JIGSAW
THEATRE COMPANY
CREATE I EXPAND I INSPIRE

presents

Big Sister
Little Brother

by Mike Kenny
(Originally commissioned by Visible Fictions)

Teacher’s
Resource Kit

Written and compiled by
Justine Campbell and Kate Shearer
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Big Sister Little Brother by Jigsaw Theatre Company is a funny, fast paced and heart-warming piece of theatre designed for primary school students that explores the dynamics in sibling relationships. The ideas in the production may need further discussion and support in the classroom.

The aim of the Teacher’s Resource Kit is to enhance your students’ understanding of the production of Big Sister Little Brother by providing a number of fun and educational activities for you to use in the classroom. The kit is designed to be user-friendly. As we understand how busy teachers are, each activity is ready to be photocopied and distributed straight to your class. You may wish to use only some them or the whole series. Or you may wish to develop or extend the learning activities to meet your current classroom needs. I look forward to your feedback on the production and these resources.

Kate Shearer
Artistic Director 2006
Jigsaw Theatre Company Staff

Artistic Director     Kate Shearer
General Manager    Brenna Hobson

Jigsaw Theatre Company

Jigsaw has been creating professional theatre for young audiences for over 30 years. The company’s philosophy is to engage young audiences with relevant and entertaining theatre while challenging and broadening perceptions of theatre for young people and supporting youth participation in the arts. Hence the company’s program of activities is diverse, incorporating public and education performance programs, professional development programs for arts educators and artists, the commissioning of new plays, tours to major venues such as the Sydney Opera House, a youth performing arts festival, workshops and an on-line resource for teachers. Our work is seen in theatres, art galleries, on-line and, thanks to the long-term support of the ACT Department of Education and Training, in schools.

Jigsaw is proud of its strong connection with education. The connection has enabled the company to support arts education, introducing thousands of young people to theatre and into the world of professional arts practice.

Jigsaw supports arts education by:

- Making professional theatre accessible and relevant to school audiences
- Following all performances with opportunities to discuss the show and ask questions of the performers and technical artists
- Complementing each production with Teachers’ Resource Kits
- Custom-designing workshops (one-off or programs) to suit the needs of individual teachers and schools
- Conducting professional development workshops
- Connecting arts educators with the resources and artists they need
- Providing technical and artistic support and advice for school productions, drama camps and classroom practice
- Providing vocational education placements, work experience and training programs for students
- Visiting classes to talk about professional theatre and training opportunities

We thank our valued supporters:

Jigsaw Theatre Company has been creating professional theatre for young audiences for over 30 years and is supported by the ACT Government through artsACT and the Department of Education and Training. We also thank Healthpact and the Tuggeranong Arts Centre.
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

RITA - JUSTINE CAMPBELL
Justine studied Drama at USQ, The University of Southern Queensland where she performed in Woysек, Waiting for Godot, King Lear, Dreams Next Door, The Bacchae and Look Back in Anger. Since then major roles include: Sarah Brown in Guys and Dolls, Godspell, Ursula Merkle in Bye Bye Birdie, Artful Dodger in Oliver, Joanna Jetsetter in Off the Planet, Ella Delahay in Charlie’s Aunt, Annas in Jesus Christ Superstar, Nurse and Iole in Sophocles’ Trachinian Women, Little Mary in The Women and Lead Fairy in The Magic of Christmas. During 2003—2004, Justine performed in Seoul, South Korea with REM/LATT Children’s Theatre where she appeared in Strange Soup, The Little Dragon and Twelve Animals (which later toured South Korea).

ARCHIE - MATT KELLY
Matt Kelly cut his teeth performing in local musicals and as an ‘Excited Particle’ for Questacon. He now spends most of his time in Melbourne performing, writing and directing. Recent credits include, L’Étranger (Meursault), The Twits (Mrs Twit), The Day My Bum Went Psycho (Zack), The Great Big Story Book (Dusty Britches) and Penny Machinations (Co-writer, Co-director).

SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER & MAKER – IMOGEN KEEN
Imogen is a visual artist, maker and designer. Her work includes costumes, puppets, bags and art objects. She has worked in stage and television production in Melbourne and Canberra. Most recently for The Street Theatre’s Speaking in Tongues, Women on a Shoe String’s Butterfly Dandy and Jigsaw Theatre Company’s productions of Flotsam and Jetsam, The Lost Thing and Arborio. Later this year, Imogen will be designing Drumming on Water (for Chrissie Shaw) and A Boston Marriage, both at The Street Theatre.

DIRECTOR – KATE SHEARER
Kate’s aim for Jigsaw Theatre Company is to create memorable works with intelligent collaborators that stir the imagination of young audiences.

