

THE INVISIBLE GIRL

By Michele Riml



STUDY GUIDE

Remai Arts Centre, 100 Spadina Crescent East, Saskatoon SK | persephonetheatre.org





Cast

Ali Jenna Berenbaum

Creative Team

Director Anita Smith
Set Designer Jensine Emmeline
Costume Designer Nicole Zalesak
Sound Designer Grahame Kent
Stage Manager Ricardo Alvarado

Staff

Artistic Associate Jennica Grienke
Youth Tour Coordinator Grahame Kent

Study Guide written by Green Thumb Theatre
www.greenthumb.bc.ca.

Company List	2
Table of Contents	3
Synopsis & About this Guide	4
Show Etiquette & DPA	5
Cirriculum Connections	6 - 7
Worksheets & Activities	8 - 17
Resources for Teachers	18 - 19
Thank You	19

Synopsis

In **The Invisible Girl** one character, Ali, tells the story, while Flash Animation images are used to show what's going on in her head. All of the other characters are illustrated through cartoon images.

The central character in **The Invisible Girl** is 10-year old Ali. She and her friends, Cali, Jessie, Lisa and Susi, are the "Ultimates", the coolest group in her grade. They love fashion, shopping and boys and have a very strict set of rules about what makes the "Hot" list and what makes the "Not" list. They barely notice the other kids in their class.

Dolores is in the same class as Ali and the Ultimates. She is shy and quiet at school but she has a wonderful voice. Her passion is singing, so she is working hard to overcome her stage fright so that she can sing in public. For years, Dolores has sat behind Ali in class, but they rarely speak to each other.

Dolores is one of the "invisible" kids who the cool kids like Ali and the Ultimates have never really noticed except to mock them. But Ali has heard Dolores sing and when Mr. Glass, the music teacher, asks for soloist nominations, Ali says three words...and that changes everything!!

About this Guide

This study guide can help you prepare your students for the show both physically and mentally. There are follow up activities and worksheets that will connect the play to the lessons in your classroom, in keeping with the BC Ministry of Education Curriculum Guidelines in the following curricular areas:

- English Language Arts – Reading and Viewing/Writing and Representing with specific reference to fiction Reading Powers (Pembroke, 2006)
- Health and Career – Healthy Living and Healthy Relationships
- Fine Arts – Drama and Visual Arts
- Social Responsibility
- Daily Physical Activity

This study guide was written by Rachelle Beaulieu; mother of three, elementary school teacher and patron of the arts. Rachelle has taught in Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and currently teaches French in Langley, BC. She has taught all subjects in French and English and was a music/drama teacher for 5 years. She has been a member of the Fraser Valley Gilbert and Sullivan Society and has acted in their performances.

To create this study guide, Rachelle used many of the resources and ideas that she puts into practice in her daily teaching. Many of the activities in this guide are not original creations. Rachelle is not attempting to claim them as her own invention. Where no credit is given, the original source is unknown. Particular thanks to Ms. Adrienne Gear for giving her permission to reference her work and her website, Reading Powers (Pembroke, 2006)

Preparing Students for the Play

When young people attend a live theatrical performance for the first time they often do not realize how different it is from watching a movie or television show. Because the performers and audience are together in the same room, they are creating the event together. Mistakes cannot be edited out! The audience has a real contribution to make to the overall experience. Each audience member affects those around them as well as the performer. The more the audience 'gives' to the performer, the more the performer can give to the audience. It is because of this dynamic interaction that the following general guidelines are suggested:

Pre-performance

Please remind students of the following:

- Use the washroom and get a drink before the show.
- Excessive movement can be distracting to the actors and to others watching the play
- It is rude and disruptive to talk, eat and drink during the play
- Photos or recordings are not allowed

Active Viewing

To make the most out of watching this live performance, please encourage your students to focus on more than just the story. Remind them to pay attention to the set, costumes, music and lighting. These aspects are an important part of a live performance and will enhance later discussions about the play and the students' experience while watching.

DPA Before the Play

Get your students up and moving before the play so that they are ready to sit and enjoy the show AND incorporate Daily Physical Activity, as per the Ministry of Education Guidelines

End to End...a physically active drama game for any space

All students start on one side of the room. They move to the other side of the room as a certain character or in a certain way (for example, "as an alien creature", "suspiciously", "without a sound"). This allows for physical activity and allows the students to focus on their own interpretation of what they must create without being singled out.

