



DRAMA SPACES

A Manual for Working with
Young People through Drama

Sarah FitzGibbon

In association with the National Youth Arts Programme

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DRAMA SPACES

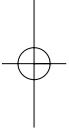
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Sarah Fitzgibbon

Foreword

The arts have an important, and often untapped, role to play in the development of young people as creative and confident individuals and constructive citizens. Drama, in particular, is an art form young people often have a natural affinity for. At a time of life that is all about physical energy, exploration and change, drama can be a powerful tool in the forging of a positive identity for young people. Non-formal educational settings, such as youth clubs, can provide a safe and fun space for the exploration of drama. To support youth workers and those who are interested in the potential value of youth arts as a working methodology, the National Youth Arts Programme has commissioned this guide to developing drama with young people.

Drama Spaces – A Manual for Working with Young People through Drama is based on three series of a course called Drama Spaces, designed and delivered by Sarah FitzGibbon on behalf of the National Youth Arts Programme over a period from 2002 to 2005.

The Drama Spaces course was aimed at youth workers with little or no experience of using drama in their work with young people. The course aimed to introduce drama as an accessible and effective activity with a range of possible practical applications. A methodology for addressing issues within a youth work context, an enjoyable social and creative outlet for young people, a way of assisting in the social and personal development of a young person by engaging with an art form and a means of developing work for performance with young people. The course guided participants systematically through each stage of the process required to create drama, from improvisation to role-play to scripts and performance.

Participants in the Drama Spaces courses over the years have included not only youth workers, but care workers, educators and youth drama leaders. The diversity of professional experience within these groups has been a rich source of ideas and advice in developing both the course content and the content of this manual. Both the National Youth Arts Programme and Sarah are indebted to participants who took part in focus sessions to evaluate draft versions of this manual, adding crucial observations and suggestions. You will also find participants' suggestions at the end of each chapter in the manual – these are based on their own experiences of implementing these stages in the drama process within their own work settings.

The analogy of making a cup of tea is used to structure the content of **Drama Spaces – A Manual for Working with Young People through Drama**. This demystifies the process and demonstrates that planning a drama workshop can be broken down into several simple and achievable steps, to make a brew that suits your group perfectly! Sarah's own vast experience working in youth drama is drawn on in the manual, with a range of techniques and games suggested for each stage of a drama workshop.

It is our hope that with the support of **Drama Spaces – A Manual for Working with Young People through Drama**, you will be encouraged to take that first step into you and your group's own drama space.

MARGOT KENNY
National Youth Arts Programme Co-ordinator

Contents

Introduction	4
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Cuppa Tea: Designing a Drama Workshop 9

Workshop Section 1	<i>Filling the kettle and switching it on</i>	14
Workshop Section 2	<i>Getting the ingredients ready</i>	18
Workshop Section 3	<i>Pouring in the hot water</i>	22
Workshop Section 4	<i>Brewing</i>	26
Workshop Section 5	<i>Pouring out the tea</i>	31
Workshop Section 6	<i>Relaxing and enjoying the cup of tea</i>	34

Stimuli for Drama	37
--------------------------	----

Techniques	44
-------------------	----

Plays and Productions	48
------------------------------	----

Scripts	54
----------------	----

Appendices:

1. References	58
2. Glossary of Terms	59

Introduction



Introduction

Using this manual

This manual can be read in a number of ways:

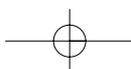
- As a manual for an organisation to support a group of volunteers.
- As a guide for youth workers who wish to develop their youth drama skills.
- As a handbook for an individual worker who is considering using drama as a way of working with young people.
- As a supporting document to the Drama Spaces training course for youth workers run by the National Youth Arts Programme

Designing a drama workshop is like making a cup of tea in that the steps towards making a cup of tea are similar the world over, yet the individual cup of tea will be unique to the taste of its drinker. The bulk of this manual is made up of the 'similar steps'. Each step in the design of a workshop is broken down into its components, with serving suggestions offered both by Drama Spaces participants and myself. Read through the Cuppa Tea section and start to design a workshop. Hopefully, you will have enough ingredients to flavour the workshop to your own taste.

Other chapters contain further ideas by illustrating the variety of stimuli and techniques you can use to get the workshop going in a direction of your choice. Further information on technical terms referred to in the text, on the publications, facilitators and support organisations mentioned can be found in the appendix and glossary.

