



I am going to see Dick Whittington at Birmingham Hippodrome!

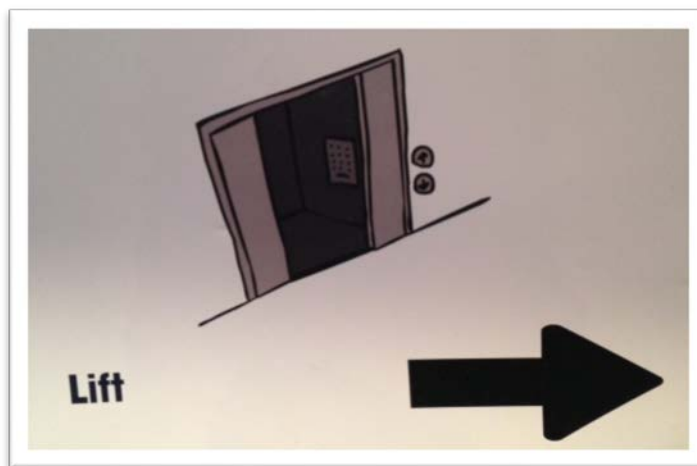


When I arrive at the theatre, there will be a big sign outside and the front of the building looks like this.



It may be a bit busy when I arrive at the theatre as lots of people want to see the show! I may have to queue or wait to go in.

The stairs may be difficult for me, so I could use the ramp, as well as lifts to get around the theatre.



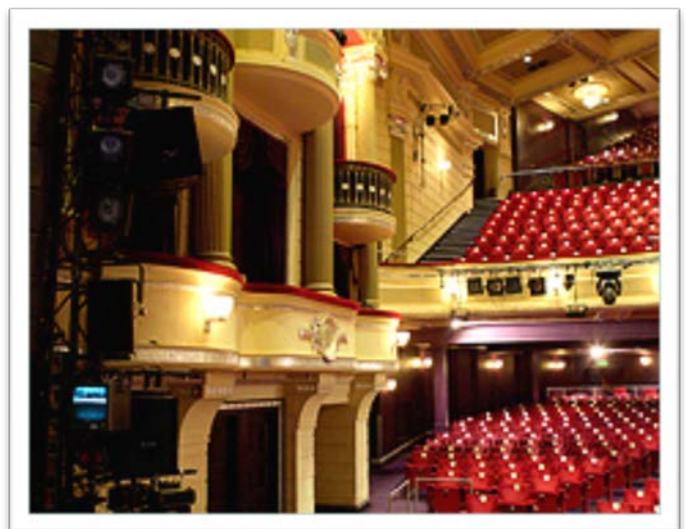
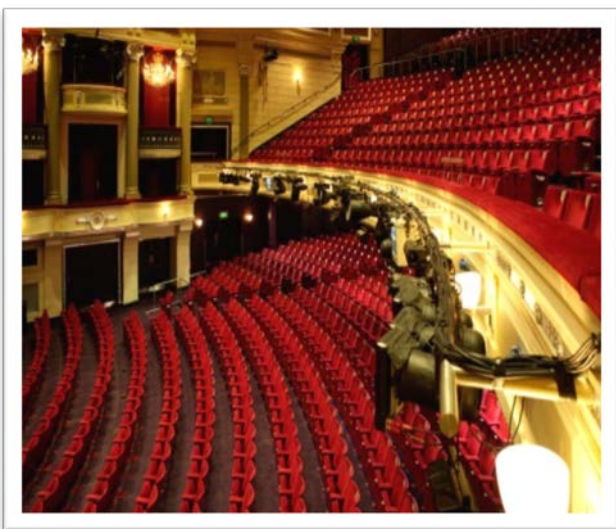
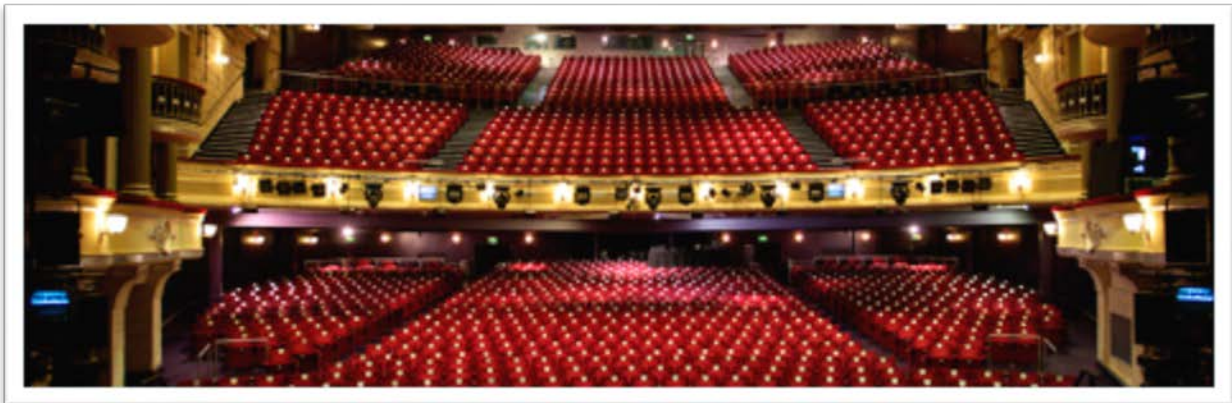
There will be lots of people working at Birmingham Hippodrome who will be able to help me if I need it. They will be wearing sparkly hats.