For the past 15 years Kate has worked as an actor, teacher, director and arts manager for a wide range of arts and educational organisations. As an actor, Kate has performed the title role in Hedda Gabler (Ibsen), Lipochka in A Family Affair(Ostrovsky), Maggie in Lovers (Friel), Angela in Wolf Lullaby (Bell) and other roles in Honour (Murray Smith), Seven Deadly Sins (Brecht/Weill), Jacques and His Master (Kundera translated by Callow), Mill Fire (Nemeth), The Owl and the Pussycat Went to See (Woods/Rudkin), Holy Days (Nemeth), A Midsummer Night’s Dream & Hair.

In London, she has directed Solitary Animals (Hackney Empire Studio), Arabian Nights (Castle Theatre, Wellingborough), Playing For Time, Confusions, Find Me (Hampshire Foundation Theatre Course) and assisted Keith Warner on the opera God’s Liar for the Almeida Theatre’s Opera Festival. Kate has returned annually to the UK since 2002 to work on professional schools’ touring productions and summer school drama programs.

WRITER – MIKE KENNY
Mike Kenny is one of Britain’s leading playwrights for children and young people. He has written over fifty plays and won numerous awards for his work including: Stepping Stones which won the Writer’s Guild of Great Britain award for the Best Children's Play and in 2000 he was the first recipient of the Arts Council of England's Children's Award.
POST PERFORMANCE QUESTIONS

1. Do you have brothers or sisters? What is the order in your family? What did you relate to in the relationship between Archie and Rita?

2. Who was your favourite character? Why?

3. Why do you think the playwright, Mike Kenny, explored the story of *The Emperor’s New Clothes*? What is the main message of this story?

4. Why do you think the tailors tricked the Emperor? How did they do it? Why did so many members of the court go along with it?

5. The end of *Big Sister Little Brother* is different to the original? Why do you think the playwright, Mike Kenny chose this ending?

6. In what ways did Rita and Archie compete with each other? Why do you think this happens in families? Does it happen in yours?

7. What did you find most humorous in the production? Most enjoyable? Most moving? Why?

8. Why do you think Rita behaves the way she does towards Archie?

9. Rita and Archie rely on one another. What is some of the experiences they have shared together apart from tricking the Emperor?

10. Who are some of the characters that Archie and Rita meet along their journey? How do the actors portray these characters?

11. The designer, Imogen Keen used fabric throughout the production design. Why did she make that choice and what are some examples in the production?

12. The production is a highly physical comedy, what sort of preparation do you think the actors need to do to prepare for performance?

13. What do you think is the message of *Big Sister Little Brother*?
STORIES

The Original Story

*The Emperor’s New Clothes* by Hans Christian Anderson is a story about a very vain emperor who is only concerned about wearing elegant clothes rather than looking after the affairs of his Kingdom.

Two scoundrels arrive at the palace pretending to be talented tailors. They lie to the emperor and tell him that they can weave magical cloth that can only be seen by people who are extremely intelligent. They tell the emperor that if he has a suit made out of this fabric he will be able to find out which of his employees are not intelligent enough to see the outfit. The emperor decides to have a suit made out of this special cloth so he gives the tailors gold thread and money to make the clothes.

The tailors set up their loom and pretend to weave the fabric and all the time they are not weaving anything at all. Everyone who comes to have a look at the material is much too scared to admit that they cannot see anything because they do not want to look foolish.

Eventually the tailors say that they have finished making the Emperor’s new clothes. The Emperor himself comes to try on his new suit and he is also too embarrassed to admit that he cannot see the clothes because he does not want to look foolish. He dresses himself in the “suit” and walks out in a great parade.

The people of the town are all too embarrassed to admit that they cannot see the clothes and they cheer and clap for the Emperor. A small boy watching the parade sees that the Emperor is really not wearing anything at all. He yells out, “the Emperor has no clothes on”. Everybody laughs and admits that they cannot see the clothes. The emperor realises that he is not really wearing any clothes at all and he looks very foolish indeed.

Task: Word List

Find two words that mean the same:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vanity</th>
<th>Double-crosser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elegant</td>
<td>Conceit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scoundrel</td>
<td>Weaving Apparatus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loom</td>
<td>Clothes maker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tailor</td>
<td>Dignified</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**STORIES**

*Big Sister Little Brother* is a play about a brother and sister called Archie and Rita. The audience finds out that these two siblings are the tailors who fooled the emperor. They are now on the run from the Kingdom and they tell us the story of “The Emperor’s New Clothes” from their point of view or perspective.

**TASK: DEFINITIONS**

Find the meanings of the two underlined words and write them below.

**SIBLINGS:**

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

**PERSPECTIVE:**

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Often when we remember an event in our lives we may recall it slightly differently than the way other people remember it and this is because we are remembering the events from our own perspective.

**TASK: IN PAIRS**

Tell your partner a story about something that has happened to you. This could be something funny, embarrassing, sad or happy. Take turns at telling your story. Whose perspective is the story from?

