

# SPAMALOT TEACHERS PACK

*„We eat ham, and jam, and Spam a lot.“*

**This teachers pack includes factual information as well as tasks and topics to be dealt with in the classroom. Cut and paste as you please, and please consult the official programme for additional information.**

## **Contents:**

1. Synopsis of *Monty Python's Spamalot*
2. The Quest for the Holy Grail
3. King Arthur – a legendary hero of time?
4. Monty Python's Spamalot
5. The concept behind *Monty Python's Spamalot*
6. Did you Know?
7. Creative Task
8. Let's get Theatrical
9. Spamalot Theatre Visit
10. Multiple Choice
11. Glossary

## **1) Synopsis of Monty Python's Spamalot**

A historian gives a brief overview of medieval England. In a miscommunication between the actors and the narrator, the actors sing an introductory song about Finland ("**Fisch Schlapping Song**"). The Historian returns, irritated, and tells the frolicking Finns that he was talking about **England**, not **Finland**. The scene immediately changes to a dreary, dark village with penitent monks in hooded robes chanting Latin. King Arthur travels the land with his servant Patsy, who follows him around banging two coconut shells together to make the sound of a horse's hooves as Arthur "rides" before him, trying to recruit Knights of the Round Table to join him in Camelot. He encounters a pair of sentries who are more interested in debating whether two swallows could successfully carry a coconut than in listening to the king.

Sir Robin, a collector of plague victims, and Lancelot, a large, handsome and incredibly violent man, meet as Lancelot attempts to dispose of the sickly Not Dead Fred ("*He Is Not Dead Yet*"). They agree to become Knights of the Round Table together, Lancelot for the fighting, and Robin for the singing and the dancing.

Arthur attempts to convince a peasant named Dennis Galahad that he, Arthur, is king of England because the Lady of the Lake gave him Excalibur, the sword given only to the man fit to rule England. However, Dennis and his mother, Mrs Galahad, are political radicals and deny that any king who has not been elected by the people has any legitimate right to rule over them. To settle the issue, Arthur has the Lady Of The Lake and her Laker Girls appear

to turn Dennis into a knight ("*Come With Me*"). They are joined by Sir Robin and Sir Lancelot, and together with Sir Bedevere and "the aptly named" Sir Not-Appearing-In-This-Show (a knight resembling Don Quixote, who promptly apologises and leaves), they make up the Knights of the Round Table ("*All For One*").

The five knights gather in Camelot, a deliberately anachronistic place resembling Las Vegas's Camelot-inspired Excalibur resort, complete with showgirls, oversized dice and the Lady of the Lake headlining the Castle in full Cher get-up ("*Knights Of The Round Table*" / "*The Song That Goes Like This (Reprise)*"). In the midst of their revelry, they are contacted by God (a recording voiced by John Cleese of the original Monty Python troupe and Eric Idle in the version currently touring the UK) who tells them to locate the Holy Grail. Urged on by the Lady Of The Lake ("*Find Your Grail*"), the Knights set off. They travel throughout the land until they reach a castle, only to be viciously taunted by lewd French soldiers. They attempt to retaliate by sending them a large wooden rabbit in the style of the Trojan Horse; however, they realise after the fact that it was not as simple as leaving the rabbit and walking away – they should have hidden inside it. Defeated, they leave in a hurry when the French begin taunting them again, sending cancan dancers after them and throwing barnyard animals including cows at them ("*Run Away!*"). Arthur and his followers manage to run into the safety of the wings before the French catapult the Trojan Rabbit at them.

*\*TASK: Compare the King Arthur legend to the plot of Spamalot*

## **2) The Quest for the Holy Grail**

The Holy Grail has become a central theme in Arthurian literature. Some historians have traced its association with Arthur as far back as some of the earliest legends about him. But the Grail first began to shine as a major Christian symbol in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, particularly with the circulation of the *Vulgate Cycle*, written by an unknown author.

On the eve before Pentecost, a beautiful woman came to Arthur's castle, and asked Lancelot to follow her into the forest. Lancelot, always the chivalrous knight, agreed, and the two went out. They rode until they came to a nunnery. As they entered it, Lancelot saw that two of his cousins, Sir Bors and Sir Lionel, were already there. Then the nuns brought out a young man and asked Lancelot to knight him. Lancelot agreed, and the youth was knighted. The next day, as he and his cousins were riding back to Arthur's castle, Sir Bors remarked that the young man had looked so much like Lancelot, it must have been his son by Elaine.

When Lancelot returned to Camelot, the knights were all summoned to meet at the Round Table. As he took his seat, he saw that there was now an inscription above the Siege Perilous. It read:

"Four Hundred and Fifty Years Have Passed Since The Passion Of Our Lord Jesus Christ: And On The Day Of Pentecost This Seat Shall Find Its Master."

As their meeting began, an elderly knight entered the hall. With him was the young man

Lancelot had knighted the evening before. He was Galahad, Lancelot's son by Elaine. He took his rightful place at the Siege Perilous.

Shortly later, an image of the Holy Grail appeared, floating over the table. It was a sign. It was time for Arthur and his knights to seek out the Grail.

In the adventure that followed, Galahad quickly proved himself to be the greatest knight of all time. Whereas his father had been charismatic and charming, Galahad was pure of heart, and refrained from much temptation in order to pursue more heavenly ideals.

Many of Arthur's knights sought out the Grail, but most returned badly wounded, or worse. Then three knights went out in search of it: Sir Bors, Sir Perceval, and Sir Galahad. They traveled to Corbenic by ship to seek out Galahad's grandfather, King Pellés.

When the knights arrived, they were met by a host of Galahad's family from Elaine's side. Then, King Pellés brought out a sword that had been broken in three pieces. When Galahad held them, the sword became whole again. It was a sign. Galahad was given a vision, and he was shown wonders beyond any mortal men can imagine. When he came out of his trance, he knew what had to be done.

The Grail was in Britain, he said. But Camelot was unworthy of it. The knights were to take the Grail to the holy city of Sarras in the Middle East, to fulfill God's will.

When the three knights returned to their ship, they found the Grail already waiting for them there. They took it to the city of Sarras, just as they had been instructed. There, a great light appeared in the sky, and the Grail was lifted up into Heaven, forever beyond the reach of men.

Of the three knights who had ridden out in search of the Grail, only Sir Bors returned to Camelot to tell of what had happened. For Sir Perceval was moved by all he had seen, and chose to live out the remainder of his days as a hermit living in the forests outside Sarras. And Sir Galahad, having seen his vision of the Grail, died shortly after. For he gave up his life so he could remain pure.

### **3) King Arthur – a legendary hero of time?**

*\*TASK: Read the following analysis of King Arthur and think about if he would still be a hero in our time. If not, how should he behave to be one?*

Although King Arthur is one of the most well-known figures in the world, his true identity remains a mystery. Attempts to identify the historical Arthur have been unsuccessful, since he is largely a product of fiction. Most historians, though, agree that the real Arthur was probably a battle leader of the Britons against the Anglo-Saxons in the sixth century. In literature, King Arthur's character is unique and ever changing, taking on a different face in every work. There is never a clearly definitive picture that identifies Arthur's character. It is therefore necessary to look at a few different sources to get better insight into the character of Arthur, the once and future king.