Person to Person... geared to get students working with those they might not usually choose as a partner

The group moves randomly through the room and uses the whole space. The teacher (or a leader) calls "person to person". This is the signal to find the person closest to you and stand face to face. The leader then calls out two body parts (eg. "one elbow to one knee" or "ear to thumb" or "toe to wrist"). Without talking, the partners work out how to connect the body parts. The leader continues to add pairs of body parts for the partners to connect (up to three or four). The partners find creative ways to add the new connections until the leader calls "BREAK". Usually the partners look like pretzels! After the pairs "break" everyone begins moving again throughout the room until "person to person" is called again.

**The key to "Person to Person" is moving quickly from one thing to another. This keeps it fast-paced and requires the students to think and act quickly without too much time to think or talk it out. It also allows for students to continually work with new partners that they don't usually choose.

Now that your students have seen the play, it's time to further enrich their experience.

This study guide includes some ways to connect the play to the lessons in your classroom, in keeping with the BC Ministry of Education Curriculum Guidelines in the following curricular areas:

- **English Language Arts – Reading and Viewing/Writing and Representing with specific reference to fiction Reading Powers (Pembroke, 2006)**
- **Health and Career – Healthy Living and Healthy Relationships**
- **Fine Arts – Drama and Visual Arts**
- **Social Responsibility**

Here are a few suggested activities and pull-out worksheets:

ALL GRADES

- Literature Links using Reading Powers (pg.7)

PRIMARY ACTIVITIES

- Friendship Pie Recipe (pg.8)
- Kind Hearts (pg. 9)
- Me Mobile (pg.10 - 11)
- Word Search (pg. 12)

INTERMEDIATE AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Outside In (pg. 13)
- Crossword Puzzle (pg.14)
- Ani-emojis (pg. 15)
- Writing Ideas (pg. 16)



Literature Links K - 8

The themes in the play, **The Invisible Girl**, revolve around friendship and finding your passion. Ali thinks she has great friends with her group of "Ultimates", but when she is excluded for reaching out to her invisible classmate, Dolores, who has a hidden talent and passion for singing, Ali finds out what being a true friend means.

Here is a list of picture books that touch on these themes for you to read to your class before or after the performance. The picture books are grouped by possible Reading Powers (Pembroke, 2006, Adrienne Gear)

Connect

Each Kindness, Woodson, Jacqueline (Primary & Intermediate)
Ordinary Mary's Extraordinary Deed Pearson, Emily & Kosaka, Fumi (Primary)
The Worst Best Friend O'Neill, Alexis (Primary)
Ruby the Copycat Rathman, Peggy (Primary)

Question

Across the Alley Michelson, Richard (Intermediate)
Enemy Pie Munson, Derek (Primary & Intermediate)
The Invisible Boy Barton, Patrice (Primary & Intermediate)
On a Beam of Light: A Story of Albert Einstein Berne, Jennifer (Intermediate)
The Mermaid and the Shoe Campbell, K.G. (Primary & Intermediate)

Visualize

The Boy Who Paints Watt, K. Jane (Primary & Intermediate)
I See Kindness Everywhere Frost, Shelley (Primary)

Infer

A Splendid Friend, Indeed Bloom, Suzanne (Primary)
Bluebird Staake, Bob (Intermediate)
Journey Becker, Aaron (Primary & Intermediate)
The Man with the Violin Stinson, Kathy (Primary & Intermediate)

Transform your Thinking

The Invisible Boy Barton, Patrice (Primary & Intermediate)
Fatty Legs Jordan-Fenton, Christie (Intermediate)
Four Feet Two Sandals William, Karen Lynn (Intermediate)
Mommy, Am I Pretty? Denomme, Margot (Primary & Intermediate)
How Full is your Bucket? (for kids) Rath, Tom (Primary & Intermediate)

For more Reading Powers (Pembroke, 2006) ideas, visit Adrienne Gear's website

www.readingpowergear.com

FRIENDSHIP PIE:

This activity is perfect to use with the book, *Enemy Pie* by Derek Munson.

