

### ART FORM

Drama

### LEARNING AREA

The Arts

### SUBJECT

English

### TARGET GROUP

Key Stage 1 & 2

### MATERIALS

### SPACE

A space large enough to move freely in - warm, ventilated and well lit.

### DURATION

From 40 minutes up to 2 x 1.5 hour sessions

### ARTIST'S INTRODUCTION

Before you bring your group to a performance event it is useful to show them how drama is made and how they might respond to it. The workshop concentrates on introducing the skills and vocabulary of performance and audience behaviour but also gives suggestions of how you might approach thematic material which obviously varies from performance to performance. This workshop is designed so that you can use it all, select activities from it, do selected activities over several days and adapt it by moving up and down the vocabulary level with different age groups.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

Pupils will have the opportunity to develop:

- Working with others – work cooperatively with group
- Communication skills – working with a focus, talking and listening to instructions.
- Problem solving and decision making – making simple predictions, seeing possibilities and asking different types of questions. Giving opinions with ideas.
- Expressing and justifying thoughts, feelings and ideas.
- Creative skills – exploring and responding to different stimuli.

#### INSTRUCTIONS

##### Activity 1: Walk the Space

*Skills: focus, groupwork, observation*

*Keywords: space, focus, awareness*

- a) Walk the space focusing on yourself and the space you're in. Stop. Close your eyes. Let your weight sink into your feet. Focus on the details of your stance, etc.
- b) Walk the space sensing where everyone else is but focusing on yourself.

**Option:** Move. Look at details of whatever your eyes have landed on. Close your eyes and in your mind's eye recreate as many details as you can. Open your eyes and note three things you missed. Repeat, always pushing for detail.

##### Activity 2: Changing Statues

*Skills: observation, concentration*

*Keywords: observe, detail*

Groups in 2's, or as a demonstration to the whole class.

A strikes a quick pose and B looks at him / her very carefully. At a signal B turns his / her back. A changes 3 details about the pose. B turns around and tries to guess what the three details are.

##### Activity 3: A Fairy Tale in Three Frames

*Skills: selection, storytelling, performing, select, focus, make it clear, concentrate, attention, respect, look for clues, frozen pictures, performers, responding, analysis, audience behaviour*

*Keywords: scene*

The objective here is twofold: to see what it is like to make your own performance and to look at what is expected from an audience and why. The activity helps develop respect, concentration, focus, attention and de-coding skills.

- a) Split the class into 4/5 groups.
- b) Each group is asked to choose a well-known fairytale. (With younger groups you could specify the tale.) They should do it quietly so the other groups don't hear.

- c) Now they must select only three frozen pictures to tell the tale. Side coach at this point to make sure that the pictures are clear and focused.
- d) One by one the groups come into the 'performance space and present their stories.
  - (i) The 'audience' is asked to identify the story. How did they know? At what point did they know? How did people use their bodies to make the picture? Was it serious? funny? How could you tell?

The 'performers' are asked how did it feel to be in the performance space? What did you expect from the audience? Did they give you their full attention? Did they give you respect? Did they concentrate on what you did?

- (ii) The 'performers' are asked how did it feel to be in the performance space? What did you expect from the audience? Did they give you their full attention? Did they give you respect? Did they concentrate on what you did?

##### Activity 4: AB Dialogues

*Skills: invention, text analysis, drama analysis, looking for clues, interpreting clues*

*Keywords: the drama, performance, "who?", "where?", "when?", "why?", "how?", "what?", character, setting, time, action*

This activity can be great fun but it also establishes quite easily the questions which need to be asked when approaching text.

- a) Explain that you can find a lot of clues in Drama by using the drama words: Who? Where? When? Why? How? What?
- b) Split the group into 2's and hand one of the following pieces of dialogue to each pair. They must make a scene using the dialogues and work out what is happening by using the drama words.

A: You  
B: Yes

A: What are you doing here?

B: I came to see you

A: Who is that?

B: It's me. Open the door.

A: Did you get it?

B: Yes

A: Let's see

A: Is it there?

B: Yes

A: Quick

B: Hold on

### Option for younger children

Teacher goes into role as a Fairy Tale character. The class has to guess who it might be – but they can only ask the drama questions.

### Activity 5: Listening

*Skills: listening, finding sound clues, concentration*

*Keywords: atmosphere, details*

When you go to see something in the theatre you need to listen for all the clues the performers give in what they say.

