

The National Strategies

Secondary

Developing drama in English:

A handbook for English subject leaders
and teachers



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Introduction: drama and critical thinking

Teachers of English recognise the important role drama plays in engaging pupils in the exploration of texts and in developing their skills in analysing characters and their motivation, themes and ideas, the language and literary techniques and authorial viewpoint. Planned drama approaches, which develop pupils' critical analysis and creativity, embed the appropriate structures, processes and skills to create personal responses which are then transferred when analysis of new texts, ideas or situations is required.

It is enactment that makes drama central to this development. When pupils are emotionally engaged and analyse both in and out of role, they are actively developing the skills and understanding which are central to progress in English. They experience for themselves the construction and layering of texts, characters, roles, tensions and dilemmas. They are also able to step outside a text or situation to gain an additional perspective. Developing this ability to participate and observe means that, given a new situation, text or dilemma, pupils are able to transfer their analytical skills to the new situation. The use of visual and physical techniques contributes to the progress pupils make in higher-order thinking skills.

Section 1: What are the issues?

Challenging misconceptions

English teachers are skilled and confident at identifying and defining good practice particularly in relation to the teaching and learning of reading and writing, but some are less secure in their understanding of how effective drama can contribute to the development of critical thinking and analytical skills. To ensure that all pupils have full access to opportunities to develop these skills, it is helpful if the department establishes a shared understanding and vision for the role of drama within English.

The pivotal difference between shallow and deep learning lies in the level of personal ownership – the conversion of generic information into personal knowledge which is deep and sustainable because it is based on intrinsic motivation, i.e. it is personally significant and valued. Central to deep learning is the notion of reflection, i.e. the process by which information and experience are internalised and knowledge is created. Because this process is personal, it creates the confidence to interpret and so the confidence to act independently.

English subject leader development materials Autumn 2008 (Ref: 00469-2008)

Focus: Exploring the issues that affect drama in English

Drawing on the twin traditions of English and drama produces experiences for pupils that are richer and more rigorous than the sum of the separate parts. The key term is engagement: engaging the interest, ideas and emotions of young people through the dramatic explorations of texts, ideas and situations. The layered process is one of setting and developing a context, then exploring tensions, techniques and characters through active engagement and questioning. It culminates in critical analysis which is enhanced by what pupils have done, thought and felt through their active physical and psychological engagement.

**Extract from the *Introduction of NATE Drama Packs (2005)* ©
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The following skills and processes are effectively explored through the deep learning opportunities provided by the visualisation and physicalisation of the concepts, techniques and ideas, as demonstrated in Section 6: Approaches to teaching drama:

- the analysis of writers' techniques and skills
- understanding texts in a social, cultural and historical context
- understanding of writers' intentions and choices of language, structures and ideas
- analysis of the different contributions made by novelists, playwrights, directors, narrators
- analysis of poetic, media/visual and literary techniques.

Specific drama techniques, crafted and developed to analyse these skills, should be a significant aspect of any English curriculum.

Similarly, with writing, pupils use a range of techniques and different ways of organising and structuring material to convey ideas and themes, and have to consider the way in which they exploit the choice of language and structure to achieve a particular effect. Discussions and written work should be directly informed by drama work which leads to a more detailed analysis and understanding of the text and of the dramatic process.

Conclusion

Where drama in English is only used to 'present' scripts, improvise ideas or adopt roles to demonstrate different register use, without a layered and developed context and role, then opportunities for improving skills in critical thinking, reading and writing can be missed and shallow rather than deep learning is often observed. By considering the ideas in this and other documents, to build and develop your existing practice, you can help pupils become skilled and independent thinkers who are able to engage fully with the learning process and the society in which they live.

What are the issues and challenges for me or us?

Issue or challenge	Is this an issue for me or us?
I am/we are confident about using a variety of drama techniques.	
I/we understand drama to be much more than the 'presentation' of scripts, improvised ideas or the use of roles.	
I/we allocate sufficient time to the structured, interactive drama approaches within units of work linked to the development of reading and writing skills.	
I/we select challenging texts (see Appendix) and associated drama activities in order to provide opportunities for the development of critical thinking and deep/profound learning.	
I/we ensure there is focus on learning, understanding and assessing drama across speaking and listening, reading and writing units of work.	
I/we secure the development of independent learners, through the planning, delivery and assessment of drama within English.	
I/we have had sufficient professional development on planning, teaching, evaluating and assessing drama within English, supported by current high-quality resources and professional support.	
I/we understand progression in drama throughout Key Stages 3 and 4 and I/we have a good understanding of drama education in the primary phase.	

Section 2: The route to improving standards in English through drama

Focus: Stages in the route to improvement – gathering, analysing and planning

Pupil engagement depends on two complementary conditions, both of which rely on the skills of the teacher:

- the provision of an appropriate climate which enables pupils to take full advantage of the knowledge and experiences being presented to them;
- the use of a variety of strategies and approaches that allow pupils to construct their own learning.

*Pedagogy and practice: Teaching and learning in secondary schools
Unit 11 Active engagement techniques (DfES ref: 0434-2004 G)*

Getting a clear picture

Providing clear leadership and a shared vision are essential components of the improvement process. Although, when looking at the impact drama has, the questions raised and the type of evidence gathered might differ in places, the process follows a route that is common to all types of school improvement.

The process

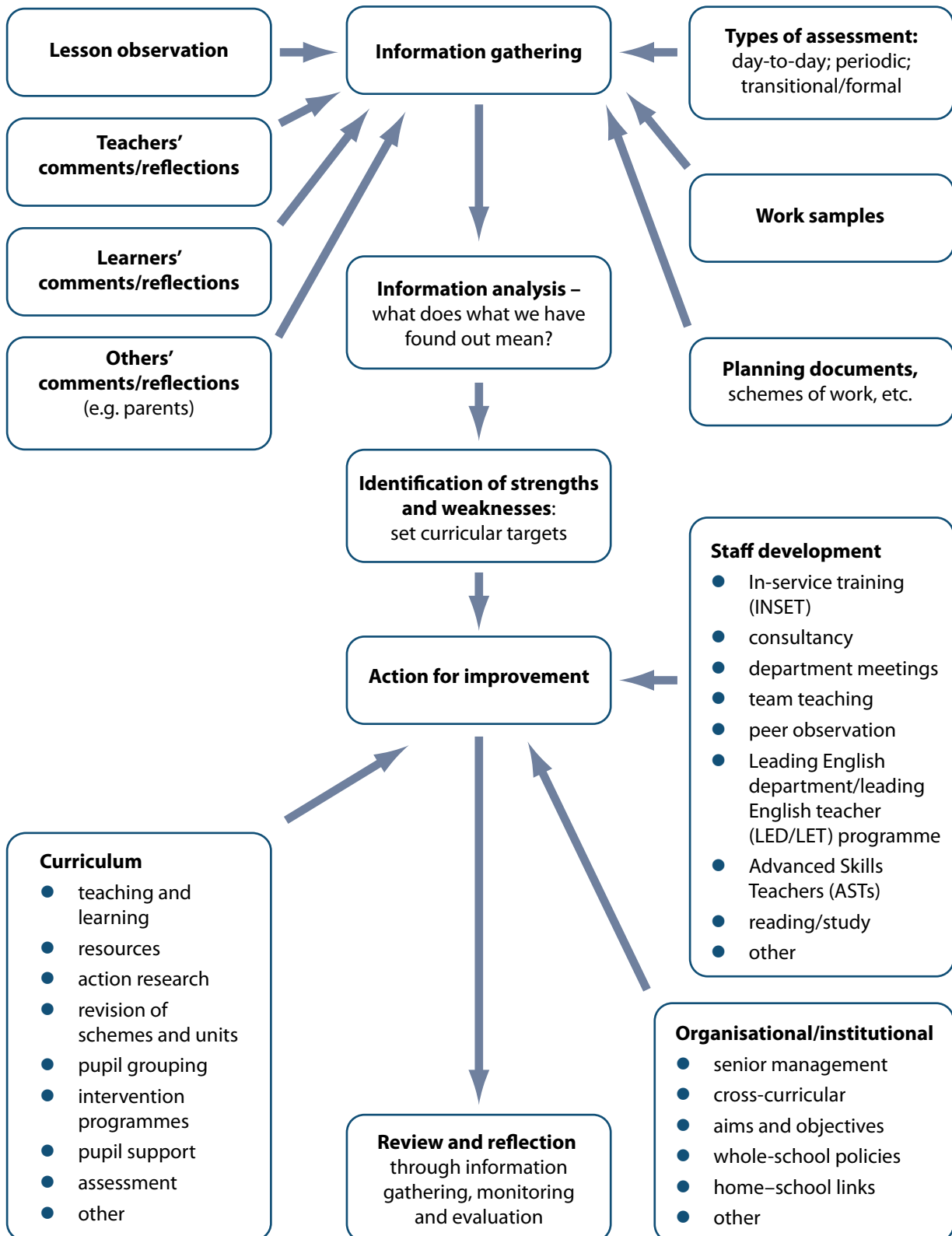
1. Gather and analyse information on current practices, structures and outcomes.
2. Identify what needs to be addressed.
3. Plan for and act on the improvements needed.
4. Evaluate the impact of the improvements by gathering and analysing information.

The route to improvement through the self-evaluation process

The diagram on the next page outlines in more detail a suggested model of a 'cycle of improvement' and provides advice as to the types of information that can be gathered and the areas of improvement that might then be addressed. Following this is a possible model of a department self-evaluation, which focuses the 'route to improvement' on the specific issues relating to drama within English, offers questions to be asked and evidence to be gathered, as well as providing a useful tool for highlighting those areas of improvement that can then formulate a department action plan.

The route to improvement

The implication of the cycle of improvement is that there must be a clear process to follow. A more focused way of representing this process is as follows:



Section 3: Gathering and analysing information

Focus: Asking the right questions

'A mental model has components and relationships between these components. Thus you can have a mental model of a concept, task or phenomenon. The vital characteristic of a mental model is that it allows you to predict and respond to unknown situations – it confers flexibility and the ability to transfer.'

