

## 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