Structuring Drama Work:  
*A handbook of available forms in theatre and drama*  
Jonathon Neelands and Tony Goode

We feel that this book encompasses a wide range of methods in which teachers and students are able to incorporate drama activity into a variety of subjects. Conveniently sized, this handbook is formatted similarly to that of a cookbook in that it lists the ingredients and instructions on how to put a drama together. Useful to all ages and subjects this book can spice up a mundane lesson plan through improv, active exploration, and reflection. Each drama is separated into four specific sections. These include the Context-Building Action, Narrative Action, Poetic Action, and Reflective Action. By exploring the material through several angles, a comprehensive understanding of the material is gained.

If anyone is interested in further exploring Structuring Drama Work, this book is available in the University of Regina Archer Library.

**Lesson Ideas:**

*Structuring Drama Work* is a very versatile book that can be used as a guide for full dramas or individual activities to spice up any lesson.

- **Hot-Seating/Teacher-in-Role**

**Description:** In this activity, the teacher will adopt a role of a character that relates to the subject of study and students then have the opportunity to question the teacher-in-role to find out more information regarding the subject in a more exciting way. This allows the students to get involved in discussion rather than having the teacher feed the information to the students.

**Example:** In a science classroom, the teacher takes on the role of Albert Einstein and the students are able to ask the teacher-in-role questions about his life and work.

- **Diaries, Letters, Journals, Messages**

**Description:** These are written in or out of role as a means of reflecting on experience; or introduced into the drama by the teacher as a means of reviewing work or building up a cumulative account of a long sequence of work. This allows them to be more involved with the topic, and explore their imagination.

**Example:** In a Social Studies/History class that is studying any of the World Wars or the Holocaust, students are asked to write a diary or journal entry as if they were living during that time. They have the freedom to choose their character whether it be a soldier, mother or wife of a soldier, someone in a concentration camp, and so on.

- **Still Image/Tableaux**

**Description:** Groups devise an image using their own bodies to crystallize a moment, idea or theme; or an individual acts as sculptor to a group. Contrasting images are made to represent actual/ideal, dream/nightmare versions. This activity also helps young children expand their imaginations and allow them to put even their craziest ideas into action.

**Example:** During story time in an early childhood classroom such as grade two, the teacher begins to read Evan Solomon’s “Big Beard’s Hook”, in which a young boy named Nathaniel finds a way to unlock his grandfather’s attic from which he has been forbidden to open. At the moment when Nathaniel opens the door, the story would be stopped, and the students would be assembled into groups where they would plan still images of what Nathaniel may encounter on the other side. The images would be presented and then the story would be continued so that the children would learn what was actually behind the mysterious door.

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