

# PERFORMANCES

## Girl Who Cried Wolf



Arena Theatre Company  
Written by Angela Betzien  
Directed by Rosemary Myers

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education programs

The following resources explore a range of activities suitable for development in the Victorian Essential Learning Standards levels 4 and 5 in the following Strands:

Physical, Personal and Social learning Strand  
(Civics and Citizenship / Interpersonal development domains)  
Discipline-based learning Strand (Arts / English domains)  
Interdisciplinary learning Strand  
(Thinking Processes / communication domains)

The following notes are a sample of ideas for activities and are intended to offer a broad jumping off point for teachers and students.

Teachers are best placed to apply and / or adapt any or all of these activities within the knowledge they have of their own students, their abilities and entry level base.

QUESTIONS WITH THE WRITER AND DIRECTOR .....	3
FABLES .....	8
STORYTELLING .....	9
STATUS / CHARACTER.....	11
THEATRICAL STYLE, ELEMENTS, CONVENTIONS .....	18
GREEK CHORUS .....	19
EXAGGERATED MOVEMENT / MOOD AND TENSION .....	20
STAGE DESIGN .....	24
RESOURCES .....	28

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**NOTE: Please remember to arrive 30 minutes before the starting time of the show.**

# Girl Who Cried Wolf

A few questions with writer, Angela Betzien, and director, Rosemary Myers

What was and is the inspiration for the play?

Angela:

The initial stimulus for the story was a real event I had read about in the newspaper. An eleven year old girl reported to police that two men had attempted to abduct her as she was walking home from school. The girl maintained the lie for several days, recreating the event and describing in considerable detail the appearance of the two men and the vehicle they were driving. She was eventually caught out and the lie was revealed. Much of my work begins from this point, a real event reported in the news that I then fictionalize and magnify.

Rose:

This was a news story that had come to Angela's attention about a girl in Queensland who faked her own abduction. Angela was also interested in other stories of real abductions.

Noel Jordan, a producer for young audiences at the Opera House, brought Angela and Arena together. Angela had ideas for the show and she undertook a lot of research. We began the first development with lots of ideas and some samples of different writing styles - scenes - that Angela had written. We worked with actors on the floor with this writing and with these ideas mapping potential storylines and roughly improvising them to see what narrative structures offered us the most interest and potential.

From here we settled on a rough storyline and then Angela wrote a draft. We then spent another two weeks developing the work - one mapping the story further and another testing the ideas with young audiences.

**The play reveals a director and writer both in clear grasp of their talents - how did your creative relationship influence the development of the play?**

Rose:

As a Director I want to be involved in generating and shaping the work - especially as it is a new script. Angela was happy to work that way. For me when it is a new work the artistic team understands what it is in the very active process of creating (evolving) it is quite an organic process and it is about mutually exploring ideas and hopefully furthering your own understandings. Angela is very capital 'P' political - she is about art as a mechanism for social change - usually that kind of manifesto is not of great appeal to me because I find it can lead to really didactic work. In this

instance I was so excited by the way Angela's strong political interest was the driver of her imagination - that the political ideas were very strongly explored from the character perspective. I found it meant the situations were well conceived and the themes were pursued in complex ways.

Angela:

GWCW is our first collaboration. I've worked very consistently with another director and creative team. Rose's creative process and aesthetic is very different but that's why I was keen to collaborate with her and with Arena. I'd never written a piece with multi media before so I was very excited by that challenge as well. I found Rose's left of centre thinking a huge influence on the writing. I honestly don't think this script would have taken the direction it has if another director had been working on it. Rose is also very good at plot and structure, one of my weaknesses so this led to a very plot driven play.

**The themes do explore incredibly difficult and challenging terrain at times. How do you successfully navigate such terrain without being superficial?**

Rose:

I think it is about having strong dramaturgy - whether that is about the narrative, the tension, the action, the characters or the pathology of the work you are creating.

Angela:

I think the trick is to focus on character, relationship and story. These are the primary elements which audiences connect with. I'd like to think the issues mentioned above sit beneath these primary elements, not on top of it. Hopefully as an audience we understand, learn, acknowledge the effects of PTSD and war, through Joe's sadness and the difficult relationship he is having with his daughter. There is absolutely no point in lecturing audiences about issues, that's for the essay writers. At the same time, I absolutely want the audience to take away a new understanding of the world they live in. Theatre should be engaging and challenging.

