

MORTAL FOOLS



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act your age

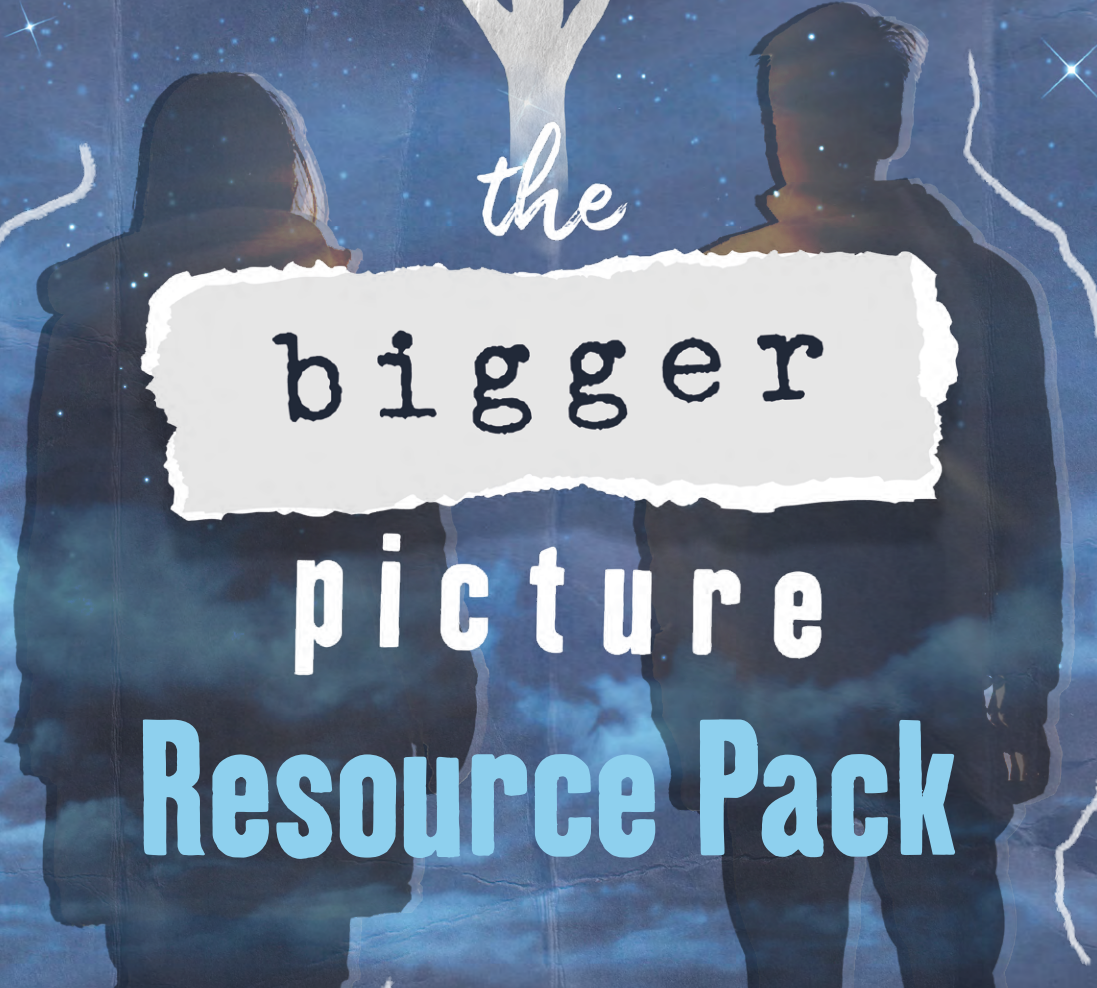
LET ME
grow



IN MY DREAMS



JUST WANT TO PLAY



the

bigger

picture

Resource Pack

press pause



the
bigger
picture



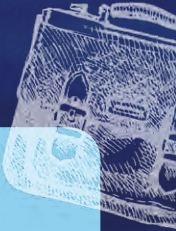
Overview

From January 2023, Mortal Fools Youth Theatre groups worked with our Mortal Fools associate artists in their weekly sessions, to explore the theme of children and young people's relationships with adults – growing up, how they treat each other and how they work together.

This was the starting point for our devising and co-creation process, each group leaned into themes and things that were important to them and had the opportunity to work with a variety of artists, art form and experiment with a variety of film making techniques as part of the process.

The creative output of the project was The Bigger Picture films.

Welcome to our resource pack!



introduction to Mortal Fools

Mortal Fools is a multi award-winning theatre, drama and creative learning company in North East England.

We co-create dynamic, socially relevant, high-quality performance-based work and creative projects. We do this equitably with children, young people, communities and professional arts and youth practitioners.

