

Please remember that all performances must be by prior arrangement with the Publishers from whom licences must be obtained.

The Keymaster

by Nick Perrin (with Ruth Kenward)

Scene 1 In A Modern Day Classroom

[ALL are seated looking very bored. SAMANTHA, MAX, C-J & BEN – and others if space allows – sit on chairs facing audience. Enter SUPPLY TEACHER (KEYMASTER), to stand D/stage R.]

SUPPLY TEACHER (to class) Good morning, class!

ALL (mumbling) Morning, sir... (ALL exchange glum expressions, etc.)

SUPPLY TEACHER I'm your supply teacher for today. (rubs hands) Right! Battle of Hastings!

SONG - HISTORY IS BORING

(☉ Track 1 / 13)

Ben (spoken) Oh no! Not another supply teacher!

Chorus	LEFT	RIGHT
	1066	BATTLE OF HASTINGS
	1066	NORMAN INVASION
	1066	WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR
	1066	1066

CHORUS do plenty of yawns, head scratching, stretching etc. to indicate boredom.

Supply Teacher 1066 is a very important date. What happened in 1066?

B/C/M/S (bored) Battle of Hastings, Sir...

Supply Teacher And who was King of England in 1066?

M/S/C (dull tone) Don't know, Sir...

Ben (bored, out to audience) Don't care, Sir...

Supply Teacher (surprised, cross) You don't care? How can you not care about history?

Chorus HISTORY IS BORING, IT'S VERY SAD.
IT'S A LOAD OF RUBBISH, MAKES US FEEL SO BAD.
HISTORY IS TORTURE, AN ENDLESS GRIND...

Supply Teacher (spoken, to audience) But I've got a way to open up their minds!

[Exit TEACHER for swift transformation into KEYMASTER]

Chorus HISTORY IS BORING, IT'S NEVER COOL.
JUST ANOTHER SUBJECT
THEY MAKE US LEARN AT SCHOOL.
DATE AFTER DATE, FACT AFTER FACT.
WHERE IS THE FUTURE
IN LEARNING STUFF LIKE THAT?

Chorus WHERE IS THE FUTURE
IN LEARNING STUFF LIKE THAT?

CHORUS give plenty of mimed reaction, pointing, excitement.

[Enter KEYMASTER, holding keys. He needs to sing in a 'larger than life' way, really hamming it up.]

Keymaster (spoken) I have the keys, the keys to history!

I CAN GO BACK IN TIME, ANYWHERE.
I HAVE THE KEYS, THE KEYS TO HISTORY
COME WITH ME BACK IN TIME, I'LL TAKE YOU THERE.

CHORUS move in time ad lib, mocking air guitar, clapping, clicking fingers etc.

[MAX, SAMANTHA, BEN & C-J move downstage looking unconvinced. They sing with the CHORUS.]

WHY DON'T YOU TRAVEL IN TIME WITH ME?
I AM THE KEYMASTER - THESE ARE THE KEYS!

Chorus HOW CAN THEY BE THE KEYS TO HISTORY?
WHAT A JOKE. WHACKY BLOKE. VERY WEIRD.

Keymaster I KNOW IT SEEMS A CRAZY MYSTERY
BUT IT'S TRUE, I'M TELLING YOU, IT'S REALLY TRUE.
OPEN THE LOCK AND YOU'LL SEE FOR YOURSELVES
WHAT IT WAS LIKE BACK IN YESTERDAY'S WORLD.

CHORUS mime indecision, puzzlement, etc.

[KEYMASTER mimes discussion with CHORUS members. CHORUS mime puzzlement to each other, on the lines of 'Who is this guy?' with shrugs etc.]

Max Either he's lost it completely or he's for real.

Ben/C-J/Sam (disbelieving) What, a keymaster?

Max (defending himself) Well, he's not like our usual supply teachers.

Samantha But he can't take us back in time.

Max Why don't we see he does next...?

Ben/C-J Yeah!

Ben Let's play along with it!

Keymaster (GRANDLY) I AM THE KEYMASTER, I AM THE KEYMASTER.
I AM THE KEYMASTER ----- KEYMASTER!

Chorus HE IS THE KEYMASTER, HE IS THE KEYMASTER.
HE IS THE KEYMASTER ----- KEYMASTER!

KEYMASTER If you're coming, let's go! But I'm warning you – history is far from boring. It can be horrible.

BEN/C-J/MAX/SAM. Yeah, horribly boring!

KEYMASTER (shrugs) Well... you'll see...

[KEYMASTER takes a key from his bunch and gives it to MAX, who holds it up to inspect it. KEYMASTER slips offstage to collect his Timelock, while BEN, SAMANTHA & C-J look over Max's shoulder at it with puzzled expressions.]

MAX (holding up the key, reads) One, nought, six, six...

ALL Ten sixty-six!

C-J (to MAX) Is that where we're going then? 1066?

High energy to contrast with earlier boredom.

MAX *(shrugging)* I dunno.

[KEYMASTER returns with Timelock, which he quickly displays first to Audience then to Chorus]

KEYMASTER Put the key in the Timelock, Max!

BEN/C-J/MAX Timelock?

SAMANTHA *(folding her arms, pompously)* Don't be ridiculous! It must be a joke.

KEYMASTER No it's not a joke. But here's a good one:
Why did the girl throw her clock out of the window?

[SAMANTHA shakes her head, rolls her eyes, walks away as if thinking this is stupid, but turns back round to listen.]

BEN/C-J/MAX *(dubious, but wanting to know the answer)* Dunno! Why did the girl throw her clock out of the window?

KEYMASTER So she could see time fly!

[ALL groan, KEYMASTER shrugs with a grin.]

SAMANTHA *(to the CHORUS sarcastically, sneering)* How old does he think we are?

KEYMASTER *(calmly)* I know how old you are, Samantha...

[SAMANTHA huffs, folding her arms and turning her back. KEYMASTER offers the Keyhole to MAX again]

And you're about to see time fly for real. Ready, Max?

MAX *(to CHORUS)* What shall I do?

ALL *(ad lib)* Go for it! Put the key in! Get on with it! *(etc.)*

SOUND EFFECT – TIME TRAVEL (long) (© Track 25)

[During the music, BEN / SAMANTHA / C-J & MAX move aside with KEYMASTER while 1066 cast enter and take positions. KEYMASTER puts the keyhole down but in view. HAROLD should be upstage standing on a raised block. COMMENTATORS should stand Downstage to one side. NORMANS & ENGLISH grouped on separate sides, as opposing teams limbering up.]



DID YOU KNOW? Halley's Comet was seen during the Norman Conquest of England and appears in the Bayeux Tapestry.

Scene 2 1066 - The Battle Of Hastings

COMMENTATOR 1 *(football commentator style)* Good afternoon, and welcome to the big match, with England playing a home fixture here in Hastings.

COMMENTATOR 2 Yes, and Senlac Hill is looking glorious in the sunshine. Match preparations are well under way.