

# PSHE/SMSC EXTENSION: CONTEXTUALISING ALADDIN

The objective of this optional piece of work in KS3 PSHE is to help students connect and contrast the main themes in the *Aladdin* storyline with what is considered to be safe behaviour online for young people.

Some KS3 students who see the show will be too young to have social media accounts and you may not feel this discussion is right for your class, but older students may benefit from exploring these issues. Discussion points the class could look at include:

## STARTING POINT

Remind the class or prompt them to consider that, at the beginning of the show, Aladdin and Jasmine feel trapped in their lives and they both end up pretending to be someone they are not to try and escape.

In fact they actually mislead each other about who they are and what their lives are like. Jasmine dresses as a commoner and Aladdin transforms into Prince Ali. They maintain their new personas in front of people they know (each other) – and people they don't know.

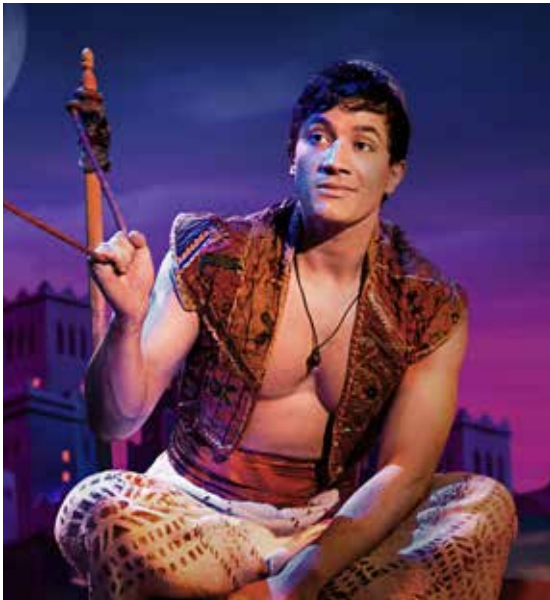
**Q** Challenge the class to think about this in small groups and work through these questions:

## CHANGING IDENTITIES

- How would it feel to pretend to be someone else, even if you were misleading them? When would that be okay, if at all?
- Sometimes people on social media think it's more important to look and sound good than to tell the truth. Is that a cool thing to do, or is it just doing what Aladdin did when he turned himself into Prince Ali?
- What picture might other people form of someone who did that?

## BEING TRAPPED

- What would happen if someone went too far in pretending to be a different person online and couldn't back out again? What would the consequences be for them and for others around them?
- How would that pressure make that person feel?



## EXTENSION:

This work could be broadened to focus on context. The social, cultural, historical, economic, and philosophical contexts of Aladdin could be explored in the English classroom. For example, the role of women in different societies or arranged marriages could be explored via the character of Jasmine.



# AFTER THE SHOW: IDEAS FOR WHOLE CLASS STARTER AND QUICK-FIRE ACTIVITIES

## NEW WORDS FOR OLD

*Expanding vocabulary and writing for performance.*

Challenge students to think of some different words to replace each bold one. They should try to change the tone of voice or personality of the character and aim to change the meaning of the sentence. You could introduce thesaurus work or synonyms.

- 'Are you positive we really lost them?' asked Jasmine. (Act 1, Sc 7)
- 'Fine. I don't need you guys anyway,' said Aladdin. (Act 2, Sc 1)
- 'Somebody call my agent,' shouted Genie. (Act 2, Sc 1)
- 'This is my happy place,' screamed Jafar. (Act 1 Sc 3)

Experiment with changing the meaning by asking the students to select and change other words by grammatical name such as nouns or adjectives (e.g. 'Someone call my mother,' wailed Genie).

## 'GENIE SAYS...'

*Understanding character. Public speaking.*

Genie has some lifestyle tips for characters from the show! Students start a sentence about a character from *Aladdin* using the prefix 'Genie says', and say something about their role in the story without using their name. The class guesses who they are talking about. Try these ones for starters:

- 'Genie says, if this character wore some brighter clothes they just might be a little more cheerful about life' (Jafar, the Royal Vizier)
- 'Genie says, if this character had got out of the palace a little more they might not be quite so trusting of other people.' (The Sultan)
- 'Genie says, if this character stopped pretending to be someone they aren't, they might find things work out better for them.' (Aladdin/Prince Ali)

For older or more able students write a selection of adjectives on the board (e.g. very, fantastic or colourful). Students must use as many as they can in their sentences.

## KEEP THE SCENE GOING

*Grammar and Connectives*

Choose a scene from the show and ask the students to describe what happens, going round the class saying one word each. Write down on the board each time a linking word is used (e.g. but, then, however, next). Discuss how these useful words can be used in composition. Ask students to compare the use of connectives in this verbal activity with connectives they can identify in the script extracts. Why do you think there are differences? Extend this activity by challenging students to find other grammatical word types (e.g. verbs, adverbs and nouns).



## POINTS OF VIEW

*Understanding storylines and events on stage. Writing to describe events*

Each student writes a 30 to 50-word mini-saga that sums up what they think happened in *Aladdin*. Ask students to read them out. Discuss what they have included and omitted. Do others agree? Why do we remember different things about the same event?

**Q** Guided discussion:

- How could a writer use characters' differing points of view to develop a narrative? For example, if two characters are describing the same event and drawing different conclusions, then that might tell us a lot about their characters and how they are different (for instance, Aladdin and Jasmine's description life inside the Palace).
- How might this impact on a story structure? For example, by suddenly introducing a second opinion of the same event later in a plot, a character's actions might be subject to a very different interpretation.

