

**Geordie
theatre**

Selfie

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**STUDY GUIDE
FOR TEACHERS**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
About the Study Guide	2
A Note On Content	2
Curriculum Competencies	3
Synopsis	4
Themes/Concepts	4
Meet the Characters	5
Setting.....	5
Pre-Show Discussion Questions	6
Overview of Lesson Plans and Post-Show Activities.....	7
Lesson Plans:	
I. What Is Consent?	8
II. Healthy Relationships	13
Post-Show Activities:	
Post-Show Discussion Questions	16
Quotation Station	17
Theater in Review	18
Taking Accountability	19
Resources	20

INTRODUCTION

Geordie Theatre is a Montreal-based professional theatre company that has presented live English-language productions for young audiences in Quebec and abroad since 1980. Pushing artistic boundaries with provocative and important stories, Geordie delivers more than 200 performances each season and reaches more than 40,000 young people and their communities annually.

Land Acknowledgement: We would like to begin by acknowledging that the territory on which Geordie Theatre operates is the traditional territory of the Kanien'kehà:ka Mohawk nation of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. Montreal is known in the Mohawk language as Tiotià:ke or Broken in Two because of the way the river breaks around the island. It is considered unceded territory of the Kanien'kehà:ka nation. This land has also existed as a meeting ground of many peoples including the Abenaki, St. Lawrence Iroquians and Huron-Wendat people. We extend our deepest respect to the elders of these communities and to all Indigenous peoples who carry the history of the land -caring for it and calling it home. We are privileged to share a story with you on this land.

A note on acknowledging territory: A crucial part of Geordie Theatre's visit happens at the beginning of the performance- the Land Acknowledgement. The Land Acknowledgement is researched and customized for the territory on which your school is located, and acts as a crucial bridge between Geordie Theatre and Indigenous Peoples.

ABOUT THE STUDY GUIDE

This study guide was created as a tool for teachers to help engage students more deeply with the themes and concepts developed in *Selfie*. The guide contains a synopsis, character and setting information, a list of the themes/concepts, as well as pre- and post-show discussion questions, activity ideas and lesson plans.

The activities in the unit have strong pedagogical grounding and are class-ready for easy distribution to students. Additionally, most activities can be adapted to an online-learning platform. Corresponding cross-curricular and subject-specific competencies from the Quebec Education Plan (QEP) are indicated for each lesson plan.

A NOTE ON CONTENT

Geordie Theatre is committed to the safety and respect of our audience. The themes/events, including consent and lack thereof, addressed in *Selfie* are not represented explicitly and are referred to with respect to the subject matter and to whom anyone may relate.

We understand, however, that despite our best efforts, you and your students may be affected by the material. As such, we have included, on the last page of this study guide, links to resources for you and your school should you need them and encourage you to access support while navigating these vital, but sometimes difficult, discussions.

These conversations are important. We believe in education surrounding consent and the positive impact that this story will have on students. We also prioritize the well-being of our audience and appreciate your trust in us, the impact of theatre, and this production.

Should you have any questions, concerns, or feedback regarding the resources listed, please contact schools@geordie.ca

CURRICULUM COMPETENCIES

English Language Arts

- Uses language/talks to communicate and to learn
- Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts
- Produces texts for personal and social purposes

Cross-Curricular Competencies

- Uses information
- Exercises critical judgment
- Uses creativity
- Adopts effective work methods
- Uses information and communications technologies
- Cooperates with others
- Communicates appropriately

Arts Education - Dramatic Arts Competencies

- Creates dramatic works
- Performs dramatic works
- Appreciates dramatic works

SYNOPSIS

The play starts on the first day of Grade 11 and best friends Lily and Emma have lots to catch up on as Emma has spent the summer in Vancouver. Upon finding out that their parents are away for the night, Lily and her older brother Chris decide to invite friends over for a house party.

Emma and Lily get ready and discuss Emma's romantic interest in Chris. Lily encourages Emma to take shots while the house fills up with more and more teenagers. The drinks are flowing, and Emma and Chris are slow dancing together. They kiss and move to Chris' bedroom.

After a rough morning, Emma and Lily discuss the party. Emma cannot recall much of the evening, specifically what happened with Chris in the bedroom. Over the next few days, Chris texts Emma to check in and invite her out on dates. Eventually Emma opens up to Lily about not remembering the last part of the party and her concerns about being pregnant. Lily reassures Emma and encourages her to reach out to her doctor.

Following her doctor's appointment, Emma meets with Chris. He is happy to meet her and brings flowers. Following awkward small talk, Emma admits to Chris that she spoke to her doctor about not remembering what happened the night of the party and she was sent to the hospital where the police were called. She did not give Chris' name but they will be speaking to his parents about the party.

