1001 NIGHTS
TEACHER RESOURCE PACK
FOR TEACHERS WORKING WITH PUPILS IN YEAR 3 AND UP

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INTRODUCTION

The collection of stories we know as *The One Thousand and One Nights* or *The Arabian Nights* began as folk tales from the oral traditions of Egypt, Syria, Iraq, India, Persia and Mesopotamia. These stories were first written down as collections by unknown authors around the 8th Century and are a reflection of the diversity of the medieval Islamic world - a huge area spanning the Middle East and Asia which was connected through trade and religion.

The first European translation of the tales appeared in 1706 when Antoine Galland translated the stories into French. Translations into English based on Galland’s work appeared soon after. Three stories which have become associated with *The One Thousand and One Nights* in the West - *Sinbad the Sailor*, *Aladdin* and *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* – were added by Galland. These stories, although probably genuine Middle Eastern folk tales, are not found in any Arabic versions of the text.

The stories that form *The One Thousand and One Nights* are held within a narrative frame set in the court of King Shahrayer. King Shahrayer, betrayed and humiliated by his unfaithful wife, vows, in a terrible revenge on all women, to marry a different woman each night - and each morning after their wedding have her executed before he can be betrayed again. This time, the bride he has chosen is Dinarzad - the youngest daughter of his Vizier - but Shahrazad, her older sister, asks to take her place. Shahrazad is confident in her storytelling powers and believes she can keep the King so entranced by her stories that he will keep her alive in order to hear what happens next - the ultimate cliffhanger. What follows is the unfolding of story, within story, within story over 1001 nights as the power of Shahrazad’s storytelling not only keeps her alive and her sister safe, but transforms King Shahrayer himself.
TRANSPORT & THE UNICORN’S ADAPTATION OF 1001 NIGHTS

1001 Nights is a devised piece of theatre that uses the stories of Arabian Nights as its starting point. The names of the places in the stories that Shahrazad tells - Basra, Baghdad, Mosul, Aleppo, Damascus, have new associations for an audience today. They are not just far away places in a story. Ongoing events in the Middle East have helped to shape the frame for this adaptation of 1001 Nights.

In our version of 1001 Nights, Shahrazad is forced to leave her home in the Middle East to come to London. The stories she tells keep her alive in a different way to the character of Shahrazad in the original stories.

The stories that Shahrazad tells are set in Basra; Baghdad; Mosul; Aleppo and Damascus.
MAKING THE PLAY

DEVISING A PIECE OF THEATRE IN RESPONSE TO 1001 NIGHTS

Director Douglas Rintoul lead the devising process and will direct the final piece. He worked for some months reading the stories and other source material - in particular about refugees - defining the narrative and the key moments to use in the rehearsal process. Douglas then spent a week exploring these ideas with three actors and the designer James Perkins. This workshop period looked at the framework for the play and particularly focused on the idea of exile, of leaving home and creating a sense of identity in a new, unfamiliar place. The devising process explored the idea of making journeys; the connection between past and present; the passage of time and the concept of distance and connection to time and place.

The stories Shahrazad tells in our version of 1001 Nights give her a powerful connection to her past life; to her home and to her mother. They also create a kind of magic through which Shaharzad can escape the difficulties of her present moment and offer possibilities of transformation for all the characters in the play.

The rehearsals for 1001 Nights were not a traditional process using a finished script - instead the actors came together with defined characters and a story arc, but without knowing the specific detail of what their characters would say and how they would behave in particular moments. This detail was discovered in the rehearsal room as they explored how the telling of the stories within the story illuminates and resonates with what is happening to Shahrazad in her new life in England. Douglas had a clear artistic vision from the outset which helped to steer the process of making the play; his job in rehearsals was to hold the vision and the framework for the play in a way that allowed the company to explore the creative possibilities within these constraints.

Image of an original design from James Perkin’s sketchbook
SYNOPSIS OF 1001 NIGHTS

At the opening of the play, Shaharazad, her mother and her father are seen at home. It is a settled home life, with routine and familiarity. The father tells stories, and jokes with his daughter. Shahrazad is very knowledgeable; she loves reading and is a poet. She has a powerful memory and she remembers whatever she reads.

