

Robin Hood and The Merry Men

Fri 13 Dec – Sat 4 Jan



CLIFFS
PAVILION

Education Pack

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Introduction:

Welcome to Southend Theatres. For many children, Pantomime, is the first experience of Live Theatre. It is a magical and exciting experience that can leave a lasting impression on a young person and lead to a love of attending and even performing theatre.

This education pack has been designed to support children during their visit to *Southend Theatres* to watch our production of *Robin Hood*. You will find a variety of engaging activities including drama games, creative writing, arts and crafts and lots of interesting information about our pantomime and the wonderful world of theatre.

Don't forget our Community and Education Department has a wide educational programme throughout the year for children to get involved with. Activities included workshops, which can be tailored around a chosen theme or curriculum area, backstage tours and the opportunity to join our various Youth Theatre Groups for ages 4-19. For more education please visit the 'Get Involved' section on our website.

We would be delighted to hear your feedback on this Educational Pack. Please email our Community and Education Manager Rachel: rachelt@southendtheatres.org.uk to pass on your thoughts.

Most importantly, we hope you enjoy the show!

Learning about Pantomime

Pantomime has been largely influenced by the Italian street theatre Commedia Dell'Arte. Two large components of both Commedia Dell'Arte and traditional pantomimes are audience participation and the use of 'slapstick' comedy.

Breaking the Fourth Wall

During pantomime performances, the characters often 'break the fourth wall'. This means that they break the pretence that there is no audience and interact directly with their audience.

Some classic lines in Pantomime productions which encourage audience participation include:

"Oh no he's not"

"Oh yes he is"

"He's behind you"

- 🎯 Idea: Split your class into groups and ask each group to pick a well-known film. Instruct them to rehearse a section from this film, including moments where they break the fourth wall. Ask each group to present theirs to the rest of the class.

Slapstick Comedy

Slapstick comedy is often physical and very silly and involves humorous situations in which a character becomes injured. A good example of this are programmes such as The Chuckle Brothers, Itchy and Scratchy from The Simpsons or Tom and Jerry.

Slapstick comedy is mimed and no physical contact is made. The event itself and the reaction of the person being injured is over-the-top and eccentric.

- 🎯 Idea: Think about examples and situations which you could use to create your own slapstick routine. Classic examples include a character slipping on a banana skin or being pried in the face. In pairs, work together to build a slapstick routine, remembering not to have physical contact.

The History and story of Robin Hood

The story of Robin Hood is an example of English Folklore. Folklore refers to the tales and stories told by communities. Folklore is shared by word of mouth, and stories can be traced back several hundred years. Over the years, the stories can change and have various adaptations. Sometimes stories can be traced back to their roots and be based on facts, other elements may be unknown and fictional.

Some people believe that Robin Hood is a fictional character from stories whereas others believe that he really did exist. It is believed he was a popular individual during the medieval times because of his kind-heartedness to the poor.

The story of Robin Hood was set long ago in Nottingham, England, England was ruled by an evil and greedy Prince John. Prince John orders the Sheriff of Nottingham to tax the people for large amounts of money, so much so that the people became outlaws.

The most famous outlaws include Robin Hood and his Merry Men and Little John. They would steal from the rich people and give this to the poor people who must pay the sheriff a lot of money in taxes. As the outlaws don't keep the loot for themselves they class their stealing as 'borrowing'.

The Sherriff of Nottingham was angry when he heard Robin Hood was giving money back to the poor people and devised an archery competition as a trap to lure Robin Hood in. Robin Hood went to the completion in disguise as an old man.

Robin Hood, disguised as the old man, won the archery competition and gave the reward of gold back to the poor people.

The Characters

Some of the most well-known characters in the stories of Robin Hood include:

Robin Hood: A clever, heroic, bold brave character who isn't scared by authority. He is an outlaw who fights for justice, taking from the rich and giving to the poor. It is thought he lived in Sherwood Forest with the other outlaws.

Friar Tuck: He meets Robin Hood and is known for his good deeds for helping the poor. He is strong and wise, passionate about helping the community and brings the outlaws together.

Little John: Is Robin's best friend. He follows Robin's lead and accompanies him on his dangerous missions to help the poor. He has a big heart, is loyal and also brave in his risky and unlawful acts. Little John was actually nicknamed Little John ironically as he is actually very tall!

Alan A Dale: Is also one of the Merry Men. He is thoughtful yet funny, and accompanies Robin Hood with his good deeds in giving to the poor.

Will Scarlet: Another Merry Man from a poor background. In some versions of Robin Hood Tales he is described as possibly the brother or cousin to Robin and known as the youngest of The Merry Men.

