

PANTOMIME EDUCATION PACK

2023/24
PANTO
SEASON

Education Resources from Stagecoach Performing Arts
produced in partnership with Crossroads Pantomimes

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Welcome



This panto season, excite and educate your learners with this panto-tastic creative learning pack, created by Stagecoach Performing Arts in partnership with Crossroads Pantomimes.

This pack is filled with learning activities and creative tasks to provide young people with an accessible way to experience the magic of pantomime whilst developing their life skills and learning about one of our most loved annual traditions!

Using this pack, you will be able to facilitate creative tasks that introduce and develop skills; including but not limited to:

- ★ DRAMA ★
- ★ DANCE & MOVEMENT ★
- ★ SINGING & MUSIC ★
- ★ TEAMWORK ★
- ★ LEADERSHIP ★
- ★ SPEAKING & LISTENING ★
- ★ IMAGINATION & CREATIVITY ★
- ★ STORYTELLING ★

We hope that you enjoy offering this creative learning journey to your learners...

Oh Yes We Do!

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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.

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 were adapted to be more fairy tale like.

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

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.

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.

Commedia spreads across Europe and begins to come popular in England.

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

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



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

The first recorded pantomime version of *Dick Whittington*.

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

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



1843

1819

1814

1806

1801

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



The character, *Mother Goose*, was created.

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

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

Mid 1800s

1886

1902

1914

1938

After 15 years of male principals, The London Palladium cast Cilla Black in the role of *Aladdin* bringing it back to the traditional pantomime.

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.



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



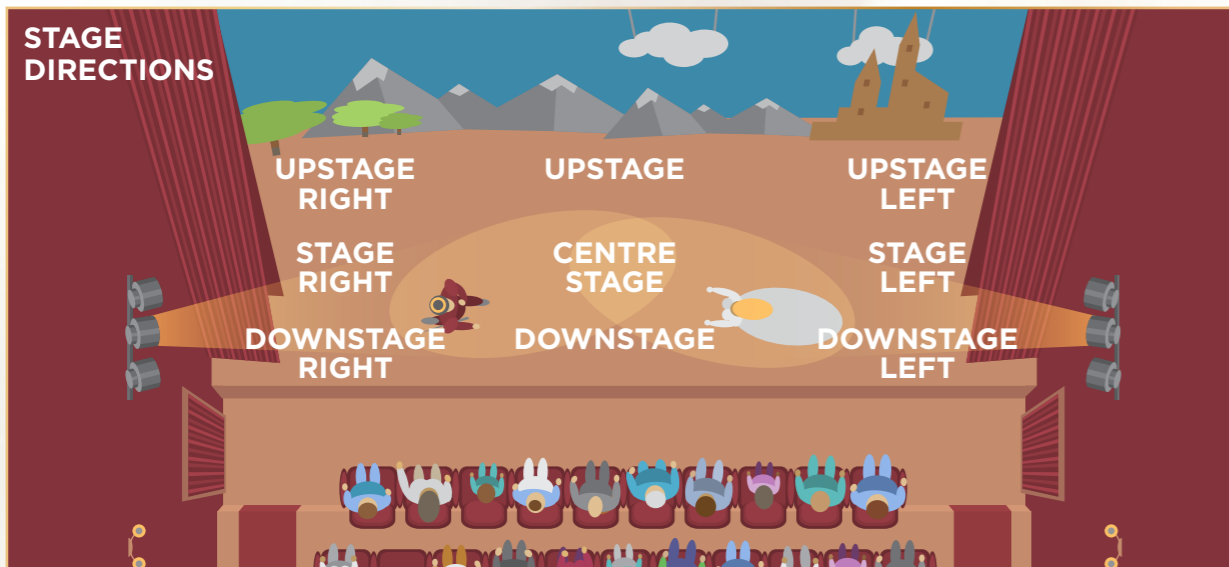
2023

2016

1971

1956

Welcome TO THE THEATRE



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.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

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

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 (www.pantomime.com/education). 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 fairy tale 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.



