

Classroom Script: Sleuth Astrid

SCRIPT ADAPTED FROM Hazel Edwards' e-book series 'Sleuth Astrid'
Illustrated by Jane Connory

http://www.hazeledwards.com/page/sleuth_astrid_series.html



Curriculum Links

- Problem solving: creativity
- Thinking skills. Logic
- Maths: percentages and odds.
- English: naming (perfumes). Satire.
- Technology: Laptop, mobile.
- Environment: Laboratory, Shopping Centre, Farmyard
- Civics: Co-operation in the community.

Themes: Festivals & celebrations. Magic shows. Farm animals

Length 14 minutes running time

CAST (flexible but 30 max)

1. Narrator (a good reader) can have Giant 'prompt' book '
2. Astrid, (big part) a chook sleuth with a mobile under one wing, who pecks on a laptop and microphone. Carries ID card.
3. Merlin the Magician with cloak & stick
4. Flopsy, bad tempered, white rabbit in magic act
5. Boy from audience
6. Audience (any number) who clap and mime, but don't have lines to speak
7. Ben the agent who gets work
8. Keeper of Lost Property
9. Rooster who laughs at own jokes.
10. Hens (any number) gossips
11. Chicks Chorus (any number) including Inspector Clues, the French chick
12. Security Guard at shopping centre
13. Guard dog on leash
14. Perfume shop girl

Sleuth Astrid: Performance Script

Optional Non- Speaking parts:

Aunty Rhoda as a Hot Chicken Shop Special Sandwich with lettuce, mustard & pickles.

Uncle as a Feather Bed Shop chicken feathers

Technical Crew

SFX Manager creates all noises.

Props (properties) Manager gets props and checks script. All props to be in right place at right time.

PROPS (For simple productions props can be mimed)

Microphone for Astrid to peck answers.

Mobile.

Car with big label 'Merlin the Marvellous'

Bottles of perfume/after-shave (3) Forget. Stop. Remember.

Giant Pack of cards for tricks

Lost property e.g. umbrellas, shoes etc

Motorcycle (Harley) with Eggs Pert numberplate

ID card for Astrid.

Photo of Merlin

Sfx:

Music to start Magic Show

Rings for mobile phone

Setting: Shopping Centre Magic Show

'Sleuth Astrid' Script:

SFX Magic Show Music

NARRATOR: This is the Magic Show.

MERLIN: (bows) I'm Merlin the Magician.

I do magic tricks.

AUDIENCE: CLAP

ASTRID: (bows and mobile gets in the way) My name's Astrid.

I'm a Mind Reading Chook.

AUDIENCE: CLAP

Chicks Chorus parade, showing off.

CHICKS CHORUS: We're chicks. You're just a chook.

ASTRID Chickens are ordinary, but I'm special.

NARRATOR: It's time for a magic trick.
Merlin will need a helper from the audience.

(AUDIENCE react. Some want to help, others try to hide)

MERLIN:
I'd like that boy in the front row to come out to help me.

BOY: Me?

MERLIN: Yes. You.
Come and pick a card from this pack.

NARRATOR: Merlin will shuffle the cards.

The boy must pick one.

BOY: This one,

MERLIN: (holds card up high,) Reading is an important skill.

This is my famous mind-reading chook.

Astrid will tell us the card.

Keep it covered.

She will read it from the back!

(swirls cape and waves stick)

NARRATOR See the microphone in front of Astrid.
Astrid has to peck her answers.

Yes is one peck.

No is two pecks.

MERLIN: Astrid, is it a red card?

ASTRID pecks once.

MERLIN: Astrid is right. It is a red card.

AUDIENCE: CLAP

MERLIN: Astrid, is it a picture card?

ASTRID pecks once.

MERLIN: Astrid is right. It is a picture card.

AUDIENCE: CLAP HARDER

NARRATOR This is amazing. Can this chook read!

She will peck one for yes and two for no.

ASTRID (talks directly to the audience as others 'freeze) It's a red King of Hearts.

I'm supposed to peck the right card. That's easy for me.

I'm the star. And Merlin gives me clues in the questions.

