

Background

Andy Griffiths and **Terry Denton** have collaborated for many years to create books for children that are imaginative, innovative and full of fun. Readers are taken on wild, crazy journeys, and discover just how far they can stretch their own imaginations.

Books Andy and Terry have produced together include the Treehouse series, *JUST...!* series, *The Bad Book* and *The Very Bad Book*, the ridiculous 'non-fiction' guidebooks, *What Bumosaur is That?* and *What Body Part is That?* and the early readers *The Cat on the Mat is Flat* and *The Big Fat Cow That Goes Kapow!* These books have captivated and kept kids laughing for more than 20 years.

In Australia Andy and Terry's books have sold over 10 million copies, won 80 children's choice awards and 10 Australian Book Industry Awards—including Book of the Year for *The 91-Storey Treehouse* in 2015.

Their much-loved *Treehouse* Series has been embraced by children around the world and is now published in more than 35 countries. Five of the books in the series have been adapted for the stage and have all had sell-out seasons at the Sydney Opera house, as well as highly successful seasons in the Netherlands, New Zealand and America.

Now it's time for the *JUST...!* books to be brought to life in theatres across the country from 2023 onwards. The *JUST...!* books are a wildly popular series of funny, fast-paced short stories told by a young Andy who considers himself the world's greatest, craziest, most annoying and most stupid practical joker.

They have remained popular for several generations and have recently been adapted for the stage by Robin Goldsworthy for **Red Line Productions**.

About Red Line

Red Line Productions is a leading Australian independent theatre presenter & custodian of Sydney's Old Fitz Theatre.

Red Line Productions has presented over 20 exclusively commissioned new Australian works, including the World Premieres of *This Much Is True* by Louis Nowra, *Degenerate Art* by Toby Schmitz and *King of Pigs* by Steve Rogers. *Betty Blokk-Buster Reimagined*, inspired by Reg Livermore's *Betty Blokk-Buster Follies* of 1975, headlined the 2020 Sydney Festival to critical acclaim. Red Line Productions have received over sixty nominations and over twenty wins.

As custodians of the **Old Fitz Theatre**, the company has presented hundreds of productions over 8 years, presenting and co-presenting Australian Premieres of timely international works, new Australian works, and landmark revivals. These include- *Angels in America*, *Anatomy of A Suicide*, *The Wolves*, *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, *Krapp's Last Tape*, *Doubt*, *A View From The Bridge*, *The Humans*, *The Aliens*, *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*, *I Am My Own Wife*, *Happy Days*, *Hand to God*, *The Judas Kiss* and a Kurt Weill operatic double bill with *The Seven Deadly Sins* and *Mahagonny Songspiel* and many, many more. Productions have transferred to Belvoir St, Ensemble Theatre, Illawarra Performing Arts Centre, Newcastle Civic Theatre & Glen Street Theatre.

In 2020 Red Line innovated in the face of the global pandemic to become world leaders in presenting live-streamed theatre readings and live-streamed theatre seasons across the world. Close to 20,000 people tuned in live streamed performances of: *Orphans* by Lyle Kessler starring Alec Baldwin; *Gruesome Playground Injuries* by Rajiv Joseph starring Rose Byrne and Ewen Leslie, with live music by John Butler; Elenoa Rokobaro's *Live in Concert* and *Thom Pain (Based on Nothing)* featuring Toby Schmitz.

In December 2022, Red Line Productions will be producing *Amadeus* by Peter Shaffer in a co-production with the Sydney Opera House. *Amadeus* will be performed in the newly refurbished concert hall as part of the 50th year celebrations of the Sydney Opera House. This incredible production will be starring acclaimed Welsh actor, Michael Sheen, in the leading role of Salieri.

2023 will see a national tour of ***JUST - (tricking, annoying, stupid, crazy, shocking, disgusting, doomed) LIVE ON STAGE!*** by Robin Goldsworthy, adapted for stage from the JUST book series written by Andy Griffiths and illustrated by Terry Denton.

Creative team for JUST LIVE ON STAGE!

Adapted from the *JUST* book series written by Andy Griffiths & illustrated by Terry Denton

Playwright - Robin Goldsworthy

Director – Iain Sinclair

Set and Costume Designer - James Browne

Lighting Designer - Veronique Benett

Composition and Sound Design – Steve Toulmin

Produced by Red Line Productions

JUST (tricking, annoying, stupid, crazy, disgusting, shocking, doomed) LIVE ON STAGE! (*JUST*) is Red Line Productions' first stage adaptation for children. Adapted by Robin Goldsworthy from the infamous *JUST!* series by Australians Andy Griffiths (author) and Terry Denton (illustrator), the series is a love letter to the power of the imagination, determination and friendship.

