



creating possibilities for disabled children

# Firebird



## A Companion Pack for Teachers & Support Staff



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**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

# Contents

This booklet is designed to give you some background information about the production and how it was devised along with some suggestions for further classroom workshops. You will also find information on some of the courses that Bamboozle runs to share its methodology and creative approach with schools.

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# The Bamboozle Approach

**Firebird** has been specifically designed to be accessible to audiences whilst at the same time maintaining Covid-safe procedures. Although the performers cannot make direct contact with the audience – as they would usually do - they will still be applying the principles of the Bamboozle Approach. The Bamboozle Approach is a series of behavioural and linguistic strategies that seek to enable learning disabled children to engage and interact with the world around them.

There is no right or wrong way to experience the show and, at various points during the piece, the performers will interact with the audience. The performers will be sensitive to the students' reactions and will build on what they see; they are not looking for any particular response or result. Members of the audience can engage with the different elements on offer in whatever way is appropriate for them.

If you would like to find out more about the Bamboozle Approach please visit our website: [www.bamboozletheatre.co.uk/our-approach/](http://www.bamboozletheatre.co.uk/our-approach/).

## Some of the Techniques at Work in the Show

- The show's narrative is simple in structure and uses almost no spoken language, the song words can provide extra narrative cues or simply be enjoyed for the sounds they make.
- The interactive first scene brings the story and characters to life and provides opportunities for engagement and interaction.
- Reactions and movements made by the students will sometimes be matched and built on by the performers creating a reciprocal interaction that can be led by the student or the performer. This is a way of building rapport using physical rather than verbal language.
- Key words are accompanied by signs to offer more ways of accessing the performance.
- Songs, live music and soundscapes help tell the story and add depth and atmosphere to the environment as well as providing insight into the feelings of the characters and the nature of the narrative at different moments throughout the piece.
- There are opportunities for interaction with the characters – particularly early on in the show – and the students are free to access the performance in whatever way is meaningful for them. Their reactions may sometimes be unexpected but they will not be right or wrong e.g. shouting during a quiet moment is an opportunity for someone to make their voice heard, rejecting an invitation to interact is an opportunity for someone to exercise their freedom to choose.
- Opportunities for interaction are approached sensitively – if a student does not wish to get involved there is no pressure on them to do so – the team make invitations

and offers without encouragement or direction so that the choice is always with the student.

- The performers will not praise students or encourage them to get involved; nor will they draw attention to students who choose not to be involved. Instead, the performers will offer opportunities and make invitations to interact. The students are free to engage in their own way and don't have to achieve anything in order to earn praise or attention just as they don't need to avoid doing something for fear of "getting it wrong".

These are just some of the techniques we use at Bamboozle to enable students to engage with our performances. We explore these and other techniques in more detail through our training courses (see course information at the back of this document).

## Firebird – The Journey

**Firebird** is an interactive performance which follows a fledgling phoenix as it grows up and encounters the characters in its world.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Meeting the Caretaker and the Firebird       | The first scene of the show takes place behind a large window with the audience on the inside and the performers on the outside. A flock of crows are introduced and the Caretaker comes to clean the window. She greets the crows and makes contact with the audience through the window – drawing pictures on the glass. The audience is invited to interact with the pictures. The Firebird is discovered and makes friends with the Caretaker.  |
| The Chicken Band                             | Two chickens encounter the audience in one of the outside performance spaces. They join a saxophonist and one of the chickens plays the guitar and sings while the other plays a cajon (a box drum). The band provide a live, jazzy musical experience. The Caretaker hears the music and comes to dance. The Firebird reappears and has grown since the first scene. The Caretaker and the Firebird play together, chase each other around and interact with the audience to play musical statues. |
| The Firebird is fully grown and takes flight | The Caretaker greets the audience in another outdoor performance space. She's tired and takes a nap. The now giant Firebird appears and swoops around the space before waking the Caretaker. They share some more fun and games with each other and the audience. In the music the call of the wild entices the Firebird who wishes to fly away and be free. The Caretaker knows that she must let the Firebird go. They say goodbye and the Firebird soars away.                                   |

# Engaging the Audience

The scenes for **Firebird** take place in different parts of each school's grounds. The settings and props are very simple which allows the characters, puppets and music to come to the fore and engage the audience.

