

Drama – The First Six Lessons



Sample of A Scheme of Work for Year 7

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Sample – full resource is 30+ pages

Teacher Notes

This scheme is intended to accomplish several things:

- To introduce students to essential Drama skills in their first few lessons;
- To make the learning fun and engaging;
- To make students strive for better achievement and higher attainment;
- To enable the teacher to formally assess students using the department's system;
- To enable students to set targets for their learning.

The links to YouTube are working at the time you purchase this resource but we have no control over their continued availability. We therefore recommend that you download them immediately via one of the many apps available such as YouTube Downloader.

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Notes to the Teacher

This scheme allows you to introduce students to Drama and assess them within the first half term. It also asks the students to set targets for themselves based on their attainment in this unit. The method of assessment is of your choice. This scheme will fit any assessment method.

The lesson plans have been written in detail so that you do not have to continually cross-reference.

The lesson length is assumed to be one hour, but can be adjusted.

Some links to external sources should be treated with caution. For example, there are often “inappropriate” comments on YouTube pages underneath the clip window. To obviate this, or if external sites are blocked in your school, **download the clips in advance**. Having them stored will also mean you are not dependent on an Internet connection.

The lessons are hyperlinked – click (or CTRL+click) the Lesson Number to go to the corresponding Lesson Plan. (Not available in this sample.)

Lesson 1

This lesson gives the students the opportunity to perform a short mime as an individual while the rest of the class guess what it is and then to perform as part of a group. Words are not used much this lesson – we are removing one of the possible embarrassment factors from the lesson straight away. The story of Humpty Dumpty is used because it is one all the students will already be aware of - they will not have to waste time thinking of a story; they can get straight on with practising its enactment. As is stressed throughout the lesson plan keep the atmosphere positive, praise wherever possible, stress that next week's lesson will involve talking and where appropriate tell students about your drama room rules (lining up, your method of getting silence, etc etc). By the end of this first lesson you should have quite a lot of informal information about each child. You may wish to make some post-lesson formative notes but do not be tempted to make any formal assessment at this stage.

Lesson 2

We take a form of Drama that all students are familiar with – the tv advert – and ask them to analyse its characteristics. Using what they know and have discussed, they make spoofs of existing ads, having been shown examples. The clickable links provided are only suggestions. You may well wish to prepare your own in advance. Adverts have their own control mechanisms for the groups – they are creating drama within the constraints of the genre: they need to get a message across, they have a certain amount of time to do it and there should be an awareness of audience. As such, adverts are a pre-existing structure within which the students have to work. This should not be seen as something which will limit them – rather as a safety mechanism. The evaluation – plenary – looks at what has been effective, what could work if it were done differently etc. The “homework” of watching an episode of Blue Peter is in preparation for next lesson.

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Lesson 3

We are using the same “safety net” in this (and the next) lesson as we did in the adverts lesson, namely to take a familiar genre, children’s tv, which has its own constraints. Although Blue Peter may not be the coolest programme on tv, it should be familiar to most students and should be watchable at home between lessons 2 and 3 for those who don’t know it. It is shown on CBBC as shown on [this page](#) and there are links to many previous episodes via BBC iPlayer.

Use of a white board and projection is required in this lesson. Use an interactive board for the writing up of the show’s features and listing which group is going to do which ones. Different groups can include the same elements (i.e. both the Green and Red groups can interview an expert if they wish).

Try to get the students to appreciate the children’s television style of presentation – full of (over-) enthusiasm, use of each other’s names frequently (“Thanks Michael”, “No problem Suzie”). There should be three presenters and one other person. I always explicitly state that students cannot play the animals. I omitted to do this one year and one student played the Blue Peter tortoise throughout. Fortunately, the tortoise no longer features on the show.

Encourage groups to share the workload as evenly as possible. They must think about the stage space – the studio – and where each item is going to happen.

I am a great believer in giving subliminal messages to children. I would therefore recommend that you decide to “check your camera” during the rehearsal time in this lesson, in full view of students while they are practising. You aren’t going to use it till next week, but it will get two messages across: (1) we **really** are going to film this (2) Teacher has a camera = slight fuss this week (“Ignore me, you’ve got work to do”) = no problems next week.

