

# WICKED

# ACTIVE LEARNING



## Secondary Drama KS3

### Introduction:

This pack is designed for Secondary Drama teachers and students to explore and analyse **Wicked** in more depth, after seeing the show. Included are a range of activities and warm-up games for **Key Stage 3**.

We encourage schools to use this pack in conjunction with the **Wicked Active Learning Introduction Pack**, **Production Images** and **Script Extracts** packs.

### Curriculum links and learning outcomes:

- Creating and developing ideas using collaboration, rehearsal skills and drama terminology.
- Applying theatrical skills in live performance
- Show knowledge and understanding of theatrical elements
- Evaluate and analyse their own and others contribution to the process of creating and refining drama
- Evaluate and analyse performance skills demonstrated in performance

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# Practical warm-up games and lesson starters focussing on Character and Themes

These activities are foundation stage practical drama tasks, primarily for group-work. They focus on the themes of **Wicked** as well as performance skills and collaborative work.

## 1. Being Wicked

Explore stereotypes of what it is to be “wicked” witches.

Ask students to create still images of a “wicked” witch. What characteristics do they have, and how do you see these in their physicality?

Print out different examples of images or descriptions of other witches from popular culture. Examples might include those in *Macbeth*; *The Wizard of Oz*; *Hocus Pocus*; *The Witches* by Roald Dahl; *Stardust*. How are they portrayed?

Consider what makes Elphaba different to these characters.

Start with an image of Elphaba at the beginning of the musical and examine how Elphaba changes as she develops through the story.



Use a Thought-Tracking exercise to explore how Elphaba would be feeling at each stage of the musical, and how this would differ from another more stereotypical ‘witch’.

## 2. Ambitions

Each character in **Wicked** has a strong ambition or dream. This may change throughout the story.

Choose one of the characters and imagine you are telling the audience about their ambition.

Write a monologue for your character which explains your ambition, why you want it, and how you are going to achieve it.



## 3. Character profiles

Photocopy the eight worksheets supplied at the end of this pack and ask students to fill in the details they can remember about each character.

Use your experience of seeing **Wicked** to complete the worksheet and write down any details you can remember.

Try to note down **why** the costume and make-up designers chose specific details, and what effect they wanted to have on the audience, and **how** it made you **feel**?

Use the space around the production photos to label any of the costume, hair and make-up or prosthetics designs.

## 4. Wicked Scenes

Using the **Script Extracts**, students can work in groups to create the scenes.

Share back their scenes with the class, allowing students to feedback and evaluate each other's performances.

## 5. Improvisation

In pairs or small groups, create the following scenes which are 'missing' from **Wicked**.

Each scene should be about 2 minutes long.

You can also add your own scenes into this list if you like.

- Elphaba tells her father she wants to go to Shiz University
- Galinda and Elphaba move into their shared room
- The Wizard appoints Madame Morrible as Press Secretary
- Fiyero is appointed as Captain of the Guards in Oz

Students may want to start scripting the scenes after initial development of work.

## 6. Wicked Animals [longer lesson]

### Warm up suggestions:

#### Finding Neutral

“Neutral” is a key position for an actor. It is the position from which actors can build a character. To build a physical character, students should first find their own neutral – a position which belies nothing about us as our own personalities.

Talk students through finding their “neutral” body position before beginning any of the following exercises.

#### Animal Freeze

Students should walk round the room.

Call out the name of different animals – students should immediately freeze in a pose of that animal. Repeat this with different, and more challenging animals.

Now call out an animal and a number.

In groups of that number, students should work together to create 1 animal – for example:

“Lion, 3” – students need to quickly get into a group of 3 and silently become 1 lion.

It may help to count down from 3 or 5 to give them a set amount of time to become those animals.

#### Passing a Spell

Get the students into pairs.

Each person in the pair is either a witch or a wizard.

In pairs they should decide on 2 or 3 magic spells they want to cast which transforms the other person into an animal. Each different spell has a different effect, so the students need to concentrate on which spell is being said and what happens.

Each spell should transform their partner into an animal. Taking turns as a pair, one student casts the spell, and the other one acts out what has happened to them.

Share back their spells with the class.

## 6. Wicked Animals cont.

### Main lesson

#### Step 1: Becoming a Monkey

This exercise is designed to get students thinking about using their own physicality to transform themselves into animals – it should also be quite a fun class exercise!

Think about the monkeys and how they are represented in **Wicked**.

How are they depicted?



## Step 2: On their Feet

Up on their feet as a class, ask the students to find neutral. They should then begin to walk around the space. Call out different instructions to talk them into the monkey physicality based on their responses gathered above.

It may help to put on a soundtrack for this activity.

## Step 3: Transforming

Once physicalities are established, ask students to explore transforming into their monkey characters from their neutral positions, and then back again. Play with the speed of this transition.

Split the class in half, so that half are observing the monkeys in the room from the beginning of the transformation to full “monkey.”

What do they notice about the physicality?

**Lee Strasberg** used this kind of animal study exercise to help actors develop their human characters. How do the students think this kind of animal study could be used in creating character?

Whilst the monkeys are animals, they are human-like too, upright and life-sized human forms, with a heightened animalistic quality.

In order to become a different creature, students will need to analyse how the animals move and how it is different to how we use our own bodies.

## Analysing images and videos

Close research, and crucially, watching, can be used in the development of any character, but is all the more important when you are creating creatures, as they are so different from ourselves.

Review the following resources, and ask students to find some of their own examples:

- Clips from nature documentaries such as **Natural World: Clever Monkeys** with David Attenborough are available on YouTube.
- **London Zoo** have videos and images of the monkeys in their sanctuary on their website
- **San Diego Zoo** also has good insight on the life of monkeys on their website

In groups, note down the most important physical characteristics of their movements.

In particular, think about:

- The centre of gravity – is it low to the ground or high?
- Where is their eyeline
- Where do they lead from?
- What is the range of their movement?
- What is their pace? Is it slow / fast?
- What do they sound like?

Share back thoughts as a class. Take note of these as the basis of the next exercise.





Character name:

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Key costume and any costume changes:

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Current performer:

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Hair:

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Key scenes:

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Make-up and prosthetics:

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Character name:

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Key costume and any costume changes:

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Current performer:

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Character name:

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Make-up and prosthetics:

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Character name:

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Key costume and any costume changes:

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Current performer:

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Key scenes:

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Make-up and prosthetics:

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