Have your students work in pairs to brainstorm the ingredients needed for Friendship Pie and then write the instructions on how to be a good friend.

Friendship Pie Recipe

a dash of

a cup of

a pinch of

a spoonful of

Instructions:



KIND HEARTS:

Ali and her group of "Ultimates" have been unkind to Dolores and make her feel invisible. Eventually, Ali is able to show kindness to Dolores and together they become "100% visible".

Try the following activity with your class to help them understand why it is important to be kind to each other.

Cut a large heart out of red construction paper and hold it in your lap as you begin to tell a story...



This is a story about my friend, (*imaginary name*). He always came to school with a smile on his face and a heart full of love for his classmates (*Hold up the big heart*). He listened to his teacher, did his best work and helped others. However, the others weren't always so kind. Joe made fun of his shoes and broke a little piece of his heart (*Tear off a piece of the heart and let it drop on the floor*). Ann said, "I'm saving this seat for my friend. You can't sit here." At story time and broke a little more of his heart. Sammy wouldn't share his crayons and Sara called him a mean name.

Ask the children, "What are some other things that might break his heart? (*Let the children suggest other unkind acts that can cause hurt feelings as you let pieces fall to the floor.*)"

By the end of the day his heart was all in pieces and he was so sad.

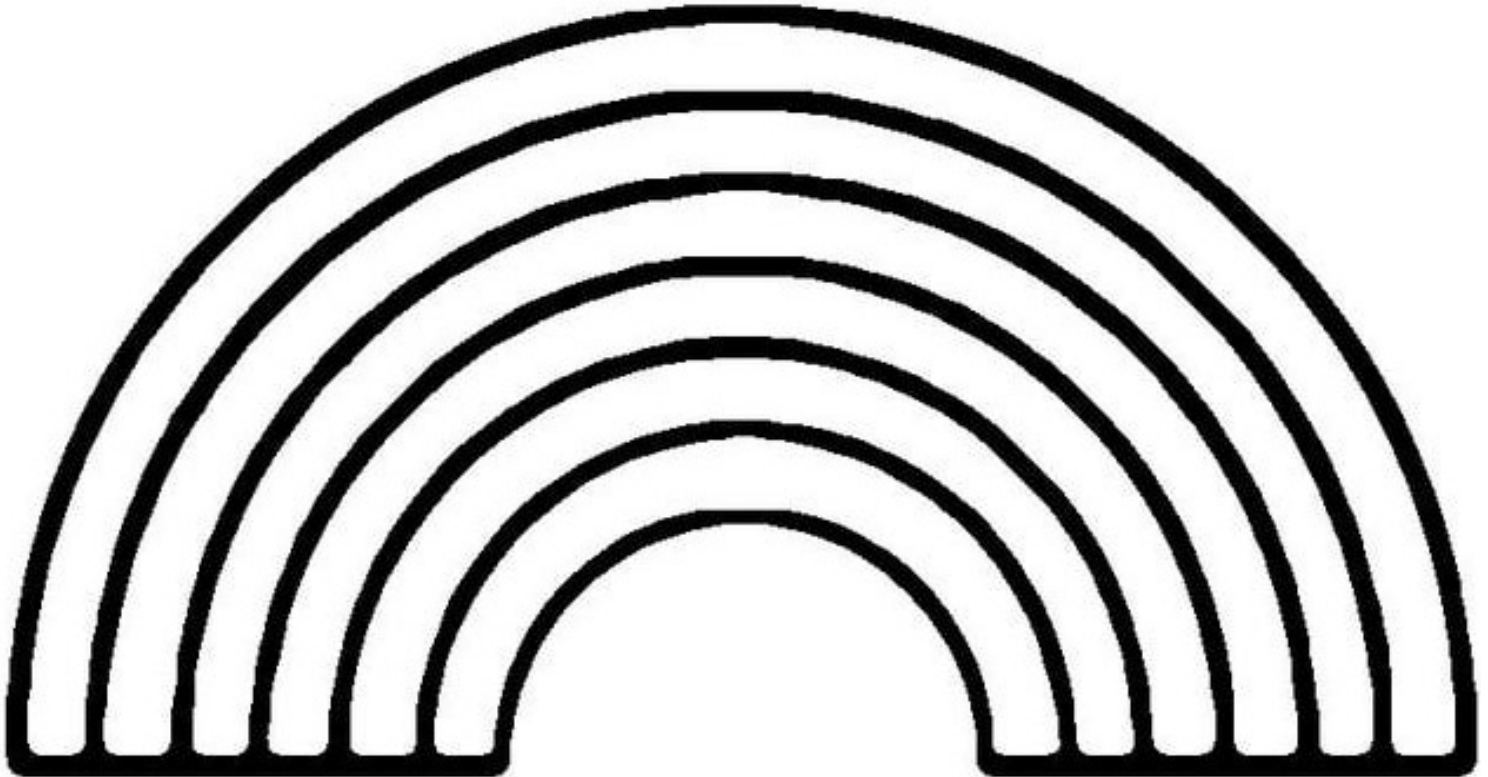
Ask the children, "Who can tell me how to put his heart back together? What are kind things we can do for and to each other?" As children name different acts of kindness pick the pieces of the heart off the floor and glue them back together on a poster board. On each piece, write the kind suggestion.