Stories are all around us. When we read a book, watch a film or hear a news item, we are encountering stories.

**TASK:** Discuss with a partner other places where we find stories in our everyday lives and list them.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
STORIES

A good story contains essential ingredients in order for it to be effective. Some of these ingredients are:

- An interesting plot
- A clear structure with a beginning, middle, climax and resolution (ending)
- A single character or a number of characters
- A clear perspective - Stories can be written in either first person (I said...) or third person (the girl said...).
- Language written with the type of audience in mind

**TASK:** Think about the story you told your partner. What were the ingredients in your story that made it a good tale? Does it have a clear beginning, middle, climax and end? Are the characters interesting?
Think of the ingredients you may want to add to your story to make it clearer and more interesting for an audience. Now re-tell your story again to a different partner making sure it has the above ingredients in it.

**TASK: Shared Story**
Think of the ingredients you may want to add to your story to make it clearer and more interesting for an audience. In groups of four, write a shared story. One person starts, writing a couple of sentences without the others seeing what they write. Fold the paper so that the words are hidden except for the beginning word of a new sentence on the paper eg: "All of a sudden...". The next person continues the story following on from the given words but making their own progression of the story. They then fold the paper again and the next person writes from the next revealed word. And so on until each person has written a couple of times. Then read the story out loud as a group.

Stories are sometimes written to communicate a message to the reader. What do you think the message was of the original Hans Christian Anderson story, *The Emperor’s New Clothes*?

Write a story using the elements listed above to communicate a message that you care about.
STORIES

**TASK:** Take any story that you know well. Your story may be an Aboriginal Dream time story or a folk tale from China or a fairy tale from Europe. Re-write this story from a different character’s perspective. For example, re-write the story of *Red Riding Hood* from the Wolf’s point of view. Compare it to the original.
DESIGN

Imogen Keen is the set, props and costume designer and maker for *Big Sister Little Brother*. Imogen says:

Upon reading the script of Big Sister, Little Brother a few design considerations were clear straight away. Firstly, a distinction had to be made between the 'real' world Archie and Rita inhabit and the world they conjure up in their re-telling of their adventures. We achieved this using two different colour and texture schemes; dull/tweedey and bright/silky.

Secondly, the many visual changes that occur had to be made to do so by the actors - no stage management - in full view of the audience. In solving these technical problems, creative questions were also answered. For example, the backdrop would have to be silk (light, compact, portable), the luggage would have to include trolleys, there would have to be a swag to make sense of carrying poles, etc.

What initiated the design process and continued throughout were conversations between the director and myself to identify our separate visions of this story and find ways to marry them together, and to collaborate on questions that arose during the rehearsal period. Early on we decided that because the characters were tailors the design would be made of fabric and have a sewn quality, which was central to the design.

Below are some of Imogen’s sketches from her design book. Designers do many sketches before having set or costumes built. Why do you think that is?

What parts of the design do you think Imogen was trying to work out in the above sketches? How was the final design similar and different to these sketches?

What are some examples of the two different colour and texture schemes used in the play?
DESIGN

Below is a drawing painted by the set and costume designer, Imogen Keen for the silk backdrop in the production which was sewn from many pieces of fabric (rather than painted).

TASK: Draw your own set design for the castle in which the Emperor lives. How do you think it could be constructed? What materials would you use?
DESIGN

TASK: Help! The Emperor needs some clothes! Design and draw a new outfit for the Emperor.
DESIGN

TASK: Imagine that the Emperor and Empress lived in modern times. In groups of 2-4, cut out clothes from magazines that you think the Emperor and the Empress would wear and stick them here. Why have you made those choices? What does it tell you about the characters?

| The Emperor | The Empress |
BROTHERS AND SISTERS

In the play *Big Sister Little Brother* Archie and Rita sometimes fight with each other. Rita is older than Archie and so she often acts bossy towards him and he does not like it.

**TASK:** Tell a story about one of your brothers or sisters. If you do not have a brother or sister, tell a story about what you think it would be like if you had a brother or sister.

Sometimes our brothers and sisters get on our nerves and sometimes they are very fun to play with.

**TASK:** List **FIVE** things you most like and **FIVE** things you least like about your brother or sister. If you do not have a brother or sister list the things you would like most and least if you did have a brother or sister.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MOST LIKE</th>
<th>LEAST LIKE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TASK:** Now list **FIVE advantages** and **FIVE disadvantages** in having a brother or sister.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADVANTAGES</th>
<th>DISADVANTAGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BROTHERS AND SISTERS
Brothers and Sisters are both similar and different to each other. Sometimes brothers and sisters like the same things and sometimes they don’t.

TASK: List some of the similarities and differences that you have to your brother or sister.