- The character of the Caretaker makes direct contact with the audience and acts as a bridge between the audience and the story as well as an intermediary between the audience and the puppet characters throughout the show. She models reactions to the puppets and helps to create a safe space for the audience to respond to the puppets and the action. She can respond to individual audience members helping to build rapport and if a member of the audience is enjoying a particular moment the Caretaker character can extend it. Equally if she sees that a member of the audience is unsure of something she can give them space to respond in their own time and in their own way.
- The Caretaker communicates with the audience directly using facial expression, gesture and physicality. This non-verbal communication provides lots of opportunities for engagement and interaction. Although the show's structure is very tight the interactive sections can be as fluid as necessary in order to take into account the way members of the audience are responding to the show on the day.
- Each scene has a different sense of scale and perspective giving three distinct experiences. The first scene is intimate and at close quarters allowing for a more concentrated and direct interactive experience. The second scene is larger and noisier offering the possibility for more active physical engagement. The final scene is epic in scale with spectacular visuals and stunning music.
- There are a variety of puppets to encounter during the show. The crows in the first scene get involved in the action and provide a strong contrast to the baby Firebird as it emerges. When the Firebird next appears, it has grown and become playful chasing the Caretaker around and flying close to the audience. The grownup Firebird from the final sequence is spectacular in scale and provides a remarkable visual experience.
- Each scene of **Firebird** has a different style of music. The songs in the first scene are sung a capella and the harmonies provide a rich auditory experience on an intimate scale. The chicken jazz band of the second scene has a very different musical style and gives a lively and upbeat musical experience – the live music changes as the scene evolves and the musicians can respond to the action taking place. The music of the final scene creates a full orchestral soundscape to match the epic scale of the Firebird puppet. It conveys the different moods of the scene from the playfulness of the beginning of the sequence to the uplifting nature of the Firebird's final departure.
- The narrative sequence follows the Firebird from birth through to its flight of freedom. Underlying the simplicity of the narrative the show explores the relationship between the Firebird and the Caretaker and the tension and anguish between taming a wild animal and letting it go back to the wild where it belongs. In the same way that we – as parents and carers - reach the point where we have to let our own young people go out into the world. This relates strongly to the **Bamboozle**

Approach where we, the adults, allow and enable children to explore by themselves and on their own terms. In the last scene of the show we have tried to encapsulate this tension. The music is underscored with the “call of the wild” which the Firebird responds to – repeatedly looking into the distance – and then coming back to the Caretaker, who is sad but who recognises the inevitable before the Firebird finally finds the call irresistible and they must say goodbye.

# Ideas for Further Exploration

All of Bamboozle's work, whether in performance or workshop, has a strong legacy element – we aim to share our methodology with as many people as possible with a view to reaching as many children and young people as possible. Some of the experiences from the show can be broken down and replicated in the classroom. We hope that you have seen some ideas that you might be able to use in your own learning environment.

## Activities for the Classroom

Creating a setting and giving it atmosphere are effective ways of enabling and supporting engagement and focus; they provide a way of facilitating an immersive, shared experience that can capture all of the senses. Here are some suggestions for classroom activities:

### **1. Painting window pictures & making patterns**

The Caretaker character in the first scene of Firebird uses window cleaner to paint pictures on the windows. Safe, wipeable window paints and markers are easily available and could be used to create pictures and patterns on classroom windows or other windows around the school.

The activity could be interactive with children on both sides of the glass making pictures with each other or with members of staff. The pictures might follow particular themes or patterns – they could be a response to Firebird or be centred around something you're working on.

Masking tape can be used to create shapes on glass with the gaps being filled in with different colours to create a stained-glass window effect. The tape can be removed after painting to reveal the different colours and shapes.

A picture on one side of the glass might provide a template for drawing on the other side. Perhaps students could draw around their hands and feet or – if they work together – one could stand against a window while the other draws around their whole outline. They could then fill in the details afterwards or create their own characters.

