EDUCATION RESOURCES FROM CROSSROADS PANTOMIMES



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PANTOMIMES

To find your nearest Crossroads Pantomime visit www.pantomime.com

Welcome

TO PANTO LEARNING!

Pantomime is a magical experience for all of those who get the chance to experience it. From the cheering and jeering of audience participation, to the beautiful sets and dazzling costumes. The long-standing festive tradition is the perfect way to get lost in a magical adventure and this education pack is the perfect way to bring a sprinkle of that panto magic to your learners.

This education pack features a variety of activities that lend themselves to independent creative tasks that can be done from the comfort of a school desk, to activities that will get the whole class up on their feet and moving.



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Content written by Chase Demmers

Panto TIMELINE

Pantomime, often referred to as 'panto', is a form of musical comedy and theatrical entertainment that is primarily performed during the Christmas seasons in the UK and other English-speaking countries. It is a unique genre characterised by its combination of slapstick comedy, music, dance, audience participation along with a well-known storyline. The history of pantomime dates back several centuries and has evolved significantly over time.

16th Century



Pantomime is born in Italian street theatre and included stories featuring an old man, Pantalone, the comedy from Pierrot, and Columbine – the girl who fell in love with the servant, Arlecchino.



17th Century

Commedia spreads across Europe and starts to become popular in England.



Theatre impressionist John Rich first introduces comedy in plays via comedic actors.

1778



The first recorded performance of *Aladdin* was at Theatre Royal Drury Lane, Covent Garden.



The first pantomime of *Jack and the Beanstalk* at Theatre Royal Drury Lane, Covent Garden.

1819

Due to a change in the law, theatres were able to put on plays using the spoken word. There was a flurry of pantomime productions and they were adapted to be more fairy tale like.

1814



The first recorded pantomime version of *Dick Whittington*.

1806

The first pantomime version of *Sleeping Beauty* was at Theatre Royal Drury Lane, Covent Garden and was called *Sleeping Beauty – A Grand Legendary Melodrama*.

1801

Many of the gags seen in panto today, were created by Joseph Grimaldi in his role as the Clown.

1843

Amateur theatre was created with many pantomime productions produced by local groups.

Mid 1800s



Victorian star, Dan Leno, plays the first Dame in pantomime.

1886



The character, *Mother Goose*, was created.

1902

Dick Whittington and his Cat was the first ever panto at The London Palladium.

1914

After the release of the film in 1938, the pantomime version of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* was created.

1938

With a glittering array of star names headlining spectacular, lavish productions, Crossroads Pantomimes is the world's biggest pantomime producer – producing 24 pantos each year including The London Palladium.

2024



Pantomime returned to The London Palladium for the first time in 30 years, with a record-breaking production of *Cinderella*.

2016

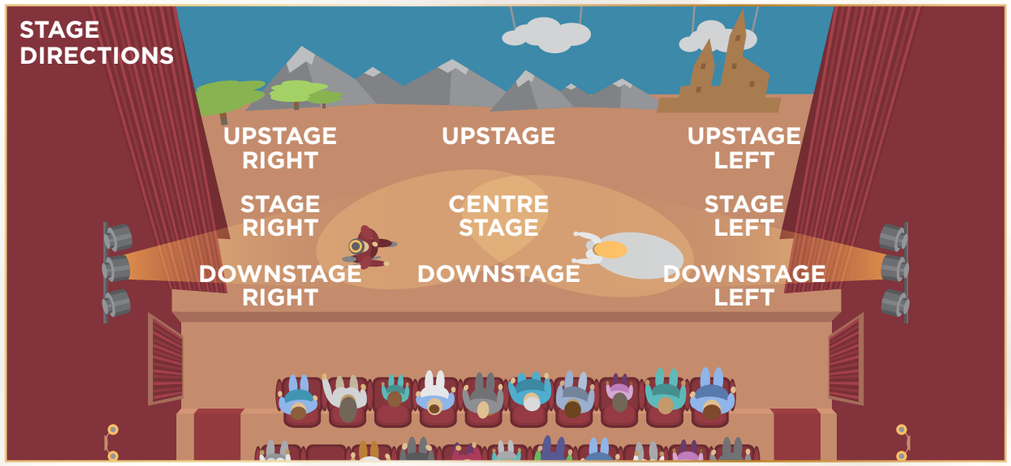
During the 1970s there was a strong revival of traditional pantomime stories like *Cinderella*, *Aladdin* and *Jack and the Beanstalk*, adapted to include contemporary humour and topical references.

