

Message In A Bottle

KEY STAGE 3 AND 4
LESSON PLAN



Resource written by Justine Reeve with edits by One Dance UK, in partnership with ZooNation.

This resource is adapted from One Dance UK's Message In A Bottle scheme. The full scheme, with additional video clips of the work including repertoire led by ZooNation dancer Lizzie Gough, is available free to members on the One Dance UK website.

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE SHOW

Message In A Bottle is the spectacular new dance-theatre show from triple Olivier Award nominee, Kate Prince MBE, set to the iconic hits of music superstar Sting, including Roxanne, Every Breath You Take, Walking on the Moon, Fields of Gold, Englishman In New York and Shape of My Heart.

A village alive with joyous celebrations is suddenly under siege. Everything changes forever. Determined and daring, three parted siblings step out on their own extraordinary adventures.

With a mix of exhilarating dance styles, dazzling footwork and breathtaking athleticism set to the music of Sting, Message In A Bottle tells a vital and uplifting story of humanity and hope.

Message In A Bottle is the latest masterpiece from the ground-breaking creator behind Some Like it Hip Hop, Into The Hoods, Everybody's Talking About Jamie (choreography) and SYLVIA, and features the astonishing talents of dance storytelling powerhouse, ZooNation: The Kate Prince Company.

<https://zoonation.co.uk/productions/message-in-a-bottle/>

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- To understand what narrative dance is.
- To discover the themes within Message In A Bottle.
- To create movement material from an improvisation task set by the choreographer.

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To introduce ZooNation: The Kate Prince Company and the dance piece Message In A Bottle. Students will practically explore key movements and a creative task set by the choreographer used to create their own movements.

STARTER

Discussion around what is a narrative dance and a dance theme. Highlight that a narrative dance is an overall choreographic structure that follows a specific story line and intends to convey specific information through that story. A dance theme is the subject matter or topic or idea that is explored within the dance piece. Show students the clips:

[Kate Prince on the themes in Message Bottle](#)

[Message In A Bottle - Production Trailer](#)

Discuss possible themes and narratives before revealing that the key themes in Message In A Bottle are:

LOVE

DISPLACEMENT

FAMILY



WARM-UP

Explain to students that ZooNation begin every rehearsal with a 30 minute warm up incorporating:

- Cardiovascular fitness
- Stretches
- Power and strength

CARDIOVASCULAR

Students run around the room forwards for 8 counts using the beat of the music, then walk for 8 counts. Build so students run for 4 counts and walk for 4 counts. Repeat the running and walking with travelling backwards 8 counts and then try on 4 counts smoothly going from one to the other. Choose students to lead their own running and walking warm up with their own counts, own direction and own use of music. Emphasise safe practice through ensuring students don't collide with other dancers

STRETCHES

Get the class to explore a few stretches including sideways lunges and forwards lunges. The students can perform lunges in lines across the floor to music. Students may do a slight lunge or a deep lunge depending on their own abilities and flexibility. Highlight safe practice through ensuring students are aligned correctly to avoid injury.

POWER AND STRENGTH

Students to perform press ups in plank position or with knees on the floor. Do 4 press ups to the beat of the music. Hold the plank for 4 counts and repeat the 4 press ups and the hold twice more.

TASK 1

Students to get into groups of three and create a still position, like a photograph, for each of the Message In A Bottle dance theme words: Love, Displacement and Family. Encourage the students to add meaning with these moments, through adding focus and ensuring their facial expression implies something. Ask students to bring them to life by finding a transition from each still image. Highlight that image 1 will be the starting point and image 3 will be the ending. This will become the theme motif.

TASK 2

"We all have some connection to family. We can understand what it is like when your family is broken by something that is not your fault" - Kate Prince

Use the words 'Connection' and 'Broken' to create a broken motif in the groups of 3. Students to number themselves 1, 2 and 3. Students 1 and 2 need to make a connection: this could be holding hands, placing a hand on a shoulder, a counterbalance, a lift (using safe practice). Student 3 then finds a way to break that connection. Student 2 and 3 again make a physical connection and student 1 breaks it. Student 1 and 3 make a connection and student 2 breaks it. The students then select the best ones and join them together to create an 8-count motif or longer.

TASK 3

Students to go over theme motif and broken motif and find ways to put them together ready to perform to gain peer feedback. Students can feedback if the three themes are clear in the dance and what dance narrative is coming across.

COOL DOWN

Students can perform a slow version of the cardiovascular and stretches section of the warm up.





FURTHER INFORMATION

Free Message In A Bottle resources for teachers [here](#).

Find out more about Message In A Bottle tour [here](#).

As a One Dance UK Teacher member you can access the full Message In A Bottle PowerPoint lessons in your [members area](#). You can find out more about becoming a One Dance UK Teacher member [here](#).

CREDITS

A Sadler's Wells & Universal Music UK Production
MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

Directed and Choreographed by Kate Prince Based on the songs of Sting
With ZooNation: The Kate Prince Company

A Sadler's Wells and Universal Music UK production co-produced with Birmingham Hippodrome and The Lowry, Salford. Research and development supported by The MOVEMENT.

Message in a Bottle photographs by Helen Maybanks