But then there is a terrible disturbance and disruption to their lives - this will be shown theatrically and the use of sound and lights will be important in the depiction of this disruption. The family is forced to leave their home and somewhere on this journey the mother gets separated from Shahrazad and the father.

Now refugees, Shahrazad and her father arrive in London and are settled into a new home. The father works and finds new routines, but he is not happy. He misses his old life and doesn’t go out, instead staying within the four walls of the flat that is their new home.

Shahrazad is also changed by her new life. She goes to school and when she is at home she finds a space for herself, outside the flat, where she can see the moon. She knows that this is the same moon her mother can see, wherever she might be. Here Shahrazad tells stories: stories from her past, stories for the present and the future.

• Firstly *The Tale of the Two Viziers*: a story of exile that sees one brother leave his home after a quarrel with his brother. He travels from his home in Egypt to Damascus and Aleppo, unable to return home.

• Shahrazad tells the story *The Envious and the Envied* to help her make sense of a bullying attack on a neighbour.

• She makes friends with a girl who lives in the flat next to hers; they share stories and come to understand each other despite not speaking each other’s language. Shahrazad tells the story of *The Three Princes and the Princess Nourhonnihar* which takes them out of their concrete world, transported by flying carpets, away over the roof tops of London to far away worlds.

• Her neighbour shares a story of her own. She tells Grimm’s version of Cinderella, *Ashputtel*, to Shahrazad. When Cinderella sits beside the tree where her mother is buried the story resonates strongly with Shahrazad.

Through the telling of stories, Shahrazad makes her new world a safe place and the power of her stories begin to affect her father too and another transformation starts to take place within him.

At the end of the play, Shahrazad’s mother finds her and her father and they are together in their new home, but their old life will not be forgotten.
There is a huge gulf between a script and a piece of theatre. I think for a lot of people, myself definitely included, reading a script can be really hard work, yet that script on the stage with the right set and the right cast and the right space and the right visuals can be really easy, you can suddenly take in all the information.

James Perkins, Designer.

Theatre is a visual, spatial and aural art form. What we see and hear and how we experience the space that we share with the actors and other members of the audience is as important as the dialogue between characters. Audiences begin reading the signs from the moment they enter the auditorium, seeing the set and how the space is ready for the story and tuning into the atmosphere created by music or other sounds already playing in the theatre.

Along with the actors you will see performing the play and the director who has been in charge of making the piece, there are a number of other people who have made creative decisions about how to tell the story:

**Set and Costume Designer**  James Perkins  
**Sound Designer**  Helen Atkinson
JAMES PERKINS TALKS ABOUT DESIGNING THE SET

I start by collecting ideas: reading the *1001 Nights* stories, collecting images inspired by Shahzarad’s original and new homes, researching any practical or emotional ideas that crop up, talking to the director and lighting designer.

**Design is reaction.** Most creative activities are reactions, even if you are right at the beginning of the process like a writer, or an artist, if you’re not reacting to external forces such as the audience or the wider world then what you’re doing is probably irrelevant. As a designer you’re right in the middle of the process, a writer, director, producer and venue are already involved so you have much more information to react to.

When you’re devising rather than starting from a script the process becomes even more collaborative. Douglas (the director) and I began by talking, quite a lot, about stories in general, these stories in particular, what excited us, what fascinated us. We discussed the type of theatre we wanted to make and what we hoped the audience would feel when they entered the theatre and saw the world we had created for the first time. As these conversations developed clear themes started to emerge, those themes became the basis of our visual research, those images became the basis of our next conversation and so the process continued…..

The research is like finding building blocks, you spend all this time filling this imaginary room with blocks of information and blocks of ideas until you reach the point where the floor of your head is covered in blocks - then you kind of sit in there and play and you click ideas together and they either work or they don’t work. If you hit a problem then you go away and you start the process again; you read the script again, you research again. Moments of failure only help to distil and strengthen your ideas.