1970s

The first ever Principal Boy to be played by a non-female was in *Aladdin* at The London Palladium with Norman Wisdom taking on the role.

1956

Welcome TO THE THEATRE



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- DIRECTIONS
- INDEPENDENT THINKING
- LISTENING
- BEING ALERT
- DICTION & VOICE PROJECTION

ACTIVITY

In a clear space such as your school hall or playground, clearly communicate to your learners the different areas of the stage and ask them to travel to the different areas, when you call them out.

STEP 1

Start with marking out the 5 most simple areas of the stage

- **STAGE RIGHT**
- **STAGE LEFT**
- **UPSTAGE**
- **DOWNSTAGE**
- **CENTRE STAGE**

Call each area out and when you do your learners will need to move to the correct area. You can do this until you feel your group/class have retained the areas.

STEP 2

In addition to the first five areas now add in a further 4

- **UPSTAGE RIGHT**
- **UPSTAGE LEFT**
- **DOWNSTAGE RIGHT**
- **DOWNSTAGE LEFT**

STEP 3

Add in a gesture, movement or phrase that your learners need to do or say when they arrive in each area. For example when arriving at centre stage, your learners could hold their hands up in a v shape as if they are embracing a spotlight shining on them.

STEP 4

Now that your learners are feeling confident with the areas of the stage, ask for volunteers from your group of learners who would like to have a go at calling out the areas of the stage.

TEACHING TIP

Teacher in role... to make the activity more fun and engaging, why not step into character as an eccentric theatre director who is directing the performers around the stage. You could enhance this even more by wearing a beret or a shawl that you keep tossing over your shoulder. Then when you get to Step 4 your learners can have a go at doing this too.

SETTING THE Scene

The opening scene for a pantomime usually consists of the audience being transported to a village, town, or market square where they are presented with an upbeat, colourful and vibrant set along with an uptempo opening number that will include singing, dancing, movement and mime.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- TEAMWORK
- USING IMAGINATION
- CHARACTERISATION
- LISTENING
- MOVEMENT & MIME
- DICTION & VOICE PROJECTION
- PEER REVIEWING
- DEVISING
- CREATIVE RESPONSE TO STIMULI

TEACHING TIP

To help create an atmosphere for Step 4, you could use these great sound effects. You can then play these while the learners are performing to enhance the effect of setting the scene. It would be good to also let the learners listen to this as part of Step 3 as this will allow them to get used to the sound but also may inform their devising.

ACTIVITY

Using the instructions below create your own bustling village scene for the opening of a pantomime.

STEP 1

Ask your learners to sit in groups and come up with a list of the different types of people and scenarios you would find in an idyllic fairytale village. You may want to get the groups to use a pen and paper to make a list.

STEP 2

Once your learners have completed their lists, it's now time for them to think of a movement or mime that represents each character from their list. For example: a baker might mime kneading bread or a villager may mime putting items in their shopping basket.

STEP 3

Split your class into two groups (group A and group B) and within these groups ask them to get into pairs or threes. Give each pair (or three) one of the characters from the list below and they will need to devise a small repetitive sequence of mime/movement that lasts about 10 seconds that they can repeat over and over again.

STEP 4

Ask group A to sit and make an audience. Then, referring back to the Stage Direction activity, assign each pair (or three) from group B a different part of the stage. This is where they will perform the sequence they devised in Step 3. While group A performs, ask group B to watch group A and try to guess what characters they are portraying. Then switch groups So Group B can perform and Group A can be the audience and guess.

STIMULUS

If your learners need a bit of support to get started, please see some stimuli below.