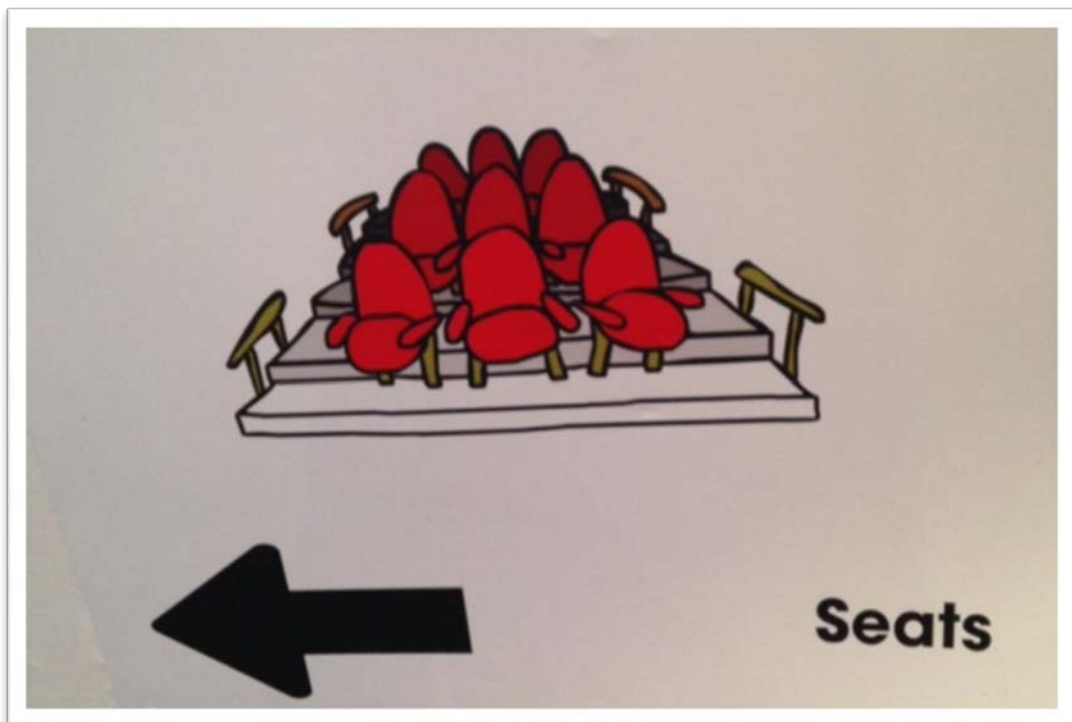
If I need to use the toilet, I can ask the person I'm with or there will be signs to show me the way.



