

A Slap of the Hand - Hereford Cattle Market Teacher's Pack



Drama Activities for Key Stage One and Two

Section 2 - The Characters of Hereford Cattle Market

All activities start with a discussion of the story or memory.

All activities are suitable for Primary aged children; Key Stage One and Two and can be either developed or simplified depending on the needs and abilities of each group.

In this section there are six stories about some of the characters who used Hereford Cattle Market. Each story is a memory from someone who has used Hereford Cattle Market over his or her lifetime. These stories give us a bit more insight into the workings of the Cattle Market and some of the people who regularly used the market.

Each story is provided here as a transcript but an audio file is also available on the website, that can be downloaded and listened to, at www.herefordshirelore.org.uk.

This section allows children to re-create some of the wonderful characters from Hereford Cattle Market and perhaps create some new ones of their own. Children will be encouraged to create freeze-frames of their characters.

Freeze-frames - children create a frozen image or a statue or a photograph using themselves as characters. It is useful to count down from 5 to 1 and get children to freeze their body when you get to number 1.

Freeze-frames can then be brought to life; this can be by just saying one word or phrase that a character may have said to whole scenes of action. Do this by going round to each child and tapping them on the shoulder, when you do this they say their word or phrase.

Character 1 - The Miss Watkinses

Character 2 - Mr Drew

Character 3 - Ted Phipps

Character 4 - Mac Higgins

Character 5 - Frank Robinson

Character 6 - Bailey Nott



Listen to tracks 10 - 15

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Character 1 - The Miss Watkinse

Colin Manning: "You were saying about ladies, the first two ladies to break into it were the Miss Watkinse of Turnastone, Vowchurch, whose farm was recently sold for a million to the National Trust to preserve it as the original farm.

They, every autumn, used to have these Hereford cattle, which always used to come and win the prize. They were two ladies, they were daughters of a farmer who died, who left these two spinster sisters who were in their forties, I suppose then. They had a farm manager and they carried on farming.

But the thing about them was, they always came to the October sale with these cattle and they would always go and buy themselves new hats. So they always came in the market in their hats – in fact I have got a picture of them. They're both dead now. They were tremendously strong characters."



Listen to Colin Manning, track 10

DISCUSSION

What made the Miss Watkinse stand out at the Market?

Why do you think there were not many women farmers?

Why do you think the sisters got dressed up in their hats to go to the Market?

Do you think that there are more women farmers now or do you think farmers are mainly men? Why do you think this is?

DRAMA 1 - Sisters in hats

Working in pairs ask the children to imagine that they are the Misses Watkinse of Vowchurch.

Get them to practice walking around as if they are wearing a hat - the bigger and fancier the better.

Ask to children to improvise a conversation between the sisters about their hats and the market.

DRAMA 2 - Sisters at the Market

Get each pair in turn to practice being the sisters whilst the rest of the group are the men farmers of the market.

Create the market, place the men farmers into the scene and then get the sisters to arrive.

Use the freeze frame device to stop the action to hear what the men farmers might be thinking or saying.

Use the device to listen to the reactions of the sisters.

Repeat with different pairs being the sisters.

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Character 2 - Mr Drew

Bobbie Blackwell: Thinking back now can you remember particular characters in the market and I'm thinking of one person in particular and that's a Mr Drew the bone setter.

Graham Baker: Oh yeah. Yes I remember Mr Drew very well. I once had to take my sister to see him at Lyonshall. But Mr Drew had a surgery, if that's the right word, in the Wheatsheaf Pub in Newmarket Street in Hereford. And he used to rent this room off a very good friend of mine called Jack Mann whose now deceased and he used to meet his clients in there over half a beer and he'd get um down one the table and straighten their backs or their legs or their arms and probably charge them half a crown.

BB: This was a surgery in the Wheatsheaf?

GB: It was just a room. There was no medical assistance or medicines it was just brute force and ignorance but he seemed to know how to get your bones back into place.



Listen to Graham Baker, track 11

DISCUSSION

Mr Drew mended people and animals bodies with his excellent knowledge of bones.

What was strange was he did this in the Wheatsheaf pub whilst drinking a beer!

Can you imagine going to see Mr Drew - what an experience it would have been.

BB: Somebody told me that he had a mother whom he acquired his skills from.

GB: Yes I believe there was a family of them. There was a Mrs James of Honorberry who may have been a cousin to him. And it all went back, the relation, to his mother. They all seemed to have this wonderful ability to sort out misplaced bones.

BB: So he had his surgery in the Wheatsheaf for human beings?

