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INTRODUCTION

Background

Wishworld, written by Rex Deverell, is a play aimed at engaging the issue of cyber-bullying, and the ways in which it can affect students both in and out of the classroom.

Beyond this, *Wishworld* explores how cyberspace can encourage creativity and community – but also provide an arena for violence.

Caveat: Disclosure

Mixed Company does not ask for or encourage personal disclosure from students during the course of the show. However, we are dealing with volatile issues. Sometimes, during the interactive segment of the performance, a student may either disclose or otherwise be adversely affected by recalling incidents of bullying they have experienced.

Mixed Company therefore STRONGLY recommends that your school's guidance department be present at the show and/or be available as a referral option for students dealing with these issues. Please feel free forward this guide to your school's guidance department for their information

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WishWorld

Play Synopsis:

The play's protagonist, Trini McLeod, comes home from school and begins writing on her computer, pouring out her feelings about the particularly bad few days she has had at school. Trini writes about her nemesis, Hillary Holcombe, the most popular girl at school who is ruining her life, as well as Jerry Clarke, the amazing hunk who doesn't seem to know Trini exists.

To escape her problems, Trini logs on to a site called Wishworld, where she is able to create a fantastic new identity for herself. In this online world Trini becomes "Amazon Woman", a mighty warrior woman who possesses superpowers that allow her to destroy her enemies. With the help of her new online friends Noxious Fumes and Siren-1, Amazon Woman crafts a virtual world where she is able to fight and defeat the evil online villain Killary.

Trini feels accepted and liked in this world, and is able to experience some release by acting out her frustrations on virtual characters; however, she is not able to escape her problems for long. While in the Wishworld chatroom, she reads nasty messages about her written by other students in her class. Trini opens up to Noxious Fumes and Siren-1 about this, and they inform her of the various ways they can destroy and sabotage Hillary online. Angry and hurt, Trini urges her online friends to trash Hilary in any way they can.

The next day when Trini logs on to the Wishworld chatroom again, she receives a message from an anonymous admirer of "Amazon Woman", who turns out to be Hillary herself. Though unaware of each other's identities at first, Trini and Hillary connect in a chatroom and have an open and honest conversation about the pressures, issues and problems both experience at school. Trini begins to see Hillary, and even her own problems, in a new light, but this newfound friendship might be destroyed as Trini realizes that she might be too late to reverse the virtual trashing of Hillary she just wished for.

WishWorld

Character Breakdown:

Trini McLeod: *a fourteen year old with issues. She is somewhat of an outcast. We see her at a not very good time in her life.*
Hillary Holcombe: *fourteen years old, the queen bee of her social set. She can be aggressively spiteful but she also has her own problems. These, however, she keeps well hidden…most of the time.*
Jerry Clarke: *the school dreamboat. Although he has some inkling about how much he is idolized, he is a little too young to understand it well or to exploit the effect he has on others.*
Siren-1: *this is the WishWorld alias for a young woman of indeterminate age who spends a lot of time on line, surfing the net, chatting and playing adventure games. She has good narrative ability and empathy with those she meets on line.*
Noxious Fumes: *alias for a teenage computer geek and "swords and sorcery" fanatic. While he possesses great technical skills he may have difficulty relating to others in real life.*
Killery: *the Demon Sorceress is an alter ego for Hilary as Trini imagines her. She is larger than life - a character out of the Saturday morning cartoons.*
Gnome: *a pitiful little character condemned to obey the witch's commands, until…*
Ogre: *a stereotypical monster who makes a cameo appearance.*
Computer 1: *A suave personage who simply provides transition routes into cyberspace.* **Computer 2:** *A promo voice for WishWorld.*
WishWorld voices: *a kind of cloud of mysterious disembodied beings.*
E-mail voices: *taunting voices of juveniles.*

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FACTS & DEFINITIONS

Cyberbullying: *"involves the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, cell phone and pager text messages, instant messaging, defamatory personal Web sites, and defamatory online personal polling Web sites, to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others." - Bill Belsey* http://www.cyberbullying.ca

E-mail: Cyberbullies frequently use emails to send threatening, humiliating or harassing messages. Often, the senders of such hateful messages can be traced, however, where the computer itself can be identified, there is no way to prove the identity of the actual sender. Many emailing programs have junk folders or filters that will block or delete emails from undesirable senders. However, often email filters cannot solve the entire problem for the bullied student, as his/her troublesome situation is not confined to cyberspace and the harassment may continue at or after school while among peers.

