

MADNESS OF TWO
presents

CLAIRE DELLA AND THE MOON

by Ellen Graham & Jamie Hornsby

Study Guide



CLAIRE DELLA AND THE MOON

About Claire Della and the Moon

Claire Della was on the Moon. Around her swirled the stars and galaxies, the comets and constellations. Infinite possibilities. Infinite questions. But the one thing you could say for certain was that Claire Della was on the Moon.

Claire Della just doesn't fit in. The things that make sense to everyone else don't seem to make sense to her, and the world is a loud and frightening place. So she retreats to the safety and quiet of the Moon, where there's no one to bother her and no one for her to disappoint. But when her link between worlds is shattered, Claire must team up with Laika, the adventurous space dog, to find a way home or else be lost forever.

Claire Della and the Moon is a tender and beautiful new theatre production for young audiences, addressing issues of mental health, depression and anxiety. Using puppetry, music, striking visuals and poetic storytelling, Claire Della and the Moon opens the doors for honest conversation and provides audience members of all ages with a metaphoric vocabulary to positively manage their own mental health.

It's the perfect show for these trying times.

Cast and Creatives

Claire Della and the Moon
By Ellen Graham and Jamie Hornsby

Directed by Shannon Rush
Music by Jamie Hornsby
Lighting design by Mark Oakley
Puppet design by Stephanie Fisher

Cast: Ellen Graham and Jamie Hornsby

Claire Della and the Moon was developed through the inaugural Hall of Possibility Artist in Residence program at Slingsby Theatre Company. It was developed in close consultation with OK Psychology, an Adelaide based child psychology practice, and is presented with the support of the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

About Madness of Two

Madness of Two is a new Adelaide-based theatre collective, founded by award-winning theatre-makers Ellen Graham and Jamie Hornsby. Using its own special blend of innovative writing, devised theatre-making, whimsy and charm, Madness of Two tackles important issues in non-traditional ways.



CLAIRE DELLA AND THE MOON

Learning and curriculum links overview

EARLY YEARS FRAMEWORK – OUTCOMES

- O1 Children have a strong sense of identity
- O2 Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- O3 Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- O4 Children are confident and involved learners
- O5 Children are effective communicators

Australian Curriculum – (Foundation to Year 3)

The Australian Curriculum builds on the key learning outcomes of the Early Years Framework. When students have viewed Claire Della and the Moon and participated in a number of pre and post-show activities, they are likely to develop knowledge, understanding and skills within the following ACARA subject areas:

- English
- Science
- The Arts
- Technologies
- Health and Physical Education

Learning Area Content Descriptions Link – F–2

www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/learning-f-2/

Learning Area Content Descriptions Link 3–6

www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/learning-3-6/

The activities listed in this publication also cover the majority of the seven General Capabilities in the Australian Curriculum for students in Foundation to Year 6 and beyond.



CLAIRE DELLA AND THE MOON

Theatre etiquette

O2, O3, O5
The Arts

What to expect at the theatre

If this is your first time coming to the theatre, welcome! The theatre is a very special artform, where you can see real life performers up close and personal, and be transported to other worlds through clever use of lighting, sound, staging and performance. Because the theatre is such a unique art form, there are special rules and expectations to ensure that everyone has a great time and enjoys their experience.

Where can you sit?

- An usher will help you find your seat. Listen to them and follow their directions.

How do you know when the performance is beginning?

- The lights might dim or you might hear a voiceover or pre-recorded sound. This will let you know that show is about to begin and it's time to be quiet.

How is the theatre different to the cinema?

- The main difference between the theatre and the cinema is that in the theatre the performers are really there – they can see and hear you, and you can see and hear them. Performers like to hear your reactions: if something is funny, they love to hear you laugh. If the performers invite you to interact, then interact. It's important not to talk or make too much noise throughout the performance, though, as that can disrupt the experience for others.

