

Developing and Writing a 'Scary' Story

At the time of the Pendle Witch trials, local people would have been familiar with local folktales of magical animals and strange happenings.

nb. See link below to overview of drama techniques used and ideas for running the session.

ACTIVITIES:

1.

Read some of the stories from the “Scary Stories - Folktales of Lancashire” Resource Sheet (also see link below)

2.

As a practice and a warm up: ask the class to do the following (Hall space or cleared classroom required):

Tell them they must walk around the space not banging into anyone else and whenever you say “Freeze” they must stop and freeze until you say “Go”. To help them do this well, tell them that when they stop they must make sure that both feet are on the floor, so as not to lose balance, not to look at anyone else, because they will make each other giggle (!), and that they are allowed to breathe and blink but nothing else. Do this a few times. If they do it really well the first time but mess up on the second or third, remind them that you know they can do it perfectly because they already have done...

3.

a) Freeze-frames:

Ask children to get into pairs and stand in a space not too close to any other pair. Explain that now they know how to freeze successfully this is the next step.

Tell them you will say a phrase and then count slowly to 10 before saying “Freeze” When you say “Freeze” they must “freeze-frame” a picture together with their partner that illustrates what you have said. (10 seconds may not seem long but it’s to stop them from a) getting too detailed or b) convincing themselves they can’t do it).

These are some phrases to use, or spark others:

- A Monster Cat
- A haunted house
- A graveyard at midnight
- The Vampire's Sweetshop
- The Ghost in the Television
- The Skeleton's Café
- The Under-the-Floorboard Monster

b) Ask them, in their pairs still, to choose one of their Freeze-Frames and spend a few minutes deciding exactly who they are, where they are and what is actually happening.

Share these with the class.

(You could extend this activity by "Thought-tracking": Tapping children on the shoulder while in freeze-frame and ask them what they are thinking / want to say, as their character at that moment)

c) Three Freeze-Frames:

Ask them, still in their pairs to now create 3 freeze-frames that tell their whole story (One of them will be their original freeze-frame).

- 1.Beginning: How does it start?
2. Middle: What happens?
3. End: How does it end?

Give them 3-5 minutes to prepare.

The whole class does their 1st freeze together on the count of 3, then again for the 2nd and then the 3rd.

4.

Write the story down.

The class now sit and write their story down in silence, without focussing on the story they've just created. (Each pair's story will be essentially the same but they will each tell it in their own words).

SUBJECTS: English: Speaking and Listening / Writing / Drama

LINK TO:

“Drama Techniques”

“Selected Tales of Lancashire”