

THE POLAR BEARS GO UP

EDUCATION AND ACTIVITY PACK

This Polar Bear Pack can be used by teachers and families as a way to engage with the show, The Polar Bears Go Up. Here you will find a synopsis of the show, an introduction to the team and how we made the show, and some activities to choose from. We hope you enjoy the show and that this pack is a fun and useful stimulus for more creativity.

Because the Polar Bears travel all around the world, we haven't linked this pack to one particular curriculum, but we hope teachers will see how these activities can meet key learning outcomes such as sharing thoughts and feelings, putting thoughts into a sequence, listening to others and speaking in a group. For some of the activities we've added in some extras as an extension. These may be suitable for older children.

The Polar Bears Go Up

Created and Performed by Eilidh MacAskill and Fiona Manson and directed by Lee Lyford

"Enthralling adventure delivered with charm, wit and a sense of wonder" The Stage****

<http://bit.ly/2bJ0kiX>

"A stream of imaginative surprises" The Herald****

<http://bit.ly/2bIZDX5>

"Visually entrancing piece of children's theatre" EdinburghGuide.com****

<http://bit.ly/2bGgPeu>

For ages 2-5 : Non-verbal / Deaf friendly / Suitable for ESL

Running time: 50 mins

Capacity – up to 200

CREATIVE TEAM

Big Polar Bear / Creator – Eilidh MacAskill

Little Polar Bear / Creator – Fiona Manson

Director – Lee Lyford

Composer – Greg Sinclair

Designer – Claire Halleran

Lighting Designer – Kate Bonney

Original Stage Manager – Deanne Jones

Touring SMs – Bee George, Avalon Hernandez, Linsey Johnstone

Originally created by the team as a co-production with Unicorn Theatre, London with support from Creative Scotland.

SYNOPSIS – What happens in The Polar Bears Go Up?

The Polar Bears Go Up is a theatre show about two cheeky, but lovable friends – Big Polar Bear and Little Polar Bear – and their adventure.

When the show begins, they've just woken up so are a bit sleepy. Big Polar Bear is ready to wake up and gives a big roar! But Little Polar Bear keeps falling asleep and needs a tickly scratch to wake up. The two bears do a scratchy dance that turns into an energetic aerobics session.

Their tummies make a loud rumble – they must be hungry. It's breakfast time!

They do a noisy dance in the kitchen – they play the spoons and cups like drums; the bottles sound like pan pipes or flutes; the cereal boxes are like maracas.

Mmmmm, they make cornflake sandwiches, which are a bit dry so they need a cup of water from the tap. Sluuuuuurpppp. Aaaahhhhhh.

Suddenly the doorbell rings. What could it be?

It's a brown cardboard box. But what's inside?

It's a star; a star balloon!

The polar bears play with the star and then have fun catching it before it flies up. They tidy everything up and always manage to catch the balloon in time. But when they give each other a big bear hug, the balloon flies up, up, up into the sky and disappears! Oh no!

It flies up so high that they need binoculars to see where it has gone. They ask it to come back down but it stays up in the sky. They reach as high as they can. They jump up. But the star's too high up.

Then the Big Polar Bear has an idea. A trampoline! They have fun bouncing up high, but the star's too high up.

The Little Polar Bear climbs on a box and reaches up. The Big Polar Bear climbs on the cardboard box and gets their foot stuck, then the box ends up on the Little Polar Bear's head and then on the Big Polar Bear's bottom!

But the star is still too high up. Big Polar Bear feels sad. Will they ever get their star friend back?

Little Polar Bear shows us a special chart that shows the star all the way at the very top. The Bears decide to go UP! They do the 'UP Dance' together.

The first thing to try to get higher up is climbing a tree and reaching up. Then they go up in a lift/elevator to the top of a tall building. Then Little Polar Bear finds some superhero capes and they try flying from a catapult, but Big Polar Bear thinks that's a bit too dangerous. The star is still too high up.

A gentler option is to try a cable car up in the mountains and it's so high up that it starts to snow. Then they hear a 'plane to fly high in, but the star is still too high up.

The two bears have almost given up when they have a great idea – to build a rocket-ship and go into space! They blast off up, up, up into space, finally find the star and bring it back home!