*Pedagogy and Practice: Teaching and learning in the secondary school
 Unit 6 Modelling (DfES ref: 0429-2004 G)*

Department self-evaluation

Planning and strategic vision	Established	Developing	Suggested evidence
The subject improvement plan places appropriate emphasis on the development of drama within English			Improvement plans Teacher surveys
The English curriculum includes structured drama activities			Curriculum plans Schemes of work Lesson observations
The teaching of drama within English is seen as a continuum and teachers have a good understanding of drama in primary education and the Framework for English			Transition and primary liaison Teacher surveys and lesson observations
Curriculum time, resources and extended learning opportunities reflect the role drama has in developing critical thinking and literacy skills			Curriculum plans Extended learning plans Curriculum structures Resources survey

Quality of teaching and learning	Established	Developing	Suggested evidence
Teachers use a variety of drama techniques within a unit of work, in a sufficiently complex way			Lesson observations Lesson plans Units of work
Pupils are engaged with drama activities, and understand the learning process within a climate for challenge			Lesson observations Pupil surveys Work samples
Pupils are engaged, explore skills, processes and ideas, transform skills and knowledge into deep learning and review, evaluate and reflect on their learning			Lesson observations Pupil surveys Peer/self-assessment
Pupils are independent learners who are able to transfer skills acquired in drama approaches into other situations requiring analysis and/or creativity			Units of work Progression maps Lesson observations Work scrutiny Assessment practices
Challenging texts/resources and associated drama activities are used to provide opportunities for the development of critical thinking and deep/profound learning			Units of work Progression maps Lesson observations Work scrutiny Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP)
Structured drama activities are used as effective approaches for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● analysis of writers' techniques, positioning and skills ● Understanding texts in a cultural and historical context ● Understanding writers' intentions and choices of language, structures and ideas 			Lesson observations Work scrutiny Assessment tasks Units of work Data
Assessment opportunities that cover all three attainment targets are embedded within the drama activities and inform future teaching and learning activities			APP and Assessment for Learning (AfL) practices Units of work Lesson observations Work scrutiny

Standards and progression	Established	Developing	Suggested evidence
Samples of pupils' work show evidence of the impact of drama on developing reading and writing skills			Work scrutiny APP practices Data
Pupil surveys evaluate the teaching and learning processes within drama activities and pupils can talk about the impact on their own learning			Pupil surveys Data Work scrutiny Lesson observations
Curriculum maps demonstrate how drama within English is mapped across Key Stages 3 and 4			Curriculum maps Pupil surveys Work scrutiny
Marking and assessment reflects the identification of skills used in drama within English and the identification of next steps for pupils			Work scrutiny APP and AFL practices Data
Pupils are involved in peer and self-assessment within drama activities			Observations Pupil surveys
Assessment data is used to track pupils' progress			Assessments and data Pupil surveys Work scrutiny
Transition programmes and cross-phase work indicate that progression and assessment is understood and maintained between primary and secondary schools			Transition policies Primary liaison work Data Continuing professional development (CPD) records
APP Speaking and listening, Reading and Writing assessment focuses are used to identify strengths and weaknesses and provide curricular targets			Assessment policy and practice Work scrutiny Pupil survey Units of work

Identifying good learning approaches and practices

The development of critical thinking and reading skills

Although lesson observation is just one source of information, it is obviously key in gathering information about the nature and quality of the learning process involved in drama approaches.



The extract of a lesson, outlined below, demonstrates how the use of drama has a direct impact on the way pupils develop their analytical skills, provides detailed evidence of and evaluates the learning process. The questions and commentary that such work promotes may act as a useful framework for exploring the presence of deep learning and the way that drama is embedded within lessons you observe. Key to good lesson observation is to maintain the focus on how and what pupils are learning, rather than what and how the teacher is teaching.


Analysing the writers' techniques, purpose and viewpoint through drama




Context of the lesson

The pupils, as part of the GCSE English Literature course, have been working on the play script of *His Dark Materials*. They have been involved in a number of drama activities within a structured, detailed unit of work to analyse the text, characters, language and narrative, including sculpting, Digital Video Clips, Rolling Theatre, Naming the Space and Action Narration (see Appendix). The focus during the lesson described is on the analysis of a particular scene (the journey to the Land of the Dead) as a way of analysing the different roles and techniques employed by the author, the playwright and the director. Pupils are required to use drama activities to explore texts and ideas, select textual references, interpret texts, analyse the writers' language choices and comment on the authors' purpose, techniques and viewpoint.

The lesson

Activity – photograph	Activity and commentary
	<p>Pupils have been given an extract from the novel. In order to gain a more detailed understanding of the writer's positioning, they work in groups of three, each pupil representing Lyra, Will or the boatman, and, taking turns around the circle, tell the story from the perspective of that character. The teacher explains the task and then intervenes only to move them on to the next character, who continues telling the story where the first character left off. The pupils gain a detailed knowledge of the extract, as well as analysing the viewpoint suggested by the author.</p>
	<p>The pupils sit in a large circle and, in order to explore a particular moment in the extract, are asked to 'sculpt' the characters in the centre of the circle. To do this, they find evidence from the text to support the positions, facial expressions, use of space, etc. First a pupil sculpts the boatman (<i>left</i>) into the scene and then Lyra is sculpted by another pupil, who is here demonstrating how Pan (represented by a coat) should be held. Throughout this process, a number of pupils have offered alternative sculpted positions, justifying their choices from the text.</p>

Activity – photograph	Activity and commentary
	<p>After much discussion and movement of the characters, 'final' positions are agreed. Pupils have spent some time ensuring that Will (<i>right</i>) is presented in a way that shows he is unable to face Lyra's act of letting go of Pan. They felt this was given particular importance by the language chosen and techniques employed by the writer.</p>
	<p>The teacher then asks a pupil to represent the 'writer' and asks the pupils to 'place the writer' (Philip Pullman) in the picture where they think he should be. The pupils use various criteria for this, including the writer's sympathy for certain characters, the empathy created, the events, the writer's perceived intention and/or specific words used. Here one pupil (in white t-shirt) is explaining why he feels the writer would be focusing on Pan and Lyra, due to the emphasis, sympathy and emotion created by the writer's techniques and language.</p>
	<p>The class is then asked whether they agree with this positioning and another pupil moves the writer to where they feel he is best placed, this time creating a link between the boatman and Lyra. The pupil is asked to justify this position from the text (projected). She points to a particular sentence and explains that she felt the writer linked these two characters, as he knew that the actions to follow were inevitable and, therefore, Lyra was controlled as much by the writer as by the boatman.</p>
	<p>Another pupil is chosen to be the 'reader'. The pupils are asked to 'place the reader' in the picture where they think he or she should be. The pupils use various criteria for this, including the empathy felt, the relationships and the reader's understanding of a particular issue or idea. Here the reader is placed comforting Lyra, as the pupil feels that the reader is completely focused on Lyra at this point. Again, evidence from the text is given to support this positioning and further discussion takes place as to how the writer controls the reader.</p>
	<p>After introducing the adapted script of the same scene, pupils again use the space in the centre of the circle to 'sculpt' the characters into the scene. They use the script to argue why they feel the boatman is, compared to the description in the novel, not as fearful and why Will is more willing to comfort Lyra and offer more direct support. Here, a pupil is again justifying the position they have chosen by pointing to, and analysing, a particular line in the play script (projected).</p>

Activity – photograph	Activity and commentary
	<p>This time a pupil is chosen to be the 'playwright' (Nicholas Wright). The pupils 'place the playwright' in the frozen scene where they think he should be. They justify their choice with evidence from the text and a discussion begins as to whether this differs from the position of the writer, placed earlier, and why. The 'audience' is then placed in the same way and a discussion takes place about the difference between 'placing the reader' and 'placing the audience'. The class are asked what this might tell them about the adaptation process.</p>
	<p>The pupil who represented the writer earlier is then asked to stand at the side of the scene. The pupils are asked whether they should place the writer into the scripted scene and, if so, where. Does the original writer remain part of the text? Are they left outside the scene? Are they near to the playwright or do they have a different perspective? The pupils move the writer to where they feel he is best placed. Here, the decision is made to place him on a chair, so he has a clear view and influence over the scene but is not directly part of it.</p>
	<p>Further discussion develops about the adaptation process and the role of the writer, scriptwriter, director and actors. This time a pupil decides to sculpt the writer into the scene, linking the boatman and Will, as she feels that it is due to the ideas and techniques used in the original novel that the playwright has been able to develop the scene in the way he has. The playwright is focusing on Lyra, as is the audience, as evidenced in the text, but the original novelist is reminding us of the link between Will, Lyra and the boatman, and, in the same way, the playwright, director and audience are influenced by the original writer of the novel.</p>

Identifying opportunities for deep learning

When gathering information about the quality of teaching and learning in drama, it is important to consider what opportunities exist for deep learning (see the table below). Further information about the different modes of learning can be found on pages 19 and 20 of the *English subject leader development materials Autumn 2008* (Ref: 00469-2008).

