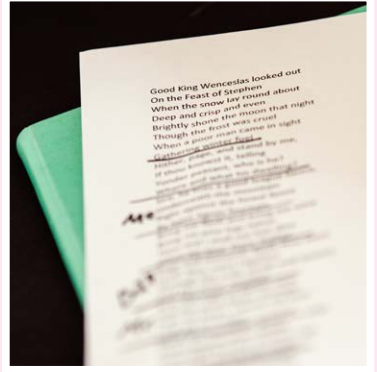


The Dark is Rising

Complicité

Callout

Write Your Own Radio Play



The Dark is Rising script

Write your own radio play script and have it recorded by a Complicité actor and sound designer!

Be inspired by listening to the audio dramatisation of *The Dark is Rising* and write your own radio play at home over Christmas or in your classroom in the days leading up to your Christmas break!



See tips below on how to write your play. Once your script is ready, send it to creativeengagement@complicite.org by Monday 8 January 2024.

We will turn two of the scripts we receive into radio plays! Voice and narration will be read by a Complicité actor and the sound effects will be recorded by a sound designer. Once recorded and sound edited, your radio play will be aired across Complicité's channels for thousands of listeners to hear your story!

Any questions send us an email to creativeengagement@complicite.org or give us a call on +44 (0) 20 7485 7700

We are looking forward to reading your script.

Listen to *The Dark is Rising* [HERE](#) ►

What is a radio play?

Long before televisions, cinemas or even books, people told stories through word of mouth. Gathered around a campfire, or standing on a soapbox in the town square, storytellers would use the power of their words and the magic of storytelling to entertain audiences.



When BBC radio was created in 1922, it continued the tradition of oral storytelling by broadcasting radio plays. Using actors to voice characters and some simple sound effects, radio plays soon became very popular. The first play written for BBC radio was called *A Comedy of Danger* by Richard Hughes. It was set in a coal mine in the dark so the characters, like the audience, could only hear what was going on. There is

something very exciting about listening to a play live on the radio at the same time as people all around the country. It is a shared experience.

Lots of radio plays are new stories being heard for the first time, but others are adaptations. This means the story was originally a book or film that has been changed to be suitable for radio. We decided to turn a book, *The Dark is Rising* by Susan Cooper, into a radio play because we knew the descriptive language and exciting story would make a thrilling audio experience.

How to write your own radio play?

When writing a radio play there is nowhere you can't go in the story and there is nothing you can't do. You can take your audience's imagination anywhere!

First, decide whether you want to make up your own story or adapt a book.

Some tips if you are adapting a book

- Choose your favourite scene and write down all the dialogue you can see (anything in speech marks).
- Look at the speech you've written down: does the story still make sense without all the text in the book? If not, you might need to add bits of narration or extra dialogue so all the information is there for the audience.
- Most of all, enjoy writing your play!



The Dark is Rising



Some tips if you are making up your own story

To get into the mind of using your ears:

Close your eyes and think about yesterday's morning. What can you hear in the memory?

If you are in your kitchen, perhaps the sounds of a kettle boiling and butter being spread on a piece of toast. Do you hear a radio in the background, a car outside your window? Any birds, animals outside?

When you write you can use background sound like these to create an atmosphere that will help the listener's imagination create an entire world.

A tip is to choose a setting with a distinct sound environment and use those sounds to underscore the story.

But first,

- What do you want to write about? Think about what matters to you or what you get excited about.
- Think about the beginning, middle and end of your story. What will grab the audience in the beginning; don't take too long to get started into the main action of the story.
- Many radio plays use a narrator to set the tone of the story and the action is in dialogue.
- Most of all, enjoy writing your play!

Keep your script around 2 pages, which will create roughly a 2 minute long radio play.



To help our actors and sound designer to read your script please use these formats when you write:

- The script should be laid out as the character's name, followed by their speech like this:

MAGGIE: How's your big brother Max then, Will?
WILL: Oh, fine thank you. Grown his hair long.

- Directions and sound effects should be written in capital letters.



Simon McBurney and fellow co-adaptor Robert Macfarlane in R&D sessions for *The Dark is Rising* © Camilla Adams

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