

# **The Age of Discovery**

**A Play for Teenagers**

## Notes to Teachers

The play consists of two styles of performance. Naturalism and Physical Theatre.

### Contemporary Scenes - Naturalism

The contemporary scenes set in the classroom are to be rehearsed and performed as natural drama. The emotional content of the lines and performance style should be as close to real life as possible.

### Historical Scenes - Physical Theatre

The historical scenes set on the ship will be choreographed set movements, performed by the whole cast with a few performers delivering the lines over the top of the action. Students are only required to *learn their lines* for these sections of the play as the physical work will be created during the production week.

### Casting

On the next page you will find the full character list for the play. Each country has been assigned characters in the play.

I would be very grateful if teachers from each country could choose which of your students will play each part assigned to you. The students will need to become familiar with the whole play and learn their lines before the production week. All characters can be played by male or female students, except for the Mother and Father roles.

# Characters

**Magalhães (Magellan)**– Portuguese Student  
(Has a reputation as a trouble maker. Interested in space discovery)

**Gama** – Portuguese Student  
(Wants to be an Actor, the comedian of the class)

**Dias** – Portuguese Student  
(Always tired and irritable, a caring person when allowed to be. Wants to be a footballer)

**Cabral**– Portuguese Student  
(A tough kid who is not afraid of confrontation with other kids his/her own age. Doesn't know what s/he wants to be.)

**Sailor 1** – German Student  
**Sailor 2** - French Student  
**Sailor 3** - Lithuanian Student  
**Sailor 4** - English Student  
**Sailor 5** - German Student  
**Sailor 6** - French Student  
**Sailor 7** - Lithuanian Student  
**Sailor 8** - English Student  
**Sailor 9** - German Student

**Captain of the Ship** – French Student

**Magalhães on ship** – Portuguese Student

**Gama's Father** – Lithuanian Student

**Gama's Mother** – English Student

**Dias' Mother** – German Student

Cabral's father- Lithuanian student

**Social Worker from the Hospital** – French Student

**Miss Reid** – English Student

## Scene 1 – On the ship

*All students perform a physical sequence based on a 15<sup>th</sup> Century ship in a storm.*

*The following lines will be heard above the backing track.*

**Sailor 1:** What happened?

**Sailor 2:** We hit land.

**Sailor 3:** What?

**Sailor 1:** We're in an island chain. It's only a matter of time before we hit another one.

*The scene ends with the chorus fading away leaving our four main characters on stage.*

## Scene 2 - Classroom

*Magalhães, Gama and Real are sitting on chairs, bored and in silence waiting for the teacher to arrive.*

*Gama enters.*

**Gama:** Morning losers!

*The others look up but make no sound. Gama goes over to each of the characters.*

**Gama:** *(Sarcastically over acting)* Afternoon Cabral and how are you today?

*(no response)*

Oh, I'm very well, thank you for asking.

*(no response)*

What was that Dias I didn't quite hear you.

*(no response)* Oh yes I've had a positively super morning so far. I bounced out of bed to find the birds singing, the little school had finished off my English assignment in the night and I have just been enlightened in Mr Smith's Maths class, not! Greetings, a glorious day, Magalhães, wouldn't you agree?

**Magalhães:** Give it a rest Gama. You're already doing my head in and you've only been here 30 seconds.

**Gama:** Well aren't you lot an inspiration. Your enthusiasm for life is astounding. Where is everybody anyway?

**Magalhães:** It's just us.

**Gama:** What do you mean it's just us?

**Magalhães:** I mean it's just us.

**Dias:** We've been here for ten minutes and no-one else has shown up.

**Gama:** No teacher?

**Cabral:** No teacher, no-one else, just us.

**Gama:** Oh you are having a laugh! I could gone home. But no, I made the effort to get here, on time.....

**Magalhães:** .....You were ten minutes late.

**Dias:** Which for Gama is on time.

**Gama:** Thank you Dias. I was on time and ready to grace this poor excuse for a personal development class with my presence.

**Magalhães:** I don't believe this. They've put us lot together on purpose. Look at us. Sleepy over there, Mr Angry grinding his teeth, the Village Clown learning his lines.....

**Cabral:** And you, Mr "I'm too cool for school so I'll be a pain in the backside all the time". What did they think they were gonna do? Sort our lives out in 5 minutes before we leave school? Stuff this, man. I'm off!

