



CINDERELLA

Teachers Resource Pack



★ Welcome to the Teacher Resource Pack for First Family Entertainment's *Cinderella*, sponsored by Robinsons!

For many of us the annual school pantomime trip was our first experience of live theatre, and a very exciting and fun-filled one that kept us wanting to return again and again.

Linking your traditional end of term Christmas treat to exciting projects back in the class can help you and your pupils gain more from the experience and we hope that this pack will provide ideas and inspiration.

We have included a variety of background information and follow-up activities inspired by the pantomime genre and *Cinderella* itself. The activities are designed to be adaptable to a range of ages and abilities, although the pack is written with particular focus on the Key Stage 1 and 2 National Curriculum and National Literacy Strategy.

How to use this pack:

The pack is designed for you to dip in and out as you wish, picking resources and activities that best suit your class. With each section you will find a range of activities; look out for the symbols indicating the type of activity:



Performance



Art and Design



Writing



Discussion



Research



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The History and Traditions of Pantomime...

In this country we have all grown up with the annual pantomime as a traditional part of our Christmas celebrations but try explaining pantomime to an American, French or German child and see how much they understand of this strange tradition...

For a start there's a man dressed as a woman... and often a woman dressed as a man, lots of audience participation, lots more slapstick comedy and very often one or two animals thrown in. It is really a very British tradition not usually seen in other countries. So what really is panto and where does it come from?

The word 'pantomime' comes from the words 'panto' meaning 'all' and 'mime' meaning 'no words'... it is a story told in actions without words. It is generally believed to stem from the 16th Century Italian tradition of 'Commedia Dell' Arte'. These were very physical shows performed by travelling actors which told a repertoire of stories using mime, music, dance, acrobatics and slapstick. 'Commedia Dell' Arte' made its way across Europe to Britain where it became very popular and where its stock characters (such as the 'Harlequin' and 'Clown') began to appear in British plays. The form was developed until, in 1717 the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane opened what is now recognised as the first modern pantomime.

From these very early performances the genre developed, becoming more widespread as more theatres were granted performing licences and the traditions that we recognise today began to be introduced. The first transformation scene (such as Cinderella's famous transformation into a princess fit for a ball), now a necessity in pantomime, was first seen in 1849 in Planché's 'Island of Jewels', the use of the fairytales that we now know and love as pantomime titles first came about in the 19th century as pantomime became popular with children who already knew the storylines, the Victorian era saw the beginning of many Christmas traditions and it was at this time that pantomimes became particularly associated with the festive season and in 1902 Dan Leno became the first ever pantomime dame starring in 'Mother Goose'.



Find out more about Commedia Dell Arte, what it was, where it came from and the characters and stories involved. Develop your findings into a display or even produce your own Commedia Dell Arte inspired production.



Discuss what experience the class has of pantomime. Who has been before and what are their favourite pantomime traditions? If this is a first visit, what expectations does the class have. Invite an older member of the community into class to talk about their own memories of pantomime.



Write a letter to a pen friend from America who has never heard of pantomime – how would you explain what it is?



The Story of *Cinderella*...

Cinderella is a magical fairytale of a young girl whose dreams really do come true!

The story begins with Cinderella living a simple but happy life with her kind but poor father and best friend, Buttons. Her world is thrown upside down when her two Ugly Sisters come to stay. The Sisters are mean and horrible to Cinderella and they force her to become their servant.

However, Cinderella's life is about to change in an incredible way as she has a Fairy Godmother who makes it her mission to see that Cinders' dreams of falling in love with a wonderful man come true!

While Cinderella is out in the forest, she meets a handsome young man that she believes is a servant to the Prince Charming. But actually, it is the Prince himself, heavily disguised! After the two young lovers are separated, the Prince decides to hold a Grand Ball at the Palace and invites every girl in the land to be sure of finding his love again. The Sisters conspire to stop Cinderella from going to the Ball, but with a little help from her Fairy Godmother, and a touch of magic to create a carriage from a pumpkin, Cinderella makes it to the Palace, and is the belle of the Ball!

