

Big Idea: Creating a Character

“Let him Have it” – the Derek Bentley Story

Key Knowledge:

Derek Bentley was a man who was hanged for the murder of a **policeman**, which was committed during a **burglary** attempt. The murder was actually committed by Christopher Craig, then aged 16, but Bentley was convicted as a party to murder, by "**joint enterprise**". The jury at the trial found Bentley guilty based on the prosecution's interpretation of the ambiguous phrase "Let him have it". Bentley was sentenced to be hanged. The Bentley case led to a 45-year-long campaign to win Derek Bentley a **posthumous pardon**, which was granted in 1993, and then a further campaign for the quashing of his murder conviction, which occurred in 1998.



Creating a character based on a real person comes with added responsibility for an actor. This helps to develop empathy, and allows the year 9 actors to bring together factual information and dramatic license in order to create and play a character. Year 9 actors will explore the case of Derek Bentley who was hanged aged 19 for his part in the murder of a police man in Croydon in the 1950s. This is known as the ‘let him have it’ case.

Key Skills

- Audience awareness
- Empathy
- Thought tracking
- Abstract
- Narration
- Emotional memory
- Role play
- Taking directions