Arthurian literature can be divided into two basic categories, pseudo-histories and romances. The main difference between the two is that pseudo-histories such as Wace and

much of the Celtic work, for example, Geoffrey of Monmouth show Arthur as a strong, central character, making him the dominant figure in the story. He is the one who goes on quests and battles, gaining respect and glory for his court. In romances, however, Arthur is most often overshadowed by his knights, staying mainly in the background as the source and the inspiration behind their great chivalric deeds.

King Arthur's character has many faces. He is shown to be kind, wise and generous on one hand, yet at the same time, he can be seen as a weak king who is stubborn, childish, and unable to make wise decisions for himself or for the good of the court. He is described by Nennius as a powerful warrior, who is able to personally slay 960 men in one charge. Wace shows him possessing leadership qualities as he establishes the Round Table to ensure that justice and peace prevail. In Celtic legends, Arthur is a supernatural hero who battles giants, monsters, and witches. He kills the Demon Cat of Losanne and hunts the boar Twrch Truyth driving him into the sea.

Some literary work depicts Arthur as an ideal Christian hero and as among God's elect. Young Arthur is able to withdraw the sword from the stone because he has been chosen by God to be the next king. Officers in the Roman army carried shields bearing portraits of their emperors. Geoffrey describes Arthur having a shield with the likeness of the Virgin Mary; this is a perfect image for a Christian hero who is primarily under the authority of God. Two Arthurs are present in Arthurian literature. One is an epic hero who is flawless and can do no wrong. He is the ideal, who is the symbol of the values of the Round Table. The second Arthur is more human. He is depicted as a two-dimensional character, with faults and imperfections. This Arthur is more popular, as the reader is better able to relate to an imperfect king than to an untouchable warrior. This Arthur feels fears, jealousy, and has doubts. However despite these flaws he always retains his prestige. Arthur continues to personify the ideal of the chivalric code and remains a glorious, beloved, and respected king whose authority stays intact despite his weaknesses. These qualities make King Arthur a true legend, which continues to fascinate and intrigue audiences throughout the generations.

#### **4) MONTY PYTHON'S SPAMALOT**

##### **So, Who Were Monty Python?**

**Monty Python** (sometimes known as **The Pythons**) were a British surreal comedy group who created the sketch comedy show *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, which first aired on the BBC on 5 October 1969. Forty-five episodes were made over four seasons. The Python phenomenon developed from the television series into something larger in scope and impact, including touring stage shows, films, numerous albums, several books, and a stage musical. The group's influence on comedy has been compared to the Beatles' influence on music.



*\*TASK: Look at the photo and discuss with a partner, who is who*

Monty Python was born in May 1969, at the Light of Kashmir tandoori restaurant in Hampstead, where five Brits (Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Eric Idle, Terry Jones and Michael Palin) and an American (animator Terry Gilliam) first sat down to discuss working together on a new BBC comedy series. Since 1966, five of the Pythons-to-be had all been writing and performing in numerous eclectic comedy shows, including 'The Frost Report', 'At Last the 1948 Show' and 'Do Not Adjust Your Set' – the last of which featured Gilliam's highly-original cut-out animations, which would become integral to Monty Python's unique style. The team all agreed that they wanted to overturn the conventions of traditional sketch comedy – sketches with a beginning, middle and end, punchlines, blackouts, and topical gags. Their approach to comedy would be unpredictable, aggressive and irreverent, each episode a thirty-minute stream-of-consciousness, reflecting the revolutionary times of the late '60s.

### **Who's who in the zoo?**

#### **Graham Chapman**

Born in Leicester, Graham Chapman studied medicine at Cambridge and St. Bartholomew's, but it was his participation in Cambridge's Footlights Club (where he met and partnered with John Cleese) that led to his touring New Zealand with "Cambridge Circus." Comedy overtook his medical career.

Having survived alcoholism and participation in the Dangerous Sports Club, and serving as a spokesperson for gay rights, Chapman died of complications from throat and spinal cancer on October 4, 1989. He was only 48 years old, and would no longer be late for a Python writing session.

#### **John Cleese**

Born in Weston-Super-Mare in North Somerset, Cleese studied law at Cambridge University, where he also wrote and performed in Cambridge Footlights revues with medical student Graham Chapman. He escaped a projected career as a solicitor by accepting an offer to write for BBC Radio.

#### **Eric Idle**

Born in South Shields in Northern England, Eric Idle was president of Footlights at Cambridge University (and was the first to allow women into the theatrical club). He appeared on stage in "Oh! What a Lovely War," contributed to the BBC Radio series "I'm Sorry, I'll Read That Again," and worked on "The Frost Report" and "We Have Ways of Making You Laugh" (which also featured cartoonist Terry Gilliam). He later invited Terry Jones and Michael Palin and eventually Gilliam to join him on "Do Not Adjust Your Set."

Idle's razor-sharp wit and musical gifts were evident throughout Python's TV, movie, book and record output. A master of wordplay, Idle portrayed a chat show guest who speaks entirely in anagrams, as well as a man who helps people learn to finish their own sentences.

### **Terry Gilliam**

Born and raised in Minneapolis and Los Angeles, Terry Gilliam's youthful enthusiasm for drawing cartoons infused his academic life and his streak of anti-authoritarianism. His early knockabout career, as a magazine illustrator and art director in L.A. and New York City in the 1960s, allowed him to cross paths with "Cambridge Circus" star John Cleese, whom he featured in a "Help" magazine photo essay about a man's lust for a Barbie doll. After moving to London, Gilliam continued with creating cartoons and animation for "We Have Ways of Making You Laugh," "Do Not Adjust Your Set," "Marty," and "Broaden Your Mind."

### **Terry Jones**

Among the Pythons, Terry Jones - an enthusiastic and passionate driver of the group - has pursued perhaps the broadest range of artistic and intellectual pursuits, from writing and performing to directing; from comedian and children's book author to Middle Ages scholar; from documentary host to political columnist. Born in Colwyn Bay, Wales, Jones teamed with fellow Oxford student Michael Palin to write and perform revues for the university's theatre club.

### **Michael Palin**

Born in Sheffield, Yorkshire, Michael Palin was a student of history at Oxford, where he wrote and performed in theatrical shows with Terry Jones. The two became writing partners whose TV credits included "The Frost Report," "Marty," "Do Not Adjust Your Set," and "The Complete and Utter History of Britain," before the formation of Python.

## **QUICK QUIZ on MONTY PYTHON**

1. Who is Monty Python?
2. Where did Monty Python begin? And why do you think it began at this location?
3. When did Monty Python begin?
4. Were all the Monty Python members British?
5. What was their sketch comedy show called?
6. When did it first air on television?
7. How many episodes were there?

8. Their influence on comedy has been compared to a famous group's influence on music. Who were they compared to? Is this an accurate comparison?
9. Who or what was „The Footlights“?
10. Monty Python is well-known for certain symbols, a large foot, the pointing finger, clouds parting to name a few, Why were these an element in their comedy?

