

Fluid Motion drama activity with Bay House School

Notes from Leigh Johnstone, actor

First of all I showed the group my one man WW1 Submariner show which gives an account of how I joined the Navy, was put on minesweepers first of all and then joined the submarine service. Then I give an account of what it's like on a submarine, take them through personal possessions and talk about my duties as a stoker. I then speak about the first and only mission I had been on which was to support HMS B11 during the early stages of the Dardanelles Campaign.

Then the group started the workshop with some drama games and a warm up and then started creating some still images based on emotions of their trip to Gallipoli. Then we brought them to life with a simple word or sound that was associated with the image. Then the group picked a moment from their trip to Gallipoli to work on, they choose a story they had heard about some New Zealand soldiers stuck in trenches only a few feet away from the Ottomans (forgive me if I don't get all these details correct). The group were moved by the way in which wave after wave of men were sent over to be mown down, reminiscent of the Western Front but not as well remembered.

They used this idea to create three still images of the start, middle and end of the scene, Focusing on body language, emotion and facial expressions. The group then brought it to life and I told them that they had to have one moment of slow motion, repetitive movement (to reflect the wave after wave of men going over) and a sound. They came up with a brilliantly simple and moving scene, with drumming and the odd scream to emphasise the horrors and the tragedy. Outcomes for students involved in the session were:

- Becoming familiar with the bigger picture of submarines and the submarine campaign of the Dardanelles
- Exploring the impact of drama to help develop understanding of Gallipoli
- Evaluating their experiences in Gallipoli and reflecting constructively on what they have learnt
- Being inspired by stimuli to express and communicate ideas, thoughts and feeling through drama