

Nicholas Clark Management & Jolyon James  
presents

# robot song

Primary School  
Education Resource

2026 edition



**NCM**



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## ABOUT THESE NOTES

Created by Alexandra Macalister-Bills  
December 2018.

Updated by Kristen Beever, June 2023.

Updated by Darcy Van Dillen, January 2026

Jolyon James knows that learning is important for all young (and not so young) people. Seeing theatre is an immersive fun experience and we believe it can transform young people's lives.

This resource has been created to help prepare young people aged 8 – 12 years to see *Robot Song* and then afterwards dive deeper into the ideas the show raises. *Robot Song* can be used as a provocation for any/all of the following Australian Curriculum areas:

- The Arts – drama, visual arts
- English
- Personal and social capability
- Critical and creative thinking capability

[A more detailed curriculum links table is located at the end of this resource]

## ROBOT SONG IN YOUR SCHOOL

Writer/Director/Designer Jolyon James is available for student talks in Victorian Schools. If you are interested in Jolyon visiting your school please contact NCM. A small appearance/travel fee applies. Email: [nic@nicholasclarkmanagement.com](mailto:nic@nicholasclarkmanagement.com)

## VIDEO RECORDING AND SCRIPT

*Robot Song* was recorded live during its premiere season at The Engine Room in Bendigo in 2018.

The script is available by emailing Nicholas Clark Management.  
[nic@nicholasclarkmanagement.com](mailto:nic@nicholasclarkmanagement.com)

The recording is available upon request.  
Marketing – contact [darcy@nicholasclarkmanagement.com](mailto:darcy@nicholasclarkmanagement.com)

Education – Video Link available by clicking [HERE](#)

## ROBOT SONG CREATIVES

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**Producer/Company name:** Nicholas Clark Management & Jolyon James

**Performance Title:** Robot Song

**Writer/Director/Designer:** Jolyon James

**Composer/Musical Director:** Nathan Gilkes

**Performer:** Adeline Hunter

**Performer:** Phillip McInnes

**Performer / Musician:** Michelle Doyle

**Technician :** Justin Gardam

**Stage Manager:** Stephanie Young

**Dramaturgy:** Christian Leavesley

**Original Costume:** Beth Sayer

**Original Lighting Design:** Paul Lim

**Set Construction:** Tom Eeles at JT Custom Builds

**Assistant Director:** Sarah Branton

**Original Commission:** Arena Theatre Company

**Artform:** Family

**Running Time:** 60 Minutes, no interval

**Warnings:** Themes of bullying and school refusal

**Appropriate Age Range:** 10+ years old, and their families

## ORIGINAL SONGS IN THE SHOW

- Weird
- The Tragic True Story of the Poo and the Tupperware
- Battletac Theme
- The Joy that Rubbish Brings
- People say I'm like a Robot
- If You Sing

## ACTIVITIES FOR BEFORE THE SHOW

Let's get you ready to go see *Robot Song*!

### WHATS THE SHOW ABOUT?

When eleven-year-old Juniper May receives a petition signed by her entire class stating that she is 'the most hated person in the school' her life is thrown into turmoil. She stops eating, refuses to return to school and her parents become increasingly desperate. Finally, her parents' resort to the only thing they have left, a giant singing robot.

Based on a true story, *Robot Song* illustrates the profound, transformative nature of creativity that when combined with unconditional love, becomes an unstoppable force. For Juniper, creativity opens doors into places she never knew existed allowing her, for the first time, to be defined on her own terms.

*Robot Song* is a deeply personal story. It shares an honest, intensely funny and often unconventional window into writer, director Jolyon James' experience parenting a child on the Autism Spectrum. The show poses, and attempts to answer the question 'how do we support, foster and celebrate difference in our children in the face of an increasingly rigid and homogenised world?'