### **2. Making simple bird puppets – like the crows**

Simple bird puppets can be made by painting a polystyrene ball or e.g. a tennis ball and adding shreds of bin liner plastic for the feathers and wings. Baby firebirds could be decorated with brightly coloured tissue paper or feathers. Legs and feet can be made out of pipe cleaners and beaks and eyes from different coloured card. The puppets don't have to be perfect and the process of making them - painting, cutting, shredding and sticking – can be a fun activity in itself.

After making the puppets the group could use them to build a story and operate their puppets within it. Creating a scene using the puppets the children have made themselves is an effective way of valuing their work and giving it meaning.

The puppets or models might also form part of a display – perhaps mounted on a branch in the classroom.

### 3. Creating a soundscape to go with a story

A soundscape might accompany the story you make with the bird puppets or any other story you happen to be exploring. It can be recorded or performed live as the story unfolds. This could be a musical activity using voice, percussion and other instruments - as well as any other resources with auditory potential. The soundscape might help tell the story by including sound effects – like bird calls – or it might provide background sounds for atmosphere.

For a sound workshop in the classroom gather together a collection of mundane objects that have sound making potential and tactile exploration qualities (plastic boxes and elastic bands, metal trays and bowls, pots and pans, plastic bottles, ping pong balls, biscuit tins, cardboard boxes, wooden spoons, newspaper for tearing, crinkly foil blankets, dried pasta, physio balls – anything at all that has noise-making potential). A soundscape can have different volume levels, different levels of intensity, different qualities of sound e.g. hard and metallic or soft and sweeping, staccato or smooth and flowing – all possibilities can be explored.

When we use musical instruments, we can become self-conscious about “playing” them and often have pre-conceived ideas about how they should be played. With mundane objects we can’t get anything “right” or “wrong” – there is no correct way to make sounds with a cardboard box. When we let go of the need to get a particular result we are free to explore with the students and can build on and develop their engagement and imagination.

## Tips for Getting the Most out of Your Sessions

- Allow plenty of time – take a whole morning or afternoon so that everyone has time to explore at their own pace.
- Let go of expectations - if we go into a session with no expectations and simply see what happens we are able to look at what interests each student and build on *their* engagement and responses rather than trying to get a particular end result. It doesn't always matter what the end result is, it's the process of getting there that's meaningful.
- Say as little as possible – even if you're the facilitator – this will give the students the space to explore on their own terms, use their own voices and explore imaginatively.

- The teacher or facilitator can narrate what's going on in the room so that everyone can be involved in the whole experience and be kept up to date with what's going on with others in the room. A single voice giving commentary is easier to focus on than multiple voices giving encouragement or direction.
- Students can be exploring different stimuli in different ways at the same time – it isn't necessary for everyone to explore everything in turn – if a student doesn't wish to engage with a particular resource or activity try something else.
- Accept any response – if a student pushes a resource away, try bringing something else to see if that is pushed away too and build it into a game, if they scatter resources try finding something for the resources to fall into so that they make a sound and then explore the different sounds.
- When we create a special environment or activity and set aside time to explore it properly we communicate to the students that something important is going on and that they are worth everything we have done to make the experience as rich as possible. Our efforts and our attention are strong indicators of how much we value our students.

# Where Firebird Began

The concept for **Firebird** was developed by Christopher Davies and Sue Pyecroft, the show's director and designer/puppet director. They wanted to create a show that would be accessible to audiences despite the current restrictions presented by the Coronavirus situation. Christopher and Sue wanted to ensure that the show would still be able to connect with its audience at close quarters – as Bamboozle's shows always have done – but would also provide some large-scale spectacle that that audience would be able to access safely and be able to enjoy as a collective experience.

After fixing on the mythical phoenix as inspiration Christopher and Sue commissioned the puppets that are central to the show's narrative. They also engaged the composer to create the songs and soundscapes for the piece as well a specialist puppeteer. Once the research and development phase of the project was underway the team was expanded to include the rest of the performers – an actor and clowning expert, an actor singer and percussionist and a saxophonist (who also happens to be the Technical and Stage Manager).