Example of village scene

Characters we may find in a village

- Butchers/Bakers
- Candlestick Makers
- Hairdresser/Wigger
- Market Sellers
- Police/Guards
- Villagers Shopping
- Florist
- Teacher
- School Children
- Farmer

Sorcery SCHOOL

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- ★ CREATIVITY
- ★ READING
- ★ RESEARCH
- ★ CREATIVE WRITING
- ★ IMAGINATION

Pantomime is full of magical beings from Fairies and Fairy Godmothers to Genies and evil Sorcerers. All of them had to learn to master their magic skills by learning spells and recipes for potions.

In this activity, your learners will be creating some spells and potions of their own.

ACTIVITY

STEP 1

All learners will need a piece of paper, notebook or access to a device to make some notes. They will then need to think of what they would like to create a spell for. For example; run really fast, disappear, fly.

STEP 2

Use a thesaurus to make a list of synonyms or words that are related to what they are aiming to achieve with their spell. For example, if they want to create flying spells they may make a list of words such as; light, high, wings, air.

STEP 3

To create a spell, write a sentence for each word.

STEP 4

After drafting your spell, write or type it up neatly. If typing you may want to use a magical looking font.

STEP 5

To make the spell look authentic, you could soak the page with a brewed tea bag. Once the paper has dried, cut randomly around the edge of the paper to make it look jagged. Then go around the jagged edges with a black marker or felt tip, to make them look burnt.

TEACHING TIP 1

Add a level of challenge - when your learners are writing the spell, challenge them to make the spell rhyme.

TEACHING TIP 2

A nice thing to do is to get an old ring binding folder and decorate it like a spell book then put all the spells inside the folder and your class will have their very own spell book.



POTION RECIPE

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Creative thinking
Creative writing
Confidence
Speaking & Listening
Presentation
Imagination

This activity can be done individually, in small groups or as a whole class. The aim is to create a recipe for a potion. The purpose of your potion could be a remedy/cure, have a silly effect like making someone turn into a sausage or even make somebody disappear. The possibilities are endless.

STEP ONE

Your learners should think about what they would like the purpose or the outcome of the potion to be. Once they have decided this should be written down or typed at the top of the page. Encourage your learners to elaborate for example, instead of simply putting "to be able to fly" they could put "to grow four wings - two of which will resemble wings of an eagle and the other two will resemble those of a dragon".

STEP TWO

Your learners should list at least ten items that they would use as ingredients for their potion.

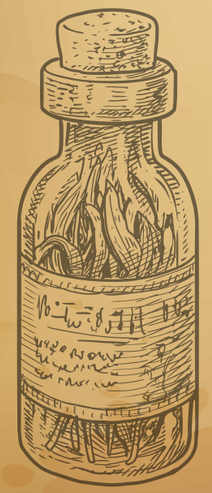
STEP THREE

Using full sentences, learners should come up with an amount of each item to be added or how each item could be added - EG;
Amount -12 pieces of cotton from a giant's smelly sock.

How - all dropped in one at a time from a meter above the cauldron.

STEP FOUR

Like with the Sorcery School, learners should tea stain the paper and make it look like old parchment.



TEACHING TIP

To make this activity quicker or to work on this as a whole class, you could create a whole class potion. Each learner could think of something very random that they are able to bring in from home to add to the potion and you could physically act out making the potion with you class.



THE MAGIC CARRIAGE Quest

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- TEAMWORK
- CREATIVE THINKING
- PROBLEM SOLVING
- LEADERSHIP SKILLS
- PHYSICAL THEATRE

TEACHING TIP

1. As a way of controlling the activity when it comes to step 6 and you are worried about learners getting too carried away and someone getting hurt, as all groups come to the start line, you can throw in a new element: The Fairy Godmother cast a spell over the carriages to make them move in slow motion.
2. If you want to avoid the competitive part of the task, make Step 6 a procession or parade of the carriages around the space.

ACTIVITY

Cinderella's carriage has broken down and we need to get her to the ball on time! Let's use our bodies to create a physical theatre travelling carriage to make sure Cinderella can still make it to meet Prince Charming. Each team needs to create a coach using their bodies and there will be a coach race to see who gets Cinderella to the ball in record time.

