



BIG DRAMAS second edition

Out of Your Mind

DRAMA TEACHER NOTES

Group discussion

- There are many occasions when we do not say what we really think. As a group, discuss the reasons for us not always speaking 'the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth'.
- As a group, choose one of the named characters and build a character profile of that person, based on evidence from the script and then from your own observations of people. Try to answer as many of the following questions as you can as a starting point. What is the character's:
 - age, marital status, family life?
 - general appearance, choice of clothing, state of health?
 - favourite hobbies, music, food?
- Discuss the role of Jay in *Out of Your Mind*. Do you think the play needs a narrator?

Improvisation

- From the group discussion above, develop an improvised scene where at least one character does speak his or her mind at a time when it is not appropriate or expected. What would happen if a student told a teacher how unreasonable that teacher was being? Or if a girl told her best friend that the new dress really didn't look good on her?
- In groups of four, improvise a scene in which two people are talking and we also hear their thoughts. What about two friends meeting at a school reunion? Or a parent trying to have a heart-to-heart talk with their teenager about a family crisis? You can go for the comedy of such situations, or explore the dramatic power of playing such an improvisation seriously.

Scripting

Take one of the named characters from the script and write a one-minute monologue in which that character speaks his or her mind, with the starting words being 'What really matters to me is ...' You can decide whether this speech is a soliloquy or is delivered to another character. So, for example, you may choose to have Mac finally tell Vera how much he loves classical music and how much he resents her comments about it.

Taking it further

- In this script, movement and mime are used to convey information about the interior lives of some of the characters. Devise a piece of movement or mime for a small group of performers that reveals something unexpected about a character of your own creation. Choose appropriate music or sound effects to support the piece and make notes on costuming and lighting.
- Choose one of the named characters from *Out of Your Mind* and write his or her diary entry describing the events of this particular day.



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- Shakespeare wrote soliloquies to reveal the innermost thoughts of characters such as Hamlet and Macbeth. Choose one Shakespearean soliloquy and write director's notes on the speech. What do we learn about the character from the speech? How would you have an actor perform the speech?



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