**Were the actors part of a devising process first?**

Angela:

Yes, our first creative development involved improvisation from the character and storyline ideas I'd set down in the concept document. This then formed part of the material that informed the first draft of the play. We then had the opportunity to work further with actors on the text. Actors have been hugely influential in shaping the direction of the particular characters.

Rose:

There were actors involved in all stages and they were critical (to the process) and certainly in my opinion they are also writers of the work

contributing the development of the characters and the storyline. The actors for the development process were not the same as the ones in the show - due to availability.

**The use of animation is particularly effective in setting mood...what were / are the challenges of using projections? As a writer? As a director?**

Rose:

It's vital that you understand the role the projections play in the mise en scene. The story boarding of the work is quite complex as you need to build the stage pictures up with the integration between the live action and the pre-recorded image. Then the technical integration is always quite complicated. The animator Chris More was absolutely fantastic to work with - this is the third show we have worked on together, so we had a good history. But it is a huge job creating all that content!

Angela:

I think the animation sets the tone / style of the piece – a Limeny Snicket / Edward Scissorhands suburban gothic. I think the media is brilliant in creating the mood, the landscape. I love that it is not literal, it's really very heightened. I don't like animation that is used only to create place, it has to be more complex than that and I think that has been achieved in this play.

**What kind of rehearsal process was undertaken?**

Rose:

We had two phases of development, and then we broke the rehearsal into two blocks. In the first we storyboarded the show blocking the actors on the floor and drawing the ideas for the animation (stick figures). Then Chris spent six weeks making the video. We had three weeks to put it all together.

Angela:

I really value the feedback of the actors during the process. One actor I work with in particular will always tell me if I'm overstating something. I think that's inevitable in early drafts. Redrafting is all about paring back the language and letting image and silence speak volumes.

**Is the best theatre a theatre that appeals to everyone? That it reaches an entire community not just an intended or specific audience?**

Angela:

Good question. It was strange presenting the play initially to an adult audience, not the primary target of the work. I'm still asking the question who is the target audience? We created it for middle school. I wanted to write something that worked on different levels. Older audiences find layers in the work that younger children may not.

Rose:

Some theatre seems to work for all audiences but there is also content factor - I think aged relevant perspective is important for interest - in general I don't think young people want to watch plays about mid life crisis for example. You want to be engaged by issues and experiences that speak with your own. Also young people have less set ideas about theatrical form which I think is fantastically liberating as a theatre maker.

**When it appears that Laura's dad is going to be blamed for the abduction - the play unfolds very much like a modern Greek tragedy. Was Greek tragedy even considered as a basis for the drama?**

Rose:

I didn't think about Greek tragedy - Angela may have. I just thought about characters stakes and action. I think it is a drama with a gothic theatricalisation.

Angela:

That's interesting... I didn't think about that, I would call the play contemporary suburban gothic in the tradition of Tim Burton and Lemony Snicket....and I guess classic plot structures have been employed. This is a hero's journey of sorts and is much more traditional in that sense than much of my other writing. I do think contemporary writers are greatly influenced by what has gone before, what works in relation to story. Suspense, revelation, climax, red herrings... these are classic devices borrowed from the past.

**How does the design influence the development of the play?**

Angela:

While I always knew that animation would be part of the production I didn't know until fairly late in the process what this might look like. I guess the key connection between the text and the media / design was the heightened gothic style and mood.

Rose:

Theatre is a multi-disciplined art form - the design is a major language of the theatre - it is about how all the art forms intersect to make the theatre. The design style came from the gothic and suburban styles in the writing but they manifest it in a visceral way.

**Music was integral to the mood of the play and live musicians made this all the more immediate....how did the process for the composition unfold?**



Angela:

Rose had lots of different ideas about music and how the live music might work in the production. She might like to elaborate on that... I love the live music, it's such a treat, watching the players respond to the actors on the stage.

Rose:

Yes - the music is just about the most visceral language for me because I find it really dictates emotional response. I think Jethro and I were really on the same page with the show right from the start - so it was quite an easy process. I like to have the composer in the rehearsal room as much as possible so we can try ideas as we go and create the scenes and the overall palette that way. I have worked with Jethro before so we already had a strong process for working together. I was very keen to have live music in the show and the cello seemed particularly appropriate for the mood.

**What do you think young people might do to make great theatre?**

Angela:

While I loved the opportunity to work with this level of technology and some beautifully executed animation, I also believe theatre can be equally powerful with none of that and I seek to create what I would call "poor theatre" often. The best theatre is about good storytelling, that's all and it doesn't require any resources other than a group of good storytellers, imagination, a space and an audience.