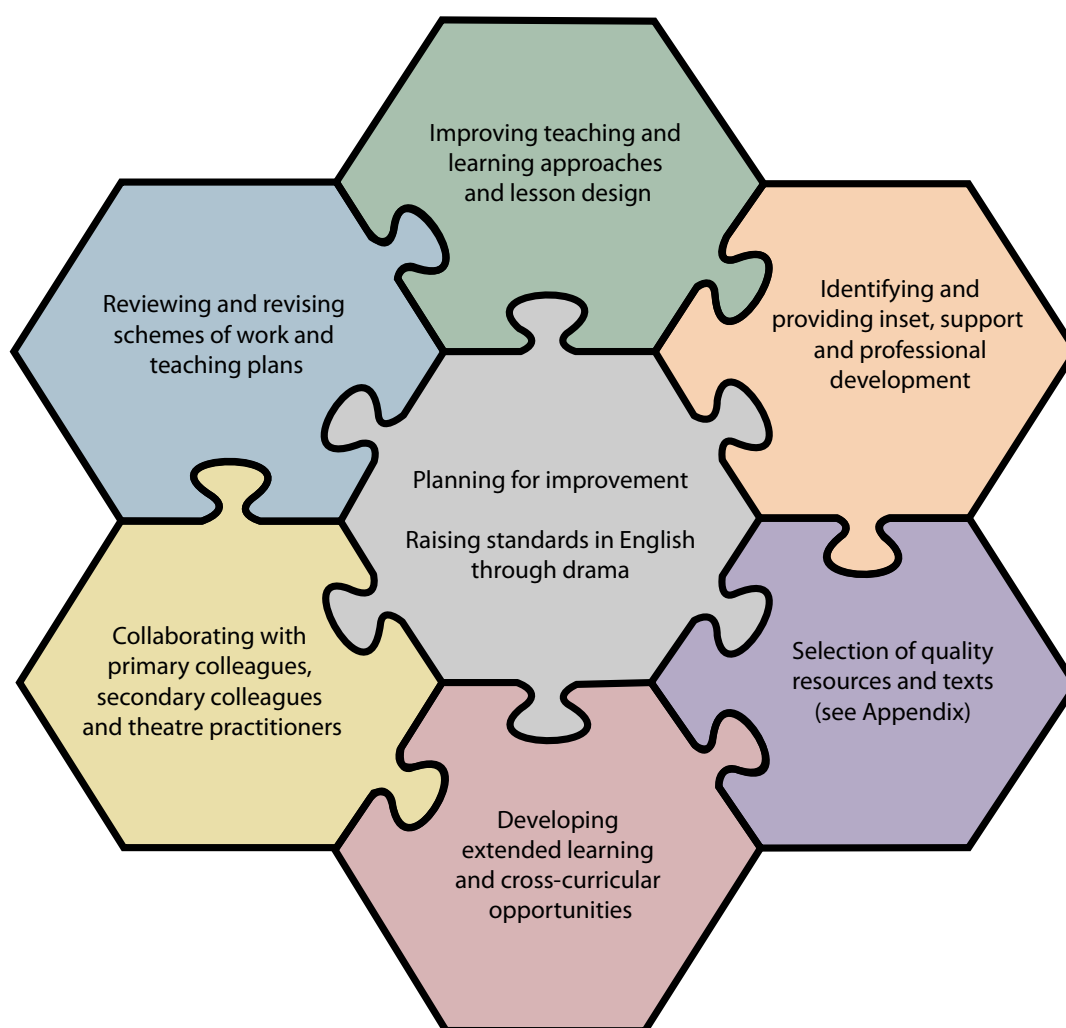
	Shallow	Deep	Profound
Means	memorisation	reflection	intuition
Outcomes	information	knowledge	wisdom
Evidence	replication	understanding	meaning
Motivation	extrinsic	intrinsic	authentic
Attitudes	compliance	interpretation	creativity
Relationships	dependence	independence	interdependence

Section 4: Planning for improvement

Focus: From analysis to action

The information you have gathered and analysed will inform the action that you now take. Below are six key areas for development and action. Consider each area, in relation to the evidence you have and the needs you have identified. You should now be able to draw up your own plan for improving teaching and learning and standards in English through drama.

Subject improvement plan



Conclusion

By working through the improvement process, analysing information and challenging misconceptions, you will be able to create a shared vision of the opportunities afforded by effective drama teaching within English. At this stage, the following criteria might be used to review whether the pupil, teacher and curriculum needs have been met by the improvement plan.

Pupils:

- use drama techniques and active approaches effectively and independently
- are confident, independent learners
- are able to analyse meaning, ideas and text through the use of active approaches
- develop high-level reading and writing skills through active involvement in the material
- are aware of the learning processes involved and able to successfully articulate and understand what they need to do to improve
- develop high-level questioning and thinking skills
- make good progress at all levels and from whatever starting point they have begun from
- understand the different roles of writers, playwrights, directors and actors and are able to understand the techniques they use
- are confident in transferring the skills learnt through these approaches to new situations, unfamiliar contexts, other texts or ideas
- are able to comment on the learning process and the way in which the process and structured activities have impacted on the development of their own skills
- are emotionally involved in the learning process.

Teachers:

- become more confident in their use of drama and active approaches to develop reading, writing and speaking and listening skills
- adapt their own schemes of work to reflect these approaches
- become more ambitious in their use of a variety of approaches to engage all pupils
- understand that structured, layered approaches mean that the teacher does not have to lead and can encourage pupils to become independent learners
- recognise that structured active approaches develop pupils' social and emotional skills, leading to the development of good social health in schools
- recognise that time invested on such approaches can have an impact on pupil outcomes in a range of situations.

School leaders:

- understand the relationship between the use of drama and active approaches in improving teaching and learning, and in the development of critical thinking skills
- recognise how active learning approaches can support pupils to become independent learners
- see the impact on developing teachers' practice leading to more outstanding lessons being observed
- see significant improvements in classroom management techniques through the use of structured, layered and active learning techniques.

Section 5: Effective planning for drama

Focus: The features of effective planning for drama

Lessons that are effective in developing thinking skills have the following characteristics.

- Pupils are given open and challenging tasks that make them think hard.
- Pupils are encouraged to use what they already know so that new learning is built on existing knowledge structures.
- Opportunities are offered to work in collaborative groups where high-quality talk helps pupils to explore and solve problems.
- Pupils are encouraged to talk about how tasks have been done. This gives them the opportunity to gain insights into how they have learned and helps them plan their future learning.
- There are learning outcomes at different levels. Some relate to the subject content but others relate to how learning can be used in other contexts. The aim is for pupils to be able to apply these strategies independently.

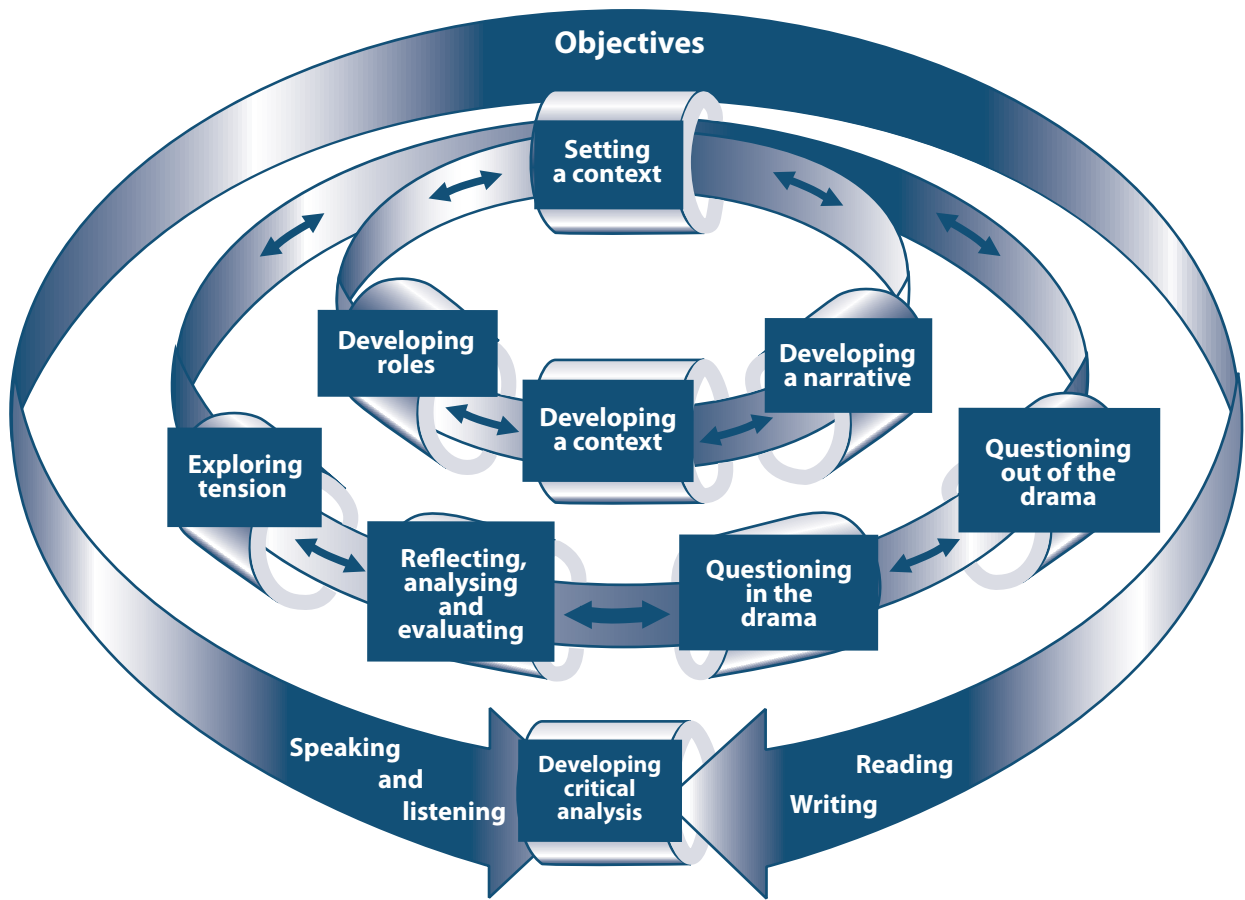
*Pedagogy and Practice: Teaching and learning in secondary schools
Unit 11 Active engagement techniques (DfES ref: 0434-2004 G)*

Drama in English at Key Stages 3 and 4 benefits from planned structured approaches which enable pupils to build their learning and construct their understanding. The use of drama conventions in isolation will not produce deep learning opportunities. Sharing such an approach with the pupils allows them to have an understanding of 'the bigger picture', vital if they are to become independent, active learners.