SFX; (MOBILE RINGS) RING RING

NARRATOR Astrid has other part-time jobs. She's an actor and she solves mysteries.

ASTRID: (looks at screen) Hello Ben. Got a job for me?

BEN: It's a T.V. commercial. They want you to act as a chicken. Should be easy.

ASTRID: Too easy. Who's it for?

BEN: The Hot Chicken Shop

ASTRID: No way. I haven't forgotten what happened to Aunty Rhoda.

NARRATOR: There was a mystery about what happened to Aunty Rhoda in the Hot Chicken Shop. Astrid found out that Aunty Rhoda became a Special Sandwich with lettuce, mustard and pickles.

ASTRID: I won't even go near that shop now.

And I won't act in Feather Bed Shop commercials either.

BEN: Why not?

ASTRID: My poor Uncle is just feathers at the Feather Bed Shop now. What sort of agent are you?

BEN: O.K. I've got a different job for you.

ASTRID: What is the job?

BEN: It's Merlin. He's lost something he needs for his 3 o'clock Magic Show.

ASTRID: (hopefully) Has he lost Flopsy?

NARRATOR: Flopsy is Merlin's white rabbit. She has long ears and a bad temper and THINKS she's the star.

BEN: No.

ASTRID: Has he lost his contact lens again?

BEN: No. This time he has lost his sense of humour. He can't laugh or smile any more. Nothing is funny for him.

ASTRID: When did he lose it?

BEN: Before he got up this morning.

ASTRID: Does he know where he lost it?

BEN: No. That's why you've got the job of finding it. Before 3 o'clock.

ASTRID: What about my fee?

BEN: Do you want the usual?

ASTRID: Yes please. I'd like the latest 'Find the Egg' game.

NARRATOR: Most agents are paid 10% of what their clients earn. But Astrid is a hi-tech hen who likes to be paid in new computer games like Eggs Galore or Find the Egg. So Ben gets to play a few games.

BEN: Goodbye.

(Others 'unfreeze' as Astrid turns off phone)

MERLIN: (swishes cane) Nothing is funny. I feel grumpy all the time.

(cane breaks). Oh no! Everything is going wrong. Last night I forgot where I parked my car, so I had to catch the train home.

(Merlin tries to glue cane together and it sticks to his fingers.)

I'M STUCK!

FLOPSY: (bounds on) Find the car first. I don't want to walk to work at the Magic Show. Come on.

ASTRID: Get lost Flopsy!

NARRATOR: Astrid pecks around trying to find where Merlin lost things.

ASTRID: If you want to find something, check the last place he went.

(Checks carpark and finds Car with big label 'Merlin the Marvellous')

Found the car. Now the sense of humour. Where could he have left that?

NARRATOR: (TO AUDIENCE) where would you look for a lost sense of humour?

Joke book? In the principal's office? Magic shop with tricks?

Astrid tried all those. Then she rang Merlin.

SFX: Ring Ring Ring.

ASTRID: Hello Merlin. Happy about getting your car back?

MERLIN: I don't feel like laughing. But thanks for finding my car.

ASTRID: Now I'm on the case of your missing sense of humour.

NARRATOR: Merlin used to play jokes. He used to laugh too.

Where did he lose his sense of humour? Astrid the mind reading sleuth will find it.

ASTRID: You start where the lost thing was last seen. Where did Merlin laugh the last time? He caught the train home last night. Maybe he left it on the train? I'll try Railway Lost Property?

NARRATOR: The Keeper of Railway Lost Property is in charge of everything that is lost on trains

KEEPER: This is Railway Lost Property. I'm in charge here.

I'm the Keeper. We have thousands of umbrellas. Lots of shoes. And sports gear. And some VERY unusual objects. (shows example)

ASTRID: Do you have a Sense of Humour?

KEEPER: Of course I have one. It's mine. Need it in this job.

ASTRID: No, I mean a 'lost' sense of humour. Merlin the Magician has lost his. I'm looking for lost laughs and jokes.

KEEPER: Well, it hasn't been handed in here. When did he lose it?

