



*From us to you: 19 stories from leading playwrights for
people across the UK to record*

GASP. EXHALE.

By Bethan Marlow

Cast size: 2-9

This play is suitable for: Group

STEP 1: REHEARSE

- Make sure you have enough people for each part or maybe you could play multiple parts.
- Try to learn all your character's lines, if possible.
- If you're looking for some guidance, check out our [How To... videos](#). We've brought together a bunch of the best actors and directors to give you their tips and advice on how to make the best film you can.

STEP 2: RECORD

- Use a phone to film your performance or record directly on your Zoom or video chat platform.
- Record your performance in well-lit spaces so we can see you clearly but avoid standing right in front of a window on sunny day, and remember to keep private items out of view.
- Try to cut out all background noise by closing windows and doors.

STEP 3: UPLOAD

- We would love to see your performance. To upload your recording to us, click [here](#).
- Please **do not share** your recording on YouTube or other similar platforms. This is so we can keep all the recordings in the same place and to respect and honour our writers' copyright and publication permissions.
- We will be creating a film of each script from the videos submitted.
- We want this to be something everyone can take part in so please do get in touch if you have any access requirements or if there is anything else we might be able to help with.
- If you are having difficulty uploading your recording, please get in touch with us via email: admin@theatre-centre.co.uk or phone: 020 7729 3066.

HELP US SPREAD THE WORD

- Recommend to a friend by inviting those you know to rehearse, record and upload their own performance.
- Encourage others by using [#ImagiNation19](#) on your social platforms. State what play you have performed but remember to not share your recording publicly.
- Thank you for being part of ImagiNation.

ImagiNation is a co-production between Theatre Centre and Theatre503

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Mothers, fathers, parents and carers of primary school children- round up your fellow parents and have a go! Distribute the lines below randomly between you.

This play can be performed by a minimum of 2 and maximum 9 people.

It is a story in two parts. The first is a Zoom Call the second is a poem. In the final edit we will overlay the two pieces.

PART 1

Screens on a Zoom meeting (gallery view), each screen with a parent/carer in it.

All very excited to see each other.

They talk over, across and above each other throughout.

- How's everyone doing?

- (*Showing her hands*) excuse the green food colouring, we've been making slime.

- I built a fort today- it was so big I could fit in it. Did you see the photo I put up? It's got a cardboard chandelier and everything.

- Anyone else got a glass of wine?

- I'm not drinking in quarantine.

- Oh, healthy!

- So, how's everyone getting on with homeschooling?

- I've given up. He just wants to play!

- I tell you, if she's like this at school, her teacher deserves a medal.
- We do worksheets eight until ten and then a snack break for fifteen minutes then educational computer lessons until midday and then lunch, one hour walk outside, maybe some crafts or p.e and then they get two hours screen time whilst I make dinner. It works really well to be fair.
- Anyone done nature art yet? I highly recommend it. Takes hours.
- We made a volcano erupt- eventually, took about a week to make the paper mache!
- Having time to teach my kids how to cook, you know, I'm really loving that.
- If I eat another cheesecake though, I'll have double cream coming out my ears.
- Is anyone else having trouble getting their kid to go outside? Mine just wants to stay in all day!
- Mine got dressed in her uniform today. No idea why.
- It's good this Zoom, isn't it?
- We've been reading lots, he's flying through his books. I'm sure he's a year or two above his age level, there's no stopping him.
- It's all life lessons in our house- planting flowers, using the washing machine, they love it. I've never usually got time to teach them that kind of thing, you know?
- It's a really special time.

- Yeah, but how much longer is it gonna go for do you think?
- Seriously, am I the only one with wine?

They all laugh.

The performers need to continue chatting, improvising for 2 MINUTES.

It doesn't matter what you'll be saying as the sound will be taken out.

AFTER THE 2 MINUTES the following lines to be distributed and spoken back on Zoom-

- How did you get the things to make slime?
- It's just glue, contact lenses solution and-
- I fucking hate slime.

They all laugh

- Oh my god, thank you for actually saying it out loud.
- I banned play-doh thinking it was the devil and then slime arrived.
- The stuff you buy already made is bad enough but making the bloody thing from scratch is just.... can you share that wine actually, it's getting me all twichy.

They all laugh.

PART 2

The following lines to be recorded over Zoom or your phone.

The poem can be shared randomly between parents/carers or just one person.

A special time to settle down on our earth
Especially special as we forget about the monetary worth
Of time
And instead spend it on our families and cake
Walking and fresh air.
And yet, my throat is tight.
I'm drowning
I play like I'm being filmed
I teach like I'm being watched
I discipline like I'm in front of a panel
And my bedtime stories are turned up a notch.
I breathe into my devices
Hot boasting air slices
my consciousness.
I grab onto my phone as if every vibration
Is a salvation.
A safety ring in an ocean, I grab onto it
As I float, lost, in a sea of.... Me.
I'm scared to swim in it.
I wish I could dive and submerge,
My eyes so blurred by the present
That I could see nothing else.
I am drowning but you will never know about it.
I am constantly, anxiously comparing my child to yours and I hate myself for it.

I feel shame in admitting that I
over-think so much
That I get myself into such
a big ball of mess when thinking of them,
Of me with them,
Of us raising them
And them in the world.
I'm drowning and it scares me
Yet the world dares me
to keep it all to myself.
Drowning in my fears
As I publicly pretend to be surfing the wave of parenthood like a pro.

A special time to celebrate our reality
To not be controlled by dignity or reputation
To not feel so overwhelmed by the presentation
of our bodies and parenting to the world.
To be able to live in a moment
That is powered by no-one but ourselves.
And yet the shelves
behind us on the screen
Must scream something
“Creative”, “Inspiring”, “original”.

Whether it's mutli-coloured homemade giant bouncy balls
Or cracked, chipped, stained walls
Although let's be honest, we rarely see the cracks
We've carefully placed them behind our backs
With the tantrums of today
And the challenging behavior at play

During the everlasting hours of our day.
Screams and rage pour out of us and our kids.
The pressure of being together forcing the lids
Of domestic shit to pop open and reveal all.
It spills on the table, we mop it up with maternal stamina.
Laugh and smile as we slide it underneath to perfect the angle of the camera.
We are made up from the waist up.
We touch up every fuck up.
Take selfies of every event
Document every special minute spent.
Portrait mode our kids looks
For photos to make memory books
That will remember this special,
suffocating time
Of being together, home-schooling and making slime.

PLEASE SEND THE ZOOM RECORDING AND POEM RECORDING TO US AS TWO SEPARATE FILES

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