- Characters we may find in a village
- ★ Butchers/Bakers
 - ★ Candlestick Makers
 - ★ Hairdresser/Wigger
 - ★ Market Sellers
 - ★ Police/Guards
 - ★ Villagers Shopping
 - ★ Florist
 - ★ Teacher
 - ★ School Children
 - ★ Farmer

GETTING INTO *Character*

Pantomime has a fusion of different vibrant characters here are some of the main ones...



Bringing a character to life on stage is made up of several components. Including; voice, body language, movement, stance, costume etc.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- ★ TEAM WORK
- ★ IMAGINATION
- ★ DEVISING
- ★ LISTENING
- ★ ATTENTION TO DETAIL
- ★ MOVEMENT
- ★ CREATIVE RESPONSE TO STIMULI
- ★ RETAINING INFORMATION

TEACHING TIP

When you want to get the learners' attention in order to explain the next part of the activity, it would be a good idea to bring the number for the speed of movement down to 1 and then to zero for stand still so you can ensure they are calm and listening.

ACTIVITY

STEP 1

Ask your learners to move around an open space such as a school hall or playground at a steady and comfortable pace as if they were leisurely making their way somewhere. On a scale of 1-10, their leisurely walk should be a number five. Number one should be the slowest and number ten should be the fastest (but without running). Zero should be standstill.

STEP 2

As they walk around the space keep calling out different numbers (between 1 to 10) to dictate the speed your learners are moving around the space. And keep doing this for a minute or so.

STEP 3

Once your learners have got the hang of the activity, you may even want to add a new layer by asking them to portray an emotion as well, for example: move around the room at a number seven and as though you are happy.

STEP 4

Show your learners the different characters (downloadable from www.pantomime.com/education) and then repeat the moving around the room activity but this time getting them to move in the style of the different pantomime characters. Encourage your learners to think about the body language of each character and how they would move. Again, you can scale up the learning by asking them to move as the characters while portraying different emotions too.

MAKE A *Scene*



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- ★ CREATIVE THINKING
- ★ DEVISING
- ★ TEAMWORK
- ★ SPEAKING & LISTENING
- ★ OBSERVATION
- ★ LEADERSHIP

TEACHING TIP

If you would like to add an extra level of challenge, when it comes to Step 2, each group could have to mime and not use any spoken word so that it will make it more challenging for the other groups to guess the scenario.

ACTIVITY

STEP 1

Split your learners into groups of 4 (or thereabouts) and each person in the group will need to pick one of the 4 types of characters from 'Getting into Character'.

STEP 2

Once this has been organised give each group a scenario for example: they walk over to the biscuit tin and discover that someone has eaten all of the biscuits. Give each group a different scenario and give them a set amount of time to devise and rehearse a small scene about their scenario that all characters in their group should be involved in.

STEP 3

When all groups have had their allotted rehearsal time, each group should perform their rehearsed piece for the rest of the learners. When they are not performing the other groups can all be given a piece of paper where they are able to write down as a team what they think the performing group's scenario is.

STEP 4

Once each group has finished performing, as a group ask all learners to guess what they think the performing group's scenario was.



WE'RE HAVING A Ball



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- ★ CO-ORDINATION
- ★ POSTURE & POSITIONING
- ★ PARTNER WORK
- ★ SPACIAL AWARENESS
- ★ MULTI-TASKING
- ★ STAMINA
- ★ RHYTHM

TEACHING TIP

Alternate between demonstrating the steps and movements between having your back to the learners and by facing them (mirroring - when they move their right you move your left etc). This will enable your learners to see your positioning from both sides and will support their accuracy of positioning.

ACTIVITY

In several pantomime stories, there is a party which is often in the form of a ball. Use the steps below to teach your learners a basic waltz step that you can create your own royal ball.

STEP 1
Using an open space such as your school hall or playground, ask all of your learners to find a space (not close to anyone) facing you.

