

**The Yackandandah Young Players and HotHouse Theatre
presents**

The Last Boy On Earth

By Brendan Hogan

Contents

| | |
|--------------------------------------------|----|
| Synopsis | 4 |
| About the Playwright | 7 |
| Overview of Activities & Discussion Topics | 11 |
| Activities | 12 |
| Script Excerpt | 16 |

TEACHER INFORMATION for

2019 Term 2 ARTS/ DRAMA/ SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT

Aimed at 7 to 12 year olds

Sprout's home is a dump. Planet Earth is a dump. One giant waste transfer station, except nothing gets recycled anymore! The year is 2043 and the world has ended. Human life is all but extinct...except for Sprout, the last boy on Earth.

The Last Boy on Earth is a play about sustainability, consumerism, humanity, relationships and the future of our planet. Brendan Hogan is the winner of the 2018 Martin Lysicrates Prize and this clever, intelligent and confronting play will surprise you with its laugh-out-loud humour, gutsy truth-telling, and ultimate message of hope.

This smart and engaging play is performed by a talented cast of young people from the Yackandandah Young Players, and in collaboration with musician, Ben Gallagher. This unique brand of children's theatre will delight both young people and their families.

Recommended for: Ages 8 and up and adults

Synopsis

It's 2043 and 10 years since the apocalypse. Sprout, a ten-year-old boy, lives with his father, Dear Leader, in a jungle of junk.

Sprout has never seen the Sun, which is permanently blocked out by clouds of dust, nor has he been allowed to venture more than a few metres from their cave-like home.

The only book they have is an old copy of a New Idea magazine, which they call the 'Bad Book', and read it as a testament of all the terrible and wasteful things humans did before the 'wreckoning'. Dear Leader is fanatical, slightly deranged, and insistent that Sprout live simply and sustainably, so that one day they will walk together to the Promised Land that awaits them: Summer Bay. Suddenly, Dear Leader dies, leaving Sprout as the last human on Earth. At first he manages okay, following the rules and routines that Dear Leader had set in place, but when he runs out of food, Sprout is forced to walk out into the Wastelands, a landscape littered with coffee cups, plastic bottles and junk. Here, he finds an iPhone and meets Pete, an advanced form of

artificial intelligence. Back in his home, the wise-cracking Pete begins to pick holes in Sprout's way of life. He introduces Sprout to music, the internet and worst of all, sugar. When Pete reveals Dear Leader to be a failed actor and cult leader, Sprout's entire belief system crumbles around him. He is lost, alone, and can't see the point of anything anymore.

Then they come. They have been watching him; Google sees everything. When the world ended, Google launched a top secret mission to colonise PlanetGoogle, formerly known as the Moon. They have sent two cosmonauts to capture the last boy on Earth so they can learn his secret to survival. Will Sprout go willingly? Or is the world still worth fighting for?

The Last Boy on Earth is a surprisingly hopeful post-apocalyptic play for children and adults. It explores (and occasionally skewers) themes of relationships, sustainability, consumerism, and our reliance on technology to always provide an answer for our growing problems.



PLAYING AT THE HUME BANK BUTTER FACTORY THEATRE

**TUESDAY 9 JULY 7PM
WEDNESDAY 10 JULY 1PM
THURSDAY 11 JULY 1PM
FRIDAY 12 JULY 7PM
SATURDAY 13 JULY 1PM AND 7PM**

ALL PERFORMANCES ARE DURING THE VICTORIAN AND NSW JULY SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

CHECK WITH HOTHOUSE FOR SPECIAL DEALS FOR PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Writer and Director **Brendan Hogan**

Sound Designer **Ben Gallagher**

Creative Producer **Carm Hogan**

Lighting Designer **Rhys Llewelyn**

Season Producer **Beck Palmer (HotHouse)**

With **Connor Wall, Alexandra Mason,
Aya McInerney, Henry Rotherham, Ben
Gallagher**

**Developed with the financial assistance of Creative Victoria
The Last Boy on Earth was first performed by Yackandandah
Young Players in June, 2018.**

About the Playwright

Brendan Hogan is an award-winning playwright and theatre-maker from Yackandandah, who writes for children and their families. His published works for children include, *Scaredy-Cat* (2015) and *How to Beat a Bully* (2016), both of which have been performed by youth ensembles in schools around Australia. In 2017, he received a Creative Victoria grant to create a new work for children about sustainability and renewable energy. *The Last Boy on Earth*, was performed in June, 2018. In 2017/18 he was one of four playwrights selected to take part in a long form creative development with Playwriting Australia and HotHouse Theatre. This 'Outposts' initiative saw him work with dramaturg, Lachlan Philpott, on a new work for children called *Play Number 4*. He was the winner of the 2018 Martin Lysicrates Prize for his play, *Farewell, Mr Nippy*.

