

Types of Drama: Conventional Theatre

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Types of Drama

- Conventional Drama
 - Conventional drama by pupils
 - Conventional drama by other drama groups
- Participatory Drama
 - Finger Play
 - Dramatic games
 - Story drama
 - Puppets
 - Role Play
- Dramatic Play
 - Symbolic Play
 - Dramatic Play Centre

Conventional Drama

- **Conventional Drama:** Activity of writing, organizing, and/or performing a dramatic play
 - **Conventional:** Typical
 - **Activity:** Active involvement of participants
 - **Writing:** The characters, plot, and theme of the drama are generally set before performance
 - **Organizing:** Requires planning, rehearsals and collaboration as well as actors, setting, props, and/or costumes
 - **Performing:** Live
- Dramatic plays are typically performed for an audience

Elements of Conventional Drama

- **Theme:** Central message of the drama
- **Plot:** Order of events
- **Characters:** Person/animals/puppets in the drama
- **Dialogue:** Verbal exchanges between characters
 - Functions of dialogue:
 - Establish the setting
 - Advance the plot
 - Reveal characters' thoughts
- **Stage directions:** Instructions of how actors move and behave
- **Staging:** Scene, props, and/or costumes

Conventional Drama by Other Drama Groups

- Performance of dramatic play or other performance art by actors other than the pupils to achieve educational objectives
- Sources for Other Drama Groups
 - Teacher – perhaps in collaboration with other teachers, staff, parents, and/or community members
 - Older pupils/students
 - Professional drama troupes
 - Children's theatres
 - Excursion to theatre and/or festival

Conventional Drama by Other Drama Groups

- Uses in Early Childhood
 - Children enjoy drama – it brings joy to the children
 - Teach important lessons in all areas of development
 - Health
 - Character skills
 - Social skills
 - Academic topics
 - Importance of education
 - Engages children's attention and interest

Conventional Drama by Other Drama Groups

- Role of teacher (Depends on the type of drama)
 - Identify how to incorporate drama in the classroom
 - Write, organize, and/or perform the drama
 - Liaise with an outside drama group
 - Scrutinize the content of play in terms of developmental appropriateness of the theme, language, and plot
 - Prepare children for the drama by activating background knowledge
 - Conduct a post-drama discussion to ensure children understand the drama, its main messages, and its application to children's lives

Conventional Drama by Pupils

- Dramatic performance performed by children to achieve specific educational goals
- Children can be creatively involved at any or all levels under the guidance of the teacher and/or specialist
 - Writing the drama
 - Organizing the drama
 - Performing the drama

Conventional Drama by Pupils

- Conventional Drama by Pupils can be performed for:
 - A small group of teacher/other children
 - Class
 - Larger school audience
 - Parents
 - Other schools
 - Community outreach

Conventional Drama by Pupils

- Uses in Early Childhood Education
 - Conventional drama can help children gain a deeper understanding of the content of the drama (e.g., use of mosquito nets)
 - By writing dramas, children develop:
 - Creativity
 - Oral language, reading, and/or writing skills

Conventional Drama by Pupils

- Uses in Early Childhood Education (Continued)
 - Through organizing and participating in the drama, children learn:
 - Planning and organizational skills
 - Social skills such as collaboration, empathy, and conflict resolution
 - By participating in drama, children develop:
 - Physical skills
 - Concentration and memory
 - Oral language and other literacy skills
 - Self-confidence
 - Children may identify hidden talents in drama, organization, art, etc.

Conventional Drama by Pupils

- Role of the teacher
 - Creatively plan the learning activity to meet developmental and/or educational objectives
 - Guide children at every level of production
 - Facilitate the performance
 - Conduct interactive sessions with the audience to enhance their learning from the performance
 - Collaborate with external specialists if necessary

Extensions of Conventional Drama

- Puppets: Puppets can present information in a novel and engaging way
- Mime: Drama without words, communicating only with gesture, expression, and movement
- Improvisation: Drama done without preparation
 - Teaches children to listen carefully and think on their feet

Planning for Conventional Theatre: BDA Instructional Framework

- **Before:** Prepare children for learning by activating prior knowledge
 - Think about: What do children need to know to understand the drama?
 - Setting
 - Plot
 - Characters
 - Theme
 - Ask open-ended questions to remind them of knowledge needed to understand the drama
- Provide a “trailer” of the drama
 - Provide a brief summary of the main content
 - End with a “cliff-hanger” to help children focus on the important part of the drama

Planning for Conventional Theatre: BDA Instructional Framework

- **During:** Present the drama
- **After:** Help children:
 1. Deepen their understanding of what happened in the drama
 2. Understand the theme of the drama
 3. Apply the theme to their everyday lives
- The *after* portion should NOT be the teacher’s presentation
 - Instead, ask questions to guide the children
 - Correct children’s misunderstandings
 - Add your own explanations to what the children say