

# APRIL

# AARD—VARK

SCHOOLS

RESOURCE

PACK

## ATYP

Australian Theatre  
for Young People



Image Credit: Luke Stambouliah

## APRIL AARDVARK

By Nathaniel Moncrieff

EZ and his gang of bullies have created a fake social media account to inflict torment and misery on their fellow students. The account's name, "April Aardvark", echoes through the halls with fear and confusion.

The gang is smugly satisfied with the results, until the day a student shows up to class claiming to be April Aardvark. She is the living, breathing manifestation of the account – a mean, obscene insult machine. She spreads chaos through the school, turning student against student and bully against bully.

But is she really who she claims to be? And if so, how can she be stopped?

Only one thing is certain – she is the greatest bully that ever lived.

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## Production Information

### Stage Suitability

Years 4+

### Season Dates

16 - 26 October 2019

### School Matinees

Wed 23 Oct, 1pm\*

Fri 18 & 25 Oct, 11:30am

\**Live streamed performance*

### Venue

SBW Stables Theatre

10 Nimrod St

Darlinghurst 2010

### Duration

70 mins + 20 min Q&A

### Tickets

\$23

1 free teacher per 10 paid students

### Bookings

<https://atyp.com.au/ATYP-productions/april-aardvark/>

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## From The Education Coordinator

April Aardvark is a play about being true to yourself despite what others might think. When supreme bully April Aardvark turns up at Mildew College and begins mercilessly picking on anyone in sight, our heroes gradually come to realise that it's only by feeling confident in being their authentic selves that they are able to shrug-off her attacks. This is the perfect play to spark conversations around bullying, online safety and personal and social capability in your classroom.

Playwright Nathaniel Moncrieff has crafted a darkly funny, complex but ultimately uplifting tale about loving yourself and positively managing relationships that will hold students spellbound throughout.

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### Activity: Cat & Mouse

This is a game of collaboration, but can also be used as a gentle metaphor for feelings of exclusion that can be the result of bullying.

1. One player is the "Cat", another is the "Mouse". The remaining players stand in a circle, facing inward and holding hands with the player either side of them.
2. The cat chases the mouse around and through the circle. At any point, players in the circle may raise or lower their linked hands to block the cat or mouse, or allow one or the other of them to pass through. The cat and mouse may not move through the circle unless permitted.
3. The round ends when the cat catches the mouse. Repeat as desired.

#### Reflection:

- As the cat or mouse, how did it feel to be blocked or let through the circle?
- How did players in the circle make decisions about who to let through?

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## Curriculum Connections

Stage	Subject	Outcome
3	English	EN3-3A EN3-5B EN3-7C
	Drama	DRAS3.4
4	English	EN4-1A EN4-3B EN4-5C
	Drama	4.3.1 4.3.2
Themes	Cyber-safety Anti-bullying Personal responsibility vs Peer pressure	

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## How To Use This Resource

This resource has been designed to help students and teachers explore, creatively and imaginatively, the themes of *April Aardvark* in your classroom.

*April Aardvark* is a play about bullying, both online and in reality, and as such we recommend the following online resources to help with discussions that may arise over the course of the activities.

**NSW Department of Education  
Anti-Bullying Website**  
[www.antibullying.nsw.gov.au](http://www.antibullying.nsw.gov.au)

**Bullying. No Way! (Australian Government)**  
[www.bullyingnoway.gov.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au)

**Kids Helpline**  
1800 55 1800  
[www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)

## Activity: Online Personalities

Read the script excerpt *MAKING THE ACCOUNT*, then in small groups take a large piece of paper and create a social media account for one of the characters below. You can use similar categories to the ones in the script, or create your own.

- Someone who's new in town and wants to make a good impression,
- Someone who wants to stand-out as the geekiest of the geeks,
- Someone who wants people to be impressed with them,
- Someone who wants to look like a part of a YouTube community (could be gamers, beauty tutorials, weird challenges, or anything else you can think of),
- An aspiring Influencer who wants to attract followers,
- A bully who wants to intimidate people.