The Sheriff of Nottingham: An evil and powerful leader who is control of the town whilst the King is at war. He is greedy in taking money, and has a nasty temper if he doesn't get his own way.

Messenger: Acts as the sidekick to the Sheriff of Nottingham. He helps the Sherriff plot his sinister schemes of wrong-doing.

Maid Marian: is a beautiful and kind-hearted woman. She has known Robin Hood since they were both children and is Robin Hood's love interest. She is a caring person and tries to look after the poor children.

Job Roles in Theatre

There are many more people involved in making our Pantomime that extended beyond the actors you see on stage. Before any show opens, there are lots of jobs that need doing to make sure they audience enjoy the show.

Find out more about who is involved in making a theatre show including the actors and what skills their job requires.

The Actor

Actors have the job of telling the story on stage and portraying a character truthfully to entertain an audience. An actor can have lots of lines to memorise and will need to research about the story and their character. Some parts may require actors to sing and dance. An actor can also have more than one part in the same show, this is known as multi-rolling.

An actor must have good communication skills, be confident to perform and portray a character. They are also good problem solvers, as improvisation is often needed in acting

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- 🎯 Idea: In a pair, pick your favourite two characters from Robin Hood and create your own made-up scene. This can be as imaginative as you want. For example, you could create a flash-back scene to when Robin Hood and Maid Marion first met. Can you explore how they met, did they at a family part or at school?

The Playwright

The Playwright is the person who writes the script. Their name will normally appear on all of the programmes and posters that you see advertising a theatre show. As the Playwright is the person responsible for making up the story for the show, they normally get a percentage of any money made from the production of their show. These are referred to as *Royalties*.

Dialogue form: This is where you only write what is actually spoken by the characters in the story. A playwright gives the actors dialogue so the audience or reader knows what is happening and how to follow the action of the story of play.

Stage Directions: The stage directions fill in the missing details and give clues as to how the scene should be set. They can

contain important bits of information including what props and costumes are needed in certain scenes and where the actors should go on stage. They are usually written in *italics* or [brackets] to indicate they are stage directions.

The playwright needs to be creative and have a good imagination. They must be good at writing and be able to work well alone.

The Set Designer

The set is what we put onstage to help create the world of the play. There is often more than one location in a play, so several items of set and backdrop are often required. The set designer would work closely with the director to create a vision of what the world of the play should look like on stage. They would often create a model box of the set to show the director and actors what they want the set to look like.

There are several parts of a set designer's job. This includes; research. They must search the world of the play, including any history that the show is linked to. They may choose to collect pictures to create a visual story board of what the set might look like, they must also consider the dimensions and technical requirements of the theatre they are working in.

Their research will inspire their model box that they create and then this will be developed into building the full size set. The set is then fitted into the theatre and transforms the space bringing the show to life creating the world of the play.

A set designer needs to be very creative, good at drawing, making and building things. There is also a strong element of maths involved as the set designer will have to work on making the set to a certain sized scale.

- ① Idea: Have a go at creating your own model box for Robin Hood. Grab an old shoe box and some arts and craft supplies and create your own mini set for Robin Hood.



Shoebbox Forest Set Example

Use the space below to draw out ideas for your set
What will your own set look

like for Robin Hood?



The Costume Designer

The wardrobe department in theatre are responsible for finding or making costumes which suit the time period and style of the play. They then have to adjust costumes to fit individual actors and have to repair any rips or tears throughout performances.

The costume designer will have to do lots of research on the world, time and style of the play before the production begins.

To be a costume designer you need to be creative, good eye for detail, able to manage a budget, and have the ability to work to tight deadlines.

Below are some examples of costume design for characters in Robin Hood.