THE END

ABOUT THE POLAR BEARS

The Polar Bears are Eilidh MacAskill and Fiona Manson alongside their producer, Sarah Gray and the wonderful creative collaborators they work with to make their performances for children. MacAskill and Manson have been creating theatrical encounters with and for children for many years and have worked with companies such as National Theatre for Scotland, Scottish Youth Theatre, Imagineate, Cumbernauld Theatre, macrobert arts centre, Fish And Game and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. But the polar bears are their favourite creation!

For more info about the Polar Bears you can visit the website – www.thepolarbears.org

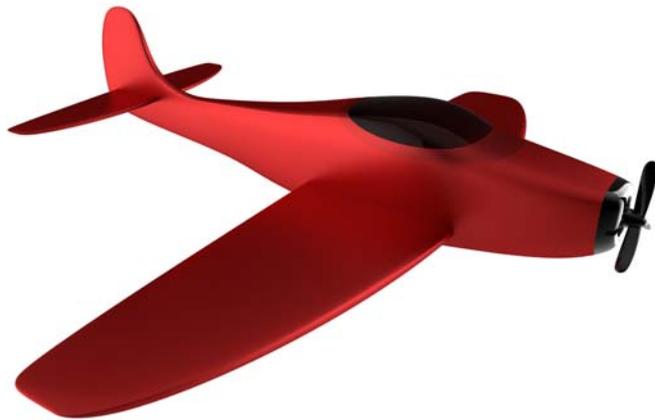
HOW TO GO UP?

In 2013, The Polar Bears made their first show, called The Polar Bears Go Wild, in which they went on a big adventure going abseiling, skiing, canoeing, and eating sandwiches on their way to the top of a mountain. To make a new show we decided the Bears should go up, because we thought children would understand the desire to get higher to change your point of view. And of course, we wanted a show where you could get back a lost balloon.

When we first started thinking about how to make this show, The Polar Bears Go Up, we had lots and lots of ideas about how to go up and not all of them made it into the show. We got some of our first ideas when we were working at the Unicorn Theatre, which is London; a big city with lots of very tall buildings. Nearby there were lots of high cranes, Tower Bridge with its tall towers, the London Eye – a big wheel that takes you up very high, and the theatre is right beside The Shard – a very high skyscraper that is the tallest building in the UK. So there were lots of things to give us ideas and as we looked up we saw birds, clouds and planes in the sky.

- What can you see around you that goes up?
- How could you get higher up?
- Can you think of any other things the Polar Bears could do to get their star?





ACTIVITIES

REMEMBERING THE SHOW

*Once you've seen *The Polar Bears Go Up* and you've returned to school, nursery or home, you can try to remember some of the things that happened in the show. If it's been a while since you saw the show or if the children are finding it hard to remember, you could always read out the synopsis and ask everyone to imagine what's happening as you read. Then go back to this activity.*

- Everyone sits in a circle and the children are encouraged to gently pass around a soft toy polar bear and stroke its soft fur. When the toy reaches each child, they tell everyone something they remember from the show.

SIMPLER

- Cut out the images provided or get together some simple props from the story to prompt ideas and support less confident speakers.

EXTRA

- Ask children tell their favourite part of the story and explain what they liked about it and how it made them feel.
- The polar bear can go round the circle a few times or can cross the circle if children can remember different kinds of memories – a funny moment, an exciting bit, a sad part.

HEIGHT CHART STORY TIME

*Do you remember how *The Polar Bears* used a special chart to work out how to get higher and higher up to reach their star?. Each time they had a new idea for a way to go up they put it on the chart to see if they were high enough.*

- Print off and cut out the images below and use these to tell the story of the bears going up. Create a simple height chart by using a length of coloured tape either on the floor or wall with smaller bits of tape stuck on at equal intervals to show the height.
- The children sit in pairs or small groups and each is given one of the pictures. The pairs/groups decide where their picture fits within the story and they have to add it onto the chart when their picture fits the sequence.
- To help the children tell the story you can model sequential language using, “and then” and “after that...”.

EXTRA

- We haven't given images for every part of the story. Can the children remember any other ways the Bears used to get closer to their star balloon?
- You could make a more elaborate chart and this and the images could be remade in felt so that children could easily add and remove the images in their own time and create their own stories. Or the images could be laminated to make them more robust.
- The images could have numbers added to help children with the sequence.
- You could make simple polar bear puppets to climb up the chart too.

SILENT STORIES

Did you notice that the Polar Bears told the whole story of their adventure without using any words at all? Can you think about how they did that? How did they make each other and the audience understand what they meant?