Hopefully, it will be a source of ideas and will enable you to unlock your own and others' creativity through drama.

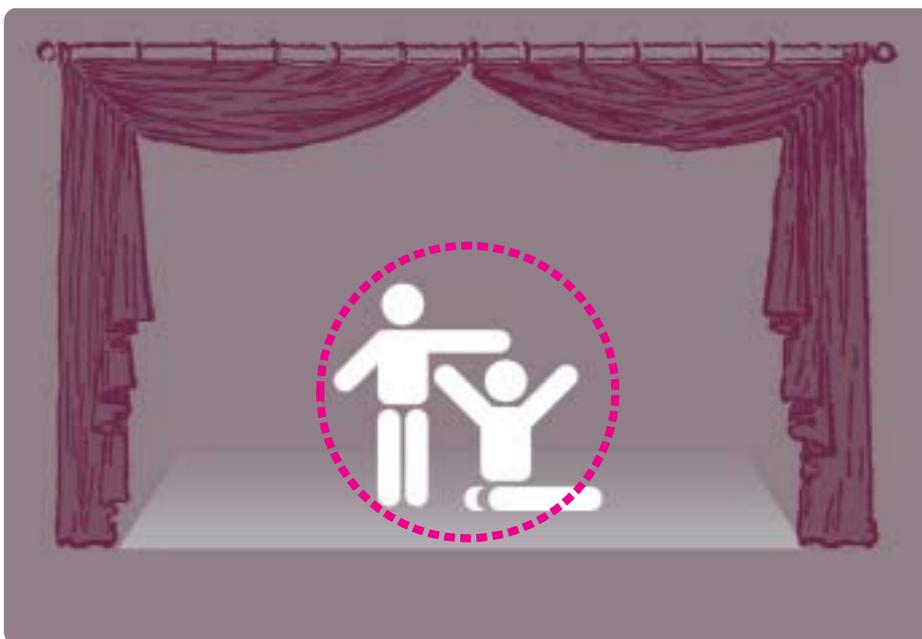
Firstly, let's consider what we're talking about when we talk about drama.



What is drama?

Drama is what goes on between people here.

Drama becomes theatre when you add other elements: stage management, lights, costume, directors, set and an observing audience.



Drama is the interpersonal or storytelling element, the interactive element between two or more people within a safe space. It is important to note that, until you make your group and yourself comfortable working within this space, your group will not be able to adequately deal with the added layers which will make it an enjoyable theatrical experience for them and for their audience. Nothing can turn a young person off quicker than putting them on stage to perform something they are not proud of or in which they feel foolish or patronised.

In the Plays and Productions chapter, we will deal with how to approach a production. However, the principal focus of this manual is drama, where the participants:

- Act as their own audience.
- Develop interpersonal skills, in particular, listening and co-operation skills.
- Develop their theatre skills.
- Are encouraged to use their creativity.
- Have fun.



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Be aware that drama is an art form and needs to be regarded as such. You have to explore your creativity within the art form; to find your own way in; to become enthused about your own creativity within that art form before you can consider trying it with your client group. Why should they take a risk on trying something new if you aren't enthused by it? This may seem obvious but it is worth stating. Contact the National Youth Arts Programme or the National Association for Youth Drama to see if you can access a youth drama workshop in your area. Participate in as many workshops as you can. Steal ideas – everyone does – and ask the facilitators questions. They will be happy to answer them.

Go see a play or movie. Analyse the following:

- How was the story conveyed?
- What elements of it spoke to you and why?
- If nothing spoke to you, why?
- Where did the producers go wrong?

Who are you working with?

Many of you will be working with young people who are in very difficult circumstances, with many problems. Try to enter into this process without your client group in mind. You will impede your own progress if you are constantly thinking 'Jamie won't do that,' or 'Dean won't be able to work in this way'.

I recommend that you use the fictional groups suggested in the Cuppa Tea section on page 5 as your imaginary group. Once you are comfortable in planning what it is you would like to do, look at the needs of your own group. You are the best person to assess these needs when planning your work.

This manual does not set out to address the needs of all young people and/or deal with every eventuality. It would be futile, patronising and useless to do so. But please do not let potential problems and 'what ifs' stop you.



