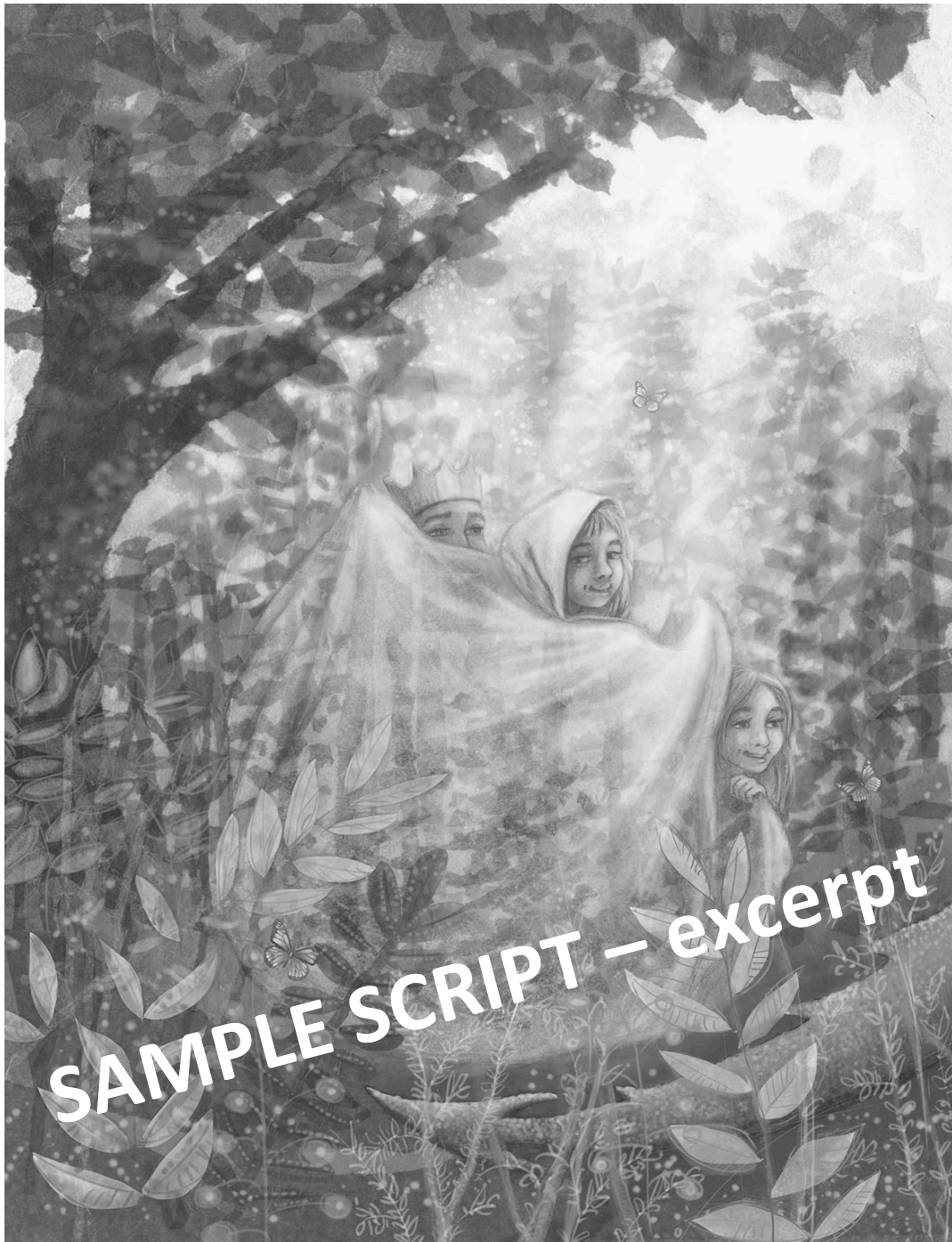


# Archie Abstock and the Incredible Cape



SAMPLE SCRIPT – excerpt

## A magical medieval musical

SCRIPT AND LYRICS BY PHIL CUMMINGS

MUSIC BY GLYN LEHMANN



# INTRODUCTION

We have developed this work with a view to leaving as much open as possible to enable schools to adapt and adjust to their own particular needs and resources.

Key aspects:

- ❖ Nineteen speaking parts and chorus opportunities in which many children can participate.
- ❖ Easy, flexible costuming options with opportunities for recycling.
- ❖ Duration is approximately 40 minutes.
- ❖ Staging suggestions have been included as guidance only; they may help with logistics, stage design, props and costuming.
- ❖ As well as the obvious benefits of being involved in a school production there are a number of themes that may be expanded upon in the classroom. We have included some suggestions.

