (15 mins)

Ask students to create their own guide or box of self care suggestions that they can go back to on days when they need a bit more support. This can be as creative as they wish. A leaflet, notes, an actual box filled with items or reminders. They can also use the worksheet provided at the end of this pack

LESSON RESOURCES AND FURTHER READING

Exam Stress:

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/blog/exam-self-care/>

(A blog for young people about some techniques to manage exam stress).

Mental Health:

<https://www.amh.org.uk/resources-for-children-young-people/12-16-years-old/>

(Resources for young people aged 12-16)

<https://www.mind.org.uk/media/8962/the-consequences-of-coronavirus-for-mental-health-final-report.pdf>

(Report from Mind on the impact the pandemic had on mental health)

LGBTQIA+

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/list-lgbtq-terms>

(Terminology and definitions)

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/experiences-lgbtq-children-and-young-people>

(The experiences of young people who identify as LGBTQIA+)

Eco-Anxiety:

[https://www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/how-to-cope-with-eco-anxiety.html#:~:text=It%20can%20be%20uncomfortable%2C%20overwhelming,to%20avert%20di](https://www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/how-to-cope-with-eco-anxiety.html#:~:text=It%20can%20be%20uncomfortable%2C%20overwhelming,to%20avert%20disaster%20in%20time)

[saster%20in%20time](https://www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/how-to-cope-with-eco-anxiety.html#:~:text=It%20can%20be%20uncomfortable%2C%20overwhelming,to%20avert%20disaster%20in%20time)

(Natural History Museum blog post about Eco-anxiety)

<https://www.nhm.ac.uk/content/dam/nhmwww/schools/teaching-resources/urban-nature-project/climate-change-and-mental-health-teachers-guide.pdf>

(Climate change and mental health: A teacher's guide)

Refugees:

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/education-resources-refugee-asylum-immigration>

(Teaching Resources from Amnesty)

Trauma & PTSD:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/media-a/4149/trauma-2020.pdf>

(Information from Mind)

Autism & Neurodivergence

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/professional-practice/wellbeing-school>

(Post about how to support autistic students in school)

EXAM STRESS WORKSHEET

<u>What causes exam stress?</u>	<u>How does exam stress affect you?</u>	<u>What can we do to cope with exam stress?</u>

MY PROFILE WORKSHEET



@callmenick
Love Mondays...
#monday #letsdothis



@Mel_02
Cute day out with these
girls!
#reunion #girlsdate
#bestfriends



@Lindsey576
Sun, sea and fresh air! Just
what the doctor ordered....

#sunshine #LA
#takeabreak
#doctorsorders
#ifyouknowyouknow



@callmenick

Nick is a small business owner and had this photo taken for his website which he is in the process of updating.



@mel_02

Mel spent the day with her friends from university. They all lived together whilst they were studying and have not seen each other in three years.



@Lindsey576

Lindsey is a doctor who has been unwell. She is now feeling better after a course of treatment and decided to go on holiday to LA.

SCENE EXTRACT

NADIA: Is it a boy or a girl?
JAMIE: I can't say?
ALEX: Because you don't want to tell us or because you can't assume their gender?
JAMIE: Both.
ALEX: Soo it's someone in year 10 who is gender non-conforming.
JAMIE: I didn't say that.
DOM: Probably is though.
ALEX: Why?
DOM: You know I'm not homophobic.
HOLLY: Well obviously.
DOM: What?
HOLLY: We just assumed you and Alex were boyfriends.
DOM: No! I mean not that would be a problem. I'm an ally.
DOM: But we're not...Alex tell them...
ALEX: (Tongue in cheek) Are you breaking up with me?

The group laugh.

DOM: I hate all of you.
ALEX: Oh sugarcakes, you're breaking me heart.
DOM: What I was trying to say was that you have to admit ...your lot, well, you are all a little bit...sensitive.