Some key points to remember while using this manual:

1. Enjoy creatively planning drama for young people.
2. Allow yourself to fail. Like any exercise, sport or activity, it may not go brilliantly the first time. Give yourself the space to evaluate and try again. With practice and experience, both you and your group will find it easier.
3. Keep the activities linked and relevant. This will help you when you are planning and conducting your workshop. It is easier to remember things if they are sequential.
4. Keep your notes clear and near to hand.
5. Workshop with others. Bring in others to help you run the session. Another person's perspective is invaluable when evaluating how the drama session went.
6. Don't feel like you have to do a two-hour workshop every week. Little and often is a better approach. Over time, your group will be able to deal with longer drama sessions as your ability to facilitate them in this art form grows.
7. Evaluate and annotate your workshops. If you keep a record of the workshops you have done and your evaluation notes, you can revisit these workshops over and over again. You will be refining your practice. It will also help you to record games and exercises you see others do.

Cuppa Tea: Designing a Drama Workshop



Cuppa Tea: Designing a Drama Workshop

Designing a workshop is like making a cup of tea. Everyone follows approximately the same steps. Everyone has their own idea about the ideal cup of tea and everyone has their own taste. Do you like sugar, milk or lemon, Barry's or Fruit Tea? Your workshop is unique to you. One of the beautiful things about planning drama is that you can be creative in the process.

The workshop structure I am using is a common format in youth drama and youth theatre.

The various stages in making a Cup of Tea are:

1. Filling the kettle and switching it on
2. Getting the ingredients ready
3. Pouring in the hot water
4. Brewing
5. Pouring out
6. Relaxing and drinking the tea

These stages roughly correlate to the following sections of a youth drama workshop:

Filling the kettle and switching it on	First Contact / Warm up / Creating Safety
Getting the ingredients ready	Warm up and Exercises
Pouring in the hot water	Putting together Ideas / Composing Activities
Brewing	Deepening the Fiction / Where might it go next?
Pouring out the tea	Showing / Sharing the Work
Drinking the tea	De-roling / Wind down / Evaluation

Exercise 1 – Design a drama workshop on the theme of Greeting

1. Put down all the activities you would associate with each section.

Filling the kettle and switching it on First Contact / Warm up / Creating Safety	
Getting the ingredients ready Warm up and Exercises	
Pouring in the hot water Putting together Ideas / Composing Activities	
Brewing Deepening the Fiction / Where might it go next?	
Pouring out the tea Showing / Sharing the Work	
Drinking the tea De-roling/ Wind down / Evaluation	



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2. Choose a group from those listed below.

Do not try this with your own group at first.

Group A

A rural group aged between 12 and 15. They are attending voluntarily. There are between 13 and 15 young people in the group. One or two 11-year-olds turn up from time to time. All of the group go to the same school and know each other well. They are not very experienced in drama, though the majority of the group was involved in the Christmas school pageant. They are familiar with you but will be getting a new drama leader. There is a code of conduct when receiving guests into the group.

Design a session looking at the arrival of a new leader to the group. Your theme can be Greetings. The workshop is to be 1.5 hours long in the parish hall.

It is the end of September and the hall can be quite cold.

Group B

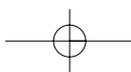
An urban group aged between 15 and 18. They are attending voluntarily and are part of a youth club. They have done drama before. The organisers want to set up a younger group and they want to involve some of the older group in the new group. There are 14 young people in the group and some want things to remain the same.

Design a workshop on the theme of Greetings. You hope this will help them in welcoming the new younger group.

Group C

You want to set up a drama group but you need other leaders. You have gathered a group of young adults together to help you. They are aged between 18 and 23. Some have been involved in the local amateur drama group. You are in a rural area that is developing into a commuter belt for the nearest big town. There are 11 adults in the group and they do not all know each other.

Design a drama workshop on the theme of Greetings for a group of adults.





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3. Gather your thoughts

Make yourself comfortable in a place where you will not be disturbed. Get two large sheets of paper and lots of markers. In the centre of the first sheet of paper, write the age range of the group you have selected. Draw and write on the sheet of paper everything you know about that age group, including what music they might like, television programmes they watch, movies they are interested in, as well as the issues facing them at their stage of development.

Once you have filled that page, turn it over and face down.

On the second sheet write the word Greeting. Write or draw everything that comes into your head when you think of the words Greeting/Greetings.