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Lesson 1

- Aims:** To work **co-operatively** with other students in large and small groups
To produce a short piece of non-verbal Drama, individually and as part of a group
- Drama Skills:** Developing non-verbal acting; negotiating; interpreting

| Activity | Length (mins) | Resources |
|---|--|--|
| <p>At all times during today’s lesson be as positive as possible, praising answers and suggestions but always asking for that little bit more, wondering if “we” can do a little bit better.</p> <p>Bring the students into room and settle them into a large circle of chairs, with one empty chair in the middle. Introduce yourself (name displayed on whiteboard) and, if this is the first lesson in the room, give any Health & Safety rules. State that not all of today’s lesson will be sitting down – but this first part will. Ask what is in the middle of the circle. “A chair” will be the obvious answer. Stating that the answer is correct in every detail ask if, by using our imaginations, we can turn that chair into something else.</p> <p>Tell the students that you are going to step into the middle of the circle, and you going to pretend that the chair is something else. You are then going to use the chair, and the rest of the group have to guess what you are pretending the chair is. They can put their hands up when they think they know but they must not shout out. Teacher walks into the centre of the circle and considers the chair then walks the chair backwards and forwards in straight lines as though mowing the grass. After a few turns backwards and forwards remove an imaginary grass box and empty it, refit it and continue "mowing". Let go of the mower and step away from it, signalling that you have finished. Choose some answers, making sure that they are answering the question “What is the chair?” (lawnmower) not, “What was I doing?” (Mowing the grass).</p> <p>Ask how they knew that it was a lawn mower; answers should include the pattern that you were walking in, emptying the grass box, perhaps you wiped your forehead to show that it was hard work, and so on.</p> | <p>The split of this lesson depends on the size of the group.</p> <p>Try to make the chair exercise no longer than 25 minutes, the Humpty practise no more than 10 and the performances the remainder.</p> | <p>A chair</p> <p>Countdown timer displayed on whiteboard if you wish (optional) https://www.online-stopwatch.com/</p> <p>The only other resource you need for this lesson is loads of enthusiasm. I cannot supply this.</p> |

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Tell them that you are going to do one more mime. Tell them that you get the idea that this is a pretty good group so you are going to make this one more difficult. Reflect deeply, then step towards the chair and place it upside down under one arm whilst pretending to blow down one of the chair legs, fingering one of the other legs as though it is a set of bagpipes. Starts marching up and down like a piper after a few hands have gone up. Finish and step away.

Ask for answers and also what was it that helps them to decide it was bagpipes.

Point out that in each mime you gave a little *extra* clue – emptying the grassbox, marching up and down – to be helpful.

Each student will now have their own go. Reiterate that the mime must be done in silence, and that the chair can be used as anything at all - **except** a chair, seat, bench, etc.

Give them 30 seconds to think of what they are going to do when it is their turn. Tell them to have two or three things ready in case someone else does what they were going to do. Encourage anyone who is a little bit fearful of having a go to go first so that they use their own idea before someone else performs it.

See the whole group perform their mimes, asking names (“What’s your name?”, “Jason”, “Everyone say hello to Jason”, “Hellooo Jason”!) as each student steps up. Use lots of praise especially for those who produce very imaginative mimes. Encourage those who use the chair by turning it upside down, on its side etc. If anyone is really stuck whisper them one of these objects:

- A hat
- A pet rabbit
- A cashpoint machine (ATM)
- A dog
- A smartphone

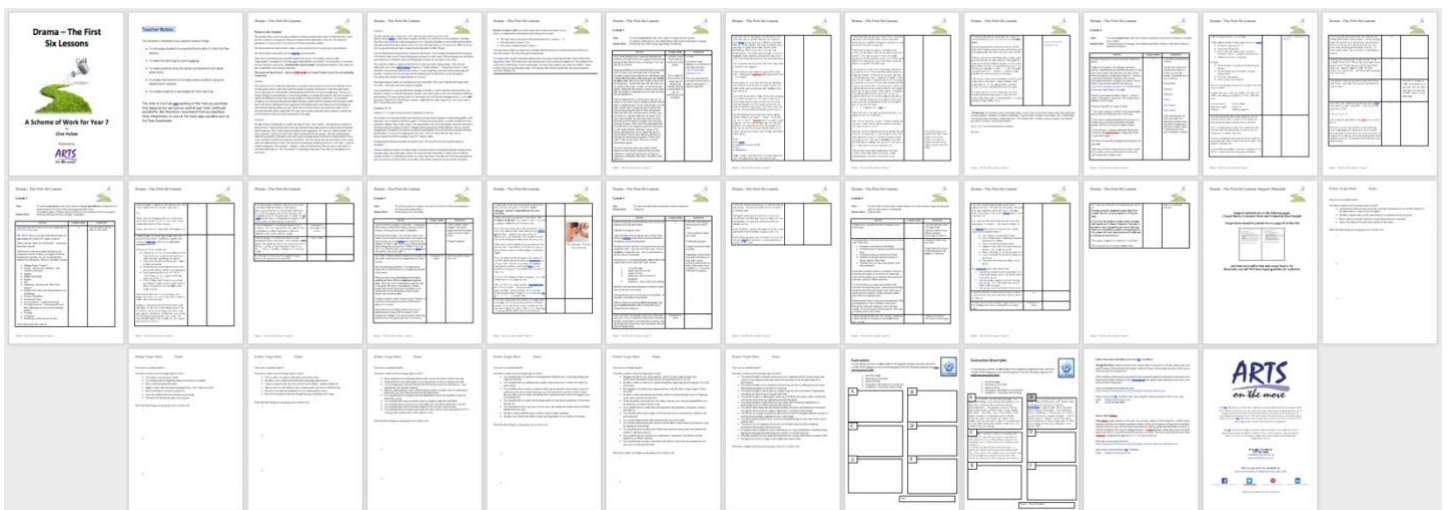
Make it clear it would be better for students perform their own ideas rather than your rubbish ones.

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| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>When everyone has had a go, recall some of the wild and wacky performances that you have seen and stress that you think that this group is going to be very successful over the coming year.</p> <p>Tell the group that you want to continue acting without words today (“what do we call acting without words?”), but that you want to move into small groups for the next exercise. As this is a little bit more difficult you are going to give them time to practise before you see the "finished" result.</p> <p>Ask the group to stack their chairs away, taking into account any rules of the room about where and how chairs are stacked. As soon as this is done, ask them to find a space and start to walk around silently. They are to walk around in a random pattern, not bumping into anyone, in silence. As they walk around continue to give your instructions - you are going to call out a number and as soon as you have called it out students are to get into group sizes of that number. Ultimately you want groups of about four or five, so call out other numbers first. So, as they walk around call out "2" so that they all pair up. (Any spare students each time should be sympathised with and encouraged to be a bit quicker next time).</p> | | |
|--|--|--|

The extract above is about half of lesson one. All of the other lessons are planned just as meticulously with links to support materials. Here’s a screenshot of the whole resource:



There’s even an assessment system, one part of which is shown on the next page.

Drama Target Sheet

Name:

Your work is currently **Level 4**.

You need to work on the following to get to Level 5:

- Show imagination in developing drama so that you are not content with the first idea
- Work sensitively with other people in your group/class so that you enhance the work
- Use the acting space with an awareness that the audience has to see and hear you...and understands your intended meaning
- Show an understanding of how 'what the drama is about' matches 'how it is created and performed' (e.g. sad things should not be like pantomime)
- You should be able to recognise and use theatre/drama words and use them to describe drama that you see
- You should be able to give workable ideas for people to make the work better
- You should be able to say how you could make your work better and be able to do that
- You should be able to give alternative ideas for how the work could be done
- You should be able to compare your work with other work you have seen (either on TV or in seeing other professional or older students' work)

Write here three things you are going to do to achieve this:

1

2

3