When using drama, teachers use structured approaches which enable pupils to:

1. set contexts
2. develop roles
3. develop narratives
4. ask questions in and out of the drama
5. reflect, analyse and evaluate
6. explore tensions, issues and situations.

Planning for drama



Section 6: Approaches to teaching drama

Focus: The features of good teaching and learning in drama

Building skills

Skills are:

- taught and built;
- applied, practised and developed;
- secured and applied independently.

Building skills is a recursive process and should be revisited at each of the stages above, as and when required, in a range of contexts and situations.

English subject leader development materials Autumn 2008 (Ref: 00469-2008)

Lesson design

The principles identified in 'Building skills' (above) and 'The learning process' (below) are central concepts within the drama planning diagram (see next page) and, provide a clear framework for planning units of work and lessons.

'The learning process'

Engaging pupils by: establishing aims and success criteria, drawing on prior learning, selecting stimulating resources/contexts, sharing knowledge and ideas.

Exploring purposes, skills, aims, processes, ideas and key questions.

Transforming skills and knowledge into deep learning, through collaborative and increasingly independent work, consolidating and extending what has been learned.

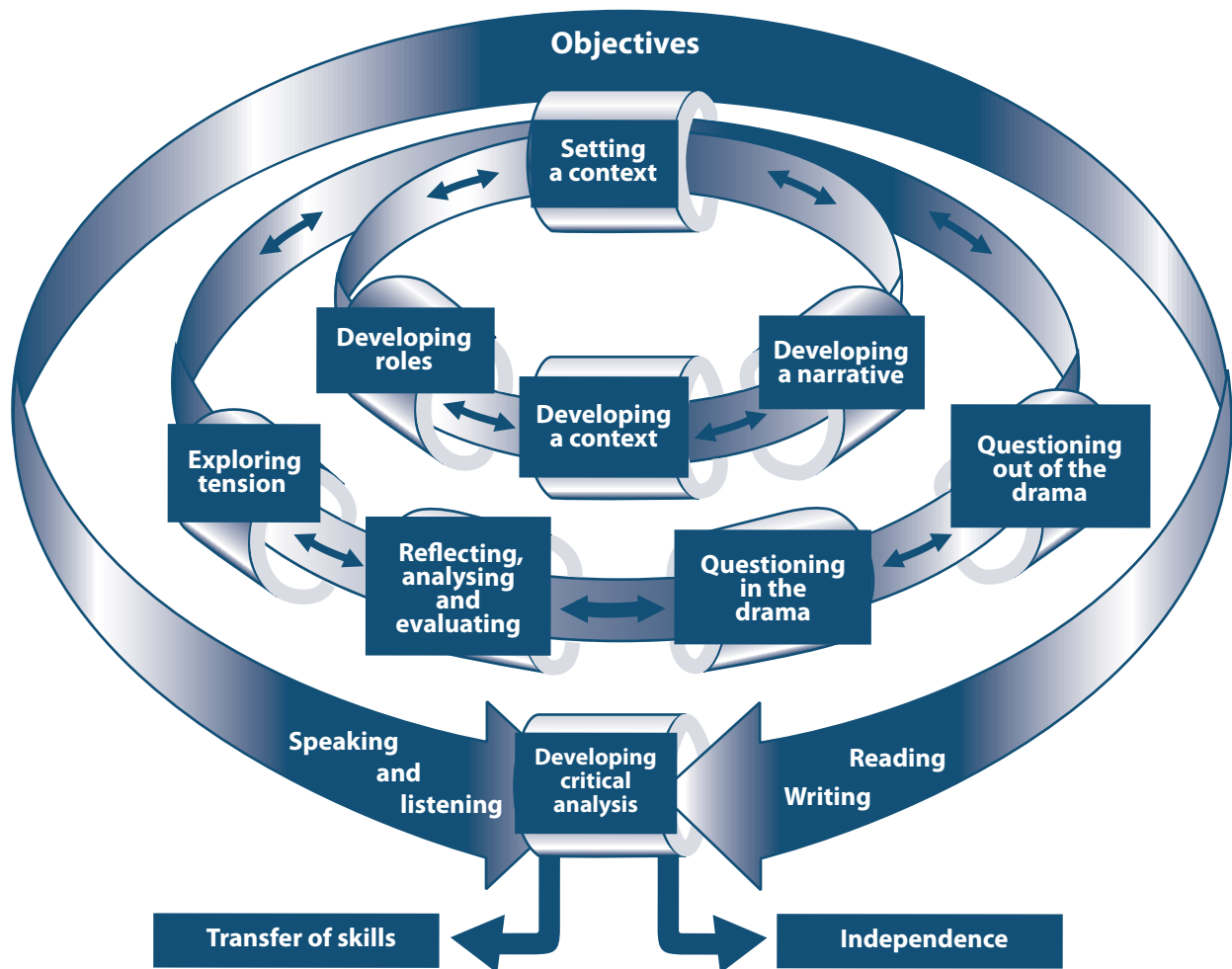
Opportunities for **reviewing**, **evaluating** and **presenting** what has been learned.

Reflecting in an extended way on the whole process, and the next steps that are needed.

This broadly fits with the familiar structured lesson model, but should now be seen in terms of a learning process that works in a range of flexible contexts such as with extra-curricular opportunities, or over a sequence of short sessions, for example.'

English subject leader development materials Autumn 2008 (Ref: 00469-2008)

Teaching drama – the learning process



Reflection, intuition, knowledge, wisdom, understanding, meaning, intrinsic, authentic, interpretation, creativity, independence, interdependence

Effective teaching structures and layers appropriate drama conventions and learning processes in such a way that contexts are created, meanings explored and analysed and high-order thinking skills are realised. Engagement with the art form of drama means that learners are driven to make meaning through an explicit understanding of the thinking and learning processes. Progress in drama, therefore, supports progress in English. The following sections identify, with specific examples, how the learning process is developed by pupils:

- engaging with a context
- exploring characterisation and developing roles
- exploring and developing narratives
- exploring tension
- developing speaking and listening, reading and writing skills
- transferring skills and becoming independent and deep/profound learners.

How do pupils engage with a context for the drama?

For pupils to engage with an identified fictional environment or perspective required for deep learning, they need to be introduced to a relevant context. This will provide a sense of place, time, character or atmosphere and stimulate enquiry.

Coram Boy

Pupils are introduced to a central philosophical statement said by one of the characters by a collective sorting of individual word cards to try to construct the statement, *'The way a nation treats its poor and unfortunate citizens, most especially its children, is a mark of how civilised it truly is.'* The pupils use the words, alongside significant objects, to create a short piece of Rolling Theatre. These objects: a child's toy, a musical instrument, a candle, a shawl, etc. have been taken out of a Moses basket by the teacher in role as a character from the play. During the Rolling Theatre, groups of pupils return the objects to the basket, accompanied by spoken statements that complete the phrase, 'Children need....'. Before any narrative development, the philosophical, historical and symbolic context in which the drama is to unfold is introduced.

His Dark Materials

Often a significant geographical context needs to be introduced and 'owned' by participants in a drama. The two parallel worlds representing Lyra's Oxford and Will's Oxford must be explored at the outset, if the pupils are to engage with the complexities of the concept of 'parallel worlds'. Pupils have acquired a sense of place through leading each other in pairs using the convention of the Guided Tour. Stimulated by projected images and narrated text, the pupils lead their partners through the botanical gardens, featured in both Oxfords, in order to visualise the landscape and, more importantly, the context in which two locations can coexist in the fictional environment of the novel and the play. This visualisation of a complex idea enables pupils to transform their skills and understanding into deep learning.

Solace of the Road

The symbolic significance of a prop or artefact can provide a provocative context for dramatic development. Before any narrative or character development has taken place, pupils examine a blonde hairpiece as it is passed round the class in an introductory circle activity. The hairpiece will come to represent the change of identity central to their understanding of the character. The physical encounter with the hairpiece also has symbolic significance for the narrative to follow. At such an early stage in the drama scheme, and with no knowledge of the fictional narrative of the novel yet, the pupils' own personal references may inform the context being established.

In all these examples, the teacher decides to set a context which does not rely on a reading of the beginning of the text. It is this appropriate selection of context-setting exercises and the selection of a part of a text or encounter with a significant image or object, that allows the pupils to make an investment in it, that leads to effective engagement.

How do pupils explore character and role?

Once pupils have engaged in the context, drama techniques are used to develop and analyse characters' roles in the drama. By physicalising their ideas about a role at different stages of its development, pupils are able to analyse the writer's craft and translate this into the creation of their own enacted roles. During this process, pupils have to evidence their ideas with specific references from texts and, therefore, invest in, and engage with, the material.

Ostrich Boys

Having been introduced to the main character of Blake through a series of small group dramas, based on short extracts from the text, a Role on the Object technique is employed. Adapted from the Role on the Wall convention, whereby word cards are placed on an outline of a figure from a drama, here, pupils' word cards are placed on or near a prop – Blake's 'rucksack', which features with him throughout the

drama. Having selected individual words, which the pupils feel best describe Blake at this stage, they are then placed by the individuals who have contributed them onto the rucksack. If the pupil believes the word to be 'true', given evidence located in the text, then they would place the word on the rucksack itself but if they think it *might* be 'true', due to the evidence, they would place it near the rucksack. Asking the pupils to consider where on the rucksack a word might be placed, such as hidden in a pocket or laid on a strap can create further symbolic meaning. The teacher constantly challenges the pupils to justify their contributions with evidence from the text. Words representing characteristics may be added to, revisited or moved in proximity to the rucksack at various stages in the drama as understanding of the role develops.