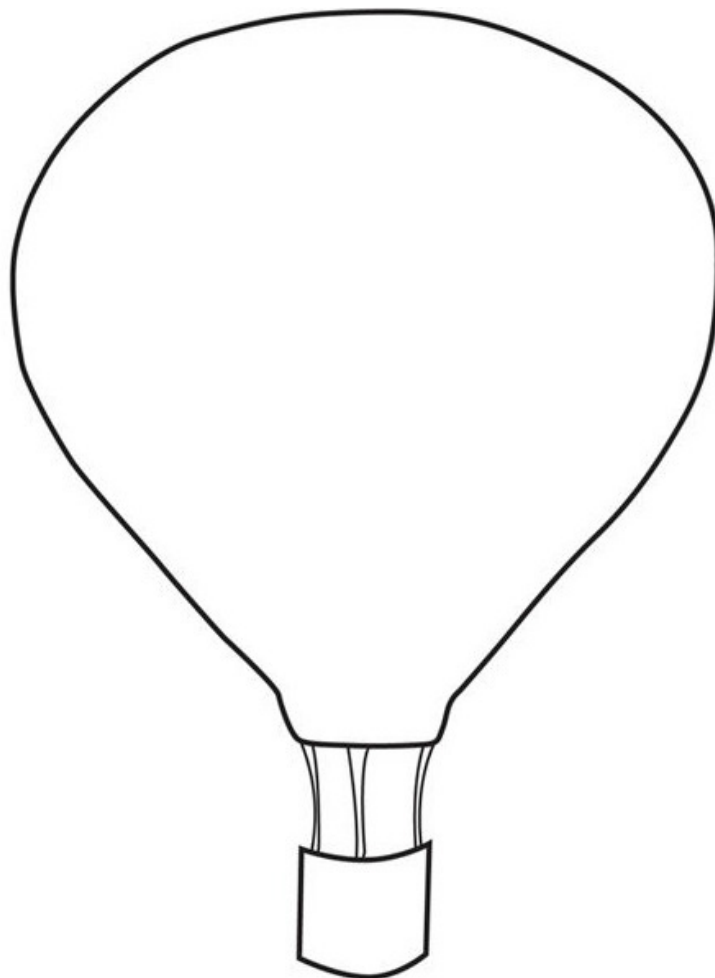
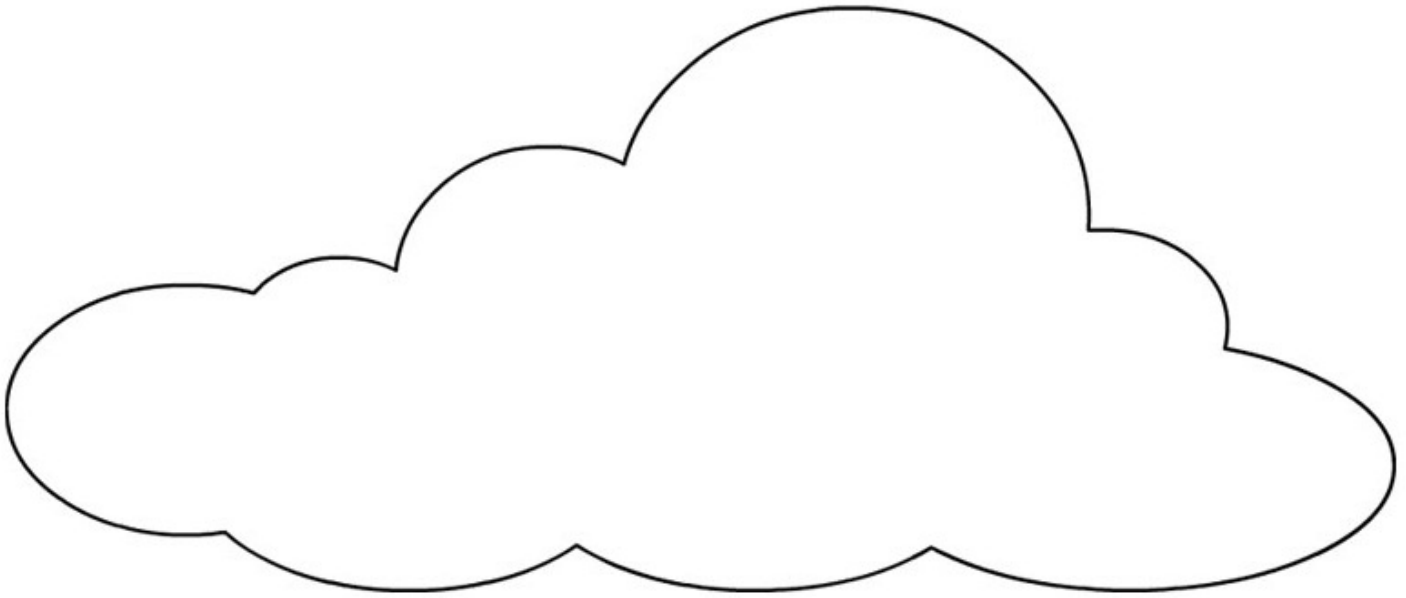
Put the poster up in the room and ask children to write the names of their classmates on the poster when they have been kind and helpful to them.

