

Active Citizenship Using Drama

A Stone's Throw



L5

Lesson 5: Jack's Journey

This lesson looks at the social and domestic influences in Jack's life and at how a specific incident or a chance meeting can change his life in a negative or positive way. It uses interviews and documentary-style drama to explore the issues and reflect the highlights in Jack's life.

Planning	
Prior Learning	<p>Pupils should have gained prior knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • active citizenship; • the legal system in Northern Ireland and lawfulness; • social justice and human rights for young people; and • young offenders centres and youth support.
Learning Outcomes	<p>Pupils will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss social and legal justice for young people; • understand the key features of a young offenders centre and the difficulties and challenges of trying to return to society after being locked up for six months; • understand the challenges of knowing who are your real friends; • understand meeting young people from 'the other side'; • ask and answer appropriate questions as a media interviewer and as a character; • use interview technique, flashback improvisations and soliloquy; and • develop confidence in presentation skills and using a camera.
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities Focus	<p>Pupils will have opportunities to develop the following:</p> <p>Being Creative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use interview technique, flashback improvisation and soliloquy effectively • Develop sustained role play <p>Working with Others and Self-Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on their own, in pairs and in groups • Respect the views and opinions of others • Effectively research appropriate questions and answers in role <p>Thinking, Problem Solving and Decision Making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make and justify decisions about timings, topics and appropriate questioning • Be able to discuss personal viewpoints.
Attitudes and Dispositions	<p>Pupils will be encouraged to develop the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Openness to new ideas • Flexibility: being flexible when using a more practical drama approach • Respect: demonstrating a more caring and respectful attitude towards others.
Resources	<p>An open space in the classroom Film and script of 'A Stone's Throw' Camera and microphone</p>

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Suggested teaching and learning strategies

Lesson Stage	Suggested teaching and learning strategies	
Launch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefly discuss the film 'A Stone's Throw', referencing the main incidents and highlights of the story. • Ask pupils to clear a space in the centre of the classroom by moving the tables and chairs to the sides and stand in a circle. • Introduce the theme of the lesson and explain documentary-style drama. Tell the pupils that they will be presenting a short programme on the life of Jack at the end of the lesson. • Tell pupils they will take on the roles of media interviewers, Jack, his family, friends and many of the people he has met in his life. • Highlight the importance of good articulation and clarity when speaking and the elements of good journalism and what makes good television. • Warm up: Introduce a short warm up with the following exercises. 	
	Breathing exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask pupils to breathe in through the nose for a count of 3, hold the breath for a count of 3 and breathe out slowly through the mouth for a count of 12. • Repeat the exercise with an increase in exhalation to 25.
	Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At this stage in the lessons, pupils should be able to lead the warm-up exercises with stretches and poses and perhaps a rhythm sequence that is extended and developed with each lesson.
	Vocal exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the articulation scale to improve pupils' clarity and distinctness by saying B, D, F, H, G, M, N, P, T, W loudly, softly, angrily, thoughtfully, shyly etc. • Use the vowel exercises to improve the volume, projection and resonance of their voices by repeating Zer, Zay, Zee, Zi, Zah, Zoh, Zoo, Zaw, Zow. • Introduction exercise: ask pupils to formally introduce the pupil to their left and the group applauds. They can use the actual name of the pupil or invent a name and add an invented profession, for example 'Ladies and gentlemen, could I please introduce you to Paula Brown who is a lion tamer.' • Pupils then move around the space and introduce themselves to as many people as possible using their name and profession. • When they return to the circle, they try to remember as many of the professions as possible.

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Activities

Activity 1: Film trailer using freeze frames and voice-over

- Ask the pupils to get into five groups of 5/6 pupils.
- Ask them to devise a one minute trailer for a full-length feature film of 'A Stone's Throw'.
- They should use a voice-over in an appropriate style, voice and accent. Each group is responsible for one freeze frame and appropriate narration freeze frames.
- They might also wish to include underscored music or sound effects.
- Encourage pupils to look at exaggerated and sensational language and perhaps humour. They can use accents and set the film in a city in another country and include opening dates and actors who could be starring in the film, for example Harry Styles as Jack and Jimmy Nesbitt as Big Al.