To make great theatre, young people need imagination. A trust in their own imagination and that of the audience's. Nothing more, nothing less.

Rose:

I think many young people are pretty imaginative and ingenious and I think these are the number one criteria. As I said earlier it is my opinion that young people are way less constrained by conventional notions of what theatre can be and that is very exciting. I say be playful, bold and creative and try and explore ideas that you burn to understand at a deeper level - tell stories that you know and that you feel are burning to be told.

# Fables...

The title of the play is **Girl Who Cried Wolf**.

The title draws on a fable called the Boy Who Cried Wolf.

Read this:

**The Boy Who Cried Wolf**, also known as The Shepherd Boy and the Wolf, is a [fable](#) attributed to [Aesop](#) (210 in Perry's numbering system), and written in 1673.<sup>[1]</sup> The [protagonist](#) of the fable is a bored [shepherd](#) boy who entertained himself by calling out "[wolf](#)". Nearby villagers who came to his rescue found that the alarms were false and that they'd wasted their time. When the boy was actually confronted by a wolf, the villagers did not believe his cries for help and the wolf ate the flock. In some fairy-tale versions, when the villagers ignore him the wolf eats him, and in other versions he simply mocks the boy, saying now no one will help him, and that it serves him right for playing tricks. The [moral](#) is stated at the end of the fable as:

Even when liars tell the truth, they are never believed. The liar will lie once, twice, and then perish when he tells the truth.

In reference to this tale, the phrase to "cry wolf" has long been a common idiom in English, described in [Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable \[2\]](#), and modern English dictionaries [\[3\]\[4\]](#). The phrase "Boy Who Cried Wolf" has also become somewhat of a [figure of speech](#), meaning that one is calling for help when he or she does not really need it. Also in common English there goes the saying: "Never cry Wolf" to say that you never should lie, as is the above phrases.

Research activities:

1. Use the internet and / or the library to investigate other fables or nursery rhymes. Make a list of the ones you discover.
2. Ask at home if a parent, guardian or older family member might have any fables or stories that have a message or moral that they remember from their childhood. Why do they especially remember that particular one? Add these to the list.

Discussion activities:

3. Report back to the class on the fables you have found, heard about, discovered.
4. Discuss them as a class.



5. Discuss films or shows that explore similar themes.  
For example, *Big Fat Liar*, the movie, has main characters called Jason **Shepherd** and Marty **Wolf!** (You may like to watch it as a class).

6. In your class discuss: What is the point of a fable?

Activity:

Choose one of the fables you have researched and in groups retell the fable to the class but as follows:

Use a narrator while the others create four freeze frames that go with the narration to tell the story.

Extension:

Bring the freeze frames to life with sound and movement.

Activity:

In groups of four or more retell this story in your own way and in your own style.

Retell it as:

- An Action story
- A Romance
- A Documentary

For example, tell the story from different points of view: the wolf, the boy, the sheep, the villagers – a bit like the animated story SURF'S UP where we get everyone's point of view combined with action to tell the story.

What other style can you think of?

How does the style affect how you feel about the story, and the characters?

## Storytelling

Angela Betzien, the writer of **Girl Who Cried Wolf**, is a brilliant storyteller. However it's because she does a lot of research and practices the craft of writing that makes her so good as well as her talent and passion.

You can practice the craft of writing with the following exercise. It's simple.

Try this narrative exercise on paper. Write the line and then fill in the blank....you can't get this wrong – it's your story!

**Once upon a time...**(fill in the blank)

For example: There was a poor, friendless boy who walked to school...

**And every day...**(fill in the blank)

he passed by an old, empty, dilapidated house...

**Then one day...**(fill in the blank)

a woman came out the front door crying...

**And because of this...**(fill in the blank)

he went to help her...

**And because of this...**(fill in the blank)

the woman gave him one million dollars...

**And because of this..**(fill in the blank)

he bought gifts for all the kids at school...

**And because of this...**(fill in the blank)

he was suddenly very popular...

**And because of this...**(fill in the blank)

the kids at school wanted more...

**Until finally...**(fill in the blank)

he spent all the money and was poor and friendless again

**The moral of the story is...**(fill in the blank)

Well? What do you think?

Try this exercise again but write your own new narrative. Be bold about your creative choices.

Try a third narrative.

Activity:

In groups, read your stories to each other.

Choose one from each person to act out.

Use the person who wrote the story as a narrator to say the lines while the others create freeze frames that go with the narration.

Bring the freeze frames to life with sound and movement.