His Dark Materials

Having met Lyra, through short enacted scenes based on selected extracts from the playscript adaptation, the pupils select words from a mechanical device described in the text, an Alethiometer, a device used by Lyra to seek out truths. As it is described, the Alethiometer has words and symbols around its clock face, which prove useful when selecting vocabulary to describe Lyra's own role as it emerges in the story. The intricate 'hands' of the machine are translated by the teacher into large card arrows that can point to the selected words laid out in a circle. Pupils have to argue why the word they have selected, such as 'disobedience', 'steadfastness' or 'natural wisdom', reveals a greater truth or insight into Lyra. Additional arrows are introduced to enable several 'truths' to exist at the same time so that pupils understand that the complex nature of a character can't be reduced to a single role definition at any time during the play.

How do pupils explore and develop narrative?

Pupils are motivated to seek for meaning because they have made a practical investment in the text right from the beginning. They develop prediction skills and, through the specific use of drama techniques, are able to analyse the choices the writer or director has made. In the Communal Voice activity, where members of the class stand behind one or other of the two frozen characters and speak their words, pupils build on what they know from the text about the characters to imagine what might happen next. By speaking the thoughts or speech of the characters, roles are developed further, as is the narrative. The pupils are considering how ideas, values and emotions are explored and portrayed.

Extracts are often used, rather than a chronological reading of the text, to develop the narrative. This careful selection of material by the teacher moves the activities on. The episodic narrative of a text, like *Ostrich Boys* or Siobhan Dowd's *Solace of the Road*, can be represented by short, small-group drama scenes. Each distinct short Digital Video Clip, scripted or improvised from different text extracts, is rehearsed by groups and then run in a Rolling Theatre sequence so that the pupils learn from each other the narrative to be covered. Sometimes a scene described in a text extract needs to be deliberately taken out of sequence to sow a vital narrative seed for later development. For example, Blake's theft of the urn containing his best friend Ross's ashes in *Ostrich Boys* or Holly's theft of the blonde hairpiece, which will enable her alter ego in *Solace of the Road* are scenes that appear well into the narrative. However, for dramatic purposes and in order to promote enquiry, these poignant scenes may be introduced at the start of a drama scheme.

Sometimes narrative may be introduced into a text to enable further analysis of character, tension or context. Within the transition unit (see Working in collaboration, below), a pupil in role as Virginia, the daughter of Galileo, secretly investigates the contents of her father's office, touching equipment and documents she has been told not to interfere with. The teacher, in role as Galileo, enters the defined drama space and quietly narrates: '*Virginia was so engrossed, so interested in the items in the box, that she did not notice her father, Galileo, walk in behind her*'.

Employing an additional piece of narration, where appropriate, allows the pupils to explore the structure of the text and, within a short period of time, to make an investment in the language, context and structure of the text.

How do pupils explore tension?

Pupils explore the different skills used, in role, to develop tension and, through specific drama activities, analyse the techniques and language choices employed by authors, poets and dramatists. The exploration of tension lies at the heart of structured drama work.

When the pupils are asked to produce texts to be placed within the drama, the structure allows for a complex reading of the histories, motivations and reference points for the characters. During the scene in Tim Bowler's *Starseeker* where the protagonist, Luke, is trespassing in Mrs Little's house, the moment when they confront each other is enacted, using the Communal Voice drama technique. The teacher has introduced the moment of tension by reading the beginning of the author's account of the confrontation. The teacher structures the drama moment so that one pupil, who thinks they know what one of the characters might say next as the dialogue unfolds, takes their position behind the frozen character and speaks.

Drama techniques, such as Communal Voice, are used so that the pupils are able to think about the characters' reactions, intentions, actions and ideas, both through the contributions that they make or witness and the discussion that takes place. By being an active spectator and/or by being in role, the pupils discover how drama is able to explore tensions. They are outside the characters looking in at the questions and dilemmas that they need to deal with, but they can also step into the drama experiencing, through the use of role, how these dilemmas affect the character. By working from within the drama and observing from outside the drama, tensions can be identified and analysed. The tensions explored are not just those highlighted by the content of the text but also by the structure and style. Another layer of the analysis of tension may be introduced by physically placing the Writer (a pupil representing Tim Bowler) into the frozen moment of confrontation. The participants question the style, language, dramatic techniques and authorial control as well as discussing what the reader brings with them to their interpretation of the text.

How do pupils develop speaking and listening skills?

While participating in drama, the different roles that are developed, both formal and informal, are often *outside* the pupils' everyday experience. They are not only using different discourse and registers but are evaluating their effectiveness. The different drama activities not only demand that pupils listen carefully to each other and/or the teacher, ask questions and give relevant comments, but they also demand that pupils participate effectively as members of a group and begin to use different language registers according to the context, role or situation.

When the pupils continue a scene through Communal Voice, they have to make the right language choices as well as adopting the tone and register appropriate to the character they are portraying. Significantly, during this process the teacher does not need to work out any order for pupils to speak in. They will establish the order themselves by using the silences. This is an effective way of allowing the pupils to recognise the importance of silence and the discipline of the drama. They are developing listening skills and recognising and analysing the structure of talk.

Throughout structured drama activities, pupils match their talk to the demands of different contexts. They use varied vocabulary and organise their talk to communicate clearly, engaging the interest of the listener. The use of a drama technique such as Conscience Alley means that they develop an understanding of the language choices required for different contexts, they make contributions and vary how and when they participate. Their responses and comments engage the interest of the listener as they vary their expression and vocabulary. When, in *Starseeker*, Luke takes refuge in the tree he climbs to escape being bullied, the drama technique demands a range of language choices. The pupils work in pairs to whisper Luke's hopes and fears as he climbs through the branches. Essential talk time is provided for the pairs to discuss and rehearse the oral text they will contribute. Then, when the drama begins with a pupil in role as Luke 'climbing' through the branches and struggling through the whispered hopes and fears, the class members listen to all the contributions and afterwards analyse the verbal landscape created and the inner voice that Luke is in dialogue with.

Through the use of role, they are placing these in an appropriate context, thereby recognising the changes or choices that are necessary in the use of spoken language.

How do pupils develop reading skills through drama techniques?

High-level reading skills, an understanding of writers' intentions and choices and an analysis of literary techniques are effectively explored through the physicalisation of these concepts.

Having established the eighteenth-century context in which the playscript adaptation of the novel *Coram Boy* is set, and having introduced the roles of Otis, his son Meshak and his mistress, Mrs Lynch, pupils start to investigate the issues in the text through reading in role. Groups of four are each given one of a number of sequential extracts from a scene in the play. During the scene, Mrs Lynch, collaborating with Otis, persuades a young mother to give her illegitimate baby to him under the pretext that he will deliver the child to the Foundling Hospital – Coram Hospital. Each group allocates roles and, using their short script, action reads their extract of the scene. The groups' rehearsed readings are then run as a Rolling Theatre sequence so that each group not only contributes their interpretation of the characters and the situation, but also listens to and observes while learning what has occurred before their extract and what happens after it. Following a short reflective discussion of the action readings, some of the moments observed can be recreated as a still image and the reading of that moment can be facilitated by the teacher who stands in the space existing between the frozen characters and asks the class to name that space, for example the space of 'fear', or the space of 'deception'. The focus of the chosen extracts, along with the ensemble performance responsibility felt by the groups, motivate readings which have integrity and prompt reflective analysis. Pupils are required to evidence their comments from the text, thus demonstrating analytical skills.

How do pupils develop writing skills through drama?

Writing within the drama process provides a meaningful context where pupils need to consider carefully the appropriate audience, purpose and style. By 'adding text to the drama' the teacher enables the pupils to think about the characters and other aspects of the text in detail at the same time as developing the drama. The pupils have to extract meaning as well as question how ideas, values and emotions are explored and portrayed. The teacher wants pupils' writing to be in keeping with the text. She/he therefore asks them to think about the language and style as well as the social and historical contexts in which they are writing. The pupils use a range of techniques and different ways of organising and structuring material to convey ideas and themes. They also need to think about the way in which they exploit the choice of language and structure to achieve a particular effect. The teacher asks pupils to think carefully about the audience they are writing for, for example a letter from Elya to Myra will differ in style from a letter from Madam Zeroni's son to his mother. They are considering what the reader needs to know and are drawing on their knowledge of literary and non-literary forms.

Throughout the drama activities, pupils question the style, language, dramatic techniques and authorial control, as well as discuss what the reader/audience brings with them to the text. Such work has a direct effect on their ability to write about this and use evidence from the text to back up their ideas. Writing skills, and the use of evidence from the texts, is directly informed by the drama activities. Because the pupils have had to make choices and have invested in the language, issues, ideas and tensions involved, they are able to write about them in depth and have sorted and selected information from the text to use in support of their ideas. The drama activities should not be seen as separate from other approaches to a text at Key Stage 3 or GCSE – they should complement each other. The drama work leads to a more detailed analysis and understanding of the text and the drama process. The discussions and written work are informed by the drama and analysis. The use of physical Venn diagrams to compare poetic techniques in the study of the poem 'Nothing's Changed' or to explore the role of the tragic hero in *Macbeth* directly informs pupils' ability to produce detailed analytical writing supported by quotations from the text.

How do pupils transfer skills and become independent and deep/profound learners?

Planned drama approaches, which develop pupils' critical analysis and creativity, move them from a superficial response to texts and situations to a more sophisticated ability to think critically.

Skills and understanding are developed through the deep learning opportunities provided by the visualisation and physicalisation of the concepts, techniques and ideas. They experience for themselves the construction and layering of texts, characters, roles, tensions and dilemmas. They are also able to step outside a text or situation to gain an additional perspective. Through this process, they recognise the layers of meaning that exist in texts, the methods and purposes of writers, an understanding of audience and the different structures and conventions that relate to these areas. Developing this ability to participate and observe means that, given a new situation, text or dilemma, pupils are able to transfer their analytical skills to the new situation. Specific drama techniques, crafted and developed to promote these transferable and independent learning skills, should be a significant aspect of the English curriculum.