If you take theatre as telling a story then designing for theatre is about creating a world. For *1001 Nights* we wanted a world that the audience would recognise, a concrete London. Once we had this base we piled flashes of the rich Eastern stories onto it. The magic feels even more magical when it’s framed by the greyness.

You want people to come into the space and feel like they can relate, like this is a space they know. Then, through words and images, you want to reveal whole new ideas that they might not have expected.
INTRODUCTION

These activities are to support teachers in preparing their class for their visit to the Unicorn theatre to see *1001 Nights*. The activities do not set out to explain the play or to outline the plot in ways that detract from the experience of being part of the audience. They do, however, set out to enable teachers to frame the play in ways that will enable their class to have an imaginative and affective connection with it.

The activities explore Shahrazad, the main character in the play, and give the class some imaginative insight into her life before she arrives in London as a refugee. The activities in the resources also draw on personal memory and the stories we tell that shape our personal and cultural identity.

Discussion, drawing, drama, writing and poetry are all part of the approach and, whilst there are no specific objectives given in the pack, teachers will be able to find many ways of linking the work to the given curriculum without adopting an instrumental approach.

Teachers will have taken part in the *1001 Nights* CPD workshop based on these resources and this will enable them to bring their own experience and responses to the work they do in the classroom.
1: STORY WHOOSH

ORGANISATION
Whole class in a circle, a hall space or cleared classroom

AIM
To give the class an overview of the narrative of and become familiar with the relationships between characters and the sequence of events in this complex narrative.

RESOURCES
A copy of the Story Whoosh narrative (at the back of this pack)

TIMING
30-60 minutes

OVERVIEW OF THE ACTIVITY
This activity explores the story of The Three Princes and the Princess Nouronnhar - one of the stories used in our production of 1001 Nights.

The teacher takes the role of narrator and as each event is told the children make a physical representation of the moment, showing what is happening. As the narration moves on the group is ‘whooshed’ out of the way and the next part of the action is portrayed as a ‘freeze frame’ by the next children in the circle. Teachers can encourage reflection on the meanings and relationships being portrayed but, in general, the ‘whoosh’ is a strategy that requires pace as well a playful approach.

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY
• In a circle, using the Story Whoosh narrative, ask children to take on roles and to show the event being narrated.
• You can ask children to represent things as well as characters if it is helpful.
• When the space becomes too crowded or it feels right to clear the images and move onto another chapter, ‘whoosh’ the group back into the circle. Continue with the story with the next children in turn.
2: IF THIS WAS A MAGIC CARPET...

ORGANISATION
Whole class in a circle

TIME
20+ minutes

RESOURCES
Small carpet/rug. This activity will be most successful if you have already done the Story Whoosh activity with your class.

INTRODUCTION
Although the idea of a magic carpet will be familiar to many young children for some it will be the first introduction to this iconic image of wishful thinking that has its origins in The Arabian Nights. This activity can be played after the class has become familiar with the story of The Three Princes and Princess Nourinnihar through the story whoosh. It plays with the idea of a magic carpet and reflects the way in which Shahrazad plays with objects in the play – including a carpet! It is about developing confidence in working imaginatively, being playful with ideas and responding to ‘what if...?’ and ‘as if’.

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY
• Organise the class into a circle and introduce the ‘magic carpet’ and the way the game works.
• Ask the class to use the phrase: Magic carpet, take me to .... I want to... Using the same phrase each time gives the game a structure and rhythm.
• Each person in the circle – including teachers and any other staff - take turns to stand on the carpet and to say where they want the carpet to take them.
• If anyone has no idea at all, they can chose to go to one of the places that has already been suggested.