Together the team came up with the shape of the show which begins with close-up interactions with the audience through a window to ensure everyone is safe. The second part of the show – which brings the audience outside – includes music from a live band and the final sequence can be enjoyed at a distance by a large group of children. Although each scene can be enjoyed as a standalone experience – a simple narrative arc joins them together and the whole piece can be accessed on a number of different levels. In this way as many children as possible can have the opportunity to experience all or part of the show.

## The Music of Firebird

In writing the music for the Firebird Craig Byrne (Composer and Musical Director) wanted to reflect the positive energy of the discussions the team had in the early stages of devising. They felt that a generous and joyous spirit was what everyone wanted and needed at this time and that the music could help a lot in providing this.

The first scene is intimate and close-up and the performers are all busy drawing or animating crows. For Craig it seemed an obvious choice to have some close harmony singing at this point. He came up with four different sections, two that reflected the jauntiness of the crows and two that created the more magical quality in discovering the Firebird chick. There is also a laid back “jazz” recording of these tunes to underscore the Caretaker’s pratfalls and drawings.

In the second scene Craig wanted something to match the mischief and playfulness of the larger Firebird puppet. The team decided that a Chicken band would best serve this endeavour! With guitar, sax and cajon they are able to play some up-tempo dance music inspired by jazz and ska. As they are playing live they can also respond to any interactions

that might take place with the students or any new scrapes that the Caretaker and Firebird might get into.

For the final scene the music needed something graceful, primal and epic to match the movement and scale of the fully grown Firebird. The obvious choice was to create a series of symphonic moods to tell the final chapter of the relationship between the Caretaker and the Firebird. Using the instruments of the BBC Symphony Orchestra Craig was able to create a rich and mythic bed of sound to send our Firebird back into the wild...

# The Touring Company

## Craig Byrne



Craig is an Actor, Musician and Composer. Studying Drama at The University of Manchester and at The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. He has gone on to work particularly with Devising Theatre companies and in the last decade he toured the UK and Europe as a Street Theatre double act with Strangelings. He has also worked extensively with Contemporary Circus performers and companies as a Composer and Sound Designer. Most recently Craig has created two comic shows celebrating his (and Bamboozle's!) hometown of Leicester (Dead Leicester, Dead Leicester Chronicles). For the past few years since encountering Bamboozle, he has performed in six of their shows throughout the UK and in China, Egypt and Australia. He is delighted to be once again devising and performing in a brand new Bamboozle show!

## David Hately

David, Bamboozle's Company and Production Technical Manager, joined the full-time team in March 2021, although he is not entirely new to Bamboozle having worked with them as both a freelance technician and on the staff of the venues Curve (Leicester) and Lakeside Arts Centre (Nottingham). He has been very pleased to have been part of the team getting through the pandemic (Moon Song online and Sing a Song) and back into presenting our work to audiences in real-life (Down to Earth, Backyard and Firebird). Prior to joining Bamboozle he has experienced a wide range of theatre and music, touring nationally and internationally with both: notable shows were with Aakash Odedra (Rising, Murmur and Inked) and Curve (with too many shows to mention, highlights include The Twits, Chicago and Westside Story). You may see David playing some music for Bamboozle too (bassoon and saxophones a speciality)!



## **Joey Holden**



Most recent productions include: The Xmas Cracker, Hull Truck, The Tempest and Bleak House Creation Theatre Company, Peter Pan Hull Truck Theatre, Rising Up English Folk Expo, Twelfth Night Lyceum/Bristol Old Vic, Where There's Muck There's Bras Northern Exhibition and has also worked with York Theatre Royal, Bristol Old Vic, The British Library, Manchester Royal Exchange, Live Theatre, Northern Stage (Founder Member) Svenska Theatre Finland, Soho Theatre, Keswick Theatre by the Lake, Bush Theatre, The Royal Court, Bolton Octagon, RNT, Sheffield Crucible, Perth Rep, The Gate, The Tricycle, Polka, The Gilded Balloon. Companies include Vamos Theatre Company, The Northern Exhibition, Told by an Idiot,

Kneehigh, Clowns without Borders, Cirque Du Soleil, Cartoon de Salvo, Vtol Dance Company, RSC, North East Theatre Consortium, Bamboozle Theatre Company, The Ding Foundation. Film includes: An interview with a Hitman and The Enormous Turnip.