Tips

Sample trailer:

- *'This is an extraordinary story of a boy on the edge. Jack was an only child but life was tough with an alcoholic mother'*
 - **Freeze 1:** Jack's mum and friends drunk in the pub and Jack looking on. *'and his father a drug pusher who ends up in prison.'*
 - **Freeze 2:** Jack's father being arrested with drugs and Jack looking on. *'Being on the street was lonely for Jack but he wanted to 'fit in'. Throwing that brick through the windscreen of the ambulance was his badge of honour and tragic downfall.'*
 - **Freeze 3:** Jack in the street with the gang about to throw the stone with neighbours, paramedics etc. present. *'The ambulance had been on its way to his grandfather who died of a heart attack. Jack was arrested'*
 - **Freeze 4:** Jack being taken from his house by the police. *'and sentenced to 6 months in a Young Offenders Centre. Jack left prison as a different person, angry and alone. He slept on the streets ... but a chance meeting changed his life. His saviour was Big Al!'*
 - **Freeze 5:** Jack smiling and playing pool with friends and Big Al looking on. *'Coming to cinemas near you. Starring ... as Jack and ... as Big Al.'*



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Activity 2: Documentary

- Assign each of the five groups a section of Jack's life to present to the class as a television documentary. The five sections of his life could be divided as follows:
 - 1. Early childhood**
 - only child living with an alcoholic mother and drug-pusher father and living with his grandad
 - interviews with neighbours etc.
 - 2. Teenage life**
 - on the streets with his friends and stopping the ambulance by throwing the stone
 - interviews with paramedics, friends, social worker etc.
 - 3. Young Offenders Centre**
 - being sentenced and going to the Young Offenders Centre
 - interviews with solicitor, police, wardens etc.
 - 4. Getting out**
 - getting out of the Centre and life on the streets
 - interviews with agencies, social workers, friends etc.
 - 5. Jack's future**
 - Big Al, a new family, joining a programme and becoming a role model
 - interviews with Big Al, other teenagers, new parents and Jack.
- Ask pupils in their groups to cast the characters required and prepare a series of questions, answers and linked narration, which might be with the presenter or with Jack himself.
- Ask the groups to select appropriate questions to be recorded for a 2-minute sequence.
- Pupils from other groups can use the camera to record.

See Appendix 1 for a sample script. Please note this is provided as a guide for teachers and not for use by the pupils.

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Debrief

- Ask pupils to find a chair and return to the circle.
- Lead a class discussion using prompt questions such as:
 - *Do you feel now that you understand more about what it must be like to be locked up for six months and try to socialise and lead a normal life when you get out?*
 - *What are implications of having a record?*
 - *What effect can being locked up have on your mental state?*
 - *What are the difficulties and challenges of having to adjust to social conditions after being locked up for a period of time?*
 - *What are the qualities of real friends?*
 - *What is the role of a youth worker and what programmes exist for young people?*
 - *Did you feel confident taking on a role and asking and answering questions?*
 - *What did you learn about documentary-style drama and using a camera to record?*
- You might wish to discuss different organisations who give help, advice and support to young people, for example when they are lonely, homeless, have mental health issues or would like help to get on to training programmes.

Such organisations are:

- SupportLine – Loneliness
www.supportline.org.uk
- Anxiety – Young people
youngminds.org.uk
- Simon Community – Homeless in Northern Ireland
www.simoncommunity.org
- Youth homelessness
www.centrepoin.org.uk
- Services for young people
www.changegrowlive.org/services
- Youth Action – Training
www.youthaction.org
- Youth Link NI – Training programmes
www.youthlink.org.uk
- Education Authority – Training programmes in Northern Ireland
www.eani.org.uk

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Appendix 1

Activity 2: Documentary

Sample documentary section

Group 1: Jack's early childhood

- The interviewer could begin outside the house where Jack lived as a child.
- The interviewer might give some information about Jack, when he was born, where he went to school etc.

'I'm standing outside the house where Jack lived. So what kind of an upbringing did he have? Some of his neighbours still live here.'

Interviewer: *'So what kind of a child was he?'*

Neighbour 1: *'Well, to be honest he was a wee skitter, always in trouble and getting up to mischief. Pretty normal really.'*

Interviewer: *'What was his mother like?'*

Neighbour 2: *'Quite decent really until she lost her job and she started drinking heavily and then the rows started and it was awful for Jack.'*

Interviewer: *'What was his father like?'*

Neighbour 3: *'A waster. Never did a day's work in his life. Always scrounging round the pub. Then he got into drugs. Prison's the best place for him. Jack's better off without him.'*

Interviewer: *'So what was Jack like at school – I met with one of his former teachers at secondary school.'*

Interviewer: *'So what was Jack like at school?'*

Teacher: *'He was a bright boy and could have done well at school. He liked science and art but he lost interest early on and got in with a bad group. Came late to school, missed days and started to get himself into trouble.'*

The interviewer finishes off with some further questions to camera:

'So there you have it. A dysfunctional family! An alcoholic mother and continual rows and a father pushing drugs and now in prison. So who could Jack turn to? What would become of him? What was his future? He decided to live with his grandad. A man he idolised, who was his hero but what kind of a person was Jack to become?'