### SHOW TRAILER

- Watch the trailer for *Robot Song* below

<https://youtu.be/PLi3yjlx8zU>



- Who did you see in the video? Make a list of the possible characters in the show.
- What production areas did you see in the trailer?
- Based on the trailer make some predictions on what you think *Robot Song* will be about.

## WHO ARE THE CHARACTERS?

Look at the list below then re-watch the trailer and see if you can pick any of the characters.

**JUNIPER MAY** the main character, also known as Junee, and Pixel and a heap of other names

**DAD**

**MUM**

**DR EMMA**

**MISS CUMMINGS** - the art teacher

**PRINCIPAL SCRYBER**

**GOMI** A large industrial recycling bin. Gomi means rubbish in Japanese.

**BATTLETAC** - the robot

## GOING TO THE THEATRE

*Robot Song* is a theatre show that will be performed live for you. There are actors, puppets, live music, special effects and much more. As a class discuss:

- What do you think theatre is?
- Has anyone in your class been to the theatre before?
- What is the experience like?
- What might you expect to see in the theatre?
- How might it be different from going to the movies or a concert?

## YOUR SHOW

English–Literacy/Literature, The Arts – Drama

Juniper: Once a magician poked me in the eye with a chicken.

Yep, theatre can do that. I prefer Youtube. I have my own channel

Juniper May actually hates the theatre but her Mum and Dad told her she should make this show about her life.

If you made a show about your life, what would be in it?

1. Write, draw or make a mind-map plan for your show.

- Who would the characters be?
- What would the location be?
- What stories would you tell about what has happened in your life?
- Think about the funniest moments in your life, the scariest moments, the happiest, the most exciting. These make great stories to tell.
- How could you recreate them for a show?

- Would your show be for theatre? A concert? TV? YouTube? You can choose!
  - Would you use your friends as actors, or would you tell the story to camera? Maybe you would prefer to make an animation.
2. Decide how you'd like to see your story performed.
  3. Now draw a storyboard for your show, putting the events in the order that you want to tell the audience.

## WHAT IS A ROBOT?

Critical thinking Capability

One of the central characters in the play is Battletac the robot. So, what is a robot? Have you seen one? In a film, on television, perhaps you had one as a toy? Have you made one using robotics?

Look carefully at the image. In pairs discuss and talk about

- What does the robot seem to be made of?
- Are there any components that seem familiar – for instances can you spot a vacuum cleaner?
- How do you imagine it can move?
- Do you think it can talk?
- What would it sound like?
- What/who might control it?
- Share your thinking with the rest of the class.
- Perhaps you can act out how you think the robot might behave.
- When you see *Robot Song* see if what you imagined actually happens.



## ACTIVITIES FOR AFTER THE SHOW

**REVIEW** English – Literacy

What happened in the show? (Some answers are provided at the end of this resource)

- How do we first meet Juniper?
- What does Juniper do when she gets scared or worried?
- Who or what is Gomi?
- Why is there a song about poo in the show?
- Is Juniper good at Art?
- Why doesn't she want to go to school?
- Where does Juniper sit in class? What does she do there?
- Why doesn't she want to do hi-fives with Miss Hope, her classroom teacher?
- What happens to make Juniper 'melt-down'?

- How do we first meet Battletac the robot?
- What happens at the end?

### **COMPARE** English – Literature

Juniper: I don't like theatre either, it's too 3D

Have a look back at the predictions you made about the show when you watched the trailer.

- How did the show compare to your predictions from watching the trailer?
- What was the same? What was different?
- How did you feel watching the show?
- What was your favourite part of the show?
- Did the show make you think of any new things? Tricky things?
- What was the most important thing about the show do you think?

### **THEMES AND IDEAS** Personal & Social Capability, Critical and Creative Thinking Capability

So what is this show, *Robot Song*, all about? Have a discussion about some of the following ideas:

- Recognising and celebrating difference
- Modern parenting
- Bullying
- The power of creativity
- Friendship
- Being yourself
- Not wanting to go to school

Did you recognise any of these ideas in the play?