DEVELOPMENT
Teachers may want to develop a similar game with the telescope from the story. The idea of the apple of healing offers an equally playful idea. It perhaps has more serious content - but nonetheless it is worth exploring.
3: MEMORY, IDENTITY AND STORY

ORGANISATION
Independent work; small group/whole class sharing; writing

TIME
50 mins

RESOURCES
Paper, drawing materials, personal objects

INTRODUCTION
Our family, our language, our culture, the country in which we live and the experiences we have in life are among the many things that shape our personal identities. Many commonplace objects that we keep are transformed because of the personal memories that are held in them. For all of us, and for refugees, in particular, even the smallest thing can be the touchstone for memories of home and family. This activity focuses on the personal memories of the class and is linked to one of the themes of the play.

PREPARATION – PLANNING AHEAD
Ask each member of the class to bring in something that they keep because it reminds them of other times, places and people. It is important for teachers to introduce this request by sharing something of their own and the stories that are part of it. This is not just a way of modelling the activity but a way of creating an authentic sharing of experience.

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY
At the start of the activity make sure that the class know that they are not expected to share memories that are too personal or private; only one that they feel safe sharing with others.

PART 1
Start by sharing your own personal object and the map of memories that you created and how drawing gives time to think about the object and where it comes from. Discuss briefly with the class what they have brought and why they keep it. Using A4 paper, ask the class to work independently to make their drawing and their memory map. This can be developed as an art activity with teachers introducing the class to new materials such as aquatint pencils or techniques such as close observation work with black pen.

PART 2
Share the drawing and the stories in small groups and then as a whole class. Draw out any commonalities that arise as the class shares their experiences and the way in which we all use things to remind us of other people, other times and other places.
ACTIVITY 3 CONTINUED:

LINKING TO 1001 NIGHTS

The diverse experiences of the classroom may lead to objects and memories from other countries or other places in the UK being shared. Teachers may like to use a world map to mark the places that are represented.

This would provide a way of linking the work to *1001 Nights* and the experience of the one of the main characters, Shahrazad, who has come to live in London and brings with her memories of her life in another country.

Examples from the teacher CPD session
4: MEMORY POEMS

ORGANISATION
Independent work; writing

TIME
50 mins

RESOURCES
Workbooks; paper

INTRODUCTION
This activity is linked with activity three – Memory, Identity and Story – and is a way of acknowledging that not all memories are ones that we want to share, either because they are too private or too painful. The poems use metaphor and simile to talk about memories without mentioning what they are and as a way of keeping private and personal memories safe. Teachers might like to use poem *The Whatifs* by Shel Silverstein as an introduction to this work. A copy of this can easily be found online.

The work makes a link to Shahrazad and her father’s experience, whose memories of leaving their homeland and losing touch with people they love are one of the themes in the play.

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY

- Discuss with the class how memories are sometimes hard to forget, even though we might want to stop certain memories, they keep coming into our minds.
- Make sure the class know that you are not expecting them to share memories that are private.
- Introduce the concept of metaphor/simile and how these ways with words can create strong images that talk about things indirectly. Teachers can use the examples written in the workshop to help explain this.
- Ask the class to write a poem starting with *My memory is like*... saying what it is like and what it does.
- Teachers will have their own procedures for redrafting but the aim is for the final poems to be written out so that other people can read them.
- Share the work by reading each other’s work as we did in the workshop. In order to do this effectively, the class will need time to rehearse the reading so that they can do it justice. Respond to the work as a class.
- Teachers can make a connection to the production of *1001 Nights* by telling the class that before their arrival in London, Shahrazad and her father will have lots of happy memories of friends and family, but that the dangers they have had to face will have left them with unhappy memories as well.
POST SHOW
Teachers can return to the poems the class have written as a way of reflecting on the play. How might these poems refer to the experience of Shahrazad and her father?

Examples written by teachers at the CPD session

*My memory is the silence of a snowy morning.*  
*My memory is a final push out of an aircraft.*  
*My memory is the stare into a deep, rocky valley.*  
*My memory is the final goodbye.*  
*My memory is like your memory.*

*A tiny pebble in the heel of your shoe.*  
*Even when you stop, pay it attention in order to remove it, it comes back another day.*  
*My memory is like a sea wave that crashes over my head engulfs me and carries me away.*

*My memories are like silence being alone the only connection I have left the only connection that links all else will come and go but memories are like silence and are always there.*
ORGANISATION
Pairs and whole class discussion

TIME
30 mins

RESOURCES
Questions to focus the discussion (at the back of this pack)

INTRODUCTION
In *The Arabian Nights* Shahrazad’s storytelling saves her life. In our version, the Shahrazad we meet has always loved stories - they have been a part of her life in all sorts of ways. We are going to be exploring the character of Shahrazad through drama and this is the first stage of that exploration.