4. Find a hook

Place the two sheets side by side and see if you can find a hook. This is something that will hook your group's imagination or interest and through which you can explore the issue. A good example of this emerged during the Drama Spaces course. One Drama Spaces participant working with the 12-to-15-year-old age group – mainly boys – suggested using some lines from a track by the rap artist Eminem about being the leader of the band as a hook into exploring the theme of leadership. His young people were fans of the artist and he felt that they would relate to the sentiments in the track rather than coldly dealing with the issue.

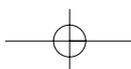
5. Design your workshop

Once you have your hook, design your workshop. Your warm-up and exercises should all link with this hook or theme.

6. Give yourself a break

If after 20 minutes you have nothing, walk away and return to it another time.

On the following two pages, you will find brainstorming worksheets for a Greetings workshop. Here, you can list all of your thoughts on the theme.



Workshop Section 1

Filling the kettle and switching it on First Contact / Warm up / Creating Safety

When you are inviting somebody into your home, you will spend some time preparing the place, creating a pleasant and welcoming atmosphere. The same is true in this instance. When the group arrive into the space, you need to create an atmosphere of safety, comfort and focused activity.

You have to think according to the following first principles:

The space you are working in

Is it warm? If not, you may need to factor that into your planning. Is it stuffy? You may need to plan a break for air. Can you get sole access during your drama session? Will you need to rebuild concentration should there be traffic through your space?

Your attitude to the space and the activity

Do you need to warm yourself up before they arrive? How can you get the group to leave the three million things they may be thinking about at the door? Are you able to do it yourself? It is worth spending a bit of time with yourself before you start to work with the group. This should help keep you focused on the work. If the members of the group are arriving one by one, what are you going to be doing when they enter the space? Are you going to set them a task until the whole group is assembled?

The goal

Do not underestimate the importance of physically warming up the body. It helps focus the mind. Ideally, you want the group to be physically and mentally warmed up and ready for the next step.

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Sarah's Method for Workshop Section 1

With the Drama Spaces participants, I did the following:

- Had coffee and tea ready and busied myself with my materials as we waited for people to arrive. After a time, I joined them for coffee and a chat. Once everyone arrived, I would conduct a physical warm up in order to bring people's awareness into this space.
- The warm-up exercises varied from session to session depending on its focus.
- At our first session, I conducted the following exercise as an icebreaker.

T-Shirt game

I got this through my friend, Irma Grothuis. I find it a great icebreaker for certain groups because:

- It gives the participants an opportunity to work in safety with material they are familiar with, i.e. themselves.
- It gives a conversation topic for people who are unfamiliar with each other.
- It allows the participants to reflect on what they wish to achieve from joining this group.

Materials needed:

- 1 sheet of flip chart paper per participant
- Markers
- Scissors

Method:

- Each person is given a sheet of paper. The leader demonstrates how to make it into a t-shirt by folding it in half and cutting a neck hole along the fold.
- Invite the group to choose one side. This is going to be the front. Ask everyone to write or draw their name and 4-5 symbols of things that they feel represent them. This can be a thing they like to do, things they are passionate about and/or symbols that they feel capture their personality.
- When they have completed this, ask them to turn over to the blank side. On this side, ask them to choose symbols that relate to the focus of the workshop. For example, in an anger management workshop, it may be things that bring their anger to a boiling point of 10. In a youth work context, I ask the group to choose 4-5 symbols of how or why they work with young people. I will also ask this group to think about what they expect or wish from Drama Spaces and see if they can put that into the t-shirt. I hope that this will give me an idea of the expectations of the group.
- When the shirts are completed, I ask the group to put them on and explain their t-shirt to five people in five minutes.
- Put the t-shirts aside for the moment.

This is Ann...

In 1998, I watched Emelie FitzGibbon and Geraldine O'Neill from Graffiti Theatre Company conduct this game as a way to introduce a group of American students to each other. I have used it a couple of times since then. It allows the group to interact safely and to gently warm up physically.

- Ask the group to walk around the space and choose four facts about themselves. On a signal, ask the group to get into pairs. One is A and the other is B. They are to exchange their facts with each other and try to memorise them. There is a very short time limit for this and a sense of urgency.
- On a signal they are to separate and walk around the space, thinking of one activity they enjoy doing that they could mime in four moves. I ask them to find a space and practice their mime. It is important to remind them that they can only do the activity in four movements.
- The group is called together and a stage area is nominated. The pairs are invited up to introduce each other to the rest of the group. A has to introduce their partner, B, and recall the four facts that B gave them earlier. As A is doing this, B mimes their activity in four moves. Then, the role of introducer is swapped around. The pair is applauded before they leave the playing area.