Above all, the tour aims to create direct access to a high-quality arts education experience for as many young people as possible across regional NSW. The focus area of an increasing body of Australian and international research, the many positive impacts on children of access to and engagement with the arts, and arts education experiences, both academically and socially have been well documented, particularly for students in low socioeconomic areas and at-risk youth.

These include increases in:

- Academic engagement and success
- Literacy and numeracy
- Critical analysis abilities
- Self-confidence and motivation in the classroom
- Social skills and engagement
- Emotional regulation
- Happiness

About The Author

Andy Griffiths is one of Australia's most popular children's authors. He and illustrator Terry Denton have collaborated on more than 30 bestselling books since their first title, *JUST TRICKING!*, was published in 1997.

He lives in Melbourne, is married to Jill, who is the editor of Andy and Terry's books, and together they have two daughters and a cat with one eye.

Andy is a passionate advocate for literacy and in 2015 was awarded the Dromkeen Medal to honour his outstanding contribution to Australian children's literature. He is also an ambassador for both The Indigenous Literacy Foundation and the Pyjama Foundation.



About The Illustrator



Terry Denton is a writer and illustrator based in Melbourne, Australia. His work is mainly humour-based cartoon style. He has been writing and illustrating children's books for 30 years and is well known for his collaboration with Andy Griffiths, illustrating the *JUST ...!* series and *Treehouse* series.

He has three children and is the owner of a back garden burial ground for dead pets. He won the Australian CBC Picture Book of the Year Award in 1986 and has since been short-listed for many awards both in Australia and internationally. Terry's books have won more than 40 children's choice awards throughout Australia.

Synopsis of The Play

Every year Andy's school holds a short story competition, and every year Andy writes an awesome, amazing, captivating, **TERRIFYING** story. But every year Andy is robbed of winning, thwarted by some dumb story about kittens and sunshine. How is that possible?!

Because Mr Rowe is against him - the game is rigged! Mr Rowe wouldn't know a good story if it jumped off the page and bit him on the bum. What kind of person doesn't like action and monsters and explosions and aliens and all the things a story needs to keep it from being a **BORING SNOOZE FEST!?** Like the kind of story Tanya Shepherd writes. Blurgh...

Who cares that technically Andy's been banned from entering the competition after last year's ... incident. There wasn't that much vomit and the two kids taken to hospital were totally fine! Well, mostly fine.

Anyway, that's all in the past. This year Andy knows that the prize is within his grasp. All he has to do is write the most **INCREDIBLE** story the world has ever read! Easy!

With the help of his best friend Danny, the love of his life, Lisa (but if you tell anyone he said that, he'll feed you to a giant slug!), his somewhat trusty dog, Sooty and a lifetime of crazy, shocking, doomed, stupid and just plain **DISGUSTING** experiences, Andy sets out on a night that will ensure a flawless victory. As long as his Brussels sprouts farts don't poison them all before morning!

JUST (tricking, annoying, stupid, crazy, disgusting, shocking, doomed) LIVE ON STAGE! takes on the wonderful world of the *JUST!* books by Andy Griffiths, vividly and hilariously bringing them to life on the stage with everything from invisibility pills and Mudmen, to vomiting dogs and death-defying balloon rides.

JUST (tricking, annoying, stupid, crazy, disgusting, shocking, doomed) LIVE ON STAGE! Definitely not for the faint-farted...we mean hearted!

Bringing JUST...! to the stage

The Workshop Process

Red Line Productions has commissioned the first Australian stage production of the *JUST...!* stories. Adapting a book for the stage is a collaborative and creative process. Below is a list of the key moments in this process.

- The director, playwright and producers have several meetings to talk about the central ideas in the books, and which of these ideas really stood out.
- The playwright writes a draft, which is then shared with the rest of the team for their feedback.
- After several drafts, a one-week creative development workshop takes place, where the set/costume designers and the actors join the team. The group improvises and plays with ideas, scenes and elements in the script in order to develop an idea of the “world” of the show and contribute to refining the script and the design.
- The playwright, director, and designer take these concepts and develop a final script, set design, costume designs and props, sharing and talking with each other to ensure they were working towards a common goal.
- The set is built, the costumes made, and the physical props created.
- The show is rehearsed for around three weeks, performed for preview audiences to tweak and adjust anything that needs tweaked and adjusted, then finally reaches the official opening performance!