Can you remember how they showed that they were hungry?

Can you remember how we knew they wanted to go up?

What did they do to say “I love you” to each other?

- In pairs try to tell your partner a short silent story.
- Pretend you two are the polar bears and one of you has to show the other how you're feeling. How do you show being SAD, HAPPY, ANGRY, AFRAID, TOO HOT, TOO COLD?

COSTUME AND MAKE UP

Think about how the performers turn themselves into polar bears. You can still see that they are people, but how do they use costume and make-up? 'Costume' is the word for the clothes performers wear on stage. Maybe you wear a costume at Hallowe'en or when you're playing?

BE A BEAR

- Do you have something white you could wear to become a polar bear?
- Try using face-paint to give yourself a black nose and white whiskers just like our polar bears.
- Our bears have ears on their wooly hats, but you could make a headband from white card with ears. Here's a link to someone who made some polar bear ears and added cotton wool to give them a lovely furry texture : <http://artsymomma.com/penguin-polar-bear-headband-craft.html>

BINOCULARS

In the show, the Polar Bears need to use their binoculars to see the balloon because it's so high up and far away.

- Everyone can make their own simple binoculars by taping together two toilet roll tubes – or make your own card tubes – and adding a piece of string or ribbon so that you can wear them around your neck.
- The Polar Bears have red binoculars, but you can decorate yours to be any colour you like. Or you could add stickers. You could even cover them in gold star stickers so you remember what you're looking for...



LARGE SPACE ACTIVITIES

In a big space everyone can practice being polar bears and remembering everything the bears did in the show. You could wear your polar bear ears and bring your binoculars too.

POLAR BEAR RHYME TIME

Adult speaks the following rhyme and the children follow the instructions. Everyone needs to listen carefully to each other and everyone can say 'Polar Bear, Polar Bear' together.

Polar Bear, Polar Bear turn around
Polar Bear, Polar Bear touch the ground
Polar Bear, Polar Bear, reach up high
Polar Bear, Polar Bear, touch the sky
Polar Bear, Polar Bear, wiggle your toes
Polar Bear, Polar Bear, sniff with your nose.
Polar Bear, Polar Bear, wave your paws,
Polar Bear, Polar Bear, show your claws,
Polar Bear, Polar Bear, say goodnight,
Polar Bear, Polar Bear, shut your eyes tight,
Polar Bear, Polar Bear, wake up now,
Polar Bear, Polar Bear, take a bow.

EXTRA

- The children could take it in turns to add their own instructions that the rest of the group can follow.

ACTING OUT THE SHOW

Adult leads sequence of movements with children copying or developing their own movements.

1. Yawning and waking up
2. Sniffing around to explore the space
3. Roaring and holding up your polar paws
4. Stretching and reaching up high to grab the balloon
5. Jumping, running and jumping, and bouncing on (imaginary) trampoline
6. Going up in lift – crouch down and slowly rise up to standing while everyone counts from 1 to 5
7. Flying in a plane with arms out
8. Going in the rocket – countdown from 5 or 10 then blast off
9. Moving in zero gravity
10. Catching the star balloon and going home.

EXTRA

- In pairs the children choose their favourite moment and practice it together. The adult then finds out which parts the pairs have chosen and everyone shows them one after the other in the sequence they would have appeared in the show.

DISCUSSION THEMES

There may be some aspects of the show that prompt further discussion and help children to think about different emotions.

- Losing things. In the show, the Polar Bears find a balloon which they really love. But then, by accident, they lose it. Have you ever lost anything? Did you get it back or did it stay lost? How did that make you feel? If a friend lost something, how could you help them to feel better?
- Helping Each Other – In the show, the Polar Bears have to try lots of different ways to go up. They each come up with ideas and then together they try it out and help each other. Why is it good to work together? Do you think the Bears would have got their balloon if they tried to do it on their own?
- Never Giving Up - The Polar Bears keep trying to get their star balloon back, even though each time they try something it's not high enough. What would have happened if they had given up? Can you think of a time when you've tried to do something difficult? How did you keep going?

THE NEXT ADVENTURE...

The Polar Bears love going on adventures and then sharing those adventures with children in their shows. What adventure would you like to see the Polar Bears go on next?

- Draw a picture or write an adventure story to share with friends. You could even share them with the Polar Bears by emailing them to info@thepolarbears.org
- Finish the sentence THE POLAR BEARS GO.....