### **QUICK QUIZ ANSWERS**

1. It is a comedy group from England, not a person
2. Monty Python began in a Tandoori Restaurant because that is where they must have been eating at the time.
3. It began in May 1969
4. No, Terry Gilliam is American.
5. Monty Python's Flying Circus
6. 5 October 1969
7. 45
8. They have been compared to the Beatles. The second part of the answer depends on the student opinion.
9. It was the Drama Club at Cambridge University.
10. Terry Gilliam was an animator.

*\*Task: Look up on the Internet which other film, shows, etc. they have produced and discuss with a partner which other productions of the Python's are in the musical SPAMALOT (Life of Brian, Monty Python and the Holy Grail, and?)*

*\*Task: How are these other productions introduced in the musical? (e.g. „always look on the Bright of life“, Lady of the Lake and Laker girls (musical in general is ridiculed (lächerlich gemacht), the Knights, scene with killer rabbit, scene with umbrellas (always look on the bright side of life), Camelot as Las Vegas and so on)*

## Characters

**KING ARTHUR** (Late 30s-60s.): The King of England who sets out on a quest to form the Knights of the Roundtable and find the Holy Grail. Great Humour. Good singer.

**SIR ROBIN** (30s-40s): A Knight of the Roundtable.  
Ironically called 'Sir Robin the Brave,' though he couldn't be more cowardly. Joins the Knights for the singing and dancing. Also plays **GUARD 1** and **BROTHER MAYNARD**, a long-winded monk.

**SIR LANCELOT d/b/a LANCE** (30s-40): A Knight of the Roundtable. He is fearless to a bloody fault but through a twist of fate, does discover his 'softer side.' This actor **MUST** be great with character voices and accents, as he also plays **THE FRENCH TAUNTER**, an arrogant, condescending, over-the-top Frenchman, the **KNIGHT OF NI**, an absurd, cartoonish leader of a peculiar group of Knights, and **TIM THE ENCHANTER**, a ghostly being with a Scottish accent.

**PATSY** (30s-40s): King Arthur's horse and servant. Underappreciated but always longing for King Arthur's approval. Good, funny, physical mover with some tap dancing. Also plays **MAYOR**, a jolly red-faced man who advertises the merits of his home town and the drunken, useless **GUARD 2**.

**SIR GALAHAD** (30s): A Knight of the Roundtable.  
Begins as Dennis, a lower class 'mud gatherer' who becomes Knighted and transforms into the dashing Sir Galahad. Also plays **PRINCE HERBERT'S FATHER**, a wealthy, brutish Yorkshireman man at odds with his sensitive son, **THE BLACK KNIGHT** who is always ready to duel despite multiple injuries. Strong baritenor singing required.

**SIR BEDEVERE** (20s-40s): A Knight of the Roundtable.  
An inept scholar. Also plays **DENNIS GALAHAD'S MOTHER**, a shrill peasant woman, and **CONCORDE**, Sir Lancelot's horse. No solo singing.

**THE LADY OF THE LAKE** (20s-30s): A Diva. Strong, beautiful, possesses mystical powers. The leading lady of the show. Great singing voice is essential, as she must be able to sing effortlessly in many styles and vocal registers. Especially seeking actresses of all races for this role.

**THE FOLLOWING ROLES ARE PLAYED BY THE SAME ACTOR** (20s-30s): Tenor singing required.  
Very good mover. Good supporting role.

**HISTORIAN**: A tweedy academic.

**NOT DEAD FRED**: A sickly little fellow who, despite others' beliefs, claims he is "not yet dead."

**FRENCH GUARD**: The condemnatory French sidekick to the French Taunter.

**MINSTREL**: In Sir Robin's band.

**PRINCE HERBERT**: The hopeful and frilly prince who loves to sing and pines for his love atop a



tower.

SIR NOT APPEARING may double as THE DANCING MONK A MALE DANCER appears as THE DANCING NUN

THE VOICE OF GOD

TWO FRENCH GUARDS are two of the MALE ENSEMBLE

ROBIN'S MINSTRELS are also ENSEMBLE: 2 MEN, 1 WOMAN.

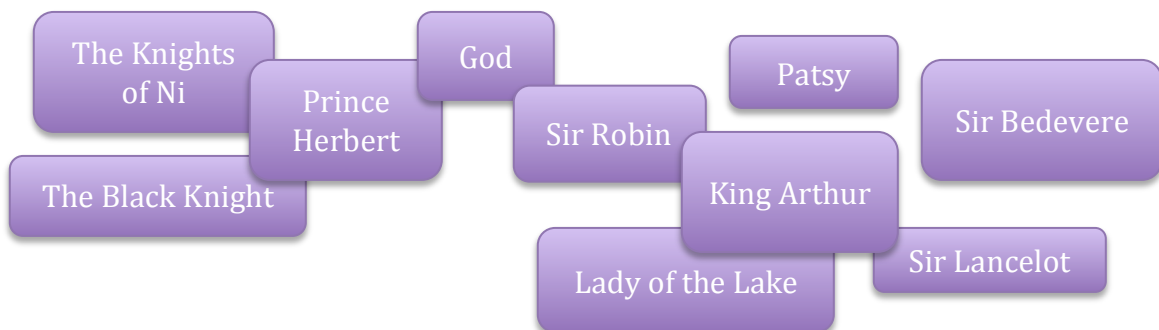
SIR BORS is MALE ENSEMBLE.

ENSEMBLE: Six men and six women

### Which character is it?

*\*Task: Fit the character to the descriptions below:*

1. Underappreciated but always longing for King Arthur's approval...
2. Sets out on a quest to form the Knights of the Roundtable...
3. A very cowardly Knight, who loves singing and dancing...
4. A strong, beautiful woman, who has far too less stage time...
5. Never seen, only heard on stage and spoken by Sonya Kraus...
6. A Prince, who is very feminine, likes curtains, sings a lot and feels misunderstood by his father...
7. A fighter never giving up... not even after losing parts of his body...
8. Is fearless but has also a soft side...
9. An absurd and cartoonish leader of a peculiar group of Knights...
10. A Knight of the Roundtable and an inept scholar...



## SOLUTIONS

Which character is it?

1. Underappreciated but always longing for King Arthur's approval... (Patsy)
2. Sets out on a quest to form the Knights of the Roundtable... (King Arthur)
3. A very cowardly Knight, who loves singing and dancing... (Sir Robin)
4. A strong, beautiful woman, who has far too less stagetime... (Lady of the Lake)
5. Never seen, only heard on stage and spoken by Sonya Kraus... (God)
6. A Prince, who is very feminine, likes curtains, sings a lot and feels misunderstood by his father... (Prince Herbert)
7. A fighter never giving up... not even after losing parts of his body... (The Black Knight)
8. Is fearless but has also a soft side... (Sir Lancelot)
9. An absurd and cartoonish leader of a peculiar group of Knights... (The Knights of Ni)
10. A Knight of the Roundtable and an inept scholar... (Sir Bedevere)

### 5) The concept behind SPAMALOT

*Monty Python's Spamalot* is a musical comedy adapted from the 1975 film **Monty Python and the Holy Grail**. Like the film, it is a highly irreverent parody of the Arthurian Legend, but it differs from the film in many ways.

