

Manorial Court Drama Activity

Cast

The Lord's Steward (LS)

12 Jury members

5 Accused people – Mathilda, Cedric, Benedict, John, Margaret

Witnesses – Peter, Henry, Walter, Abigail, Mary, William, Alice, Gregory, Hugh, Stephen

Setting

Table for Lord's Steward, two rows of chairs for jury, accused stand, witness stand, chairs at the front for guilty people to await punishment

Scene 1 – The trial of Mathilda

LS – I call Mathilda to the accused stand

Mathilda walks to accused stand

LS – Mathilda, you are accused of telling lies. On 22nd September you said you were ill and could not help with the harvest. I call Peter to the witness stand.

Peter walks to the witness stand

LS – Peter, give your evidence

Peter – Mathilda hates doing hard work and always complains that the harvest is hard work. She lied that she was ill to have a day off.

LS – Thank you Peter. I call Henry to the witness stand.

Peter leaves witness stand. Henry walks to the witness stand

LS – Henry, give your evidence

Henry – I was working in the lower field and could see Mathilda's hut from where I was. She came outside and did not look ill.

LS – Thank you Henry

Henry leaves witness stand

LS – Mathilda would you like to say anything

Mathilda – I was ill, I get pains all over and can't work when I'm like that. I went outside to get some air. I don't tell lies, I was really ill.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think Mathilda is guilty or not guilty. If the majority decision is not guilty Mathilda is told she is free to go. If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment Mathilda should receive. Mathilda to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

Scene 2 – The trial of Cedric

LS – I call Cedric to the accused stand

Cedric walks to accused stand

LS – Cedric, you are accused of stealing Walter's chicken on 3rd October. I call Walter to the witness stand.

Walter walks to the witness stand

LS – Walter, give your evidence

Walter – I got up in the morning and went to feed the chickens and one was missing. Later on I heard that Cedric was having chicken for dinner, he doesn't have any chickens so it must have been him that stole my chicken.

LS – Thank you Walter. I call Abigail to the witness stand

Walter leaves witness stand. Abigail walks to the witness stand

LS – Abigail, give your evidence

Abigail – I saw Cedric walking about that night and he was near Walter's hut. Cedric is normally indoors at night so it was odd to see him out.

LS – Thank you Abigail

Abigail leaves witness stand

LS – Cedric would you like to say anything

Cedric – I was out that night. I went for a walk because I had an argument with my wife. She was cross because we didn't have anything for dinner. I found a chicken in the woods and took it home with me.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think Cedric is guilty or not guilty.

If the majority decision is not guilty Cedric is told he is free to go.

If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment Cedric should receive. Cedric to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

Scene 3 – The trial of Benedict

LS – I call Benedict to the accused stand

Benedict walks to accused stand

LS – Benedict, you are accused of drunkenness and swearing on the night of 31st August. I call Mary to the witness stand.

Mary walks to the witness stand

LS – Mary, give your evidence

Mary – It was late at night and there was a terrible noise coming from the green. I looked outside and Benedict was shouting and swearing. We shut the door and stayed indoors.

LS – Thank you Mary. I call William to the witness stand

Mary leaves witness stand. William walks to the witness stand

LS – William, give your evidence

William – I am the innkeeper and on that night Benedict came in and had a lot of ale. When he left he was staggering about and shortly afterwards he was on the green shouting and swearing.

LS – Thank you William

William leaves witness stand

LS – Benedict would you like to say anything

Benedict – I did go to the inn that night but I was not shouting and swearing. When I left it was a fine evening and I was dancing in the moonlight.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think Benedict is guilty or not guilty.

If the majority decision is not guilty Benedict is told he is free to go.

If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment Benedict should receive. Benedict to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

Scene 4 – The trial of John

LS – I call John to the accused stand

John walks to accused stand

LS – John, you are accused of mugging Alice on the night of 11th October. I call Alice to the witness stand.

Alice walks to the witness stand

LS – Alice, give your evidence

Alice – I was walking across the green when I was hit hard on the shoulder. I fell down and did not see who had hit me but I believe it was John. John asked me to dance with him but I said no. My shoulder was very painful for weeks afterwards.

LS – Thank you Alice. I call Gregory to the witness stand

Alice leaves witness stand. Gregory walks to the witness stand

LS – Gregory, give your evidence

Gregory – I know John very well. He is a kind man and would not hurt anyone. He likes Alice and would not want to harm her at all.

