# Tam O'Shanter

At first glance, this may seem a bit of a challenge to young readers but I think that with a bit of imagination 'Tam' can be made to come alive.

A good reading is the place to start, probably before looking at the text.  Then perhaps another reading, following the text.  Not every word needs to be known or explained as long as the direction of the plot and the moral of the story is grasped.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HkCkm0tZLPw  Karen Dunbar

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pU_Lbdy3Ud8 James Cosmo

You might then look at an illustrated comic version read by Hamish McDonald and illustrated by Gary Welsh

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GAqVwCa_x5o comic version

**Listening and watching will only get students so far.**

They need to be involved more directly in creating their own versions.  This is just one way to approach it:

The story is made up of a number of scenes.  For example, the first 36 lines can be seen as an introduction and general warning. The next section as the scene in the ale-house, then a brief piece of homespun wisdom before the night and the weather is described.  However, it's the task of the students, in pairs or small groups, to decide on how the story is to be divided into scenes and to give them each a rough title. They could select a few lines from each scene which best sum up the content of the scene, say between one and four lines.

The next stage, if time and willingness permit, will be to draw a comic strip or, to give it a more upmarket name, a storyboard. Divide a sheet of A4 into rectangles. The number of rectangles being the number of scenes plus one for the title.  Fill the rectangles with simple drawings. Stick people are fine!  One version could use quotes from the original, some perhaps in speech bubbles and another version might update the story into 21st century English.

**Less able students – an idea**

Below are some photos of the ironwork signage on the 'Poet's Path' at the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum in Alloway, Ayrshire, illustrating parts of the poem. They could be photocopied and randomised, students being asked to arrange them in the best order to tell the story. They could then be stuck onto a couple of sheets of A4 and appropriate captions added.

Here they have been used in a Microsoft Clipchamp presentation, something else that some students might like to try.  https://clipchamp.com/watch/p7LjKnQ8Eu2  The application allows sound to be added but this writer didn't feel equipped to do justice to the Scots language!