Are any of these ideas in the play you planned about your life?

### **WRITE YOUR OWN INTRO** English – Literacy/Literature, The Arts – Drama

Dad *(in a really bad American accent)*  
Welcome to *Robot Song* the touching true story about a girl who finds a robot in her recycling bin

Juniper: My name is Juniper May, I'm good at art, singing, writing, computers, YouTube and heaps of other things. One thing I really love are robots, I'm pretty much an expert. One thing I really hate is school, because a little while ago I received this letter

- How would you introduce your show about your life?
- Write a short paragraph for your own introduction.
- Decide on an accent.
- Work in groups to record or film each others introductions.

### **CREATED WORDS** English – Literacy/Language/Literature

In the play Juniper likes to make up words for feelings and thoughts she has. Juniper thinks normal words just don't describe these feelings and thoughts well enough so they need her own description.

Here are some of her made up words:

Shuckup = shut up

Stukid = stupid

Awesominia = so excited you can't sleep

Squid = stupid kid

In this activity you might like to draw on a list of vocabulary or spelling the class is working on OR just think about how you can play with nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and other types of words to create new words.

- Work with a partner
- Create FIVE TO TEN made up words for feelings or actions that you think need their own special description.

For example:

- What is the word for when you are nervous and excited at the same time?
- Is there a word for when you open a new packet of chips and the smell wafts up and hits your nose?
- Or when you think you picked up all the lego then you step on a piece with bare feet?
- Create a class Nicktionary – a dictionary of new words

### **WORDS INSIDE OTHER WORDS** English – Language/Literacy

Juniper: Words are like Lego, you can build anything with them.

My favourite kind is a word that hides another word inside

Here are some examples of words that hide within words Juniper has found:

Music = us

Hear = ear

Breathe = eat

Touch = ouch

Where = here

Believe = lie

**ACTIVITY**

What words can you find hidden in the following?

Smart	Disappearance	Forgot
Bold	Journey	Tearful
Silly	Danger	Gigantic
Momentum	Elephant	Creative

- Write a sentence that uses both the original word and the hidden word.
- Share them with a friend.

**THINGS WE MAKE OUR FAMILY MEMBERS/CARERS DO** Personal & Social Capability, Critical and Creative Thinking Capability, English – Literature, The Arts – Drama

Juniper: Once when I was three I did a poo on the floor in the living room. True story then I didn't know what to do, so I covered the poo with some Tupperware. Covered the poo and just left it there. (Poo Song)

Juniper's dad thinks the Tupperware container is covering a soft piece of avocado. He picks it up and then realises what it is!

- Pair and Share - what are the gross things you have made your parents do?
- Share stories with the whole class, then...
- Work in pairs to record a YouTube video about your gross thing. You might record these on tablets or perform them to the class.

**CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING** Personal and Social Capability, Creative Thinking Capability

Juniper: Welcome to orbiting Juniper, episode Four. 'How to fix your Mum's white silk blouse after you accidentally put red marker pen on it while doing an unrelated activity.'

*She holds up pictures of the blouse.*

Juniper: This is the blouse. This is the mark. My solution ...

*The next picture is the blouse covered in red marks.*

Juniper: I call it Red Ant Dancing. Mum called it the second worst thing I had done that morning. She must keep a list."

In this scene, Juniper finds a 'creative' solution to the red pen mark she put on her mum's best blouse.

- Have you ever done something you didn't want your family to discover and found a way to cover it up?

- How could you fix a mistake you made by using creativity to make it a positive experience?

For example a broken iPad screen could become a...

- Chance to do a science experiment and find out what's inside iPads
- A prop for an advertisement for looking after iPads

Work in pairs to problem solve how you could fix a past mistake into a positive.

### **WHAT COLOUR IS THE SKY?** The Arts – Visual

Dad: Juniper the sky is never just blue. There are so many different skies depending on who or what or where you are, you literally get to choose which ever one you want. Nothing is ever what it seems.