Have fun!

*Phil Cummings* - script and lyrics

*Glyn Lehmann* – music

## TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

When beginning the process, children could be involved in planning and problem solving of set issues i.e. designing, drawing and drafting. They could also of course be involved backstage in tech roles, costuming assistance and movement of props. Here are some suggested points of interest for classroom study.

- ❖ In the opening rap sequence the sampled melody is based on Ring-a-Ring-a-Roses. The first printing of the rhyme appeared in 1881 in a book by Kate Greenway entitled *Mother Goose*. A study of the historical origins of the song may be of interest.
- ❖ A blacksmith was the technological wizard of his age. What types of tools, implements etc. might a blacksmith create? How were they used and why?
- ❖ A study of castles i.e. heating, plumbing, lifestyle, security, building materials and structures.
- ❖ A study of the Middle Ages.
- ❖ A study on dragon mythology.
- ❖ A study on the reality of being a knight. How heavy was a suit of armour and a sword?

There are a number of musical genres used in the songs.

Rap – *Dragon Rap*

Pop Ballad – *Just Me*

Soul – *Look Into The Mirror*

Musical Theatre (Comic opera) – *We Are The Knights*

Folk – *Arlie's Song*

Jazz/Blues – *You Never Listen*

Research the origins of a chosen genre and its relevance to today's music. This might offer an interesting perspective on historical studies.

**Other points of classroom discussion might be based on character and interpretation:**

Why is Arlie so maligned?

Why are the other children so cruel? How did Arlie handle it and could he have handled it better?

What makes him feel that he can't be who he wants to be?

What do you think happened to his father? Write your fictional account of his father's death.

How important was the princess in helping Arlie find a solution?

Would Arlie have saved the king without her and if so why?

Again, these are merely suggestions and starting points that can help tie in classroom teaching with the development of the production. There are a number of other artistic and creative possibilities in the staging suggestions to follow.

## SCENE SUGGESTIONS

These simple ideas could obviously be expanded upon depending on budgets and costing constraints.

### 1. The Village

A village might be created from large painted cardboard boxes.

The castle, hills and forest could be painted on a backdrop enabling the scene transitions to be almost seamless.

### 2. The Castle

As above, the castle could be a fridge box or other large box painted and cut to shape, making it easy to move/slide.

A small child's play tent could add to the setting giving it a 3D effect.

When Arlie is collecting the material discarded by the wasteful tailors and it floats down to him, magician scarves are perfect and float ethereally when dropped or thrown. Tissue paper might also work.

Also, they could use recycled clothes and cloth i.e. cut up oddments of secondhand clothing with material that has a silk or satin feel - choose material light enough to float and drift.

*Art activity:* Children could dye or tie dye their own scarves and materials.

### 3. The Forest

This could be created using simple cardboard trees that are easily moved/slid on and off stage.

The camouflage area on stage only needs to be very small, e.g. a suitable length of hessian so that Arlie blends in when under his cape.

## COSTUME SUGGESTIONS

**Arlie:** Waistcoat or jacket could be purchased from a secondhand clothing store and decorated with colourful pieces of cloth.

The cape could be a bedsheet or other material of suitable earthy colour decorated with leaves, sticks, feathers, grass, mushrooms, bark etc. created using material offcuts and attached to the cape.

*Art activity:* Alternatively, children could paint a sheet with leaves, sticks, feathers, grass, mushrooms, bark etc.

**Knights:** There are many suggested methods of simple costuming of the knights online, such as a pillow case cut to place over the head, decorated with coat of arms and perhaps tied at the waist.

*Art activity:* Designing, decorating, researching heraldry. Children could research their family or choose to represent their favourite things or their school and what it stands for as they design their own 'coats of arms'.

The blackened knights - after the dragon has burnt them - a black covering of their costume, again, might be dark pillow cases cut to quickly slip over their heads. Charcoal might be used to blacken faces.

**Dragon's Tail:** (Forest Scene) Could be made from any number of materials including stuffed pillowcases sewn together. The tail might have fishing line attached so that it can be moved invisibly by someone off stage giving it an occasional tug.

Once again, these are only basic suggestions to hopefully help you on your way.

**The Village Children:** The children could wear plain clothes, loose fitting tops, perhaps a little dirty or dusty. Any pants they wear might be cut to three quarter length to reflect the style of the period.

**The Princess:** The Princess is trying not to be noticed so she would wear plain clothes that would identify her more as one of the village children than a princess.

**The Queen:** The queen might have a crown and wear decorated clothing reflecting her wealth and power. She may also have a baton with which she can wield her authority, particularly when dealing with the knights.