Instant Messaging (IM): Cyberbullies also use instant messaging programs, such MSN messenger, to send hurtful messages. IM plays a very large role in the social lives of students and young people; often it is the main source of communication used outside of school. What occurs online often impacts personal and social relationships as well as behavior that occurs and is acted out in life, whether at school or hanging out afterwards.

Chat Rooms / Bash Boards: As we see in Wishworld, chatrooms are popular spaces were users go to meet new online acquaintances or meet up with already established friends. Although entering chatrooms is a popular practice with young people, there are also many dangers lurking in such spaces. Firstly, there no way to identify exactly who one is communicating with in such a space (as all participants take on a username of their choice); this being the case, young people should NEVER make meeting arrangements with someone who they have met online. Besides the dangers of communicating with undesirable strangers, there is also the opportunity in chatrooms for hurtful messages to be broadcast to a wide audience. For example, in such chatrooms there often exists something called a "bash board"; this is a nickname for a virtual bulletin board where users can go to anonymously write and post any message they want.

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Indicators of Cyberbullying

How do you know if someone is being cyberbullied?
Below are some signs to watch out for:

1.) Long hours on the computer
2.) Closes windows on their computer when you enter room
3.) Is secretive about Internet activities
4.) Behavioral changes
5.) Is always doing homework on the Internet, but always in chat groups
    and getting behind with school work
6.) May find unexplained long distance telephone call charges
7.) Won't say who they are talking to
8.) May find unexplained pictures on computer
9.) Trouble sleeping
10.) Stomach and headaches
11.) Lack of appetite, throwing up
12.) Fear of going to out of the house
13.) Crying for no apparent reason
14.) Lack of interest at social events that include other students
15.) Complains of illness before school or community events often
16.) Frequent visits to the school nurse or office complaining of feeling sick
    - wants to call Mom or Dad to come and get them
17.) Lowered self-esteem
18.) A marked change in attitude, dress or habits
19.) Unexplained broken personal possessions, loss of money, loss of
    personal items
20.) Stories that don't seem to make sense
21.) Acting out aggression at home
22.) Missing or incomplete school work, decreased success in class

Teach your child to communicate. If an adult or a child someone is being cyberbullied, do not accept the bullying behavior as a problem your child has to live with. The bullying behavior is the responsibility of the bully, not the child being bullied. - *As posted on* *www.cyberbullying.com*

Quick Facts about the "Always On" generation:

-Dubbed the "Always On" generation, 74% use Instant Messenger several times a week.
-Nearly 50% of Canadian students use the Internet for AT LEAST one hour per day.
-Nearly 60% use Instant Messenger or chat rooms.

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POST-SHOW CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Activity #1 – <u>Create a contract for a "safe" discussion</u>

As a class, create a collective contract that will regulate the guidelines for group discussion. On top of what you might see as important or required for engaging in a discussion with your individual class, such a contract should include the following:

- ✓ ***All actions need to ensure each person's emotional and physical safety.*** During the lesson, each student should respect others as well as their environment, both emotionally, psychologically as well as physically. (This includes using proper terminology and avoiding insults or slurs.)

- ✓ ***Each student should also take precautions to respect and protect him/herself emotionally, physically and psychologically.*** Where the classroom may be a "safe" space for honest discussion, students should ensure that they don't feel "unsafe" in the larger school environment after disclosing personal information.

Activity #2 – <u>**Order the Antagonists**</u>

On each handout there is a list of quotes from the play, the characters who spoke them, and a brief description of each character. Based on what each character says, students must decide who the highest-level antagonist in the play is. They are asked to list the characters in order from 1 – 5 according to his/her level of antagonism (5 = highest, 1 = lowest).