ME MOBILE:

The Invisible Girl encourages students to find their passion, like Dolores had for singing, and to share their talents with others, even when they might be afraid.

Use the templates provided to have your students create a “Me Mobile”, celebrating their special talents and qualities.





WORD SEARCH:

Try to find as many of the hidden words from **The Invisible Girl** as you can. Remember that the words can be hidden across, down, diagonal and even backwards!

G	I	E	N	H	I	A	G	U	I	C	S	U	F	T
Q	R	I	T	T	Q	N	H	N	Z	R	E	L	E	H
E	E	E	A	A	X	Y	V	D	N	L	T	T	Q	E
R	M	G	E	D	N	I	C	W	C	S	E	I	G	A
A	E	E	N	N	S	I	E	O	Z	W	B	M	W	T
O	G	N	O	I	T	A	M	I	N	A	A	A	P	R
L	Y	B	B	Y	S	H	S	O	I	X	I	T	D	E
O	A	L	G	P	T	E	U	P	N	Q	D	E	T	L
S	E	I	W	H	R	F	Y	M	A	F	L	S	E	I
U	S	L	E	O	J	B	W	I	B	S	B	M	P	N
R	J	O	L	F	R	I	E	N	D	S	S	X	V	I
J	R	O	E	G	A	T	S	R	D	X	U	I	L	Q
Y	D	N	E	D	F	I	H	E	F	F	K	A	O	X
B	W	D	C	S	N	L	I	S	Q	A	E	R	M	N
R	S	U	L	G	B	W	D	M	M	K	J	P	Y	B

ALI
DOLORES
INVISIBLE
SING

THEATRE
ANIMATION
FRIENDS
GREEN THUMB

NOMINATE
SOLO
THEORY
DIABETES

PASSION
STAGE
ULTIMATES

OUTSIDE IN:

When Ali and the “Ultimates” looked at Dolores they only saw what was on the outside...an awkward, quiet and heavyset classmate that was more or less invisible. What they didn't see was her inner life – her passion to be a singer or the fact that she suffered from diabetes.