STEP 1

Split the class into equal groups in the four corners of the room if possible and ask them all to come up with a team name that is panto or Christmas themed (e.g. Tinsel Turbos or the Wishing Wonders).

STEP 2

Once teams have been established, explain that each team will need to to create a new carriage for Cinderella and the winning carriage will be the one she goes to the ball in.

STEP 3

Show your learners some images of carriages so that those children who need a visual prompt feel included and have an understanding of the task.

STEP 4

Explain that each team needs to create their carriage using their bodies with some learners being the wheels, some being the main part of the carriage, some being the horses. Leave your learners to create their carriages within a time frame that feels appropriate.

STEP 5

Once each carriage has been created, ask each team to present their carriage to the rest of the class with all team mates in their correct positions. This is where the learners can show how the carriage moves and other mechanisms like does it have an opening door?

STEP 6

Once all groups have presented their carriages it's time for the carriage race. Establish a start and finish line and ask each team to line up on the start line. The aim is for each team to reach the finish line with their carriage still fully intact with all group members crossing the finish line as one unit. The winning carriage gets to save the day and take Cinderella to the ball.

Daring Dames Danced Daftly Down
Dame Dolly's Dazzling Doorway

Wicked Witches Wildly Whacked Wonky Wooden Wardrobes

Princes and Princess Practiced Politely Polishing Pearls to Perfection

Twisted TONGUES

BANK OF WORDS FOR STIMULI

Advent	Calling	Elf	Gag	Humour	Nudge	Special effects
Acting	Christmas	Encore	Ghost Scene	Palace	Panto	Stepmother
Angel	Cracker	Enchanted	Gift	Presents	Pantomime Horse	Tinsel
Audience	Christmas Eve	Exaggerated	Good	Jolly	Present	Transformation
Aloud	Cheer	Fairy Godmother	Galavant	King	Principal	Tradition
Baddie	Climbing	Festive	Glide	Magic	Quick Change	Villain
Baubles	Crying	Family	Granted	Mask	Reindeer	Variety
Beanstalk	Dame	Father Christmas	Greedy	Mistletoe	Santa	Wand
Boxing Day	Dancing	Fourth Wall	Hero	Moral Ending	Seasonal Songs	Widow Twankey
Bouncing	Dallying	Finale	Holler	Music Hall	Script	Winter
Buttons	Decorations	Freeze	Hooray	Nativity	Sidekick	Wonderland
Carol	Eating	Fun	Holly and Ivy	New Year	Snow	Yuletide

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- SPEAKING
- DICTION
- EXPANDED VOCABULARY
- ARTICULATION
- CONFIDENCE
- CREATIVE THINKING
- COGNITIVITY
- MUSCULAR FUNCTION

TEACHING TIP

If you want to extend this activity you could add an extra step after step four where learners could come up with a movement to go with each word of their tongue twister. This part of the activity could be expanded further by asking learners to deliver in the style of a panto character using their voice and body gestures.

ACTIVITY

Tongue Twisters are a fantastic way of getting young people to understand language, increase vocabulary and confidence in communication. They are also really fun and a great way to enhance engagement of any subject. This activity works great as an independent learning task or as a small group.

STEP 1

Explain what a tongue twister is. See above and below examples of a few panto themed tongue twisters that may help you with your explanation.

STEP 2

Introduce the idea of writing a tongue twister to your learners. As a starting point it would be a good idea to try and create an initial tongue twister as a whole class.

STEP 3

Whether your learners are working independently or as a group they should come up with their own tongue twister. They can use the list of Christmas and panto themed worlds above to stimulate some ideas.

STEP 4

Set the time frame that your learners have to come up with their tongue twister and explain that they will have the chance to perform them should they wish.

STEP 5

Once your learners have performed their tongue twisters they should now be tasked with coming up with a new one. Once they have written the new one they should be handed into the teacher who will then put them in a hat or a container.

STEP 6

Other learners should then come up and take a tongue twister at random from the hat/container and say the words repeatedly until they get tongue tied. The teacher or another learner should be in charge of keeping a tally of which learner is able to repeat a tongue twister the most times.

