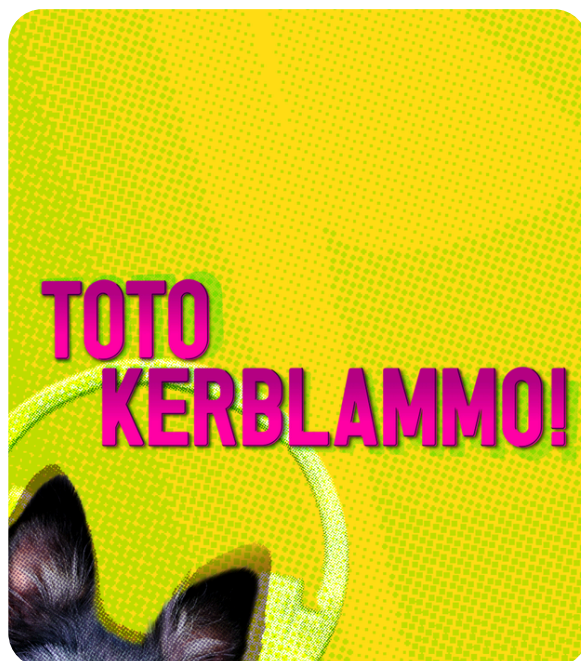


TOTO KERBLAMMO! CLASSROOM REFLECTION

SUMMARY OF THE PLAY FOR TEACHERS

[For more information about themes in the play please download our pre-show THEMES resource](#)

The play opens with 12 year old Effy and her beloved dog, Toto. Effy is in hospital after being run over by a car. We piece together Effie's world through glimpses which we see and hear. Effy's Mum has poor mental health, and has been placed in a secure psychiatric hospital after setting fire to the house while her and Effy were sleeping – it is unclear if this was deliberate or an accident. We hear how difficult Effy's relationship is with her mum throughout the play, she is unkind and there are signs of neglect. So Effy is sent to live with her Aunt and Uncle in a flat where no pets are allowed. Effy would rather live with her Dad in Scotland, who she hasn't seen for a long time.



Effy's closest and only trusted friend is her dog Toto. She sneaks Toto into her Aunt's in a small box. She meets a neighbour, Noah – who is very different from her and she does not trust him. (Noah is played by the same actor as Toto and there are similarities between the two characters). Effy gets to know Noah a little bit better, they gradually become friends.

Effy gets into an argument with her Aunt when Toto is discovered. She runs away with Toto and they are hit by a car on the road. Effy is visited by her mum and Noah in hospital. She slowly comes out of the coma, and as she gets better we realise Toto is dying. Effy and Noah rush out of the hospital to save Toto but it is too late. The play ends with a touching scene between Effy and Noah, Effy allows herself to get closer and Noah says he'll look after her – we see her learn how to shift some of the trusting relationship she had with her pet to a human. It ends with birdsong.

CURRICULUM LINKS

The play is relevant to the following PSHE topics:

Personal Safety

Mental Health

Relationships

Emotional Literacy

Responsibility



SIMPLE CONVERSATION STARTERS

TIME: 20 minutes (approx)

SUBJECT AREAS: Drama, English, Speaking & Listening

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: To reflect on the play adding depth to understanding

LEARNING OUTCOMES: By the end of the activity, pupils will be able to:

- Articulate their response to the play
- Consider different responses from their peers
- Begin to think about the purpose of theatre

Choose all or just a few of the following questions to explore with the class:

- What was your favourite moment in the play?
- Was there anything you didn't like or didn't understand?
- Can you describe what you heard through the headphones?
- How did the lights help to tell the story?
- Choose three words to describe: Effy/Toto/Noah
- What do you think happened to Effy's mum? Why?
- What could make Effy's life better?
- What can humans offer that dogs can't? What can dogs offer that human's can't?
- Do you think Noah could be a good friend to Effy?
- If someone is feeling sad, what could they do to feel better?
- During the play we hear sounds to represent feelings. At the very end we hear birdsong, how did that make you feel?



ACTIVITIES

CREATIVE CHECK OUT: THE SOUND YOU MAKE WHEN...

TIME: 10 mins + 20 min extension

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Develop critical thinking, understand creative expression

Throughout the play Toto introduces the sounds things make and we hear them.

Ask the class if they remember and can replicate or describe the sounds for the following:

- When you think about home
- When you're confused
- When you think about being an adult but can't imagine it ever happening

(If they can't remember - can they think of their own sounds?)



At the end of the play, when Effy is with Noah, the script asks for 'the sound of love' which builds into an explosion. Can they remember this sound? Did it sound like love?

Ask the class, "If happiness was a sound what would it be?" Count 1, 2, 3 and ask them to all make that sound at the same time.

EXTENSION

At their desks, use pen, pencils and anything else available in the class to draw what the sound of happiness might look like?

Prompt questions: What colour is it? What kind of shape is it? What texture is it?

BE INSPIRED...

Next time you are reading a book together in class take a section and think about what this world would sound like. Choose a few confident readers who won't be distracted and ask the rest of the class to contribute with sound effects – this could be real things (e.g. running) and to represent feelings.

How does this develop their understanding of the world of the story?

If they repeated it just with the sounds would the content of this section still be clear?