This activity is a discussion about how stories can fulfil a whole range of different functions in our lives. Teachers might want to edit or adapt the discussion questions to suit the age-range they are teaching.

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY
- Introduce the activity with a brief discussion about story that will focus the thinking for the paired talk. Then organise the class into pairs.
- Give each pair a slip of paper with two questions to think about and discuss together before the whole class discussion.
- As a whole group share the thinking. The teacher’s role is to focus this towards Shahrazad and her life, in preparation for the drama work that draws on this discussion.
6: SHAHRAZAD — THE GIRL WHO LOVES STORIES PART 2

ORGANISATION
Small groups, whole class

TIME
60 mins

RESOURCES
Text extract from the play

INTRODUCTION
In this activity the class will be creating some moments of Shahrazad’s life through freeze frames that show how story played a part in her life before she arrived in London. Developing a sense of character in this way can enable the class to establish an imaginative engagement with the performance.

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY
• Explain that Shahrazad is a girl who loves stories and that in this activity we will imagine the kinds of experiences that she might have had when she was younger.
• Organise the class into groups of 4. Explain that the aim of the work is to imagine an event that shows that stories are an important part of Shahrazad’s life.
• Tell the class: Shahrazad lives in a city called Damascus. She lives with her mother and father. Other members of her family live close by. She might be telling stories, or hearing stories; she might be on her own, outside with her friends, at school, at home with her family or at a relative’s house. Remind the class that they can use the previous discussion on stories to help them.
• Read the extract from the opening of the play (below).
• Ask each group to create a frozen image.
• Share the images with the whole class: these can be brought to life with improvised dialogue; the setting, time etc. can be explained to help those watching to imagine the context of the event.
• Discuss with the class what the scenes reveal about Shahrazad.

Once upon a time there was lovely old house in Damascus, built around a shaded and tiled courtyard with a square pool in the centre where a small jet of water pulsed. It resembled many others in that old city. Doves flew down in the heat of the day to rinse their dusty wings in the little pool, and the small lemon trees breathed honey. It was not unlike many other houses in that city, but for the family that lived there it was not like any of them, it was home. In this home lived a Vizier and his wife who had a daughter called Shahrazad and she was clever and learned, as she had read nearly all the books of literature, philosophy, and medicine. She knew poetry by heart and knew the sayings of men and the wise words of Kings. She never forgot anything she read. She lived for her books and loved them so much that it was impossible to get her to put them down.
ACTIVITY EXTENSION: THE PHOTO ALBUM

ORGANISATION
Independent work

TIME
60 mins

RESOURCES
Paper and drawing material for making the photograph; a photograph album

INTRODUCTION
This is an extension of the previous activity and is way of developing a relationship with the character the class has created. By imagining her life before London, the class is creating their version of Shahrazad who has a settled home life full of stories and ordinary family events that will eventually be disrupted by the situation in her country.

Making the images for the photograph album and writing Shahrazad's memories enables each person in the class to draw on the work created collaboratively.

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY
• Ask everyone in the class to choose a moment they think Shahrazad will remember - it could be from the image they have created or from one that they have seen.
• Ask the class to imagine that a photograph has been taken of this moment that Shahrazad keeps in a photograph album.
• Create the photograph and write in-role as Shahrazad about the photograph and what she remembers about the event.
• The photographs and the written memories could be kept in an album created for the work, scanned in and made into a PowerPoint version or used to create a wall display about Shahrazad.