At midnight, the Fairy Godmother's spell breaks and Cinderella is once more dressed in rags. She runs from the Palace but her crystal slipper is left on the stairs. The Prince declares that he will search every house in the land to find the girl who fits the slipper. Eventually, he arrives at Cinderella's house and upon her trying on the slipper, it is clear she is the mystery girl he has been searching for... and they live happily ever after!



The synopsis given here is the pantomime version that you have seen. Read some other versions of *Cinderella*, including the classic folk story by Perrault and more modern versions such as the Disney animated film.

Discuss where the versions differ and where they are similar; can the class identify similar characters, places and events across the versions?

Use the discussion to explore how the same narrative can be structured and written differently to suit the writer's purpose. Ask the class to retell the story in their own way to suit a chosen audience and medium.



Design a set for one of the scenes in *Cinderella*.

Think about what is included in the scene and any features that are integral to it. Make sure your design will fit in with the overall look of the fairytale story.

Display your set designs to share with the rest of the class or school.



Characters in Cinderella...

Every pantomime has a number of 'stock characters', which we expect to see in every pantomime. There is always a villain, a hero or principal boy and his helper, a principal girl, an over-protective parent figure, a fairy, a dame and usually an animal.

The following characters all appear in Cinderella:

Cinderella	A beautiful but downtrodden young girl and the object of our hero's heart.
Prince Charming	Our hero. He vows to find Cinderella and rescue her from the Ugly Sisters.
Buttons	Cinderella's best friend.
The Ugly Sisters	Bullies who make Cinderella's life a misery and misguidedly think they are beautiful.
Fairy Godmother	Cinderella's guardian angel.



Discuss the characters you have seen in ***Cinderella***.

Identify who the 'stock characters' are in the story. How do we identify them? What other characters do we see and do they fit into any of the roles given above? Can you think of any other stock characters that you would expect to see in a pantomime?



Design a costume or a piece of headwear for one of the characters in ***Cinderella***.

Think about who they are and their personality and choose a design that reflects this. Are they rich or poor? Outgoing or shy? Good or bad?



Split into groups assigning one character to each group and give each person a name tag. Move around the room until the teacher shouts 'stop' and turn to the nearest different character. Improvise a short scene with them, thinking about how your character feels towards the other. On 'go' move around again, next time stopping at a new character you've not met before.



A History of Cinderella...

Cinderella is one of the most popular fairytales ever told and is also a very old story. The earliest recorded version was written in China, around 850-860AD.

The Chinese version features Yeh-shen, a heroine who is kept in rags by her evil step-mother. Instead of a Fairy Godmother, Yeh-shen is helped by a magical fish, and a golden shoe is used to identify her to the prince she will marry.

The theme of the story is so popular, that even in these early days it was passed from culture to culture and it is estimated that up to 1,500 versions of the tale exist throughout the world.

The earliest recorded European version was written by Italian fairytale collector, Giambattista Basile in 1635 and titled, *La Gatta Cenerentola* or *The Hearth Cat*.

The Grimm Brothers, in Germany, wrote *Aschenputtel* or *Ash Girl* who is aided by a white bird to defeat her evil step-sisters, who in this more grisly version have their eyes pecked out as punishment for their wrong-doing.

The version that made it most popular though, was written by Charles Perrault (we will look at Perrault in more depth later in the pack).

Perrault's version was published in 1697 and introduced many of the elements we are familiar with to the story, such as the glass slipper, the fairy godmother, the pumpkin carriage and the animal servants. This version became the most popular in Western culture and it is this that inspired the many books, films, novels, musicals and, of course, pantomimes that we know today!



Try to find out more about the oldest recorded version of the story from China.

Discuss how the story differs from the version we know today and how it is similar. How will the story be affected by the culture and time it was written in?



Read Perrault's version of ***Cinderella*** and develop your own play or musical based on the traditional fairytale.

This could be a big project culminating in a performance or a smaller class project.



Who was Charles Perrault...?

Many of the tales that we know and love today became popular in Europe thanks to one man and no study of the fairytale genre is complete without finding out a little about him...