We will then go inside the theatre. It is very big and there are lots of seats!



This is what the inside looks like with nobody inside.... and this is what it looks like when everyone is sitting in their seats ready to watch the show. A person wearing a sparkly hat will look at our tickets and tell us which seats to go to.



The numbers and letters on our tickets tell us where to sit; it is not a choice.

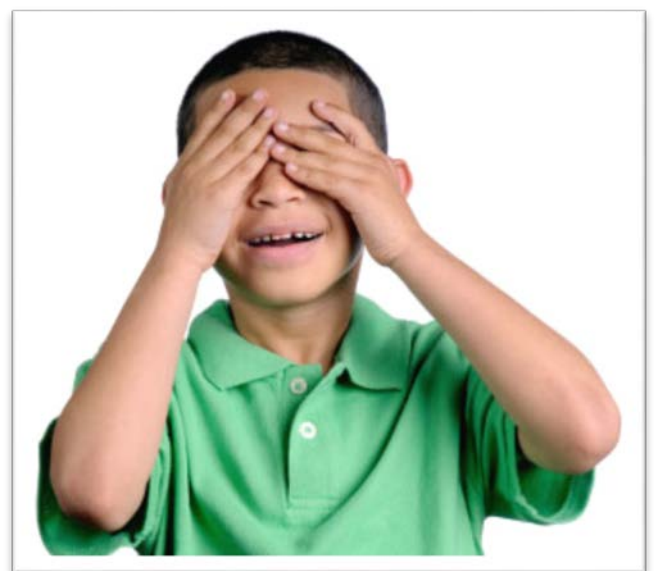
Once we have found our seats and the pantomime is about to begin... it may go a little dark. But not too dark!

Dick Whittington is a pantomime. A pantomime is a funny play – with goodies and baddies, singing and dancing and lots of jokes and always has a happy ending!

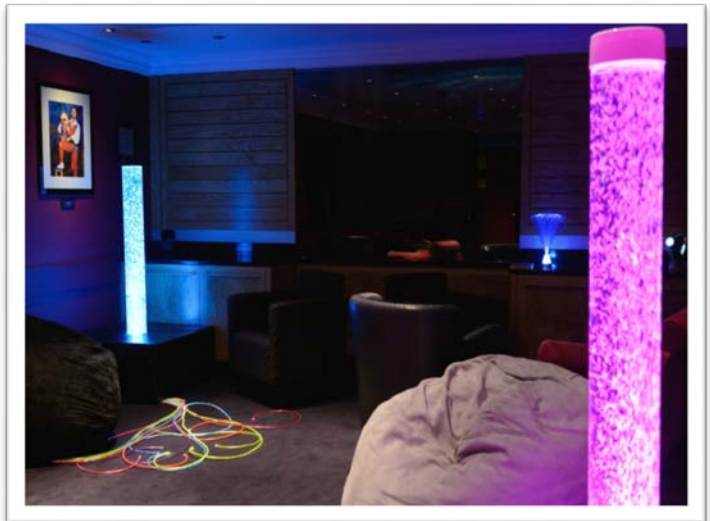
But in some parts of the pantomime, it can be quite noisy and there are lots of different coloured lights – sometimes flashing and sometimes there are a few bangs ... but not too loud. Sometimes the music can be a little scary but it warns me to be ready in case there is something I don't want to watch or see.

The audience (that is us – watching the show) are allowed to join in by clapping, shouting, booing and singing. The story will be told by people on the stage who are called actors.