This Resource

Learning About and Through The Arts

Attending a live performance provides the opportunity for a huge range of rich learning experiences. Not only can learning occur about the arts, but also through the arts. *JUST...!* can be the impetus for a range of learning in English, Creative Arts and PDHPE, before, during and following the performance.

The activities suggested in this resource have been designed to challenge and inspire children to extend their thinking by engaging their imaginations in both individual and collaborative creativity. They are suggestions only and are by no means a definitive list. Use this list as a springboard to plan for learning around the texts and performance, and to develop further learning experiences appropriate to the year level of the class.

Teachers are strongly encouraged to adapt or modify these ideas and suggestions to suit the wide-ranging needs of their students.

Visiting The Theatre

Why is theatre important?

In the multi-modal world of education as we know it, watching a stage production can open a child's mind to a myriad of imaginative possibilities, allowing them to walk in someone else's shoes and participate in a world beyond their own.

The learning opportunities are many and varied, and RED LINE PRODUCTIONS are excited about the value-added experience that theatre provides across key learning areas of the curriculum.

Pre-show

JUST PREPARING

Attending a live performance is a rich and engaging learning opportunity. For some students, seeing *JUST...!* may be their first experience of live theatre. Promote discussion in the classroom on what constitutes appropriate audience behaviour at a live performance. Live theatre differs greatly from film or television, and as an audience member it can be a much more engaging experience.

For performers as well, working to a live audience is vastly different to performing in a studio to a camera. Prepare children through explicit teaching to make the most of their theatre experience.

Discuss what it means to be an audience member:

- Audience members sit and listen quietly for most of the time.
- They join in the action when invited, and clap and cheer to show their appreciation.
- They allow fellow audience members to watch the show without interruptions.

Use role-play and class discussion to explore the following questions:

- What is a theatre?
- What are actors?
- What are characters?
- What are costumes?
- What is a stage?
- What is a set?
- What are props?
- What is a script?
- Is theatre 'real'?

Familiarise students with the work of Andy Griffiths and Terry Denton in the lead up to the performance.

Theatre Etiquette

JUST BEHAVING

Certain behaviour is expected of audiences at live theatre events. The following suggestions are provided to enhance your experience of visiting the theatre:

- arrive on time
- turn off mobile phones or other electronic devices
- visit the bathroom prior to the commencement of the performance
- follow the directions of the front of house staff who will usher you to your seats
- when the lights dim, it is a signal to be quiet and to allow the performance to begin
- there should be no photography and no talking by audience members
- applauding is the most appropriate way to express your appreciation for the performance and actors, and usually occurs at the conclusion of the performance

Teaching and Learning Activities

Themes to explore

- Creativity
- Imagination
- Feelings and emotions Friendship
- Resilience
- Tolerance
- Working together

Post-show

JUST REFLECTING, JUST DISCUSSING

- Responses to the show – invite students to discuss
 - their favourite moments in the show
 - what they found most surprising about the show
 - which scenes had the most impact? Why?
 - which elements of the play made them laugh
 - the role of humour in the play
 - some of the theatrical elements used in the production?
- *JUST...!* is performed by a team of three actors and uses many elements to bring the story to life. List these categories on the board or on pieces of paper:
 - Stage action, physical storytelling style
 - Set design
 - Lighting
 - Costume design
 - Special effects
 - Sound effects
 - Puppetry
 - Dialogue
- Ask students to identify moments in the play in which these elements were evident and discuss why and how they were used. How did they contribute to enhancing the purpose of the story?

Students will be developing their ability to categorise and extend their observations about attending a theatre performance and develop a meta-language around theatre & drama.

Creative Arts

NSW Syllabus Outcomes

Creative Arts	Stage 2	Stage 3
DRAMA - Making	<p>DRAS2.1 Takes on and sustains roles in a variety of drama forms to express meaning in a wide range of imagined situations.</p> <p>DRAS2.2 Builds the action of the drama by using the elements of drama, movement and voice skills.</p>	DRAS3.2 Interprets and conveys dramatic meaning by using the elements of drama and a range of movement and voice skills in a variety of drama forms.
DRAMA - Appreciating	DRAS2.4 Responds to, and interprets drama experiences and performances	DRAS3.4 Responds critically to a range of drama works and performance styles
VISUAL ARTS – Making	<p>VAS2.1 Represents the qualities of experiences and things that are interesting or beautiful* by choosing among aspects of subject matter</p> <p>* 'Beautiful' within this outcome does not simply mean 'pretty' but rather something that excites and arouses awe, wonder, fascination and delight.</p>	VAS3.1 Investigates subject matter in an attempt to represent likenesses of things in the world.