The police interview Chris and others at the party. Rumours and gossip on social media ensues. Emma and Lily discuss what Emma should say to the police. Lily advises her to be careful and avoid getting Chris in trouble, but Emma is hesitating. Lily reminds her that she was dancing and kissing Chris, that he is not a violent psychopath and that he doesn't deserve to be punished, but Emma still feels uneasy about what happened and is not committing to protecting Chris.

Lily posts a picture of Emma and Chris kissing on Instagram and her followers react, some upset at Emma, some supporting Emma. Chris and Emma talk about the posted picture and discuss how things could have been different the night of the party. Chris confesses his love for Emma and he apologizes to her. Lily joins them and apologizes for posting the picture. They speak about the night in question and share an emotional moment.

In the closing scene, Emma is by herself, sharing with the audience her struggle and pain from which she is only now emerging.

THEMES/CONCEPTS

- Consent and sexual assault
- Peer and social pressure
- Social media
- Self-advocacy and integrity

MEET THE CHARACTERS



Emma, 16 years-old, thoughtful and intuitive, Chris' crush.



Lily, 16 years-old, Emma's best friend, big heart and big mouth.



Chris, 17 years-old, Lily's older brother, a good guy, Emma's crush.

SETTING

- Emma, Lily and Chris' highschool
- Lily and Chris' house
- Social media, specifically Instagram

PRE-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The following discussion questions may be used to initiate conversation and build background information of the main themes in *Selfie*. They might also be used as writing prompts or as an introduction to lesson plans. Please select the questions that are most appropriate to the age group you teach.

Social and peer pressure

- How did you feel at the beginning of high school? Why?
- What does it mean to fit in? How important is fitting in for children? For teenagers? For adults?
- In which ways do people sometimes act to fit in?
- Have you ever done something to fit in that you regret? Or, have you ever seen someone act differently to fit in? When might this be a bad thing?
- What are the characteristics of a healthy friendship? What about an unhealthy relationship?

Consent

- When is consent needed?
- How do you ask for consent?
- How do you refuse consent?
- How does power and privilege play into consent?

Social Media

- What role does social media play in your life?
- What role does it play in society?
- How does social media relate to gossip? Does it make it better or worse?
- How do stories evolve into different versions?
- What pictures are worth posting?
- What pictures are worth commenting on?
- Should one ask consent to post a picture of someone else?

LESSON PLAN & POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES

Please note that the topic of some of these activities may be sensitive to some students. Please ensure students are mature enough to handle the topics and proceed with sensitivity. If any of the students seems anxious or distressed, please speak to the school counsellor.

Lesson Plans:

I. What Is Consent? (Pre-show)

Through classroom discussion, a video and scenario analysis, students will understand the definition of consent, how and when to ask for it and how to recognize it, as well as practice asking for and recognizing consent. In addition, students will come to understand that sexual assault is not necessarily synonymous with violent intent.

II. Healthy Relationships (Post-show)

Students will identify the elements of healthy and unhealthy relationships through classroom discussions and analyses of excerpts from *Selfie*. They will also learn about the main tenets of effective communication and how to improve relationships while staying true to oneself.

Proposed Post-Show Activities:

Post-Show Discussion Questions

Students are presented with discussion questions to help unpack and further understand the themes presented in the play *Selfie*. The questions may initially be assigned individually or in small groups but a class-wide debrief, guided by a teacher, is advised.

Quotation Station

Students are presented with relevant excerpts to analyse and discuss individually, in small groups or as class.

Theatre in Review

Using the Theatre in Review handouts provided, students are invited to write a review of the play for their school newspaper, using the following sections: introduction, plot summary, main message, performance and design elements, and personal reaction.

Concluding Activity: Taking Accountability

After reviewing the important elements of an apology, students are invited to write and/or interpret an apology from Chris to Emma.

LESSON PLAN I

WHAT IS CONSENT?

OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

- Students will understand the definition of consent, how and when to ask for it and how to recognize it.
- Students will understand that sexual assault is not necessarily synonymous with violent intent.
- Students will practice asking for and recognizing consent.

COMPETENCIES

- English Language Arts: Uses language/talks to communicate and to learn, Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts
- Cross-Curricular Competencies: Uses information, Exercises critical judgment, Cooperates with others, Communicates appropriately

MATERIALS

- *Talking About Consent* handout

ACTIVITY

1. Ask students to share words or thoughts that come to their mind when thinking about the word "consent". Add the information on a chart or whiteboard.
2. Explain that consent is not as simple as "yes" or "no".
3. Show one or both of the following videos:
 - [What is consent? by Kids Help Phone](#)
 - [Consent Explained: What Is It?](#)
4. Help the class come up with a definition of consent that includes but is not restricted to the following elements. Have students define each and give examples.
 - Clear
 - Freely given
 - Informed
 - Changeable
 - Enthusiastic
 - Not influenced by substances
5. Have students complete the first section of their handout.