**The King:** The clothes the king might wear would make him stand out as wealthy and powerful, i.e. a crown, jewelled chains around his neck, golden rings, shiny buttons on his clothing, gold or silver fringing etc.



# SCRIPT

## **Arlie Abbstock and the Incredible Cape**

### **The Musical**

Script and lyrics by Phil Cummings

Music by Glyn Lehmann

### **Scenes**

1. The Village
2. The Castle
3. The Forest

### **Characters**

Arlie Abbstock

Arlie's mother

Village children (Group 1, Group 2), including speaking parts for:

- Child 1
- Child 2
- Child 3
- Child 4
- Child 5
- Child 6

The king

The queen

The princess

Tailor 1

Tailor 2

Tailor 3

Tailor 4

Knights, including speaking parts for:

- Knight 1
- Knight 2
- Knight 3
- Knight 4

All characters can be played by either boys or girls.

# SCENE 1 - THE VILLAGE



## Tk 1 MUSIC - The Village Square

*A Medieval village. Children playing in the village square; perhaps old fashioned games such as hopscotch, quoits etc. Some pretending to be knights battling shadows, and others roaring and flying like dragons.*

*Narrator appears and wends way through the playing crowd holding a large book entitled 'Arlie Abbstock: An Autobiography.'*

*In the background there is the rhythmic chink of a blacksmith hammer. The villagers move to the rhythm of the hammering and the village children call to each other in playful banter.*



Forward to  
next track

Track 1 ends (or fade)

**Child 1** Here I come! You'd better run.

**Child 2** Ha ha, why? You'll never catch me.

**Child 3** That's right; you won't catch any of us.

**Child 1** Oh yeah! I bet I will.

*Arlie is sitting, watching the children play. He is sewing cloth with a needle and thread. His small cottage window is behind him.*

*The narrator stops, opens the book and begins reading as the children continue playing in silence.*

**Narrator:** Arlie Abbstock lived in a small village in the days of kings, queens, castles and dragons. Arlie's father died when he was a baby so he lived alone with his mother. The village had been a peaceful place until a mean dragon came to live in the mountain caves nearby. The dragon loomed as a constant threat and cast a shadow of fear and uncertainty over the village.



## Tk 2 SFX - Dragon Attack

*There is a sudden ROAR - the children duck and cower. The wafting sound of huge wings can be heard. Note: If logistics allow there might be a shadow pass overhead to depict the shadow of the looming dragon.*



Forward to  
next track

*As the sound effect ends, Child 4 appears with black teased wig as if hair has been singed - charcoal face, as if burnt. Points to the sky and cries out:*

**Child 4** Hey! Did you see that dragon! That was *really* close! I could have been fried!



### Tk 3 SONG - Dragon Rap

*Choreograph appropriate movements – children might like to work on creating their own. Child 1 pretends to be the dragon. Child 2 pretends to bravely fend off the dragon. Village children are divided into Group 1 and Group 2, responding to each statement of Child 1 and Child 2 respectively.*

**Child 1 (dragon)**      **Stand back, it's my turn**  
**I am the dragon my breath will burn**

**Group 1**                      **Stand back, it's his turn**  
**He is the dragon his breath will burn**  
*(sing)* **Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah, nah**  
**Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah, nah**

**Child 2**                      **Get back dragon! Out of my way!**  
**You won't fry me, not today**

**Group 2**                      **Get back dragon! Out of her way!**  
**You won't fry her not today**  
*(sing)* **Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah, nah**  
**Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah, nah**

**Child 1**                      **When I roar the fire will leap**  
**I know you can't take the heat**

**Group 1**                      **When he roars the fire will leap**  
**He knows you can't take the heat**  
*(sing)* **Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah, nah**  
**Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah, nah**

**Child 2**                      **Huh! Really! Just you try me**  
**I am brave, you won't fry me**

**Group 2**                      **Huh! Really! Just you try her**  
**She is brave, you won't fry her**  
*(sing)* **Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah, nah**  
**Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah, nah**

*The village children dance around each other playfully.*

**Group 1 & 2**                      *(sing)* **Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah, nah**  
**Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah, nah**  
**Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah, nah**  
**Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah, nah**



Forward to  
next track

<b>Child 3</b>	Look out!
<b>Child 4</b>	Ha ha nearly got you!
<b>Child 5</b>	No you didn't.
<b>Child 6</b>	You're cooked!
<b>Child 1</b>	ROOOAR!
<b>Child 2</b>	CHARGE!