Other things to remember

- Turn off your mobile phone.
- Go to the toilet before you go into the theatre.
- Don't eat or rustle food packets in the theatre.
- Be sure to clap when the show is over.
- Enjoy the show!



CLAIRE DELLA AND THE MOON

Class Discussion

O1, O3, O4, O5

Conduct a class discussion, using as many of these questions as you please.

- Did you enjoy the play?
- What were your favourite parts of the play?
- Which parts made you feel excited?
- Which parts made you feel sad?
- Did any parts make you feel scared?
- Why did Claire run away to the Moon?
- What was good about being on the Moon?
- What was bad about being on the Moon?
- What was good about being on Earth?
- What was bad about being on Earth?
- How did Claire get to the Moon?
- Who was Laika?
- How was Laika similar to Claire?
- How was she different?
- What would you say to a friend that was feeling like Claire?
- What do you do when you feel sad?
- Who were the citizens of space?

Activity

Draw your own citizen of space.

- Think of a name for them.
- What do they like?
- What do they dislike?
- Do they have any family members?
- Do they have any pets?
- Why are they in space?

Activity

Draw your own planet, asteroid, comet, star or satellite.



CLAIRE DELLA AND THE MOON

Themes/Metaphors

English, The Arts

Claire Della and the Moon uses many metaphors to address its themes of mental health, depression and anxiety. Metaphors are useful in art because sometimes just describing emotions doesn't quite capture the entire feeling. We can say "that song makes me happy", but that's a little bit boring! Instead we could say that "when I heard the song, I felt a brilliant bolt of lightning moving around inside of my heart." That helps us to imagine the emotions better, even if we have never felt that same feeling before.

These are some of the metaphors and themes in Claire Della and the Moon.

The Earth

The Earth in Claire Della and the Moon is where Claire normally lives. It's where her family is, where her friends and neighbours are and where she learns and plays. However, Claire sometimes feels like she doesn't fit in on Earth – that it can get too loud or angry or stressful and that she can't do anything right.

We all feel like Claire from time to time, like we don't fit in but everyone else seems to be just fine. In the play, Claire feels so out of place that she wishes she could just leave the planet.

The Ladder

After a terrible day, Claire feels so completely overwhelmed and upset that she wants to leave Earth and go somewhere quiet where she'll be alone. She has kept objects that relate to things that upset her – the fishbowl that she broke, the bus ticket that she couldn't figure out how to use, and the circuit board that she argued with her brother about. Claire then builds a ladder out of these objects to get as far away from Earth as she can.

Sometimes we hold onto memories that upset us, just like how Claire holds onto her objects, and we use them to try and prove to ourselves that we are bad or wrong. When we do this, we are only focusing on the negatives and creating distance between ourselves and our friends and family, just like how Claire creates distance by going to the Moon.

Citizens of Space

When Claire climbs her ladder to the Moon, she sees people on their own planets, far off in the distance. Claire thought that she was the only one in space – the only person who felt out of place on Earth – but by seeing other people like her Claire realises that she is not alone. People often don't show that they are feeling sad or lost or alone, so we can see someone and think that they are coping with emotions or life much better than we are. However, every person is complicated, with their own thoughts and feelings. Sometimes we all need alone time, just like the people in space need their own planets.



CLAIRE DELLA AND THE MOON

Themes/Metaphors - Continued

English, The Arts

The Moon

The Moon is where Claire goes to be alone when she feels overwhelmed or stressed or sad. Sometimes when you are going through very intense emotions you can feel very far away, like you're on a whole different planet. It's not a bad thing that Claire is on the Moon, but it's not good for her to stay on the Moon forever. She needs to learn to come back down to Earth, rejoining her friends, family and hobbies.

The Rocket Ship

Claire needs to get back to Earth to see all the people who love her. To do that, she builds a rocket ship out of all of the things she finds scattered on the Moon. When we are feeling down, it can be hard to remember all of the things that are special about ourselves. Claire is a brilliant inventor, and she uses her skills to build the rocket that gets her home.

