

History of the key mills

The King and the Miller of Mansfield



In this lesson pupils will get to know about a play, written over 300 years ago, which is about the miller at the old King's Mill, John Cockle, encountering King Henry, who had become lost and separated from his courtiers whilst out hunting in Sherwood Forest. The King pretends to be one of his own party, but when his true identity is revealed he knights the miller for his hospitality. The play was a huge success in the West End of London and across Europe.

They will learn about the Georgian Theatre and how plays reflect the prevailing ideas about society. Pupils will be prompted to discuss the actions and behaviours of the characters in the play and explore the key themes of honesty, loyalty to the King and the rights of the common man.

Reading and comprehension are essential to this lesson and pupils will have the opportunity to stage part of the play, with opportunities to perform, create scenery and play the role of a bawdy audience. All scenes have been abridged to make them accessible for a younger age group. Where the original wording is integral to the play a glossary is provided.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- HM_L2TN** Teacher's Notes
- HM_L2TS** Teacher's Slides
- HM_L2HO1** Scene 1
- HM_L2HO2** Scene 4
- HM_L2HO3** Extract from Scene 6
- HM_L2HO4** Summary of the play

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

The learning provided in the Teacher's Slides will be embedded through a discussion about one of the early scenes in the play. Pupils will consider the characters' actions and how society differed in the 1100s, compared with modern day.

Pupils are supported to read and interpret the motives and opinions of key characters in a reading and writing comprehension task.

There is the opportunity for pupils to revive the play by putting on a short performance, with pupils allocated different roles including acting, set design and playing the role of a jeering audience. Pupils can also review the play and performance of the actors, in the guise of a local theatre critic, as a creative writing task.

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LINKS TO THE CURRICULUM

HISTORY

Key Stage 1

They should use a wide vocabulary of everyday historical terms. They should ask and answer questions, choosing and using parts of stories and other sources to show that they know and understand key features of events.

- Significant historical events, people and places in their own locality

Key Stage 2

They should regularly address and sometimes devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance.

ENGLISH

Language and literacy

Vocabulary development

They should increase pupils' store of words in general; simultaneously, they should also make links between known and new vocabulary and discuss the shades of meaning in similar words.

Reading

Pupils should develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write.

Spoken language

They should have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

Comprehension

Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction.

Listening to, discussing and expressing views about a wide range of contemporary and classic poetry, stories and non-fiction at a level beyond that at which they can read independently (Key Stage 1).

Writing

Effective composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar.

Drama and role play

Drama and role play can contribute to the quality of pupils' writing by providing opportunities for pupils to develop and order their ideas through playing roles and improvising scenes in various settings.

Reading, re-reading, and rehearsing poems and plays for presentation and performance give pupils opportunities to discuss language, including vocabulary, extending their interest in the meaning and origin of words. Pupils should be encouraged to use drama approaches to understand how to perform plays and poems to support their understanding of the meaning.

Key Stage 2

Comprehension

Increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction, fiction from our literary heritage, and books from other cultures and traditions.

Pupils should be taught to recognise themes in what they read, such as loss or heroism. They should have opportunities to compare characters, consider different accounts of the same event and discuss viewpoints (both of authors and of fictional characters), within a text and across more than one text.