Research activity:

Watch an episode of **the Simpsons** at home or in the classroom and see if they follow the narrative exercise too.

Once upon a time...there was a boy called Bart

And every day...he went to a school he hated

Then one day...he discovered that if he pretended to be terminally ill

everyone would feel sorry for him

And because of this... he could get out of class...

Report your findings to the class.

## Status / Character

Discussion:

Discuss what 'status' means. What is a status symbol? An expensive car? A watch?

Who are people in 2008 who have high status?

Who in our society has low status?

What is high status? What is low status?

Activities

Status exercise

In an open space, select half of the class as "A" people and the other half as "B" people.

The "A's" walk in straight lines, and maintain direct eye contact at all times.

The "B" people walk in zig zags and shift their eye contact often.

Walk in the space and greet each other. Swap over.

What did you experience?

The status script:

A: Hello

B: Hello

A: Been waiting long?

B: Ages

Try this script with a partner. Try it with A as high status and B as low status. Reverse this and see what happens. Try it so that the status is equal. Show the class.

In pairs, using acting skills to develop a clear and exaggerated character, make a scene in which one of you plays a high status character and one plays a low status character.

Select a location and a time. Experiment and improvise.

In the scene see if there is the possibility of something occurring that will shift the status in some way so that it is not the same as when the scene began.

Discussion:

Characters in **Girl Who Cried Wolf** could be said to be high and low status.

Catriona has high status – she is even described as the Princess of Pleasant Lakes. Her dad is a wealthy developer. He appears to have high status.

Laura has low status. Other school kids call her a 'freak'.

Her dad has mental health issues. She does not have a computer. He lives in a caravan park. Because of this he has low status.

Ada has low status when she's questioned about not having a job, but does

her status change?

The status of different characters shifts during the play. How does it shift?  
What happens to the characters and their status? Why?

Activity

Read this scene:

**Scene 10**

*Scene morphs into the school grounds.*

*Laura is sitting alone under a tree reading her poetry book.*

**RYAN** Hey loser, I mean Laura.

**LAURA** Yes?

**RYAN** She knows she's a loser.

**LAURA** Why are you associating with Ryan Smalley, Catriona? Everyone knows he sticks frozen peas down his underwear.

**RYAN** How do you know that?

**LAURA** Saw it on U Tube.

**CATRIONA** We're going out.

**RYAN** We're totally in love.

**CATRIONA** Totally.

**RYAN** You'll never know what that's like.

**LAURA** I already know what that's like.

**CATRIONA** How?

**RYAN** Do you have a pet dog?

**LAURA** I've read Shakespeare's sonnets.

**RYAN** Who?

*Laura recites a sonnet.*

**LAURA** *Let me not to the marriage of true minds,  
Admit impediments; love is not love  
Which alters when it alternations finds,  
Or bends with the remover to remove:  
O, no, it is an ever-fixed mark,  
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;  
It is the star to every wand'ring bark,  
Whose worth's unknown, although his heighth be taken.*

*Silence*

**RYAN** Write a poem for us.

**CATRIONA** Shut up Ryan.

**RYAN** Yeah write a poem for us dedicate it to our love.

**LAURA** If you want me to write a poem I'll need to know a bit more about it.

**RYAN** What do you need to know?

**LAURA** How far have you gone?

**CATRIONA** So none of your business.

**RYAN** How far do you think?

**LAURA** You've just held hands you haven't even kissed yet.

**RYAN** Have so kissed.

**LAURA** With tongue?

**CATRIONA** Pervert.

**RYAN** Yeah you're a total pervert.

**LAURA** If I'm going to write a poem I need to know everything.

**CATRIONA** Forget it.

**LAURA** You're obviously both frigid.

**CATRIONA** Who was that man who wished you good luck at the Idol competition Laura?

**RYAN** Yeah.

LAURA No one.

CATRIONA That was your Dad.

LAURA No it wasn't.

CATRIONA Yes it was. Osama Bin Laden kicked him out of his cave cos he stank. I smelt him.

RYAN Yeah he was totally rank.

CATRIONA Don't they have showers at the Caravan Park? Can't he afford soap?

LAURA That wasn't my Dad.

RYAN Who was it, you're boyfriend?

LAURA A homeless man whose life I saved one time. And now he's forever indebted to me.

RYAN Really?

CATRIONA She's lying derelict.

LAURA Where was your Mum and Dad, Catriona? I didn't see them at the competition.

CATRIONA They're in Hong Kong.

LAURA Haven't they been gone for months?

