



Reading the Poem

The Pied Piper of Hamelin

Teacher Preparation

Teachers are advised to read this poem aloud to themselves several times before presenting it to the class.

Teacher Strategy A - Setting the Scene

- 1.** Explain to class that the poem they are about to hear was written in 1842 by the famous poet, Robert Browning. He wrote it especially for a young boy who was ill. The poem is based on an event that happened in the German town of Hamelin many hundreds of years ago.
- 2.** Have the poem displayed in preparation to reading it to the class. There are a number of words that will be unfamiliar to students but the context will enable them to understand the meaning. Leave any explanation of words until after the poem has been read.
- 3.** Following the reading allow time for undirected discussion and any questions.
- 5.** Re-read verse paragraphs (episodes) 1 to 4 which set the scene and explains the problem of the rats. Explain any words not understood by students.
- 6.** Ask students to re-tell the events to end of verse 4 in their own words.
- 7.** Have individual students read the lines that they like best.



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Teacher Strategy B

1. Remind class of poem from last lesson. Explain that it is to be read for a class production.
2. Draw attention to the change in pace from first verse to second. Have students consider how the verse about the rats should be read to reflect the rats scurrying about and causing trouble.
3. Allow individual students to demonstrate how the second verse could be read.
4. Look at third verse. Ask class to suggest how the voices of the different townspeople should be portrayed.
5. Continue to look at the poem until all verses have been examined and class has determined how the poem as a whole should be read.
6. Divide class into groups of five or six, each with the text of the poem. Their task is to divide the poem between members of their group so that the poem can be read as a dramatic production using only their voices to portray the events.
7. Allow time for the groups to practice their reading to present the poem to an audience .
8. Before presenting the work to an audience use **PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN BLM 1** to prepare a program that explains the back ground to the poem and events depicted.

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Teacher Strategy C



- 1.** When children have worked with the poem for some time discuss what might really have happened to the children of Hamelin. Explain that the town of Hamelin records that 130 children were lost in the 13th century. But how they were lost is not clear. Some theories are that:
 - i.** They joined a Children's Crusade to go to the Holy Land. One such crusade had begun in Germany in 1212.
 - ii.** The rats had brought the deadly disease plague to Hamelin and the children all died of the disease.
 - iii.** They were taken off by a leader who was able to convince them to follow him and begin a new settlement in Eastern Europe. This is what Browning suggests.

- 2.** Have class complete **PIED PIPER OF HAMLIN BLM 2** to re-search possible answers to the mystery.