One of the musical's creators, Eric Idle, explained the title in a February 2004 press release: I like the title *Spamalot* a lot. We tested it with audiences on my recent US tour and they liked it as much as I did, which is gratifying. After all, they are the ones who will be paying Broadway prices to see the show. It comes from a line in the movie which goes: "we eat ham, and jam, and Spam a lot."

The show has had mixed reactions from Idle's former colleagues in Monty Python. Terry Gilliam, in an audio interview,<sup>[58]</sup> describes it as "Python-lite". He later told the BBC News, "It helps with the pension fund, and it helps keep Python alive. As much as we'd like to pull the plug on the whole thing it carries on – it's got a life of its own."

Terry Jones – who co-directed the original film with Gilliam – expressed his opinions forthrightly in May 2005: "*Spamalot* is utterly pointless. It's full of air...Regurgitating Python is not high on my list of priorities." However, when asked whether he liked *Spamalot* during an interview with Dennis Daniel on 98.5 WBON-FM "The BONE" on Long Island shortly after the musical's opening on Broadway, Jones said, "Well, I thought it was terrific good fun. It's great to see the audience loving it. I suppose I had reservations as far as...well...the idea of doing scenes from a film on stage. I just don't get the point of it. They do them terribly well...I mean, they really are good...but I just quite don't understand what that's about. It isn't really 'Python.' It is very much Eric."

In an Oct. 2006 interview, Michael Palin said, "We're all hugely delighted that *Spamalot* is doing so well. Because we're all beneficiaries! It's a great show. It's not 'Python' as we would have written it. But then, none of us would get together and write a 'Python' stage show.

## REVIEWS:

\*TASK: Read the following review by Feminist writer, Amanda Rodriguez

<http://www.btchflcks.com/2014/07/spamalot-a-feminist-review.html#.WBnSCrTgqi4>

Written by *Amanda Rodriguez*.

*Spoiler Alert*

I recently went to see a local production of the infamous musical comedy *Monty Python's Spamalot* (a Broadway adaptation from the 1975 hilarious Arthurian quest film *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*) at *Asheville Community Theatre*. Though running a little long at two and a half hours, I loved it. As a fan, it was wonderful to get to see a theatre company bring to life all the gags, costume changes, ridiculous accents, jokes and songs that make Monty Python so special. As a feminist, I'd like to examine how the theatre production measures up to scrutiny through a feminist lens.

First off, despite my love of it, there's no denying that the original source material, *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, is a sausage-fest. Most of the women are played by men, and the most noteworthy scene featuring women is a bunch of cloistered nun-types at Castle Anthrax who all desperately want to have sex with Sir Galahad (they thankfully omitted this scene in the play). Though *Spamalot* doesn't greatly improve on the number of significant roles for women, it does add a host of female background performers who appear frequently as well as the show-stealing Lady of the Lake (*often dubbed the Diva of the Lake*). Though she is primarily a love interest, the Lady of the Lake is also essential as she's the equivalent of a *dues ex machina* who solves dilemmas the cast faces, puts them on the right path for their quest and generally inspires enthusiasm in the pursuit of the grail.

The Lady of the Lake has a lot of tongue-in-cheek meta-songs, and the best one, "Whatever Happened to My Part (The Diva's Lament)," actually acknowledges how little stage time she's gotten in comparison to her male compatriots. Though this number concedes that her representation is at best uneven, it doesn't do much to truly integrate the lone female character into the plot itself.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZJqAYUAJbTk>

In the above clip, we have *Sara Ramirez* of *Grey's Anatomy* fame performing the role of the Lady of the Lake in the original Broadway production. She even **won the Tony for Best Performance by a Featured Actress in 2005**. I love that a full-figured woman of color was cast in this role, and the world recognized how brightly she shined.

In the Asheville Community Theatre *Spamalot* production, I was so pleased to see the astoundingly talented Nana Hosmer fill Ramirez's shoes as the Lady of the Lake. The full-figured diva has a dynamite voice that playfully emulated different musical genres but also shook the rafters with its vibrato. I feel fortunate that I (and all the other theatre-goers) got to see this woman's powerhouse performance.

All in all, though I lamented the lack of female characters and found the number "You Need a Jew" mildly offensive, I was delighted that, though the play felt the need to end with a wedding, it was a gay wedding between Lancelot and the song-loving, fabulous Prince Herbert. I was worried they wouldn't have the guts for it, but then I remembered, *hey, this is Monty Python we're talking about here*. I was, however, the most moved by Nana Hosmer's Broadway caliber performance. She, along with Sara Ramirez, reminded me how challenging it is for women of color and women with bodies that don't match Hollywood's (*very thin*) standards to find quality roles in films and on TV. I hope this means that theatre is a more welcoming arena that is appreciative of talent and beauty that comes in different shapes, sizes and colors.

Bitch Flicks writer and editor *Amanda Rodriguez* is an environmental activist living in Asheville, North Carolina. She holds a BA from Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio and an MFA in fiction writing from Queens University in Charlotte, NC.

***Ms Rodriguez raises some interesting points about the show from her perspective as a feminist writer. What are these points and do you feel they are valid?***

*\*TASK Watch/read the following reviews below and write or record your own review of Spamalot:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZDiW0mMqQk> (12 min – in German)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlgxmy6Frlg> (28 minutes and spoken rather fast)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=61l-apYwsjA> (in German)

<http://www.adaptistration.com/blog/2014/09/01/are-you-following-the-south-williamsport-spamalot-controversy/>

## **6) Did you know?**

### **Fun Facts about Monty Python, The Search for the Holy Grail and Spamalot!**

The term spam (-mails) goes back to a sketch from Monty Python's Flying Circus from the year 1970th. It plays in a cafe where the menu offers exclusively "spam". "Spam" is the common abbreviation of Spiced Ham and the name of a brand of canned meat: During the 2nd World War "spam" was one of the few nutritions that was always available despite rationing - similar to the unwanted spam emails. That's why the musical is named "Spam-a-lot", which rhymes wonderfully well with Camelot.

What's in a name?:

Other group names considered for the Pythons were: *A Horse, a Spoon and a Basin, Owl Stretching Time, The Toad Elevating Moment, Bun Whacket Buzzard Stubble and Boot and Gwen Dibley's Flying Circus* (Gwen Dibley was the lady who played piano at Palin's mother's afternoon town guild meetings and Palin thought she'd be quite surprised to have a group named after her.) For a while they had a working title of *Circus*, then Cleese suggested "python" as something nasty and sneaky and Idle came up with a sneaky agent called Monty.

Monty Python fact: The giant foot that comes crashing down in the opening credits of every episode of Monty Python's *Flying Circus* is the foot of Cupid, from the Renaissance masterpiece *Venus, Cupid, Folly and Time* by Bronzino.

Funny Film Fact: When Patsy (Gilliam) and Arthur (Graham Chapman) are crossing the meadow, the castle in the background (and later, Camelot) is a plywood cutout. Shooting had to be stopped many times as the wind kept blowing it over.