CATRIONA They're on very important business.

LAURA It's a pity they missed your big Idol win and what about your 13<sup>th</sup> birthday next Saturday. Are they coming home for that?

*Catriona is silent.*

LAURA You sure they haven't forgotten you exist?

CATRIONA Shut up.

LAURA Maybe you should call them and remind them who you are. You can borrow my phone if you want.

CATRIONA You own a mobile? I thought you were too povo.

LAURA Fact: Two out of three children born in Australia were unwanted accidents.

CATRIONA That's so not true.

LAURA I'm afraid it's an *Inconvenient Truth*, Catriona.

CATRIONA Shut up.

*Catriona storms off*

RYAN You've upset her now you freaking....freak face.

*Silence*

RYAN What?

LAURA I can show you how to do it.

RYAN What?

*Ryan hesitates, thinks about it, and concedes. Laura pulls him close to her.*

LAURA You have to hold me like this.

Put your arms around me. Put your hand there.

Now, you have to look deeply into my eyes. My eyes Ryan.

Now tell me that you love me.

RYAN What?

LAURA Tell me that you love me.

RYAN No way.

LAURA You have too Ryan or it won't work.

*Pause*

RYAN I love you.

LAURA Say it like you mean it Ryan.

RYAN I love you.

*They are millimetres away from kissing when Catriona comes back and sees*



*them together.*

**CATRIONA** Ryan? FREAKS. JUST DIE BOTH OF YOU. YOUR MUM'S OBESE RYAN AND SHE SMOKES AND SHE'S GOT DIABETES AND HER FINGERS ARE PROBABLY GOING TO FALL OFF AND SHE'LL PROBABLY DIE AND IT'LL BE ALL HER OWN FAULT AND YOU'RE DAD'S A CREEP AND HE LOOKED AT ME FUNNY WHEN I WAS IN MY BIKINIS AND LAURA YOU'RE MUM'S POOR AND CAN'T GET A BOYFRIEND AND SHE DOESN'T EVEN OWN HER OWN HOUSE AND YOUR DAD'S GONE PSYCHO FROM THE WAR AND HE'S PROBABLY GOT WARTS FROM THE CARAVAN PARK SHOWERS AND HE'S ON A MENTAL ILLNESS PENSION BLUDGING OFF THE GOVERNMENT AND YOU TWO SO BELONG TOGETHER. YOU SHOULD GET MARRIED AND HAVE LITTLE UNWANTED FREAK BABIES AND LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER ON THE DOLE. I HATE YOU BOTH.

*Silence*

**LAURA** So that's how you do it.

**RYAN** Shut up freak.

*Ryan runs after Catriona.*

Discuss where the status shifts.  
How does the language help shift the status?

Print out the scene.  
In groups of three perform the scene for the class.  
Each group will be different. Observe how body language also affects status.  
What happens to the body language of a character when their status drops or gets higher?

How does Catriona deal with her changed circumstances? – i.e. having to go off to boarding school?

Activity

Read the scene below:

**CATRIONA** Is it true, that statistic?

**LAURA** What statistic?

**CATRIONA** Two out of three babies born in Australia are accidents? Their parents never wanted them?

**LAURA** I just made that up.

**CATRIONA** I knew that. You're such a liar Laura Black.

**PRINCIPAL** Good morning students. Firstly I'd like to welcome back two Pleasant Lakes students who've both had some time away from school. I am aware that rumours and innuendo will be rife and I want to put an end to all that. I'm hoping that a valuable lesson has been learnt by all. Catriona Dijon has asked for special permission to address you all on this, her last day at Pleasant Lakes Primary.

*Catriona approaches the podium.*

**CATRIONA** Thankyou Mr Thwaite. I just want to say before I leave Pleasant Lakes Primary to go to my really excellent new exclusive private boarding school that I am really really sorry to anyone that I've hurt through my actions and my lies. I could never deliberately hurt anyone. I'm just not like that. All I wanted was to find out what it was really like for street kids. Many of you probably don't know this but there are millions of kids living on the streets in Australia. Many of them do not have any homes. They eat from garbage cans and vandalise train stations for entertainment because they don't have Playstations or DVD's like us. It's not a very nice life and I found that out the hard way. That's why I'm starting a special campaign to raise money for street kids to get them off the street and into proper homes like the ones we take for granted in Pleasant Lakes. To start the fund I'm giving \$500 of my own hard earned pocket money and I encourage all of you to dig deep too. And where ever I go I will always remember the motto of Pleasant Lakes Primary: Truth and Endeavour, Truth and Endeavour.