Participants' Suggestions for Workshop Section 1

Drama Spaces participants suggested these activities for this section, based on exercises they would use with groups within their own work.

The facilitator

- Be prepared. Have everything you will need laid out and ready for use.
- Stay busy until everyone is in/ready. There is nothing worse than nervous smiles.
- Be there before the group arrives, chatting to everyone as they arrive, without the fear of the group.
- Remember to smile.

The chat

- Ask each person to think of something good that happened to them that day.
- Ask each person to rate their mood as a colour, e.g. 'I am feeling red', or 'I am feeling grey'.
- Chat about what you might do in the session.
- Draw up a contract of behaviour, in which the group decides what behaviour is or is not acceptable and the sanctions for breaking the code of conduct.
- For the first 10 minutes, have Tayto and orange or tea and coffee and chat to the group.

Create your circle

- Create a circle using the alphabetical order of the group's names.
- Create a circle in order of the group's birthdays.

You can return to these circles at any time during this or other sessions; you can call 'our circle' and the group have to reform the one you have chosen as quickly as they can.

The ice-breakers

- Conduct some shakes and stretching exercises. These serve to warm up the body and focus the mind but they may not be appropriate to all groups. Any exercise that moves the body, allows the group to become attuned to your voice and gets them focused on being at a drama session will do.
- I tend to use what are called isolations.
 - Ask the group to balance on one foot and rotate the raised foot from the ankle. Invite the group to imagine that they are drawing a circle on the floor with their foot. The circle gets bigger as they rotate their leg from the knee.
 - Draw an even bigger circle in the air by rotating the leg from the hip. Balancing is tricky but tipping over is part of the fun. Repeat using the other leg.
 - Place your hands on your hips and put your hips to the front, then both left and right and then to the back. Do a number of repetitions and finally draw a circle on the floor with your hips. Do the same for the belly and rib cage.
 - Stick out your hand and rotate it from the wrist. Rotate your arm from the elbow and then the shoulder. Repeat, doing the other side.
 - Lift the shoulders up. Then push them down. Rotate your shoulders forwards and then backwards. If you are feeling brave, rotate one shoulder in one direction and the other in the other direction.
 - Opening the mouth, allow the head to fall back, bring it to the centre and then forward. Turn your head to the right and then the left. Remember to keep your mouth open when putting the head back to prevent a strain on the throat.
 - Repeat the sequence and alter the instructions to be sure the group are listening to you.
- In a line ask 'anyone who...' to cross the space. Ask things like "anyone who had cereal this morning cross the space". Follow this with something like "anyone who has blue eyes cross the space". Create the list in advance if you are trying it for the first time.
- Ask someone what their name is and why they think they were given that name.
- Go around the group and ask each person to say their name. Each time you go around the group ask them to add an adjective, a super hero name or an action that links with their name.
- Think of a country that starts with the first letter of your name.
- Ask each person to create the letters of their first name through movement. Start by asking them to spell their first name in the air with their finger. Extend this by asking them to write it with their arm, upper body, upper body and head, whole body.

All exercises and actions in this section depend on your relationship with the group, whether it is new or pre-existing. Remember that you are trying to create a safe and creative environment.

Workshop Section 2

Getting the ingredients ready

Warm up and Exercises

In this section of the workshop, you are trying to prepare your group for dealing with the theme and/or activities that form the main part of your workshop. This can include:

- Physically alerting the group to working together as a group or with another individual.
- Physically warming the group up to use their bodies.
- Mentally preparing the group to work on a theme by carefully selecting a game or exercise that will link on some level with the theme.
- Allowing the group to get used to hearing your voice.

Be very careful when selecting a game or exercise. It should link on some level with the theme or the techniques you might be using. For example, you might use observation games if you are planning to use freeze frames/tableaux later in the workshop.

Many leaders get to the middle of their workshop and wonder why the group are taking a different angle to the theme or issue than they anticipated. This can usually be traced back to a miscommunication caused by the leader's choice of activity in the warm up.

Remember that you are sending signals to the group from the moment you meet. If you choose a game or exercise, you need to have a rationale for using it at that bridging point between the warm up and the main drama activity.