**Magalhães:** Where to? Where have you got to go?

**Cabral:** Anywhere but here, having to listen to Hugh Grant bang on!

**Magalhães:** Sit down! (**Magalhães stands up**) You ain't going nowhere. This is typical of this school, it's a joke. This is our personal development class and now that I have actually made the effort to be in school no one else turns up, including the teacher.

**Gama:** (**As a teacher**) And what exactly would you like to develop Magalhães?

**Magalhães:** I'm being serious!

**Cabral:** Go on then, what do you want to develop?

**Magalhães:** Me! I want to develop me! I want to have some idea of what I'm gonna do next. I mean look at us. Some big hope we turned out to be. We're leaving school in five months and does any of us have a single clue of what we'll do when we get out? (**There's a silence.**) Well?

**Gama is impatient to leave and gets up to look out of the window for the teacher.**

**Gama:** Where's Mrs Reid?

**Magalhães:** Who cares? We don't need some 'lightweight, do-gooder', telling us what to do. This is our life! Come on Gama let's start with you. (**Sarcastically**) What do you want to do when you grow up?

**Gama:** Act.

**Everyone:** What?

**Gama:** Act.

**Magalhães:** What do you mean act? Like Brad Pitt or something?

**Gama:** Yeah like Brad Pitt or something!

***They all start to laugh.***

**Gama:** No one said that to James Franco.

**Dias:** Who?

**Gama:** James Franco. You know, the Green Goblin in Spiderman? Never Been Kissed?

**Cabral:** Yeah we know you haven't.

**Gama:** No idiot, that's another film he starred in. His grandfather was born in Portugal. Do you guys live in caves or something?

**Magalhães:** So that's your big dream then is it? Gama the film star?

**Gama:** Yeah. Although I want to do it properly. I want to go to a Drama School in England and learn how to do Shakespeare and act on TV and film. I want to be the next Leonardo DiCaprio.

**Cabral:** Leonardo DiCaprio? Shakespeare? I doubt you can even spell it.

**Gama:** "It is not in the stars to hold our destiny but in ourselves".

**Cabral:** Says who?

**Gama:** Shakespeare you Moron! Although that's easier said than done.

**Magalhães:** What do you mean, it's easier said than done?

**Gama:** Oh, nothing, forget about it.

**Magellan:** Come on, don't stop the performance now.

**Gama:** Shut up.

**Dias:** Life doesn't always let us do what we want to do.

**Magellan:** Why doesn't it?

### **Scene 3 – On the ship**

#### ***Physical Transition***

**CAPTAIN:** Officer in charge!

**SAILOR 1:** Here, Captain.

**CAPTAIN:** Good! Speak to the sailors: go to it quickly, or we run ourselves aground: look lively, look lively.

**SAILOR 1:** Let's go, men! Look lively, look lively, my good men!  
Quick, quick! Take in the top sail. Listen to the Captain's whistle. **(To the storm)** Blow your wind until you burst.

We're not afraid to die tonight!

#### **Scene 4 – Gama's House.**

**Gama's parents are having an emotional argument while Gama sits quietly trying to do his homework.**

**Mother:** But how long do we have?

**Father:** I don't know! I don't know any more. They sacked three lads from the workshop today. The supervisor just gave them a letter, said "we're sorry" and they left. The management are having a meeting tomorrow to see how many of us they can keep on.

**Mother:** But they can't just sack you. You have a contract

**Father:** They can and they will.

**Mother:** Well what are you going to do? We have bills to pay. What about the kids? What are we going to do? I'll have to find a job. You'll have to find a job somewhere else.

**Father:** Where? There are no jobs around here for factory workers. It's all computers and websites these days. I can't believe it. Twenty five years loyalty to that company and this is how you get treated. **(To Gama)**. The sooner you leave school the better. You're going to need you to contribute to the family, start paying your own way. Get some money coming in!

**Mother:** We can't expect him to be the provider.

**Father:** He needs to sort himself out. When I was his age, I'd left school and was in full time work.

#### **Scene 5 – Back on the ship**

##### **Physical Transition**

**Magalhães:** Officer in charge, look after them. Where's the Captain?  
Keep the men moving.

**SAILOR 1:** Please, keep below.

**Magalhães:** Where is the Captain?

**SAILOR 3:** Don't you hear him? You're keeping us from doing our jobs, stay inside your cabin, you're helping the storm!