### Activity

In groups of ten or more (half the class?), perform this scene for the class. Decide on who might be the director for this exercise:

One person to play Catriona, one to play the Principal, one to be Laura and the rest to be the school kids.

How can the actors who have no lines have a high status or low status? Experiment and present to the class.

# Theatrical Style, Elements, Conventions

Rose Myers describes the style of the play as Gothic.  
Angela Betzien uses a poem by Edgar Allan Poe in the play.

Read this scene.

## Scene 4

**NARRATOR** On a dark dark night in a caravan park on the outskirts of Pleasant Lakes a tormented figure sits hunched over an old typewriter.

*Joe Black taps away at the typewriter in the meagre light.*

*Laura, in another part of the caravan recites a Poe poem by torchlight*

**LAURA** *Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,  
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore-  
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping  
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.*

*Joe knocks, Laura pauses, listens, then continues.*

**LAURA** *'Tis some visitor,' I muttered, 'tapping at my chamber door –  
Only this and nothing more.'*

*Joe knocks again. Laura switches of the torch.*

Edgar Allan Poe was most famous for his works of Gothic Fiction.

Gothic fiction is a genre of literature that combines elements of both [horror](#) and [romance](#). As a genre, it is generally believed to have been invented by the [English](#) author [Horace Walpole](#), with his 1764 novel [The Castle of Otranto](#). The effect of Gothic fiction depends on a pleasing sort of [terror](#), an extension of essentially [Romantic](#) literary pleasures that were relatively new at the time of Walpole's novel.

Prominent features of Gothic fiction include terror (both psychological and physical), mystery, the [supernatural](#), [ghosts](#), [haunted houses](#) and [Gothic architecture](#), [castles](#), [darkness](#), death, [decay](#), [doubles](#), [madness](#), [secrets](#) and [hereditary curses](#).

Discussion

How is the play 'Gothic'?

Do you know any other productions or films that could be described as 'gothic'?

Have you ever seen any films directed by Tim Burton?  
e.g. The Nightmare before Christmas? Sweeney Todd?

Are there others?

What is a goth? Is that different?

How do they dress? Look? What sets them apart from everyone else?

Is Ada a goth?

Horror, which is a part of the Gothic style, developed from one of the very earliest forms of theatre known as Greek Tragedy.

In many ways the play also follows elements of Greek tragedy. For example, we know that Laura's lies are going to make for a bad ending especially for her dad but we're still shocked when it unfolds that way.

There are a number of conventions from Greek Theatre that we still use in different ways today. One is the narrator, which in many ways developed from what was called The Chorus as it was known then.

## Greek Chorus

Activity - The narrator's introduction.

As a class allocate the lines and read this scene:

### **Scene 1**

*Darkness*

**NARRATOR** In a dark dark world  
There is a dark dark country  
And in the dark dark country  
There is a dark dark state  
And in the dark dark state  
There is a dark dark city  
And in the dark dark city  
There is a dark dark suburb  
And in the dark dark suburb  
There is a dark dark street  
And in the dark dark street  
There is a dark dark house  
And behind the dark dark house  
There is a dark dark development site  
And in the dark dark development site  
There is a dark dark hole  
And in the dark dark hole...

**BOY'S VOICE** There is me.

In groups of four or more, (even as half the class) divide up the text. Allocate lines.

Deliver the text in a group.

Explore ways to deliver the lines.

For example:

- Whispering
- Song
- Repetition
- Laughter
- Echoing
- All of the above

Use movement to accentuate the text.

Use movements that signify you are a group – a single movement that everyone can repeat easily.

Deliver the lines while you are 'frozen images' or 'statues' spread through the space like those of the "angel" Ada.

Present the text as a Greek chorus.

Investigate Greek theatre some more on the internet. Just google it.

## Exaggerated Movement / Mood and Tension

Activity

Read this scene:

### The Nightmare scene

#### Scene 28

*Laura runs through the suburban landscape. A nightmarish montage of surreal images confront her as she runs. Ada appears in grotesque angel form, Catriona zombie like, chants "You're such a liar Laura Black" whilst performing her Idol dance routine.*

*Out of this nightmare landscape emerges an image of Joe Black's interrogation by police. This could be an image reminiscent of a Guantanamo Bay prison scene.*

*Finally, the boy's voice in the wind becomes clear in the chaos and the cacophony. Is it calling out "Laura?". Laura screams. Day. The nightmare is over.*

**LAURA** I have to tell the truth.

The play is beautifully written and this scene represents the climax of the play.