Australian Curriculum – Content Descriptions

The Arts	Years 3 & 4	Years 5 & 6
DRAMA	<p>Explore ideas and narrative structures through roles and situations and use empathy in their own improvisations and devised drama (ACADRM031)</p> <p>Identify intended purposes and meaning of drama, starting with Australian drama, including drama of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, using the elements of drama to make comparisons (ACADRR034)</p>	<p>Explore dramatic action, empathy and space in improvisations, playbuilding and scripted drama to develop characters and situations (ACADRM035)</p> <p>Explain how the elements of drama and production elements communicate meaning by comparing drama from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander drama (ACADRR038)</p>

Drama

JUST CREATING, JUST IMAGINING, JUST PLAYING, JUST COLLABORATING

Drama can be used to support learning across the curriculum by giving students the opportunity to imaginatively explore ideas and issues in a meaningful manner. Drama supports the development of self-esteem, builds communication skills, enhances problem-solving abilities and encourages focus and team building. To ensure students and teachers achieve the most out of a Drama session the following guidelines will be helpful:

- conduct the session in an open, clear space
- explain to students the idea of working in a 'safe space' – at all times students should support and encourage others. Laughter is a natural reaction, so long as students laugh with each other, not at each other
- start the session with warm-up activities to encourage focus from the class group (see Resources for suggestions of suitable websites that provide a range of circle/focus/team-building warm-ups)
- be firm with students when giving instructions and monitoring the activities – this allows students to see that a safe space is being maintained
- participate in the activities yourself – this allows you, as the teacher, to model ideas and assist with the flow of improvisations and role-plays, as well as have some fun!
- include a reflection session at the end of the session
- An important theme in the play is “working together”. Use drama games to encourage “working together” as a group – select Drama games from the suggested websites listed in Resources.

FROZEN IMAGE

This activity invites students to work quickly in small groups to create a visual representation of an idea, theme, text, event, or character using their own bodies. Students work collaboratively to make meaning, but without talking or telling each other how to fit into the image.

Brainstorm a variety of scenes from the play. Organise students into small groups and assign one scene to each group who create a frozen image to represent their scene. Other groups try to determine which scene is depicted. After all groups have had a turn, students are asked to sequence the scenes around the space to highlight the plot development in the play.

NB. This would be a useful activity to do prior to getting students to storyboard the action of the play (English activity).

HOTSEAT – identity, building a character

Hotseating is an activity where students can work in either small groups or as a whole class. One individual sits at the front, adopting the mantle of a character from the play, and is asked questions by the rest of the group. The student is required to respond in character as if they were being interviewed.

Choose a character from the play to be interviewed. The group creates and asks a variety of questions to develop a more in-depth understanding of a characters' background or how the character feels about situations in the play.

This allows the class to delve more deeply into character development

SCULPTING

Students work in pairs or groups with one student acting as a sculptor and their partner(s) acting as clay. The sculptor gently shapes the clay into a statue that reflects some aspect of the concept under discussion. Students may take turns to be the sculptor. This activity requires sensitivity, respect and trust.

Consider the different emotions and reactions Andy experiences in the play.

In pairs, create sculpted figures to represent the emotion or reaction to a given stimulus from the play.

BUILD A STORY

On any given day we are presented with simple problems and challenges that can be used to develop fun and imaginative stories. Try this activity with students sitting in a circle, each adding a sentence to build a story. The sentences must begin using "Luckily..." and "Unluckily ..." alternately and should establish a sequence or continuity for the story.

Scenario: Imagine hiding in a storeroom or cupboard in the school. In a circle build a story, each person adding a sentence to make this the worst, most disgusting experience ever.

- Present a variety of scene ideas to students. Working in pairs or small groups, students act out the scenes, then devise and improvise alternate directions for the scenes to develop.

NB. This activity links to the "What happens next?" writing activity

- Use simple costume items to help build a character.
- Experiment with music and sound effects to support and enhance the telling of a scene.

Visual Arts

JUST DRAWING, JUST DESIGNING, JUST MAKING

- Create a visual response to reflect the feeling of watching the performance. This may be a sketch or use colour to best capture the experience. Share drawings among the class for interpretation and respectful response.
- Design a poster for the play – think of elements that best represent the events and ideas of the script.
- What would happen if you were trapped in the school library? Draw a map of the school library and the possible escape routes. Label the map for future reference.
- Imagine Andy’s family gathered together for their dinner of Brussels sprouts. Illustrate the scene as you imagine it.
- In the play, Sprout (a Brussels sprout), is a puppet. Create an artwork, then design and make a puppet character for a food you dislike intensely. Use this as inspiration to create a script for a puppet show with other students in the class.

