

Largs Academy  
Department of Drama  
Transition Tuesdays



# The Giant Who Threw Tantrums

by David Harrison

## Introduction to Performance

Inspired by the story of 'The Giant Who Threw Tantrums' you will take part in a rehearsed reading of a short story.

## Read the following story to yourself.

At the foot of Thistle Mountain there lay a village. In the village lived a little child who liked to go walking. One Saturday afternoon he was walking in the woods when he was startled by a terrible noise.

He scrambled quickly behind a bush.

Before long a huge giant came stamping down the path. He looked upset!

‘Tanglebangled ringlepox!’ the giant bellowed. He banged his head against a tree until all the leaves shook off like snowflakes.

‘Franglewhangled whippersnack!’ the giant roared. Yanking up the tree, he whirled it around his head and knocked down 27 other trees.

Muttering to himself, he stalked back up the path towards the top of Thistle Mountain.

The child hurried home.

‘I just saw a giant throwing a tantrum!’ he told everyone in the village. They only smiled.

‘There’s no such thing as a giant,’ the Mayor assured him.

You can use the link below to help you. Here you will find someone reading the entire story. You only need to listen to the first minute for today’s task but maybe you’ll want to listen to the entire story at the end.

[https://www.schooltube.com/media/the-giant-who-threw-tantrums/1\\_0v81kuvi](https://www.schooltube.com/media/the-giant-who-threw-tantrums/1_0v81kuvi)

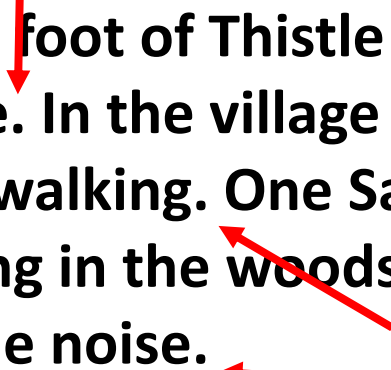
## Completing a Rehearsed Reading

Now that you have read the story we are going to analyse the writing so that we can read it aloud. If you have a sibling at home, why not aim read it to them or perhaps you could read it to a pet. If you have a voice recorder on a mobile phone you could use this instead or to listen to your rehearsals before performing live.

Let's begin by looking carefully at the punctuation. If you are able, you may wish to use a highlighter or highlighter function to mark out the different parts of punctuation.

One of the most obvious punctuation marks to notice is the full stop (.). In the first paragraph we have a number of these.

**At the foot of Thistle Mountain there lay a village. In the village lived a little child who liked to go walking. One Saturday afternoon he was walking in the woods when he was startled by a terrible noise.**



Go through all of the text and highlight or notice all of the full stops. At every one of these you must pause and take a breath. Go back and read the story again taking a very obvious breath and pause at each full stop. This will feel very strange to begin with but it is exactly what is required when speaking aloud for someone to be able to hear you and understand you clearly.

Excellent! Now that we have worked on the full stop let's begin to look at the comma (,). The comma is also used to indicate when to take a pause but this time it is a shorter pause. Let's look at the following sentences:

**Yanking up the tree, he whirled it around his head and knocked down 27 other trees.**

**Muttering to himself, he stalked back up the path towards the top of Thistle Mountain.**

Comma = a half breath

Full Stop = a full breath

Read this sentence aloud, making sure there is a difference between your half breath and your full breath.

Excellent work!

### Quick History Lesson

Most historians believe that punctuation as we know it today was invented to show how a text should be read aloud. By the fifth century BC, Greek playwrights were using some basic symbols to show where actors should pause, and the scholar Aristophanes of Byzantium (c257– c185 BC) invented a formal system of punctuation.

So there you go! Punctuation wasn't created by your teacher to torment you. It was an aid to allow ancient Greek actors to perform the script as the playwright wished.

Words are usually put together in units called **sentences**.

There are four main types of sentence:

**Statements** – this is the most common type and gives information about something. It ends in a full stop. For example, ‘I am going to the shops.’

**Questions** – These ask something. They always end in a question mark. For example, ‘Why are you going to the shops?’

**Commands** – sometimes called imperatives, these directly tell someone to do something. For example, ‘Come here!’, ‘Look at me!’, ‘Think about it.’ They can end with either full stops or exclamation marks.

**Exclamations** – these convey strong emotions such as anger, fear or surprise. For example, ‘Good grief!’ ‘You must be joking!’ ‘No way!’ ‘Absolutely not!’

**Can you notice any of these sentence types in the short story?**

**If you have printed off the story then:**

**Put an ‘S’ next to all the statements**

**Put a ‘Q’ next to any questions**

**Put a ‘C’ next to any commands and**

**Put an ‘E’ next to any exclamations**

**If you are looking at the story on screen then just make sure you have noticed the different types of sentences.**

Excellent!

You will have noticed the large amount of statements and also a number of exclamations present.

So, why have I asked you to identify the sentence types? Well, by knowing what types of sentences you are reading you will have a hint about **how** you should be saying them.

The easiest are commands, questions and exclamations.

If you are giving someone a command then you probably want to sound authoritative and in control. What tone\* of voice would you use if you wanted to sound like this? A shy and timid tone? No, of course not.

Asking questions can bring about three different types of intonation\* patterns in your voice. You can watch this short video below to listen to the different types of intonation patterns.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WhCncdRUvLo&safe=active>

Your biggest challenge is going to be your exclamatory sentences. These are used to express a sudden emotion like anger, fear, surprise ...

Look back at your exclamatory sentences. What tone/emotion would you associate with these sentences. Make a note on the story next to these sentences or make a mental note about how these lines should be delivered so that your audience recognise the emotion.

\*Tone – Emotion in your voice

\*Intonation – the rising and falling of your voice in speech

Now read the story aloud ensuring that there is a difference between the statements and the exclamations. Don't forget your pauses!

The last thing we are going to think about in our rehearsed reading is the use of direct speech. Direct speech is indicated by speech marks (" "). In our story we have the very obvious direct speech from the giant. It's not only obvious due to the use of speech marks but by the very unusual language used by the giant.

**'Tanglebangled ringlepox!'**

**'Franglewhangled whippersnack!'**

It would really make the character of the giant come alive in the reading if you could use a voice different to your own or one that is different from the narrator, the voice telling the story.

Spend some time experimenting with different voices that your giant could have.

The giant isn't the only character in the story. We also have the small child:

**'I just saw a giant throwing a tantrum!'**

And we have the Mayor:

**'There's no such thing as a giant'**

Give these characters a voice of their own too. That's four different voices for one story! What a challenge?!

Now that you have spent lots of time in the excellent analysis of the story you can begin to spend time preparing your rehearsed reading.

When you are ready, decide on your audience and read your story aloud. You should know some of the words quite well by now, so try lifting your eyes from the paper/screen and look directly at your audience. I find my cats are a perfect audience when I am rehearsing lines for a play.