6. Explain that while consent includes many different elements, it is important to know how to recognize it, ask for it and answer in real life situations.
7. True or False Scenarios: Read these scenarios aloud to your class and ask them whether they feel each is true or false. Dispel any myths by providing them with the explanations included in the facilitator's notes. Adapted from the [Respect Myself Sexual Consent Lesson Plan](#) by the Department of Health of Nunavut.

True or False Scenarios

Scenario	Correct Response	Facilitator's Notes
A person sees their best friend in the school hallway and decides to grab her bum. This is an act of sexual violence.	True	<p>Any sexual activity without consent is sexual violence, and it is against the law. Examples of sexual violence include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unwanted kissing or touching - Following - Making sexual comments - Taking and sharing sexual pictures - Forced sex (rape) - Any sexual activity with someone underage <p>It doesn't matter if the other person is your best friend, your girlfriend/boyfriend, date, husband/wife, common-law partner or stranger – consent is important for every person.</p>
A person who is under the influence of drunks or alcohol can consent to sexual activity.	FALSE	A person who is drunk, high, asleep or unconscious cannot give consent to any type of sexual activity. A person can only give consent if they are awake and fully aware of what they are agreeing to.

Someone who feels pressured or forced to say “yes” cannot consent to sexual activity.	TRUE	<p>Only an enthusiastic “YES!” means consent. Signs of non-consent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “I liked it last time, but right now I’m not in the mood.” - “Can we do something else instead?” - “I like this, but not that.” - “I’m not sure.” Or “I don’t know” - “Not now.” - “No” or “Stop” - Drunk, unconscious or asleep - Silent, crying or pushing away <p>A person’s age and who they are having sex with (for example, a person in a position of power, trust, or authority) also has an influence on whether or not they can consent.</p>
Married couples do not need consent for sexual activities.	False	Consent is important for every person and every situation. People who are married, on a date, common-law, dating, best friends, on-and-off, or strangers still need consent for any type of sexual activity.
A person who consents to kissing and touching also consents to other types of sexual activity.	False	Consent is important for every sexual activity. A person can say yes to one sexual activity, and no to a different sexual activity. Always ask your partner and don’t make assumptions.
A person who consents to sexual activity has the right to change their mind at any time.	True	Consent doesn’t happen just one time – it is ongoing. A person who says yes at one moment can change their minds at any time, even during sexual activity. Keep asking and checking-in with your partner. They have a right to change their minds, and it is your responsibility to stop and respect their decision.

8. In groups of 3-4, have students fill out the rest of the handout and then share all the information as a larger group. A completed version is provided to help support the teacher.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES / ADDITIONAL READINGS & RESOURCES

Show and discuss the following scenarios from etr.org's [Coercion and Consent Scenarios](#).

TALKING ABOUT CONSENT

What does it mean to give consent?

What does consent sound like?

How do you ask for consent?

What can you do and say when you do NOT want to give consent?

Examples of situations that may seem like consent but are NOT consent.

TALKING ABOUT CONSENT

What does it mean to give consent?

Consent is a clear and enthusiastic "yes". It is free-given, it is informed and it is not influenced by peer pressure or any types of substances like drugs or alcohol. Consent does not just happen once, it is ongoing and can change from situation to situation and day to day.

How do you ask for consent?

Can I ...?
 Do you like it when I...?
 Do you feel comfortable when I...?
 Do you want to go further?
 Would you like to stop?
 Does this feel nice?
 Are you okay?
 Do you still feel okay?
 Are you sure you are ready for this?

What can you say when you do NOT want to give consent?

No.
 I'm not comfortable.
 I'm not in the mood.
 Not now/today.
 Maybe another time.
 I'd prefer to stop here.
 I'm not into this.
 This isn't it.
 Not my vibe, thanks.
 Can we do something different instead?

How do I take accountability when I acted without consent?

I'm listening. Tell me more.
 I didn't realize you felt that way.
 How would you have preferred I acted?
 There are no excuses for my actions.
 I'm sorry for my actions.
 You're right, what I did was wrong.
 Thank you for telling me.
 I'll be changing the way I do this in the future.
 I apologize for breaking your trust.
 What can I do to help?

Examples of situations that may seem like consent but are NOT consent.