I will illustrate with a workshop I used for Drama Spaces. It is one I have used with a variety of groups and is based on one conducted by Geraldine O'Neill.

Sarah's Method for Workshop Section 2

With the Drama Spaces participants, I conducted an Introduction to Improvisation workshop with a warm-up for a group of people who haven't worked together before. I wanted the group to get physically and mentally prepared for working with each other and taking risks so I did the following:

- Knee Fights – from 'Playing the Game' by Christine Poulter.

Put the group into pairs. You have guarded knees when your hands are over them and unguarded knees when there are no hands over them. You cannot leave your hands guarding your knees for more than 15 seconds.

The objective of the game is to get as many taps on your partner's unguarded knees in a minute as possible. This is a very high-energy game as each member tries to get as many taps on their partner's knees while avoiding having their own tapped.

• Strings

The purpose of this workshop exercise is to develop trust and thoughtful action. Care is needed. Insist on silence. The goal is to establish a trust contract between the people in pairs. It may not be appropriate for every group.

A will imagine that B is leading them around the room by a piece of string attached to their nose. The piece of string has to stay the same length throughout the exercise.

Without criticising, point out where trust has been broken.

E.g. where someone is not allowing themselves to be led, or where the leader is jerking the string. I might add music, using pairs to demonstrate how well it looks when the concentration is strong.

The pairs are now ready to risk a brief improvisation exercise.

Participants' Suggestions for Workshop Section 2

- 'Walking the space' is a good place to start. Ask the group to find a space in the room where they are not near anyone else. They are asked to swing their arms to be sure they are not near anyone. Tell them that they are creating a bubble or force field around themselves. They have to make sure that the bubble is not burst or the force field broken by ensuring they do not run or bump into anyone else. Ask them to walk to the opposite side of the space without damaging the bubble or force field.
- Play 'emotion statues'. Ask the group to 'walk the space' and tell them that you are going to call out a word and they must create a statue of it. Call out a number of emotions and allow them to create statues of those emotional states. You can extend the game by assigning a scale from 1 to 10. What would a statue of Anger 5 look like compared to Anger 10?
- Ask them to 'walk the space'. Tell them you are going to play 'Lead by...'. Ask them to imagine that there is a string attached to a part of their body. Call out different parts of the body to start with such as 'lead with your head.' Once they are doing well at the exercise, call out combinations, such as 'nose and toes' or 'right ear and left knee.'
- Sometimes it is a good idea to break the large group into smaller ones and try to integrate the shy with the outgoing. In 'model makers,' split your group into smaller groups or pairs. Invite them to create a frozen picture of words that you will call out. These words should relate to your theme. Once they have decided on the picture, tell them that they are allowed to insert three movements. This could be one person doing three movements, or three people having one move each. All of the moves have to add to the story within the picture.

- Create a group mime. Divide them into small groups. Tell them that you are going to call out something and that they have to create it in 30 seconds using everyone in the group and without talking. I tend to get them to create a bowl of Spaghetti Bolognese among other things – like the Eiffel Tower and the Ha'penny Bridge.
- Play 'Machines.' Tell the group that you want them to create a machine. It is an old fashioned machine with cogs and wheels. Ask one person to start with a machine-like movement. One by one, the others join in, each one becoming part of the machine by a physical gesture and sound. Encourage them to link in with each other as parts of the machine. Once each person has become a part of the moving machine, you can speed the machine up or slow it down. This is a starting point from which you can make a variety of machines, such as a 'love machine'.
- Play 'Person to Person'. Everyone walks around. Someone shouts 'Now' and grabs the person nearest to them. A nominated person in a group says 'Cheek to cheek' and the pair have to act it. They then separate, only to form another pair when you signal. Commands can be 'knee to knee' or 'head to elbow' – anything physical – and each pair has to act it. The group needs to be comfortable with each other. It is also a good idea to plan out what combinations you are going to say before you play it to prevent embarrassing situations.
- Ask the group to visualise a box and to leave all of their hassles in it and put a lid on it. Take these things out of the box and put things in during the workshop.
- Play 'Blind Offers' or 'What are you doing?' Invite the group to form a circle. Go around the circle once. Each person has to mime an action. The person to their right has to ask them 'What are you doing?' They answer truthfully. The second time around the circle, the person is miming an action but when asked what they are doing says something different. That suggestion has to be mimed by the person asking the question. When they are asked 'What are you doing?' they must answer with another suggestion, and so on.