- a) Ask the students to close their eyes. Guide them through a few slow, deep breaths as they quiet themselves down.
- b) Explain that the whole class is going to keep their eyes closed and just listen for 2 minutes to all of the sounds around them. They need to listen really well because they're going to share all of the different things they heard in just a couple of minutes.
- c) Give the students the signal to begin and resist the urge to speak while they are concentrating on the task of listening.
- d) Once the two minutes are up, invite the students to open their eyes and share all of the different sounds they heard.
- e) Discuss:

\* We hear sounds all the time, but to listen we really need to concentrate. For example, we may hear many of the same sounds in this classroom every day (the sound of someone's clothes rustling, maybe a bird outside the window, or the sound of a classmate yawning) but we usually we ignore them so we don't remember them. But today we really listened to many of these sounds because we were concentrating on being a good listener.

\* How many people think that it was really hard to just sit quietly and listen?

\* Why do you think it is important to be a good listener?

\* What do you think you need to do when someone is talking to become a good listener (i.e. look at the person who is speaking, sit still, pay attention, etc.)

### Activity 6 : Fortunately, Unfortunately

*Skills: invention, story-making*

*Keywords: time, continuity, setting, story,*

When you go to a performance you need to see if the performance has a story, how it is built and how the characters act.

- a) Divide the class into groups of 5 – 8. Ask each group to form a circle sitting.
- b) Explain to the groups that they are going to tell a story. One person will start the story and each person, in turn, will add a sentence as it goes around the circle.
- c) The story begins with: 'There was once a boy/girl called \_\_\_\_\_ who liked jelly' (the person to go first chooses a name). Every sentence after this must begin with either 'Fortunately.....' or 'Unfortunately.....' Remind the children that if they listen carefully to what the person before them is saying, it will be easier for them to make up the next sentence in their group story.

### Option for older children

#### Short Stories

This may be done as an oral or written exercise. As in the activity above, one person begins the story with a single sentence. The person next to them gives the next sentence, and so it continues until each person, in turn, has added a sentence. However, the story must be complete by the time it has gone around everyone in the circle. You may wish to assign roles.

**1<sup>st</sup> person:** Introduces **time and character**

**2<sup>nd</sup> person:** Introduces **setting**

**3<sup>rd</sup> person:** Introduces one or more **other characters**

**4<sup>th</sup> person:** Introduces an **action** (i.e. something happens)

**5<sup>th</sup> person:** Gives another **action**

Action continues until the turn of the last person, who tells **the ending**.

Continue until everyone has had a chance at starting the story.

#### Activity 7: Particular Thematic Activity

*Skills: specific knowledge to inform the reception of the performance*

*Keywords: thematic vocabulary*

The important thing about substantial pre-performance thematic work is not to pre-empt the play, not to tell the story but to put pupils in possession of information/activities which will place them in the play and will enhance both their enjoyment and their educational/aesthetic experience of the encounter.

- Does the performance use puppets? Make some simple puppets and see what it's like to make them work.

- Has the performance a theme of, e.g. the seasons?

Create four groups to make pictures of each season. Find out what happens in each season. What colour might a season be?

- Has the performance an historic setting?

Create a drama set in that time. Do some specific project about life in that time.

#### Activity 8: Let's Start the Investigation Here

*Skills: speculation, memory*

*Keywords: design, concentration, attention, respect, clues*

Recap. the information and skills the group have and encourage them to put all their detecting skills to good use when they go to see the performance.

So we're going to see a performance of X in Y space. When you hear the title what do you think it might be about? The company has sent us this flier/image/picture. What might that tell us? I wonder if we're right. Can anyone remember what skills we need to be an audience who are on the lookout for lots of clues?

#### TEACHERS' TIPS

Awareness of how people move in space and how we observe them is very important in performance. It's important on a visit to a performance to concentrate and search for all the clues, all the details.

#### LINKS TO OTHER LEARNING AREAS

- Personal Development – developing self esteem through performances and working with others; discussing a range of social problems and finding resolutions
- Language and Literacy – listening and responding to others' points of view, make judgements and draw conclusions using appropriate vocabulary
- The Arts - non-verbal modes of expression e.g mime

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**Toolbox**

**LOOKING FOR CLUES**

**EMELIE FITZGIBBON**

**Don't forget to send feedback to  
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