ASTRID: Yesterday.

KEEPER: When does he need it back?

ASTRID: Before the 3 o'clock Magic Show. He must laugh and joke in his work.

NARRATOR: Astrid decided to check out the farmyard. It is the gossip centre. The hens know everything.

(Chicks Chorus, Hens and the Rooster peck across the farmyard)

ASTRID: Have you heard anything funny?

CHICKS: We might have.

HENS: Maybe.

ASTRID: Merlin the Magician has lost his sense of humour. I must find it before his 3 o'clock Magic Show.

ROOSTER: (sneering) So you're the hard-boiled detective. Hard boiled...get it? (laughs at own joke)

INSPECTOR CLUES: Rooster fell off the henhouse roof yesterday. Merlin was here and he laughed. So Merlin must still have had it then.

ASTRID: That's a clue.

INSPECTOR CLUES: Would you like my help with this case?

ASTRID: No thanks. Unless it's a French mystery where you have to speak French, I can manage.

ROOSTER: If you want to know anything, ask me. Not the chick.

NARRATOR: Rooster thinks he's top of the pecking order. His job is to look after his hens. But he's always telling BAD jokes, and then laughing.

ASTRID: Heard any laughs around here? Smiles?

ROOSTER: Why? Is laughing at my jokes a crime? (laughs so loudly he falls beak first into water bowl)

HENS (giggle and then laugh)

Rooster shakes himself and stalks off.

NARRATOR: Inbetween jobs, Astrid stays in her loft above the bird yard. All kinds of birds rent space. Ducks. Geese. Even a swan who teaches ballet. Astrid can park her motor cycle alongside. Not many chooks ride Harleys. Astrid pecks on her laptop.

ASTRID: (Typing) Going to leave a question on Chooks Anonymous. Others read it and leave answers.

Lost. Sense of Humour belonging to Merlin. Please contact Astrid the Mind Reading Chook.

Hope someone leaves me a clue before 3 o'clock.

Might play a few games..... (types)

Now I'll check my messages. Oh no. I typed Cook instead of Chook. How embarrassing!

SFX Ring Ring Ring

ASTRID: Astrid speaking.

SECURITY GUARD V.O. Are you the chook looking for a laugh?

ASTRID: I'm Astrid, the part-time sleuth. My client has lost his sense of humour. Have you heard a lost laugh?

SECURITY GUARD V.O. Yes.

ASTRID: How do you know it belongs to Merlin?

SECURITY GUARD V.O. He was here at our Shopping Centre last night.

ASTRID: Which Shopping Centre?

SECURITY GUARD V.O. Aren't you supposed to read minds?

NARRATOR: There are millions of shopping Centres.

ASTRID: I need a few clues. Even a mind reader can't get it right every time.

SECURITY GUARD V.O. I'm the security guard at Central Carpark. I patrol with my dog.

ASTRID: How big is your dog? I want to keep my last tail feathers.

SECURITY GUARD V.O. Meet me outside the Hot Chicken Shop in ten minutes. I'll show you where I last saw Merlin. (hangs up)

ASTRID: The Hot Chicken Shop! Aunty Rhoda vanished there!

NARRATOR: Astrid rides her Harley to the Shopping Centre carpark. Her number plate is Eggs Pert. She sniffs around the back of the Hot Chicken Shop.

ASTRID Bones in the rubbish. Clues to my ...Ex relatives.

(Dog on leash drags Security Guard across stage and sniffs at Astrid who holds up her ID card)

SFX Dog Woof Woof Woof.

ASTRID: This is my ID. And here is a photo of Merlin. Have you seen this man laugh before?

SECURITY GUARD That's Merlin all right. He was next to the perfume stand in the mall yesterday. Is that right Rufus?

SFX Dog Woof Woof Woof.

SECURITY GUARD What sort of chook are you?

ASTRID: English Sussex. See, I'm white with a black collar.

SECURITY GUARD: (pulling at dog) My dog Rufus has a collar.

