

# Pantomime

By Sarah Gudgeon

## 1. Read

Pantomime is a great Christmas tradition. It first started in Britain in the 18th century and today parents all over the country still take their children to the theatre to watch classic plays like Cinderella or Jack and the Beanstalk, but these are not ordinary plays; in pantomime productions everything is bigger and brighter and louder. The actors wear extravagant costumes and make-up, they dance, they sing, they tell jokes and most importantly, they shout to the people in the audience.

The boys and girls in the audience are part of the show. The actors often say something like 'Tell me if you see the bad guy' and the kids shout out 'He's behind you'. The actor then tells the children he can't hear them and the boys and girls get more and more excited and continue to shout 'He's behind you' until they are red in the face. Finally, the actor says 'Oh, he's behind me' just as the bad guy throws a cake in his face or something similar. And then the children laugh and laugh and laugh, and the adults too!

## 2. True or false

- a. Going to see a pantomime is a modern Christmas tradition.
- b. You watch a pantomime at the cinema.
- c. Pantomime actors wear big, colourful costumes.
- d. The people in the audience must not speak.
- e. The bad guy comes from behind the actor.
- f. Only children laugh at pantomimes.

## 3. Choose the correct word to complete these pantomime catchphrases.

hear      over      is      louder      behind      out

- a. He's \_\_\_\_\_ you.
- b. He's \_\_\_\_\_ there.
- c. Look \_\_\_\_\_!
- d. I can't \_\_\_\_\_ you
- e. Shout \_\_\_\_\_
- f. No he isn't! Yes, he \_\_\_\_\_!

## Teacher's Notes

2. True or False

a. false   b. false   c. true   d. false   e. true   f. false

3. Choose the correct word to complete the pantomime catchphrases.

Practice these phrases with the students either before they do the task, or afterwards, depending on their level. They will have great fun shouting them out. Explain to your students that the whole idea behind pantomime is good old-fashioned fun, where everyone can be a bit silly.

a. He's **behind** you

b. He's **over** there.

c. Look **out!**

d. I can't **hear** you

e. Shout **louder**

f. No he isn't! Yes, he **is!**