



improvised theatre meets interactive science workshops / performances for humans aged 6+

The Discovery Lab is a spaceship, and is home to travelling aliens on an earth exploration mission.
They come in peace.

They are extremely invigorated by the amazing planet of Earth. Plants, bugs, clouds, why things float or the pH of lemon juice, the aliens find it all fabulously fascinating!

They're keen to learn more from you, the earth experts.
So pop along to their pop-up lab to investigate, explore, think and discover!

Session Content

The audience enter to discover a spaceship, apparently abandoned.
Eventually two figures emerge, searching and scanning. They sense the audience's presence, and establish contact, asserting "We Come In Peace!"

These are aliens on a discovery mission to Earth. They are delighted to meet the "earth experts" in the audience. The aliens are getting low on spaceship fuel. The interesting thing is, their spaceship is powered by science discoveries. This leads into a hands-on science workshop, with the overarching aim of generating new discoveries which will fuel the spaceship.

These workshops can be broadly themed on:

biology (e.g. seeking plants, insects),
Works best **outdoors**.

physics (e.g. lightwaves, soundwaves).
Works best **indoors**.

chemistry (e.g. pH levels of food etc).
Works well **indoors or outdoors**.

We can design bespoke activities on a specific science topic if required.
This will incur an additional planning cost which can be negotiated.

During the workshop

Participants explore tasks at their own pace, there are extension activities if required, and the spaceship is furnished with information books and an iPad.

The aliens model curiosity and look up more information in a very organic way, based on the discoveries the participants have made.

Participants are encouraged to draw or write about their discoveries. These are pegged up around the spaceship for use in the improvised theatre which happens straight after the workshop.



Earth Experts explore biology



at a summer holiday discovery lab in Hartcliffe



Earth Experts explore pH levels



at the pop-up park, Calne



a biology-based discovery session in Hartcliffe, Bristol



...and also at Dorset Wildlife Trust

improvised theatre

The aliens wrap up the workshop, saying it's time for them to go.

They begin to extract power from the discoveries that have been made during the workshop by placing them in their centrifugal randomiser (tombola) but regrettably, in the process of taking off, an important part of the spaceship breaks. This part needs repairing soon or the spaceship might explode!

In emergencies like this, the aliens draw upon discoveries for inspiration and guidance. They mine the centrifugal randomiser for more discoveries, and allow these discoveries to guide them through a series of intergalactic portals to surreal imaginary planets inspired by the workshop discoveries. The aliens find what they need to repair the broken part and return just in time to stop the spaceship exploding!

stand-alone theatre

It is possible to book the theatre show without the hands-on workshop.

We find young earth experts often have a lot of interesting science-based knowledge at their fingertips, so we can deliver this element as a 45-60 minute improvised theatre show.

If we've delivered a workshop too, the improvised show is not as long as that.

Because it's improvised, it's flexible.



Client testimonials

“

Wordfest brought The Discovery Lab to Calne Pocket Park in June 2021. It was a roaring success with around 60 young people taking part over the course of the day in family bubbles.

The performers were engaging and their blend of storytelling and science communication, differentiated to individuals enabled young people from around 2 - 12 to be a part of the show at their own level.

The performance element was very empowering as the alien characters in the show were not portrayed as experts, but needed the help, ideas and knowledge of the young people. The range of activities on offer meant all young people could all be involved and bring their own knowledge and expertise to the show.

”

Ruth Hill

Calne Pop-up Park, Events Coordinator

“

The show was an excellently performed and brilliantly imaginative piece of theatre. Paul and Gill seamlessly interweaved the audience's suggestions into their world, running with the scientific discoveries offered and wholly immersing the audience along the way.

Their clever use of props and impressive set was both entertaining and inspired and it was a real treat to see such a well executed concept brought to life.

Brave Bold Drama are excellent to work with, professional to a tee and would be a fantastic addition to any theatre or festival's programming. We highly recommend The Discovery Lab!

”

Rosalind Beeson

Programme Manager, Bristol Improv Theatre

“

We were delighted that Brave Bold Drama brought The Discovery Lab, complete with ingenious spaceship set to our family creative sessions at Paddington Farm, Glastonbury.

The children were intrigued by the spaceship set, which was cleverly designed and hugely appealing. Paul and Gill were their usual brilliant selves, entertaining and inspiring the children with warmth, total commitment and wonderfully quirky humour to explore the landscape around them in search of interesting plants and mini-beasts to explain to their friendly alien hosts. Such an original and exciting approach to encouraging children to explore the natural world around them.

”

Leela Bunce

Events Organiser, Children's World

“

We commissioned Brave Bold Drama and The Discovery Lab for a half term family event at Hengrove Mounds as part of our My Wild City project engagement programme. It was fantastic! The kids loved meeting the crazy aliens and hearing the funny stories. Gill and Paul are inventive and even the most hesitant families get drawn in, and the weaving together of all the things the children found in to a funny improv performance was brilliant.

I would highly recommend the Discovery for an exciting and unusual way of engaging families and children.

Hannah Welsh

**Community Engagement Officer,
Avon Wildlife Trust**

”

Participant Testimonials

“ I liked searching for nature and doing drawings for the aliens. ”

“ The aliens were funny and made us feel comfortable and welcome. ”

“ Such great energy and storytelling. Very interactive and accessible. ”

“ The storytelling was joyful and exciting. Fun learning! Please come back. ”

“ We loved how the aliens brought everyone's discoveries into a story at the end. ”

“ It was awesome. The children were focused and engaged throughout. Different to anything we've done before. ”

costs

Guide Fees:

Please contact the company as these will vary depending on your requirements.

Travel:

Depending on location, calculated as 45p a mile. We travel in one vehicle.

Materials:

Depending on which version is booked, we may need to add on the cost of consumable science resources. These costs are negotiable.

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The Discovery Lab: credentials



The concept of The Discovery Lab was first developed for summer of 2020, where sessions were trialled at outdoor play sessions for vulnerable young people in Hartcliffe, south Bristol on a scheme run by Learning Partnerships West.

We secured funding from The Royal Society of Chemistry Outreach Fund to work with a theatre designer Bronia Housman to get the touring structure of a spaceship built. This funding also supported us to work with science education specialists Knapsack Productions.

We developed the content of the biology, chemistry and physics sessions in consultation with Knapsack Productions, and this work was kindly supported by Pound Arts Centre, Corsham.

We developed the characters and the back story of the aliens in rehearsal sessions led by Imogen Palmer who, like us, is an associate artist with the Bristol Improv Theatre.

Brave Bold Drama are experienced arts educators. Our artistic director has a PGCE and a Masters Degree in theatre. She taught secondary drama for 13 years before setting up Brave Bold Drama.

We have twice been awarded "Champion Centre" status between 2021-2023 by Trinity College London in recognition of our arts education work delivering Arts Award courses. We are also permanent resident artists at Pervasive Media Studios in Bristol, which gives us access to leading creative technological practice and expertise.

Funders and Partners