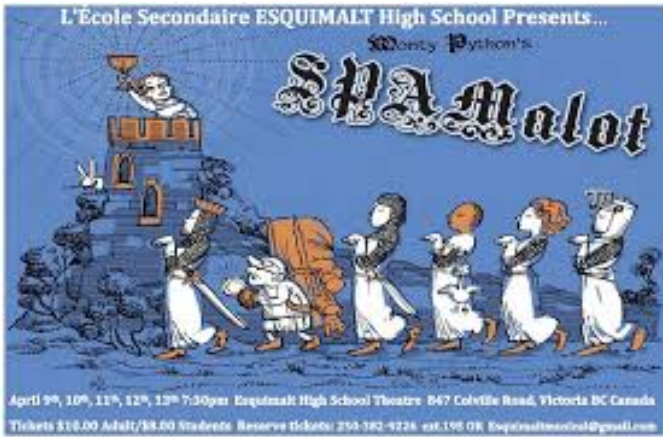
The Black Knight scene was inspired by a story John Cleese heard at college: two Roman wrestlers were engaged in a long match and they became so entangled that one of them suffered a broken limb. He couldn't take the pain any longer and submitted, so various attendants came over, untangled them and tapped the winner on the shoulder, saying "You won," at which time they discovered he was dead.

Led By Terry Jones and **Terry Gilliam**, along with the cast of *Spamalot*, in 2007, 5,567 people in Trafalgar Square set a new world record for the largest coconut orchestra as they "clip-clopped" along to *Always Look On The Bright Side of Life*.

The fossil of a giant prehistoric snake discovered in 1985 in Riversleigh, Queensland, Australia was named *Montypythonoides riversleighensis* in honour of the Monty Python team.

## **7) Creative task**

*\*Task: compare the different posters and decide which one you like the most. What do these images have in common? What are the differences. Which one would you choose for a play produced in your school?*



*\*Task: Design your own poster for Monty Python's Spamalot.*

*\*Task: Look at the English Theatre's poster design.*

*What do you like/not like about it? Look at the poster carefully and decide why the designer has chosen the colours and the picture that he did.*

**Film clips:**

*\*TASK: Watch the staging of „Always look on the Bright side of Life“  
Do you think this adaption works well? Compare it to the one in the English Theatre  
Frankfurt production.  
Is there any difference? Which one is better? What would you change?*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OszF4drxGmU>

### **8) Let's get Theatrical**

*\*TASK: Choose one of the two scenes below and think about how you would  
present it on stage. Act out in groups and create your own  
interpretation/adaption of this scene.*

Scene Four: The Black Knight  
(KING ARTHUR rides in with PATSY holding the shrubbery. The  
BLACK KNIGHT bars his way)

ARTHUR

Good Sir Knight. I am King Arthur looking for my men. Would you care to join us?

BLACK KNIGHT

No one shall pass!

ARTHUR

I see. Well, good sir knight I have no quarrel with you, but I must pass this way.

BLACK KNIGHT

Then you shall die.

ARTHUR

I command you as King of the Britons to stand aside!

BLACK KNIGHT

I move for no man.

**#19A The Black Knight**

ARTHUR

So be it!

(KING ARTHUR draws his sword and after a short battle chops the BLACK KNIGHT'S left arm off)

ARTHUR

Now yield, worthy adversary.

BLACK KNIGHT

'Tis but a scratch.

ARTHUR

A scratch? Your arm's off!

BLACK KNIGHT

No, it isn't.

ARTHUR

Well, what's that then?

BLACK KNIGHT

I've had worse.

ARTHUR

You liar!

BLACK KNIGHT

Come on, you pansy!

(The fight continues. Soon ARTHUR chops the BLACK KNIGHT'S right arm off. ARTHUR makes a triumphant gesture and then kneels in prayer)

ARTHUR

Victory is mine! We thank thee Lord, that in thy mercy-

(The armless BLACK KNIGHT kicks ARTHUR in the buttocks while he is praying)



Come on then.

BLACK KNIGHT

What?

ARTHUR

Have at you!

BLACK KNIGHT

You are indeed brave, good Sir Knight, but the fight is mine.

ARTHUR

Oh, had enough, eh?

BLACK KNIGHT

Look, you stupid bastard, you've got no arms left.

ARTHUR

Yes, I have.

BLACK KNIGHT

Look!

ARTHUR

BLACK KNIGHT

It's just a flesh wound. You yellow bastard! I'll bite your legs off! You chicken shit, lily-livered, upper class twit.

(The BLACK KNIGHT backs up to the comparative darkness of the Gateway, where he hides the lower part of his body behind a trick door while the MONK ENTERS with a large basket distracting the attention of the audience)

MONK

Alms for the poor! Alms for the poor!

(The MONK picks up an arm and puts it in the basket. PATSY gives him the other arm)

MONK (CONT'D)

Arms for the poor! Arms for the poor!  
(EXITS)

BLACK KNIGHT

The Black Knight always triumphs! I'm invincible!

ARTHUR

You're a loony.

(ARTHUR runs a sword through the BLACK KNIGHT'S chest pinning him to the castle door)

BLACK KNIGHT

Chicken-chicken-chicken-chicken.

(ARTHUR swipes at the BLACK KNIGHT'S legs)

BLACK KNIGHT (CONT'D)

Ha! You missed me!

(Both his legs flop on the stage)

ARTHUR

Come on, Patsy!

BLACK KNIGHT

All right, we'll call it a tie.

(Alt: All right, we'll call it a draw)

(ARTHUR rides off, leaving the legless, armless BLACK KNIGHT pinioned to the castle)

BLACK KNIGHT (CONT'D)

(Sings:)

ALWAYS LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE OF LIFE ....

**OR**

Scene Eleven: The French Castle

(KING ARTHUR and his KNIGHTS arrive at the foot of the castle, and dismount)

ARTHUR

Halt! Hello! Hello!

(The TAUNTER, a silly mustachioed Frenchman, appears in the battlements of the castle)

TAUNTER

'Allo! Who is it?

ARTHUR

It is King Arthur, and these are my Knights of the Round Table. Whose castle is this?

TAUNTER

This is the castle of my master, Guy de Loimbard! The French bastard.

ARTHUR

Go and tell your master that we have been charged by God with a sacred quest. If he will give us food and shelter for the night he may join us on our quest for the Holy Grail.

TAUNTER

Well, I'll ask him, but I don't think he'll be very keen. He's already got one, you see?

ARTHUR

What?

GALAHAD

He says they've already got one!

ARTHUR

Are you sure he's got one?

TAUNTER

Oh, yes, it's very nice. (Aside)  
Hey! I told him we already got one!

(The FRENCH GUARDS titter in mirth. We see only their helmets nodding in glee)

GUARDS

Tee hee.

ARTHUR

Well, can we come in and have a look?

TAUNTER

Of course not! You are English bed-wetting types!

ARTHUR

Well, what are you then?

TAUNTER

I'm French! Why do you think I have this outrageous accent, you silly king?

ARTHUR

If you will not show us the Grail, we shall take this castle by force!