Encouraging and teasing someone until they try drinking or smoking.
 Assuming someone will have sex with you because they have in the past.
 An underage person agreeing to having sex with someone above the age of consent.

LESSON PLAN II

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

This lesson plan is adapted from the [Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships](#) lesson plan by the Canadian Center for Child Protection.

- Students will learn to understand the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Students will learn how to effectively communicate within a relationship
- Students will learn how to take accountability and apologize within a relationship

COMPETENCIES

- English Language Arts Competencies: Uses language/talks to communicate and to learn, Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts, Produces texts for personal and social purposes.
- Cross-Curricular Competencies: Uses information, Exercises critical judgment, Uses creativity, Communicates appropriately.
- Arts Education - Dramatic Arts Competencies: Creates dramatic works, Performs dramatic works.

ACTIVITY

1. Ask students about their understanding and definition of relationships. Make sure it includes friendships, romantic relationships, and relations with family members, younger and older children, and with other adults, such as teachers and coaches.
2. Explain to students that today they will be outlining the characteristics of mutually respectful and healthy relationships, and the characteristics of less desirable unhealthy relationships.
3. On the whiteboard, design a t-chart titled "Relationships" with two columns, "What I Would Want" and "What I Would Not Want", and ask the students to describe things people do in healthy relationships and unhealthy relationships. Use the provided chart to guide students and complete their answers.
4. Show the students the following excerpt and consider the questions. Does Lily apply pressure on Emma? If yes, how?

LILY: You're a freakin BABE now take a shot with me

EMMA: I think I'm good for now-

LILY: Are we doing this, or are we doing this?

Emma considers for a moment, and then they take the shot.

5. Show the students the following excerpt and consider the questions. What do you think about Lily and Emma's friendship? Does this make Lily a bad friend? What is her intention? How is Emma feeling?

LILY: Well, I happen to know for a fact that that's not true. But anyway, like – when I saw those pics of you in Vancouver, I was like yes. That's my girl. That's my amazing, talented, smart, beautiful friend. I've known you were amazing all along, and now I feel like you're starting to figure it out too. Now it's time to let everyone see what I see. You've had your like, glasses off, hair out-of-the-bun moment, now you just gotta make your entrance where everyone's like "woooAAAHHH, who's that?!"

EMMA: Thank you Lily.

LILY: You're welcome. Now I demand you shut up and take a shot immediately.

6. Explain that oftentimes relationships and friendships are not purely "healthy" or purely "unhealthy" (point to both sides of the chart) and sometimes mostly healthy relationships have some characteristics of unhealthy relationships. Tell them that this is when boundaries and effective communication come into play.
7. Review with the following five step to effective communication inspired from [Herahub](#).

Step 1: Observation

Take the time to observe what we hear or see or what is happening without blaming, judging or evaluating to understand the behaviour and the intention behind it.

Step 2: Feelings

Be aware of your feelings and express them clearly.

Step 3: Needs

It is difficult for others to fulfill our needs if they do not know what they are. Figure out what your need is and share it.

Step 4: Request

Once you have shared your need, explain what behaviour you need to see more or less of and share it. Using positive language works best.

Step 5: Putting it all together

When I hear/see _____ (observations), I feel _____ (feelings) because I am needing _____ (needs). Would you be willing to _____ (request).

8. To practice using these communication skills, share this excerpt again and ask students what Emma could have said to Lily instead of agreeing to the shot. Ask

students to think under what circumstances using this type of communication could be helpful.

9. Concluding activity: In teams of 2-4 students, students will rewrite a scene from the play *Selfie* or another show/movie, or write a short scene of their creation. Their scene must depict a form of peer pressure and use of the effective communication skills taught throughout this lesson to reach resolution.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES / ADDITIONAL READINGS & RESOURCES

[The Peer Pressure "Bag of Tricks" Role Playing Lesson for Middle School Students](#) by The Cool Spot

POST-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The following discussion questions may be used to initiate the conversation necessary to process the themes of *Selfie*. They might also be used as writing prompts. Please select the questions that are most appropriate to the age group you teach.

1. What happened the night of the party? What do you think about each character's behaviour and choices? How could they have behaved differently to avoid the situation?
2. How did what happened impact the relationship between Chris and Lily?
3. How did Emma and Lily's friendship evolve throughout the play?
4. What happens now? How is each character affected by what happened? Will things ever go "back to normal"? Can trust be reestablished once it is broken?
5. How did social media, in this case Instagram, influence what happened? What do you think about Lily posting the picture of Chris and Emma? Should she have asked for consent to post it? How did it change the story of what happened?
6. Has your understanding about consent changed? If yes, how so? What does this story teach us about consent?