Examples from the teacher CPD session
WE HAVE TO LEAVE

ORGANISATION
Whole class discussion, pairs in role & independent work

TIME
30 mins drama; 30 mins creating the bag

RESOURCES
Images of Shahrazad’s bag (at the back of this pack)

INTRODUCTION
Sometimes places become so dangerous that people have to leave their homes immediately. This is what happens to Shahrazad and her family. Keeping within the fictional context is important but teachers also need to also allow space for children to articulate their knowledge and experience of this through things they have seen on the news, read in the papers or heard adults talk about. Teachers need to be aware that there might be children in their class whose families have been in this situation and be sensitive to how this is handled.

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY
• Tell the whole class what happens to Shahrazad’s family: One day Shahrazad’s mother and father tell her that they are going to have to leave home. The place has become too dangerous for them to stay. She is going to have to pack her bags and get ready to leave.
• Discuss with the class what they think Shahrazad’s response might be. Remind the class that there is no one answer to this question and they need to think about what they know about Shahrazad as a character to imagine how she might respond.
• Tell the class that they are going to work in pairs, taking on the role of Shahrazad and her father or mother. How do you think they tell Shahrazad: would they be anxious but not showing it to their daughter? Would they show Shahrazad how worried they are? Would they get cross with her or be patient with her questions?
• Tell the class that this is the information that they have to put into the scene.
• **Parent:** not sure when we will return; pack everything you need for a few months or more; take only a very small bag; take only essentials; nothing heavy as the bag has to be carried; take something small and light as a memory of home; leaving immediately.
• **Shahrazad:** How much time? Can I take my books? What kind of clothes?
• In pairs: improvise the scene between Shahrazad and her mother or father.
• Bring the scene to a close and tell the class that they are going to have an opportunity to do the scene again, But this time they will be able to hear how everyone else has imagined what might have gone on at this moment.
• **Listening Hand:** explain that as you walk round the room you will stop next to a pair and hold your open hand above their heads. When you do the hand acts as if it is a microphone and brings the conversation to life. When you close your hand the conversation stops. And then you will move on to another pair.
• Ask the class to listen to how everyone has imagined the scene. Discuss the responses.

INDEPENDENT WORK
Using the image of the bag, ask everyone to draw what Shahrazad puts in her bag, especially the things she takes to remind her of home.
8: THE MOMENT OF LEAVING

ORGANISATION
Whole class discussion; groups of three in role

TIME
30 mins drama

RESOURCES
Drama space

INTRODUCTION
This activity explores the moment of leaving. The family have to flee their home leaving behind the lives they have known and the place where they have lived. The mother stays behind to look after an older relative, she says that she will join them later.

By using three linked frozen moments with very little dialogue the class has to work to express their understanding of this moment in the lives of Shahrazad and her parents visually. When the scenes are shown, the class has to work to interpret what they see by ‘reading’ images and inferring the thoughts, feelings and responses of the family.

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY
• Discuss with the class how the family would keep themselves safe as they leave the house for the last time; discuss what different responses each person in the family might have to leaving.
• It is important to remember that this discussion is not to narrow the ideas down to one response but to open up the many possible ways people might respond in this situation and the things they are leaving behind. The aim of the discussion is to focus the thinking that will then will be continued when the groups work independently on their ideas.
• Organise the class into groups of three: father, mother and Shahrazad.
• Ask each group to prepare three frozen images that are linked to each other showing the moment of leaving. Teachers can use their experience in the workshop to give examples of what might be happening in the three scenes.
• When the images have been composed, ask the groups to add three lines of dialogue to the images.
• Share the work and discuss what has been created within the context of 1001 Nights, which has as its main character Shahrazad, a girl who has had to go through experiences like the one the class have created.
9: SHAHRAZAD’S SONG

ORGANISATION
Whole class activity

TIME
50 mins

RESOURCES
Copy of the poem (below)

INTRODUCTION
This poem is in the script and is taken from The Story of the Two Viziers in 1001 Nights. The audience will hear it sung during the performance when Shahrazad is full of sadness and homesickness.