When the pantomime begins I will hear music and singing. If it is too loud, I can cover my ears, or put on my ear defenders and if the lights are a little too bright, I can cover my eyes or wear my tinted glasses.



If I want to leave the auditorium at any point, the doors will be open and there are quieter rooms where I can go to relax and play. There might be other people in those rooms.



The show begins...



The first person I will see on stage will be King Rat. If I feel afraid or nervous, I can cover my eyes. He does seem quite frightening but he is an actor playing the part and just pretending.

But we can all shout and boo and hiss at King Rat - so that he knows we don't like him. It's fun. BOO!!!!



There are lots of other characters to meet in this story and of course – the most important person is the hero of the show, Dick Whittington.



Dick comes to London Town to make lots of money! But the only job he can find is to try and get rid of all the rats in the city and if he does, he can become Lord Mayor of London. That is a hard job to do on his own and the only help he has is Babby The Cat – given to him by Sarah the Cook.



Sarah the Cook works in Councillor Krankie's shop and wears lots of very funny dresses. Look out for the Christmas Pudding! She lives with her son, Idle Jack... who is very silly and always seems to be falling over. (Can you guess who is who?)



At the shop, Dick meets Councillor Krankie's daughter, Alice and falls in love!



But things don't go too well for Dick and Alice as King Rat plays a horrid trick on Dick and he runs away!

But he decides to come back and clear his name and defeat King Rat. But he can't do that on his own... he needs a little bit of fairy magic with the help of Fairy Bow Bells.



And the adventure begins as they set a trap for King Rat, which takes them on an ocean voyage – on and under the sea! And end up being ship-wrecked on a far off island!



Even though it may look as if some of the characters are in danger, they are not really and there are always lots of jokes and very funny things to stop me being too frightened!

Watch out for Little Jimmy who works for Councillor Krankie. Here they are, with Jimmy pretending to be a ventriloquist dummy, when he keeps falling off Councillor Krankie's knee, like a doll.



In this pantomime – there are lots of things bigger than normal....

Look out for giant cakes, huge rats and an enormous shark! But none of them are real... not even the cake!

Half way through the performance, we will have a break. This is called the interval.



During the break, all of the lights will go on where we are sitting and people will leave the seats to get a drink or to go to the toilet. There will be signs to show me where to go.



The interval lasts for about 20 minutes but it may be longer. There will be announcements over the loudspeaker to tell me how long there is left in the interval.

In the interval, I will need to collect my 3D glasses from someone in a sparkly hat to wear in the second half of the performance.



When the interval has finished, everyone will come back to their seats and sit down again. It will get darker and quieter again, just like at the beginning of the show. The actors will come back on the stage and finish telling the story of Dick Whittington.

There is a special scene – when Sarah the Cook and Alice are under the water in a submarine. At this time – Sarah will tell us all when to put our special 3D glasses. They look like sun glasses and I will only need to wear them when she tells me, not all of the time.

When I am wearing the glasses it will feel as if all the different sea creatures are coming towards me, but they are not. It can feel very funny as I will try to touch them but I can't. It is safe. Nothing will hurt me. It is just the glasses that make it feel like this.

If I do not like it, I can take my special glasses off and I can cover my ears.

Near the end of the pantomime, when everyone gets go off to get ready for Dick and Alice's wedding – Idle Jack asks four children to come on stage and help to sing a song with him. This is the song they sing and everyone can join in. You can learn the song and do all the actions and join in too!

*Clap hands, stamp your feet,
Bangin' on the big bass drum
What a picture, what a picture
Um-tiddly-um-pum-um-pum-pum
Stick it in your family album*

When the story has finished, all of the actors will come out on stage. This is the end of the show. Everyone will clap a lot so the actors know how much they liked Dick Whittington.



I will then leave Birmingham Hippodrome and go home, or back to school or college. I will be given a special sticker by a person in a sparkly hat to say that I have **had** a Purrfect time with Dick Whittington and his Cat and even King Rat!