TAUNTER

You don't frighten us, English pig-dogs! Go and boil your bottoms, sons of a silly person. I blow my nose at you, so-called Arthur-king, you and all your silly English knnnniggets.

ARTHUR

Now look here my good man!

TAUNTER

I don't want to talk to you no more you empty headed animal food trough wipers!. .. I fart in your general direction! Your mother was a hamster and your father smelt of elderberries! Now go away or I shall taunt you a second time

GALAHAD

Is there someone else we could talk to?

TAUNTER

Hey, no chance, son of a window-dresser! I wave my private parts at your aunties, you tiny-brained wipers of other people's bottoms!

ARTHUR

I command you, in the name of the Knights of Camelot, to open the doors of this sacred castle, to which God himself has guided us!

TAUNTER

Well, I burst my pimples at you and call your door-opening request a silly thing, you cheesy lot of second-hand electric donkey bottom biters. Thppt!

(Blows a raspberry)

FRENCHIES

Thppt.

(The hands of the FRENCH KNIGHTS make very rude gestures between the battlements)

ROBIN

They're using rude gestures, sir.

GALAHAD

The fiends. They haven't an ounce of chivalry.

ARTHUR

What do we do, Bedevere?

BEDEVERE

Well, I believe it's time for Plan B, Sire. My secret weapon.

ARTHUR

If you do not cease to taunt us, we shall be forced to bring out our secret weapon.

TAUNTER

Oh, no. Oh, gee We are so scared. Oh, hey, did I mention before to you ... Thppt.

(The TAUNTER runs his head across, up and down the battlements before disappearing)

ARTHUR

Right that's it. They have a nasty shock coming to them. Bedevere. What the hell is that?

(BEDEVERE pulls a large wooden rabbit in from Stage Right)

BEDEVERE

The wooden rabbit, Sire! It's the very latest in modern technology.

(The KNIGHTS are very impressed)

ROBIN

Wow.

## **9) SPAMALOT THEATRE VISIT**

Questions to accompany your visit:

1. How old is the English Theatre? When did it begin? Where did it begin?
2. How many shows does it have per year?
3. What season is it having now?
4. What are the next shows?
5. What are the rules of the theatre? (*look at the door signs*)

In the theatre:

1. Why is it called Spamalot?
2. What is SPAM?
3. What kind of show is this? How do you know that?
4. Describe the set, what do you like about it?
5. Where is it set? What place and time?
6. **(in class)** Make a sketch of the set design, using colour if possible.
7. From what you have seen and heard, what would you use as a poster design?
8. How many people do you think there are working in this theatre?
9. What different jobs could you see?
10. What or who is the SM?
11. Who or what is the MD?

The Programme:

1. What information is contained in the programme?
2. Who is the Voice of God?
3. How many actors are there in the cast?

4. Which actor is making his first professional debut in Spamalot?
5. The story is based upon a legend-which one?
6. What or who is Excalibur?
7. Who is Monty Python?

Watching the Show:

1. Where does the play begin?
2. What flag is projected on to the bookshelves?
3. England was divided- who was in the East?
4. Who was King of the Britons at this time?
5. There is a talk of a „plague with a 50% chance of pestilence and famine“What kind of style is used here- what does it remind you of?
6. The actors do a song and dance about a country that is not England. What country are they singing about?
7. What do they do with the fish in the dance?
8. There is a scene where monks walk across the stage- what do they do with their bibles that is unusual?
9. Arthur and his knights rode horses- what do we have in the show to refer to a horse?
10. Arthur is on an important mission, to recruit people for his quest. What is ironic about the guards behaviour?
11. What is the name of the “Old Woman” that Arthur meets ?
12. What is odd about the pile of mud?
13. There is a very recent reference to something that happened in Britain. What was this?
14. How did Arthur become King?
15. According to King Arthur, what is special about his sword?
16. What is a doubting Thomas?

## **SOLUTIONS:**

Questions to accompany your visit:

1. How old is the English Theatre? When did it begin? Where did it begin?  
**About 30 years**
2. How many shows does it have per year?  
**3-4 shows per season**
3. What season is it having now?  
**Season 2016/17 – Strictly British**
4. What are the next shows?  
**The current show is Spamalot and the following are Handbagged and Hound of the Baskervilles**
5. What are the rules of the theatre? (look at the door signs)  
**Do not eat, drink, film, record in the auditorium/ during the show**

In the theatre:

1. Why is it called Spamalot?  
***It's based on a line in the movie, which goes: we eat ham, and jam, and Spam a lot.***
2. What is SPAM?  
***Spam is a brand of canned precooked meat products made by Hormel Foods Corporation.***
3. What kind of show is this? How do you know that?  
***It's a Musical, because the difference in comparison to a play is that it is mostly made of songs.***
4. Describe the set, what do you like about it?
5. Where is it set? What place and time?  
***It's set in England 932 A.D.***
6. (in class) Make a sketch of the set design, using colour if possible.
7. From what you have seen and heard, what would you use as a poster design?
8. How many people do you think there are working in this theatre?  
***About 100***
9. What different jobs could you see?  
***Actors, stage-crew, technicians, staff from James the Bar...***
10. What or who is the SM?  
***Stage Manager***
11. Who or what is the MD?  
***Musical Director***

The Programme:

1. What information is contained in the programme?  
***There is a lot of information about the musical itself, its creators, the cast and crew from the English theatre, the legends behind the musical and a lot more.***
2. Who is the Voice of God?  
***Sonya Kraus***
3. How many actors are there in the cast?  
***13 actors***
4. Which actor is making his first professional debut in Spamalot?  
***Anthony Cragg***



5. The story is based upon a legend-which one?  
**Arthurian Legends**
6. What or who is Excalibur?  
**Excalibur was King Arthur's magic sword.**
7. Who is Monty Python?  
**Monty Python is a British comedy group. The six members created it in the late 1960s.**

Watching the Show:

1. Where does the play begin?  
**In a library**
2. What flag is projected on to the bookshelves?  
**England**
3. England was divided- who was in the East?  
**The French.**
4. Who was King of the Britons at this time?  
**King Arthur**
5. There is a talk of a plague with a 50% chance of What kind of style is used here- what does it remind you of?  
**It sound like a weather report.**
6. The actors do a song and dance about a country that is not England. What country are they singing about?  
**Finland**
7. What do they do with the fish in the dance?  
**They slap each other with the fish**
8. There is a scene where monks walk across the stage- what do they do with their bibles that is unusual?  
**They hit it against their foreheads.**
9. Arthur and his knights rode horses- what do we have in the show to refer to a horse?  
**Coconut shells**
10. Arthur is on an important mission, to recruit people for his quest. What is ironic about the guards behavior?  
**They are discussing the migratory patterns of swallows and the fact that coconuts are not native to the area.**
11. What is the name of the "old Woman" that Arthur meets ?  
**Dennis**

12. What is odd about the pile of mud?  
***It is pushed on by a cartoon hand. (Typical of Monty Python)***
13. There is a very recent reference to something that happened in Britain. What was this?  
***Brexit***
14. How did Arthur become King?  
***He saw the Lady of the Lake who told him of his destiny and gave him Excalibur***
15. What is special about King Arthur's sword?  
***It has a name.***
16. What is a doubting Thomas?  
***a person who is sceptical and refuses to believe something without proof.***

## **10) MULTIPLE CHOICE**

The answers can be found in the Spamalot programme.

