



ENGLISH AND DRAMA

Welcome to the English and Drama Super Curriculum. Below you'll find a whole host of things to do to stretch yourself beyond the classroom curriculum.

It's nearly Christmas! In English, we are going to be looking at Christmas poetry this month.

At this time of year theatres are overrun with silliness and Christmas magic – this month we are focusing on the comedy that can come from when things go wrong, turning negatives into positives and revelling in the joy that can Christmas can bring.

READ

English: Follow the link below to read Benjamin Zephaniah's poem *Talking Turkeys*:

<https://benjaminzephaniah.com/books/talking-turkeys/>

Dr Benjamin Obadiah Iqbal Zephaniah was born and raised in Birmingham, England. He cannot remember a time when he was not creating poetry but this had nothing to do with school where poetry meant very little to him, in fact he had finished full time education at the age of 13. His poetry is strongly influenced by the music and poetry of Jamaica.

Drama: Follow the link below to read about the history of Pantomime and it's links to Commedia dell'arte:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/2JZ6TSqnd480n90dzN77r1Q/where-does-pantomime-really-come-from>

Christmas time marks 'panto season' and families flock to the theatre to shout "he's behind you" at various celebrities dressed in ridiculous costumes. Whether you love it or hate it, pantomime is a British tradition. It does however link back to the early work of Commedia dell'arte.

If you are in Year 8, you will explore Commedia dell'arte in your Drama lessons after Christmas.

LISTEN

English: Follow the link to listen to Stephen Fry read Clement C. Moore's '*'Twas the Night Before Christmas'*:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dAL5UOeqKuY>

Drama: Follow the link to listen to Rosalie Craig perform 'Probly' from The National Theatre's new musical, *Hex*:

<https://youtu.be/xlLeLAoOCnE>

This Christmas spectacular is a reimagining of 'Sleeping Beauty' from the perspective of the tricky sprite who makes her slumber. *Hex* is being performed at the Olivier Theatre from 4th December - 22nd January.

WATCH

English: Follow the link to watch a clip from Scott Mosier and Yarrow Cheney's *The Grinch*. The voiceover comes straight from Dr. Seuss's original book *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* which was written in rhyming verse:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RBLTJUKTMN8>

(If the video isn't working, click settings and watch in 480p)

Theodor Seuss Geisel was an American children's author, political cartoonist, illustrator, poet, animator, and filmmaker. He is known for his work writing and illustrating more than 60 books under the pen name Dr. Seuss.

Drama: Follow the link to watch a clip of *The Nativity* by 'The Gone Wrong' team:

<https://youtu.be/5WGz4zrpSyQ>

Mischief Theatre Company thrive on the spirit of slapstick and the laughter of their audiences.

This incredible theatre company create productions which seem to be 'going wrong' but in fact have been rehearsed to look that way. The company is touring their new show *Magic Goes Wrong* in early 2022.

DO

English: Write a poem that rhymes about what Christmas means to you.

Drama: What could go wrong on Christmas Day? Have a go at writing a scene set on Christmas morning. Consider how you might include some of the features of a 'gone wrong' play.