

ECE 401: Overview of Drama in Early Childhood Education

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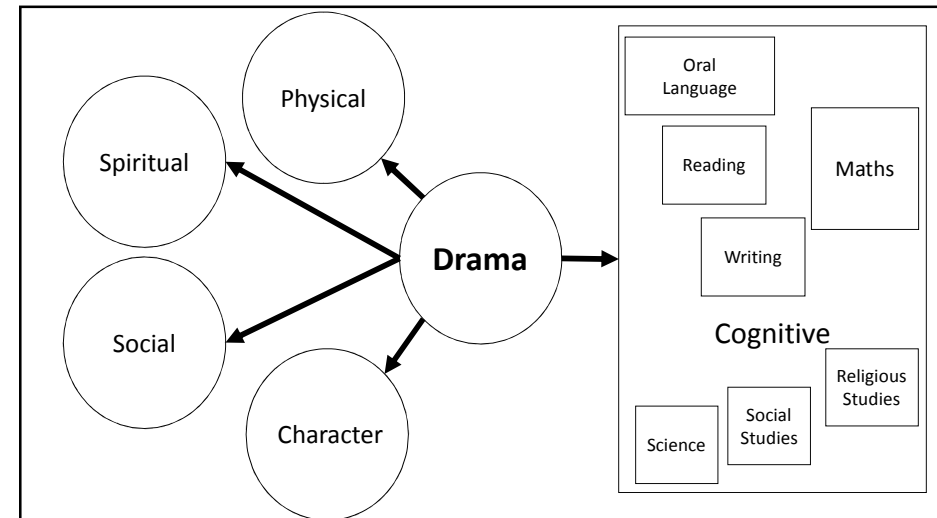
Definition of Drama

- **Drama:** The act of using the imagination to become someone or something other than yourself.
 - **Act:** Children are actively involved in the drama
 - **Imagination:** Act of forming a mental image of something not present to the senses or never perceived in reality
 - **Become:** To undergo change or development
 - **Something or someone other than yourself:** Wondering, 'What if...?' and acting as if the imagined was reality

Drama in Education

- ***Drama in education* is NOT an independent course to teach acting skills**

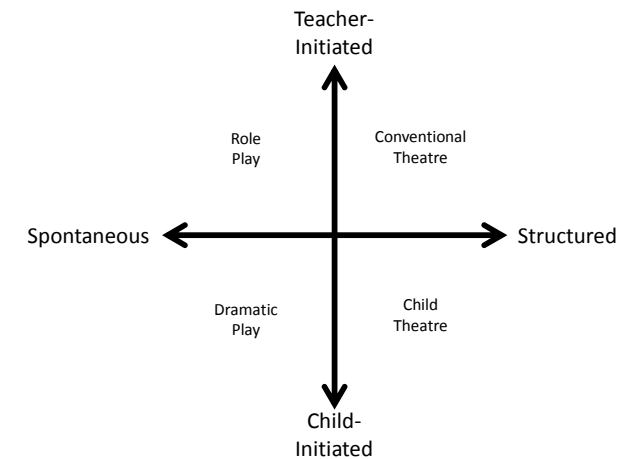
- *Drama in education* means that drama is used a **tool** (e.g., *teaching method*) for helping children learn important cognitive, social, character, and spiritual knowledge and skills



Drama in Education

- **Drama in Education:** Process of learning where children can be taught through carefully structured experiences which include plays, dramatic play, and dramatic activities
 - **Process of learning:** Emphasis is on general learning, not learning acting skills
 - **Carefully structured experiences:** High quality instruction requires careful planning by the teacher, (set objectives, gather relevant materials, and introduce the drama learning experience)
 - However, drama in education can also be spontaneous
 - **Plays:** Scripted Theatre
 - **Dramatic Play:** Free-choice playtime
 - **Dramatic Activities:** Any activity that requires the imagination

Continuum of Drama in Early Childhood Education



Drama and Learning

Principles of Learning

- Learners are active in their attempts to learn (Cognitive Theory)
- Students learn by observing others (Bandura's Observational Learning)
- Social interaction helps learning (Constructivism)
- Meaningful learning occurs within real-world tasks (Constructivism)

Drama

- Dramatizing helps children actively experience what they are learning
- Children observe others' behaviors and learning in drama
- Drama gives social interaction helpful for learning
- Drama is more like the real-world than lecture/ recitation