<u>Objective:</u>

To explore character motivations and character relationships as they relate to the issues of bullying and cyberbullying. This exercise aims to take class discussion from the play to an exploration of how these issues relate to student's own lives.

*see
p. 9 - 10
for
handout*

<u>Curriculum Expectations:</u>
Dramatic Arts
~To demonstrate understandings of motives of characters (gr. 7-8).
~To accurately represent the attitudes of a character (gr.7-10).
~To identify biased & stereotyped language (gr. 9).

<u>Teacher Prompts:</u>

Character analysis: What kind of manipulator is each respective character? What is this person doing and why is he/she doing it? What are the character's motivations? *(E.g.: Hillary – issues of insecurity).*

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Wishworld – Order the Antagonists

Objective: To explore character motivations and relationships.

Below is a list of descriptions of the characters in the play, as well as a list of quotes taken directly from the script. Based upon what you know of the character and what each character says, who do you think is the highest-level antagonist in the play? List the characters in order from 1 – 5 according to his/her level of antagonism (5 = highest, 1 = lowest).

Character Breakdown:

Trini McLeod: *a fourteen year old with issues. She is somewhat of an outcast. We see her at a not very good time in her life.*
Hilary Holcombe: *fourteen years old, the queen bee of her social set. She can be aggressively spiteful but she also has her own problems. These, however, she keeps well hidden...most of the time.*
Jerry Clarke: *the school dreamboat. Although he has some inkling about how much he is idolized, he is a little too young to understand it well or to exploit the effect he has on others.*
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~Some good questions to consider while completing this exercise include: *what is this person doing and why is he/she doing it? What kind of manipulator is this character? What are the character's motivations?*

Character	Quote
TRINI	"The person I hate the most... more than anybody in the whole world, the universe, actually the scummiest scumbag in the history of humanity, the person who doesn't even deserve to be called a person: is Hilary Holcombe."
VOICE "A": (anonymous emailer)	"Dear Trini, you are the most horrible despicable girl in our school. Why don't you stay home and stop bugging us? Have a nice day."
NOXIOUS FUMES:	"Listen, Amazon Woman, like how much worse can it get? And there is nothing sweeter than revenge. Believe me. I love getting even. I love it! People call me a nerd. People call me a geek? I show them how right they are. I'll hack into their computers, destroy their files, mess around with their e-mail. Come on. Haven't you ever wanted to get revenge on somebody? *~(Noxious Fumes talking to Trini about Hilary and the "in" crowd)*
HILLARY:	"Oh, Trini! I was just joking. Where did you get that sweater? Retro looks so good on you. And what's wrong with "Previously owned" clothing, right? Oh, I could talk to you for hours, but I have friends. I promised. But you'll be at Courtney's sleep-over on Friday, won't you? Oh, I'm sorry. I forgot. You weren't invited, were you? That's totally sad. Too bad. Gotta go."

?? 1_____2_____ 3_____ 4_____5??

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Activity #3 – <u>Get Inside the Character's Head</u>

<u>Objective:</u> Identify characters who are confused and who seem the most ambivalent and explore character motivation in greater depth.
Teacher might want to reinforce the point that relevant safety contract stipulations are binding for this exercise.

a.) Each student, working individually, is asked to sketch their favourite scene from the play on the hand-out sheet provided, and fill in "thought bubbles" for each of the characters.
b.) Hold a 10 minute discussion around the ideas and thoughts students had while doing this exercise.

<u>**Curriculum Expectations:**</u>
Health and Physical Education
~To analyze situations that are potentially dangerous to personal safety (gr. 7-8).

*see P.15 for handout

Dramatic Arts
~ To demonstrate understanding of the motives of the characters (Gr.7-10).
~To accurately represent the attitudes of a character and to demonstrate how a role is communicated through voice quality, gestures and body movements (gr.7-10).

<u>Teacher Prompts:</u> Guidelines for "getting inside the character's head"

Think about body language. What is each person "saying" without speaking it? How are attitudes communicated through the body? What is the relationship being depicted between the people in the scene? How do their postures express these relationships? Do the ways in which the characters interact, in terms of their body language in each image, contradict what each character might be saying in the actual scene?