Try this art activity with your students to encourage them to remember to look from the outside in. This doubles as an activity to meet the Health and Careers learning outcomes, too!

You need:

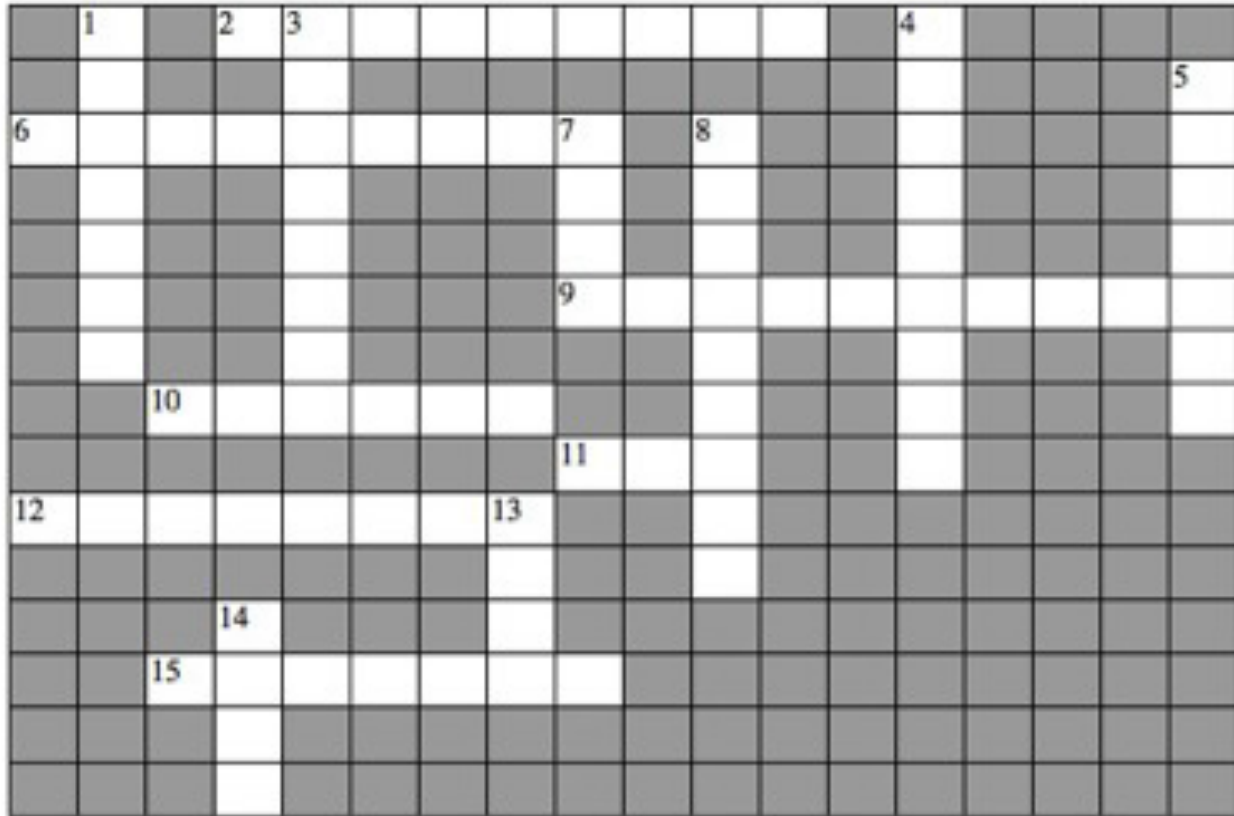
- A shoebox covered with plain paper
- Felt markers/pastels/crayons
- A selection of magazines or other decorative materials
- Scissors
- Glue

Instructions:

1. Think about your “outside” life. What do you do that is public and that most people know about you, for example, you play soccer, you have a brother, your favourite food is pizza etc...Now, decorate the outside of your box to reflect this outer you! Use cut outs from magazines, your own drawings, etc... Be as creative as you like!
2. Now – this part might be harder. What about the inner you? Do you have a secret passion like Dolores? Maybe you dream of being an astronaut or you have a special souvenir that you keep tucked away in your room or you want to be the next Canadian idol. Whatever it is, open your box and decorate the inside to reflect this secret wish!
3. If you want, share your box with a friend. But don't feel you have to.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE:

If you watched **The Invisible Girl** carefully, you should be able to complete the following crossword puzzle easily. Good Luck!!



