

WASTE

Activity W07

Theme

Students participate in a drama by taking on the roles of explorers in the distant future who come across an 'ancient' waste dump from the 21st century and try to figure out what all these things were used for! Surely they weren't just thrown away?

Objectives

To think creatively around the topic of disposable/non-disposable objects. To introduce a forum for discussion on topics such as personal and societal responsibility, consequences and the potential for change and to introduce language appropriate to such discussion.

Curriculum Links

SESE, Science and Geography—Environmental awareness and care

English—Emotional and imaginative development through language

Drama—Drama to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding

Skills

Questioning, working with evidence, cooperating and communicating; creative thinking; exploring feelings, knowledge and ideas leading to understanding

Time

40 minutes (with some flexibility)

Links to Green Schools

Waste and Litter

Expedition! is based around the teacher's notes in the drama curriculum and teachers will probably want to adapt the ideas to their own classroom situations. The activity can be expanded along the lines of the exemplars given in the teacher's notes on the drama curriculum (especially that on page 74).

A sample of script you might like to use to guide the action is provided on page two and the numbers in the text below refer to this. Many teachers will prefer to use their own words.

Expedition!

→ BACK TO THE FUTURE

WHAT YOU NEED

- A selection of clean and very varied non-biodegradable waste (bottles, CDs, polystyrene cups, spark plugs, foil wrappers, batteries, cloth from artificial fibres)
- Sheets of newspaper

WHAT YOU DO

- 1 Lay the waste out in one area of the room and cover with sheets of newspaper. Facilitate action when necessary.
- 2 The teacher reads a message: In the year 3020 an archaeological research group finally gets permission from Earth government to explore an area of the Earth that has remained uninhabited for centuries (1).



WASTE

Activity W07

Continued →

- 3 The teacher/messenger may at this point decide to present the archaeologists with 'government passes' (sticky labels or pieces of card) on which they are identified as 'experts' of different kinds (medical team, technicians, art historians meteorologists, geologists etc. This might help give a different focus to each view of the objects they will find later.
- 4 The teacher takes the role of a government messenger who has been asked to go along. This character helps the action but more usually sits silently by (2).
- 5 They journey through places where they recognise only a few living things and arrive at the island (3/4).
- 6 They excavate, excited at the thought that people may have lived here. They immediately find evidence! The island is one big rubbish dump! They delightedly examine the things they find and document what they might have been used for (5)
- 7 The children begin to look at what they find. The tone of the exploration should be creative and based on what they see, not what they already know.
- 8 Each group or individual takes an object and describes its possible uses. They tell the story of the person or people who used it. (At this point the exploration may be purely verbal and interactive although if the pupils wish to make notes in their character as explorers this would work too)
- 9 Night falls and they camp and sleep. They dream of the people who once lived here. Those people have a wish—what is it? (6)
- 10 The group awakes and discusses what the people in the dream might have said. (Some teachers may choose to discuss the 'messages from the past' here, others may wait until the expedition returns to base.)
- 11 They pack up and prepare to return to the research station to tell the world of their discovery (7/8).
- 12 The teacher and pupils may decide that their report consists of a message from the past, a collection of documented artefacts or a piece of written work as best fit the time and curriculum objectives of the teacher.

Go further

- 1 Art activities based on the re-appraisal and reuse of waste material.
- 2 Music activities based on instruments made from reused objects or a ritual based on the archaeologists' perceptions of the people who once lived on the island.
- 3 Writing activities based on writing newspaper articles or TV news scripts to report on the expedition

WASTE

Activity W07

Continued →

SCRIPT WORKSHEET

Teachers may wish to use these scripts, adapt them to their own requirements, or substitute their own words and ideas.

Teacher (in role as messenger but not using any particular 'acting' voice)

1. Archaeologists of Science Centre One, I bring a message to you from Earth Government. I will read exactly what it says. 'Date 11-K-6 in the year 3020. To the eminent archaeology team of Science Centre One from the Central Committee for Earth Government: Permission is given to the expeditionary team of Science Centre One to explore the unknown region known as Ultima Island. You may camp for one night on the island on this first exploration. You are reminded that this area is currently uninhabited and the journey may be hazardous. Please ensure you have all necessary equipment for your journey as you will be out of communication range due to local conditions. We hope Earth may benefit from the scientific data you will collect. Earth Government wishes you well. May you go and return in safety!' That is the end of the message.

2. (Before setting out)

The Earth Government has instructed me to accompany your expedition. My name is Galla. In my youth I heard stories of this Ultima Island and wished very much to visit there.

It may be a dangerous place, and we must stay only one night.

3. (As they are travelling)

I recognise almost no familiar things. What is this landscape? Tell me what you see.

It seems strange, yet they say people really lived here once.

4. (Beginning the exploration)

There is no time to waste. We may only remain for one night.

(An idea for a yoghurt carton exploration might be something like this...) Were the people so small that this thing is a hat? There are so many—did the tribe wear new hats each worship day? What is the significance of this material, which the chrono-scope shows was extracted from the buried bones of dinosaurs? (plastic) What can these hieroglyphics (words, symbols) mean?

5. (Spotting the island)

Look, that dark shape in the sea. We have arrived at Ultima Island.

6. (To finish the exploration.)

The teacher should remain unobtrusively sitting on a chair. Night is falling. We must lie down and sleep. Close your eyes. Sleep.

(For the dream scenario. In a calm voice.) In my sleep I see the people who once lived here. You see them too. They are before us in our dreams. Those people have a wish. Those people from the past are trying to tell us something. What is their message? They are fading away now and we sleep on on Ultima Island... (The teacher counts to 10 inwardly)

7. (To end the drama)

It is morning! We have been dreaming all night! We must return to Science Centre One. We must bring back what we have learned.

8. We have arrived safely, now I must bring your findings to Earth Government. What messages do you wish me to bring?