In the Communal Voice activity pupils build on what they know from the text about the characters to imagine what might happen next. The pupils are using dramatic techniques to explore texts and meanings. By physically placing the narrator, writer and reader, the pupils are coming to a greater understanding of the author's craft and are visualising their thoughts, discussing the possibilities and, therefore, beginning to explore the text, characters and ideas in detail.

Exploring texts and ideas through drama conventions means that pupils begin to select and sort the relevant information. They are able to work as independent learners because they have a clear understanding of the learning process and the critical thinking skills required.

The autonomous learner knows how to learn and has a disposition to do so. She can identify, on her own and/or with others, a problem, analyse its components and then marshal the resources, human and non-human, to solve it.

She continuously questions herself and others as to whether she is employing the best methods. She can explain the process of her learning and its outcomes to her peers and others, when such a demonstration is required.

She is able to organise information and, through understanding, convert it into knowledge. She is sensitive to her personal portfolio of intelligences.

She knows when it is best to work alone, and when in a team, and knows how to contribute to and gain from teamwork. She sustains a sharp curiosity and takes infinite pains in all she does.

She has that security in self, built through a wide and deep set of relationships and through her own feelings of worth fostered in part by others, to be at ease with doubt, and to welcome questioning and probing of all aspects of her knowledge.

Above all she delights in the growth of her increasing awareness of herself as a learner and in her capacity to make sense of her world.

Autonomous learner definition developed by Christopher Bowring-Carr. Published in Personalizing learning: Transforming education for every child by John West-Burnham and Max Coates (Network Educational Press 2005) ISBN 1855391147. By kind permission of Continuum.

The development of independent, critical thinkers and deep learning lies at the heart of structured and layered drama activities. Pupils analyse problems, question the methods used, explain the learning process, organise information, know when best to work alone or in groups, sustain a sharp curiosity, welcome questioning and probing, and delight in their capacity to make sense of the worlds, fictional and real, around them. It is this emphasis on critical thinking and the ability to analyse and understand the learning process that means pupils are driven to become autonomous learners who are able to apply their skills, understanding and knowledge to new situations in relation to more demanding contexts and ideas.

Working in collaboration

Primary liaison and transition work

Working closely with primary colleagues to gain a shared vision of drama's place in the curriculum and an understanding of progression from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 4 can be very rewarding. Specific transition plans and units of work provide opportunities for colleagues to work in a cross-phase and cross-curricular way, and promote a sense of consistency and continuity of approach.

Recent work on Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 transition recognises the need to focus on the learning process rather than specific content and subject links. Developing the work through a cross-curricular approach means that the focus is on the learning needs and skills of pupils at this particular time, enabling them to move from Year 6 to Year 7 through developing their understanding of their own learning and thinking skills, within the context of the whole-school curriculum.

The Galileo transition unit in the NATE Drama Pack shows how Year 6 teachers stimulated pupils to invest in the process and see it as the first step in developing their learning at Key Stage 3. The unit, which develops language and critical thinking, is also the starting point for various units of work in different subject areas.

The Shakespeare transition unit, available at www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies encourages Year 6 and Year 7 pupils to work together on a play, developing their understanding of characters, themes and ideas through drama approaches, and leads to an ensemble performance.

Progression from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4

By the time pupils enter Key Stage 3, most pupils will have used a variety of drama techniques (conventions) to explore characters, texts and/or issues, and experienced working in role. Most pupils will be able to respond to the imaginary context, but some pupils may find it difficult to distinguish between imaginary work in role and work out of role. While most pupils will be able to evaluate drama work, they may need the teacher to provide the terminology and the critical framework.

During Key Stages 3 and 4, pupils become more confident at using, selecting and analysing drama conventions. They understand how the use of different drama conventions can help them to think critically about a situation, issue or text. They are motivated to think critically because they are engaged in the drama learning process and aware of the boundary between the imagined world they have created and the real world of the classroom. This understanding of drama conventions and critical thinking means that pupils are able to analyse in more detail the way in which action, language, character, atmosphere and tension are conveyed through language, techniques, text and performance.

By the time they enter Key Stage 4, most pupils will have experienced structured and layered drama activities and have an understanding of the thinking and learning processes involved. They will be confident in using, selecting and analysing a variety of drama conventions and can demonstrate the ways in which drama helps them to think critically. They are, therefore, more able to transfer this understanding to new texts and ideas. The structured approaches and critical thinking are evident in their analytical writing, as is the detailed evidence that they are able to select, to support their ideas and analysis.

Cross-curricular and extended learning opportunities

The revised National Curriculum promotes cross-curricular learning and many schools have changed their curriculum structure to enable opportunities for extended learning. The use of structured drama activities can be a valuable feature of such work. Once a school has identified an area of learning that pupils find difficult across many subjects, the visual and physical exploration of that skill or concept through structured drama approaches can have a significant impact on pupils' learning in a number of areas. Being able to understand and analyse the reliability of sources, texts and images is a concept that pupils often find difficult, but is a skill required in many aspects of the curriculum, particularly at Key Stage 4 in humanities, science and English. The use of drama techniques, described in this document, enables pupils to analyse the construction of texts and images and also question issues of reliability in terms of authorship, integrity and the placement of text or image in different publishing/media forms.

Working in association with local and regional theatres

By working collaboratively with theatre companies who are committed to high-quality and challenging professional play productions for young people, educators can ensure carefully structured workshop approaches embedded in the curriculum are at the heart of the educative process shared between theatre education and school. Working alongside theatre practitioners provides teachers with excellent professional development as they can observe how rehearsal and performance approaches and techniques can be transferred to their classrooms.

It is important that young people develop as critical spectators, participants and creators of the cultural world around them. To do so they need a rich range of experiences that motivate, engage and inspire.

All young people should have the opportunity to participate in high-quality cultural activities, no matter where they live or what their background. Effective experiences should be about the depth and quality of cultural engagement, not just access or one-off activities.

English subject leader development materials Autumn 2008 (Ref: 00469-2008).

In 2007, a project was developed with Northampton Royal and Derngate Theatres. The theatre commissioned an adaptation of the novel *Starseeker* by Tim Bowler and then, through collaboration with the theatre, director, novelist and playwright, an educational programme and resources/materials were developed by teachers/advisers to support teachers and pupils. Visiting the theatre to see such a production was promoted as an important and invaluable experience for all young people. The programme involved workshops for teachers and pupils and culminated (among other things), after several weeks, in an on-stage workshop for pupils and teachers which included the technique of 'Placing the playwright, the novelist, the reader, etc.' where the 'real' novelist, playwright and director were involved.

Section 7: Assessing drama

Assessment

Although there are specific assessment criteria for drama at Key Stages 3 and 4 as part of the Speaking and listening strand, it is important that assessment and curricular targets for pupils focus on all three attainment targets in English.

The evidence presented throughout this booklet illustrates the impact drama has on reading and writing skills and the ways that standards can be raised. Assessment of drama should therefore not be confined solely to the Speaking and listening strand.

Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP)

The use of the APP materials, in particular the assessment focuses, allows teachers to use structured drama units of work as part of periodic, as well as day-to-day assessment. This provides evidence of the pupils' strengths and weaknesses and indicates clear learning steps (curricular targets) for pupils. Teachers are then able to identify areas of learning that need to be strengthened or revisited within their teaching plan.

Building evidence and providing meaningful feedback

Teachers understand how progress in drama can be measured against the various criteria for Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing, and they already involve pupils in the assessment process. By using a variety of assessment techniques appropriate to the task and criteria, they are able to generate a range of evidence and information to inform future teaching and learning, and provide specific, detailed feedback and advice to pupils.

Through teacher feedback and self-assessment opportunities, pupils are helped to see that they are developing and making progress in drama, as critical thinkers, and as increasingly skilled speakers, listeners, readers and writers.

Assessment in practice

Assessment criteria or focus	Activity and/or evidence
<p>Reading assessment focuses</p> <p>AF2 – understand, describe, select or retrieve information, events or ideas from texts and use quotation and reference to text</p> <p>AF3 – deduce, infer or interpret information, events or ideas from texts</p> <p>AF4 – identify and comment on the structure and organisation of texts, including grammatical and presentational features at text level</p> <p>AF5 – explain and comment on writers’ use of language, including grammatical and literary features at word and sentence level</p> <p>AF6 – identify and comment on writers’ purposes and viewpoints, and the overall effect of the text on the reader</p> <p>GCSE AO2 reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Read and understand texts, selecting material appropriate to purpose, collating from different sources and making comparisons and cross-references as appropriate. ● Develop and sustain interpretations of writers’ ideas and perspectives. ● Explain and evaluate how writers use linguistic, grammatical, structural and presentational features to achieve effects and engage and influence the reader. ● Understand texts in their social, cultural and historical contexts. 	<p>General comments</p> <p>Structured drama activities, such as <i>Rolling Theatre</i>, <i>Sculpting</i>, <i>Placing the Author</i> and <i>Naming the Space</i>, all provide opportunities to assess pupils’ reading skills.</p> <p>Through oral or written responses, informed by or within the drama, personal responses to texts and pupils’ analysis of language, structure and theme can all be assessed.</p> <p>Pupils should be encouraged to make connections between texts and cultures, which can be assessed through written or oral responses.</p> <p>The importance of the chronological and cultural context, of the text and the writer and reader are central to many of the drama activities and prompt pupils to analyse the different meanings and interpretations.</p> <p>The importance of the context, of the text and the writer and reader are central to many of the drama activities and prompt pupils to analyse the different meanings and interpretations through discussion and written responses.</p> <p>Structured activities, such as <i>Placing the reader and writer</i>, where pupils need to analyse authorial purpose and viewpoint and support their comments with evidence from the texts, mean that assessment opportunities exist through the work itself or through written analytical responses directly informed by the work.</p>
<p>Specific Key Stage 3 example:</p> <p>Reading AF3 Level 6</p> <p>Across a range of reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● comments securely based in textual evidence and identify different layers of meaning, with some attempt at detailed exploration of them ● comments consider wider implications or significance of information, events or ideas in the text 	<p>Evidence in relation to this assessment focus could come from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● selecting quotations from a text to add to a role-on-the-wall figure, and justifying the choice through explaining how the quotation is relevant to the character. ● using ‘thought bubbles’, where one pupil speaks the words of a character while another displays on card the thoughts going through that character’s head at the time. ● <i>This Way – That Way</i>: the same scene or events can be played with different narrators or to show a different director’s interpretation. The playing of the scene will be altered according to the narrator’s/director’s perspective in ways that require engagement with the significance of information, events or ideas.