*All children charge off stage in pursuit of Child 1 (dragon).*

<b>Narrator</b>	Everyday Arlie Abbstock would watch the children playing. He would hardly ever join in their games. He had tried but he always got in the way and the other children would get cross with him. Anyway, he found it boring to run about and shout for no reason at all. He would much rather have a needle and thread at his fingertips than a sword or a shield because Arlie loved to stitch and weave and sew.
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*Arlie's mother appears.*

<b>Arlie</b>	Mother, I've just remembered! The royal tailors are working at the castle today.
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<b>Mother</b>	I know Arlie.
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<b>Arlie</b>	Well, you know what that means don't you?
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<b>Mother</b>	Yes I do Arlie. They will be throwing all their scrap material over the castle wall, just like they do every week.
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<b>Arlie</b>	That's right mother and I will be there to collect it. I wonder what colours I will get today. Last week the red and blue gloves I made sold well at the market stall.
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<b>Mother</b>	Yes they did Arlie and I don't know where we'd be without the money from your market stall. Your father would be <i>very</i> proud of you.
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<b>Arlie</b>	Do you really think so mother?
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*Arlie's mother helps Arlie put on a patchwork vest/waistcoat that Arlie has obviously made from scraps. She takes hold of Arlie's shoulders and smiles.*



**Mother**

I know he would.

You are the amazing Arlie Abbstock! Now off you go.

*A small group of children, still playing, reenter. Arlie walks through their boisterous game and is bumped and knocked.*

*Princess appears at the side of the stage; watching what is happening but lurking like a shadow, not getting involved. She is not dressed like a princess.*

**Child 1**

Get out of the way Arlie!

*Arlie is sent spinning from one child to another in an awkward exchange.*

**Child 2**

Yes, get out of the way! You can't play!

**Child 1**

You're ruining the game.

**Child 2**

You always do!

*All children point crossly and say in sharp chorus...*

**Village Children**

GO! Arlie Abbstock!

*The children turn their backs on Arlie and return to their games as they leave the stage. Arlie wanders dejectedly toward the castle wall. The Princess watches him walk away into the shadows as he too leaves the stage.*



**Tk 4** MUSIC - The Castle (for scene change, if required)

## SCENE TWO - THE CASTLE

*The tailors can be seen sorting scraps of material. Stage blocks may be used for the tailors to stand on behind the castle wall so their upper bodies are visible. Arlie sits at the castle wall and the tailors throw material scraps that drift down to him.*

**Tailor 1**

We don't need any more red.

**Tailor 2**

The King doesn't like too much green.

**Tailor 3**

This yellow is no good, it doesn't suit him.

**Tailor 4**

Yes, throw all these scraps away. They are no good to us or the king.



Forward to  
next track



**Tk 5 SONG - Just Me**

*Princess reappears, watching, wondering. Arlie doesn't see her.*

**Arlie**

*Chorus*

**I don't know what will become of me  
I don't think I can ever be what others dreamed I'd be  
I am who I am can't they see  
It's so hard to be what others expect me to be  
When I am just...me**

*Verse 1*

**I gaze from my window  
Every morning, every day  
And I watch the games others play  
I follow where they go  
But in their games I know  
I'm always lost in their shadow**

*Chorus*

**I don't know what will become of me  
I don't think I can ever be what others dreamed I'd be  
I am who I am can't they see  
It's so hard to be what others expect me to be  
When I am just...me**

*Verse 2*

**In my quiet village  
People stop and stare  
I know what they're thinking, I don't care  
Eyes follow where I go  
But in my heart I know  
One day I'll walk from their shadow**

*Chorus*

**I don't know what will become of me  
I don't think I can ever be what others dreamed I'd be  
I am who I am can't they see  
It's so hard to be what others expect me to be  
When I am just...me**



Forward to  
next track

*Arlie finishes his song then runs about collecting scraps of material. As he runs he bumps into the princess. She falls to the ground. Arlie doesn't know who she is. The princess brushes herself down.*

**Princess** What are you doing?

**Arlie** Collecting scraps of material that the wasteful king is throwing away.

**Princess** Why?

**Arlie** I love to stitch and weave and sew. See, I made this from scraps collected here.  
*Arlie twirls to show off his waistcoat/jacket, struts as if modelling.*

**Princess** You actually made this yourself?  
*Admiring the vest/waistcoat.*

**Arlie** Yes, it was easy. Here, try it on.

**Princess** I like it, it's great.  
*Trying on vest. She struts and caresses the waistcoat admiringly.*

**Arlie** And I make gloves, scarfs and hats with scraps as well.

**Princess** What do you do with them?

**Arlie** I sell everything at the village market.

**Princess** You are *very* resourceful and *very* clever.

**Arlie** Thank you.

**Princess** Don't worry about those children back there.  
*Places her hand on his shoulder.*

**Arlie** I try not to.



#### **Tk 6 SONG** - Look Into The Mirror

*Princess glances at something shiny/mirror-like hanging at eye level on the castle wall; a silver shield for example. OR Princess produces handheld mirror from her pocket.*

