



# Education activities

BASED ON JASPER JONES  
FROM THE NOVEL BY CRAIG SILVEY, ADAPTED BY KATE MULVANY

## WRITTEN RESPONSE

Write a review of this production of *Jasper Jones*, taking into account direction, acting, design elements and audience response.

For guidelines on how to write a review, see our review writing resource linked in the drop-down menu for *Jasper Jones* at [statetheatrecompany.com.au/education-program](http://statetheatrecompany.com.au/education-program).

## ACTIVITY

For many people today, social media is an important avenue for self-expression, particularly platforms like Instagram that are often viewable to a wider audience.

In small groups or as an individual, choose a character from *Jasper Jones*. In the small groups, make sure everyone selects a different character.

Think about or discuss your character. What do you see as their main character traits? How do they see themselves? How do other characters see them? What is important to them? How do they express themselves. Think about how these aspects of the character might be expressed through their Instagram account.

Take photos you think the character would take or find images online you think relate to the character. Come up with captions for the photos - use a mix of quotes from the show or book and captions you have written yourself. Lay them out like Instagram posts.

In a group presentation or within a small group discussion, present the images you have taken or chosen and the captions you have written. Talk about why you made these choices and how you think they relate to the character.

## DISCUSSION

As a class, discuss the idea of 'coming of age'. What does this idea mean to you? What do you think it meant to come of age in the 1960s in Australia? What does it mean in 2019 in Australia? Why do you think it has changed? How is it different across different cultures within Australia? What about internationally? How do you think this might change in future?

## WRITTEN RESPONSE

What are the central themes of *Jasper Jones*? Identify one or two themes (e.g. growing up, racism, fear, etc.) and explain how and where they were used in the play. Use specific examples and quotes.

## ACTIVITY & WRITTEN RESPONSE

Think about the themes and issues presented in *Jasper Jones*. Browse through a newspaper or have a look on a news website. Can you see any of the themes of the show reflected in current world events? Themes and issues like racism, sexual abuse, domestic violence, gender roles and others are still being discussed by people today, both nationally and internationally.

Choose a theme or issue presented in the play and a news article from the past 12 months that shows how that theme or issue is still relevant. Research how your chosen topic was viewed and talked about in the 1960s when *Jasper Jones* was set; compare this to current discourse on the topic. How has the way we see this concept or idea changed from the 1960s to the present day? How is it similar? Write down your responses using quotes from the play and a news source or sources.

## ACTIVITY

In a group, choose a scene from *Jasper Jones*. Discuss how you would want this to be represented on stage. Make sure you consider all design elements – set, props, sound, lighting, etc. Write down your ideas or create a mood board.

Next, think about the characters involved in your chosen scene. Discuss what they might be feeling in that moment, how their feelings might change as the scene progresses, what they are trying to achieve in the scene and what might have changed in the character's life after the action or conversation involved in the scene. Think about the expressions and physicality that might accompany the emotions and actions of the characters.

If possible, create a minimal version of your chosen design and act out the scene. If there are important design elements that are difficult to simplify, describe these ideas to the rest of the class or your teacher before the group acts out the scene.



## ACTIVITY

Design a front of house experience or poster for this production of *Jasper Jones*. Think about the audience, themes and messages of the production. How might you emphasise these in your design? Come up with colours and concepts, list your ideas and sketch them out. Create a final product (a poster, model or final design sketch). Ensure everything that is included is there for a reason.

## DISCUSSION

The word 'sorry' is very important in *Jasper Jones*. In the play, Charlie says:

"In all the best books I've read, the characters are caught between being good and being bad. They're stuck between right and wrong. But it's the truly good people that can tell the difference. And so it's a truly good person that can admit fault and say 'Sorry'... 'Sorry' belongs to the truly good people. It means you feel the pulse of someone else's pain and it's an offering for someone who's suffering to take or leave... Or is 'Sorry' the refuge of the weak?"

Think about a time when you said 'sorry' to someone. Did you do so out of guilt? Do you think saying 'sorry' is something only good people do? Has there been a time when you thought someone should say 'sorry' and they didn't? What did that make you think about that person? As a class, discuss what it means to be 'sorry'. You may want to relate it to public apologies, like the one given by Kevin Rudd to the Stolen Generations in 2008 or the apologies (and non-apologies) issued by people involved in the #MeToo movement.

## FURTHER ACTIVITIES

Other activities are available in the study guide available under the drop-down menu for *Jasper Jones* at [statetheatrecompany.com.au/education-program](http://statetheatrecompany.com.au/education-program).