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Activity # 4 – <u>**Character analysis: Trini, Hillary, Jerry**</u>

<u>Objective:</u> These exercises are aimed at examining the external pressures (family, society, and friends) that affect the attitudes, actions and opinions of the character.

a.) <u>**"The Onion: Identifying Spheres of Influence"**</u>

On large chart paper, draw onion diagram *(to be provided);* in each labeled circle, write the thoughts, phrases, influences of each character. (The class can add to this chart throughout the duration of working on the play.)

b.) <u>**"Tip of the Iceberg."**</u>

Draw Iceberg diagram *(to be provided);* information written above "water line" is "factual", information written under is speculative. The deeper down the more speculative, and can include things the class wants to know about the character.
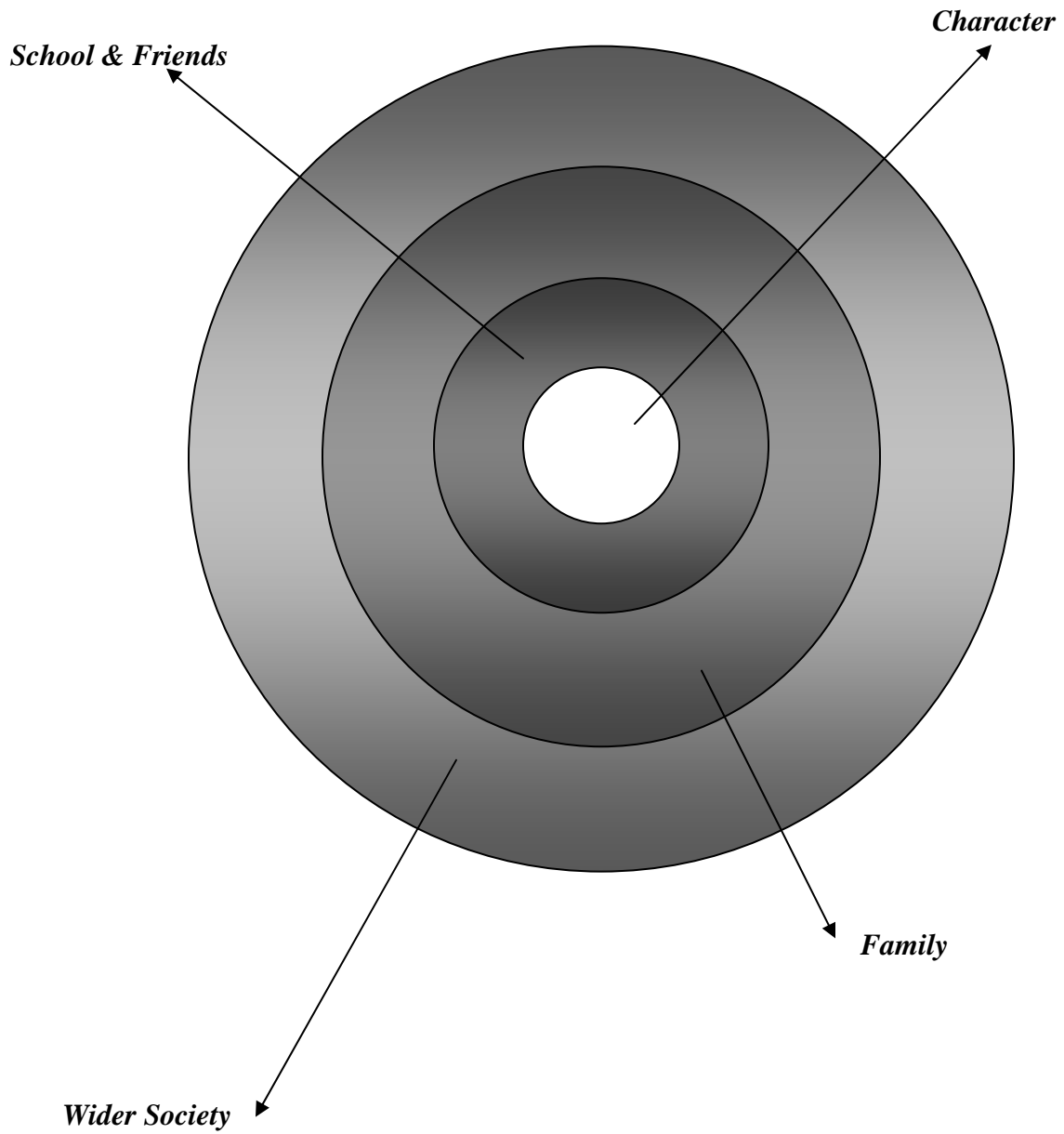
Curriculum Expectations:
Dramatic Arts
~To demonstrate understandings of motives of characters (gr. 7-8).
~To accurately represent the attitudes of a character (gr.7-10).