1. How many actors appear in "Spamalot"?
  - a) 6
  - b) 13
  - c) 19
  
2. Who is the musical director?
  - a) Daniel Schult
  - b) Leigh Thompson
  - c) Umberto de Bernardo
  
3. Which instrument is not represented/played in the orchestra?
  - a) Drums
  - b) Violin
  - c) Keyboard
  
4. Who of the following three was one of the founders of Monty Python?
  - a) John Cleese
  - b) John du Prez
  - c) John McManus
  
5. When was Monty Python created?
  - a) late 1940s
  - b) late 1950s
  - c) late 1960s
  
6. Which of the following is a movie from Monty Python?
  - a) Life of Steven
  - b) Life of Brian
  - c) Life of Mike
  
7. Who is the director of the play?
  - a) George Rae
  - b) Katy Stredder
  - c) Lisa Blair
  
8. In which part of Harry Potter did Keith Henderson take part?
  - a) Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone
  - b) Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets
  - c) Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix
  
9. Who speaks the "Voice of God" in Spamalot?
  - a) Neil Innes
  - b) Sonya Kraus
  - c) Andrea Klein
  
10. Who is the artistic and executive director of the English Theatre?
  - a) Peter Vornhagen
  - b) Daniel John Nicolai
  - c) Pierre Dekker

11. Which actor plays "Sir Robin"?
  - a) Jo Parsons
  - b) Matthew Gent
  - c) Daniel Smith
  
12. What is the name of the song that Sir Galahad and the Lady of the Lake sing?
  - a) The Song that Goes Like this
  - b) Always look at the bright side
  - c) Find your Grail
  
13. Who is being mocked by Eric Idle with the song "The Song that Goes Like This"?
  - a) Andrew Lloyd Webber
  - b) Hans Zimmer
  - c) Jon Howard
  
14. Who was raised by the Lady of the Lake?
  - a) Lancelot
  - b) King Arthur
  - c) Galahad
  
15. What was the name of King Arthur's sword?
  - a) Excalibur
  - b) Mercia
  - c) Gwynned
  
16. Who gave Arthur his magical sword?
  - a) Elaine of Astolat
  - b) Lady of the Lake
  - c) King Pelles
  
17. Who are the parents of Sir Galahad?
  - a) Lancelot and Elaine of Corbenic
  - b) King Arthur and Lady of the Lake
  - c) Sir Bedevere and Laker girl
  
18. Who drank from the Holy Grail?
  - a) Lancelot
  - b) Christ
  - c) Sir Galahad
  
19. Where was King Arthur fatally wounded?
  - a) Battle of Camlan
  - b) Battle of Avalon
  - c) Battle of Meleagant
  
20. By whom is Lancelot loved?
  - a) Lady of the Lake
  - b) Laker girl
  - c) Elaine of Astola

## SOLUTIONS

### Multiple Choice Spamalot

1. How many actors appear in "Spamalot"?
  - a) 6
  - b) 13**
  - c) 19
2. Who is the musical director?
  - a) Daniel Schult
  - b) Leigh Thompson**
  - c) Umberto de Bernardo
3. Which instrument is not represented/played in the orchestra?
  - a) Drums
  - b) Violin**
  - c) Keyboard
4. Who of the following three was one of the founders of Monty Python?
  - a) John Cleese
  - b) John du Prez**
  - c) John McManus
5. When was Monty Python created?
  - a) late 1940s
  - b) late 1950s
  - c) late 1960s**
6. Which of the following is a movie from Monty Python?
  - a) Life of Steven
  - b) Life of Brian**
  - c) Life of Mike
7. Who is the director of the play?
  - a) George Rae
  - b) Katy Stredder
  - c) Lisa Blair**
8. In which part of Harry Potter did Keith Henderson take part?
  - a) Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone
  - b) Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets
  - c) Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix**
9. Who speaks the "Voice of God" in Spamalot?
  - a) Neil Innes
  - b) Sonya Kraus**
  - c) Andrea Klein
10. Who is the artistic and executive director of the English Theatre?
  - a) Peter Vornhagen
  - b) Daniel John Nicolai**

- c) Pierre Dekker
11. Which actor plays "Sir Robin"?
- a) Jo Parsons
  - b) Matthew Gent**
  - c) Daniel Smith
12. What is the name of the song that Sir Galahad and the Lady of the Lake sing?
- a) The Song that Goes Like this**
  - b) Always look at the bright side
  - c) Find your Grail
13. Who is being mocked by Eric Idle with the song "The Song that Goes Like This"?
- a) Andrew Lloyd Webber**
  - b) Hans Zimmer
  - c) Jon Howard
14. Who was raised by the Lady of the Lake?
- a) Lancelot**
  - b) King Arthur
  - c) Galahad
15. What was the name of King Arthur's sword?
- a) Excalibur**
  - b) Mercia
  - c) Gwynned
16. Who gave Arthur his magical sword?
- a) Elaine of Astolat
  - b) Lady of the Lake**
  - c) King Pelles
17. Who are the parents of Sir Galahad?
- a) Lancelot and Elaine of Corbenic**
  - b) King Arthur and Lady of the Lake
  - c) Sir Bedevere and Laker girl
18. Who drank from the Holy Grail?
- a) Lancelot
  - b) Christ**
  - c) Sir Galahad
19. Where was King Arthur fatally wounded?
- a) Battle of Camlan**
  - b) Battle of Avalon
  - c) Battle of Meleagant
20. By whom is Lancelot loved?
- a) Lady of the Lake
  - b) Laker girl
  - c) Elaine of Astola**

## **11) GLOSSARY (extended from the programme)**

**Adversary** – enemy or opponent

**air-speed verlocity** – the speed at which a bullet or other projectile travels through the air

**alms** – money or food given to poor people

**amuck** – behave uncontrollably and disruptively

**anarcho-syndicalist**- is a theory of **anarchism** which views revolutionary industrial unionism or **syndicalism** as a method for workers in capitalist society to gain control of an economy and, with that control, influence broader society.