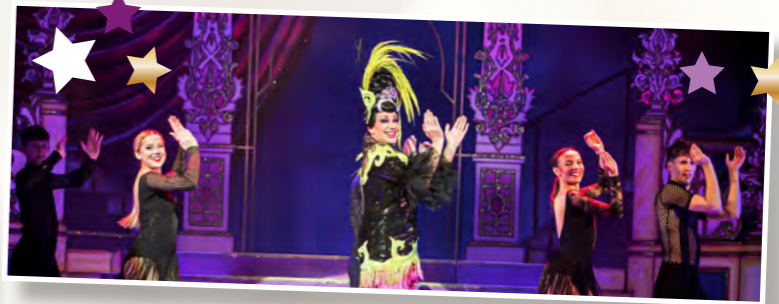
STEP 2
Using the diagram above talk your learners through basic waltz steps.

STEP 3
Once you have been over the waltz step enough times for your learners to feel confident doing it, ask your learners to join the movement together and add fluidity. Also, add some waltz music for the learners to keep in time with.

STEP 4
Now that your learners feel confident with the steps, ask them to put their arms in "hold". This would mean putting one arm out to the side and one arm curved inwards bringing the hand in line with the centre of the chest but still keeping the space between the hand and the chest as though you are resetting it on a partner's shoulder.

STEP 5
Once your learners have mastered the "hold", now ask them to keep their arms in their position as well as doing the steps we learned earlier.

EVERYBODY Dance Now



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- ★ RHYTHM & CO-ORDINATION
- ★ TEAMWORK
- ★ PROBLEM SOLVING
- ★ CONFIDENCE
- ★ CHOREOGRAPHY
- ★ CREATIVITY
- ★ SPACIAL AWARENESS

TEACHING TIP

When it comes to Step 4 and Step 5 it would be a good idea to have some stock movements/dance moves in mind that you can give as suggestions to those learners who might struggle to think of their own.



ACTIVITY

Let's create a Dance Circle. This is a great way to get your learners moving, thinking, being brave and expressing themselves.

STEP 1
Put some upbeat music on for learners and start with a game of musical statues as a way of getting everyone moving.

STEP 2
Once you have played a few rounds of musical statues and all learners are feeling more relaxed and comfortable, change the expectation of what happens when the music is paused. Call out a different character you may find in a pantomime each time you pause the music and your learners should take the shape of this character and freeze until the music starts again. Do this for a few minutes or until you feel your learners are ready to move on.

STEP 3
Ask your learners to make a circle and when the music comes on they will need to clap their hands in time with the music with a slight sway to the left and the right.

STEP 4
Once your learners are participating the next part of the activity (going around the circle in a clockwise direction), give all learners the chance to go into the centre of the circle and perform a free style dance move of their choice. Any nervous learners may want to do their dance move with the person next to them.

STEP 5
Once you have been around the whole circle, organise your learners into pairs or small groups and ask them to create a short dance routine to an appropriate song choice. Give your learners a time limit to work on this.

STEP 6
Once your learners have reached the time limit, get each small group to join another pair/small group.

STEP 7
Each group takes it in turns to teach the other group their dance routine and then they choose their favourite (or maybe all) parts of the dance routine and put them together to create a new dance routine as one group.

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 and each of the 12 days being something different made up by your class.

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.

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 ★

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 Twelve 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 TikTok in Step 2 and their day number was 3; their line of the song would be "three Tik Tok dances". Each group will need to make sure that what they have chosen in Step 2 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 movement, 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 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.

PANTO PAGEANT *Strike a Pose*

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.



Printable masks available at www.pantomime.com/education

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- ★ RESEARCHING
- ★ DESIGNING
- ★ PRESENTING
- ★ CHARACTERISATION
- ★ SPEAKING & LISTENING

TEACHING TIP

Make the most out of your pageant, show your learners a video of a runway/fashion show. Clear a space in your classroom and create a runway, with your learners creating an aisle and add some music. Encourage each learner to move down the runway in the style of their mask character too.

ACTIVITY

STEP 1

Give all of your learners a mask template

STEP 2

Ask your learners to research pantomime masks using either that class IT facilities or as a homework task so that they can look at different kinds of masks for inspiration to create their own.