Brendan has also worked with diverse groups to create original and inspiring theatre for regional communities. In 2016, he collaborated with

Yackandandah Cemetery Trust and Yackandandah Museum to create and produce *From Here To There*. In 2017, he collaborated with the residents of a local aged-care facility to explore the themes of resilience and growing old to produce a new show, *Living Memory*. Brendan has featured in national print, radio and television media, including *The Conversation Hour* with Jon Faine



and *Back Roads* (ABC TV). He has presented at several conferences and festivals as a writer and an advocate for arts in the community, including the War Widows Guild of Victoria and the Writers, Readers and Poets (WRAP) festival. He is currently a primary teacher at Yackandandah and teaches recreational drama classes at the Flying Fruit Fly Circus, Yackandandah.

Term Two

Art/Drama/Sustainability Project

Upcycling A Set

The original set for *The Last Boy on Earth* was made from upcycled materials and when the show was finished, the entire set was recycled.

With your help, we will be upcycling again to create the chaotic rubbish strewn world that Sprout has been living in.

Your class project will be to use recycled objects, cardboard and plastic of all different sizes and shapes to create part of the set onstage and set the scene in the foyer before the show. There will be puppets to make too, for use in class for drama and storytelling. All materials will be provided by HotHouse, and at the end of Term 2 the creations for the show will be collected and taken to the theatre. Creations can be returned to schools once the performances are finished or once again recycled.



The Last Boy on Earth is performed by four young people in years 6 and 7, plus a live musician. There are characters with a hero story that children can relate to, lighting and music that are magical and a set made of recycled everyday items that bring the story to life. Stage effects, props, costumes and music are used to draw you into the world Sprout has been left with. Attending a live performance is a rich and engaging learning opportunity. Children will get the most of a theatre experience by talking about and practicing being an audience member in the class and drama room at school. The audience sit and listen quietly for most of the time, join in the action when invited, and clap and cheer to show their appreciation. They allow fellow audience members to watch the show without interruptions.

Live Performance for Young People



Overview of activities, focus questions and discussion topics:

Understanding Theatre

What is a theatre? What are actors? What are characters? What are costumes? What is a stage? What are props? What is a set? What is a script? Is theatre 'real'? How can movement tell a story? How can music, dance and sound effects tell a story?

Drama

The Last Boy on Earth explores ideas of loneliness and imagination, companionship and love and how doing what you think is right is a kind of bravery.

Learning intention: Design and make a puppet-friendly and a waste-land scenery, using them both to tell a story.

To be successful: Research different types of puppet making materials and media. Plan how to make their puppets, create a waste-landscape using collage – newspapers, old wrapping paper and glue them down, think about more dark areas than light...remember Sprout has never seen the sun!

English

What would it be like to be the last person on Earth? Would you like it? What would be good? What would be bad? Students firstly write a short story about what they would do if they had the

whole Earth to themselves.

Learning intention: Write a script or storyboard with speech bubbles and a cartoon-like image of your puppet and present it to the class.

To be successful: Visit your local library and read different types of picture books, ask the librarian to read a story, find some cartoon style story telling; such as the *13 Story Treehouse*, *Captain Underpants*, etc. Write your own story about what the Earth would be like with no adults around!

Sustainability

What is happening to our planet? What happens to plastic after we throw it in the bin?

How can we think more environmentally and how can we reduce our waste at school? At home?

Sustainability is a word that is used often in politics and on the TV. But sustainability is not just how we deal with what we throw away but also how we build strong and engaged communities. Families and schools play a vital role in the fabric of our communities.

Learning intention: Examine each of these ideas in a group discussion.

