

Captured by the goblins

In this unit students explore fantasy through improvisation and develop and present a performance based on chapter four of *The Hobbit*.

They will:

- sustain and build belief in roles
- use elements of drama to create effects
- show the development of movement and language skills
- form opinions about drama.

Drama forms

- improvisation
- movement
- storytelling.

Resources

- Tolkein, J.R.R. *The Hobbit*.

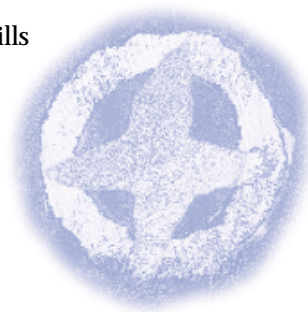
Learning activities

Getting started

- Discuss fantasy. List fantasy stories. Students create, research, collect and create images of fantasy characters. Students take the hot seat in role as a fantasy character. Students introduce themselves to a partner. *Explore voice and ways of moving. Tell the story of your life.* Respond to questions.
- They create fantasy machines in groups, using sound and movement.
- Students read chapter 4 of *The Hobbit*. Research possible appearance and personalities of hobbits, wizards, dwarfs, goblins and goblin king by reading, discussing, drawing and painting. Small groups present incidents from the chapter as frozen moments. Discuss.

Taking on roles in situations • Developing drama • Performing

- Divide the chapter into three sections. Organise students into three groups and give each group one section of the chapter e.g.
 - Group one...* The company of Bilbo, dwarfs and Gandalf are sheltering in the cave from a storm when a crack opens in the cave wall and the goblins capture Bilbo and the dwarfs. They are tied together.
 - Group two...* Bilbo and the dwarfs are forced by the goblins to run down the tunnels to the goblins' cavern and are brought before the goblin king.
 - Group three...* The dwarfs and Bilbo are rescued by Gandalf and set off down the tunnels to escape the goblins' home.
- Each group writes its part of the story as a script or as an outline of the action for a storyteller. Students take on roles and experiment with voices and movement.
- Explore and refine movements using varying levels and use of space. *How would the dwarfs and Bilbo's movements change when they are rudely awakened by the goblins? How will the goblins capture them and tie them? How will the dwarfs' movements change if they are all chained together? How would the goblins show they are in charge and the dwarfs are prisoners? How can different levels be used here? How would the king speak and move? How would he show his high status? How would Gandalf move? Would his attack with fireworks and beheading of the king be better if done in slow motion, or with each goblin freezing into a position as Gandalf points to it, so that, when all are frozen, the dwarfs and Bilbo can escape?*
- Groups develop and refine their ideas and present their parts to the other groups.
- Teacher and students discuss and decide on the action that works best for each part or how to extend, refine and edit the actions. Rehearse.
- Groups sit in a semicircle. When it is their turn to perform, students stand in the performance space with storyteller at one side and freeze until the storyteller has finished. They then perform. When they finish they sit in the semicircle.



Responding

- Discuss the performances. *What is working? What isn't working? What should happen now? Are any props needed? How could lighting be used? How could music be used to enhance tension?*
- Students write about the experience in journals and reflect on it by answering the following questions: *What did I learn about myself? What did I learn about others? What surprised me? What confused me? How could I or others improve? What was the most enjoyable part and why?*

Assessment of students

- Teacher observation of students' drama work and their process of working.
- Analysis by the teacher of students' oral and written comments, drawings and other responses to their drama work.
- Consideration of the following questions about students' learning in drama:
 - ♦ How well are they able to sustain and build belief in roles? How convincing are they? Are the voices used effectively to communicate role?
 - ♦ What evidence is there that students are using drama elements to create effects as they work with others to develop drama? How effectively are they working together?
 - ♦ What evidence is there that students are developing movement and language skills? Which particular skills were developed in this unit? How well were students able to use voice, gesture and different types of movement to communicate their ideas? Which movement and language skills need further development?
 - ♦ What opinions about drama are students forming? What other learning in drama is evident as they observe and respond to their drama and the drama of others?

Extension activities

- Explore other moments from the story through movement and improvisation. Explore with students the use of sound and music to underscore key scenes.
- Develop movement work around fantasy creatures. Create with students images of these characters and experiment with different ways of using movement and gesture to portray them. Decide on a situation in which these characters come together. Use music to build the piece and create mood.
- Build a play about a fantasy voyage to an unknown location. Refer to books like *Where the Wild Things Are* for inspiration.

