



My name: Tom

My life story, in a nutshell: I grew up in Manchester, and from a young age showed a flare for creativity and art. As a child I was very sociable, as well as very content playing on my own, and I daydreamed and doodled my way through most of school! As a teenager, I found a way to channel all this imagination through acting, and that led me all the way to training as a professional actor at one of the world's leading drama schools. Now, as a sometime actor, writer and artist I've never forgotten the profound impact the arts can have on a child, and believe it to be extremely important in everyone's development.

My childcare experience: Before leaving Manchester to study acting, I worked for three years as a tutor for a drama group aimed at 5-8 year olds, and it was here that I found I had an easy rapport with children, and a talent for inspiring imagination and creativity. I also feel that I personally gain a huge amount personally from working with children, as they remind me to let my playful side run wild, and it's this quality that means we often get on well!

My skills: As well as being a professional actor, I run a theatre company that has had success in the London fringe scene. I am a highly skilled guitarist, pianist and singer, and an avid sketcher and painter. I am also very sporty and athletic; as a teenager I had professional trials in cricket, played regular Sunday football and regularly won 1500 metre races for my school.

Why I love working with kids: When working as a drama tutor, I remember many examples where kids would join who were painfully shy and reserved. I always recognised something of myself in those kids, and prided myself on being able to bring them out of their shell by building their confidence. I think kids are at an age where anything is possible, and so by building their confidence in any skill or talent, who knows where it will take them!

Activities I'd love to do with kids after school:

I'd love to do painting with the kids in a collaborative way, so that together we create something we can both be equally as proud of!

I know tons of games from teaching drama that awaken a child's imagination in a focused and specific way e.g. My version of grandma's footsteps that will create an Oscar winning actor of any child!

I also think meditation is an extremely important skill for children to develop from a young age, and can have profound effects on their mental wellbeing. I have devised small games to play that are rooted in meditation, so that it doesn't just become a boring sit down activity in the child's eyes.