Juniper: You want me to choose the colour of the sky?

Dad: Yep, any colour you want.

Juniper: You're so annoying. What colour is your sky then?

- Imagine a different coloured sky – what colour is it?
- Draw it, paint it, collage it (you could use an iPad app for this)
- What colour is the earth if the sky is this new colour?
- What other things and beings have changed colour?
- Share your new coloured world with others – Whose world is similar?
- What is Juniper's father really saying here?

### **THE LETTER** Personal & Social Capability, Critical thinking Capability

*"This is an official school petition stating that you are a total freak. You sound like a robot, you act like a robot, you must be a robot. No-one wants you at this school. It would be way better for everyone if you had never been born."*  
Signed – everyone in your class

- What do you think about this letter?
- Why would someone write it?
- How would you feel if you received this?
- How could you help a friend if they received this?
- Does it change your opinion if you knew a real kid in a Melbourne school actually received this letter?
- What do you think about Battletac's words below?

Battletac: If you weren't smart, kind, strong, creative, different – this letter would never exist. This letter is proof that you are AWESOME

**SONG – SOME PEOPLE SAY I’M LIKE A ROBOT**

Personal & Social Capability, English – Literacy

Read this verse from “People say I’m like a robot” sung by Juniper.

*I FEEL EVERYTHING YOU SAY AND DO  
I PROBABLY FEEL IT MORE THAN YOU  
LIKE WHEN YOU FILLED MY LUNCH WITH SOIL OR  
DIPPED MY PENCILS IN THE TOILET OR  
TOLD ME THAT THE BUS HAD GONE  
AND I GOT LOST WHILE WALKING HOME  
OR WHEN YOU HID MY IPAD AND IT TOOK ALL DAY TO FIND*

It sounds like some pretty awful things have been done to Juniper!

- Think carefully about the UNDERLINED and BOLDED words and phrases in the verse above
- What words or phrases could you replace them with that made Juniper’s experiences positive and fun and inclusive?
- Example: Like when you filled my lunch with marshmallows AND I made a friend while walking home  
What other things can you think of?
- You might like to discuss this with a partner or a group or as a whole class and arrive at a very different version of the verse.

**WRITE ABOUT FRIENDSHIP** English – Literature

Divide into pairs and imagine you are either Juniper or Battletac

- Write a letter from Battletac to Juniper May or Juniper May to Battletac.
- In the letter you want to tell the other character why they are your friend
- Think about what you saw in the production.
- How you think each character would write to their friend?
- If you are comfortable to, read your letters to each other.
- OR put them in an envelope and post them to each other in class
- Share them again and discuss what the letters say about friendship.

**WHAT IS YOUR SUPERPOWER?** Personal & Social Capability, The Arts – Visual

Miss Cummings: Being different is your superpower.

Think about what makes you different to your friends and family. Look back at the story about your life – there’s some pretty great stuff in there.

- So what is your superpower?



For Juniper May...

Juniper May > is like a robot > robots are awesome >  
therefore Juniper May = AWESOME!

Juniper and her father make her into a robot at the start of the show using found objects – a cardboard box, torches, a lamp and some claw hands.

Using art supplies and found objects – turn yourself into the superhero version of you!

You might like to use this costume to act out the show about your life you planned earlier and perform it for your class.

## DEAR JOLYON JAMES...

The activities in this resource mean you have created some writing, some drama, some artwork and some superhero versions of yourself! Arena would love to see these or hear from you. So, if your teachers and parents feel it is okay – please take a photo of your work or make a PDF and email it to: [nic@nicholasclarkmanagement.com](mailto:nic@nicholasclarkmanagement.com)

## FEEDBACK

NCM and Jolyon James would love to hear from you. We're especially interested in to hear about:

- *Robot Song* – How you responded to the show
- Education Resource – How useful did you find you found this document?