Claire also asks for help from Laika, and together the two are able to build their rocket ship. It would be hard to build a whole rocket by yourself, so Claire realises that there's nothing wrong with asking for help, just like there's nothing wrong in asking for help when you are struggling with your own emotions.

At the end of the play we know that Claire can use her rocket ship to travel between the Earth and the Moon. The Moon doesn't stop existing once Claire travels back to Earth, just like sadness doesn't disappear forever even when we're happy. It's important to feel happiness and sadness sometimes, and it's important to be able to accept both.



CLAIRE DELLA AND THE MOON

Mental Health

O3, O4, O5
Health, Science

Feelings

We all have a wide range of feelings. We can feel happy, sad, angry, hurt, confused, frustrated, lonely, and many more things. What other feelings can you think of?

Thoughts

We may not realise it, but our thoughts have a big impact on our feelings. The things we tell ourselves can lead us to think, feel and believe things that might not be helpful. Learning to replace negative thoughts and behaviours with more helpful ones is a great way to look after your own feelings. Perspective is everything.

Depression

We all feel sad sometimes, and that's normal. But sometimes, if sadness lasts for a long time, we might be experiencing something called depression, which is a more serious and longer lasting version of sadness. Some signs of depression can include:

- Feelings of hopelessness
- Constantly feeling tired or irritated
- Not getting things done at school
- Loss of interest in hobbies and activities
- Difficulty concentrating

It's important to remember that if we're feeling down, there are plenty of people to talk to, whether that's a family member, a friend, a teacher, or a counsellor. We can always reach out to people who want to help us, and we can always be there for our friends if they're going through hard times.

Anxiety

Like depression, anxiety is a more serious version of perfectly normal feelings. We all feel stressed, nervous or afraid sometimes, but these feelings can become too strong and we might not know how to cope with them. Some signs of anxiety include:

- Worrying a lot
- Rapid heart rate and queasy stomach
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty sleeping
- Imagining bad things happening

Like with depression, there are many people to talk to if you feel that you're having problems with anxiety. Try talking to a friend, a family member, a counsellor or a teacher. Like with all feelings, learning to accept them and manage them is the key to a happy and mentally healthy life.



CLAIRE DELLA AND THE MOON

The Roundabout/Black Hole

On the next page you'll see a diagram of Claire Della orbiting a black hole. This is a useful way to think about your own thoughts and examine your behaviours. By asking yourself the following questions, you can take control of your thoughts, feelings and behaviours and work to improve your reactions and responses. This is very useful when an event happens to make you feel upset, and you want to give yourself the tools to feel better.

It works by following the arrows and asking yourself the questions in the white boxes.

For example:

EVENT

I failed a test.

What am I feeling? How strong am I feeling?

I am feeling frustrated, sad, upset, angry and hopeless.

What behaviours does this feeling lead to?

These feelings lead me to lash out, cry, or give up.

Do I want to feel this way or this strongly? Do I want to behave this way?

No, I don't!

What thoughts lead me to feel this way?

"I'm so stupid, I'm just not smart enough, there's no point even trying."

Challenge those thoughts or behaviour.

"I'm not stupid, I just didn't fully understand the questions. I can do better."

Generate new thoughts or behaviours.

"I'll do better next time. I can ask for help if I don't understand something."

From there, you can go around the circle again until you're happy with your responses.

The Roundabout System © OK Psychology 2011





EVENT

What am I feeling?
How strong is the feeling?



What behaviours
does this feeling
lead to?



Do I want to feel this
way or this strongly?
Do I want to behave
this way?



I'M OUTTA HERE!

Yes, I do!



No, I don't!



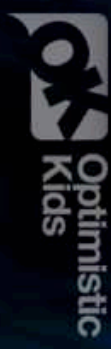
What thoughts
lead me to feel
this way?