We specialise in co-creation with children and young people delivering a variety of activities and projects throughout the year. Our sessions take place in various settings, including school and educational settings, out-of-school groups and youth work settings, and community events like Northumberland Pride.

We work with 1,000s of children and young people every year, mostly in the North East, holding safe spaces for young people to be creatively brave – our work is high impact, responds to contemporary needs and can be transformational.

The Bigger Picture is an example of one of our 2023 projects.



Mortal Fools Youth Theatre presents:

**These films are available
to watch now!**



the

**bigger
picture**

**It's as if we just
see things differently...
I just wish there was a way
that I could show them
how I see the world.
What it's like to be me...**

Across 6 poignant and purposeful film shorts, you're invited to see the world through Mortal Fools Youth Theatre's eyes and feel what it's like to grow up today. Their realities, lived experiences, inner worlds, and fantastical dreams – interwoven with the positive changes they want to make in the world, and the hope that we can all be kinder to one another. And have more FUN in our lives!

Mortal Fools Youth Theatre invite you to listen, learn and laugh with them by watching their films and for youth workers, theatre practices, parents, and carers – this short resource pack might help you explore the themes with your young people. We create resource packs like this one so that folks can scaffold conversations, makes watching our digital content less surface level and to encourage your young people to make sense of the themes explored on film.

**Materials you may need to have
to hand ahead of watching the
films and doing any activities:**

- › Paper
- › Drawing materials
- › Magazines/newspaper for collage
- › Scissors
- › Glue

The voices of 75 young people from Northumberland and the North East come together in a collection of short films, created by Mortal Fools Youth Theatre with Fly Girl Films and Mortal Fools' associate artists.

**Advice from our Mortal Fools Practitioners
ahead of watching The Bigger Picture
films and having a go at any activities:**

- › Sometimes we ask our young people to explore topics that are sensitive (like their worries, hopes and dreams). It's important to encourage folks to only ever share what they're comfortable sharing in discussion. And welcoming them to talk to you if there's anything they need support with exploring.
- › You don't have to watch all The Bigger Picture films – you can pick one or a few (or them all) and run with whatever activities/discussions you think might be appropriate for your young people.
- › Make sure you have FUN – games and creative tasks are a great way of unlocking creativity. Feel free to adapt them as appropriate for your young people, to ensure they can engage whilst having fun!
- › We've included different types of activities – not all young people learn or express in the same way or have certain preferences – having a few activities up your sleeve means that young people can engage in a way that works for them.
- › When exploring social action issues – keep asking the question “SO WHAT?” to prompt discussion. This encourages folks to consider why something is important and why it might be important to others – why should people care? How can we get them to care?
- › Always be curious, ask questions and tell young people what excites you when they are sharing.

Film 1:

Mortal Fools Youth Theatre
Ashington Stage 2

out of our minds

Straight from the mouths of Mortal Fools Youth Theatre, this is a letter from young people expressing what they want to see change in Ashington, in Northumberland and the world and how they want the adults in their lives and community to help them make these positive changes.

Pre-watch discussion questions:

Note: You can facilitate discussion as an open forum, get folks to work together in small groups or individually, use collage, drawing, writing, brainstorming on big pieces of paper, think and then share approach – whatever feels appropriate for your group.

- › What change do you want to happen in your community?
- › What does community mean to you? What/who are your community?
- › Who do you think has the responsibility in making positive change in your community happen?
- › What do you think your role as individuals could be in helping make positive changes happen?
- › What's an example of "social action"?

Post watch:

An important part of community is bringing people together, so they can feel a part of something and connect.

Task: Come up with an idea for a public event for your community that would bring people together – use the questions below to prompt thinking...

- › How would your event enable people to connect and have fun?
- › What would event attendees do/enjoy at the event?
- › Where would the event be?
- › What would the event be called?
- › Who from the community would you invite to attend?

Task: And then design a poster/invitation for the event that represents the event in a fun way and share your design with the group.

Task: Write a letter to a grown-up/decision maker expressing things you wish adults would understand and what you'd like to change in the community!

Finish the sentence prompts:

"Dear Adults, we've been thinking..."

"We understand that..."

"But..."

"So, we are asking you to..."

"And we can..."

"So will you help us?"

Share: Invite your group/young people to share what they've made, any thoughts, to look at each other's event posters and read their letters – but only if they are comfortable to share.

click here

Watch: **Out of Our Minds**



Film 2:

Mortal Fools Youth Theatre
Ashington Stage 3 & 4

let us
grow

Teenagers, eh? Too old to play and no longer a carefree child, but too young to be an adult and to have a say in the world! Put up and shut up – seems to be the consistent message from society to teenagers. But what if the world enabled teenagers to still enjoy being kids AND have their voices heard – what if we let them grow!?



