

Education Resources

In this production Jason makes both a physical journey to another land and a personal journey of self belief and self esteem. Together Jason and his team of Argonauts negotiate and overcome different problems.

This makes Jason and the Argonauts an excellent and inspiring starting point for exploring many areas of the PSD curriculum, in particular themes of transition, self awareness, independence and interdependence. These Education Resources are designed to explore these themes through practical, experiential learning exercises.

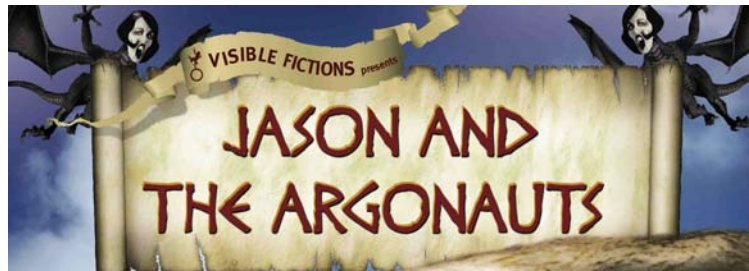
Ideas for Follow-UP Work

These are some ideas for work that you could do after seeing 'Jason and the Argonauts'. The 'Ideas for Preparatory Work' would also be appropriate to use as follow-up work.

These ideas are drama based but could be used as the basis for group discussion or writing exercises. The exercises build on each other and work as a complete unit but we also encourage you to use the ideas as a starting point and adapt them to best suit the needs of your group.

We hope you find them useful and inspiring.

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Character Recall

Ask the group to walk around the room at a steady pace without talking to or bumping into anyone else. Ask them to try and fill any space they see.

When the group is focused and walking fluidly explain that you are going to remind them of a character from the play and that you when you call 'freeze' they are to make a statue of that character, when you call 'come to life' they are to walk around the room as that character, and when you call 'normal walking' they are to continue to walk around the room as before.

Work through the following characters:

- Jason
- Aeson – Jason's father who appears to him in a dream
- Chiron – Jason's stepfather, who looked after him after Jason's father was killed.
- Pelias – Jason's evil uncle who murdered Jason's father and who Jason fights for the throne.
- Hera – The queen of Heaven, who appears to Jason as an old woman who he carries across the river of blood.
- Hercules – the strongest man in the world who thinks he should be the captain of the Argo.
- Mopsus – an Argonaut – a natural philosopher who studies beasts and birds and plants.
- Orpheus – an Argonaut – the greatest musician and poet in the world.
- Hylas – an Argonaut – beautiful and wise and a dab hand with a bow and arrow.
- Medea – the witch princess, one of the guardians of the fleece who falls in love with and runs away with Jason.
- Aetes – The King of the End of the world, guardian of the fleece and Medea's father.
- Ceto – the sea monster

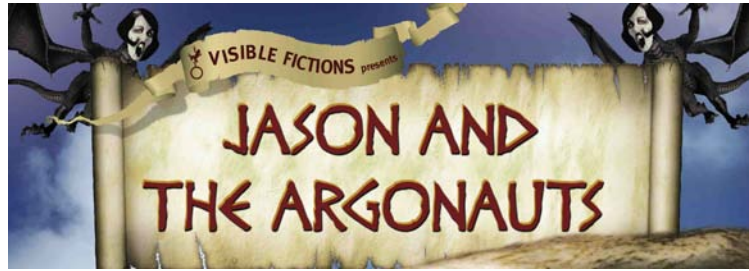
Character Recall Continued.

- Phineas – The wise King, blinded by the Gods for seeing the future too clearly and tormented by the harpies.
- Harpy – The half woman, half bird creature sent by the gods to torment Phineas.
- The dragon – who guards the fleece.

(These are all the characters from the play, if the group is getting restless and finding it hard to focus, just work through the main characters.)

Discuss, focusing on:

- Which characters did you remember most clearly? Why do you think this is?
- Which characters did you like the most? Why?
- Were there any characters you didn't like? Why?



Character Swap

Divide the group up into pairs.

Explain that they are going to act out a conversation between Jason and one of the other characters from the play and, like the actors did in the play, they are going to swap roles.

Encourage each pair to find a good space to work in, it might be a good idea to get them to draw around their 'acting area' with a piece of imaginary chalk. They need to define an area where they have space to move but won't be entering other pair's 'acting area'.

Ask each pair to choose one of the other characters from the play for Jason to have a conversation with. Tell them that they can choose one of the characters who didn't talk in the play (e.g. the dragon) but for this exercise they will need to imagine that that character can talk.

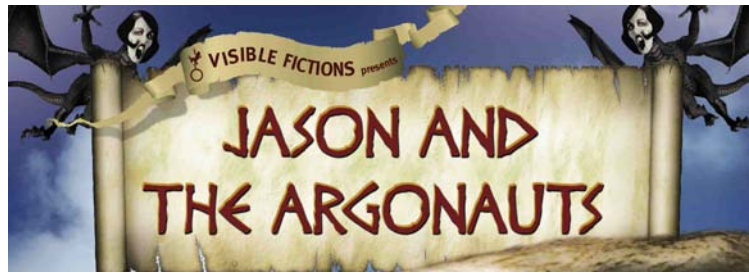
They must keep within their acting area and there should be no physical contact (thus no chasing about the room or fights).

Ask them to choose who is going to start as Jason and who is going to start as the other character they have chosen.

Explain they are to have a conversation and that when you call out 'swap characters' they are to swap over so whoever was playing Jason becomes the other character, and vice-versa (just like the actors did in the play) and keep the conversation running as smoothly as possible.

Run the exercise, and then watch some (or all) of the pairs. **Discuss** each one focusing on:

- How smoothly did they manage the change over?
- What was the conversation about?
- How would you describe Jason's relationship with this character?



Be brave or afraid?

Ask the group to recall what Medea says to Jason near the end of the play, just before he is going to fight Phineas:

'If you're not afraid of anything, you can't really be brave – you're just stupid. And if you're not brave you can't be a hero. So to be a hero you have to be afraid.'

Divide the group up into groups of 4 or 5.

Ask them to choose a moment from the story when Jason needed to be brave but he was feeling afraid.

Explain that they are to create two 'tableaux' (still pictures) of that moment, one where Jason is feeling afraid and one when he is feeling brave.

The groups will need to think about who else is in the picture and how they are feeling when Jason is feeling afraid and when he is feeling brave.

Explain that when they show the tableaux, that you are going to come round and tap each character on the shoulder and they are to say what they are thinking at that moment. This is called 'thought track'.

Give them time to prepare and then ask each group to show the 'afraid tableaux', 'thought track' it and then **discuss**:

- Why is Jason afraid?
- How is Jason's fear affecting the others in the tableaux?
- What could help Jason be brave?

Next, show the 'brave tableaux', 'thought track' it and then **discuss**:

- Why does Jason need to be brave?
- What is helping Jason be brave?
- How is Jason's bravery affecting the others in the tableaux?