Challenge those
thoughts or
behaviours



Generate new
thoughts
or behaviours



CLAIRE DELLA AND THE MOON

Designed by Jamie Hornsby
based on an image © Optimistic Kids

CLAIRE DELLA AND THE MOON

Activities

O1, O2, O3, O4, O5

Make Your Own Moon (Breathing exercises)

In Claire Della and the Moon, Claire goes to the Moon to find a quiet place where she can be alone. It's important to be able to find time to sit by yourself and just breathe.

- Create a circle. You could use rope, chalk, string, or just imagine a glowing circle on the ground that you can sit inside of.
- Get comfortable, whether that's on your back or sitting down.
- Breathe in deeply while counting slowly to 4.
- Hold your breath for 4 seconds.
- Gently breathe out for 4 seconds.
- As you breathe, try and imagine the breath entering your body. How does it feel?
- Repeat this for as long as you need to.
- Notice how you feel afterwards. Are you calm? Are you happy? Angry? All of these feelings are normal, and if they get too overwhelming you can always return to your own little moon and keep breathing.

Space Jar (craft activity)

When Laika first finds herself in space, she panics! The way she gets these feelings under control is to stabilise, focus and breathe. When we pay attention to our surroundings (what we see, smell, hear and touch), we can stop worrying about the future or the past and calm down our own mind.

To have something to focus on you can make your very own Space Jar!

You will need:

- An empty jar or a bottle with a lid
- Warm water
- Glitter glue or Craft glue

Instructions:

Add glitter glue or craft glue to the bottom of your jar until it just covers the bottom. Add warm water and shake (with the lid on!) to combine. This is your very own piece of space in a jar, so you can add different ingredients like shells, glitter, glow in the dark stars, figurines – whatever makes it special to you!

When you are feeling nervous you can shake your jar and focus on the swirling stars within.



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Make A Rocket

At the end of the play, Claire Della uses her skills as an inventor to create a rocket ship out of spare parts. You can use your own skills to create your very own rocket out of things you find in your classroom or at home.

You will need:

- A toilet paper roll
- Cardboard
- Scissors
- Glue/hot glue gun
- Paint

Instructions:

Cut the shape of the rocket ship's wings and nose out of cardboard. You can use the toilet paper roll as reference for how big your wings should be.

Cut an opening/window on the toilet paper roll. Glue the wing shape to the back of the toilet paper roll. Once the glue has dried, then you can paint your rocket ship – you can start with white paint as a base, or just start painting with your favourite colours!



CLAIRE DELLA AND THE MOON

Star Cup/Nightlight

Claire is able to find the last piece of the rocket ship by looking for the light. Sometimes being in the dark can make the light seem all the more beautiful.

You can make your own nightlight to look at in the dark by just using a cup, paint, and a glowstick.

You will need:

- Styrofoam cup
- Black paint
- A paintbrush
- A toothpick
- A glow stick or LED candle light
- Star stickers or any other decorations you want!

Instructions:

Paint the cup with black paint and let it dry. Add another coat if you would like it to be completely covered.

Now it should look like the night sky – but the night sky needs some stars! Add as many star stickers or other decorations as you would like to the outside. Then, poke holes in the cup with your toothpick. These will become the “stars” when lit.

Take your glowstick or other light, activate it, and place it inside of the cup. Turn the lights off in your room or classroom. You should be able to see shining lights in the darkness!



