

# Showtime!

## Arvon: Creative Writing Day



Arvon is the UK's leading creative writing charity dedicated to nurturing writers of all ages. Since 1968, we have been running residential writing courses and workshops with schools and individuals. Writers Helen Mort and Lemn Sissay are among those whose passion for writing was first awakened at Arvon.



**In-Schools Touring: Schools' Resources**

**This pack contains:**  
Pre-show information sharing resource  
Pre-show pupil activity  
Post-show pupil activities



# Information for **teaching staff** taking part in the workshop and show.



Before the workshop and show it would be helpful if you could:

- Share what is happening and when with your colleagues in school. We have included a poster template on the next page that you could print out for the staff room to let people know what's happening.
- Let parents, carers and the wider school community know what is happening – we have provided some wording to help. Just add the details then copy and paste.
- Prepare your pupils – there are some ideas on how to do this later in the resource pack.
- We also have a separate [visual story and information about our access and sensory kit](#) to support with this.
- Make sure you have the resources needed for the workshop.
- Let any teaching/support staff who will be present during the workshop and show know what to expect so they can support pupils to access the experience.

Here is some more information about the organisation visiting your school which you could share with teachers:

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Pupils will take part in a Creative Writing Day - a fun and inspiring creative writing workshop led by professional writers, suitable for all abilities.

# Showtime!

Pre-show information for the school. Stick me up on your staffroom wall!

## What you need to know.

Our school is taking part in Primary Arts, a new creative cultural programme for London's primary schools from A New Direction.

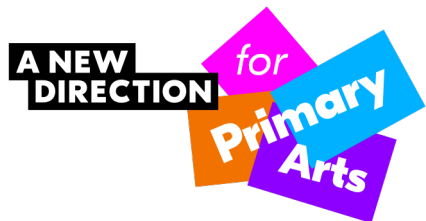
We have booked a touring session. Performers will be visiting us in school to provide a show and workshop for pupils and twilight CPD for staff.

## Who is visiting us?



Title of the show:

**Creative Writing Day**



### Classes taking part

### Date of the show and workshops

### Where the show is taking place

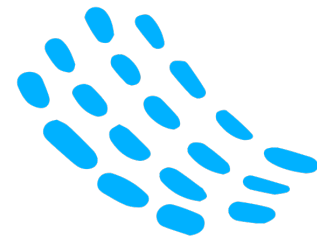
### Timings of the show and workshops

### Staff member organising it

### Staff members attending

### Date & time of Teacher Twilight CPD

# Information to share with parents, carers and the wider community before the show.



Below is some suggested copy for a letter home to parents/carers or inclusion in your school newsletter:

We are delighted to let you know that our school is taking part in Primary Arts – a new creative, cultural programme for London primary schools from A New Direction.

We have booked a touring session, and Arvon will be visiting us in school to provide an experience and workshop for pupils in [INSERT CLASS/ES TAKING PART] on [INSERT DAY AND DATE].

Pupils will take part in a Creative Writing Day - a fun and inspiring creative writing workshop led by professional writers, suitable for all abilities.

Arvon is all about encouraging people to see themselves as writers. They believe writing creatively supports children to grow in confidence, improve writing skills and boost wellbeing. Your school will be partnered with professional writers for the day, who will perform their own work and support pupils to develop and perform theirs.

The show will inspire pupils by lifting their written words off the page and bringing the year group together to celebrate their writing. It will take place after pupil workshops, bringing all pupils together for a final celebration, with spoken word performances from the professional writers followed by pupils taking to the stage to share their written pieces authored in the classroom workshops.

Professional writers will lead creative writing workshops with your chosen classes. These workshops will offer your pupils the chance to try their hand at writing prose and poetry, with the writers ensuring that there are multiple points of entry for pupils of all abilities.

# Preparing **pupils** for the show.



Before the workshop and show you can let your pupils know what to expect using some of the key info and discussion questions below.

Arvon are coming to visit us to do a workshop and a show! In the workshop, the visitors are going to help us write something. In the show, we will watch the visitors perform.

This is the summary of the show. Listen carefully and then tell your talk partner what you think the show will be about.

We will take part in a performance which lifts your written words off the page and brings your year group together to celebrate writing. We will also hear from professional writers who will perform their own work and support us to develop and perform ours.

Professional writers will also lead creative writing workshops with our class. These workshops will offer you the chance to try writing prose and poetry, with the writers ensuring that there are multiple points of entry for pupils of all abilities.

## Pre-show discussion questions

You might like to talk through the following prompts to be ready for the performance.

- What is a show and what makes it special?
- What makes a good performance?
- What makes a good audience? E.g.
  - Stay sitting down so everyone can see and hear.
  - Respect everyone's personal space.
  - Don't talk when the show is on unless the actors ask you to take part.

You can also let your pupils know what to expect using the discussion prompts on the next page.