**antioch** – was an ancient greco-roman city, near the city of antakya, turkey.

**Appease** – to please, make amends

**Aptly** - appropriately

**Averting** – turning, looking away

**badger** – a heavily built omnivorous nocturnal mammal of the weasel family

**bereaved** – be deprived of a close relation or friend through their death

**beseech** – ask someone urgently and fervently to do or give something

**bicker** – argue about petty and trivial matters

**bint** – a girl or woman

**bold** – it can mean brave or strong

**bosom** – old fashioned word for breast

**bowels**-

**breadth** – also known as width (how wide something is)

**brute** – a savagely violent man

**bugger** – a person, typically a man, for whom one feels pity or respect

**bums** – a lazy or worthless person, also refers to bottoms

**butch** – manly, masculine

**carp** – a deep-bodied freshwater fish, typically with barbels around the mouth

**catapult** – a military machine for hurling large stones or other missiles

**chap** – slang term for a man, like “guy”

**chewing** – to masticate your food

**chivalry** – the medieval knightly system with its religious, moral, and social code

**chum** – a close friend

**churlish** – rude in a mean-spirited and surly way

**chopped** – the past tense of chop which is to cut with a large blade

**clad** –decorated with a covering or coating

**Congregation** – a group of people, normally in a church

**consent** – to allow, to permit also as a noun “permission”

**coot** – a stupid or eccentric person, typically an old man

**creeper** – any plant that grows around another plant or up a wall

**daft** – mad, silly, unreasonable

**daring** – brave, risky

**dashing**- brave and handsome

**deceiver** – someone who is dishonest

**deed** – literary an action that is performed intentionally or consciously

**derive**- comes from , originates from a certain source

**diaphragm** – muscular partition separating the thorax from the abdomen

**disheartened** – to feel demotivated, down

**distress**- trouble, pain or agony

**do you up a treat** – sort you right out; make you happy and content with whatever

**dorsal** – relating to the upper side or back of an animal

**dough** – informal for money  
**dumps**- an unpleasant place, comes from dumping ground, where rubbish is deposited  
**Emperor**- the head of an empire  
**Exploiting**- taking advantage of someone or something for personal profit  
**fable** – a short story, typically with animals as characters, conveying a moral  
**famine** – extreme scarcity of food  
**fess up** – confess  
**fiends** – a very wicked or cruel person  
**fish schlapping**  
**flatulent** – suffering from an accumulation of gas in the alimentary canal  
**formidable** – inspiring respect through being impressively powerful or intense  
**frilly**-*soft decoration on clothing or linen, consists of ruffles fabric*  
**geezer** – a man  
**get stuffed**- an unpleasant way of telling someone to go away  
**git** – an unpleasant person  
**gory** – covered in blood  
**gouged out** – make a hole with a gouge (a chisel with a concave blade)  
**goyim** – a Jewish name for a non-Jew  
**gristle** – cartilage, especially when found as tough inedible tissue in meat  
**groom** – a groom takes care of horses  
**grovel** – lie or crawl abjectly on the ground with one's face downwards  
**grumble** – complain about something in a bad-tempered way  
**Gwynedd, Powys, Dyfed** – preserved counties of Wales  
**herring** – a kind of fish  
**Highland Fling** – a dance performed by the Scottish  
**homicidal** – wanting to kill/murder  
**hum along**- it is what you do when you know a melody of a song but not the words  
**humble** – having or showing a modest or low estimate of one's importance  
**husk** – the dry outer covering of some fruits or seeds  
**impeccable** – in accordance with the highest standards; faultless  
**imperialist dogma**  
**inept** - incompetent  
**inferior**- *not good, or not as good as, of a lesser quality*  
**in haste** – to do something quickly. In a hurry  
**knave** – archaic a dishonest or unscrupulous man.  
**krauts** – derogatory for a German  
**la vache** – French for cow  
**lobbed** – throw or hit (a ball or missile) in a high arc  
**loony** – a mad or silly person  
**mangled** – destroy or severely damage by tearing or crushing  
**manky** – inferior; worthless  
**mano e mano** – Spanish for man-to-man  
**mercia** – was one of the kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxon heptarchy  
**merits**- achievements or good qualities  
**moistened**- to make wet  
**nibble** – to take small bites  
**non-migratory** – refers to birds not flying to warmer climates over winter  
**nostrils** – nose-holes  
**ounce** – 28.35 grams  
**pansy** – an effeminate or homosexual man  
**neasant** – a poor person normally living in rural areas



**perpetuate** – make (something) continue indefinitely  
**pestilence** – a fatal epidemic disease, especially bubonic plague  
**pimples** - acne  
**pin** – a kind of tree  
**plover**- a bird with a short tail and long legs that is found mainly by the sea or in areas covered with grass  
**plumage** – a bird's feathers collectively  
**poles and krauts** – refers to Polish and German people  
**posh spice** – refers to one of the Spice Girls (a British all girl band in the 90's)  
**pram** – a four-wheeled carriage for a baby  
**prancing** – (of a horse) move with high springy steps  
**prat** – an incompetent or stupid person; an idiot  
**providence** – the protective care of god or of nature as a spiritual power  
**pulp** – a soft, wet, shapeless mass of material  
**qu'est ce-que c'est** – french for what's that?  
**quail** – a small short-tailed old world game bird resembling a tiny partridge  
**quarrel** – to argue  
**quench** – extinguish (a fire), to satisfy (thirst)  
**rampart- a mound or wall for defence**  
**ratified**- to make an agreement official  
**rear** – extend or appear to extend to a great height  
**Renoir** – refers to the painter  
**revere** – feel deep respect or admiration for (something)  
**rodent** – a gnawing mammal of an order that includes rats, mice, squirrels etc  
**rope**- thick cord made of twisting nylon or hemp together  
**rugger** – rugby  
**renowned**- well-known  
**sacrosanctus domine, pecca vi ignoviunt, jesus christus domine, pax vobis cum venerunt** – holy lord, we ignorant have sinned, lord jesus christ, grant them rest  
**samite**- rich silk fabric interwoven with gold and silver threads, used for dressmaking and decoration in the Middle Ages  
**scabbard** – a sheath for the blade of a sword or dagger, made of leather or metal  
**scimitar** – a short sword with a curved blade that broadens towards the point  
**seldom**- not often, rarely  
**shiksa** – jewish for a gentile girl or woman  
**shrubbery** – an area in a garden planted with shrubs (bushes)  
**snuff it** – said to express indifference, resignation, or rejection  
**sod**- a person in an unfortunate position, an unlucky person  
**soggy** – very wet and soft  
**soiled** – made dirty  
**stew** – a dish similar to gulasch  
**stoat** – a small carnivorous mammal of the weasel family  
**strand** – a single thin length of something such as thread, fibre, or wire  
**stumped** – not know what to do or say  
**suffice** – be enough or adequate  
**suspenders**- an elastic strap attached to a belt or garter, fastened to the top of a stocking to hold it up.  
**swallow** – a kind of bird  
**swamp** – a marshland, a wet area in nature  
**tabard** – a sleeveless jacket with a hole for the head  
**tart** – a prostitute  
**taunt** – a remark made in order to anger, wound, or provoke someone  
**tenderness**- sensitivity

**The Killer Rabbit of Caerbannog** – an immensely cute but bloodthirsty rabbit

**tush** – a person's buttocks

**tremendous** - wonderful

**trot**- refers to a horse's walk that is a bit faster than usual

**twat** – see 'git'

**tweedy**- a strong robust character, refers to people who wear the fabric called tweed

**twit** – a silly or foolish person

**unleavened**- made without yeast or other raising agents

**utterly** – completely, totally

**vessel** – a ship or large boat

**vow** – a promise

**wager** – more formal term for bet

**whack** – to hit

**wield**- to hold and use

**witty** - funny

**winding** – following a twisting or spiral course, curved

**yield**- to produce