Discuss how the nightmare was created for the audience by the actors, the writer and the director, and the designers.

The images seem disjointed and the movement and sound are highly exaggerated.

### Activity

In groups create your own naturalistic scenes about an ordinary day...that may hold underlying fears...

For example:

The day I arrived at my new school  
The last night Catriona spent at the house  
Joe Black remembering the Gulf War

Include in it a nightmare scene using what you know about playing that now you've seen the play...

Use Exaggerated movement – stylised movement and / or freeze frames that tell a story

Add music or a soundscape

### Activity

The TV advertisement for Pleasant Lakes is as follows:

*Read this scene*

*A Dolphin Developments Advertisement.*

**FELIX** Hi. I'm Felix Dijon. Is this your first visit to Dolphin Development's Pleasant Lakes Estate? It is? Join me for a power walk around the lake.

Are you tired and run down by the hustle and bustle of city life? Concerned about pollution, global warming, nuclear holocaust, water shortages, terrorism? You're not alone. Escape from it all at Pleasant Lakes. You're not simply buying a home, you're joining a community. It's just a wonderful relaxed place to bring up the kids. Call 1300 555 3 I'll see you at the Lake.

How are people being encouraged to buying a house at Pleasant Lakes?

Laura's dad Joe says it's all being built upon a lie. He's telling the truth and when the rain comes it proves him right but no-one believed him...

Why not?

In a way he's the opposite of his daughter Laura, and Felix Dijon, who are both telling lies but people believe them.

#### Research Activity

Find out who Cassandra the soothsayer was.

She warned people about things in the ancient past but no-one believed her.

How is she similar to Joe Black?

#### Performance activity

In groups tell the story of **Girl Who Cried Wolf** from Joe's perspective.

Make Joe the narrator.

Keep it simple. Make only four scenes.

Use freeze frames if you like.

Bring the freeze frames to life using sound and movement.

#### Extension activity

##### Multimedia

Create a new advertisement that tells the truth about Pleasant Lakes.

What are the main themes of the play?

List them as a class.

Create a powerpoint of images of the themes of the play. Use photos, google images or make your own.

Now repeat the advertisement as the character Felix Dijon juxtaposed with the images as they are projected behind you.

What impact does this have on the audience?

#### Extension activity

Poetry is integral to the play.

Re-read Laura's poem from her ill-fated idol participation.

She wrote it after seeing Ada being an angel trying to find her brother.

This experience moved Laura very much. Enough to write about it.

As Rose says, she was burning to tell the story...

LAURA:

Sleepy Sunday suburbia

Prison of disturbia

Black crow karks

Three legged dog barks



As the boy walks past  
For the last  
Time  
Past the Tupperware boxes  
Past the homes of plastic dreams  
Through the car park of the Bi Lo  
Wait!  
Something is not as it seems

Again the crow karks  
And the three legged dog barks  
As the boy walks past  
For the last  
Time.

Tonight he'll not be home in his tuppaware box  
Tonight he'll not be home in his tuppaware bed  
Tonight he'll be invisible  
One of the disappeared instead.

### Discussion

Catriona spends quite a few nights alone in a dark, dark half-finished house.  
Discuss the fears that she may have faced.  
What is Laura afraid of?  
What is her dad afraid of?  
List all the characters and their fears?  
What are you afraid of?

### Activity

Visit some of the poetry websites listed in the resources sections of these notes. Explore them and see what you discover about poetry.

Write your own poem about something you feel deeply about:

- Perhaps someone else in a difficult situation
- Your fears, hopes
- A story you are burning to tell?

Don't show anyone unless you'd like to.  
It does not need to rhyme or even make sense.  
If you like, use the poem to make your own theatre using some of the techniques discussed in these education notes.

# STAGE DESIGN

The play explores stage design in a number of ways.

Design elements of any play may include:

Lighting  
Costume  
Music  
Set

Research activity

Find out who was responsible for each of these design elements of **Girl Who Cried Wolf**.

What are their names? What other work have they made? What shows have they worked on?

What careers exist in the theatre industry?

Report to the class

# PLEASANT LAKES JUNKYARD

(a large open space required)

Activity

Collect as much junk material as possible. Cloth is useful as is ducting, light timber or light metal. But old wheels and even plastic is excellent to use.

In groups of four, create a sculpture.

It requires no meaning except that you enjoy what you have created.

When every group has finished, walk around the room simply observing others' creations.

Don't judge or comment, just take it in as if you are in an art gallery.