Pre-watch discussion questions:

Note: You can facilitate discussion as an open forum, get folks to work together in small groups or individually, use collage, drawing, writing, brainstorming on big pieces of paper, think and then share approach – whatever feels appropriate for your group.

- › If you could time travel, would you go back to your younger self, or future self or stay the same age – and why?
- › What age do you think you become an 'adult'?
- › When do you think adulthood should actually be?
- › What do you miss about being a young child?
- › What are you looking forward to as an adult?

Post watch:

Pick one of the following tasks for your group or share all three options and encourage them to do the one they connect with the most.

Task: Draw a tree on a big piece of paper with a partner and draw/collage things from your early childhood that you miss doing, activities you used to love, toys you used to have and representations of happy moments/memories.

Task: Write a letter to your future self – sharing with them something that you'd like them know or checking in with them about something in the present, that you're looking forward to happening in the future.

Task: Create a mood board/collage that represents things that make you happy / you're grateful for in the present.

Share: Invite your group/young people to share what they've made, any thoughts, to look at each other's creations and read their letters – but only if they are comfortable to share.

Revisit: Invite your young people to reconsider their answers to the pre-watch questions and chat if their answers/views have changed or stayed the same.

click here

Watch: Let Us Grow



Film 3:

Highfield Middle School

in the
making

Mortal Fools Youth Theatre invites you to reflect on what it means to “be resilient” and how we can support others in this! Over three stories, devised by Highfield Middle School, discover moments of resilience and that resilience can look very different depending on the context – whether that’s by yourself or with the support of others; the important thing is figuring out what works for you and to never stop learning and challenging yourself.



click here

Watch: In The Making



Pre-watch discussion questions:

Note: You can facilitate discussion as an open forum, get folks to work together in small groups or individually, use collage, drawing, writing, brainstorming on big pieces of paper, think and then share approach – whatever feels appropriate for your group.

This film explores Resilience – so it’s probably a good idea to define resilience to your group. Resilience can be described as is the process and the outcome of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences; it’s having ability to manage the emotion felt during uncertainty, life challenges, withstand adversity, whilst also having the ability to bounce back and grow from those moments.

- What do you think makes someone resilient?
- Can you think of an example of when you think someone in your life was being resilient?
- What do you think it feels like to be resilient?
- Do you consider yourself resilient?
- Can you think of a time in the last year connected to school or learning setting, where you were resilient?

Post watch:

Task: Write a poem (individually or collectively) about resilience using the 5 senses – what does resilience look/sound/smell/feel/taste like?

Task: Kindness challenge – Lacking in self confidence can impact resilience. The task is to draw and cut out hearts and write compliments/positive things you’d like members of the group to know or remember when they are facing a problem, to remind them they are capable.

Share: Invite folks to give their hearts to member of the group and encourage them to keep them in a safe place, where they can relook at them when life gets tricky.



Film 4:

Mortal Fools Youth Theatre
Tyne Valley Stage 2

in my
dreams

What is the world like in your dreams? Are there dragons? Endless chocolate? Can you teleport? Do you have the ability to make the world a better place for you and others?

In this film, Mortal Fools Youth Theatre Tyne Valley bring their dreams to life and show us what they would like to cherry pick from the dream world, make them a reality in the real world. They share what sort of people they are in their dreams and ask the world to help them become the people they want to be!

click here

Watch: In My Dreams



Pre-watch discussion questions:

Note: You can facilitate discussion as an open forum, get folks to work together in small groups or individually, use collage, drawing, writing, brainstorming on big pieces of paper, think and then share approach – whatever feels appropriate for your group.

- › Do you dream?
- › Do you dream of a world different from this world we live in?
- › What inspires your dreams?
- › Do you have a favourite dream you have?
- › Why do you think it's important to have dreams?
- › In my dreams everyone is...?
- › In my dreams I am...?

Post watch:

Task: Design (draw or collage) your dream world and fill it with all the things you want for the world and fantastical things!

Task: Draw yourself in your dream world- but only include things that could be possible in the real world. What do you look like? What are you doing? What are you good at? What are you known for?

Task: Discussion - what can we do to make these dreams come true?

Task: Pick one thing you'd like to make happen in the real world from your dreams and make an action plan of how you might make it a reality across the next ten years? Break it down into achievable steps to get there.

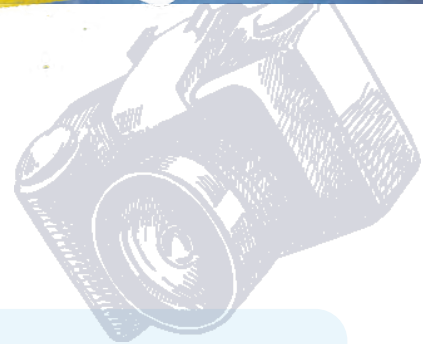
Share: Invite your group/young people to share what they've made, any thoughts, to look at each other's creations- but only if they are comfortable to share.