English

NSW Syllabus Outcomes

English	Stage 2	Stage 3
Communicate through speaking, listening, reading, writing, viewing and representing	<p>EN2-1A Communicates in a range of informal and formal contexts by adopting a range of roles in group, classroom, school and community contexts</p> <p>EN2-2A Plans, composes and reviews a range of texts that are more demanding in terms of topic, audience and language</p>	<p>EN3-1A Communicates effectively for a variety of audiences and purposes using increasingly challenging topics, ideas, issues and language forms and features</p> <p>EN3-2A Composes, edits and presents well-structured and coherent texts</p>
Use language to shape and make meaning according to purpose, audience and content	<p>EN2-7B Identifies and uses language forms and features in their own writing appropriate to a range of purposes, audiences and contexts</p>	<p>EN3-5B Discusses how language is used to achieve a widening range of purposes for a widening range of audiences and contexts</p> <p>EN3-6B uses knowledge of sentence structure, grammar, punctuation and vocabulary to respond to and compose clear and cohesive texts in different media and technologies</p>
Think in ways that are imaginative, creative, interpretive and critical	<p>EN2-10C Thinks imaginatively, creatively and interpretively about information, ideas and texts when responding to and composing texts</p>	<p>EN3-7C Thinks imaginatively, creatively, interpretively and critically about information and ideas and identifies connections between texts when responding to and composing texts</p>
Express themselves and their relationships with others and their world	<p>EN2-11D Responds to and composes a range of texts that express viewpoints of the world similar to and different from their own</p>	<p>EN3-8D Identifies and considers how different viewpoints of their world, including aspects of culture, are represented in texts</p>

Australian Curriculum – Content Descriptions

English	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Language	Understand that languages have different written and visual communication systems, different oral traditions and different ways of constructing meaning (ACELA1475)	Understand how texts vary in complexity and technicality depending on the approach to the topic, the purpose and the intended audience (ACELA1490)	Understand that the pronunciation, spelling and meanings of words have histories and change over time (ACELA1500)	Understand how authors often innovate on text structures and play with language features to achieve particular aesthetic, humorous and persuasive purposes and effects (ACELA1518)
Literature	<p>Discuss texts in which characters, events and settings are portrayed in different ways, and speculate on the authors' reasons (ACELT1594)</p> <p>Draw connections between personal experiences and the worlds of texts, and share responses with others (ACELT1596)</p>	<p>Use metalanguage to describe the effects of ideas, text structures and language features of literary texts (ACELT1604)</p> <p>Discuss how authors and illustrators make stories exciting, moving and absorbing and hold readers' interest by using various techniques, for example, character development and plot tension (ACELT1605)</p> <p>Create literary texts that explore students' own experiences and imagining (ACELT1607)</p> <p>Create literary texts by developing storylines, characters and settings (ACELT1794)</p>	<p>Use metalanguage to describe the effects of ideas, text structures and language features on particular audiences (ACELT1795)</p> <p>Recognise that ideas in literary texts can be conveyed from different viewpoints, which can lead to different kinds of interpretations and responses (ACELT1610)</p> <p>Create literary texts that experiment with structures, ideas and stylistic features of selected authors (ACELT1798)</p>	<p>Analyse and evaluate similarities and differences in texts on similar topics, themes or plots (ACELT1614)</p> <p>Identify, describe, and discuss similarities and differences between texts, including those by the same author or illustrator, and evaluate characteristics that define an author's individual style (ACELT1616)</p> <p>Create literary texts that adapt or combine aspects of texts students have experienced in innovative ways (ACELT1618)</p>