LS – Thank you Gregory

Gregory leaves witness stand

LS – John would you like to say anything

John – I have never hurt anyone in my life. I like Alice very much and would never hurt her in any way. I was upset that she didn't want to dance with me but I accepted it. I would protect Alice not hurt her.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think John is guilty or not guilty.

If the majority decision is not guilty John is told he is free to go.

If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment John should receive. John to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

Scene 5 – The trial of Margaret

LS – I call Margaret to the accused stand

Margaret walks to accused stand

LS – Margaret, you are accused of starting a fire outside Hugh's hut on 31st August. I call Hugh to the witness stand.

Hugh walks to the witness stand

LS – Hugh, give your evidence

Hugh – I was in the field helping with the harvest when I was told that there were flames near my hut. I ran home and found a fire. Luckily it was small and I managed to put it out but my hut could have been burned down. I think it was Margaret because we had been arguing on the night before.

LS – Thank you Hugh. I call Stephen to the witness stand

Hugh leaves witness stand. Stephen walks to the witness stand

LS – Stephen, give your evidence

Stephen – I didn't see Margaret in the fields that morning. She was there later on but not in the morning. Margaret has an obsession with fire I have seen her staring at flames whenever there is a fire.

LS – Thank you Stephen

Stephen leaves witness stand

LS – Margaret would you like to say anything

Margaret – It wasn't me. I was in the fields helping with the harvest. I don't know why Stephen didn't see me because I was there. It was not me that started the fire.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think Margaret is guilty or not guilty.

If the majority decision is not guilty Margaret is told she is free to go.

If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment Margaret should receive. Margaret to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

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Peter walks to the witness stand

LS – Peter, give your evidence

Peter – Mathilda hates doing hard work and always complains that the harvest is hard work. She lied that she was ill to have a day off.

LS – Thank you Peter. I call Henry to the witness stand

Peter leaves witness stand. Henry walks to the witness stand

LS – Henry, give your evidence

Henry – I was working in the lower field and could see Mathilda's hut from where I was. She came outside and did not look ill.

LS – Thank you Henry

Henry leaves witness stand

LS – Mathilda would you like to say anything

Mathilda – I was ill, I get pains all over and can't work when I'm like that. I went outside to get some air. I don't tell lies, I was really ill.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think Mathilda is guilty or not guilty. If the majority decision is not guilty Mathilda is told she is free to go. If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment Mathilda should receive. Mathilda to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

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Peter walks to the witness stand

LS – Peter, give your evidence

Peter – Mathilda hates doing hard work and always complains that the harvest is hard work. She lied that she was ill to have a day off.

LS – Thank you Peter. I call Henry to the witness stand

Peter leaves witness stand. Henry walks to the witness stand

LS – Henry, give your evidence

Henry – I was working in the lower field and could see Mathilda's hut from where I was. She came outside and did not look ill.

LS – Thank you Henry

Henry leaves witness stand

LS – Mathilda would you like to say anything

Mathilda – I was ill, I get pains all over and can't work when I'm like that. I went outside to get some air. I don't tell lies, I was really ill.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think Mathilda is guilty or not guilty. If the majority decision is not guilty Mathilda is told she is free to go. If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment Mathilda should receive. Mathilda to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

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Peter walks to the witness stand

LS – Peter, give your evidence

Peter – Mathilda hates doing hard work and always complains that the harvest is hard work. She lied that she was ill to have a day off.

LS – Thank you Peter. I call Henry to the witness stand

Peter leaves witness stand. Henry walks to the witness stand

LS – Henry, give your evidence

Henry – I was working in the lower field and could see Mathilda's hut from where I was. She came outside and did not look ill.

LS – Thank you Henry

Henry leaves witness stand

LS – Mathilda would you like to say anything

Mathilda – I was ill, I get pains all over and can't work when I'm like that. I went outside to get some air. I don't tell lies, I was really ill.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think Mathilda is guilty or not guilty. If the majority decision is not guilty Mathilda is told she is free to go. If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment Mathilda should receive. Mathilda to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

Scene 2 – The trial of Cedric

LS – I call Cedric to the accused stand

Cedric walks to accused stand

LS – Cedric, you are accused of stealing Walter's chicken on 3rd October. I call Walter to the witness stand.