**Princess** *Verse*  
**Come take my hand**  
**I will help you stand**  
**Against them and what they say**  
**I know they are cruel**  
**But they are the fools**  
**I know you will have your day**

*Pre-Chorus*

**Stand here beside me  
Brave, bold and free  
Don't let anyone take that away**

*Chorus*

**Look into the mirror  
Nothing could be clearer  
We are who we are  
Under the same sky, moon and stars  
Look into the mirror  
Nothing could be clearer  
We are who we are  
Under the same sky, moon and stars**

*Bridge*

**No shining sword  
No castle wall  
Will hold me in  
Will make me fall  
Don't let cruel words  
Or staring eyes  
Or pointing fingers  
Cast a shadow  
Or darken your skies**

*Pre-Chorus*

**Stand here beside me  
Brave, bold and free  
Don't let anyone take that away**

*Chorus 2*

**Look into the mirror  
Nothing could be clearer  
We are who we are  
Under the same sky, moon and stars**

**Princess & Arlie**

**Look into the mirror  
Nothing could be clearer  
We are who we are  
Under the same sky, moon and stars  
Look into the mirror  
Nothing could be clearer  
We are who we are  
Under the same sky, moon and stars  
The same sky, moon and stars**

Track 6 ends  
Track 7 begins  
- no pause

## **Tk 7** SFX - The Dragon Swoops

*Song finishes. Sound FX continue - the sound of wings and a loud roar as dragon suddenly swoops.*

*CUE: after the first dragon roar and swooping sound...*

**Arlie** Look out! It's the dragon.  
*Reaching to protect the Princess.*

**Princess** Oh no! He's going into the castle.  
*Pointing to the castle.*

**Arlie** Look! He's got the king!  
*Pointing overhead.*

**The King** HEEEEEEELP!  
*Off stage, as if in the distance.*

**Princess** Father! FAAAAAATHEEEEEER!  
*Looking to the sky.*

*Arlie looks shocked, not only because the dragon has taken the king but also because the girl he has been chatting to is the princess.*

**Arlie** Y...You called the king father. You're the p...p...princess?

**Princess** Yes I am.

**Arlie** But you don't look like a princess.

**Princess** Thank you... I think.


*The sound of stomping feet as the knights, in single file, are approaching in a boisterous march. They chant in rhythm with their stomping.*

**Knights (Chanting)** We are the Knights of the King... We are the Knights of the King... We are the Knights of the King...  
*They chant until they stop marching and all bump into the leader. The queen is with them. They are pompous and bumbling.*

**Knight 1** Princess, what are you doing here?

**Queen** Yes young lady, what *are* you doing outside the castle walls?

**Princess** Never mind that now, what are we going to do to save father?



Forward to  
next track

**Knight 1** Don't worry. We are going to attack.  
*Puffing out chest.*

**Knight 2** Yes, we are going to charge in and wave our swords about like this.  
*Waves sword foolishly.*

**Knight 3** And shout very loudly like this. YAAAAAGGGGH!

**Knight 4** That dragon will run for its life when it sees us coming.  
*Nodding at how impressive he believes his friends have been.*

**All Knights** Oh yes indeed, it sure will!  
*All together in chorus nodding resolutely.*

**Arlie** And if it doesn't?

**Knight 4** Oh it will, just *look* at us.  
*Puffing out their chests and striking comical poses.*



## **Tk 8** SONG - We Are The Knights

**Knights** We are the knights of the king  
 We can do almost anything  
 With a clang, a rattle, a bang and a...ting!

We are the knights of the king  
 Not afraid of anything  
 Except bugs in our armour that can...sting!  
*One knight jumping about as if he has a bee in his armour.*

We are knights of the queen  
 Big and strong and mean  
 We bathe once a year to keep...clean!

We are the knights of the queen  
 People gasp when we are seen  
 We draw big crowds that love to cheer and...scream!

We are knights always on guard  
 To guard is very hard  
 We train everyday in the c...

We are big...  
 When... knight  
 ...is the only way... Hey! Yaagh!... right?

We are the knights of the king  
 We can do almost anything  
 With a clang, a rattle, a bang and a... tiiiiing! Tah Dah!

**END OF SAMPLE SCRIPT**

