

I want to be a worm

Primary school pupils discuss their school plays.

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Nicholas McConnell, 8, is in year 4 at Grange First School in Newcastle.

I was in a school play called The Lampton Worm. It was my first proper play, a Geordie folk tale. It's I really enjoyed my part, but I wish I had been in the worm. about a boy called John Lampton and a worm. Lampton has to go to war in Palestine, but before he leaves he goes fishing and catches a worm. At first he thinks he's caught a fish, but then he realises it's a worm and throws it down a well. Lampton goes off to war, but the worm grows and grows. There's a lot of fuss in the city because the worm gets too big and it tries to eat everyone.

We made the play a comedy. We added lots of jokes about the teachers and the head teacher. We spoke it Geordie and sang Geordie songs too. I played a town hall person complaining about the worm. I had to wear a waistcoat, top hat and shirt. I found the top hat down the back of my chest of drawers at home.

In the play, the mayor of the city is scared of the worm and makes a speech about it. I had to push a squirry cream pie in the mayor's face while he is making the speech. The audience laughed when I did it.

I really enjoyed my part, but I wish I had been in the worm. We made one like a Chinese dragon with six people underneath it. It was big and green.

At the end of the play, Lampton comes back from the war a hero and he kills the giant worm. It was hard work; we had to do lots of practising. We performed the play twice. The whole school and all of the parents of Class 4 watched it.

I like doing plays because you have to work in teams. I'd like to do another play. I wouldn't be an actor, but I might just join a theatre club when I go up to middle school next year.

Anna Mackay-Beasley, 10, is in year 6 at St Peter's Primary in Paddington, west London.

We're doing a play based on Johnny and the Dead by Terry Pratchett. We're adapting it for Christmas, but there aren't many girls in the story so we're going to make lots of new parts.

I don't know which part I'm going to play yet - I hope it will be a good one. I won't have to audition because the teacher chooses who gets what part. To get a good part, you have to be good at singing and dancing. It's not very fair because some people aren't very good at either and they always get really bad parts. There should be proper auditions because some people are scared to show what they can do in front of the whole class.

I think we'll have to wear kids' clothes in the play. There's a lot of dead people from Victorian times, too, so we might have to wear old-fashioned clothes as well. If I'm a dead person I'll probably have a white face because I'll have to look like a ghost. We have a person who comes in and does our make-up - she's done it for every play for the last three or four years.

I love acting. I like the games you play to make sure you trust each other. You fall down and trust someone to catch you. It's important to trust each other before you go on stage. Otherwise you feel nervous and think each other's going to get things wrong.

When I learn my lines I read them over and over and over again, then I write them out. Finally, I read them to somebody as if I'm acting. I can learn a page of lines in an hour.

We do twice as much acting as everybody else in school because my teacher is the only acting person in the whole school. He's a brilliant teacher. If I didn't do acting, then I'd be a boring person. I started when I was five and I'm hopefully going to do it for the rest of my life - or at least until I'm 80.

About the team

Interviews by editor Julia Press, 17, and reporters Camille Noriega, 13, Katherine Faulkner, 11, and Juanita Rosencior, 13. This article was published in the [Times Educational Supplement](#).

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