RUNNING THE ACTIVITY
• Explain to the class that these are the words of a poem from 1001 Nights that they will hear Shahrazad sing in the play.
• Read the poem to the class twice. Ask the class to listen to the sound of the language.
• Read it again but this time each student has a copy that they can follow.
• Talk about it – the language is challenging but there is enough familiarity in it.
• Make it clear to the class that it is not about understanding every word but responding to the language – words and phrases that they like the sound of.
• Ask the class to work in pairs to choose two phrases that they really like – either because of what they say or because they enjoy the sound of the words.
• Tell the class that you are going to read it to them again - but this time when they hear their line they join in.
• This can be developed with some rehearsal into a class performance that could be presented at assembly.
• Discuss the reasons why each pair chose their lines and the meanings that they find in them. Teachers will also want to discuss the lines that puzzle the class. But there is no need to try and create a finalised meaning – it is perfectly acceptable to leave some mystery! It is an evocation of feeling rather than an explanation.
• Ask the class why they think Shahrazad sings this song when she is thinking about home and family.

Love, if our parting longer lasts,
My heart will pine and soon will waste away
But if you bless these sad eyes with your sight
The day we meet will be a blessed day
The oceans now between us are too vast
I trace your image in my empty heart
Stirred my thoughts and longing
Hours spent in mourning
This distance keeping us a world apart
INTRODUCTION

These are the resources to accompany the Drama activities in section 1. Resources can be photocopied and used by teachers in the classroom. Resources include:

- Story Whoosh Script for Activity One
- Questions for Activity Five
- Shahrazad’s Bag for Activity Seven
There was once a Sultan of India who had three sons, Prince Houssain the eldest, Prince Ali the second and Prince Ahmed the youngest.

The Sultan had adopted the Princess Nourinnhar when she was 16 and her father died. He had promised her father that when the time came he would help find her a husband.

What he didn’t realise was that his own sons had all fallen in love with the princess.

But neither the Sultan nor the princess could choose between them.

So the Sultan set them a task; they must go out into the world and whoever returned with the most extraordinary object from their travels would win the princess’ hand. He gave each prince forty bags of gold.

So the princes mounted their horses, and set off together on their travels.

They arrived at an inn at a place where the road split into three directions and they agreed to meet back at this place in one year’s time with the fabulous objects they found.

And so they all rode off in a different direction.

Prince Houssain, the eldest brother travelled for three months until he arrived at a place called Bisnagar.

He went into the market place and saw many shop keepers and stall holders:

One selling the finest fabrics, silks and brocades.

One selling the finest porcelain.

One selling beautiful jewellery made from pearls, diamonds, rubies.

One selling strange curiosities and objects.

He saw a seller pass by with a piece of carpet on his arm, calling out to sell it for forty bags of gold.

Prince Houssain asked the seller how it could be so expensive.

The carpet seller answered ‘whoever sits on this piece of carpet may be transported in an instant wherever he desires to go’.

Prince Hussain was intrigued and wanted to see for himself how this could be true, so the carpet seller laid the carpet down on the floor and he and the prince sat down on the carpet and the prince made a wish to be transported into the room in the inn where he was staying.

In that moment he found himself and the carpet seller there.

He needed no more proof so he gave the seller the forty purses of gold.

Prince Ali, the second brother, travelled for four months until he arrived at Schiraz, in the kingdom of Persia.

He too travelled into the market place:

One selling the finest fabrics, silks and brocades.

One selling the finest porcelain.

One selling beautiful jewellery made from pearls, diamonds, rubies.

One selling strange curiosities and objects.

He saw one stall holder with a strange ivory coloured tube which he was trying to sell for forty bags of gold.

He asked the seller how such an object could be so expensive.
• The seller answered. ‘First see this tube has a glass at both ends’ for the object was a telescope, which Prince Ali had never seen before, ‘by looking through one end you can see whatever it is you most wish to see in the world.’ So Prince Ali looked through the telescope and made a wish; to see the Sultan, his father. He immediately saw the Sultan in perfect health, sitting on his throne with his servants around him.
• So Prince Ali paid the seller the forty bags of gold for the amazing telescope.