GB: On a Wednesday, to save the farmers going to him you see, all the way out to Lyonshall. If they where in the market selling a few sheep or a few cattle and they'd got a bad back they could go and see Mr Drew and have a pint of beer at the same time.

BB: He did animals as well?

GB: Oh he specialised in animals. I mean if we had a problem in the market we'd pop up and say 'Mr Drew can you come down and look at this'.

DRAMA - Mr Drew's Clinic

Get the children into pairs to create a scene where a farmer goes to see Mr Drew at the Wheatsheaf pub with a problem that needs sorting out.

Remind the children to take extreme care with each other and make sure that they are acting Mr Drew's brute strength and not actually hurting each other. Ask the children to think of noises and facial expressions for both Mr Drew and the patient to use during the treatment.

Get the children to show back all of their scenes of Mr Drew's clinic to each other.

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Character 3 - Ted Phipps

David Probert: "There was an old fellow called Ted Phipps I remember. He used to make sure he got himself into jail for the very coldest months of the year, because that was the warmest place to be. He had nowhere to live. He had nowhere to live so he'd be drunk and disorderly somewhere and he'd get himself slung in the cells for a few weeks.

He was estranged from his wife and I used to think that he used to make sure that he didn't, he was supposed to be paying part of his unemployment allowance to his wife or something and of course he would make sure that he didn't pay it. They'd come chasing for that as well so he'd get locked up.

Very, very unfortunate end poor old Phipps had, because in the cattle market there was a very large scales, they used to weigh the store cattle at the back of the Langford Sale Ring. Before a cattle sale on a Thursday and after the calves on a Wednesday we used to straw it up ready to go and there would be a lot of deep straw on the scales and he used to sleep there and one very cold morning when he hadn't managed to get himself into prison he was found dead on the scales. He'd died in the night and he was practically frozen to the metal which was quite unfortunate."



Listen to David Probert track 12

DISCUSSION (may not be suitable for Key Stage One)

What sort of life did Ted Phipps have?

What did he do everyday?

Why was his life hard?

How had he ended up like this?

DRAMA - Ted tells his story

Ask the children to imagine that they are Ted Phipps. Ask them to think about what his life was like and how he lived.

Ask the children to imagine that they are climbing into the big scales filed with straw on a cold night. Get them to freeze this position.

Going round the room, tap each child on the shoulder and say, "Ted - how are you feeling?" or "Ted, what has happened to you today?"

Try to ask open questions that won't leave the child with a yes or no response but they can speak as the character of Ted Phipps.

If the exercise works well ask the children to do some creative writing as Ted and then perform this work back.



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Character 4 - Mac Higgins

Terry Court: "My last little story for you: this man Higgins, his father, was sheep dealer, Mac we called him, he was M.A.C. Higgins and he walked a hundred and fifty ewes from Carmarthen to be sold in Hereford on the Wednesday. He got into Hereford, he came from, I don't know, Monmouth or somewhere on the morning of the sale because they used to stop in those other places, and then they were there for the sale. He sat in the corner of the market getting his breath back. They didn't sell, so he didn't know what to do with them.

And his father was trying to get them sold. And his father goes into the Market Tavern and leaves Mac sat with these sheep and he comes out and at half past eight at night to tell Mac he had managed to sell them But there was a little bit of bad news: he had to walk them back to Swansea! (Laughter) That was it. Off he went. I can remember him. I got a photograph of him somewhere too. They are herd animals so there's a couple who are always leading and if there's enough people around, just blocking the odd streets. When you're going up Whitecross you've got Baggally Street, Stanhope Street, all these streets going off, and if you've got somebody standing there, they'll keep going. But of course cows were kept for a lot longer in those days, have them for six or seven years probably, and they get to know the ropes! They know where they're going.

They're knowing animals."



Listen to Terry Court, track 13

See a picture of Mac Higgins on page 22

DISCUSSION

Talk to the children about the distance that Mac had travelled to get to the Market.

Use a map to see how far he had come.

Ask the children how they thought Mac travelled with the sheep.

Ask the children where they think is reasonable for Mac to travel to and then look at the distance to Swansea.

Talk about how Mac might have been feeling about his dad.

DRAMA - Mac Higgins

Using the following questions ask the children to create different freeze frames of Mac Higgins to show using their bodies and faces what he was thinking and feeling.

Once they have successfully shown this then ask them to answer the questions with words.

How do you think Mac was feeling once he got to the Market?

How do you think he felt when the sheep didn't sell?

What was Mac thinking while he was waiting for his father to come out of the Market Tavern?

How do you think he felt when his father told him he had to take the sheep back to Swansea?