Share your ideas with the class and discuss how and why these people might want to use these accounts to get the attention they seek.

## Activity: What Happens Next?

In this activity, you'll creatively explore ways to find positive outcomes to bullying situations. The activity draws on Forum Theatre techniques and requires a teacher or student to take on the role of facilitator.

1. As a class, brainstorm a list of different types of bullying and a phrase that represents each one, for example:
  - **Have you seen this?**  
(Sharing images)
  - **Go on, I dare you.**  
(Peer pressure)
  - **Did you hear about...?**  
(Spreading rumours)
  - **It was just a joke.**  
(The power of words)

Continued on next page.

## Script Excerpt: Making The Account

*ALEX, GEORGE and LIZZIE gather around EZ, who is holding a phone.*

**EZ** Her favourite colour?

**ALEX** Blood.

**EZ** Favourite animal?

**LIZZIE** Tarantula.

**EZ** Favourite sport?

**GEORGE** Making people cry.

**EZ** Favourite food?

**LIZZIE** Tears.

**ALEX** No. Mac 'n' cheese.

**EZ** Why Mac 'n' cheese?

**ALEX** Why Mac 'n' cheese?  
R-O-F-L-U-I-V, EZ.

**GEORGE** What?

**ALEX** Rolling on the floor  
laughing until I vomit.  
Hashtag: obvious,  
George.

**EZ** Anything else that she  
likes?

**ALEX** Hate.

**GEORGE** Hate?

**ALEX** Yes. She likes hate.

**GEORGE** Hate comes under the  
next section.

**ALEX** She doesn't hate hate,  
you skid mark.

**GEORGE** Can someone please make  
her stop talking?

**EZ** That's enough  
information. Let's  
start sending messages.  
Who's first?

2. In small groups, choose one type of bullying from your list (and the phrase that goes with it) and create a tableau of a bullying scenario with your phrase as its title.
2. Once you have created your tableau, the facilitator calls “*Start*” and the image comes alive as an improvised scene.
3. After the scene has had a chance to develop, the facilitator calls “*Pause*” and the actors freeze. The facilitator asks the audience “*What happens next?*” and the audience may suggest actions to help the actors positively resolve the situation.
4. The facilitator chooses one idea from the audience and the actors incorporate it into the scene to see if it alters the outcome in a positive or negative way. If they wish, the audience member may ‘tag-out’ one of the actors, replacing them in order to try out their idea. This may happen several times over the course of one scene.
5. The scene ends when a positive resolution has been reached.

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### After You See The Show: Some Ideas for Post-Show Activities

- **What do you think happens after *April Aardvark* ends?** Write a story or script that shows what happens next, then email your ideas to [education@atyp.com.au](mailto:education@atyp.com.au) and they might even be published on our website!
- **Develop an anti-bullying policy for your classroom.** As a class, brainstorm a list of positive behaviours you wish to encourage and constructive alternatives to negative behaviours. Create a poster of your policy for your classroom wall so that you can continue to refer to it in the future.

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## Creative Team

### Writer

Nathaniel Moncrieff

### Director

Amy Hardingham

### Dramaturg

Jane FitzGerald

### Set & Costume Designer

Stephanie Howe

### Lighting Designer

Kelsey Lee

### Sound Design Mentor

Steve Francis

### Sound Design Mentee

Daniel Duque

### Stage Manager

Jana Vass

### Production Manager

Sorie Bangura

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## ATYP Foundation Commission Plays

*April Aardvark* is the winner of the 2018 ATYP Foundation Commission. These Commissions invest in work for young people to perform. Developed by ATYP and published by Playlab, we are creating a canon of plays for young actors aged between 10 and 13.

Resource created by ATYP Learning  
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 02 9270 2400  
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