

Teaching with Drama

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Outline

- Planning for Drama in ECE
 - Conventional Theatre
 - Participatory Drama
 - Dramatic Play
- Materials for Drama
- Guidelines and Ethics of Integrating Drama into the Curriculum
- Motivating Children to Participate in Drama
- Challenges of Drama in ECE

Planning for Drama in ECE

- “It is the teacher’s classroom plans and organization, sensitivity and responsiveness to all the children, and moment-to-moment interactions with them that have the greatest impact on children’s development and learning” (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2009, p. 8)
 - Successful early childhood classrooms are the result of careful, thoughtful and creative planning.

Planning for Drama in ECE

- **Step 1 in Planning is Always:** Identify the Learning Objective(s)
 - Drama can meet objectives in any domain of development
- “Unsuccessful lessons are often the result of teachers not being clear about their objectives” (Eggen & Kauchak, 2016, p. 522).

Weekly Learning Objectives

Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework or the National Early Childhood Curriculum for ages 0-5 years

Approaches to Learning Children uses imagination in play and interactions with others.	Cognition: Mathematics Child knows number names and the count sequence.	Types of Drama <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conventional Theatre <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conventional theatre by pupils • Conventional theatre by others • Participatory Drama <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finger Play • Dramatic games • Story drama • Puppets • Role Play • Dramatic Play <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symbolic Play • Dramatic Play Centre
Social & Emotional Development Child engages in cooperative play with other children.	Cognition: Scientific Reasoning Child compares and categorizes observable phenomena.	
Language & Literacy Child attends to communication and language from others.	Physical Development Children will demonstrate control, strength, and coordination of large muscles.	

Planning for Conventional Theatre: BDA Instructional Framework

- **Before:** Prepare children for learning by activating prior knowledge
 - Ask questions to help them begin to think about the title, characters, plot, setting, and/or theme of the drama
 - Summarize what will happen in the drama
- **During:** Present the drama
- **After:** Help children deepen their understanding and make connections to their everyday lives
 - Ask questions that help children:
 - Understand the drama better
 - Make connections to their everyday lives
 - Learn important lessons from the drama

Planning for Conventional Theatre (Pupils)



- Teacher decides (perhaps in collaboration with the pupils):
 - Story of the drama
 - Ideas for pupils' roles

Planning for Conventional Theatre (Pupils)

- **Before**
 - Introduce the drama: Tell a story, have pupils imagine a place, or think about a personal experience.
 - Assign roles (if needed)
- **During:** Dramatization – Children dramatize the story
- **After**
 - Discuss the experience and reflect.
 - Extract meaningful lessons from the experience
- **Repeat** (if appropriate): Plan and re-play – Allow children to change roles or dramatize again

Planning for Participatory Drama

- Browse resources to uncover various types of participatory drama activities

Planning for Dramatic Play

- Select a centre theme that is appropriate for the children and context
- Gather materials related to the centre
- Allow sufficient time for children to get involved in the centre (at least 30 minutes)
- Introduce the centre to build children's interest and activate prior knowledge
- Be a resource for children during centre time to answer questions, help children solve problems, guide children to more in-depth play, and model play
- Evaluate the quality of children's play in the centre
- Provide additional materials and guidance as needed

Materials for Drama

- "Most effective learning comes from simple but versatile materials (bits of soft wood, feathers, cork, string, fabric, stones, clay) stored and accessible to children. The learning environment should extend children's imagination" (French, 2013, p. 36)
- One important material for drama is adults
 - **Teachers:** Teachers and teacher assistants are rich resources due to their knowledge, creativity, and language
 - **Parents** can also be enlisted to help in dramatic activities

Free Materials for Drama

Free Material	Source
Cardboard boxes	Appliance stores, Supermarkets, Shops
Carpet pieces and squares	Carpet shops
Scraps of wood	Katako
Newsprint	Newspaper boys (Suya vendors)
Scrap paper	Photostat, Offices
Pictures	Printing presses
Empty food containers	Restaurants, Hotels
Nature: Rocks, Leaves, Sticks, Seeds	The Village
Fabric scraps	Tailors, Decorators
Dress-up clothes and accessories	Parents, Community Members
Old cards, Calendars, Catalogues, Newspapers, Magazines	Parents, Community Members
Old kitchen items	Caterers, Parents, Community Members

Guidelines and Ethics of Integrating Drama into the Curriculum

- Guidelines
 - Plan purposefully and carefully
 - Drama should not be for drama's sake but for the sake of education
 - Make themes to relate to the specific objectives
 - Allow the creativity of students to play out
 - Roles of students and teacher should be clearly defined
 - At the same time that the drama is for learning, its element must be reflected artistically as well.
 - Explore and make drama
 - Reflecting on drama
 - Co-operating and communicating in making drama.
- Exemplars are given with each content objective which indicate the kind of explorations, experiences and activities that are envisaged in it. These are neither prescriptive nor comprehensive. They are merely suggestions that may help the teacher in planning a programme of effective learning through drama.

Guidelines of Integrating Drama into the Curriculum

- The approach to drama in the curriculum may be termed process drama. It involves children in a process of improvisation and exploration that leads to definable drama outcomes and learning outcomes. In order to make the process effective three prerequisites are necessary:
 - Content
 - the fictional lens
 - a safe environment.
 (Government of Ireland, 1999)

CONTENT

- Content will supply the subject matter of the drama. This will be based on
 - some aspect of life (remember realism?) e.g enactment of market setting.
 - on the child's experience (remember expressionism, absurdism ?) e.g a dramatic play.
 - The content of some other curriculum area. The drama should not be for drama's sake but for the purpose of specific objectives.

FICTIONAL LENS

- By using the fictional lens the teacher can look at the content through the medium of a story and frame it as a dramatic fiction. He/she can then
 - suggest that the children improvise an enactment in which they engage with characters who find themselves in the particular dilemma, location or situation suggested by the action.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

- The children must be allowed to make the drama in a safe environment
 - In order to increase their confidence,
 - In order to allay their fears
 - In order to dissipate their inhibitions
 - where what they do is valued and validated by other children and by the teacher.