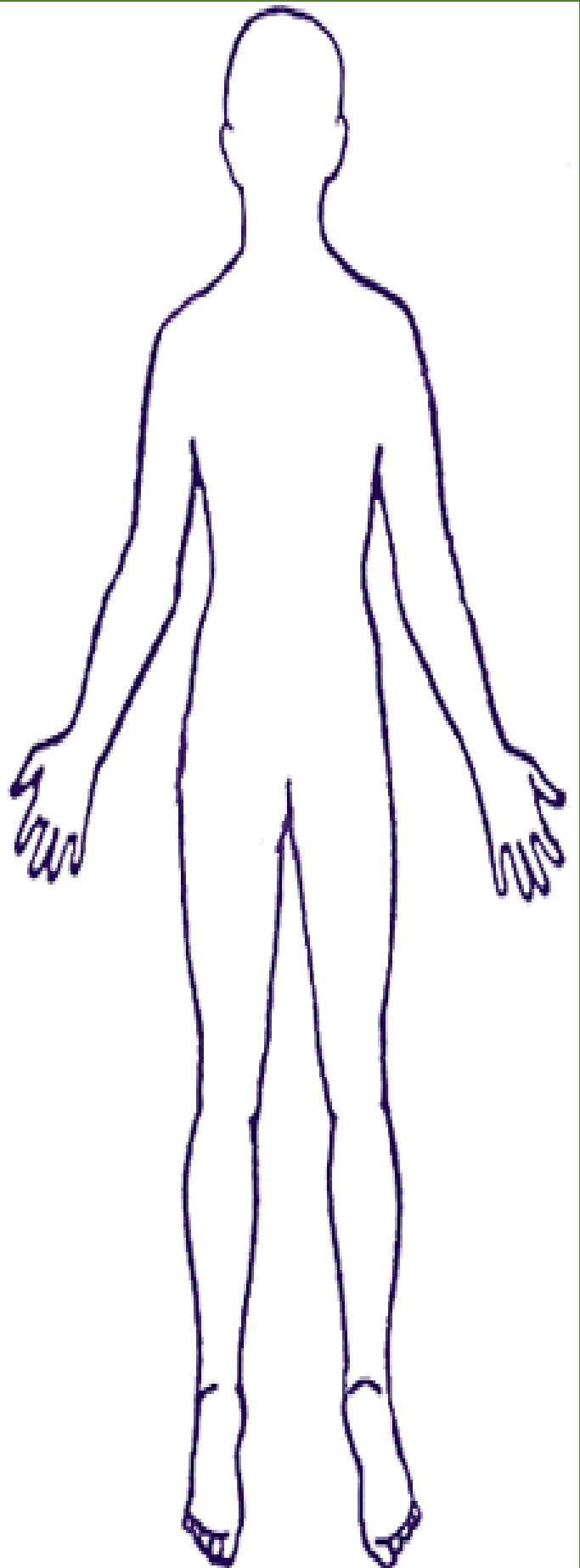
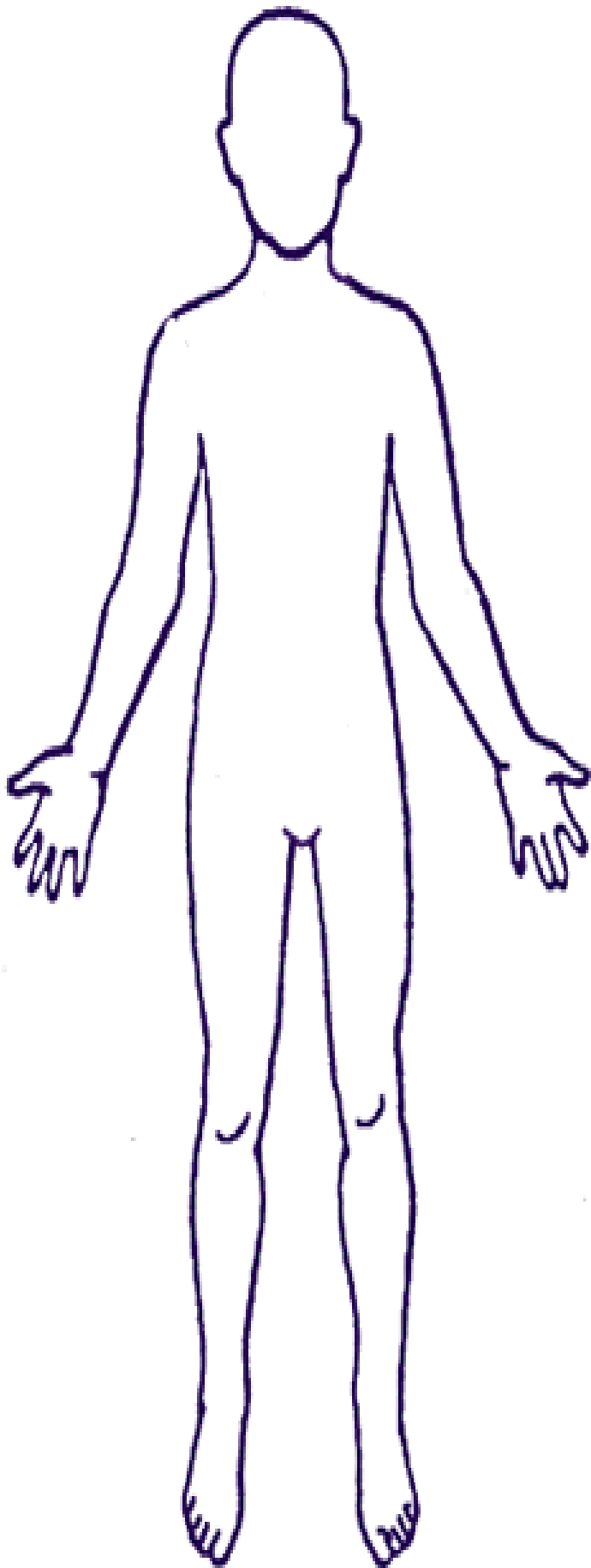