Australian Curriculum – Content Descriptions

English	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Literacy	<p>Identify the point of view in a text and suggest alternative points of view (ACELY1675)</p> <p>Listen to and contribute to conversations and discussions to share information and ideas and negotiate in collaborative situations (ACELY1676)</p> <p>Identify the audience and purpose of imaginative, informative and persuasive texts (ACELY1678)</p> <p>Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts demonstrating increasing control over text structures and language features and selecting print, and multimodal elements appropriate to the audience and purpose (ACELY1682)</p>	<p>Identify and explain language features of texts from earlier times and compare with the vocabulary, images, layout and content of contemporary texts (ACELY1686)</p> <p>Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts containing key information and supporting details for a widening range of audiences, demonstrating increasing control over text structures and language features (ACELY1694)</p> <p>Identify characteristic features used in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts to meet the purpose of the text (ACELY1690)</p>	<p>Clarify understanding of content as it unfolds in formal and informal situations, connecting ideas to students' own experiences and present and justify a point of view (ACELY1699)</p> <p>Identify and explain characteristic text structures and language features used in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts to meet the purpose of the text (ACELY1701)</p> <p>Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive print and multimodal texts, choosing text structures, language features, images and sound appropriate to purpose and audience (ACELY1704)</p> <p>Re-read and edit student's own and others' work using agreed criteria for text structures and language features (ACELY1705)</p>	<p>Compare texts including media texts that represent ideas and events in different ways, explaining the effects of the different approaches (ACELY1708)</p> <p>Participate in and contribute to discussions, clarifying and interrogating ideas, developing and supporting arguments, sharing and evaluating information, experiences and opinions (ACELY1709)</p> <p>Analyse how text structures and language features work together to meet the purpose of a text (ACELY1711)</p> <p>Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, choosing and experimenting with text structures, language features, images and digital resources appropriate to purpose and audience (ACELY1714)</p> <p>Re-read and edit students' own and others' work using agreed criteria and explaining editing choices (ACELY1715)</p>

Just Reading

- Read a book from the *JUST...!* series. Examine the similarities and differences between the books and the script. Consider each experience and how they contribute to an understanding of the text.
- Like Andy Griffiths, other Australian authors such as Anh Do, Tristan Bancks and Oliver Phommavanh all draw on their own experiences to write their books. Research and read some of the work by these authors, then consider the similarities and differences between them. As a class, discuss why these authors are popular. What elements of their writing appeal to their readers?

Just Inspiring

- What is inspiration? As a class brainstorm where inspiration comes from. Create a visual inspiration wall in the classroom. Include pictures, photos, drawings, experiences, feelings ...
- Watch an interview with Andy Griffiths and Terry Denton (see Resource list for relevant websites) to identify their sources of inspiration.
- Make a list of things that can inspire you to write – feelings, environment, friends, events at school, events in life ...
- Start a diary (visual or written or both!) to record your thoughts and experiences.

Just Planning

- Mrs Livingstone says, “write what you know”. What do you know? Create a mind-map of all the things you know.
- Create a storyboard for the plot development of the play – use illustrations with notes.
- Written Word Appreciation Day – think of an alternate name for this. Create a word wall in the classroom of new and interesting words you discover in your reading.
- These are the titles of the *JUST...!* series:

JUST TRICKING! JUST ANNOYING! JUST STUPID! JUST CRAZY! JUST DISGUSTING! JUST SHOCKING! JUST DOOMED!

- In *Once Upon a Slime*, Andy Griffiths suggests creating a list of “What if?” story ideas for each title. Try this...

In the play, Andy states that his story has to be

“...Gripping! Thrilling! Exciting! Chilling! Terrifying! Mystifying! Electrifying! Stupefying! HORRIFYING!! PETRIFYING!!!”

- Using these words as new titles for a JUST...! story develop some more storyline ideas.
- Group each of the titles from the two lists into genres and analyse how themes are developed through the storylines.
- Consider each of the titles as adjectives and verbs and explore how the form of the word changes depending on its grammatical use. Create a variety of sentences to demonstrate this.
- What other words can you think of to continue the JUST...! series?

What happens next?

- Developing options for your stories. As Andy develops his story for the Book Fair Competition he comes up with alternate scenarios to move the story forward. It’s good to keep the options open to see what works best. Examine the excerpts from the script in the **RESOURCE** section. Add two more options for “What happens next?” to each excerpt.

Now try coming up with four options for each of the following scenarios:

- You’re cooking pancakes. You flip one and it flies out of the window ...
- You’re riding your skateboard. You hit a banana skin and skid out of control ...
- You’re sitting in the car and your mum/dad is driving when you notice a spider crawling across the windscreen ...

(These scenarios have been adapted from *Once Upon a Slime* – p.32)

NB. Refer to preparatory activity in Drama section.

- Discuss the processes of writing a story
 - where to start
 - inspiration
 - mind map
 - research
 - start first draft
 - edit (ask students why?)
 - draft and edit several times

Just Writing

- Write a review of the play – model examples of theatre reviews to the class. Ask the following questions before getting students to review the play.

- What did you like?
- What did you dislike?
- What would you include in a review in order to recommend the show to others?

- Write a character description for each character in the play. What motivates them?

- Discuss the idea of “point of view” in a text. Events in the play are told mostly from Andy’s point of view. Choose a scene from the play – consider how this scene would change if it was written from the point of view of another character. Write the chosen scene from Danny and/or Lisa’s point of view, and then try from one of the support characters – Mr Rowe, Sooty, Sprout ...