## **Lori Hopkins**

Lori has been working (and playing!) with puppets since 2009 after training at the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Prague, at Rose Bruford College and the London School of Puppetry.

For Bamboozle Theatre Company, Lori has previously played Mole in Along The Riverbank and toured the UK and China. She has also appeared in shows for Little Angel Theatre, Polka Theatre, Royal & Derngate and Pins & Needles Productions.

Lori produces her own shows and has recently created digital shadow puppetry productions for on-screen viewing with her fledgling company Pinwheel Theatre.

In addition to her performance work, Lori is an Education Practitioner and Puppetry Consultant for Shakespeare's Globe Education. She leads regular workshops for all ages ranging from Early Years storytelling to CPD for teachers.



## **Ben Moores**



Ben Moores trained in ballet, percussion and classical singing before gaining a Masters in Ensemble Theatre from Rose Bruford college directed by Gabriel Gawin from 'Song of the Goat' theatre company. He co-devised and performed in Bamboozle's immersive production of 'Storm' for autistic audiences which has toured regularly over the last five years. He collaborated with learning disabled actors on several productions with Hijinx theatre company including 'Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger' which was a co-production with Frantic Assembly theatre company. Ben has created work with his own theatre company: 'Theatre Elliptical' including the productions: 'Whirlpool People' in 2019 and 'Absence of Separation' in 2016.

# The Company Behind the Scenes

## Christopher Davies - Director

Christopher Davies is a teacher, trainer and theatre director and author of two books: *Creating Multi-Sensory Environments. Practical Ideas for Teaching and Learning* and *Dramatic Starts*.

He co-founded Bamboozle in 1994. As Artistic Director, he writes and directs many of the company's touring shows, leads the training programme and continually seeks ways in which we can improve our methods of communication with young people for whom making themselves understood is a daily and life-long challenge.



Christopher runs Bamboozle training courses and workshops nationally and internationally: including for the National Theatre, Shakespeare's Globe, New York University, Sydney Opera House, Arts Centre Melbourne, Singapore Arts Council, Shanghai Children's Art Theatre and for Assitej in Sweden.

## Sue Pyecroft – Puppet Designer & Puppetry Direction



Sue Pyecroft co-founded Bamboozle Theatre Company in 1994. As well as being the lead theatre designer for Bamboozle's highly acclaimed touring shows for many years, she has also developed the use of puppetry as a way of connecting to students in performances. Sue was involved with the development of Bamboozle's programme of work with students on the Autistic spectrum and is currently developing Bamboozle Backyard – a space in nature for families with children on the autistic spectrum. Recently Sue has been more involved in the production side of Bamboozle's touring shows.

# Firebird – Producing the Show

Producing Firebird involves a whole team of Bamboozlers led by the Director and supported by administrators at Bamboozle HQ who make sure that the show gets out on the road and into schools once it is ready.

The research and development team held a number of Zoom meetings to work on various concepts for the show. The company then workshopped their ideas at Bamboozle HQ as part of the research and development process. The designers came up with the concepts for the puppets and the composer wrote the songs and music. During the rehearsal period the company honed all of their ideas into the final production which included taking elements of the show into a local school to see how the students responded to it.

Each day on tour the stage manager and performers unload the van and put up the set in a new school. They get ready for the performances with physical and vocal warm-ups. These are important for reducing the risk of injury, for making sure that the performers are comfortable on stage and for protecting the performers' voices. The show's scenes are performed around the school throughout the day and, at the end of the day, the stage manager and performers take down the set and re-pack the van ready to travel on to the next venue for the next performance.