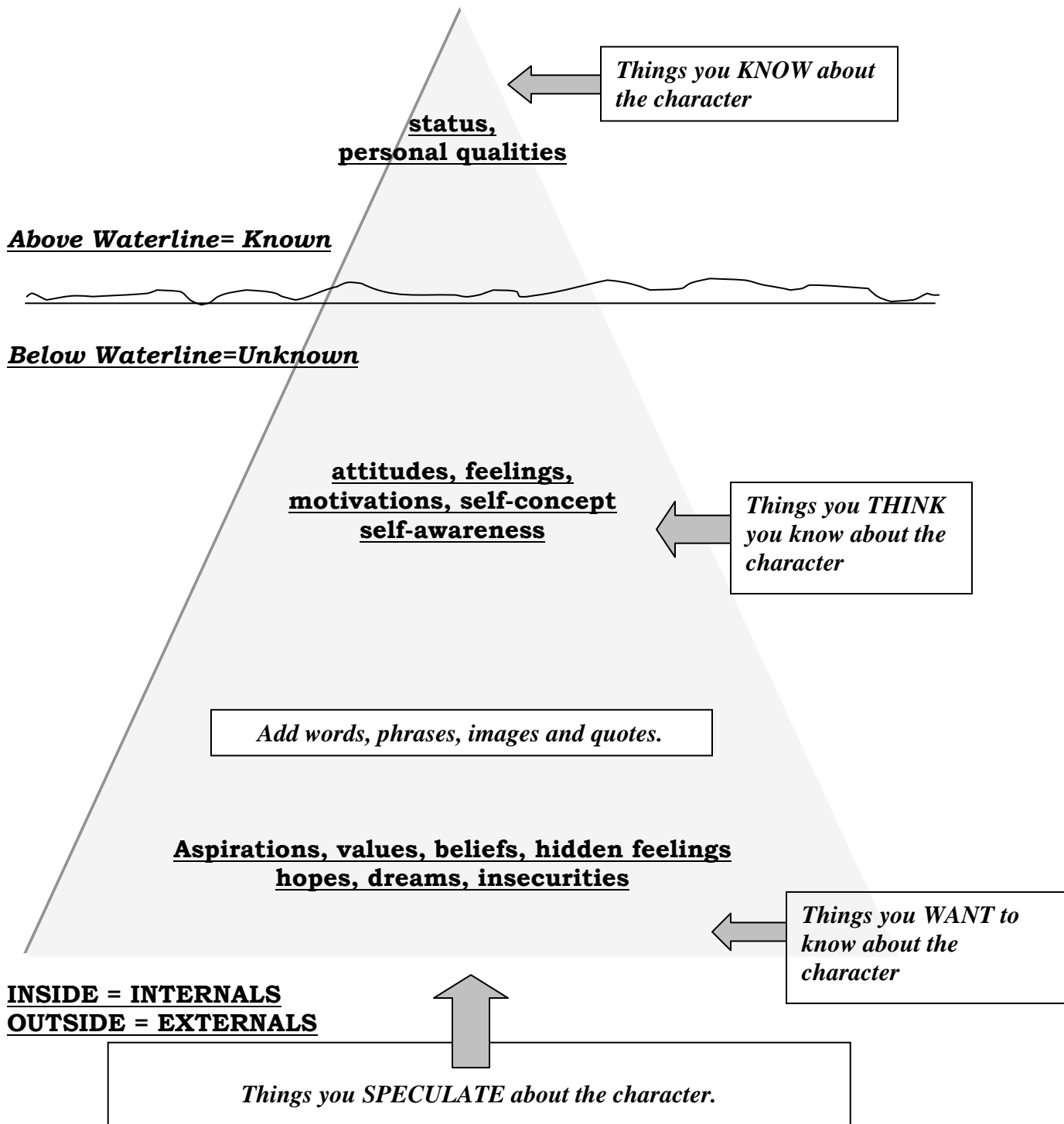*Engage.   Educate.   Empower.*

THE ONION: *Identifying Spheres of Influence*

Character

School & Friends

Family

Wider Society

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TIP OF THE ICEBERG: *Character Exploration*

**status,
personal qualities**

*Things you KNOW about
the character*

Above Waterline= Known

Below Waterline=Unknown

**attitudes, feelings,
motivations, self-concept
self-awareness**

*Things you THINK
you know about the
character*

Add words, phrases, images and quotes.

**Aspirations, values, beliefs, hidden feelings
hopes, dreams, insecurities**

*Things you WANT to
know about the
character*

**INSIDE = INTERNALS
OUTSIDE = EXTERNALS**

Things you SPECULATE about the character.

Think about: *character behaviours, reactions, likes, dislikes,
relationships, profile, experiences, people that have shaped the character,
things people say about the character, events in the character's life, etc.*

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Getting Inside the Character's Head

In the space below, draw your favourite scene from the play. Based on what you know of each character and the relationships they have with one another, fill in the thought bubbles over each scene with what you think each character is *really* thinking, but not saying.

Guidelines for "getting inside the character's head"

Think about body language. What is each person "saying" without speaking it? How are attitudes communicated through the body? What is the relationship being depicted between the people in the scene? How do their postures express these relationships? Do the ways in which the characters interact, in terms of their body language in each image, contradict what each character might be saying in the actual scene?

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Activity #5 – <u>Hot-Seating</u>

This activity aims to unravel character motivations and complexities and shed light on the way she/he responds to the issues posed in the play.
In this activity, one or more students take on the role of one of the characters in play. In role, she/he then responds to questions posed by the remainder of the class about how she/he thinks or feels about the problems she/he faces in the play. This is generally a reflective exercise, in which situations can be called upon to ask: "What would you have done differently if you went through this again?"