Booing Baddies Boldly Bellowed Below the Beanstalk
Behind the Baron's Back

Magic ON THE DANCE FLOOR



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- MIME
- COORDINATION
- CREATIVE THINKING
- PROBLEM SOLVING
- TEAM WORK
- MOTOR SKILLS
- SPATIAL AWARENESS

TEACHING TIP

If you have the facilities to be more digital, rather than using paper to write the character names, you could use an iPad or an interactive white board.

ACTIVITY

This activity is a take on the classic children's party game, Musical Statues. This version is panto themed and also requires some call and response elements. This is a great activity to get young people moving as well as using their creative thinking skills.

STEP 1

Choose some music that is great to dance to and that maybe also has a magic theme (e.g *Abracadabra* by Lady Gaga, *Black Magic* by Little Mix).

STEP 2

Choose a learner who can be the wizard or witch of the dancefloor and give them something to use as a wand. This can be something made for this purpose or can be something as simple as a classroom ruler or pencil. The witch or wizard's job is to be in charge of deciding when the music starts and stops and this will be signalled by when they wave the "wand".

STEP 3

All the rest of the learners are the dancers and the teacher/group leader will need to write the following characters on individual pieces of paper: Prince, Princess, villain, Giant, Comic/Fool, Fairy. Once this is done, stand behind the learner who is the wizard/witch but you need to be visible to the other learners.

STEP 4

When the music starts the learners should dance in the style of whatever character is written on the paper you are holding up. When the witch/wizard has an idea of what character all the learners might be dancing like, they will wave their "wand" to stop the music.

STEP 5

When the music stops and everyone freezes the witch wizard will call out what character all the learners are portraying. Then the following dialogue will happen between the dancing learners and the witch/wizard:

If the witch/wizard is WRONG	**If the witch/wizard is RIGHT**
Dancing Learners: *Oh no it's not*	Dancing Learners: *Oh no it's not*
Witch/Wizard: *Oh yes it is*	Witch/Wizard: *Oh yes it is*
Dancing Learners: *Oh no it's not*	Dancing Learners: *Oh no it's not*
Witch/Wizard: *Oh yes it is*	Witch/Wizard: *Oh yes it is*
Dancing Learners: *Oh no it's not*	Dancing Learners: *Oh yes it is*

So it isn't revealed until the witch/wizard is correct until the last line. If they are correct then they pick another learner from the group to take on the role and swap with them. If they are incorrect they stay as the witch/wizard until they guess correctly.

Oh yes it is





SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- TEAMWORK
- SPEAKING & LISTENING
- PROBLEM SOLVING
- MEMORISATION
- CRITICAL THINKING

TEACHING TIP

If you have an odd number of learners it may be an idea to have one learner support you in being the quiz host.

ACTIVITY

This quiz is a team activity and each team will need to work together to answer as many questions correctly as possible.

STEP 1

Split your group of learners into teams as equally as possible and ask them to come up with a team name that should be related to pantomime.

STEP 2

The teacher/adult in the room will be the quiz host and read out the questions provided.

STEP 3

After each question, the quiz host will give the teams some thinking time to decide if the answer is true or false. The thinking time can be decided by the teacher depending on how they feel the learners will best cope.

STEP 4

The quiz host will then ask each group if they think the answer is true or false. If they think the answer is true, they should answer, Oh yes it is! And if they think the answer is false, they should answer Oh no it's not!

QUESTIONS

1. In pantomime, Villains traditionally enter stage left and fairies and fairy godmothers always enter stage right? *True*
2. When a theatre is closed or empty, it is tradition to always leave a light on. *True (A Ghost Light)*
3. A pantomime dame can be played by any gender? *True*
4. Pantomime originates from Spanish street theatre? *False (Italian)*
5 Pantomime gets its name from the style of theater originally being performed without spoken word? *True*
6. A pantomime horse is usually two actors in a costume? *True*
7. Often, pantomimes will feature well known songs that will have some of the words changed to fit with the storyline? *True*
8. Pantomimes are based on traditional tales? *True*
9. Pantomime is only performed around Christmas time? *False*
10. A pantomime audience are expected to sit quietly and listen? *False*

12 DAYS OF Panto

In many pantomimes the main characters will perform a comedy version of the Twelve Days of Christmas - often with novelty props.