Walter walks to the witness stand

LS – Walter, give your evidence

Walter – I got up in the morning and went to feed the chickens and one was missing. Later on I heard that Cedric was having chicken for dinner, he doesn't have any chickens so it must have been him that stole my chicken.

LS – Thank you Walter. I call Abigail to the witness stand

Walter leaves witness stand. Abigail walks to the witness stand

LS – Abigail, give your evidence

Abigail – I saw Cedric walking about that night and he was near Walter's hut. Cedric is normally indoors at night so it was odd to see him out.

LS – Thank you Abigail

Abigail leaves witness stand

LS – Cedric would you like to say anything

Cedric – I was out that night. I went for a walk because I had an argument with my wife. She was cross because we didn't have anything for dinner. I found a chicken in the woods and took it home with me.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think Cedric is guilty or not guilty.

If the majority decision is not guilty Cedric is told he is free to go.

If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment Cedric should receive. Cedric to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

Scene 2 – The trial of Cedric

LS – I call Cedric to the accused stand

Cedric walks to accused stand

LS – Cedric, you are accused of stealing Walter's chicken on 3rd October. I call Walter to the witness stand.

Walter walks to the witness stand

LS – Walter, give your evidence

Walter – I got up in the morning and went to feed the chickens and one was missing. Later on I heard that Cedric was having chicken for dinner, he doesn't have any chickens so it must have been him that stole my chicken.

LS – Thank you Walter. I call Abigail to the witness stand

Walter leaves witness stand. Abigail walks to the witness stand

LS – Abigail, give your evidence

Abigail – I saw Cedric walking about that night and he was near Walter's hut. Cedric is normally indoors at night so it was odd to see him out.

LS – Thank you Abigail

Abigail leaves witness stand

LS – Cedric would you like to say anything

Cedric – I was out that night. I went for a walk because I had an argument with my wife. She was cross because we didn't have anything for dinner. I found a chicken in the woods and took it home with me.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think Cedric is guilty or not guilty.

If the majority decision is not guilty Cedric is told he is free to go.

If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment Cedric should receive. Cedric to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

Scene 2 – The trial of Cedric

LS – I call Cedric to the accused stand

Cedric walks to accused stand

LS – Cedric, you are accused of stealing Walter's chicken on 3rd October. I call Walter to the witness stand.

Walter walks to the witness stand

LS – Walter, give your evidence

Walter – I got up in the morning and went to feed the chickens and one was missing. Later on I heard that Cedric was having chicken for dinner, he doesn't have any chickens so it must have been him that stole my chicken.

LS – Thank you Walter. I call Abigail to the witness stand

Walter leaves witness stand. Abigail walks to the witness stand

LS – Abigail, give your evidence

Abigail – I saw Cedric walking about that night and he was near Walter's hut. Cedric is normally indoors at night so it was odd to see him out.

LS – Thank you Abigail

Abigail leaves witness stand

LS – Cedric would you like to say anything

Cedric – I was out that night. I went for a walk because I had an argument with my wife. She was cross because we didn't have anything for dinner. I found a chicken in the woods and took it home with me.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think Cedric is guilty or not guilty.

If the majority decision is not guilty Cedric is told he is free to go.

If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment Cedric should receive. Cedric to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

Scene 3 – The trial of Benedict

LS – I call Benedict to the accused stand

Benedict walks to accused stand

LS – Benedict, you are accused of drunkenness and swearing on the night of 31st August. I call Mary to the witness stand.

Mary walks to the witness stand

LS – Mary, give your evidence

Mary – It was late at night and there was a terrible noise coming from the green. I looked outside and Benedict was shouting and swearing. We shut the door and stayed indoors.

LS – Thank you Mary. I call William to the witness stand

Mary leaves witness stand. William walks to the witness stand

LS – William, give your evidence

William – I am the innkeeper and on that night Benedict came in and had a lot of ale. When he left he was staggering about and shortly afterwards he was on the green shouting and swearing.

LS – Thank you William

William leaves witness stand

LS – Benedict would you like to say anything

Benedict – I did go to the inn that night but I was not shouting and swearing. When I left it was a fine evening and I was dancing in the moonlight.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think Benedict is guilty or not guilty.

If the majority decision is not guilty Benedict is told he is free to go.

