

WHY NOT?

In the play the weather is forever changing. Shaun mentions his 'Mountain Alpine Coat' which keeps him hot when it's cold and cools him down when it's hot.

> Why not design some futuristic costumes? Think about whether the clothes have special functions e.g. "Hover Boots" and whether they look different to the clothes we wear today.

> Why not create an advert to help sell your designs and act it out with your friends?



The moon, TIDES and animals

• Gravity on the moon is weak, so everything on the moon weighs only one sixth of its weight on Earth. But the moon's gravity is strong enough to affect the Earth - by pulling on the water in the oceans and creating tides. At high tide the water is raised, and at low tide the water is dragged away by the pull of the moon's gravity.

• 2 billion tonnes of water flow in and out of the Bay of Fundy in Canada every day. This is more than all the rivers on Earth combined. Many Finback whales come here to feed on fish. Without the moon the Bay would not provide a constant source of food for the whales.

• On Christmas Island 60 million crabs migrate (travel) from the forest to the sea. They do this in November and December when the tides are weak. The crabs can't swim or breathe under water - so they wait for weak tides before going into the sea to lay their eggs. This way they are less likely to drown.



a moonless WORLD

In *Moonshed*, the moon has disappeared from the sky. Writer Aisha Khan had to imagine a world without a moon.

- For a start, the night sky would be very dark.
- The weather would go mad. This is called climatic change. In Britain it could be very hot one day and freezing cold the next.
- There would be no lunar (moon) tides.
- Lots of animals need the moon. For example, owls use the light of the moon to hunt. These animals would be very confused if the moon disappeared and it would take a long time for them to get used to it.



moon Facts

Did you know?

- The moon is a rocky ball that takes 28 days to go around (orbit) the Earth.
- It is about one quarter the size of our planet.
- The moon is the second brightest object in our skies after the sun. Although it's very bright, the Moon does not shine, it reflects light from the sun.
- At night the Moon's temperature drops to -180°C and at midday the sun heats the rocks up to a scorching 120°C .
- There is no water or air on the moon and this means that there is no life there either.

The earth in 2015

In Anu and Shaun's world in 2015, children go to a school called The Senior Academy. They do lots of tests in Junior Academy to decide which 'stream' they will go into. Shaun and Anu will be in different groups, with different teachers. They will probably never see each other because all 'streams' are divided and kept apart. This is why Anu is feeling worried - he doesn't like exams and doesn't like the idea of having to do more tests.



Imagine...

A world without a moon.

> Draw a cartoon strip showing the strange changes that would take place in a moonless world. Maybe your drawings could show how the weather changes from one day to the next.

> Create the front page of a newspaper for the day that the moon disappears and another one for when the Moon appears again.

> Pretend you are Professor Hinckel from the Moon Intelligence Agency (MIA). Write a story about the time after he discovers that the fragment of rock has disappeared from Anu and Grandad's cupboard. How does he feel when the moon re-appears in the sky?

> Design a poster written by the Moon Intelligence Agency asking people to look out for pieces of the missing moon.

> Create a short play in which one of the characters from the play is interviewed for a news programme about the re-appearance of the moon.



GRAVITY

In the 1660s, a very important scientist called Isaac Newton, wondered why the Earth orbits the moon without flying off into space. When he saw an apple fall from a tree he realised that the Earth has a pull that affects everything around it. He called this pull gravity. Newton discovered that the Earth's gravity reaches as far as the moon and stops it from escaping.

WHY NOT?

> Write a story describing how you feel about going to secondary school or what it's like if you are already there.

> Why not cut out photos of modern machines and gadgets from magazines and catalogues, and then draw what you think they'd look like in 2015? You might even want to create a scrapbook or to invent your own gadget. Draw a picture and make notes to show how it works and what it does.

> Why not design your own space probe? What could it be used for? Make a drawing of what it would look like and then, using objects you'd find around the house e.g. yoghurt pots and kitchen rolls, build the probe. You could use bits of coloured paper and sweet wrappers to make buttons and use straws for levers.

IN MOONSHED ANU'S FAVOURITE POSSESSION IS HIS SPACE PROBE AND HIS FAVOURITE PLACE TO THINK IS HIS SHED. WE ASKED SOME OF THE PEOPLE WORKING ON THE SHOW WHAT THEIR FAVOURITE THINGS ARE AND WHAT ADVICE THEY WOULD GIVE TO ANU...



World Premiere
moonshed

By Aisha Khan Directed by Sarah Frankcom

Programme and Activities

Writer Aisha Khan on

moonshed

"In the play Vela is the Protector of the moon so I wanted her name to link with the stars. VELA SUPERNOVA is a massive star that ran out of fuel and collapsed in an explosion called a supernova thousands of years ago."