- Create a new scene for the play – think of another difficult situation Andy and Danny might find themselves in and explore how they will react to and deal with the problem.

Identify the features of a narrative and a play/script. Choose a short scene from the play – try writing the scene in a narrative, descriptive style.

- Choose a scene from one of the JUST...! books you have read – adapt this scene as a script with dialogue.

- Andy Griffiths uses extremes in his writing – extreme words, extreme events, extreme situations and consequences. How extreme can you go? A fun way to explore this is to find some newspaper headlines that might reflect an extreme situation. Once you’ve collected a few headlines, cut up the words and randomly rearrange them to create different headlines, then write an extreme story to go with that headline.

- Lovelyville vs. Bloodyville - In the play Andy twists a perfectly “lovely” story into something perfectly awful. Choose an idea for a story. Write it using as much positivity and loveliness as you can... then turn the whole thing around and write the opposite story.

- Discuss the processes of writing a story

- where to start
- inspiration
- mind map
- research
- start first draft
- edit (ask students why?)
- draft and edit several times

- Is there a writing competition at your school or your local library? Ask students to write a short story to enter into the competition. Emphasise the need to draft, edit, draft, edit, draft, edit ... and ask students how they will know when their story is finished.

- The play makes literary references to two well-known writers – Charles Dickens and William Shakespeare. Who were these writers? What questions would you ask them?
- Gather some examples of work from William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens and Andy Griffiths. Explore the different styles and approaches to writing. What do you observe about the language, text structure and formality/informality of style between the three authors?
- What sort of audience would they be writing for?
- Create an interview, which could then be filmed with students taking on the roles of Dickens and Shakespeare? ... Or perhaps write a conversation between these writers and Andy Griffiths.
- What is a biography? Research and create an author biography - for one of the writers above, for one of your favourite authors or for yourself as an author!

Just Fun

- At the start of the play, Andy describes hiding in the library cupboard as “risking his life” because it is “disgusting”! Is there anything you’d risk your life for? What extremes would you go to?
- School sleepover - In which part of your school would you be prepared to spend a night? Write about what might happen during that night? Be as imaginative as possible. Share the events and ideas with the whole class.
- Andy hates Brussels sprouts. Make a list of the foods you really dislike. Choose the one you dislike the most. Draw the food. Write a poem about this food. Write about the day your food attacked you – “The Attack of the Killer ...!”
- Tanya Shepherd is Andy’s nemesis. What does this mean? Create an imaginary nemesis for yourself and write a descriptive paragraph of this person. Draw the character based on your descriptions.
- The character of Andy thinks he is an “expert” at writing! Sometimes it’s fun to imagine we are an expert on something. Imagine you are an expert on something weird and unusual such as a mosquito trainer, a door knob tester, a crazy hair stylist, ... Describe how and why you became an expert in your chosen talent.

Just Saying

Note for teachers:

There are many wonderful and varied ideas to encourage children to write in *Once Upon a Slime* by Andy Griffiths, a collection of fun ways to explore words and pictures, using examples from many of the JUST...! titles.

This is an invaluable resource to have in the classroom.

PDHPE

NSW Syllabus Outcomes

PDHPE	Stage 2	Stage 3
Demonstrate an understanding of strategies that promote a sense of personal identity and build resilience and respectful relationships	PD2-3 Explains how empathy, inclusion and respect can positively influence relationships	PD3-3 Evaluates the impact of empathy, inclusion and respect on themselves and others
Develop interpersonal skills that enable them to interact effectively and respectfully with others, build and maintain respectful relationships and advocate for their own and others health, safety, well-being and participation in physical activity	PD2-10 Demonstrates a range of interpersonal skills that build and enhance relationships and promote inclusion in various situations	PD2-10 Demonstrates a range of interpersonal skills that build and enhance relationships and promote inclusion in various situations

Australian Curriculum – Content Descriptions

Health & Physical Education	Years 3 & 4	Years 5 & 6
Personal, Social and Community Health	<p>Explore how success, challenge and failure strengthen identities (ACPPS033)</p> <p>Describe how respect, empathy and valuing diversity can positively influence relationships (ACPPS037)</p> <p>Investigate how emotional responses vary in depth and strength (ACPPS038)</p>	<p>Examine how identities are influenced by people and places (ACPPS051)</p> <p>Practise skills to establish and maintain relationships (ACPPS055)</p> <p>Examine the influence of emotional responses on behaviour and relationships (ACPPS056)</p>

Just Friendship, Just understanding, Just Talking

- As a class, construct the sequence of Andy's emotional journey/growth through the play. What were the influences on this?
- Use the character descriptions developed in writing sessions to discuss and analyse the qualities of the characters.
 - What makes the characters friends?
 - Friendship – what qualities do you look for in a friend?
 - What does it mean to have a best friend?