Assessment criteria or focus	Activity and/or evidence
<p>Specific Key Stage 4 example: GCSE AO2 reading</p> <p>Indicative Grade C criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● evidence of ability to explain writers' ideas ● engagement with and interpretation of significant ideas and perspectives supported by appropriate textual evidence ● exploration and evaluation of writers' viewpoint, ideas and attitudes, showing some awareness of the possibility of different interpretations 	<p>Evidence in relation to this assessment objective could come from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Placing the writer and reader</i> activities, where pupils need to analyse authorial purpose and viewpoint and support their comments with evidence from the texts, mean that assessment opportunities exist through the work itself or through written analytical responses directly informed by the work.
<p>Speaking and listening assessment focuses</p> <p>AF1</p> <p><i>Talking to others</i></p> <p>Talk in purposeful and imaginative ways to explore ideas and feelings, adapting and varying structure and vocabulary according to purpose, listeners, and content</p> <p>AF2</p> <p><i>Talking with others</i></p> <p>Listen and respond to others, including in pairs and groups, shaping meanings through suggestions, comments and questions</p> <p>AF3</p> <p><i>Talking within role-play and drama</i></p> <p>Create and sustain different roles and scenarios, adapting techniques in a range of dramatic activities to explore texts, ideas and issues</p>	<p>General comments</p> <p>The level of engagement in drama activities and analytical discussions means that teachers and pupils are able to assess how pupils take account of others' views and adapt their spoken language to the role or situation.</p> <p>Work can be recorded in a variety of ways, including a learning journal for further analysis, and both teachers and pupils are able to assess against APP or GCSE criteria during the learning process.</p> <p>The structured use and selection of drama activities enables pupils to talk about complex ideas (see Section 6: Approaches to teaching drama) and issues and this allows for assessment of their analytical and critical thinking skills in addition to their choice of role, gesture, etc.</p>

Assessment criteria or focus	Activity and/or evidence
<p>AF4</p> <p><i>Talking about talk</i></p> <p>Understand the range and uses of spoken language, commenting on meaning and impact and draw on this when talking to others</p> <p>GCSE AO1 speaking and listening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Speak to communicate clearly and purposefully; structure and sustain talk, adapting it to different situations and audiences; use standard English and a variety of techniques as appropriate. ● Listen and respond to speakers' ideas, perspectives and how they construct and express their meanings. ● Interact with others, shaping meanings through suggestions, comments and questions and drawing ideas together. ● Create and sustain different roles. 	
<p>Specific Key Stage 3 example:</p> <p>Speaking and listening AF3 Level 6</p> <p>Across a range of contexts demonstrate empathy and understanding through flexible choices of speech, gesture and movement, adapting roles convincingly to explore ideas and issues.</p>	<p>Evidence in relation to this assessment focus could come from:</p> <p>Developing and sustaining roles through <i>Rolling Theatre</i> and then distilling the scene to a key moment of tension, supported by evidence from the text, provides evidence that can be assessed throughout the process. Pupils are using speech, gesture and movement, and exploring issues and ideas.</p> <p><i>Thought Tracking</i>: the inner thoughts of a character are revealed either by the person adopting that role or by the others in the group. This is a particularly useful way of slowing down and deepening a drama especially if used in conjunction with <i>Still Photographs</i>. A further development of this is to have the participants draw the distinction between what a character says, thinks and feels.</p> <p><i>Venting</i>: a variation on <i>Thought Tracking</i> in which pupils can come up and vent the feelings, emotions, confusions or ambiguities in the character's mind at that moment. Several pupils can vent simultaneously to create a 'dialogue' or to demonstrate different views of the character's state of mind.</p>

Assessment criteria or focus	Activity and/or evidence
<p>Specific Key Stage 4 example: GCSE AO1 speaking and listening</p> <p>Indicative Grade B/C criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● develop and sustain roles and characters through appropriate language and effective gesture and movement ● respond skilfully and sensitively in different situations and scenarios, to explore ideas, issues and relationships 	<p>When pupils develop and sustain a variety of roles though structured drama activities, they can be assessed for their use of vocabulary, engagement and use of standard English in discussions, not just in relation to their ability to sustain and develop a role.</p> <p>Pupils benefit from knowing and experiencing how to use a variety of techniques for realising characters, <i>e.g. centring, emotion memory, states of tension</i>. They also need to attend to vocal and physical delivery in order to position an audience, <i>e.g. tone, pitch, volume, positioning, gesture</i>.</p> <p>Evidence could come through performance or a series of structured drama techniques which could include the <i>Conscience Alley</i> convention: at a critical moment in a character's life when a dilemma, or problem, or choice must be made, the pupil in role as the character walks between two rows of pupils who may speak out what is in the character's conscience. The use of first person narration enables pupils to demonstrate their understanding of role.</p>

Assessment criteria or focus	Activity and/or evidence
<p>Writing assessment focuses</p> <p>AF1 – write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts</p> <p>AF2 – produce texts which are appropriate to task, reader and purpose</p> <p>AF3 – organise and present whole texts effectively, sequencing and structuring information, ideas and events</p> <p>AF4 – construct paragraphs and use cohesion within and between paragraphs</p> <p>AF5 – vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect</p> <p>AF6 – write with technical accuracy of syntax and punctuation in phrases, clauses and sentences</p> <p>AF7 – select appropriate and effective vocabulary</p> <p>AF8 – use correct spelling; handwriting</p> <p>GCSE AO3 writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Write clearly, effectively and imaginatively, using and adapting forms and selecting vocabulary appropriate to task and purpose in ways that engage the reader. ● Organise information and ideas into structured and sequenced sentences, paragraphs and whole texts, using a variety of linguistic and structural features to support cohesion and overall coherence. ● Use a range of sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate punctuation and spelling. 	<p>General comments</p> <p>Drama can generate evidence for the assessment of writing, both within the dramatic context and beyond it in critical writing relating to experiences and performances.</p> <p>When pupils produce text with a specific audience, purpose and effect, related to the fictional context they have engaged with, this provides assessment evidence of writing skills.</p> <p>Because analytical written responses are informed by, and therefore include, complex ideas from the drama activities, assessment of high-level writing skills can take place and be evidenced.</p> <p>Critical writing about drama requires pupils to organise ideas effectively, to express opinions economically and to develop a distinctive individual critical voice.</p>
<p>Specific Key Stage 3 example:</p> <p>Writing AF3 Level 6</p> <p>Across a range of writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● material is clearly controlled and sequenced, taking account of the reader’s likely reaction, e.g. paragraphs of differing lengths, use of flashback in narrative, anticipating reader’s questions ● a range of features clearly signal overall direction of the text for the reader, e.g. opening paragraphs that introduce themes clearly, paragraph markers, links between paragraphs 	<p>Evidence in relation to this assessment focus could come from:</p> <p><i>placing the text</i>, which enables pupils to write for a specific audience, for a specific purpose within a meaningful context, which provides written evidence of these writing skills</p> <p>creative <i>‘in role’ writing</i>, which encourages learners to make appropriate and imaginative choices of style in a range of forms</p> <p><i>critical writing</i> about novels, poems, plays and performances</p> <p><i>personal writing</i> in journals about the experience of participating in drama activities and in performance.</p>

Appendix

Resources

This section contains:

- selection of quality plays/texts – suggested criteria
- glossary of drama techniques

Choosing play scripts for Key Stages 3 and 4 English

Considering what analytical activities would be possible with the text is a good way of assessing whether the necessary depth/complexity/dramatic techniques are included. For this reason, although the theme and/or issue might appear quite complex or somehow relevant to young people, the lack of drama techniques, complex structure, language or style means that they often become more PSHE-type texts rather than those which can be analysed to the required level.

It is not enough to build pupils' skills in reading without also addressing the key issues of engagement and motivation.

Improving reading: A handbook for improving reading in Key Stages 3 and 4
(Ref: 00950-2009DWO-EN-02)

Key features of an effective text might therefore be:

- **A character or characters that pupils can engage with.** Such a character or characters needs to be introduced to the audience early in the play. This is often not about them being a contemporary, 'relevant' young person (the danger with this is they take on a stereotypical nature rather than depth of character) but displaying a level of emotion or empathy that allows young people to invest in them. This is as easy to achieve (if not easier) with a play in a different social/historical context than as a contemporary/reality-type script.
- **A variety of dramatic techniques are employed in the text so that analysis of the playwrights' authorial control is possible.** This might be in terms of structure (moving away from chronological order, etc.), use of symbolism, language, staging, sound or other literary/dramatic devices.
- **Language is complex enough to analyse and dialogue is effective.** It is important for young people to see how emotion, feeling, atmosphere, etc. can be created much more effectively through language, other than colloquial and dramatic devices.
- **Content that reflects the need not to patronise young people.** This often happens when adults try to interpret 'their' language. Young people are not motivated by providing them with what may be seen as contemporary issues or people – that often fall into a stereotypical structure – but by complex ideas and people that challenge and make them question their own lives and the world around us. *Ostrich Boys, Solace of the Road, His Dark Materials, Coram Boy, etc.* engage young people with characters, dramatic structures, language, emotion and complex ideas in a way that can engage even the most disaffected pupil.
- **Layering of ideas/techniques.** The need for layering is often emphasised in terms of analysis, but it is important to the text as well that it is layered and can exist on a number of levels. The most effective texts are those which have become 'crossover'-type texts that older pupils/adults can read on one level and younger pupils on another. This again is not down to subject matter but the nature of the text, techniques and characters.