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Character 5 - Frank Robinson

Colin Manning: Our job used to be to go to Lloyds Bank on a Wednesday morning and collect the money, with a man called Frank Robinson, who walked from Lloyds Bank to the market with five to ten thousand pounds in cash. Well he always stopped off at Higgins the pork butchers to get the hot pies. Course nowadays they're not allowed to sell hot pies. But we went to Higgins' and got the hot pies. When we got back, we had to go to Monkmoor Street, and there was a man there made beautiful doughnuts.

And we had to go there and get the doughnuts for everybody's lunch. So Brian and I, that was our life for a time. And then we used to act as clerks in the market.

Sarah: How did Frank carry the money? What was it in?

Mr. Manning: It was carried in what's known as a Gladstone bag, which you probably have never seen.

On one Wednesday morning, he went to Higgins and put the bag down with five thousand in on the floor, and walked away to the market with the hot pies, to be greeted by a telephone call from Higgins: 'Mr. Robinson, you've left the money.'



DRAMA - Frank Robinson's bag

Read through the story again, maybe more than once.

Put the children into small groups of 3 or 4 and ask them to recreate this story.

With discussion and support, they decide who the characters are they need to tell their story.

They can choose how they tell it.

They might decide to have a narrator with the rest of the group acting out what the narrator says or they take on the roles without a narrator and retell the story.

Look for differences and variations in the re-tellings. Which bits get left out and which always remain.

There is not right or wrong way of doing this exercise, the children simply re-tell it as they have heard it.



Listen to Colin Manning, track 14

DISCUSSION

Ask the children to imagine the responsibility of carrying all the money in cash in a bag through Hereford.

Would the bag be big?

Would the bag be light or heavy?

How do they think Frank felt once he realised he had left the money?

How quickly do they think he travelled back to get the bag?

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Character 6 - Bailey Nott

Terry Court: And the Langford saleroom was opened very much soon after I was there. There's a plaque on the wall where it said Alderman Langford and the Queen came to open this thing. It was quite a day for us of course.

Julian Gallimore: I did have a seat. My father engineered one, possibly my brother and my sister, but I was there sat in the Langford saleroom and watched the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh come over and the Duke looked back, and realised, and pointed out to the Queen that he'd been weighed! Cos they'd come over the weighbridge.

TC: That's the pleasure of being the bosses son! Because I was out in the market with the lads introducing the Queen to the porters. That was a great moment in my life because there was two porters called William Batchstone and Bronco Bushel. And Sam Lilly. And Sam lived at Madley and on Stoney Street there and Sam, used to smoke cigarettes without lighting them: he'd suck 'em and they'd get very brown and dirty. Then he'd break them, turn them round and pop the other end in. Break the other end off, see. And he never had one out of his mouth. And Bronco used to chew tobacco until it had no flavour left in it at all then he would put it in his tin. When it dried he'd smoke it.

And Bailey Nott who was our numbering porter would always be covered from head to toe in cow muck and flour and water 'cos we used to use paste to stick the numbers on the cattle, a mixture of flour and water paste. He was caked in a mixture of that and cow dung!

This particular day we got him fairly smart, he still had a bit of old stuff on his fingers and I said to him: You really ought to go and wash your hands. You don't want to shake the Queen's hand with that bloody thing! Anyway she went through the Langford Saleroom and there was pedigree Hereford Cattle and Ryeland sheep somewhere in the market and we were involved as official auctioneers to both those societies and then she came into this lairage where the fruit market was held and was introduced to me and then I had to introduce her like the captain of a football team to my team.

There's a little gap between the Langford lairage and the saleroom and she was actually in the gap before I was able to get Bronco to spit out his tobacco and Sam ready to spit out his cigarette! Little things like that you're bound to remember.



Listen to Terry Court and Julian Gallimore, track 15

DISCUSSION - see page 22

DRAMA - see page 22

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Character 6 - Bailey Nott (continued)

DISCUSSION

This is a long and complicated story with all the different characters.

Go back through the story with the group to establish which character is which and what they all do.

The whole group can retell this story, using all the characters.

DRAMA - The Queen and Bailey Nott

Get the children to create freeze frames of the key characters in this story; the Queen, Prince Philip, Bailey Nott, William Batchstone, Bronco Bushel, Sam Lilly and Terry Court who tells the story.

Get the children to think about how the characters would stand, what their faces would be like, what expressions?

Break the story down into sections: getting ready for the Queens arrival, introducing the Queen to the staff and the things that Terry was worried about.

Show the story back in these sections where you can freeze the action, ask characters questions and then continue with the action.

Alternatively, get the group to retell the whole story in one go.

You could tell the story from different characters' perspectives; did Bailey Nott see things differently to Terry Court for example?



MAC Higgins