And we'd love to see any examples of student work created in response to *Robot Song*.

If you would like to share with us please email [nic@nicholasclarkmanagement.com](mailto:nic@nicholasclarkmanagement.com)

## KEEP IN TOUCH

For further information or queries, contact NCM:

Website: <https://jolyonjames.com.au/robot-song-the-musical>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/meccano202/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/robotsongmusical/>

## SOME ANSWERS TO THE QUIZ

1. How do we first meet Juniper? – she appears looking like a robot
2. What does Juniper do when she gets scared or worried? – she breathes slowly and repeatedly
3. Who or what is Gomi? – her best friend the recycling bin
4. Why is there a song about poo in the show? – Juniper’s dad accidentally picked up a poo in the hallway thinking it was an avocado
5. Is Juniper good at Art? – Yes
6. Why doesn’t she want to go to school? – no friends, not very interesting, it is scary
7. Where does Juniper sit in class? – at the back so she can lean and put her head in the cupboard
8. Why doesn’t she want to do hi-fives with Miss Hope, her classroom teacher? – she doesn’t like touching and Miss Hope wears smelly hand lotion
9. What happens to make Juniper ‘melt-down’? – she receives the letter from her class
10. How do we first meet Battletac the robot? – on a screen
11. What happens at the end? – Battletac convinces Juniper the letter means something else, something positive and awesome

## ROBOT SONG: HOW IT ADDRESSES CURRICULUM

### THE ARTS- DRAMA

Exploredramaticaction,empathy and space in improvisations, playbuilding and scripted drama to develop characters and situations (ACADRM035 - Scootle )

Develop skills and techniques of voice and movement to create character, mood and atmosphere and focus dramatic action (ACADRM036 - Scootle )

Rehearse and perform devised and scripted drama that develops narrative, drives dramatic tension, and uses dramatic symbol, performance styles and design elements to share community and cultural stories and engage an audience (ACADRM037 - Scootle )

Develop and apply techniques and processes when making their artworks (ACAVAM115 - Scootle)

### THE ARTS – VISUAL ARTS

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE

#### TEXT STRUCTURE & ORGANISATION

Understand how authors often innovate on text structures and play with language features to achieve particular aesthetic, humorous and persuasive purposes and effects (ACELA1518 - Scootle )

### LITERACY

#### CREATING TEXTS

Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, choosing and experimenting with text structures, language features, images and digital resources appropriate to purpose and audience (ACELY1714 - Scootle )

#### INTERACTING WITH OTHERS

Participate in and contribute to discussions, clarifying and interrogating ideas, developing and supporting arguments, sharing and evaluating information, experiences and opinions(ACELY1709 - Scootle )

#### INTERPRETING, ANALYSING, EVALUATING

Use comprehension strategies to interpret and analyse information and ideas, comparing content from a variety of textual sources including media and digital texts (ACELY1713 - Scootle )

**LITERATURE**

## LITERATURE AND CONTEXT

Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts(ACELT1613 – Scootle )

**PERSONAL & SOCIAL CAPABILITY**

Recognise personal qualities and achievements: describe the influence that personal qualities and strengths have on their learning outcomes

Express emotions appropriately: explain the influence of emotions on behaviour, learning and relationships

Understand relationships: describe factors that contribute to positive relationships, including with people at school and in their community

Understand relationships: identify the differences between positive and negative relationships and ways of managing these

Work collaboratively: contribute to groups and teams, suggesting improvements in methods used for group investigations and projects

**CRITICAL & CREATIVE THINKING CAPABILITY**

Identify and clarify information and ideas: identify and clarify relevant information and prioritise ideas

Imagine possibilities and connect ideas: combine ideas in a variety of ways and from a range of sources to create new possibilities

Consider alternatives: identify situations where current approaches do not work, challenge existing ideas and generate alternative solutions

Links to the Victorian curriculum: <https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/level7>