

# *SPEED*



A short sketch in rhyme with workshop notes

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### **SPEED**

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# Production and Workshop Notes

## ABOUT SPEED:

Speed is a cautionary tale about the perils of speed - and the perils of sloth!

A short sketch in rhyme for 4 speaking characters and a couple of non-speaking. However, there are all sorts of things you can do with it that require more people to be involved.

### Cast:

**Lottie:** a speedy girl (or any gender - just change the name and pronouns)

**3 Friends:** any gender

**2 stretcher bearers** (any gender, no lines)

This is how you can use this sketch:

### As a classroom reading/vocal exercise only:

There is a rhythm to the sketch and the 4 speaking actors will need to become attuned to it. Sometimes a character will 'finish the sentence/thought' of the previous speaker - and these moments need to move smoothly without pause. As well as the rhythm there are the obvious emotional aspects to the predicament our 3 sloths find themselves in! The part of Lottie is clearly a speedy one, but the lines should not be delivered in a frantic or garbled way - so some vocal discipline is required. However you decide to use the sketch, this is a good way to start.

### As a physical exercise with separate speakers:

If you want to work on the physical aspects without your actors holding pieces of paper, I would suggest having 4 separate speakers to say the lines whilst you have fun working on the action sequences. There is plenty to do here! From the slackstick and/or slo-mo 'banana skin' moment, to the gradual rooting and becoming tree-like of the 3 others. You can pause the lines and create movement-only sequences if you wish. At particular points in the action Lottie runs around, across the stage, around the friends. Often they stop & watch, sometimes they try to ignore – it should look comic!

If you have a Lottie who can do cartwheels & other impressive speedy tricks that would look great!

### As a sketch in performance - learning lines!

As this is a freebie, you are most welcome to use it in performance if you're planning a revue type show. Integrating the words and actions is a rewarding and fun experience. I would be inclined to use the first two options in rehearsals, leading up to your actors taking on the lines themselves once the physical aspects are in place.

### Staging:

There is no particular set for this, but it needs to come to life with imaginative action! You can, of course, stage it however you like. Sound effects might be fun...  
Be creative, have fun with it.

However you use this, please consider leaving a review somewhere! I would really appreciate it. Feedback also gratefully received.

I hope it's a fun experience...

*The friends enter very slowly and make their way to centre stage*

**Friend 1:** We will tell you a tale  
Of impatience and speed  
Of hurdles and signs  
That you really should heed

**Friend 2:** It is a sad tale  
But please take heart  
It may keep you safe  
And that sets it apart

**Friend 3:** From stories of evil  
Or horror without goal  
And the whole thing starts  
With us out for a stroll

*Lottie runs up and stops in front of the friends*

**Lottie:** I don't care to stroll  
I like to run fast  
I don't look around  
I go with a blast!

*Lottie runs offstage*

**Friend 1:** **We** like to walk slow  
To take in the feeling  
Of all that we see  
From the floor to the ceiling

**Friend 2:** We're creatures of sloth  
We like to sit still  
We never go quick  
Especially uphill

**Friend 3:** Sometimes we stop  
To slowly look round  
And our feet start sprouting  
Roots in the ground

*The friends get stuck to the ground as they gradually turn into trees*

**Friend 1:** It is quite unusual  
To turn into a tree  
But sometimes it happens  
And it's hard to get free

*Lottie runs on again & speeds around the stage as before*

**Friend 2:** So when Lottie turned up  
And we needed a hand  
We called and we shouted  
But we could not command

**Friend 3:** Her attention at all  
Not even a bit  
She just ran past  
And that was it

**Friend 1:** Our friend is well, different  
She's not like we are  
She flies like a bat  
Without any radar

**Friend 2:** She runs like a cheetah  
Without any design  
And life is so fast  
She can never resign

**Friend 3:** Herself to be quiet  
To sit and be still  
To relax and unwind  
To 'vege out' or to chill

**Friend 1:** I shouted out "LOTTIE"  
**Lottie:** "Sorry can't stop  
I'm not one to just  
Stand there and flop"

**Friend 2:** I shouted out "BUT .."  
**Lottie:** "Must go in haste  
All this hanging around  
It's just such a waste"

**Friend 3:** I shouted out "PLEASE"  
**Lottie** "Now I really must go  
Why don't you move  
You're incredibly slow!"

*Lottie runs off*

**Friend 1:** And with that she was off  
And we were perplexed  
But we cannot be blamed  
For what happened next

**Friend 2:** I reached in my pocket  
And found something slimy  
Then threw it away  
It was all old and grimy

**Friend 3:** I caught it right then  
It fell in my hand  
And I panicked a bit  
But I just hadn't planned

**Friend 1:** For it to fall on my head  
I looked such a fool  
So I chucked it away  
I felt so uncool

*Lottie enters running & eventually slips on the banana skin which (rather ironically) might look rather good in slow motion ..*

**Friend 2:** Then it fell on the floor  
And when Lottie ran past  
She slipped and she slithered  
Then finally at last

**Friend 3:** She lay on the ground  
And ceased to move  
And I have to admit  
That I did approve

**Friend 1:** Of this new style Lottie  
Not running, instead...

*Pause as stretcher bearers rush on and take her off to hospital*

Just lazing about  
In a hospital bed

**Friend 2:** Well, now you can see  
That being fast is no good  
It's best to be still  
And turn into a wood

**Friend 3:** But if you're passing by soon  
Please lend us a hand  
We're branching out slowly  
And becoming quite grand

*The friends get quite speedy & manic for the last few verse*

**Friend 1:** But we're not quite ready  
To stay put evermore  
We miss our beds  
So we really implore

**Friend 2:** You to get some speed on  
To hurry and race  
Don't waste a minute  
Just up your pace

**Friends:** **Run faster, be quicker**  
**Friend 3:** Get here right away  
And we promise to be active...  
Well... maybe... someday

**Friends:** (shouting) **HURRY UP!**

# THANK YOU

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## **Spy School: The Seventh Department**

A one act musical with Spies (obviously) Barbara Hockley (words) Greg Swinford (music)

and more ...

## **About Barbara Hockley**

An experienced and qualified drama practitioner and teacher, Barbara has been writing specifically for youth theatres and schools since 2005 and has created many plays, films and other 'events' with young actors over the years. Most of them are rather surreal and off-the-wall in nature and often deal with themes around storytelling, creativity and the power of imagination and dreams. They are also pretty funny, exciting and 'bonkers' is a word that crops up a lot. But serious themes do run through them, despite the apparent mayhem and madness!

If you are performing one of our plays, please invite us to your performance/s! We would love to attend (depending on location).