If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment Benedict should receive. Benedict to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

Scene 3 – The trial of Benedict

LS – I call Benedict to the accused stand

Benedict walks to accused stand

LS – Benedict, you are accused of drunkenness and swearing on the night of 31st August. I call Mary to the witness stand.

Mary walks to the witness stand

LS – Mary, give your evidence

Mary – It was late at night and there was a terrible noise coming from the green. I looked outside and Benedict was shouting and swearing. We shut the door and stayed indoors.

LS – Thank you Mary. I call William to the witness stand

Mary leaves witness stand. William walks to the witness stand

LS – William, give your evidence

William – I am the innkeeper and on that night Benedict came in and had a lot of ale. When he left he was staggering about and shortly afterwards he was on the green shouting and swearing.

LS – Thank you William

William leaves witness stand

LS – Benedict would you like to say anything

Benedict – I did go to the inn that night but I was not shouting and swearing. When I left it was a fine evening and I was dancing in the moonlight.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think Benedict is guilty or not guilty.

If the majority decision is not guilty Benedict is told he is free to go.

If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment Benedict should receive. Benedict to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

Scene 3 – The trial of Benedict

LS – I call Benedict to the accused stand

Benedict walks to accused stand

LS – Benedict, you are accused of drunkenness and swearing on the night of 31st August. I call Mary to the witness stand.

Mary walks to the witness stand

LS – Mary, give your evidence

Mary – It was late at night and there was a terrible noise coming from the green. I looked outside and Benedict was shouting and swearing. We shut the door and stayed indoors.

LS – Thank you Mary. I call William to the witness stand

Mary leaves witness stand. William walks to the witness stand

LS – William, give your evidence

William – I am the innkeeper and on that night Benedict came in and had a lot of ale. When he left he was staggering about and shortly afterwards he was on the green shouting and swearing.

LS – Thank you William

William leaves witness stand

LS – Benedict would you like to say anything

Benedict – I did go to the inn that night but I was not shouting and swearing. When I left it was a fine evening and I was dancing in the moonlight.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think Benedict is guilty or not guilty.

If the majority decision is not guilty Benedict is told he is free to go.

If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment Benedict should receive. Benedict to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

Scene 4 – The trial of John

LS – I call John to the accused stand

John walks to accused stand

LS – John, you are accused of mugging Alice on the night of 11th October. I call Alice to the witness stand.

Alice walks to the witness stand

LS – Alice, give your evidence

Alice – I was walking across the green when I was hit hard on the shoulder. I fell down and did not see who had hit me but I believe it was John. John asked me to dance with him but I said no. My shoulder was very painful for weeks afterwards.

LS – Thank you Alice. I call Gregory to the witness stand

Alice leaves witness stand. Gregory walks to the witness stand

LS – Gregory, give your evidence

Gregory – I know John very well. He is a kind man and would not hurt anyone. He likes Alice and would not want to harm her at all.

LS – Thank you Gregory

Gregory leaves witness stand

LS – John would you like to say anything

John – I have never hurt anyone in my life. I like Alice very much and would never hurt her in any way. I was upset that she didn't want to dance with me but I accepted it. I would protect Alice not hurt her.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think John is guilty or not guilty.

If the majority decision is not guilty John is told he is free to go.

If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment John should receive. John to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

Scene 4 – The trial of John

LS – I call John to the accused stand

John walks to accused stand

LS – John, you are accused of mugging Alice on the night of 11th October. I call Alice to the witness stand.

Alice walks to the witness stand

LS – Alice, give your evidence

Alice – I was walking across the green when I was hit hard on the shoulder. I fell down and did not see who had hit me but I believe it was John. John asked me to dance with him but I said no. My shoulder was very painful for weeks afterwards.

LS – Thank you Alice. I call Gregory to the witness stand

Alice leaves witness stand. Gregory walks to the witness stand

LS – Gregory, give your evidence

Gregory – I know John very well. He is a kind man and would not hurt anyone. He likes Alice and would not want to harm her at all.

LS – Thank you Gregory

Gregory leaves witness stand

LS – John would you like to say anything

John – I have never hurt anyone in my life. I like Alice very much and would never hurt her in any way. I was upset that she didn't want to dance with me but I accepted it. I would protect Alice not hurt her.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think John is guilty or not guilty.

If the majority decision is not guilty John is told he is free to go.

If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment John should receive. John to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

Scene 4 – The trial of John

LS – I call John to the accused stand

John walks to accused stand

LS – John, you are accused of mugging Alice on the night of 11th October. I call Alice to the witness stand.