ACROSS

- 2. When something can't be seen but is still present
- 6. The name that Ali and her friends used
- 9. The theatre company that produced "The Invisible Girl"
- 10. A sophisticated idea or notion
- 11. The main character in the play, "The Invisible Girl"
- 12. An illness that affects the level of sugar in one's blood
- 15. An intense liking for an activity

DOWN

- 1. She was nominated for the solo by Ali
- 3. To put someone's name forward in a competition
- 4. the technique of showing moving cartoon characters
- 5. When something can be clearly seen
- 7. Dolores does this very well
- 8. A special heart shaped card
- 13. A part in a song for one single person
- 14. The front part of one's head

ANI-EMOJIS:

The Flash Animation used in **The Invisible Girl** began with drawings, sketches and cartoon images. Students can have a lot of fun trying out cartooning techniques and creating a set of animated emojis.

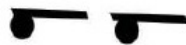
Have students experiment with a variety of lines and shapes to form various eyes, mouths, eyebrows, etc... Then have them mix and match to create surprising and expressive combinations.



Angry



Bored



Looking right



Confused



Suspicious



Tired

CARTOON MOUTHS



Encourage your students to come up with six or more original emoji faces. Discuss the way that facial features can give the viewer a lot of information about how a character is feeling. Encourage them to draw emoji faces that express different moods or character traits. You may want to use a tracer, such as a roll of tape so that your students do not waste too much time trying to draw a perfect circle.

Draw features from the experimental pages in pencil, outline these in sharpie once the desired emoji has been created and use watercolour paints or pencil crayons to select colours that might reflect the emoji (for example, red for anger or embarrassment, green for nausea or jealousy).

You may also want to experiment by creating a range of light and dark values, if working with paints.

**Explore,
Experiment,
Create!!!**

Writing Ideas

After watching the performance of **The Invisible Girl** try a few of the writing ideas below.

Throughout the performance, Ali shares many big ideas or theories.

Choose from those below to start a class discussion/debate or to form the framework of a journal entry or a persuasive piece of writing.

THEORY: Warning signs can only be seen when you look back.

THEORY: If you don't know, don't ask.

THEORY: Life would be a lot easier if you could just hit a button and rewind it.

THEORY: Some people fit together. Some people do not.

THEORY: Sometimes you want to be invisible.

THEORY: Sometimes standing up means standing out.

Theatre Review

Have your students write a theatre review about this performance of **The Invisible Girl**.

Consider sending it in to us at Green Thumb. We love to get your students' feedback.

A **Theatre Review** usually includes the following:

- A brief summary of the story
- A comment on the quality of the play itself
- A description of the costumes and set and a comment on whether these were interesting and appropriate
- A comment on the actors' portrayal of the characters and on the director's skill at pulling the whole show together.

There are many examples of reviews in newspapers and online that you could use to introduce the concept and format of a theatre review.

Friendship Doodles

Use this BLM to have your students represent what friendship and love means to them in words and pictures.

LOVE

fRIENDSHIP
and what it means
to me...

1

2

3

A friend is
someone WHO...

Technology Links

Ultimately, the message in **The Invisible Girl** is about staying true to oneself and being kind to others. There are many inspirational songs and videos online that can be shared with students of all ages.

Below is just a small sample of what you could share with your class from time to time to reinforce kindness at school and beyond.

Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

<https://randomactsofkindness.org>

Ripple

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovj5dzMxzmc>

Kindness Boomerang – “One Day”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwAYpLVyeFU>

Unsung Hero

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5UBikaulQM>

True Move

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89aowrIN--k>

Give a Little Love

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PT-HBI2TVtl>

Acts of Kindness Caught on Camera 2012

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJWrBjdI4HY>

Thank You!

Thank you for taking the time to use and review the *The Invisible Girl* study guide as a resource to further enrich your students' experience watching the play.

Visit our website at persephonetheatre.org for more information about future Youth Tours or School Matinees.

Good luck in the school year and we hope to see you next year!

We want to hear from you and your students!

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