#### **Scene 6 – Back in the classroom**

***We see Gama sitting down. The others are in the same positions as before.***

**Magalhães:** Tough call man. I mean, what do you do? Become an actor or stay at home and help your family?

**Dias:** Ah come on, your dad hasn't even lost his job yet. You've still got the chance to do what you want to do. At least they *can* work. At least your dream is not completely dead.

**Gama:** What do you mean?

**Dias:** Well, they can look after themselves. It's not like they are disabled or anything.

**Cabral: (Sarcastically)** What you mean like your family?  
**(He laughs at his cruel joke)**

**Dias:** Well not my family exactly because I don't have one but like my mum, yeah. She's disabled.

**Magalhães:** Eh?

**Dias:** She's disabled, in a wheel chair. She was in a car accident six months ago . Damaged her spine and lost the use of the right side of her body.

**Cabral:** No way man. I'm sorry I didn't know.

**Dias:** I know you didn't. No one knows.

**Magalhães:** Who looks after her?

**Dias:** I do.

**Gama:** What about your dad?

**Dias:** Never met him. He left when I was born. My mum brought me up on her own. Now it's my turn to look after her.

**Cabral:** But what about your footy? You're the best footballer in Guiense. You should be taking over from Ronaldo.

**Dias:** Dunno. This woman from the hospital came to the house the other day to.....

### **Scene 7 – Back on the ship**

#### **Physical Transition**

**Magalhães:** No, man, be patient.

**SAILOR 1:** I'll be patient when the sea is patient. Get going! What do these storms care about the name of the Captain? Go to your cabin!

**Magalhães:** Hey, even now, remember which Captain you have aboard.

**SAILOR 3:** No one that I love more than myself.  
Look lively, man!—Out of our way!

### **Scene 8 –Dias' House**

**Dias' Mother and a Social Worker are in conversation as Dias enters with his football kit. He sees the social worker and sits down to hear the conversation.**

**Social Worker:** So I guess you guys will have to make a decision quite soon.

**Dias:** Decision about what?

**Dias' Mother:** We have been talking about my care arrangements once you go to football academy in Lisbon.

**Dias:** What are you talking about? No one is looking after you but me. We're not having some stranger in the house taking care of you while I'm miles away in Lisbon. Anyway, we don't have the money. It would cost a fortune for me to go to Lisbon and then we'd have to find money for a carer. There's no way we can do that.

**Dias' Mother:** Well we have been talking about what support I can get and about asking the bank for help.

**Dias:** The bank won't help. Look at us, we barely pay the rent each month.

**Dias' Mother:** Well we've got to try something!

**Social Worker:** Your mum tells me that you're a very talented footballer and I know she would be devastated if you didn't follow your dream. We are aware of your financial situation and we are working hard to try and find a solution.

**Dias:** Well I won't hold my breath and don't patronise me! Look where your *solutions* have got us so far! *I'll* get my exams done and then *I'll* get a job and *I* will look after you mum. I'm going out.

**S/he goes to exit.**

**Dias' Mother:** What about your dinner?

**Dias:** I'm not hungry. I'll be back in a bit to do yours.

**Dias leaves the scene and sits down in their classroom chair and the scene switches back to the classroom.**

### **Scene 9 – Back in the classroom**

**Magalhães:** So what will you do?

**Dias:** If I knew that I wouldn't be in here with you.

**Gama:** But you can't just give up. Your mum won't let you.

**Dias:** Don't see that we've got a choice.

**Cabral:** There has to be some help out there for you. You might not find all the answers on your doorstep but you have to at least try and find a solution.

**Dias:** Yeah whatever, what do you care if I become a footballer. What does anyone care? Just because your brother made it, it doesn't mean everyone will.

**Cabral:** Yeah I know.

**Magalhães:** So what about you Cabral? What's your story?

**Cabral:** I haven't got one.

**Gama:** You haven't got on? What does that mean? You don't have any dreams or ambitions?

**Cabral:** No, not really.

**All:** Why not?

## **Physical Transition**

### **Scene 10 – Back on the ship**

**SAILOR 3:** I get great comfort from this fellow. I don't think he has been marked for drowning: his complexion is perfect for being hanged.

**SAILOR 5:** Down with the top mast! Quick! Lower, lower! Bring her to almost a standstill, with her head as near the wind as possible with the main sail. [A cry inside] Damn their screaming! They are louder than the storm. Again! What are you doing here? Shall we give up and drown? Do you intend to sink us?