QUOTATION STATION

EMMA: I don't know why he always has to put on a show.

LILY: I don't know why she suddenly changed.

CHRIS: I don't know why it feels like she can't always be herself.

LILY: The thing is, in the end it doesn't matter who you really are. What matters is what everyone else gets to see.

CHRIS: Right?

EMMA: Right?

1. Here Emma is talking about Chris, Lily is talking about Emma, and Chris is talking about Lily. Why do people feel the need to act differently in front of others? How does social media affect a teenager's image of themselves and others? What does Lily mean when she says that it doesn't matter who you really are, what matters is what others see? Do you agree or disagree?

LILY: Like – okay, I just – I'm really nervous, okay? Like I don't want anything to change between us because you like went to Vancouver and found yourself and shit, and I just wanted to throw you this bigass amazing party so you don't forget bout me –

2. Lily feels that Emma changed during her trip to Vancouver in the summer and that is worried that, as a result, her friendship with Emma will be different, that she has become "too cool" for her. What are some reasons that friendships change or fall apart? Has this ever happened to you, or have you witnessed it? What are the elements of a healthy friendship?

LILY: Yeah, the like, 'school' version of Chris. But actual Chris and actual Emma... well, you actually know him.

EMMA: At school he's like a different person.

LILY: Yeah I know. I mean like, those girls he dates? He never sticks with them because he can't keep up that act. They think he's this super bro, but /he's not.

3. Why does Chris act like a "super bro" at school? Why does he date girls that do not know him well? How do you think that makes him feel?

CHRIS: And like, I guess the thing is that I was scared to ever say anything to you about how I feel cause like, I don't want to fuck it up. You're special, and like – I'm not. I'm so not. No one knows that but I think you do so I guess I just didn't think you'd ever like me, because you know the truth. Does that make any sense?

Despite being popular, Chris doesn't think he is special. Is this a common situation? How do some people hide their insecurities? What portion of teenagers do you think are insecure? Why?

THEATER IN REVIEW

Write an article review of the play *Selfie*, using the guidelines below.

Title: Use a catchy title.

Introduction: State the name of the play and where you viewed it.

Plot summary: Who were the characters? What was the story about? Don't ruin the ending!

Main message: What is the main message of the play? What might someone learn as a result of viewing the play?

Design Elements & Performances: Discuss the set design, prop design, costume design, sound design, and how the play was performed.

Personal reaction: How did this play impact you? Did this play make you think? Did it change your perspective? What were the aspects of this production that you enjoyed the most and the least? Would you recommend it to others?

TAKING ACCOUNTABILITY

In this excerpt, it is clear that Chris is struggling to apologize to Emma. Review the important elements of a true apology and have students write (and possibly interpret) an apology scene between Chris and Emma.

<u>What to include</u> (after listening to victim)	<u>What not to include</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Explanation of what went wrong and acknowledgement of responsibility- Sincere apology- Expression of regret and offer to repair	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Justification of what happened "I was drunk"- Apologizing for their feelings "I'm sorry you feel hurt"

CHRIS I love you.

EMMA (pause) What?

CHRIS I've been in love with you for like a year. I told you at the party.

EMMA Oh.

CHRIS You really don't remember anything?

EMMA I don't.

CHRIS Okay. I mean I know you told me that before, but I didn't know it was so...

EMMA Yeah. Pretty scary.

CHRIS I'm sorry.

EMMA Why are you sorry

CHRIS Because... because all this stuff.

EMMA What stuff?

CHRIS I don't know

EMMA What stuff? What stuff are you talking about?

CHRIS Like the picture, and-

EMMA No. No. You know what I'm talking about. You know what I'm talking about. You told me you loved me, okay, but that's not it. That's not it.

CHRIS I'm sorry

EMMA Don't tell me you're sorry. Don't say that you're sorry when you don't even know what you're saying sorry for

CHRIS For everything

EMMA For what? For what? Why can't you say it?

CHRIS I don't know

EMMA You do!

CHRIS I fucked up! I did fuck up. Like I always do. I messed up our first time together. If I knew you wouldn't remember I would never have done it. I'm sorry, I'm so, so sorry

RESOURCES

Healthy relationships and consent:

[Healthy Relationships - Love Is Respect](#)

[Learn About Consent - Teen Talk](#)

[Healthy Relationships - The Hotline](#)

[Healthy Relationships Versus Unhealthy Relationships](#)

Sexual assault help and law:

[Evaluate the relationship - Quebec.ca](#)

[Criminal Code Canada](#)

[Government of Canada](#)

[Sexual Assault: Reporting, Getting Help, Remedies](#) by Éducaloi