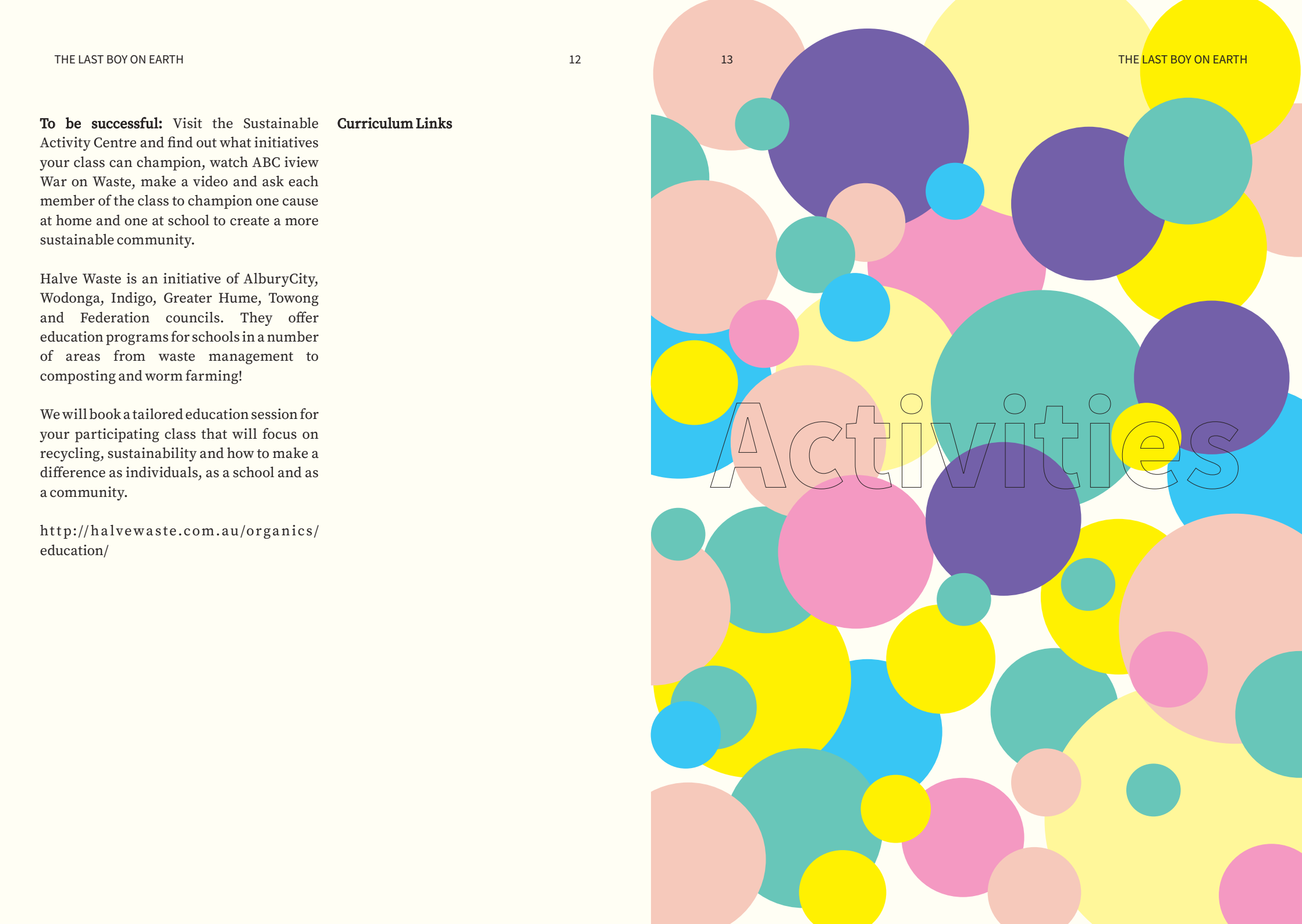
To be successful: Visit the Sustainable Activity Centre and find out what initiatives your class can champion, watch ABC iView War on Waste, make a video and ask each member of the class to champion one cause at home and one at school to create a more sustainable community.

Halve Waste is an initiative of AlburyCity, Wodonga, Indigo, Greater Hume, Towong and Federation councils. They offer education programs for schools in a number of areas from waste management to composting and worm farming!