SIMILARITIES

DIFFERENCES

In Jigsaw’s production of Big Sister Little Brother we watch Archie and Rita having fun together as well as arguing. We see that sometimes when brothers and sisters argue frequently, they form habits of relating to one another. For example, Rita has a habit of being a little mean and bossy to Archie yet she is always very polite to the Emperor. Often we treat our bothers and sisters very differently to the way we treat our friends.

TASK: In pairs, improvise a scene that is about you and your brother and sister at home. You play yourself and your partner will play your brother or sister. Now swap roles and make up a new play about you and a friend. Your partner will play your friend doing the same activity as you and your sibling. Take turns then present these to the class.

QUESTIONS:

1. How was your attitude and behaviour different in the first play compared with the second play?

2. Why do you think we are often more polite and kind to our friends rather than our brothers and sisters?
BROTHERS AND SISTERS

**TASK: Brainstorm**
Sometimes brothers and sister compete for the attention of parents. As a class, brainstorm other ways in which you may get attention other than competing?

*Big Sister Little Brother* is a re-telling of *The Emperor’s New Clothes* from a different perspective. In what ways do the following different perspectives effect brothers and sisters?

**Age:** ________________________

**Gender:** ________________________

**Position in the family:** ________________________

**Roles and responsibilities:** ________________________

“Sometimes you’re not very nice to me”

Older siblings sometimes tease younger ones because they can. Some ways to cope with teasing include:

- Ignore it.
- Respond back in a way that is humorous.
- Simply agree with the teaser – they will have not got the response they are looking for.
- Tell the teaser enough is enough.
- If these measures aren’t working, ask an adult in charge for help.

Older siblings sometimes feel responsible for their younger siblings which leads them to take charge, tell others what to do and make all the decisions. **Can you think of when Rita may have done this?**

Younger siblings look up to their older siblings and try to impress them. Younger siblings copy their older sibling’s behaviours, games and attitudes. **Can you think of when Archie may have done this?**

**Does any of this occur in your family?**
TRAVELLING

In *Big Sister Little Brother* we hear that Archie and Rita have many adventures while travelling.

**TASK:** Imagine you are going on a road trip with your brother or sister. List some of the places you would like to visit and explore on your travels.

Now write down the things you will need to take with you and the things you will need to leave behind. (For example a television might be too heavy to carry so you would need to leave it behind.) What is most precious to you? Why? Draw pictures of your precious things.

**ITEMS TO TAKE**

**ITEMS TO LEAVE**

**TASK:** Who are the people you would like to go travelling with? Why have you selected them?
TRAVELLING

TASK:
Imagine that you and your brother or sister are going away for two weeks. You can choose to go anywhere you like. Write a letter back home to one of your parents telling them all about an exciting adventure that you have had on your trip.

ADDRESS

DATE

DEAR


BEST WISHES,
PLAYS

*Big Sister Little Brother* was written by the children’s playwright Mike Kenny.

**TASK:** Below is an excerpt from the play *Big Sister Little Brother.* Practice this scene with you and a partner as Archie and Rita. Perform your scene for the class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rita:</th>
<th>Where are we now?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archie:</td>
<td>Back where we started. I got lost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita:</td>
<td>We’ll have to go my way then?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archie:</td>
<td>S’pose so (gets chocolate out to eat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita:</td>
<td>What’s that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archie:</td>
<td>Mine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita:</td>
<td>Where d’you get it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archie:</td>
<td>I saved it from my lunch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita:</td>
<td>Give us a bit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archie:</td>
<td>No. It’s mine. You had one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita:</td>
<td>I ate it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archie:</td>
<td>Tough. This is mine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita:</td>
<td>Please.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archie:</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita:</td>
<td>Abracadabra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archie:</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita:</td>
<td>I’ll tell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archie:</td>
<td>Go on. Tell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita:</td>
<td>It’s not fair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archie:</td>
<td>It is. You’ve had yours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita:</td>
<td>(picks up scary case)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archie:</td>
<td>Don’t, Rita.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita:</td>
<td>You know what’s in here, don’t you Archie. There’s a scary case monster. Isn’t there Archie?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archie:</td>
<td>(puts his hands to his ears)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita:</td>
<td>And you know what will happen if I open it, don’t you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archie:</td>
<td>(starts to sing to blot out the scariness)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita:</td>
<td>Its going to put its slimey tentacles around your leg and drag you into the case with it, where it’s dark and it’ll digest you slowly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archie:</td>
<td>Have it. Have it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita:</td>
<td>Thanks. That’s very kind of you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Think about staging your scene:**

How will you use the space? Different levels? Pace? Pitch? Pause? What will you emphasize? How can you build tension in this scene?
PLAYS

**TASK:** Now imagine that you and an imaginary sibling are travellers and write your own dialogue for a scene in a play. What will cause suspense in your scene? How will it effect the relationship? Practice it and perform it for the class.