With your group of learners, create your own version of the Twelve Days of Christmas with each of the 12 days being something different made up by your class.

ON THE FIRST DAY OF PANTO THE THEATRE BROUGHT TO ME;
- 12 BAGS OF POPCORN
- 11 PANTO PROGRAMMES
- 10 DANCERS DANCING
- 9 SINGERS SINGING
- 8 VILLAINS LAUGHING
- 7 FAIRIES FLYING
- 6 PANTO HORSES
- 5 MAGIC WANDS
- 4 SILLY JOKES
- 3 HENCHMEN
- 2 PANTO DAMES
- & A BEANSTALK WITH A THOUSAND LEAVES

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- CREATIVE THINKING
- TEAMWORK
- SINGING
- RHYTHM
- MUSICAL TIMING

TEACHING TIP

If you are unable to arrange a performance, it may be a fun idea to make a music video where each of the twelve groups are filmed singing their line in different locations around your school. This will then be a nice thing to watch as a class or send home to your learners' families at the end of term.



ACTIVITY

Follow the steps below to create your own version of the well known festive song.

STEP 1
Split your learners into twelve groups as evenly as possible.

STEP 2
Ask each group to think of something to do with pantomime, winter, the festive season or popular things from children's pop culture.

STEP 3
Give each group a number between one and twelve and that will be the day number from the 12 days of Christmas that the group will represent.

STEP 4
Whatever each group has chosen in step 2 will need to be paired with their day number. For example if the group chose Beanstalk in step 2 and their day number was 3; their line of the song would be "three Beanstalks growing". Each group will need to make sure that what they have chosen in step two fits with the syllables for their line of the song.

STEP 5
Depending on how much time you have, your group can either come up with a dance move, to accompany their part or create a poster to hold up when performing the song. If possible a prop to accompany each line of the song would also enhance the performance.

STEP 6
Get your learners to rehearse the song in order, ready for a performance.

STEP 7
Arrange a performance. This can maybe be done in a festive assembly at the end of term or in a class setting where the learners perform to each other.

Comedy CORNER

Slapstick comedy is an important component of a pantomime. This could be exaggerated falling over, characters bumping into each other on stage and many other scenarios.





SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- TEAMWORK
- RESEARCH
- DEVISING
- PERFORMING
- MIME

TEACHING TIP

To save time and to support all learners, it may be easier to pre-prepare your scenarios and have them ready on paper that you are able to give to your groups for them to devise their piece around.

ACTIVITY

STEP 1
Ask your learners to research slapstick comedy. This can also be done as a class.

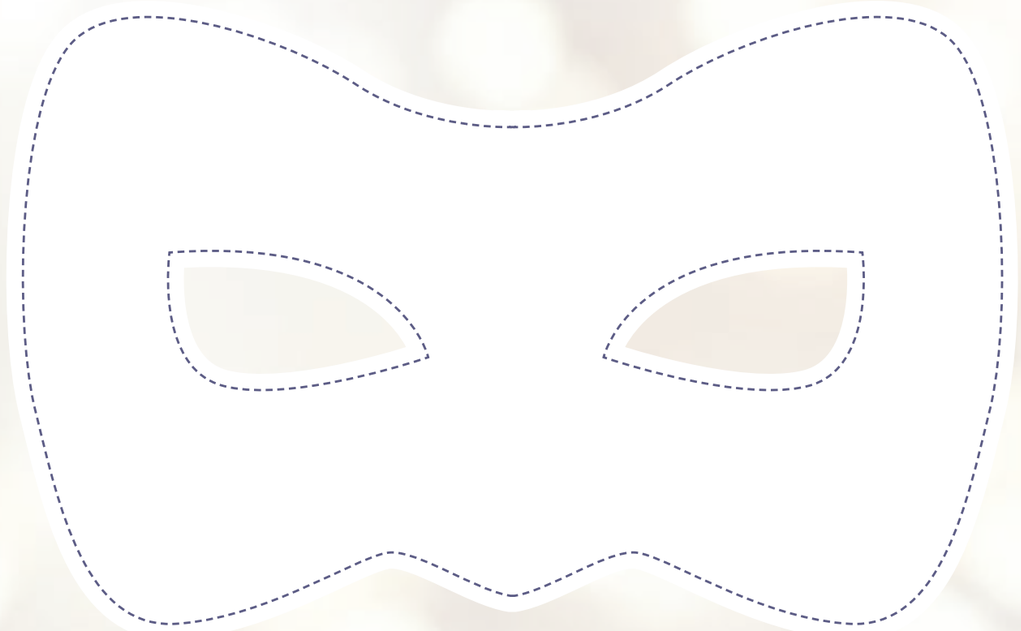
STEP 2
Split your class into small groups and get them to come up with a funny scenario that they can devise a small slapstick comedy scene to.