We will book a tailored education session for your participating class that will focus on recycling, sustainability and how to make a difference as individuals, as a school and as a community.

<http://halvewaste.com.au/organics/education/>

Curriculum Links



Activities

TIMELINE

Ten Weeks

| | ACTIVITY | MATERIALS |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Activity 1 | <p>Introduction to the play</p> <p>Explain what a synopsis is. As a class or individually, students read the synopsis for The Last Boy On Earth. Using the script excerpt, have students work in pairs or small groups to see if they can identify particular features of scripts. Discuss. In small groups of 4, students use the script excerpt as a form of Reader's Theatre.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - synopsis of play - script excerpt |
| Activity 2 | <p>Write a story</p> <p>In The Last Boy On Earth, Sprout is the last surviving human on Earth. Individually or in small groups, students come up with what they see as being the advantages and disadvantages of being the last human on earth. Discuss as a class. Students write a story or journal entry, imagining that they are the last person on Earth. They explain what it is like, what the challenges are, and the benefits.</p> | |
| Activity 3 (optional) | <p>Sustainability</p> <p>Halve Waste Incursion</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Halve Waste incursion |
| Activity 4 | <p>Puppet making</p> <p>In The Last Boy On Earth, Sprout makes a puppet friend out of an old basketball to keep him company. Using recycled materials, students (either individually or in pairs) make their own 'junkyard puppet'.</p> | |
| Activity 5 | <p>Bringing the puppet to life</p> <p>Once the puppet is complete, students bring their creation 'to life' by developing 'character'. Students complete a character profile in response to some of the following prompts: name, things it likes to eat, things that make it happy, things that make it angry, things it is afraid of, something it is really good at, something it doesn't want anyone else to know, something it dreams about, three unusual things you would find in its pocket or suitcase.</p> | |
| Activity 6 | <p>Building a recycled world</p> <p>In The Last Boy On Earth, Sprout's home is surrounded by a landscape of waste. Individually, in pairs or in groups, use recycled materials to create the landscape your puppet/s inhabit.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recycled materials. HotHouse will give you some ideas to start with. |
| Activity 7 | <p>Create a story</p> <p>In pairs or small groups, students write a short play (using features of a script) about their puppet/s set in the landscape they have created. Alternatively, students could write a story or journal entry from the point of view of the character they have made.</p> | |
| Activity 8 | <p>This is what we made</p> <p>Students share or perform what they have created.</p> | |

An excerpt from ‘The Last Boy On Earth’ by Brendan Hogan. There are four characters in this excerpt: Sprout, Moongirl, Moonboy and Googlebot (artificial intelligence – a bit like Siri on an iPhone)

SCENE FOUR

SPROUT is unconscious. He is wearing a special collar around his neck. MOONGIRL has a matching one on her wrist. MOONBOY is conducting an experiment, while MOONGIRL is looking at the different pieces of junk in SPROUT’S home. He wakes. When he sees them, SPROUT is startled and moves back.

MOONGIRL

Do not move! Do you understand, savage?

SPROUT

Who are you?

They both ignore him.

Are you from the future?...Or a Lady Gaga Film clip?

MOONGIRL presses a button on her wrist,

zapping SPROUT.

MOONGIRL

You ask too many questions!

MOONBOY

GoogleBot, answer.

GOOGLEBOT

On December 22, 2034, in response to the extinction of human life on Earth, GoogleAeronautics executed a top secret plan to colonise PlanetGoogle, formerly known as the Moon. Praise be to Google.

MOONBOY & MOONGIRL

Praise be to Google.

They both turn to SPROUT.

Say it!

SPROUT

Say what!

MOONGIRL presses a button on her wrist, causing SPROUT to convulse.

MOONBOY

Praise be to Google. Say it.

SPROUT

But dear Leader said Google was owned by the Devil himself.

MOONBOY

(Angry) Your leader was an ignoramus! Google is our saviour, ya!

Praise be to Google!

MOONGIRL

Praise be to Google!

MOONBOY

Stand up! Praise be to Google! Say it.

SPROUT

Well, you see, would you believe that I’ve just left one cult, so I’m kinda on the rebound and don’t really –

MOONGIRL zaps him.

MOONGIRL

Say it!

SPROUT

(Feebly) Praise be to Google.

MOONBOY

Ya, now, you understand.