"When I first started thinking about the play I was quite clear about the main characters. I wanted to look at the close relationship between Anu and his Grandad, and at Anu and Shaun's strained friendship. The other ideas – finding a mysterious stone, building a probe, Grandad's stories and a visitor from space searching for the stone, all stayed very much the same."

"The idea of setting Moonshed in a moonless future came out of the blue. But I became hooked on it and I set out to research whether a moonless Earth was really possible. The more I read and the more programmes I watched, the more excited I became about the idea. I knew that setting the play in 2015 would let me be as imaginative as I wanted to."

"When I set Moonshed in the future I began to think about what changes might have happened by 2015. New technologies are always being invented and old ones are forever being improved. Just look at mobile phones and computers and how they change every year. It was thinking about this that made me look at everyday objects and imagine how they could be different."

"I began by looking at what Anu would be using whilst building his probe. In Anu's world not many people use an ordinary hammer or an ordinary screwdriver – everything is powered by electricity to make jobs easier."

Name: Hannah McBride
Role: Vela



Advice to Anu about starting a new school: Things change, be brave & take every opportunity that comes your way.
Favourite thing about working in theatre: The best thing about working in theatre is that you can become someone completely different.
Best thing about your character: I like the fact that Vela is strong in both her head & her heart.
Favourite theatre project: A play called 'On A Night Like This' by John Godber as he wrote the part especially for me.

Name: Lewis Hellewell
Role: Shaun



Favourite place to have a quiet think: My bedroom. Sitting on my bed listening to music & writing my diary.
Advice to Anu about starting a new school: I would say there are no strangers, just friends you haven't met yet.
Best thing about your character: My favourite part is 5 minutes before you go on & you're backstage listening to the audience. Then before you know it – it's started!
Shaun is really fun if a little bit mischievous. It's good being a young boy again.

Name: Ronny Jhutti
Role: Anu



Favourite place to have a quiet think: Not any one place but it has to involve walking outdoors; in a park, or a beach, where you can take in what's around you.
Favourite thing about working in theatre: I love theatre because it creates many places without lots of visual effects. You have a real relationship with real 'live' people performing with you & watching you.
Best thing about your character: He is strong minded, has a belief in himself to succeed, is willing to help all around him & cares for his Grandad.
Favourite theatre project: A version of 'Jungle Book' that was produced at the Young Vic in 1996. As Mowgli, I had to play a character who thinks he is not a human & has to learn to become one.

Name: Afrah Sachak
Role: Grandad



Most prized possession: My first present (an old 1950s radio) given to me.
Favourite place to have a quiet think: In my study at home.
Advice to Anu about starting a new school: Think of it as an adventure & enjoy each day.
Best thing about your character: That he is a loving grandfather.

Name: Sarah Frankcom
Job: Director



Favourite place to have a quiet think: The attic at the top of my house.
Advice to Anu about starting a new school: Everyone else will be just as nervous as him, including the teachers.
How did you end up working in theatre? I used to be a drama teacher. I directed a play which people seemed to like & was asked to direct something else & it just kind of went from there.
Favourite theatre project: The first play I directed was called 'Contetti' & was set in a pub in Huddersfield. We didn't have much money to put it on, the set was chalked on the walls of the theatre & we rehearsed in a disused suntan lotion factory.

Name: Aisha Khan
Job: Playwright



Most prized possession: A cuddly soft toy cat my parents bought for me when I was a baby. It's a bit worn & torn but still loved.
Advice to Anu about starting a new school: Once you're in school and you've met up with your friends and made some new friends too you'll have lots of fun!
Favourite thing about working in theatre: Meeting people who are as passionate about the theatre as I am.
Favourite theatre project: This one!

Name: Lizzie Clachan
Job: Designer



Most prized possession: A cup of tea.
Favourite place to have a quiet think: When I want to have a quiet think, I walk alone around the city.
Advice to Anu about starting a new school: Don't be nervous, look at it as a new exciting experience. If you get lost in the corridor you might discover something new.
Favourite theatre project: Each project I do is quite different – new people, new places. So long as everybody works hard & has fun, they are always rewarding.

Name: Richard Owen
Job: Lighting Designer
Name: Carolyn Downing
Job: Sound Designer
Name: Keith Broom
Job: Technical Stage Manager
Name: Lynn Howard
Job: Deputy Stage Manager
Name: Tracy Dunk
Job: Wardrobe Supervisor
Set and props by the Royal Exchange Theatre Company

Credits
Crossley Garden Buildings for entrance shed
Alyaz Bedding for audience cushions
Q Text Enterprises for audience cushions
Travis Perkins for large foyer bags
Caphone Warehouse, Selfridges, Trafford Centre
Stockport Binocular Centre for their kind loan of the telescope
Black and Decker
Selfridges, Exchange Square
Teffey GB
Premier Foods
Barbakaaan Deltacessen
Blackwell's, University Precinct