STEP 3
They should rehearse their scenario and perform to the class.

STEP 4
This time the groups should come up with a different scenario and the challenge is they are not allowed to use words this time around, it must all be done through mime and see if the rest of the class/audience can guess the scenario.

MASK Charade

Pantomime originated in Italy; Commedia dell'Arte, a 16th-century Italian entertainment. In addition to comedy, mime, dance, music and tricks, the performers would also wear vibrant masks to represent the various characters in their performance.





SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- CREATIVE THINKING
- IMAGINATION
- PROJECT PLANNING
- CHARACTERISATION

ACTIVITY

STEP 1

Pick one of the characters from the images above to base your mask on

STEP 2

Draft some ideas on a piece of scrap paper, ready to design your mask based on the character you have chosen. Think about the emotion that your mark will have – Angry, Sad, Happy, Shocked.

STEP 3

When designing your pantomime mask, remember that bigger is better, so go big and bold. Use lots of bright colours and other items in addition to paint and coloured pencils, such as materials, glitter and accessories.

STEP 4

Once your mask is finished start bringing it to life by thinking about how they would move and gesture.

TEACHING TIP

Once all of your learners have finished making their masks, it may be a nice idea to have a parade. In addition you could stimulate your learners minds more but getting them to think about their own soundtrack or piece of music their character would walk onto the parade to?



Where ARE WE NOW?!?

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- EXTENDING VOCABULARY
- CREATIVE THINKING
- INDEPENDENT THINKING
- SPATIAL AWARENESS
- MOVEMENT

TEACHING TIP

If you have the time to explore further you could ask the learners to come up with some additional pantoland environments to explore. Or get them to write down some of the verbs they come up with when you question them in step 4 and they could try and use them in a piece of creative writing in the future.

ACTIVITY

Quite often in pantomimes, the characters have to go on long treacherous adventures. Maybe to save a princess or confront a villain and win back the magic lamp. This activity merges pantomime adventures with the popular children's game, The Floor is Lava!

STEP 1

Ask pupils to spread out and find their own space. Explain that they are lost in pantoland and they need to be prepared for all environments before they find their way back to safety.

STEP 2

Call out the environment dramatically, the floor is made of ice and it is melting!
Describe it vividly: "it's disappearing under your feet and you need to get to the other side of the room before it melts completely". Encourage big, bold, exaggerated movements and expressive faces and encourage variety in levels, speed, and energy.

STEP 3

Switch environments, keeping the pantomime style. Some examples are:

- Enchanted forest, pushing through hanging vines and thick undergrowth.
- Sticky swamp, thick squelchy mud.
- Captain Hook's ship rocking on choppy seas.
- A slippy shiny palace that Cinderella has just mopped and forgot to dry.