Film 5:

Mortal Fools Youth Theatre
Tyne Valley Stage 3

the whole story



Imagine if we could see someone else's point of view in the moment; would it help you understand folks better? Or change your opinion of them?

Using Point of View storytelling, step into the everyday reality of Mortal Fools Youth Theatre Tyne Valley and explore assumptions made about young people, where they come from and how they can negatively impact young people.

Pre-watch discussion questions:

Note: You can facilitate discussion as an open forum, get folks to work together in small groups or individually, use collage, drawing, writing, brainstorming on big pieces of paper, think and then share approach – whatever feels appropriate for your group.

- What are some of the assumptions you think society makes about young people?
- Do you think there are stereotypes connected to young people? Are they true?
- Why do you think these assumptions and stereotypes exist?
- Can you think of a time someone make an unfair assumption about you?

Post watch:

Task: Draw/collage a “stereotypical teenager” from the point of view of your teachers/parents/adults in your life? Add personality traits, attributes, attitudes etc. Circle any you think are unfair.

Task: Look at the circled ones and discuss why you think they are unfair and how you might challenge them.

Task: Draw/collage a “stereotypical teenager” from your point of view. What attributes, traits, attitudes do they have? What do you want them to be known for?

Task: Explore differences between the two “stereotypical teenagers” – why do you think the similarities or differences exist?

Task: Write an honest letter to adults, sharing what you would like to say to people who make assumptions about young people and why you'd like it to change.

Share: Invite your group/young people to share what they've made, any thoughts, to look at each other's creations and read each other's letters – but only if they are comfortable to share.

click here



Watch: The Whole Story



Film 6:

Mortal Fools Online Youth Theatre

i Think i'm
ready...

Join Mortal Fools Online Youth Theatre on an adventure inspired by the fantastical worlds in literature and film, that they love to escape to. This film explores the concept of “growing up”, what skills and strengths are needed for this inevitable life process and if young people ever feel “ready”.

When James finds himself in a world other than our own, he meets a group of adventurers on their way to battle a monster – but maybe the monster has more in common with them than they think...



click here



Watch: I Think I'm Ready

Pre-watch discussion questions:

Note: You can facilitate discussion as an open forum, get folks to work together in small groups or individually, use collage, drawing, writing, brainstorming on big pieces of paper, think and then share approach – whatever feels appropriate for your group.

- Do you think you're ever “ready” to be a grown up?
- Why does growing up feel hard?
- What are the attributes of a grown up?
- What are some of your favourite stories that have a fantasy world (e.g. Narnia, Alice in Wonderland, Stranger Things)?
- What do you enjoy about that world? Do you ever imagine yourself there?
- What do you think makes the difference between the grown-ups/adults and young people in that world?

Post watch:

Task: Design/draw a map of your favourite fantasy world from literature/film? What's there? Who is there? What's the landscape like? What challenges and adventures await?

Task: Now draw yourself as the hero or anti-hero of this world.

Task: Write a list on a different piece of paper/digital notebook a list of feelings, thoughts, and emotions this character may feel when they encounter something difficult – positive and negative.

Task: It is rare that we ever have to face a challenge alone – thinking about the negative feelings your character might be having, design an army or team of folks you'd want on your side, to overcome the challenge.

Share: Invite your group/young people to share their worlds, any thoughts and to look at each other's creations – but only if they are comfortable to share.

Thank you

for watching and engaging with
Mortal Fools Youth Theatre films.

Engaging, enabling, empowering, and amplifying young people's voices, is an important part of what we do, so by taking time out to watch the films and by listening to our young people, you helped us on that mission!

If any of the themes or topics have made you feel a certain way or were a bit tricky, we'd like to highlight our Wellbeing Resource. Team Mortal Fools have pulled together a downloadable resource to signpost to a wide variety of wellbeing and mental health support organisations, friends of Mortal Fools, inspirational influencers, courageous activists, and colourful content creators.

You can download that **HERE**



Please keep in touch with us at Mortal Fools - we'd love to hear how you get on using the resource and what you think of the films; we're always happy to chat, connect and share best practice!

Keep in touch with us via:

- › Joining **our mailing list** to keep up to date with all things Mortal Fools.
- › Following and engaging with our content on social media – we are **@mortalfoolsuk** across all channels.
- › Subscribing to our **YouTube Channel**
- › Reaching out to us to chat via: **info@mortalfools.org.uk**



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