ASTRID: I'm glad about his collar. Ahhhhhh

(Guard Dog chases Astrid, who runs past stalls of perfume, and girl who squirts them)

PERFUME GIRL: "Remember", 'Stop' and 'Forget' are on special this week.

Yesterday I squirted the after -shave called 'Forget!'"

ASTRID: I can smell 'Remember' on my beak. Wonderful! It works.

NARRATOR: Astrid grabs a bottle of STOP and squirts it at the Dog who stops and sits.

ASTRID: (panting) Sit.

PERFUME GIRL: Give me back my bottle of STOP

ASTRID (giving back bottle.) Thanks for the clue. Did you squirt 'Forget' yesterday when Merlin was around?

PERFUME GIRL: YES. Until the guard complained. The rabbit in the magician's hat was coughing.

ASTRID Flopsy? That rabbit is always complaining.

SECURITY GUARD: Merlin was here for two shows so he was sprayed a lot with 'Forget'

ASTRID: Maybe Merlin 'Forgot' his sense of humour because of the spray?

SECURITY GUARD Like a poison?

ASTRID: When I was in the LAB, I was sprayed with something by mistake. That's why I can read things. And sometimes read clues to people's minds.

Do you remember if Merlin laughed in the first part of the first show?

SECURITY GUARD Yes, he did. But by the end he was grumpy. And so was that rabbit.

ASTRID: Perhaps Merlin forgets to find things funny when he's been sprayed. Perhaps that's how he lost his sense of humour.

SECURITY GUARD How are you going to get it back?

ASTRID: Same way I stopped Rufus. An antidote. The opposite perfume.

NARRATOR: Astrid thanked the guard and left quickly. She could feel an 'egg' coming on. Eggs are her ideas. She's careful about where she leaves them. At home, she checks for messages. Chooks Anonymous is quiet.

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FLOPSY: (swaggering on stage) I hear you've been running around like a headless chook.

ASTRID: (to audience) For such a beautiful bunny, Flopsy can be SO thoughtless. A rabbit like her doesn't think. Her words hurt. I can see that picture in my mind. Head-less chook. That picture worries me more than chicken recipes on the Internet.

FLOPSY: Have you found Merlin's sense of humour? It's nearly time for the Magic Show. I can't remember what time we start.

ASTRID: Did you get squirted by Forget perfume yesterday?

FLOPSY: Yes. But I can't remember days and times now.

ASTRID: (to audience) That's a clue! Flopsy never did have a sense of humour, so she couldn't lose it. But maybe she 'Forgot' other things. Maybe the perfume spray affects her in a different way?

FLOPSY: If you're not careful, Merlin will sell you at the bird auction. But I can't remember when that is.

ASTRID: Thanks Astrid. You always say such kind things.

MERLIN: (grumpily) Hurry up. Time to go on stage.

ASTRID: (dialling) Hullo Perfume shop? Could I have a bottle of Remember delivered urgently? Yes. Credit card.

(Astrid sprays Merlin with 'Remember' and he starts to smile and joke.)

NARRATOR: They do the card trick. Merlin gives Astrid the clues by the way he asks the question.

Is it a red card? Means it is red.

Do I have a red card? means it's black.

Astrid sprays Flopsy with “Remember”. Perfume.

FLOPSY: I remember that the show starts at 3 pm

ASTRID: Merlin’s show is already started and you’re on NOW!

FLOPSY: (Hurrying) and the bird auction is Friday 13th

CHICKS CHORUS: No thanks.

INSPECTOR CLUES: You should have asked for my help in solving the mystery. REMEMBER is a French perfume.

ASTRID: It’s an after-shave.

INSPECTOR CLUES: (shrugs) Same thing.

CHICKS CHORUS Congratulations. We heard you’d solved the mystery of Merlin’s lost sense of humour.

ROOSTER: Should try farmyard perfumes like Grain or Mush. Joke!

NARRATOR: They’re taking Stop and Forget perfumes off the market for more LAB testing.

SFX Ring Ring Ring.

ASTRID: It’s my agent. (answers her mobile) Hello Ben. Got another job for me?

BEN: Carrot the Parrot has lost his voice.

ASTRID: I’m not surprised. #

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