

Using the play for drama

What makes a good drama lesson?

You don't have to be a great actor or an experienced drama teacher to run a successful, fun session. Establish a clear structure and some ground rules, just as you would for any other lesson. Below is a suggested structure you could use.

Getting started

Establish ground rules with the children about how to conduct themselves through the session. For example:

In this lesson we agree to:

- 🚢 Zone-in' and stay focused
- 🚢 Respect each other
- 🚢 Work together and cooperate
- 🚢 Communicate – talk about and show our ideas.

Talk about the reasons for these rules. How do the children think it will help them? How can they show that they are working together respectfully?

Be clear about your expectations around talking and listening, touching, and how the children use the space. You may also want to establish some practical boundary lines, such as the markings of a games court in the gym or hall. Have a clear signal for starting and stopping the action. This could be an agreed word like 'freeze!' or an action such as clapping hands or turning over a rain stick. Practise your chosen signal a few times at the beginning of your drama sessions.

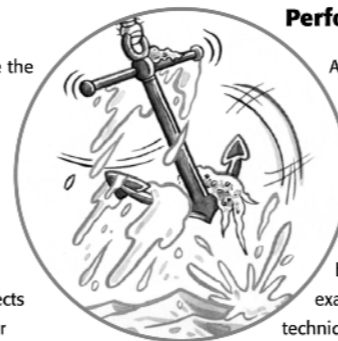
Expect everyone to join in and remember that your own enthusiasm and involvement will inspire the children to enter into the drama.

Warming up

This is a key part of any drama session and gets the mind and body ready. Play a couple of games; you'll find some suggestions which will work well with *Captain Greenbeard's Eco-Adventure* at the beginning of each Workshop. You'll notice that the games require the children to make decisions. As they play the games remind them that they are communicating, concentrating and cooperating.

Focus

This is where you introduce the theme the children will be exploring. You might use a piece of text, some music or a picture. Go to the Smart Learning website www.smart-learning.co.uk/smartscripts/soundbank to hear some great sound effects that you could use. The four Workshops use lines from the play, sea shanties and pictures of the harbour and on board ship as focuses.



Performance

Always give the children a chance to demonstrate what they have been doing. This doesn't mean that each lesson will have to include a full-scale performance; that is clearly unrealistic. But it is important for the children to put the skills they have been learning into a context. For example, Workshop three includes techniques for developing the call and response of the sea shanty together with miming the movements of unfurling the sails. Allow time for the groups to perform their sequence.

Development

Here you will be building gradually on the focus using one of the drama techniques suggested on page 16, for example, visualisation, freeze frames, soundscapes and so on. Stay focused but be flexible. If the lesson is going well the children will be adapting and moving on with the original stimulus and this is when exciting learning happens.

Plenary

This is an opportunity to round off and summarise the lesson, so that pupils focus on what was important, what they have learnt and any progress they have made. This will mark the session as a learning experience, rather than just 'playing around', as they reflect on what they have learnt.

Use the self-evaluation sheets on pages 46 and 47 to help with this.

Drama techniques with *Captain Greenbeard's Eco-Adventure*

The following drama techniques are developed through the Workshops:

Frozen scene

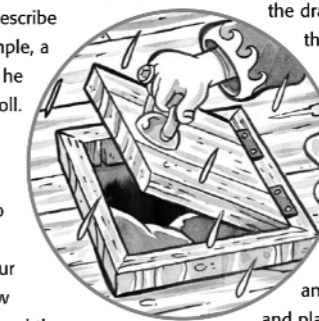
This is sometimes called a tableau or a snapshot. The group all pose to show a picture or a scene which is frozen in time, for example, Poll and her crew tying up Greenbeard and the crew of The Flying Porpoise.

Thought tracking

This is a useful development of the frozen scene. As children are tapped on the shoulder they say a line, answer a question or describe how they are feeling, for example, a 'frozen' Greenbeard says how he feels about being tricked by Poll.

Quick-thaw

The frozen scene is allowed to 'thaw out' into speech and movement for just three or four seconds, for example, the crew members showing how they load the cargo onto the ship.



Soundscape

The children use their voices or their bodies to suggest the sounds of a specific scene, for example, the race across the sea to Deception Island.

Visualisation

The children close their eyes and visualise sensory details as the teacher describes a particular scene, for example, the busy harbour at Tierra del Fuego.

Teacher in role

The teacher takes on the role of a character within the drama, for example, as the Bosun leading the sea shanties as the crew work the sails.

Interview

The children act as TV reporters to find out more information about the scene and characters, for example, interviewing Captain Greenbeard and Poll Ooshun about their motives and plans.

You can also use Smart Scripts for GROUP READING...go to www.smart-learning.co.uk/scriptsamples to download more creative ideas