Allocate each group to a new sculpture, not the one you created.

Decide that this sculpture has in fact come to life on the last night that Catriona is in the unfinished house.

Give it a voice or voices.

Give it an attitude.

Go around the room and present your findings / discovery.

Now develop a scene where the sculpture comes to life.

What does it have to say to Catriona?

It could be the day the junk was 'bulldozed for standing in the way of progress'.

It could be the day the owner threw it in the tip.

It could be the day the junk collector collected it.

Choose a song that reflects the attitude of the sculpture.

Keep it very simple.

Start and end the scene with the song or part of it.  
Add a soundscape.  
Now add a few lines the junk sculpture might say to Catriona or her even her dad.  
Rehearse and present to the class.  
Write up the process. How difficult was it?  
What was easy? What might you do differently next time?

#### Extension activity

Create an abduction note using letters cut out from actual newspaper headlines.  
As a class, put them all up on the wall to create a backdrop for a scene or performance of one of the scenes from the play.  
Or simply leave them as a work of visual art.  
Is there a way to work together as a class to tell the story of **Girl Who Cried Wolf** through this visual medium?

#### Extension activity

Create a soundscape of the housing development on the night Catriona has to spend her last night there.  
Create the sound of the rain and lightning.  
The creaking buildings.  
Use junk spread through the space to create the sound.  
Make the junk come to life in Catriona's mind.  
Add live music to the scene. Use a recorder, a drum, a violin

#### Extension Activity

Write a review of the play.  
Consider the following in your review.  
Is there anything else you should include?

Title:

Writer(s):

Company:

Where and when you saw the play:

How you felt about seeing the play before it started:

Give a brief outline of the story and the main characters.

Identify major themes, issues, ideas in the play.

How did it make you feel?

Did you find the story convincing?

Which parts worked best for you?

Were there any moments that stirred your emotions?

How did the audience react to the play?

How did you feel about the characters?

Which one did you respond to most and why?

Did anything about the set particularly catch your eye?

How did the actors use the set?

How did you rate the actors?

Comment on voice, gesture and movement.

On balance, was it a successful show?

Did it keep your interest and involve you with the characters?

Did it make you laugh, cry, think?

Was it suitable for its audience?

Extension activity

Visit the Arena Theatre website, listed in these notes.

Find out as much as you can about the show, **Girl Who Cried Wolf**

In a group of three or four, design / write and print a flyer for **Girl Who Cried Wolf**.

The A4 flyer is to be forwarded to schools to let them know about the play.

Discuss what information you might need to include on a flyer.

Discuss what images you should include.

Examine other flyers / posters for films, theatre shows, etc.

## Extension Activity

The writer of **Girl Who Cried Wolf**, Angela Betzien, read a news article that inspired the play.

Research newspaper articles and choose one of your own.

Become the writer / director!

Determine who the 'characters' are in the newspaper story.

Determine what the locations are.

Decide if you will use a narrator.

Decide if you'll use a soundscape.

Decide if you'll use costume.

Decide if you'll use live music or cd /mp3.

Explore theatre styles to tell the story.

Experiment with any of the processes you have played with from these notes and present.

Give feedback.

# Resources

## Theatre

[www.arenatheatre.com.au](http://www.arenatheatre.com.au)

[www.realtv.net.au](http://www.realtv.net.au)

[www.angelabetzien.blogspot.com](http://www.angelabetzien.blogspot.com)

[www.comeout.on.net](http://www.comeout.on.net)

[www.assitej.org](http://www.assitej.org)

[www.assitej.com.au](http://www.assitej.com.au)

[www.dramavictoria.vic.edu.au](http://www.dramavictoria.vic.edu.au)

[www.theatrelinks.com](http://www.theatrelinks.com)

## Books

Impro by Keith Johnstone - Methuen

Impro for Storytellers by Keith Johnstone – Methuen

Drama Stages by Pamela Gaudry and Roma Burgess – Longman

Acting in person and in Style in Australia by

Crawford/Hurst/Lugering/Wimmer – McGraw Hill

## News

[www.theage.com.au](http://www.theage.com.au)

[www.abc.net.au](http://www.abc.net.au)

[www.sbs.com.au](http://www.sbs.com.au)

The Age newspaper

The Australian newspaper

The Herald Sun newspaper

## Poetry websites

[www.poetryclass.net](http://www.poetryclass.net)

[www.achuka.co.uk](http://www.achuka.co.uk)

[www.bbc.co.uk/arts/books/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/books/)