*"Hot-seating" should centre on the protagonist, or low-level antagonists. (*See *glossary of terms).*

Options for Hot-Seating:
a.) One person plays the character being hot-seated; the rest of the class itself is given a collective reality to play out during the hot-seating process. – E.g. the class acts as reporters asking the hot-seated character questions for a "human interest" story. Students may be given a few minutes to prepare questions appropriate to the "questioner" role they have been assigned.
b.) The entire class can act as Trini, and the teacher can pose questions. Each student may respond "in role" (see *glossary of terms*) to each individual question.
c.) Multiple students can be hot-seated "in role", giving various responses to the same questions posed by the class; the rest of the class itself is given a collective reality to play out during the hot-seating process.

> ➤ The beginning of the hot-seating process can begin by looking at the external pressures that the protagonist is going through. Questioning could then proceed to encourage more reflective responses to the character's inner reality and motivations.
> ➤ "Role on the Wall": during the discussion on the protagonist's external pressures, keep a list of personal and external pressures, as well as characteristics. These can be recorded on the wall as the class is asking questions.
>> a.) Draw a rough outline of human figure on chart paper/blackboard that will represent the hot-seated character.
>> b.) Throughout the class discussion, fill the drawn figure in phrases, words and thoughts that illuminate character; issues or subjects that reveal the "internal world" of the character are to be drawn inside the figure, those that represent "external world" to be written outside.

Curriculum Expectations:
Dramatic Arts
~To organize and carry out a group improvisation (gr.7).
~To identify ways of sustaining concentration in drama (E.g. remaining in role when playing a character being interviewed) (gr. 7-10)

~To demonstrate an understanding of role as a balance of self (student) and other (gr.9) ~To identify and employ different questions to develop and deepen roles within a drama (gr. 9). ~To demonstrate an understanding of how empathy functions as a component of role-playing (gr. 9).