Andy: *Whatever! But the three of us. Working together. That's what's made today so incredible. I could never have done any of this without the two of you. To be honest, I only seem to be at my best when I've got my best friends by my side.*

- Why is support for each other important?
- In what situations does it help to have some support and encouragement?
- Think of situations in which you've helped out a friend... How did you help, how did it affect your friendship?
- Friendships can change over time. What factors can influence change in a friendship or how we feel about another person?

This activity should be adjusted according to the year level of students. It can be conducted as a class discussion, using respectful language and age appropriate content.

- Andy and Danny find themselves in a variety of challenging or scary situations, some imagined, some real.
 - What are the similarities and differences between a challenging situation and a scary situation?
 - Create a list of the emotions we might experience in each situation. What qualities should we try to develop to help us face a challenge?
 - Discuss a range of strategies to develop and use to lessen and conquer fears? Create a poster for the classroom.

Resources

Curriculum - Australian and NSW

<https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au> - NSW Syllabus information

<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum> - Australian Curriculum

<http://www.scottle.edu.au> - Learning and planning tools and resources

Author/Illustrator information

<http://www.andygriffiths.com.au/> - Andy Griffiths website

<https://www.panmacmillan.com.au/author/andy-griffiths/> - Publisher website

Interviews with Andy Griffiths and Terry Denton

<https://www.abc.net.au/7.30/it-takes-two:-popular-childrens-author-andy/11343956>

<https://youtu.be/ILVC1UrQAOA> - How Andy Griffiths found Terry Denton, 'a brother in stupidity' | Throwback | covering their process and history of working together creatively.

<https://youtu.be/UT8HVAWwRgo> - Andy Griffiths & Terry Denton live on stage | Sydney Opera House

Good websites for Drama games and activities

https://dbp.theatredance.utexas.edu/teaching_strategies

<https://www.dramanotebook.com/drama-games>

<http://www.primaryresources.co.uk/pshe/pdfs/dramawarmups.pdf>

Ideas for writing

Griffiths, Andy. *Once Upon a Slime, 45 fun ways to get writing ... FAST!* Sydney: Pan McMillan, 2013. Print.

Acknowledgments

This document took inspiration from quality Teacher Resource Kits created by CDP Theatre Producers and Monkey Baa Theatre Company, adapting information from the sources listed above.

This resource was created and compiled by Elaine Smith (BArts, BTeach)

Excerpts from The Script

Use for “What Happens Next?”

<p>Andy: So! What did I do next? Avoid the old lady by swerving into oncoming traffic, OR! Go straight at her and just hope for the best? Lisa: Both sound terrible! Andy: Okay! (To the audience) What do you guys reckon? Did I swerve OR! Did I go right at the old bag??</p>	
<p><u>SWERVE</u> Andy: That’s exactly what I did! But just as I swerved, the old lady dove out of the way putting her right back in my line of fire!</p>	<p><u>RIGHT AT HER</u> Andy: That’s exactly what I did! I closed my eyes, kept going straight and just hoped she was quicker than she looked.</p>

<p>Andy: But at the bottom of the hill there’s a fork in the road... One side leading to a rickety old bridge that crosses the lake, and the other side... Danny: That goes straight into the zoo! Andy: Brilliant! So, what did I do?? Bridge, OR! Zoo?!?</p>	
<p><u>BRIDGE</u> Andy: That’s EXACTLY what I did!! I turn right at the last second and tear onto the rickety old bridge...It’s creaking and cracking under the weight of the car and then when we’re right in the middle, disaster! We run out of petrol! The old bridge can’t take it anymore, it snaps and we fall all the way down into the cold lake below.</p>	<p><u>ZOO</u> Andy: That’s EXACTLY what I did!! I turn Left at the last second and smash through the gates of the zoo... Through the gorilla enclosure! Through the lion’s den! Through the bird sanctuary! Through the meerkat exhibit! And finally, I smash through the back wall of the zoo and go flying right into the lake!!</p>

“What Happens Next?”

<u>Scenario</u>	
<u>Option 1</u>	<u>Option 2</u>
<u>Option 3</u>	<u>Option 4</u>

Storyboard

Language and structure of text