## **Physical Transition.**

### **Scene 11 – Cabral is at a basketball game with his Dad**

*In the background the company mime a slow motion game of Basketball, while Cabral and their Dad sit in front of the action watching the game.*

**Cabral's Dad:** Oh come on, that was a foul. Referee! That's it, That's better. That's great play son. Keep the pressure on. That's my boy out there!

**Cabral:** Pass the ball! Use your team!

**Cabral's Dad:** **(To Cabral)** Shut up you idiot. What do you know? When was the last time you picked up a ball? When was the last time you did *anything* impressive? Look at your brother out there. Now *he's* impressive, he always has been. By the time he was your age, he'd won more trophies than you've had hot dinners. Why can't you be like him? You're too like your mother you are. No back bone! Pass me that coke.

**Cabral is clearly upset and spills the drink over his dad as he passes it too him.**

**Cabral's Dad:** What is wrong with you? Every time you do something you mess it up! You're an idiot and you always will be. You're a waste of space! Go and get me a cloth. Go on then, move!

**Cabral exits.' Cabral s Dad suddenly jumps up and shouts at the game.**

**Cabral's Dad:** Come on son, make me proud!

### **Scene 12 – Back on the ship**

## **Physical Transition.**

**SAILOR 6:** Damn your voice, you loud, cursing, selfish dog!

**SAILOR 1:** Then go to work.

**SAILOR 7:** Keep her close to the wind, close to the wind! Make the

two sails tight: out to sea again: steer her away from the shore.

**EVERYONE:** We're all lost! Say your prayers; say your prayers! We're all lost!

**SAILOR 8:** Will our voices be ignored?

### **Scene 13 – Back in the classroom**

**Magalhães:** Oh my God! You are such a wimp! I wouldn't let anyone talk to me like that. What's wrong with you? Why don't you stand up to him?

**Cabral:** And say what? He's right. I've done nothing with my life compared to my brother.

**Dias:** You've done nothing yet. But you're only 17. You've only just begun. Who knows what you will do with your life?

You could be anything you want. But it's obvious that you won't decide with your Dad and him **(Pointing at Magalhães)** shouting at you. So what, your brother made it big as a basketball player? It doesn't mean that you're not going to do anything with your life. And you can shut up Magalhães. How far has your big mouth got you lately? You strut around these corridors like you own the place. Like you're so cool and too intelligent to be taught anything. But you're not intelligent enough to know what *you* want to do are you?

**Magalhães:** Yeah I am! I know exactly what I want to do. I want to study the stars. Find new planets. Solve the problems of space travel. Understand the mysteries of the universe. I want to explore and discover the next frontier.

**Dias:** So what's stopping you? There's no one holding you back. No reason for you not to do what you want. So why are you always getting in trouble?

**Gama:** Why are you late for lessons?

**Cabral:** Why don't you try when you could easily do the work the rest of us find difficult?

**Dias:** Why?

**Magalhães:** I don't know. I don't like being told what to do.

**Cabral:** Are you being serious. The only reason you are in this class of misfits is because you don't like being told what to do?

**Dias:** Grow up Magalhães. You're an idiot if you can't see that the only person holding you back is you! Honestly, how are you going to work at NASA if you don't like being told what to do?

**There is a long pause when everyone stares at Magalhães.**

**Suddenly Miss Reid enters the classroom.**

**Miss Reid:** Hello everyone, sorry I'm so late. What have you been doing all this time?

**Magalhães:** **(Aggressively)** Waiting for you, where have you been?

**Dias: (Correcting Magalhães) Miss?**

**Magalhães sits down realising his aggressive attitude is rude.**

**Miss Reid:** I'm so sorry. My car broke down. I got here as soon as I could. So let's get started. OK, we were going to discuss the next stage of your lives and what you are going to do after you have left school.

**The school bells rings signifying the end of the session.**

**Miss Reid:** Oh no. I'm so sorry everyone. Shall we arrange another time to.....

**Magalhães:** Don't worry Miss. We all know what we've got to do.

**Each student gets up from their chair and goes to leave.**

**Miss Reid:** And what's that?

**The students stop and turn to Miss Reid.**

**Dias, Cabral ,Magalhães: (Together) Gama?**

**Gama:** "It is not in the stars to hold our destiny but in ourselves"

**Full cast physical sequence.**

**We see a black and white film of the rehearsal process and students socialising projected on stage.**

**Curtain Call**

**END**