Playmakers: *Emil and the Detectives*

Project Information Pack
What is Playmakers?
Playmakers is a new project from the National Theatre available to all state primary schools across the UK. It uniquely connects learning across the curriculum with an end-of-year school production of Emil and the Detectives directed by school staff.

Starting after February half term, participating classes will read the book Emil and the Detectives by Erich Kästner. You will receive a scheme of work to follow, with creative activities and questions relating to each chapter.

Teachers will then be able to select from a range of cross-curricular lesson plans to deliver with their class which fully explore the story, the setting and the characters. Areas of the curriculum include literacy, history, geography, P.E and art and design.

During the second half of the summer term pupils will draw on this learning as you start rehearsals for your school production of Emil and the Detectives. You will be provided with training, a director’s guide, a specially adapted script (with original songs), backing tracks and the relevant performance licence as part of the package. The production will take place at the end of the Summer term.

The project is designed for year 5 or 6 and it is possible to book for multiple classes.

‘Having a class novel which turned into a topic, which then led to a production worked brilliantly for the children. It was truly inclusive, with a role for all abilities in the process.’

How much does it cost?
Playmakers is available to all state primary schools at a cost of just £350.

Why should I sign up?
Playmakers gives you a chance to do something different for your end-of-year school production, with support from one of the largest producing theatres in the UK.

The project offers pupils of different abilities and levels of confidence a chance to develop their:

- Creativity and creative thinking
- Group work and cooperation skills
- Verbal and non-verbal communication
- Empathy (through stepping into the shoes of different characters)
- Confidence and self-esteem
Whether you are a teacher with years of experience of making theatre in schools or you are completely new to it, Playmakers has something to offer. As well as addressing key areas of the curriculum, the lesson plans will prepare your class for the start of rehearsals, helping them to know the story, characters, setting and context of the play inside out. A teachers guide and training at the National Theatre will help you to plan your rehearsals in a way which reflects the theatre-making process at the NT and will harness the creativity of your class. The project will also leave a legacy of theatre-making skills in your school.

‘The children were fully immersed in the world of the play. They had tonnes of empathy with the characters and were able to really live and breathe the play. They know it so well that they could improvise it themselves.’

‘The children have learned to work together as a team with a real consideration for each other. They have been very focused and have become notably better at problem-solving within the group.’

**Why Emil and the Detectives?**

*Emil and the Detectives* is a classic adventure story about a boy learning to rely on himself and on his new friends. Emil leaves his small town in Germany and sets off on a journey that will change his life. When his money is stolen on the train by a mysterious stranger, Emil thinks he’s lost everything. As he starts tracking down the thief, he soon discovers that he’s not alone in the big city after all.

The story focuses on themes such as growing up, stepping into the unknown and taking responsibility for yourself and your actions. It is therefore an ideal story for years 5 and 6 to study and perform as they prepare for secondary school.

In 2013 the National Theatre produced *Emil and the Detectives*. The production involved over 150 children from local schools. The children worked with the NT for a year, getting a real insight into theatre-making and preparing for the start of rehearsals by researching their characters and finding out about the setting and context of the story. You can find out more about this project by watching [this short film](#). It was the profound effect that participation in the NT production had on the children involved that inspired Playmakers.

‘This was the perfect project to celebrate their time at primary school and prepare them for the step up to secondary school.’

**When does it take place?**

Playmakers will take place in the second half of the spring term and the second half of the summer term 2016. However, the project is designed to be flexible to suit the best timings for you and your school. Please contact us if you would like to discuss this.

The project timetable for the majority of schools will be as follows:
### SPRING TERM 2016

| February (after half term) | Read the book and reading scheme of work  
Deliver literacy and cross-curricular lesson plans |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| March                     | Two-day Theatre-Making Course for Teachers (17 & 18 March)  
Continue to deliver lesson plans |

### SUMMER TERM 2016

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<th>April</th>
<th>SATs – project on hold for year 6 groups</th>
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| Mid May                     | Performance skills sessions – delivered by teachers  
Rehearsals begin |
| HALF TERM 30 May – 3 June   | Main rehearsal period |
| June                        | Final rehearsals and performances in school |

### What will I receive?
Playmakers is a package with several different components, each of which is described in detail below:

- **Step-by-step teachers’ guide**
  The teachers’ guide will support you every step of the way as you create your in-school production, from preparing and planning rehearsals right through to the first performance.