CLAIRE DELLA AND THE MOON

Origami Stars

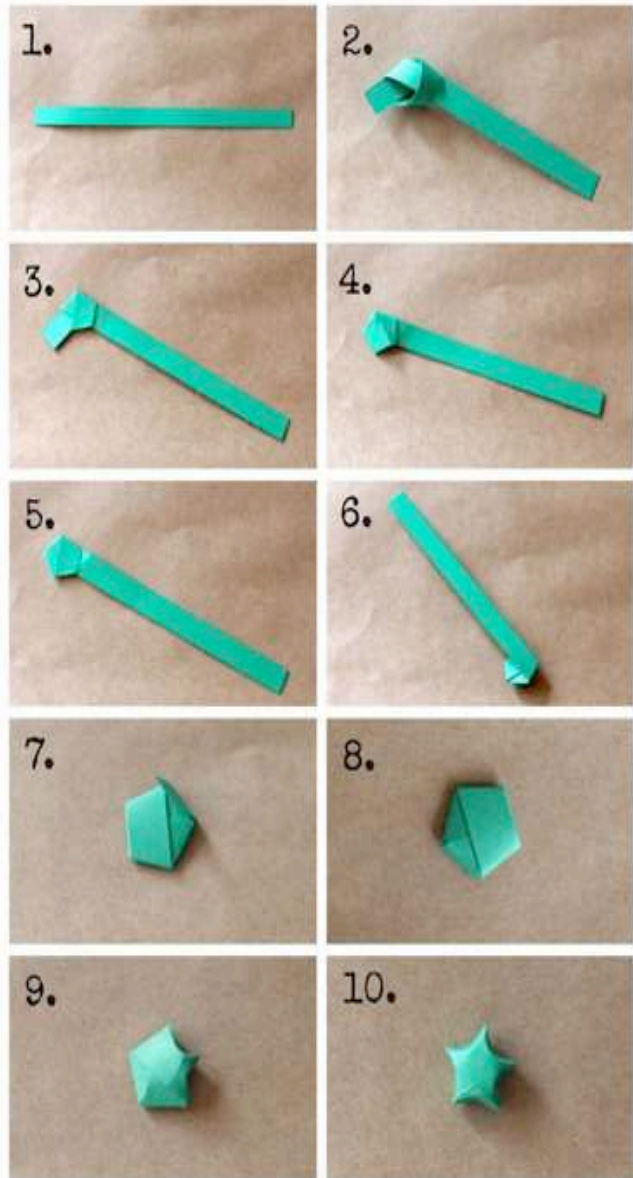
Whether she's on the Moon or back on Earth, Claire has a full view of the stars. Stars help us tell stories and make wishes. With just a bit of paper, you can make your very own stars which you can keep with you to remind you of your wishes.

You will need

- Strips of A4 paper, of whatever colour you like!

Instructions:

- 1 Take a strip of paper
- 2 Tie a knot towards one end of the strip. Leave just enough room at the short end to tuck it back into the knot afterwards.
- 3 Crease the knot to form a tight, flat pentagon with a short end and a long end.
- 4 Fold the short end back towards the pentagon and crease the edge.
- 5 Tuck the short end into the pentagon.
- 6 Fold the long end of the strip back over the pentagon and crease the edge.
- 7 Continue to fold the strip around the pentagon, now loosely creasing the edges as you fold it. Keep going until the strip is too short to fold again.
- 8 Tuck the end of the strip inside the pentagon.
- 9 Pinch each corner of the pentagon between your thumb and index finger to create an indentation.
- 10 Do this on each side until you've got a beautiful, pointy star!



CLAIRE DELLA AND THE MOON

Citizens of Space Create a solar system

As Claire travels through space, she sees many distant people, each on their own planet. Like Claire, they have their own worlds, full of their own thoughts and emotions. With some paint, you can make a planet for yourself – or enough planets to fill a whole solar system!

You will need:

- Black card paper
- Balloons
- Different coloured paints
- Brush

Instructions:

If you want a starry background, add a little bit of white paint to a brush and flick it over your black card paper. That will become your starry sky.

Take your balloon and blow it up.

Then mix some paint together on a plate – whatever combination looks best to you! The resulting mix should look a bit like tie die.

Take your balloon and stamp it into the paint, then stamp it onto the card.

Take it away, and the paint that's left on the card has become a planet!

Do this as many times as you like, until your solar system is full of wonderful colourful planets.

If you like, you can combine your card with the rest of your class, until you have a huge solar system with loads of different planets!





Government of South Australia

Department of the Premier
and Cabinet