A list of game books is included in the References appendix at the back of this book.

Workshop Section 3

Pouring in the hot water: Putting together ideas/Composing Activities

At this point, you are introducing the pretext or theme for the drama. The group should be:

- Physically and mentally ready to deal with the theme.
- Set a task that will be their entry point into the drama. I recommend that with teenagers and adults you break them into smaller groups for this section. It is easier for smaller numbers to negotiate with each other.

Sarah's Method (A) for Workshop Section 3

In the Introduction to Improvisation workshop I conducted with Drama Spaces participants, after the warm up (illustrated in the last section) I kept the group in their pairs from the warm up exercises and played the following three exercises:

- Who? What? Where?

Give this opening line to A: 'What time do you call this?' Together, A and B have to decide who they are, where they are and what is happening. Once they have made those decisions, ask them to set up the scene – i.e. get them to agree on the locations of any furniture, the entrances and exits. Ask them NOT to rehearse the scene until you give the signal. On your signal, allow them act out the scene at the same time.

Swap around so that B's opening line is 'Who do you think you are?'

- Short Scripts

Workings in pairs (if you want to mix them up ask them to change partners) give them a short script (6 to 8 lines) to work on. Remind them of the earlier exercise – they have to decide whom they are, where they are and what is happening. They can only use the lines given and look at the pauses between the phrases to decide how they can convey the 'Who? What? Where?' that they have agreed on.

Use simple scripts that will not disturb someone with reading difficulties. (This is something to bear in mind). Perhaps, suggest that each pair decide on a reader to read out the lines.

For example:

A: 'Let me in.'

B: 'Who is it?'

A: 'It's me!'

B: 'Have you got it?'

A: 'Let me in.'

B: 'Have you got it?'

A: 'See.'

B: 'Oh!'

- Under Cover

Working in pairs, ask them to sit under a coat. Remind them of the previous exercise. They have to decide who they are, where they are and what is happening under this cover. They have to agree on an opening and closing line for the scene. Allow them time to set up the scene. On your signal, allow them to play out the scenes.

A Note of Caution

Watch for confident performers so you can ask if they would mind performing any of the scenes again in front of everyone. Also, ask for volunteer performers. However, remember never force anyone to perform.

To further illustrate the starting point, I'll outline another way I started this section of a workshop.

Sarah's Method (B) for Workshop Section 3

When using a picture to tell a story, I did the following:

- The group is asked to close their eyes so I can set some pictures out on the floor. On opening their eyes, I present the whole group with a series of postcards of art works. The group is put into smaller groups of four. Each group has to select a postcard that appeals to their group. (Always have many more pictures than participants or groups to avoid a conflict). On selecting the picture, each group is asked the following questions to assist them in the creation of a story :
 - Who are the people in the picture?
 - What is their relationship to each other?
 - What happened just before the picture?
 - What is going on during the picture?
 - What happened just after?
- They have five minutes to decide on a story from the clues in the pictures. Be sure to encourage them so that everyone has an opportunity to say what they think. They are invited to nominate a spokesperson to tell the story without interruption. Remind them that there are no 'right answers'.
- From here, I invite them to create a frozen picture of the moment before the picture, the picture itself and the moment after the picture. Using these initial images, we can attempt to create a story.

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Participants' Suggestions for Workshop Section 3

- Pose a question – the group reply with answers through pictures/freeze frames or cut outs from papers and magazines.
- Introduce a pretext for drama – create an imaginary community, encourage a group role-play and introduce a dilemma that they must solve. (This is a very basic example)
- Use photos to create characters.
- Use a piece of music to inspire situations/stories

You will find more on techniques and stimuli for drama in Sections 8 and 9.

Workshop Section 4

Brewing: Deepening the Fiction/Where might it go next?

This is where you have to be at your most intuitive. Having introduced your theme or pretext, you now have to go further with it. Great care is needed. It is a balancing act between keeping your groups interest and focus, deepening their belief and commitment to the work while acknowledging that some groups within your larger group may take more time and need more attention than others. It is in this section that a friend or helper can be invaluable.

Don't let it scare you. In this section the key is to keep it moving. The more familiar you get with different techniques, the easier it will be.