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Performers                    | Craig Byrne<br>David Hately<br>Joey Holden<br>Lori Hopkins<br>Ben Moores<br>David Hately |
| Technical and Stage Manager   |  |
| Director                      | Christopher Davies   |
| Designer                      | Sue Pyecroft   |
| Composer & Musical Director   | Craig Byrne  |
| Puppetry Direction            | Sue Pyecroft   |
| Design Assistant              | Hannah Boothman  |
| Puppets designed and made by: |  |
| Crows                         | Connie Burley  |
| Baby and Young Firebirds      | Alex Hatton  |
| Adult Firebird                | Tom Cleaver  |
| Chicken costumes              | Kim Tuplin   |
| Tour co-ordinator             | Jennifer Murphy  |
| Teachers' Companion Pack      | Nicole Arkless   |

Firebird was devised by the company.

## Acknowledgements

Our thanks also go to:

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Connie Burley                   | Additional design support                               |
| Amelie Davies                   | Rehearsal support                                       |
| Electricity Sports Cricket Club | For use of their grounds for Firebird flight rehearsals |
| The Black Horse, Aylestone      | For use of their skittle alley windows for rehearsals   |
| Curve, Leicester                | For hosting Firebird in their re-opening showcase event |

We would also like to thank the students at Birkett House School in Leicester for letting us explore elements of the show with them during the final rehearsal week.

# Bamboozle Training Courses

## An Introduction to the Bamboozle Approach

### Practical training courses for staff in using Bamboozle's Approach with students

Bamboozle produces interactive, multi-sensory theatrical experiences exclusively for children and young people with learning disabilities. All of Bamboozle's work, whether performance or workshop based, is underpinned by an approach that we share, as far as possible, with the schools that we visit. The Bamboozle Approach is a series of behavioural and linguistic strategies that are designed to put students at ease and enable them to engage comfortably and meaningfully with the world around them. Fundamental to our way of working is the use of creative ways to engage students. These techniques can be used in any setting whether it's in the classroom, in the drama studio or out in the world.

We offer training courses for staff to explore these strategies in more detail. These courses are available in a variety of different formats from staff INSET days to workshops with students where staff observe the techniques in practice and then analyse them with Bamboozle facilitators afterwards.

#### Each course incorporates:

- An explanation of the fundamental principles of Bamboozle's Approach and the thinking behind it
- Practical demonstrations of the strategies at work
- Techniques that you can begin using in the classroom straight away
- Practical demonstrations and group exploration of creative ways to engage students

#### Course formats include:

- Whole or part school introductory INSET training days **from £795**
- On-line introductory course series **from £149 per person**
- Three-day pilot projects which include an introduction/planning day with staff and then two days of contact time with students and staff **from £2,950**
- Week-long residencies where Bamboozle works with a group of students and their teachers and support staff for the whole week on an immersive drama-based experience **from £9,950**
- Bespoke long-term culture change projects where Bamboozle works with a school at regular intervals throughout the year to embed The Bamboozle Approach along with a creative process of teaching and learning **from £10,000**

All of Bamboozle's courses are tailored specifically to the needs of the school and its students. We have delivered this training to meet a variety of needs including: **working with behaviour that challenges, engaging autistic students who are described as being hard-to-reach, facilitating greater engagement with students described as having PMLD, adopting a creative approach to teaching and learning**, and many more.

## **Multi-Sensory Environments**

### **Practical Courses for Staff on Creating and Using Multi-Sensory Environments**

Staff in special schools know the power and value of Multi-Sensory Environments; the trouble is that there's not enough time to set one up and never enough budget to acquire the necessary materials. Bamboozle's courses explore how environments can be created quickly, easily and cheaply and how they might serve to deepen the impact of the story or theme you are exploring to make it more meaningful to the students you are working with.

#### **The courses include:**

- Looking at different materials, building strategies and where and how environments can be set up in your school
- Practical sessions where you can create your own multi-sensory environment with ways to stimulate all the sensory channels – auditory, visual, kinaesthetic, olfactory and gustatory
- How to get the most out of your multi-sensory environment and create stimulating and meaningful learning opportunities for your students

#### **Course formats include:**

- Whole or part school introductory INSET training day **From £795**
- Design consultation and gathering of materials on a theme defined by the school followed by INSET training day **From £2,200**

#### **Also available:**

##### ***Creating Multi-sensory Environments* by Christopher Davies**

This highly practical guide to creating and using multi-sensory environments is packed full of ideas for low-cost, easy to assemble multi-sensory environments, accompanied with suggestions for use with clear learning outcomes linked to the P Levels for children with special educational needs.