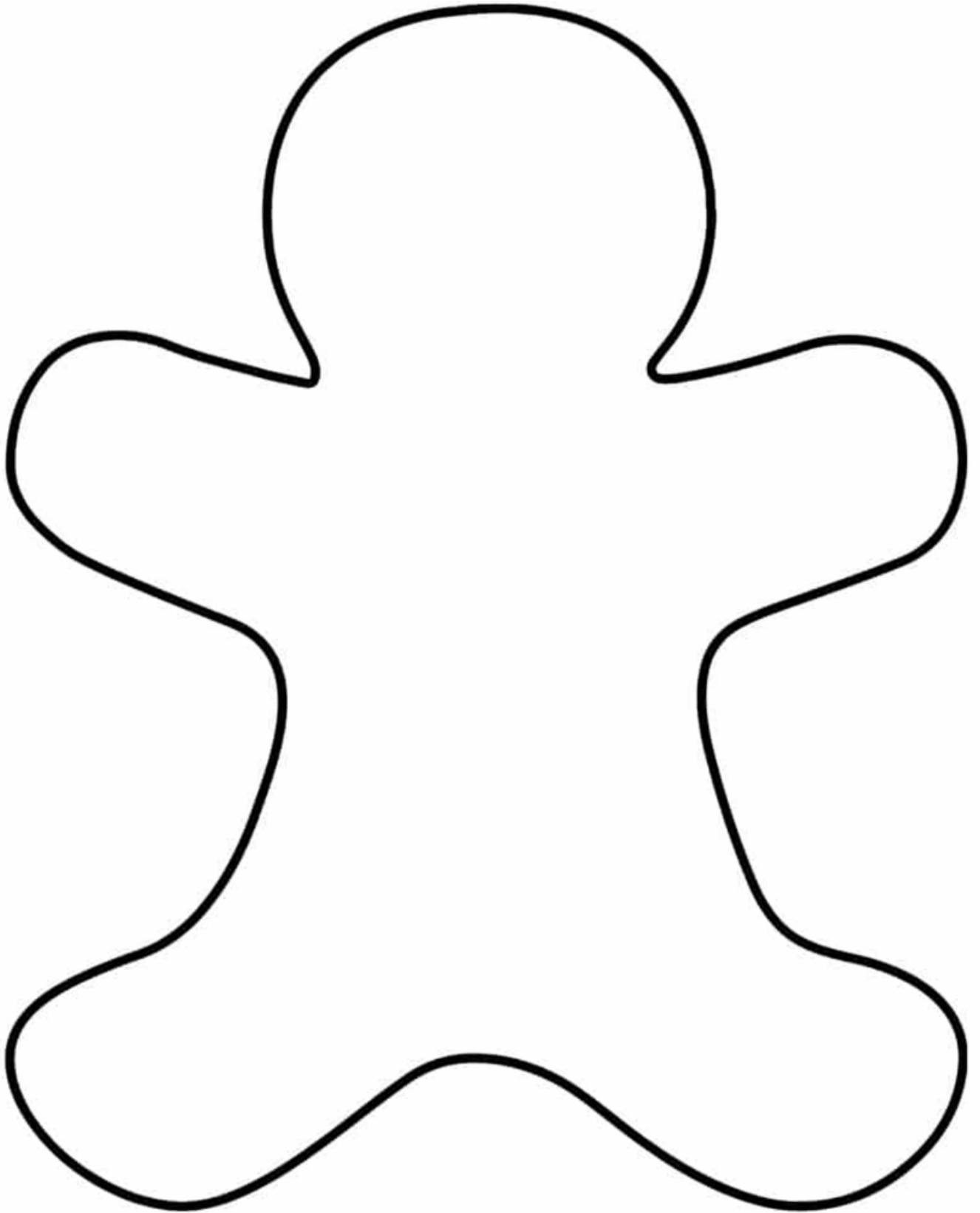
Alex looks incredulously at Dom.

DOM: Well you are!!!
ALEX: I didn't realise when I was getting ready for school today that I would need to represent the entire LGBTQ population.
DOM: I'm just saying it's more likely to be one of your friends than one of the rugby lads.
ALEX: Really.
NADIA: Cause gay lads can't play rugby?
BILLY: All that cuddling up together.
DOM: It's called a scrum.
BILLY: You'd think being gay would be an advantage.

Billy goes back to their book. Holly, Nadia and Rosie laugh.

DOM: I didn't man anything bad by it just...
ALEX: Sure.
DOM: Alex! Don't get all moody.
HOLLY: A lover's tiff?
ALEX: Just let it go.

MY IDENTITY



NADIA'S MONOLOGUE

And the floor falls away from under me
And straight away I am back there
And it's like the last fourteen months in the UK haven't happened
And I am back there.
In my country
Before we left
The smell of books burning in the air.
My lips pressed hard together to stifle a scream
There are guards outside and they're rattling the door handle as we sneak out the back into the cold night air.
And my Mum and Dad and me
We run.
And the sound of my aunt trying to stall them is carried on the wind as we reach the road where my Dad's colleague's vehicle is waiting.
And we are in the back of the van and hiding under blankets
And I can smell petrol and sweat and my mum's perfume.
And I can feel the anger ripping through me
The feeling of injustice
That we are fleeing like criminals
Cooped up like animals
Just because my Dad wrote a story for a newspaper that told the truth
And we're across the boarder but still constantly looking over our shoulders
And we have lost everything we had and I am leaving everything I knew.

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NADIA'S STORYBOARD

SUPPORTING NEURODIVERGENCE

<u>SUPPORTS those who are Neurodivergent</u>	<u>DOES NOT support those who are Neurodivergent</u>

Sensory Spaces	Busy or crowded areas	Having a timetable or schedule
Being overloaded with information	Talking quickly	Fidget Toys
Chill out rooms	Clear instructions	Sudden changes
Giving space and time to process	Social situations	High pressure tasks
Listening to them	High pressure environments	Not judging them
Loud areas	Using pictures or visuals	Their routine being broken

WORD WALL WORKSHEET

Creative	Anxious	Nervous
Stressed	Eco-conscious	Autistic
Brave	Refugee	Worried
Confident	Smart	Inspiring
Scared	Confused	Social Media
Prefect	Brother	Friends
Mental Health	ADHD	Shut down
PTSD	LGTBQ+	Hiding



**My Self Care
Box**