**WHOOSH**

• Prince Ahmed took the road to Samarkand; and as his brothers had done, travelled into the market place.
• One selling the finest fabrics, silks and brocades.
• One selling the finest porcelain.
• One selling beautiful jewellery made from pearls, diamonds, rubies.
• One selling strange curiosities and objects.
• There he saw a stall holder who held an artificial apple in his hand and was asking for forty bags of gold. Prince Ali asked ‘Let me see that apple, and tell me how it can be as valuable as to cost so much?’
• The stall holder answered ‘Whoever possesses this apple has a great treasure. It cures all sick people of the most terrible diseases, fever, or plague. If the patient is dying, it will immediately restore them to perfect health. All the patient has to do is smell the apple.’
• A passer-by in the market who had been listening said he had a friend who was dangerously ill and was afraid would die.

**WHOOSH**

• So Prince Ahmed, the stall holder and the passerby went to the house of the sick friend and there found him very ill on his sick bed. The stall holder held the apple under the sick friend’s nose and immediately he stirred, opened his eyes and sat up. He was cured.
• So Prince Ali gave the stall holder the forty bags of gold and took the apple.

**WHOOSH**

• So Princes Houssain, Ali and Ahmed returned to the inn where they had parted one year ago. Each one was carrying their precious object; each one certain that they had found the most extraordinary thing.
• Prince Houssain showed them his carpet and said that it must be the most extraordinary object as it can transport you wherever you want to go in a moment.
• Prince Ali then showed his brothers the telescope and said that this must be the most extraordinary as whoever looked through the telescope could see whatever their hearts desired.
• Prince Houssain took the telescope looked through it and wished to see the Princess Nouronnihar.
• His brothers looked on and saw as his face changed, it became full of pain and grief. Through the telescope Prince Houssain saw Princess Nourinnhar sick in her bed, surrounded by her women and attendants, who were all in tears. Each brother took the telescope and saw the terrible sight.
• When Prince Ahmed saw that the Princess Nouronnihar was near to death, he took out his apple and said to them, ‘if a sick person smells this apple it will restore them to perfect health.’
• Prince Houssain, laid out his carpet and all three of them sat down on it and all made the same wish, and were transported to Princess Nouronnihar’s side in an instance.
• Prince Ahmed held the apple under her nose, the princess stirred, she opened her eyes and sat up and she was cured.
• The Sultan called the three princes together and told them that he could not decide between them; it was Prince Ahmed’s apple that cured the princess, but without Prince Ali’s telescope they would not have known of her illness, and without Prince Houssain’s carpet they would not have made it back in time with the cure.
• So the Sultan set a new task: he told each brother to fetch a bow and arrow and go to the great plain outside the city. The prince who can shoot the farthest will win the princess’ hand.
• Prince Houssain, the eldest, took his bow and arrow, and shot first.
• Prince Ali shot next, his arrow went further.
• Finally, Prince Ahmed’s arrow flew so far that nobody could see where it fell.
• But, because Prince Ahmed’s arrow could not be found, the Sultan decided that Prince Ali should marry Princess Nourinnhar.
• And the story of Prince Ahmed and the fairy that made his arrow travel so far with her magic is a story for another day.
QUESTIONS FOR ACTIVITY FIVE:
SHAHRAZAD THE GIRL WHO LOVES STORIES

How can stories get you into trouble?
How can stories take you to other places?

How can stories make you cry?
How can stories remind you of other times?

How can stories remind you of other people?
How can stories change your mood?

How can stories get you out of trouble?
How can stories upset people?

How can stories help you make sense of what is happening?
How can stories make you see things more clearly?
SHAHRAZAD’S BAG
FOR ACTIVITY SEVEN: WE HAVE TO LEAVE
1001 NIGHTS

A Transport/Unicorn production

TRANSPORT
www.transport-theatre.eu

CREATIVE TEAM
Devised and directed by Douglas Rintoul
Designed by James Perkins
Sound Design by Helen Atkinson