- **Lesson Plans**
  During the Spring Term you will be provided with a range of literacy and cross-curricular lessons to choose from to deliver with your class. The literacy lessons (closely linking to SATs requirements) relate to the following:

  - Comprehension  
  - Speaking and Listening  
  - Debate  
  - Persuasive writing  
  - Poetry – imagery and metaphor  
  - Writing – stories, script writing, newspaper articles, letters and diaries
In addition to literacy, lessons provided cover topics across the following curriculum subjects: History, Geography, Art and P.E. Sample lesson plans are available on request.

‘The work in the classroom helped the children to step into the world of the play rather than just getting a script and it not having meaning for them. We particularly enjoyed the history aspect and writing our own stories inspired by the 1920s’

**Two-day Theatre Making Course for Teachers**
Thursday 17 and Friday 18 March 2016

The course will provide a thorough introduction to making theatre with primary aged children. It will cover many aspects of approaching the task of directing a production including:

- Planning your rehearsal process
- Managing rehearsals with a large cast
- Ideas for stage and costume design
- Using movement in performance
- Effective use of voice in performance

‘I was really excited about putting my new knowledge of theatre-making into practice after the CPD. I felt much more confident about approaching the rehearsal process as a result of it.’

**Cast Performance Skills Training**

You will receive 3 x 45-minute workshop plans for you to deliver with your cast. These will focus on 3 key aspects of performance which children of this age (and therefore directors) often find the most challenging:

- Working as a group in performance
- Effective use of voice in performance
- Focus and staying in character during performance.

Each workshop will be accompanied by a short film for teachers showing a professional director demonstrating the workshop with a group of primary children and showing how these exercises can feed directly into creating specific scenes for your performance.
• **Directors script**

This script is an adaptation of Erich Kästner’s novel by playwright Carl Miller. This version for primary schools to perform is an adapted version of the original script for the National Theatre Production. It is 35 - 40 minutes in length and includes:

- Over 30 speaking parts (of varying sizes) to suit children of all abilities and levels of confidence.
- An unlimited number of non-speaking parts (the Detectives)
- Plenty of ensemble/whole cast performance opportunities
- Easy-to-learn songs
- Scenes broken down into manageable rehearsals chunks
- Character list for each scene
- Notes on directing each scene and ideas for staging
- Clear stage directions and music cues.

• **Actors script**

The actors script has:

- A clear layout with large easy-to-follow text
- Key words underlined to help with emphasis
- Additional margin notes to help the actors understand the intention behind their lines and consider what their character might be thinking.

• **Performance licence**

The project fee includes the performance licence for one public performance. A public performance is a performance for parents or others outside of the school (regardless of whether they are buying tickets.)

Performances exclusively for staff and other children in the school do not count as public performances.

If you wish to present more than one public performance then please contact us. A small charge will be made for each additional performance.

• **Music and Sound**

As part of the Playmakers package you will receive:

- Backing tracks for the songs in the show with and without a guide vocal line
- A piano score for the songs (with guitar chords)
- Music to underscore key scenes
- Sound effects CD
Optional: Make Theatre Day at the National Theatre

Playmakers includes an option to experience a Make Theatre Day at the National Theatre for participating classes. This is an active and exciting introduction to theatre-making and the backstage world of the National Theatre and includes:

- a backstage tour
- an opportunity to handle props and try on costumes
- a performance skills workshop with a professional actor

Make Theatre Days are offered at an additional cost of £150 per class

All About Theatre

All participating schools will also receive a copy of the All About Theatre - a richly illustrated hardback specially designed to take children behind the scenes and open up the world of theatre. With over 128 colourful pages, this unique and lively book shows how plays like War Horse, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time and many others are made, from the first idea to the final curtain.

How do I book?
To book, please complete this form and then we will contact you with further information. Alternatively call or email us on 020 7452 3308 or jcarey@nationaltheatre.org.uk.
If the link to the form above doesn’t work, then please paste the following into your browser: https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/6QVG6QN

What if I have more questions?
We are more than happy to answer any further questions you might have. Please contact Jo on 020 7452 3308 jcarey@nationaltheatre.org.uk or Jackie on 020 7452 3311 jtait@nationaltheatre.org.uk