The book is available from our website ([www.bamboozletheatre.co.uk/shop](http://www.bamboozletheatre.co.uk/shop)) **priced at £22.99**

##### **Multi-sensory Environments created for you by a Bamboozle designer**

Following a period of consultation, a Bamboozle designer comes into your school each half term, or term - as required, and creates a new multi-sensory environment tailored to your needs.

**Price variable according to requirements.**

## **Engagement for Learning**

### **Creative ways to engage students working outside a subject-specific curriculum**

One of the fundamental aspects of Bamboozle's work - whether in a performance, in a workshop, or in the classroom - is the focus we place on engaging the children we work with. Once we have hooked a child's interest and nurtured their engagement we have the potential to open up a world of possibilities. All of Bamboozle's education projects use creative engagement as the foundation for learning. We facilitate creative learning sessions, explore what the children choose to engage with and then build their learning around that.

In 2021 the Government is expected to roll out a new statutory assessment programme for pupils with the most complex needs – this will replace P scales 1-4 and will be based on the “the engagement model” (exploration, realisation, anticipation, persistence and initiation).

Bamboozle will be running courses looking specifically at creative ways to engage pupils who are described as having complex needs and for those who are on the autistic spectrum and described as being hard-to-reach.

The courses will cover:

- Creative approaches to facilitating immersive and engaging learning sessions
- How to hook interest and develop engagement
- Using characters, multi-sensory environments and narrative scenarios to sustain engagement
- Behavioural and linguistic strategies that promote child-initiated learning
- Developing learning scenarios to enable sustained engagement and deepen experiential learning
- Techniques for group focus
- Enhancing observation skills
- Developing differentiated learning pathways

The courses have not yet been advertised but to register your interest, please email [nicole@bamboozletheatre.co.uk](mailto:nicole@bamboozletheatre.co.uk).

## **Storytelling and Building Original Narrative**

### **A Practical Course for Staff to explore a creative, multi-sensory approach to storytelling and building original narrative**

Many of the storybook packages available to schools offer a few props or flash cards to accompany a particular story but what they don't do is give advice on how to enhance the storytelling or how to explore the story in more depth. The more students engage with a story the more they will get out of it. Bamboozle has a wealth of experience in working creatively with existing stories and devising and developing original narrative. This course will give you an insight into Bamboozle's way of working and provide you with practical tools for continuing your work with students.

**These courses include:**

#### **Using existing stories**

- Choosing a story or elements of a story to explore
- Bringing a story to life and hooking the students' interest
- Exploring creative ways of developing the story and devising practical activities to accompany it

#### **Creating an original narrative**

- Starting points for a narrative
- Using a person in role as a character in the narrative
- Ways to develop the narrative and keep the students engaged and invested in it
- Practical activities inspired by the narrative

**Course formats include:**

- Whole or part school introductory INSET training days **from £795**
- Three-day workshops which include an introduction/planning day with staff and then two days of contact time with students followed by discussion sessions with staff **from £2,950**
- Week-long residencies where Bamboozle works with a group of students and their teachers and support staff for the whole week on an immersive drama-based experience **from £9,950**

**Also available:**

***The Bamboozle Book of Dramatic Starts*** by Christopher Davies

This simple, practical book guides teachers through creative ways of beginning a narrative and encouraging students to engage with it. The book covers a number of different activities and gives:

- A clear explanation of how to put each activity into practice with students
- An explanation of how each element of the activity works and the thinking behind it

- Examples of how Bamboozle has used each activity in practice

The book is available from our website ([www.bamboozletheatre.co.uk](http://www.bamboozletheatre.co.uk)) **priced at £14.95**

# Contacts

Resources for **Firebird** are available for download from Bamboozle's website:

<https://www.bamboozletheatre.co.uk/shows/the-firebird>

If you would like any more information about the show or on any of the courses mentioned in this booklet please do not hesitate to contact us.

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