Charles Perrault was born in Paris to a wealthy family and studied law, before beginning a career in government service when he worked as secretary to King Louis XIV's finance minister. When he lost this post in 1695, aged 67, he dedicated himself to writing.

In 1697, Perrault published a collection of fairy stories, that were mainly derived from pre-existing folktales, including *Cinderella*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Bluebeard* and *Puss in Boots*. The stories had all previously been passed down in the oral tradition but Perrault was the first to publish them as a collection, introducing his own style and additions to each and laying the foundations for the 'fairytale' to establish itself as a new literary genre. The collection became known as '*Tales of Mother Goose*'.

The elegant and simple style in which Perrault wrote made the tales incredibly popular and they became the accepted versions of the stories in many countries, despite the fact that the original tales were much older. The stories in Perrault's book are the ones we still know today.



Split the class into groups and give each group a selection of fairytales written by Perrault.

Each child should read one story and report back to the group, identifying different aspects of the story and explaining their response to it. The group should identify common features across the stories and present their findings to the rest of the class.



Following on from the task above ask the class to compare specific features of the stories such as character types, settings and events.

Collect information about the main character types (heroine, villain etc) and use this to make predictions about how they will act in different situations and/or settings. Explore the characters feelings using improvisation and role play.



Producing Your Own Pantomime...

A big event in any school calendar is always the Christmas production but if this is your first time in the directors chair it can be a daunting prospect! Our brief guide to producing panto should get you started...

1/ Choose your title... Decide which pantomime you would like to produce. Traditional favourites include Peter Pan, Cinderella, Dick Whittington and Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.

You may wish to write your own script with references to local people or places (perhaps your baddie is the headmaster and your fairy the lollipop lady!) or use a pre-written script but if you do, remember that you will need to pay for the performance rights.

2/ Cast your stars... Once you have a script ready you will need to cast your stars... hold auditions to choose main characters although when working with young children it is nice to ensure there are enough parts for everyone, providing numbers are manageable. If there is a lot of interest some children could be encouraged to be involved behind the scenes.

It can be an idea to hold a workshop rather than 'x-factor' style auditions to take the pressure of individuals.

3/ Give out scripts and arrange rehearsals... Now your script is completed and your cast have been given their roles, hand out scripts and encourage everyone to learn their lines BEFORE rehearsals start. This will give you more time to devise each scene and work on movement and spacing.

Give out rehearsal schedules with dates and times so everyone knows when they are needed in advance. It may also help to outline what you hope to achieve in each session so you know that you are on track for opening night!

4/ Sets, props and lighting... Get some volunteers involved at this stage! The school caretaker and parents who are handy with DIY may be able to help. Sets and lighting may be more or less complicated depending on the facilities your school has but remember to make them easy to work with. If necessary it is better to keep things simple.

5/ Costumes... Again a volunteer who is handy with a needle is useful here! Your wardrobe mistress will need to identify any specific costumes needed for principal characters as these may need to be specially made or hired. For ensemble pick simpler costumes that can be picked up easily on the high street or that some may already have and ask parents for donations.

6/ Marketing... School plays always have a guaranteed audience of parents and family members but if you are relying on ticket sales to help cover the costs of the production some marketing is useful! Encourage the children to sell as many tickets as possible by offering a prize for the person who sells the most. Encourage the schools wider community to be involved by coming along as well...your local press and 'What's On' Guides can help with this.

7/ Opening Night..! Ensure you have had at least 3 run-throughs of the entire play, including a technical and dress rehearsal and you are ready to go! Break a leg!



Resources...

You may find the following resources useful for information on pantomime and *Cinderella*...

The Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault by Angela Carter.
Penguin Modern Classics; 2008.

Walt Disney's Cinderella. DVD. 1950; USA. Walt Disney Productions.

www.surlalunefairytales.com for a collection of classic fairytales and information on their origins.

www.its-behind-you.com for information on Cinderella and the pantomime genre.

www.wikipedia.org - For information on Charles Perrault and Cinderella.