SPROUT

Are you going to kill me?

MOONBOY & MOONGIRL look to each other.

Because, to be honest, I think I’m ready. When living becomes meaningless, so does dying. Just make it quick.

SPROUT closes his eyes and prepares to die. He winces in anticipation. After a while he opens one eye and sees them ignoring him.

Well, are you going to do it or not?

MOONBOY

GoogleBot, answer.

GOOGLEBOT

In three minutes, the shuttle-pod will return to Earth and you will be transported to PlanetGoogle to undergo further observation. If you submit, you will not be harmed. Praise be to Google.

MOONBOY & MOONGIRL

Praise be to Google.

SPROUT

I just have one more question...well two actually...

MOONGIRL holds her finger over the button, threateningly.

Okay, just the one. Why me? Why come all this way to get me?

MOONBOY gets up close to SPROUT.

MOONBOY

Ya, finally a good question, little Sprout.

SPROUT

How do you know my name?

MOONBOY

Ya, thanks to the mobile phone, we know most things about you. When you turned it on, ya, Google saw you. Google sees everything. Eight billion people. Poof! Dead, just like that. Nobody survived in the whole world. Except you, ya? Why is that? Google wants to know your secret. A tone or melody plays.

GOOGLEBOT

Prepare to GoogleMunch.

In unison, MOONBOY and MOONGIRL stop what they are doing and remove identical items from their space-packs. It is their food, in non-descript vacuum sealed packaging. SPROUT eyes it off.

SPROUT

I sure am hungry. I wonder what it tastes like?

MOONBOY and MOONGIRL turn away so SPROUT can't see them eating. When they are finished eating, they both chuck the packaging away. A tone or melody plays.

GOOGLEBOT

Prepare for GoogleBurp.

MOONBOY and MOONGIRL burp in unison.

SPROUT

Are you going to recycle that?

They both ignore him.

I said, you should probably recycle that, otherwise it's just going to go to landfill.

MOONBOY

Ya, like your home? It's a dump.

SPROUT

It's not my rubbish.

MOONGIRL

It's disgusting.

SPROUT

What? So you don't have any junk on PlanetGoogle?

MOONGIRL

Yes, but we don't live in it.

SPROUT

Where does it go then?

MOONGIRL

I don't know. Away.

SPROUT

Is this plastic?

MOONBOY laughs then becomes serious.

MOONBOY

Ya, do not make me laugh. It was scientifically proven in 2033 that the overuse of plastic causes cancer, diabetes and racism.

SPROUT

What is it then?

MOONBOY

That is GoogleCon.

SPROUT looks at him blankly.

Ya, GoogleBot, answer.

GOOGLEBOT

GoogleCon is the number one natural resource on PlanetGoogle. Made largely from silicon mined from the GoogleSurface, GoogleCon can become anything. Buy GoogleCon today. Praise be to Google.

MOONBOY & MOONGIRL

Praise be to Google!

They look to SPROUT.

SPROUT

(Half-heartedly) Praise be to Google.

MOONGIRL gets up in his face.

MOONGIRL

You better smarten up stupid boy if you don't want Google to hurt you.

SPROUT

Why would they hurt me?

MOONGIRL

You think they send us all the way here just to help you? Google thinks you are special. They think you are an advanced species. But when they see you – see how pathetic and stupid you are...you'll wish you'd died, just like all the other useless Earth humans.

She glares at him and the tension is broken by the sound of a tone or melody.

GOOGLEBOT

Prepare for GoogleTinkle.

MOONBOY and MOONGIRL urinate in their space-suits.

Connor Wall

PLAYS SPROUT



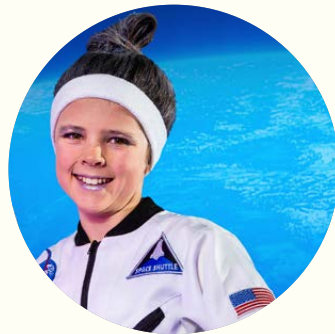
Alexandra Mason

PLAYS MOONGIRL



Aya McInerney

PLAYS MOONBOY



Henry Rotherham

PLAYS GOOGLEBOT



Acknowledgements

This Education Pack has been developed by Brendan Hogan and HotHouse Theatre with the assistance of Carolyn Doyle.