To demonstrate understanding of the element of risk in playing a role (E.g. adapting challenges to personal and social beliefs (gr. 10).
To demonstrate an understanding of language that is free from bias and stereotyping (gr.10).

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Activity #5b – Personal Reflection

This is an optional exercise that can be used as an extension to the Hot-Seating exercise and can be evaluated using the rubric given below.

Write a personal reflection on the "hot-seated" character: what factors cause him/her to be confused, to act offensively or defensively? Who do you think she/he feels the most pressured by? How could she/he have acted differently in scenes of heavy conflict?

Curriculum Expectations: *Dramatic Arts*
~ To write in role in various forms (e.g., reports, speeches, interviews), showing their understanding of the complexity of a dramatic situation, and using appropriate vocabulary, tone, and voice for the character (gr.7-8).

~ To produce pieces of writing in which they reflect on their experiences in drama and dance, and in which they show their ability to analyze and find solutions to problems in real life (gr.7-8). ~To demonstrate an understanding of how empathy functions as a component of role-playing (gr. 9). ~ To apply principles of listening both in and out of role (gr. 9).

~ explain how role playing in dramatic arts can function as a catalyst for learning about self, others, and the world (gr.9-10). ~To describe the various kinds of learning (E.g. social, personal, artistic, deepened understanding of content) made possible through drama (gr.9-10). ~To generate criteria to assess individual contributions to the collective development of a drama (gr.9-10). ~To demonstrate an understanding of the purposes of reflecting – in and out of role, throughout and upon completion of a drama (gr.9-10).

Evaluative Rubric: See attached for sample.

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Activity #6 – <u>**"Spectrum of Difference" - Image Theatre**</u>

<u>Objective:</u> *Fostering empathy, exploring possible "solutions" and avenues of agency in relation to the problems and issues presented in the play. This exercise is an opportunity for students to explore their own relationships to feeling powerless.*

Because Wishworld is a place of imagination where individuals can play out and overcome situations and relationships which in real life seems unfixable, allow the students to write their own success story where they overcome a power to which they feel helpless in real life.

1.) Divide class into 2 groups. One creates a tableaux scene *(see glossary of terms)* depicting a student's situation at school that is similar to Trini's in the play, and the other group creates a scene depicting that same student's situation at a school that is free of bullying and cyberbullying.

2.) The "spectrum of difference" between the scenes is explored by the class. What has to happen to move from one world to the other? What forces are keeping the worlds so distinct?

3.) Each group is asked to create a scene that shows the process of change that would be needed to create the ideal environment as depicted/explored in tableaux #2. However, let them imagine that this change has been achieved through supernatural means – E.g. the oppressed individuals developed supernatural powers which allowed them to overcome their situation. What sort of supernatural powers are they and why were they necessary to enact the change?

*This exercise could also be a written exercise, with written scenarios replacing enacted scenes. These scenarios could also be spoken, with students working in groups and creating scenarios.

Let each member of the class consider a way in which they feel powerless and helpless. Then encourage them to imagine themselves as a superhero. What sorts of traits might that superhero have? How might those particular traits help them overcome the oppressions that they feel?

Curriculum Expectations: *Dramatic Arts*
~To produce pieces that deal appropriately with youth problems and to produce work as a member of an ensemble (gr. 7-8).
Social Sciences *~To apply strategies for building self-confidence (gr. 9).*
~To demonstrate communication and conflict resolution skills in the context of family and social relationships (gr. 9).
~To understand and apply a variety of problem solving and decision-making skills to family and social problems (gr. 9).

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Activity #7 – <u>**Writing in Role**</u>

Students are asked to re-write or create scenes that deal with the external pressures faced by the protagonists or low-level antagonists in the play. Students can:

a.) Re-write a scene from the play, which demonstrates a possible solution to the conflict that is presented.

b.) Write an "out-take" scene that demonstrates possible solutions to conflicts presented in the play. There are other characters in the lives of the on-stage characters that influence them; how might one write a scene about one of the characters interactions with someone in their lives that shows the pressures they might have to face? How might one explore how these characters might deal with external pressures?

