



*HLF Rebuilding Bodies and Souls*

## **‘The Town that didn’t Stare’ activity**

**Suitable for:** 6-8 years

**Time needed for set up and activity:** 5-10 minutes: have costumes ready. Activity lasts approx. 30- 45 minutes: suitable for the whole class, then split the children into groups of 5. 1 adult needed for whole activity.

**Context needed for the activity:**

- What airmen are
- A basic understanding of who McIndoe is
- What a burn/injury is
- What war and a war hero is
- ‘Guinea Pig’ refers to an airman with injuries

**Activity Objective:**

- To improvise a short performance exploring how local people reacted to seeing the Guinea Pigs in East Grinstead

**Suggested Learning Objectives:**

- To be able to empathise
- To understand the lives of people that used to live in East Grinstead
- To be able to work scientifically
- To use discussion skills
- To be able to imagine and explore ideas through spoken language and role play
- To be able to consider different view points

**National Curriculum Links:**

- **History:** significant historical events, people and places in their own locality
- **History:** the lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements
- **History:** Understand historical concepts such as cause and consequence, similarities and differences and asking historically valid questions
- **History:** Gaining Historical perspective (including local and national history and understanding types of history, i.e. military)
- **English:** Spoken language (including using descriptions, being involved in discussion/presentations/performances/role play/improvisation, listening to peers and adults, participating in conversations, asking questions, consider and evaluation different viewpoints, gain and maintain interest of the listener)
- **English:** Competence in speaking and listening

- **Physical Education:** Develop fundamental movement skills, becoming more competent and confident by engaging in a wide range of activities to extend coordination and agility
- **Science:** Asking and answering questions
- **Science:** Label and identify the sense associated with different parts of the body

### **Materials and equipment:**

Selection of costumes, hats and accessories for children.

### **How to:**

Begin by talking about how East Grinstead became the town that didn't stare. How the children were scared and confused by the appearance of the airmen, but recognised that the airmen were war heroes and should be treated with respect and not stared at. (Link to RBS exhibition by mentioning that the RAF airmen suffered burns which meant that their hands and faces were severely damaged or injured)

### **Suggested questions to ask before activity:**

What would be different about the airmen because of the burns and injuries?

Why would people stare?

(Recap what Guinea Pigs are)

(Recap/explain what a freeze frame is)

### **Introduce activity**

- Start with a game- Pass the clap around the circle (change directions)
- Big stretch, little stretch, big mouth, little mouth and yawn (drama warm-up activity)
- Ask the children to walk around the room. (If time, play stop, go).
- Ask the children to shake hands
- Ask the children to smile at people as they walk past
- Then ask the children to act as though they are afraid when they see someone walking towards them
- Divide the group into smaller groups of around 5 children.
- Each group will create a freeze frame (**What is a freeze frame?**)- imagine they are sat on a bus and they see the Guinea Pigs. In this freeze frame they are afraid- **what will their facial expression be? How would they react?**
- Bring the freeze frame to life. **What might they say?**
- This time each group will create the same freeze frame but will be friendly and welcoming to the Guinea Pigs.
- Bring the freeze frame to life. **What might they say to welcome the Guinea Pigs?**
- **Extension:** Ask the groups to perform one or two of their short scenes.

Summarise the session and share findings with the group.

### **Suggested questions to ask after activity:**

How did it feel when you were scared of the guinea pigs?

Which freeze frame did you prefer?

What do you think is the best way of reacting when we see people who look different or we perceive as scary?

What can we learn from the story of the town that didn't stare?

Have you ever been in a situation like this? What happened?