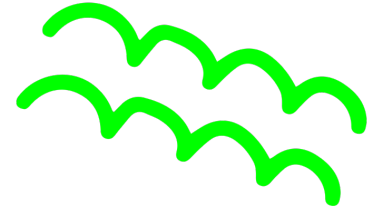
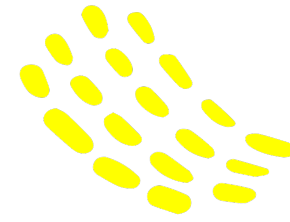
Depending on your pupils, for example pupils with SEND/younger children, you might want to share extra information about what sensory or interactive elements might happen or you might choose to leave that as a surprise. We have also provided a separate [visual guide and information about our access and sensory toolkit](#).

# Thinking about our show and workshop

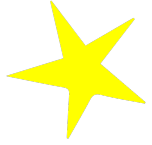
What do we need to remember when we have visitors to school?



How do you feel about the show coming to our school? Are you excited, nervous, happy?



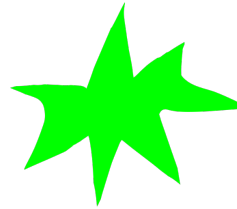
How can we make sure that we all enjoy the show? For example, we will need to sit and listen very carefully.



What props do you think you might see in the show?



In some parts of the show, they might ask us to take part – what do you think they might ask us to do?



What kind of music, songs or sounds do you think the show will include?



How will we know when to stop taking part and it is time to sit and listen again?



What do we do at the end of the show to say thank you?



# Additional resources for your school!



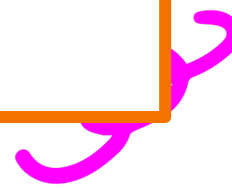
Prior to your school's performance and workshops taking place, your school will also receive:

- **A box of books** containing a range of fiction and non-fiction titles for all year groups, linked to the themes explored by the shows in this year's programme. These are for you to use in book corners or the school library.
- **A themed booklist** showing the books you've been sent and a range of additional titles you might find interesting.
- **A box of creative materials** and a themed resource with ideas for creative activities. This box contains a wide range of items that we hope will bring creativity to life in your classroom in many different ways!

The box of creative materials is for your school to use how you like! We suggest that it be used for the class/es that took part in the Primary Arts In-Schools Touring workshop and show for some extra creative activities. Most of the items in the box can be used for more than one project, as we wanted to ensure that it included lots of core art materials that, if looked after kindly, will be used again and again.

Each box contains the following materials:

- 2L PVA glue and 12 glue sticks
- Coloured tissue paper and coloured cellophane rolls
- Peel & stick wiggly eyes
- 100 paper plates
- 2 x 10m rolls of sugar paper in olive and cream
- Safety pins
- Scissor block set
- 2 x 1m of fake fur fabric
- 10m of calico fabric
- 2 packs of 48 coloured pens and 3 packs of 48 colouring pencils
- 50 sheets of coloured card and 50 sheets of white card
- Coloured lollipop sticks pack and 2 packs of stripy pipe cleaners
- Bumper pack of A6 greetings cards
- 100 sheets of A6 white card
- 45m of modelling string



# Take a bow!

## Post-Show Activities

We hope that your school enjoyed the workshops and show!

Exploring the themes of the show and supporting pupils to reflect on the experience, we have suggestions for 10 minutes, 30 minutes or a full 1-hour lesson.





# If you have 10 minutes

## Box Office Vox Pop



Ask pupils to interview each other in pairs for a couple of minutes each, then as a whole class write up some short sentences to share in your school newsletter or assembly.

You have just come out of the show and a journalist grabs your attention to ask you what you think as you are leaving. Journalists: use a pen/ruler/your hand as a microphone and ask your talk partner:

- How are you feeling?
- What was the show you just saw?
- What was your favourite part?
- Can you sum up the performance in just one word?

Challenge students to think of their own questions and follow up questions to what's been said.

**Go Further:** Pupils could write up a review of the experience or perform a memorable part in groups.

**EYFS/KS1/SEND:** Focus on two of the questions and provide sentence frames, word mats with key vocabulary and pictures from the show to scaffold students as needed.

**KS2:** Challenge pupils to think of their own questions and follow up questions to what has been said.

**Creative Skills:** In this activity pupils are collaborating by co-operating together and sharing reflections.

# If you have 30 minutes

## Invite others to see the show!



Do the discussion activity above to reflect on the show, then support pupils to think of something you could send or share with other pupils who haven't yet experienced the performance.

*Children at other schools are going to see the same show we saw. Let's send them an invitation... how could we make them excited to see the show? What do we want to tell them and how can we do this in a creative way? What should we keep as a surprise? Why?*

Allow pupils to think of ideas in groups and then present back to the class – they could perform, write up or draw their ideas. Example invitation ideas: a card that opens up as a pop-up flower, a suitcase with a letter inside, a sound recording of a song, a map – all with some key information about the show.

**Reflection:** How does your invitation link to the show? What else does it make you think of?

**Go Further:** Pupils could make the actual invitations in DT/Art/Literacy lessons and then display them in the classroom/school hall/display boards.

**EYFS/KS1/SEND:** Focus on thinking of an object and a word to send to other pupils that links to the show. Provide options and key words for pupils to choose from. For example: friendship, welcome, travel.