Use the space on the next page to design your own costume for the Jolly Friar, Robin Hood or Maid Marion. Think about what materials you may use to make your costume.

If you are feeling extra adventurous why not add up the cost of your costume materials to find out how much money it would be to make your very own costume!

Types of materials include:

- Cotton
- Satin
- Silk
- Velvet
- Nylon
- Denim
- Lace
- Suede



Create your own wanted poster

Robin Hood and the rest of the outlaws were wanted for their crimes of robbery from the rich. Design your own wanted poster for an outlaw of your choice below.

Remember your poster should be eye catching, and include a detailed description of what they wanted person looks like. You could include a reward as an incentive for people to find the outlaws.



Make your own target shortbread biscuits

Equipment

Mixing Bowl
Spoon
Baking Tray
Circle Cookie Cutter
Rolling pin
Icing bags and flat nozzles



Ingredients – (Makes 20 biscuits)

150g plain flour
100g butter
50g caster sugar
225g Icing Sugar
2-3 tbsp warm water
White, Black, Blue, Red and Yellow Food Colouring



Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180 C/ Gas 4
2. Whisk together the butter and sugar until the mixture is light and fluffy.
3. Gradually sieve in the flour (You can use a food processor if you prefer)
4. Sprinkle plain flour out onto the kitchen surface and roll out the dough so it approximately 1cm thick.
5. Cut out 20 circles using your cookie cutter and place on a grease proof lined baking tray.
6. Put in the oven for 15 minutes, checking regularly and remove once they are golden brown.
7. Allow biscuits to cool down fully before icing.
8. Mix together the icing sugar and water.
9. Divide your mixture between 5 bowls.

10. Add a small amount of food colouring to the bowl so you have 5 separate colours.
11. Scoop the white icing into an icing piping bag and pipe a circle border on the outside of the biscuit. Remember to apply gentle pressure to the icing bag.
12. Continue this process working your way in on the biscuit making smaller circles with the black, blue, red, and then yellow icing.
13. Allow your icing to set and then enjoy your Robin Hood themed biscuits!

Robin Hood Word Search

N D W U H W R R S N C K O L A
X O H E W S I O E Z D X U C J
W H T L E Z Q O B I E A T O I
U Z R T R O O P B I K X L E Z
I H G A I T A X E S N S A L F
V I A V D N A F M K H A W T F
S W O R R A G H T E C R S T I
V J Z D R B K H R S T U J I Q
T L J X R S S I A I E S T L M
J V Y A F B F D K M Q R E G O
K T I P B F K O A I K X O D N
L R C E R Q H O Q D B N J F E
F R O I J V I H P N H V C J Y
M R C U Y E N U Q O B C R K Q
W H X M M H T L J G O U H B D

ARROWS
FOREST
FRIAR
HOOD
JOHN
LITTLE
MONEY
NOTTINGHAM
OUTLAWS
POOR
RICH
ROBIN
SHERIFF
TAXES
TUCK

Write your own Theatre Review:

Another job within the world of theatre is the role of a press officer. A press officer will often attend the opening night of a new show with the press who will review the performance. This review will then get published for the public to read. Theatre reviews use star ratings. Rate our pantomime out of a 5 star rating.

Why not have a go at writing your own review and tell us what you thought of our pantomime.

Title

Date and Time

Venue -

Introduction- Did you have any information about the performance before you saw it, for example, had you read a book or seen a film of the same title? Did you have any expectations surrounding the story or famous actors?

Response- Tell the reader whether the performance met your expectations and give them a brief idea of what the show was like.

The Acting and Directing - Did the actors portray their parts effectively and did any actors stand out? Were there ways in which the actors could have been directed differently to make the story clearer?

The Design- What did the lighting, set, music and costume add to the performance?

The Conclusion- Finish your review with your main points, perhaps adding your favourite moment. You must conclude as to whether you enjoyed the performance or not. You could also include what you learned from the performance and whether you would recommend it to others.

