

## Exploring the themes of Storm In A Teapot (A Story About Stories)

- **A story about stories:** In the process of writing a story, our characters learn from pre-existing stories and ask the children in the audience for help. Their own story, Storm In A Teapot, is broken down into: The Beginning, The Middle and The Ending, and these are signposted physically by the hanging of tea towels during the performance. In addition to this, important moments of storytelling are identified: The Problem, The Decision, The Battle, which appear as text in various books which are revealed to the audience.
- **Celebrating individuality and creativity:** Our characters with their very different personalities are brought together by a shared love of stories, resulting in friendship and support. They accept each other as they are. Grandma Kettlepot wants to create her own story but she has self doubts; the audience contribute ideas to help the characters with the quest.
- **Loneliness, isolation, invisibility and otherness:** We are bringing our show to many who will have lived experience of these issues, including Ukrainian refugees and learning disability groups. Grandma Kettlepot is considered by some to be lonely, she has isolated herself from a group that do not understand her. She comes from another part of the UK and struggles to fit in, but she has interests (reading, dancing, motorbikes), a best friend in Willoughby Wordsearch and a faithful dog, therefore she is emotionally resilient. According to the UK Mental Health Foundation, there are higher levels of loneliness in young people than ever before, with risks to future mental health problems. Schools can foster environments in which children look for, identify and intervene when a peer seems lonely or disconnected from others.
- **Courage, conviction and resolve:** Grandma Kettlepot wants to write her own story, she encounters several obstacles on her journey including members of the Book Club with stereotypical attitudes and limiting ideas. These lead to her having to battle with some negative self talk, a voice in her head which she names The Greedy Goblin. She is not discouraged and finds a way to finish her story.