Alice walks to the witness stand

LS – Alice, give your evidence

Alice – I was walking across the green when I was hit hard on the shoulder. I fell down and did not see who had hit me but I believe it was John. John asked me to dance with him but I said no. My shoulder was very painful for weeks afterwards.

LS – Thank you Alice. I call Gregory to the witness stand

Alice leaves witness stand. Gregory walks to the witness stand

LS – Gregory, give your evidence

Gregory – I know John very well. He is a kind man and would not hurt anyone. He likes Alice and would not want to harm her at all.

LS – Thank you Gregory

Gregory leaves witness stand

LS – John would you like to say anything

John – I have never hurt anyone in my life. I like Alice very much and would never hurt her in any way. I was upset that she didn't want to dance with me but I accepted it. I would protect Alice not hurt her.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think John is guilty or not guilty.

If the majority decision is not guilty John is told he is free to go.

If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment John should receive. John to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

Scene 5 – The trial of Margaret

LS – I call Margaret to the accused stand

Margaret walks to accused stand

LS – Margaret, you are accused of starting a fire outside Hugh's hut on 31st August. I call Hugh to the witness stand.

Hugh walks to the witness stand

LS – Hugh, give your evidence

Hugh – I was in the field helping with the harvest when I was told that there were flames near my hut. I ran home and found a fire. Luckily it was small and I managed to put it out but my hut could have been burned down. I think it was Margaret because we had been arguing on the night before.

LS – Thank you Hugh. I call Stephen to the witness stand

Hugh leaves witness stand. Stephen walks to the witness stand

LS – Stephen, give your evidence

Stephen – I didn't see Margaret in the fields that morning. She was there later on but not in the morning. Margaret has an obsession with fire I have seen her staring at flames whenever there is a fire.

LS – Thank you Stephen

Stephen leaves witness stand

LS – Margaret would you like to say anything

Margaret – It wasn't me. I was in the fields helping with the harvest. I don't know why Stephen didn't see me because I was there. It was not me that started the fire.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think Margaret is guilty or not guilty.

If the majority decision is not guilty Margaret is told she is free to go.

If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment Margaret should receive. Margaret to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

Scene 5 – The trial of Margaret

LS – I call Margaret to the accused stand

Margaret walks to accused stand

LS – Margaret, you are accused of starting a fire outside Hugh's hut on 31st August. I call Hugh to the witness stand.

Hugh walks to the witness stand

LS – Hugh, give your evidence

Hugh – I was in the field helping with the harvest when I was told that there were flames near my hut. I ran home and found a fire. Luckily it was small and I managed to put it out but my hut could have been burned down. I think it was Margaret because we had been arguing on the night before.

LS – Thank you Hugh. I call Stephen to the witness stand

Hugh leaves witness stand. Stephen walks to the witness stand

LS – Stephen, give your evidence

Stephen – I didn't see Margaret in the fields that morning. She was there later on but not in the morning. Margaret has an obsession with fire I have seen her staring at flames whenever there is a fire.

LS – Thank you Stephen

Stephen leaves witness stand

LS – Margaret would you like to say anything

Margaret – It wasn't me. I was in the fields helping with the harvest. I don't know why Stephen didn't see me because I was there. It was not me that started the fire.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think Margaret is guilty or not guilty.

If the majority decision is not guilty Margaret is told she is free to go.

If the majority decision is guilty then LS asks each jury member in turn what punishment Margaret should receive. Margaret to sit at the front of the court to await punishment.

Scene 5 – The trial of Margaret

LS – I call Margaret to the accused stand

Margaret walks to accused stand

LS – Margaret, you are accused of starting a fire outside Hugh's hut on 31st August. I call Hugh to the witness stand.

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LS – Thank you Hugh. I call Stephen to the witness stand

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LS – Stephen, give your evidence

Stephen – I didn't see Margaret in the fields that morning. She was there later on but not in the morning. Margaret has an obsession with fire I have seen her staring at flames whenever there is a fire.

LS – Thank you Stephen

Stephen leaves witness stand

LS – Margaret would you like to say anything

Margaret – It wasn't me. I was in the fields helping with the harvest. I don't know why Stephen didn't see me because I was there. It was not me that started the fire.

LS to ask each jury member in turn whether they think Margaret is guilty or not guilty.

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