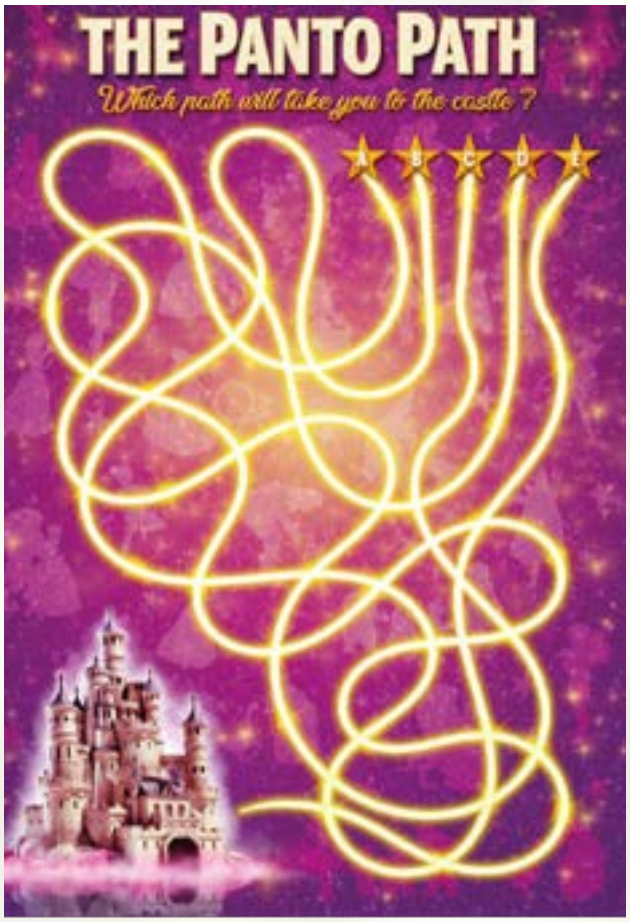
Question your learners about their movements and their pace.

STEP 4

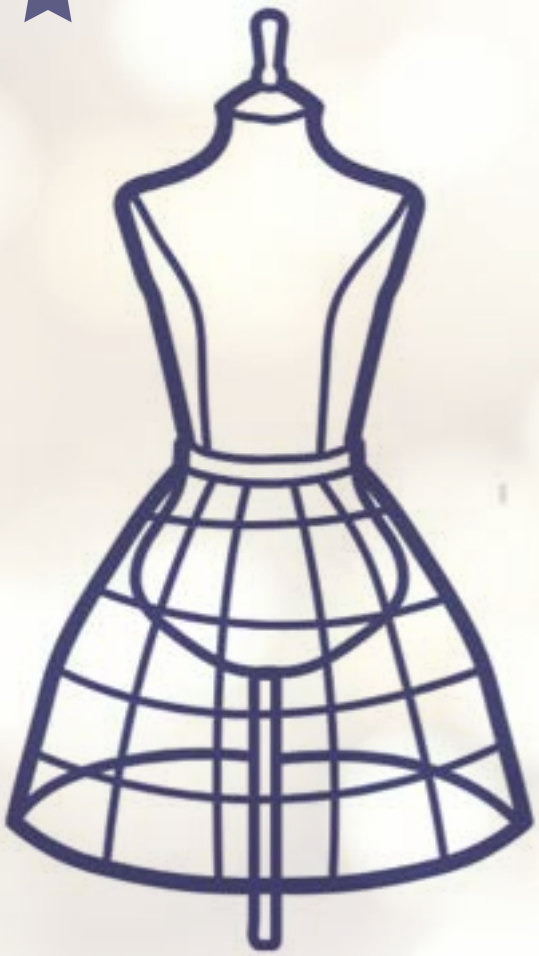
Pause the action on each environment and let a few pupils demonstrate their movements to their peers and point out the dynamics of their movements such as which environment made them move down low or up high, slower or faster. Ask them what descriptive words or verbs that come to mind.

Activities

Choose a star then follow the path to see if you can finish in the castle!



Using the template below, you can cut out the shape of a dress or draw/add materials on top to create your amazing costume!



Printable activities available at **www.pantomime.com/education**

Panto Time!

To the tune of *Jingle Bells*

Panto time! Panto time!
Favourite time of year.
Bring your family! Bring your friends!
To boo and hiss and cheer! Oh!

Panto time! Panto time!
Glad to have you here!
Every Christmas is the time,
When panto will appear!


CROSSROADS
PANTOMIMES