

DIGITAL THEATRE+

LESSON PLAN FOR REMOTE LEARNING
DRAMA/THEATRE



Frantic Assembly © Manuel Harlan

THINGS I KNOW TO BE TRUE

BY ANDREW BOVELL

A FRANTIC ASSEMBLY PRODUCTION

LESSON PLAN LENGTH: 60 MINUTES

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the social, cultural and/or historical context of a chosen stimulus
- Practically explore a performance text and the work of a specific theatre company to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of drama
- Understand the role of the director and the creative process
- Develop an informed and personal response to the text and subsequently maintain this through a critical writing style

To teach this lesson, you will need the following resources found in your toolkit:

- [Things I Know To Be True | Frantic Assembly](#)
- [An Introduction to Frantic Assembly](#) (Get students to read this in advance)
- [An Introduction to Physical Theatre with Scott Graham](#)
- [A Frantic Assembly Warm Up](#)
- [An Interview with Scott Graham](#)
- [Things I Know To Be True A Comprehensive Guide](#)

Plus:

- For the entire lesson – a video conference link for your chosen platform*
- Before the lesson begins – an email with a link to An Introduction to Frantic Assembly (link above)
- For Exercises 3 and 4 – prepare an email with video links and instructions for your students

**Keeping students and teachers safe during remote education is essential. Please ensure any online platform you are using to communicate or coordinate with students is suitable for their age group and check privacy settings. For further information, see the [NSPCC guidance](#).*

For further resources to help you teach *Things I Know To Be True*, including the [full-length production](#), [Play Text](#) and [Comprehensive Guide](#), visit www.digitaltheatreplus.com

EXERCISE 1

UNLOCKING THE CONCEPT

- Hold a video conference on your chosen platform. Assign consecutive numbers to each person in the group.
- Going in numerical order, invite each student to finish the sentence, '*Things I know to be true are...*' Students should say a few simple things that they believe to be true. Encourage them to be as personal as they feel they can be.
- Once all of the group has shared something, do the exercise again and introduce the concept of 'family'. Each person has to use family to frame their answer.



ESTIMATED TIME:
15 MINUTES

This exercise invites participation and immerses the students in the emotional landscape of the play.

EXERCISE 2

FRANTIC ASSEMBLY FACT FILE: SHOW AND TELL

- Put students into pairs labelling themselves as either A or B. In a private chat, A has 30 seconds to tell B 10 facts about Frantic Assembly (that they can remember from the [Introductory Essay](#)). Once the 30 seconds is up, B should do the same. Set a time limit for students to complete the activity in. In the group video call, ask A students to recall and present the information that they heard B share and ask several B students to do the same.
- Next, tell students that on the count of 10, they must pose as if they are in a freeze frame image that they feel depicts Frantic Assembly's work. Repeat this five times and take a screenshot each time. Share the screenshots and ask students to select their favourite. Nominate one or two people from the group to talk about their favourite in relation to Frantic Assembly's methodology.
- As an alternative option to discussing Frantic Assembly facts in pairs, students could write 10 facts individually and send them to you. You could collate the facts and share this 'master sheet' with the entire class.
- As an alternative to taking screenshots of all students in a freeze frame pose, you could direct students to the production page to select a gallery image (or perhaps a screenshot from the performance) that they think epitomises Frantic Assembly's work. They should share their choices with the class, saying why they chose this image or moment in particular.



ESTIMATED TIME:
15 MINUTES

This exercise deepens the students' understanding of the methodology of a particular practice and encourages them to use their imagination.

EXERCISE 3

AN INTRODUCTION TO PHYSICAL THEATRE AND *THINGS I KNOW TO BE TRUE*

- Pre-prepare an email for your students with video links and instructions.
- Instruct them to watch [An Introduction to Physical Theatre with Scott Graham](#) (4 min 47 sec).
- In the video, he talks about the conflict between text and subtext. Choose a moment from the play and ask students to think about how they'd portray the conflict between what is being said and what is being performed physically. What techniques would they use to captivate the audience?
- Now, ask them to watch [An Interview with Scott Graham](#) (11 min 41 sec). Ask what they think it means to challenge somebody's creative process?



ESTIMATED TIME:
15 MINUTES

This exercise will introduce the group to the working practice of the show's director and engage them with his creative process.

EXERCISE 4

COLLABORATION

- Share a link to the [Things I Know To Be True Comprehensive Guide](#). Invite students to read through it, asking them to pay particular attention to the **Collaboration** chapter.
- Ask students questions about what they read: Did anything surprise you about the process of collaboration? How do you think the collaborators felt about the process? Would you prefer to work alone or in collaboration with others?
- As an alternative to discussing these questions on a video call, you could ask students to write their responses on a shared class Google Doc – a collaboration in itself!
- Once complete, repeat Exercise 1 of this Lesson Plan.



ESTIMATED TIME:
15 MINUTES

This exercise will encourage students to engage with different creative practices.

For further resources to help you teach *Things I Know To Be True*, including the [full-length production](#), [Play Text](#) and [Comprehensive Guide](#), visit www.digitaltheatreplus.com

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QUESTIONS

1. Who founded Frantic Assembly?

2. Which West End hit did Frantic Assembly contribute to?

3. What is Frantic Assembly's mantra?

4. What special anniversary have Frantic Assembly recently celebrated?

5. What is the name of Frantic Assembly's innovative training programme?

6. What theatre technique is at the root of Frantic Assembly's work?

7. Which three pieces did Frantic Assembly create in association with playwright Bryony Lavery?

8. Name the Shakespeare play that Frantic Assembly adapted.

ANSWERS

1. Who founded Frantic Assembly?

Answer: Scott Graham and Steven Hoggett

2. Which West End hit did Frantic Assembly contribute to?

Answer: *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

3. What is Frantic Assembly's mantra?

Answer: Always forward, never back.

4. What special anniversary have Frantic Assembly recently celebrated?

Answer: 25th

5. What is the name of Frantic Assembly's innovative training programme?

Answer: Ignition

6. What theatre technique is at the root of Frantic Assembly's work?

Answer: Devising

7. Which three pieces did Frantic Assembly create in association with the playwright, Bryony Lavery?

Answer: *Beautiful Burnout*, *Stockholm* and *The Believers*

8. Name the Shakespeare play that Frantic Assembly adapted.

Answer: *Othello*

The following questions have been written to deepen and expand your students' understanding of the text. They can be used for homework or to prompt classroom discussions.

- What is the most crucial thing to understand about Frantic Assembly's style?
- Frantic Assembly is known for using a particular set of techniques, name a few of them.
- Physical Theatre has had a huge impact on how directors and performers present their work. Name some of the most famous and impactful practitioners in this field.
- How can non-verbal physical communication determine onstage relationships?
- Describe an example of when a physical action is stronger than words.