

Lockdown Tales Activities



The Big Breath

By Cleo Sylvestre

Read for Wonderful Beast's Lockdown Tales by Cleo Sylvestre, with original music by Sylvia Hallett.



This beautiful story is about everyone helping each other to make something bad go away.

We can't always do things on our own, and things can only change when we can get everyone aiming for the same result.

With this activity, you can get your friends or family together and act out the story as a team, or 'cast'.

'Dramatization', or making a play: adaptation and casting

THE STORY

listen to the story again, and work out how you want to **act it out**. Which parts of the story can be **acted**, instead of **described**, if you turn it into a play?

You could have a **Narrator**, maybe a grown up or older child who can **read the story**, and children who enact the **dialogue** (that means the bits where two or more characters **talk** to each other).

Will you have your narrator read the text **as you find it** in the original, or will you turn their descriptions into **live action**? If you keep the narrator, which parts would you **still have them describe**?

You can download the text of the story [from our website](#). There are lots of parts, and you might have fun being all of the different animals with different voices, like Cleo did.
Or, you might be able to act it out with more people.

Cast:

Nasty Cloud
Hummingbird
Ant
Spider
Rabbit
Monkey
Rhinoceros
Elephant
Other Animals (who come to help)

CASTING

If there are several of you, decide on who is playing which part (or parts if there are fewer people).

(You can change roles if you do it again so no one feels stuck as one animal).

SET

You could start by creating/ painting/ building a make-believe tropical island as an island back drop for the play.

Send us videos and pictures of your activities! Use the hashtag **#LockdownTales**
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'Dramatization', or making a play: costumes, movement and creating atmosphere

COSTUMES

Perhaps each animal character could have a **mask** (especially bearing in mind Coronavirus, as there is a lot of blowing in the story!). What other ways could you **show** that the animals are blowing? Maybe you could use **words**, like 'Blow, Blow, Blow away Cloud!'

MOVEMENT

Practice being the different animals. How do they **move**? Are they heavy, light, quick, slow? Can you **give a voice** to your animal, saying which you are? How does the animal's voice **tell us something** about it? Would a great **big elephant** have a **little squeaky** voice, or a **big, strong voice**? In the story, the elephant's voice is described as '**friendly**', the cloud's voice as '**deep**', and the rhinoceros' voice as '**rich**'. How might you **vocalise** these characteristics?

OVERTURE

This is a bit of **music**, which is often played before a performance to **create an atmosphere**, or **feeling**.

Try making **sounds** of birds, monkeys, snakes, frogs, lions...different **tropical noises** to make a wonderful **soundscape**. Each person could choose one or two sounds. Start quietly **one by one**, as though the forest is coming to life and then **add another and another** till everyone is celebrating a beautiful day full of sunshine. **Listen** to each other's sounds. Don't just repeat yours. Have some **silent gaps**. That makes it much more exciting, and realistic. You could use this soundscape at different stages in the story, where you want to make a dramatic pause or celebrate a success.

SCRIPT

You could turn the story into a script, but it's up to you how you want to do it. You can find the original text of Cleo's story [here](#).

You might lay out your script like this:

HUMMING BIRD: I shall go and ask the cloud to move away.

NARRATOR: ...said the tiny humming bird. So, she flew up and up until she got nearer to the cloud.

HUMMING BIRD: Could you please go away, Mr Cloud?

NARRATOR: ...she tweeted in her gentle voice.

How will you create **your** play? We'd love to see what you do. Get someone to video your performance and **send it to us!**

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