STEP 3

Using the template, your learners can create their own mask. If they are struggling for inspiration, you could suggest they use one of the characters we have met earlier on in the pack.

STEP 4

Once all of your learners have created their masks, why not show them all off by having a Runway/Pageant. All learners can move down the runway wearing their mask to show the rest of the class.

STEP 5

Show and Tell. Encourage all learners to either show and tell their mask to the class or to partner/small group and explain their character.

ARE YOU HAVING A Laugh

Comedy is a key element in pantomime. This normally tends to be led by the comedic sidekick in each story.



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, it must all be done through mime and see if the rest of the class/audience can guess the scenario.

SOME OTHER Ideas



COULD IT BE MAGIC?

Pantomimes are full of magic, magical characters and magical objects. As a creative writing task, ask your learners, if they were able to have any magic power, what would it be and why?

Once they have written about this, they will need to write a magic spell.

This could be in the form of a poem, chant or recipe, and a great opportunity to get your learners to develop their creative writing skills.

WHO'S BEHIND YOU?

A great game to take in turns as a whole class or in smaller groups!

STEP 1

You will need two volunteers.

STEP 2

One of the volunteers will need to be the guesser and will need to sit on a chair facing the rest of the class. The other will be the mystery panto character.

STEP 3

The learner who is the mystery panto character will need to choose a panto character and write the character's name down in block capitals on a piece of paper. They will then stand behind the guesser and hold up the piece of paper for the rest of the class to see.

STEP 4

When the panto character is in place the rest of the class will signal to the guesser that it is time to start guessing by calling out in unison: **They're behind you!** The guesser should start asking questions to the class to try and identify the panto character standing behind them. The questions can only require a Yes or No answer and the rest of the class should respond to the questions by either chanting: **Oh Yes it is** for a Yes, and **Oh no it isn't** for a No. When your guesser has guessed correctly who the panto character is, the whole group should again call out: **They're behind you!**



Activities

A-maze-ing

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

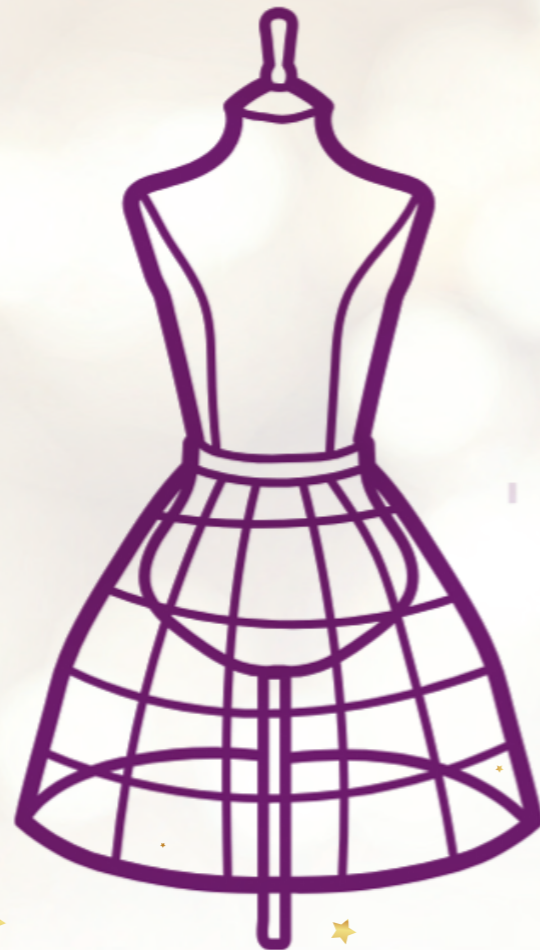


Printable activities available at
www.pantomime.com/education



Costume Design

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



Songsheet

♪♪♪ To the tune of *Jingle Bells* ♪♪♪

♪♪♪ Panto Time! ♪♪♪

**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!**



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