



Loving Learning Through Creativity:

The Pedlar of Swaffham: Learning Resources

Watching the video:

- At the beginning of the video, we can see various objects on screen. These objects are clues as to what the story might be about. Ask your pupils to a) check out what they can see, in as much detail as possible; b) offer some ideas about what the story might involve. (The objects are: a clay pot, a picture of a tree, some coins, an old picture of London Bridge, and an apple.) Encourage them to give reasons for their ideas. For example: “There’s an apple. Maybe someone is going to poison someone – like in Snow White.” “There’s a rough looking pot or bowl. It looks old. I think there might be food in the story because it looks like something you might cook food in.” The point of this activity is to encourage engagement, rather than worrying about whether these ideas are correct or not.
- Stop the video at 3 minutes 53 seconds, just after the storyteller (Sue) asks the listener “What would you have done?” Ask the pupils to think about whether they have ever had a dream that seems to tell them something. Let this lead to a discussion about the nature of dreams: dreams can be odd, silly, worrying, and strange. Invite volunteers to share some dreams they’ve had (as long as they are appropriate, of course!) then consider whether the voice in this story could also be the voice of instinct? What is instinct? Ask the pupils if they have ever had an instinct about something: that something is going to be great fun, or difficult, for example, or an instinct that they should do or say something in a situation? Did they follow their instincts, and if so, how did it work out in the end? This might lead into a discussion about whether or not we should always follow our instincts.
- Stop the video at 4 minutes and 55 seconds, just after Sue (storyteller) says “What should he do now?” Ask the pupils to come up with 3 ideas of what John Chapman could do now that he’s arrived at London Bridge. Think about what the implications of each idea might lead to in the story.

After watching the video:

Here’s a multiple choice quiz, to see how well pupils remember the story. Alternatively, they could look at the questions and then listen to the story a second time, if this would help:

QUIZ

- 1) What is a pedlar?
 - a) Someone who cycles a lot
 - b) Someone who travels around the country selling things
 - c) Someone who likes apples
- 2) Where is Swaffham?
 - a) Scotland
 - b) London
 - c) Norfolk

- 3) What pet did John Chapman have?
a) A dog
b) A cat
c) He didn't have a pet
- 4) What used to nest among the rafters above John Chapman's bed?
a) Bats
b) Mice
c) Birds
- 5) What kind of apples grew on John Chapman's apple tree?
a) Golden Delicious
b) Russet
c) Pink Lady
- 6) Why did John Chapman say, "It's nothing but a dream," when he first heard the voice?
a) Because he'd been worried there was someone in the house
b) Because it was the dog having the dream
c) Because he thought dreams were always nonsense
- 7) What three things did he pack to go to London Bridge?
a) His blanket, his dog, his apples
b) His blanket, some bread and some cheese
c) His blanket, his tree and some food
- 8) Where did John Chapman sleep during the night in London?
a) On the embankment under the bridge
b) In one of the shops
c) On a doorstep
- 9) What advice did the shopkeeper offer to John Chapman about dreams??
a) Stay in London until his dreams come true?
b) Listen carefully to what his dreams are telling him
c) Don't take any notice of dreams; they're nonsense
- 10) What were the words that were carved into the foot of the statue of John Chapman when he died?
a) Even dreams can turn to dust
b) Even dreams can turn to gold
c) Dreams will always turn to gold

Further ideas and activities:

- A) Discuss what you think John Chapman felt about:
- being poor?
 - having a garden with an apple tree in it
 - having a dog
 - living alone
 - being on his own in London
 - becoming rich

Imagine you are John Chapman writing his daily thoughts and feelings in his diary. Choose one or two of the subjects and write a paragraph for each, as though you are John Chapman.

- B) If the dog in this story had a name, what do you think would be a good name for it, and why? Can you think of any other stories with dogs in? Why does the writer put a dog in this story? How does having a dog affect what we think of John Chapman?
- C) If you had so much money that you didn't need all of it, who or what would you give it to? Explain why. Research a charity that helps the homeless, the poor or the hungry.
- D) Recently, there has been some controversy about the choice of statues that are put in public places in our societies. What do you think people should consider before they put up statues?