- **A palpable sense of dramatic tension.** This is not just tension between the characters or characters and their surroundings, but in the dynamic of the play. This is always motivational and promotes serious engagement for actors and audience as well as providing directorial potential.
- **Length of text.** Although this really shouldn't be an issue, it is important that the plays contain enough substance to be able to develop character and narrative in a layered and complex way.

Glossary of dramatic conventions

Action Narration: a stylised convention which requires each participant to pause and verbalise motives and descriptions of actions before they undertake them in an improvisation.

Action Reading: pupils, in role, walk through a scene, speaking the lines, and adding gestures and movements, while reading from scripts.

A Human Poem – Structuring the Text: the poem is divided into individual words, which are printed on individual pieces of card and one is given to each pupil. No punctuation or guidance about structure is provided. The pupils physically try to create the poem by positioning themselves with the cards they are holding into lines and stanzas.

Captioning: written cards or spoken phrases are juxtaposed with still images to add a further dimension.

Communal Voice: individual members of the group take up positions, one at a time, behind a sculpted character and speak the words that character says at a chosen moment in the drama. Individual 'voices' can speak more than once. A dialogue can be staged in this way with sculpted characters facing each other, while their 'voices' take positions behind each of them and speak only the utterances of that character. The teacher may speak in role as one of the characters to introduce a new element, introduce information or play devil's advocate.

Conscience Alley: a group divided into two lines facing each other. A pupil (or teacher) in role as a character in the drama walks between the two lines as individuals speak out what is in the character's conscience. This may be set up so that one line represents the positive aspects of the character's dilemma and the other line, the negative.

Digital Video Clip (Still Image Sandwich): a short, repeatable dramatic sequence is 'bookended' with a still image at the start and a still image at the end.

Drawing the Object: pairs are given a significant object (which will be relevant to the text and/or used later in the drama), usually before the drama begins: A and B sit back to back. A, in possession of the object, describes it in words without revealing its name or use, B draws it.

Extended Drama – interrupting the text: text is 'interrupted' with improvised performances as if it has been 'paused', and in the reader's head personal thoughts, events, images are enacted. This process continues throughout the text. A word or phrase may be extracted from the text to begin the opening to each section of the performance, for example:

- first and second line of text...
- improvised performance...
- third and fourth line...
- improvised performance

Exploring the Gateway from Text to Reader's Mind: two still images are created. One illustrates, in a literal sense, a particular piece of text, while the other presents what is in the reader's mind at this point. A discussion takes place about what enables the reader to move from one image to another.

Flashback: replay of important sections to allow for group scrutiny. Can be undertaken in real time, slow-motion or as a series of tableaux.

Forum Theatre: action by an individual or small group enacted in front of the whole group. Ownership of the action is shared by all, thereby encouraging intervention, pausing, suggestion, replay and commentary.

Freeze-frame: still pausing of a significant moment.

Guided Tour: in pairs, A (with eyes open) leads B (with eyes closed) slowly through an imaginary environment while providing a spoken commentary. The environment or location may be based on text but will usually be stimulated by a printed or projected pictorial map. Roles can be reversed to enable parity of experience.

Hot-seating: placing one person in role under scrutiny by instructing the rest of the group, in defined roles, to direct questions at her or him.

Improvised Drama: encouraging participants to openly explore an issue or situation through the perspective of their adopted roles, free from script.

Layers of Wallpaper/Traffic Lights: different layers or aspects of a text (for example facts, opinions and suggestions or neutral and positive) are explored by physically creating them. Pupils select particular words or phrases from the text to make up the layers and stand in different lines or rows according to the layer they are creating. They are asked to choose which line might be closest to the reader or writer, finding evidence to support the decision.

Mantle of the Expert: an individual or group of characters are assumed to have specialist knowledge about a subject. This allows them to speak with authority to the rest of the group.

Matching Pairs: a means of linking elements of a drama where pupils who have sculpted an image have captions previously devised for other images, or the images themselves, matched to them. The activity is approached like a game of 'pairs', with pupils having to search for links that might exist. As the links can be thematic or symbolic, it encourages pupils to move away from a literal reading and use of an image to a symbolic one.

Meeting Convention: a group is gathered together in role to receive new information, agree action or solve problems. The meeting may be chaired by teacher in role, pupil in role or in some cases be deliberately convened with no identified leader.

Merged Images: sculpted images are transformed into alternative images. The second image may be a resolution of tension in the first or may simply portray the passing of time. The transformation often takes place in slow motion but may be deliberately made at speed.

Mime: movement without words depicting and often replaying a significant moment.

Naming the Space: participants are invited to offer words to describe a physical (or metaphorical) space between two characters at a moment of tension in the drama. The same technique can be used to describe barriers that exist between characters or situations.

Narrator's Voice: a participant in the drama (often the teacher) speaks or reads between or over actions to move the drama on or add depth to the narrative. The narrator's voice may be accompanied by music or sound for theatrical effect.

Objects in a Box/Bag/Case: pre-selected objects significant to the drama are 'discovered' in an appropriate receptacle or placed in the receptacle by a character in the drama. The process of discovery or placing may be ritualised and accompanied by music and/or the narrator's voice.

Overheard Conversation: a character in the drama is identified and witnessed eavesdropping on other characters' conversations. The device may be a means of evidencing testimony or gossip or may be a means of linking group work together as in the case of teacher in role as the eavesdropper, reporting back in narration or at the end of a dramatic sequence.

Placing the Author/Playwright/Poet/Screenwriter: in order to help pupils to appreciate an author's perspective, a pupil or teacher represents the presence at a defined moment in the drama of the author/playwright/poet/screenwriter. Supposedly unseen by the actors (frozen at a significant moment), the author is sculpted into the scene by individual pupils who justify the positioning by drawing on evidence from the text. The act of placing the author is carried out as many times as demonstrates the range of possible author perspectives at any one moment in the drama.

Placing the Director or Audience: a similar process to **Placing the Author**, but here promoting understanding of the theatre or film director's perspective and the opportunities for the insight of individual members of the audience.

Placing the Text: often prompted by a picture or text extract, depicting a space where written documents can be found, such as a private office or public meeting place. This technique combines conventions to culminate in a theatrical reading. Participants create two copies of a text which could be found in the defined space. One copy is placed in the appropriate place; the other is retained by its authors. When a pupil/teacher in role picks up, points to or unfolds each placed text, the authors of that text read its contents out loud, providing an insight to a key character's world.

Placing the Word: as in **Placing the Text** but using single words on card or paper, placed and read within the defined dramatic space.

Ritual: a stylised enactment of moments of high social and cultural significance, for example the sequential placing of objects in a sculpted image from a drama.

Role on the Circle/Venn diagram: borrowing from the **Role on the Wall** process, this convention requires that the participants place cards with written statements/words indicating what is known or understood about a character at a defined moment in the drama. The cards are placed in circles representing, say, 'Strengths' and 'Weaknesses'. The circles can be added to as the drama progresses. In some cases (for example Macbeth) the circles are overlapped to create a space where previously distinct characteristics merge (revealing the complexities of, say, Macbeth's 'tragic heroism'). The Venn diagram might also be used to explore ideas/themes or techniques rather than characters.

Role on the Object: developed from **Role on the Wall**, this convention is used to help pupils define character traits at defined moments in a drama. Instead of placing sticky notes or cards with written statements or words on an outline on the wall, the cards are placed on an appropriate item of clothing, object or mask. The proximity of the card containing the statement/word to the object may reflect the certainty with which the statement is made at the defined moment in the drama. Such a developing image with words can act as a useful visual stimulus at the beginning or end of discrete sessions.

Role on the Wall: a useful 'communal' method of building a role as a group – ideas are collected from the group and progressively displayed – usually done with sugar paper and sticky notes as a 'work in progress' document.

Role Reversal: a technique of encouraging participants to swap roles so that different perspectives can be experienced and considered from within the drama.

Rolling Theatre: a means by which groups can share their work on different aspects of a drama, learning from each other by running several rehearsed sections in a sequence. The theatrical integrity of the sequence will be the result of each group taking total responsibility for the start and finish of their section, independent of the need for teacher intervention. This may be achieved through the use of strong still images at the beginning and end of Digital Video Clips, signalling the contribution of the next group in a prearranged theatrical sequence.

Routes through the Text: a physical representation of a 'route' through a text is created, according to a particular theme, perspective or technique. Students 'walking the route', or ribbons or ropes, may be used to indicate the route taken. Still image, printed words or enactments can be linked in this way to illustrate in which order certain aspects of a text are approached. A route can be redefined according to whether the perspective is from the reader's or writer's point of view.

Scripted Drama: using written text to shape the structure of the piece.

Sculpting: participants offer suggestions to place an individual in a significant, frozen position so that considered analysis can be made.

Small-group Playmaking: small groups of participants plan and present pieces of drama that explore the issues and context of the work.

Teacher in Role: a crucial technique whereby the group leader adopts a role (which could be central to the drama) that offers a model of appropriate language and behaviour. Sometimes the teacher will deliberately choose a low-status role to offer an alternative perspective.

Thought-tracking: the inner thoughts of a character are spoken by members of the group in a sequence. The subject of the process is usually signified by individuals touching the frozen character whose thoughts they utter.

Warm-ups: structured playful activities designed to forge a dynamic within the group. Often contains a 'serious' link with the work to follow.

Writing in Role: a technique whereby participants write from the points of view of one of the roles. This enables different perspectives and viewpoints to be explored in greater depth.

Zone of Importance/Character Cards in a Circle: to promote analytical discussion among small groups at significant moments in the drama, character cards are placed in a circle defining a zone of importance where, for instance, the characters placed nearer to the centre would be deemed to be more powerful at that particular point in the drama. Directions of power might be added with the introduction of arrow cards. The exercise develops the pupils' understanding of proxemics and may be extended to incorporate theatrical blocking.

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