*Writing in role for high-level antagonists should be avoided for this exercise. (See *glossary of terms*)

Curriculum Expectations:
Dramatic Arts
~To write in role in various forms showing understanding of complexity of a dramatic situation, using appropriate vocabulary, tone and voice for character portrayal (gr. 7-8)
~To produce pieces that deal appropriately with youth problems and to produce work as a member of an ensemble (gr. 7-8)
~To write in role in various forms showing understanding of complexity of a dramatic situation, using appropriate vocabulary, tone and voice for character portrayal (gr. 7-8)
~To apply principles of listening both in and out of role (gr. 9).
Social Sciences *~To apply strategies for building self-confidence (gr. 9).*
~To demonstrate communication and conflict resolution skills in the context of family and social relationships (gr. 9).
~To understand and apply a variety of problem solving and decision-making skills to family and social problems (gr. 9).

<u>Prompts:</u>

Questions to guide the writing process:
How might a protagonist access a low level antagonist realistic ways? What are the resources that can be utilized to help characters work towards possible solutions to the conflicts they face?

Evaluation Rubric: See attached for sample.

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Glossary of Dramatic Terms

Hot-Seating: a group, working as themselves or in character, question or interview another role-player(s) who must answer "in character". This can be improvised or with questions prepared.

In-role / Role-playing: the role-player is speaking for the character through him/herself; the student is acting "as if" she/he was the character, keeping one foot in their shoe, the other in the character's shoe, so to speak. This is meant to encourage personal reflection and discovery.

Writing-in-role: any written work done "in-role", with the writer composing from the point-of-view of the character in question.

Tableaux: is French for "living picture." It essentially describes a still image, a frozen moment, or a "photograph" created by posing still bodies. It aims to represent and communicate an event, idea or feeling. The technique combines the forms of the theatre with painting and photography.

~Some terms to use to introduce in discussions which can aid in assessing and giving names to various attitudes that students may possess:

Level 1 – Understanding
Level 2 – Acceptance
Level 3 – Empowerment
Level 4 – Inclusion

Students should understand that these levels are fluid, with possible movement from (Level 1) Understanding, into (Level 2) Acceptance, into (Level 3) Empowerment, into (Level 4) Inclusion.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RESOURCES

For Students...

WEB SITES – support services and resource guides.

http://www.cyberbullying.ca

http://www.stopcyberbullying.org/

http://www.bewebaware.ca/english/CyberBullying.aspx

http://www.chatdanger.com/

http://kidshelp.sympatico.ca/en/
Kids Help Phone takes calls from children and youth everyday.

Helpful Resources for Youth and Adults:

Abuse.net
The Network Abuse Clearinghouse is compiling a large database to report and track internet abuse and abusive users.

The Children's Partnership
Guidelines and advice for adults about how to make online experiences safer and more meaningful for kids.

http://www.cybertip.ca/en/cybertip/
Cybertip.ca. This site compiles tips from those reporting sexual abuse or exploitation of children.

Readings on Internet Law:

Bill C-15: Ottawa's proposed anti-cyber-luring law
(Scroll down to section 172.1 at bottom of page)

http://www.caip.ca/
Canadian Internet Law Resource Page
Children's Online Privacy Protection Act 1998 (COPPA) -(USA) COPPA Commission's Final Report to Congress, October 20, 2000 (USA)

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For Teachers...

http://www.cybersmartcurriculum.org/lesson_plans/68_04.asp
This site provides lesson plans for teachers from Cybersmart
(Macmillan - McGraw-Hill Publishers)

http://www.kidsmart.org.uk/
KIDSMART is a fun, playful site created for children, teachers and
parents. The site focuses on 5 key SMART tips which children should
remember when going online.

Media Awareness Network
(MNET). MNET maintains a critically acclaimed Web Awareness Program,
a comprehensive and informative program for anyone interested in
internet safety.

http://www.netsmart.org
An educational resource on online safety for parents, teachers and
children aged 5 to 17; created by the National Center for Missing &
Exploited Children, NCMEC (USA).

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