**KS2:** Encourage pupils to think as widely as possible – what could they do with unlimited resources?

**Creative Skills:** In this activity pupils are collaborating and being imaginative by playing with possibilities.

# If you have 1 hour

Creative Writing: Planting a Poem – Activity provided by Arvon

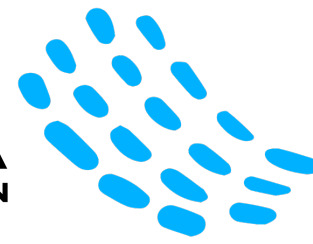


For this activity, you will need pens/pencils and paper.

- Start by leading a group meditation (you can do this using music): Take a few deep mindful breaths. Relax your poetry-self into the space. Imagine you are a plant. This could be a sunflower, a tall, tall tree, or something completely made up...reach up & have a good stretch! Now ask pupils to imagine the classroom space as a garden & they are the plants. What do plants need to live their best life? E.g. fresh air, space, music, company, soil, food, water & light. (5 minutes.)
- Pupils draw themselves as if they were a plant. Your plant-self can be as strange & wonderful as you like because every plant is unique. Where are you planted? What are your leaves, stems, flowers like? Does your plant-self have a smell? Does your plant do anything extraordinary? Do they make a sound? Write it down! (10 minutes.)
- Next, pupils work in pairs to interview each other and write their partner's plant care instructions. They could ask about their favourite places, foods, sounds, smells, textures. Is there anything they don't like? What do they need to grow and feel happy? (5 - 10 minutes.)

# If you have 1 hour

Creative Writing: Planting a Poem – Activity provided by Arvon



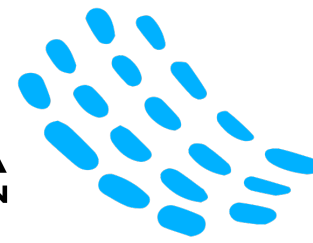
- Pupils re-visit their own images and spend some time thinking about what their plant-self might need. Using the list their partner made, they can create some Plant Care Instructions unique to them in the form of a poem! (10 – 20 mins.)

Ask pupils to think about:

- What is your ideal temperature/climate?
  - What do you like to eat?
  - What sounds help you feel calm?
  - Does your plant-self have anything magic we should hear about?
  - Is there anything your plant self does not like?
  - Where would your plant-self grow best & does this place change from time to time?
- Once pupils have started writing their poems, share the example poem with them (on the page after next). Allow pupils time to re-draft their poem / make any changes. Ask them if they can try to rhyme some of the lines in their poem and think about how they will perform their poem. Remember poems are all about personality so let your plant poem be delivered in your own unique voices & style. (15 - 20 minutes.)
  - Perform your poems to your partner and then the class!

# If you have 1 hour

Creative Writing: Planting a Poem – Activity provided by Arvon



**Reflection:** How are all our instructions different / what do they have in common? What makes us unique?

**KS1/SEND:** Use some real plant care instructions as a template. More movement & drawing can be used to map ideas. A physical plant in the space also works well, you could read any instructions & use this as a template.

Tap into all the senses, experimenting with smells, places, textures, sounds. You can also make a collage of pupils' favourite things ahead of the task to have some ideas to work from.

**Go Further:** You could make a 'Poe-tree' or plant wall with some of their plant care instructions, celebrating our brilliant uniqueness & all that we bring to the world as our creative living selves!

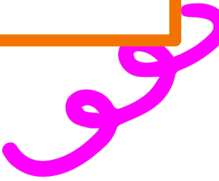




**Creative Skills:** In this activity, children are being disciplined by crafting and improving and being persistent by daring to be different.



# The Purple Poet

## Plant Instructions by Laurie Bolger

Give this plant hot blackcurrant squash (3 times daily) /  
play her metal & rock but sometimes classical music can help her grow her best /  
place her in the window sill in the kitchen so she can watch the neighbours walk by /  
she thrives best on the beach in chilly springtime /  
here you can feed her marshmallows (the pink ones) by a camp fire & lentil bolognese once a week indoors /  
sometimes you might notice her leaves stretching up extra tall (usually in the mornings) this means she is at her happiest /  
spritz her with lavender at night-time when you will notice this plant curling up around the couch cushions /  
make the atmosphere extra warm & if you listen carefully you can hear her snore.



# Thank you!

We hope that your school enjoyed the show!

Please share your experiences with other teachers in your network and encourage schools to sign up for information about next year's Primary Arts programme at:

[www.anewdirection.org.uk/primary-arts](http://www.anewdirection.org.uk/primary-arts)

**A NEW  
DIRECTION**  
We create opportunity



# About New Direction

A New Direction is an award-winning charity (1126216) working to enhance the capacity and agency of children and young people in London to own their creativity, shape culture, and achieve their creative potential.

Primary Arts is supported by The City of London Corporation City Educational Trust Fund (29084), a City of London Corporation charity. We are extremely grateful to them for their support.



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**#PrimaryArts**

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