

Title: The Absurd Ascension of Jackson

Synopsis:

In 1996, Michael Jackson staged a celestial performance at the Brit Awards where he ascended a glowing platform surrounded by child disciples, essentially declaring himself the second coming of... himself. Enter Jarvis Cocker of *Pulp*, who crashed the stage, wiggled his bum, and flashed a two-finger salute in protest. The blog explores this clash of absurd self-glorification and cheeky British rebellion, and uses it to reflect on hubris, artistic excess, and why every writer needs an inner editor (or at least a Jarvis Cocker).

The Snark's Blog: [here](#)

Discussion Questions

Use these questions to spark conversation and reflection in the classroom:

- Why did Jarvis Cocker's interruption resonate so powerfully with the public? Was it purely comedic – or something deeper?
- What do we learn about audience perception of ego and power through Jackson's performance vs. Cocker's protest?
- How does this incident mirror the function of satire in literature and performance?
- What's the difference between artistic ambition and self-delusion? Where's the line?
- Do you agree with the blog's claim: "Editors are God's way of telling writers they can't play God with their characters"? Why or why not?

Writer's Prompts

Creative exercises to help students apply the themes of the topic:

- **Prompt 1:** Write a Scene. A celebrity unveils their greatest artistic creation – only to have it hilariously derailed by a commoner with a better sense of timing and irony.
- **Prompt 2:** Reverse the Roles. Write from the perspective of the "Michael Jackson" character, trying to justify the divine symbolism of their art. Make it persuasive. Make it tragic.
- **Prompt 3:** The God Complex. Create a character who believes they are a messiah (literally or metaphorically), and explore how others react. Is their downfall comic or tragic?
- **Prompt 4:** Public Shame as Plot Twist. Use a moment of public embarrassment (bum-wiggle or otherwise) as the catalytic scene that forces your character to change.
- **Prompt 5:** The Performance That Went Too Far. Invent an awards show moment that tips from spectacle to surreal nightmare. Lean hard into the ridiculous.

Class Activities

These activities will help expand on the themes of the topic:

- **Group Debate:** “Art vs. Ego.” Split the room. Half the class defends the idea that artists should push boundaries and embrace spectacle; the other argues that humility and self-awareness matter more.
- **Design Exercise:** “The Most Absurd Awards Show Performance.” Students collaborate in groups to storyboard the most over-the-top, symbolic performance imaginable. Bonus points for fog machines and celestial metaphors.
- **Collaborative Story-Building:** “The Stage Crasher’s POV.” Build a story where a protestor (like Jarvis) crashes a performance, but things go hilariously or tragically off-script. Focus on tone, motivation, and aftermath.
- **Creative Rewrite:** Rewrite the Jackson scene as a short story, monologue, or even a Greek tragedy. Replace pop stars with gods, disciples with minor deities, and the Brits stage with Olympus.
- **Satire Workshop:** Choose a celebrity or public figure and invent a scene where they go too far. Use humor, exaggeration, and irony to critique their actions.

Closing note from the blog’s writer, The Snark

Sometimes, all it takes is one skinny Brit in thick glasses to remind the world that the emperor is not only naked – he’s floating six feet in the air surrounded by smoke machines and creepy children in robes. Writers, let this be your takeaway: dream big, but don’t forget your inner editor. Or better yet, hire a Jarvis. Every great story needs someone willing to say, “Mate... no.” And if your characters start acting like gods? Trip them. Publicly. With a smirk.