Sarah's Method (A) for Workshop Section 4

In the Introduction to Improvisation workshop I conducted with Drama Spaces participants, in this section I used the concept of Status as a way to gently allow a group to take on a Role.

Status and how it works

- Status is the easiest and most comprehensible way for a group to grasp the basics of improvisation. Ask the group what they understand by the word 'status'.
- Using a deck of cards, explain that an Ace is the most important card in the deck for this exercise. The Two of any suit is the least important.
- Set up the situation. It is a very elegant and important party, no one knows each other but everyone is delighted to be there and anxious to be friendly. (I usually suggest the MTV or Meteor Music award ceremonies. Ask the group to suggest who might be there and their status). Who has higher status: a journalist or a waiter? Who has higher status: a music executive or a musician? Ask someone to shuffle the cards for you. Then, give each member of the group a card. Tell them not to look at it but to place it facing out on their forehead. Therefore, everyone can see your status but yourself. The group is asked to treat everyone according to the card on their forehead. They are not to tell each other what status they have, but to hint at what their status might be by how they interact with them. Allow the improvisation to play out for about five or ten minutes. You can start them mixing by going into role yourself. E.g. you can take on quite a low status role and invite some people to the VIP section, asking someone of low status why they have not brought the VIPs some champagne. It doesn't take long before the group gets into the swing of things.
- Freeze the exercise. Ask those who thought they were of high status to go to one corner of the room and those who thought they were of low status to go to the other and those in the middle to form the middle of the line. When you have a line, ask them to look at their card. Question a couple of the participants about how they guessed what their status was.

Furthering the work 1

- During the same workshop, we further explored how we could use status to help us improvise, by moving on to other interactive situations.
- Ask for some volunteers and allow them to take a playing card. This ordinary playing card will denote the status of the role they will take on in the scene. No one else should see it, so that neither the players nor the audience are aware of the status to be portrayed. Allow them to play out the following situations:
 - Doctor's waiting room
 - Bus Queue
 - Bank Queue
- Once each person has had an opportunity to play a part in the scene, freeze the scene. Invite the audience to guess what status each player had.

Furthering the work 2

- Go back to the scenes done earlier and attach a new status to each partner. See how the status changes the scene from how it was played before. Try reversing the status and see whether it changes the scene.
- After the scenes, discuss if anyone said certain thing that allowed the scene to develop or continue. These are offers and by accepting them the other players are allowing the scene to develop. It is something you want to encourage if you wish to continue using improvisation with a group. Not accepting an offer is called 'Blocking', which causes a scene to stop or end.

A Note of Caution

It is worth noting that if you are asking young people to take on a role, you need to create a distance between the young people and that role.

The character created by someone participating in a drama workshop is called 'a role' and when they are in the world of this character they are 'in role'. Being 'in role' can be a valuable experience for a young person. At a time in their lives where they are 'trying on' different personalities and attributes, being in role allows them an opportunity to escape from the role the group may have elected for them. However, this can lead to a young person creating a role that is close to his or her own personality. It can lead to a blurring of lines between the character and the young actor that may expose that person to bullying, teasing and gossip.

Creating a clear distinction between the person and their role or character is called 'distancing'. Creating an independent character by asking the character the questions listed below will help. You could also move

the context of the scene, for example, moving the timeframe backwards or forwards. Miming dressing and undressing as the character can help cement the distinction.

If you are using role-play, please include a 'de-roling' exercise at the end of the next session. This allows the young person to leave the role or character in the drama space.

Below is another example of a workshop for Section 4 and an example of creating distance between the actor and their character.

Sarah's Method (B) for Workshop Section 4

In the Using a Picture to Tell a Story workshop I referred to before, I did the following:

- Freeze Frames/Tableaux based on pictures.
I invited the group to create an image of what happened just before the picture, in the picture itself and after. So at the end of that section I had about six stories. For a group starting out, showing those stories and discussing them may be enough but if you wished to, where could you go next?
- Character work
Allow each person to find a space where they are not directly facing anyone else. Ask them to answer the following questions about the character they played in the picture.
 - What is your name?
 - What is your age?
 - What is your favourite colour?
 - What is your favourite food?
 - What makes you happy?
 - What makes you sad?
 - What makes you angry?
 - What is your greatest hope?
 - What is your greatest fear?
 - What is your secret? (This does not need to be a big thing, just something you would rather no one else knows about.)
- Allow them to close their eyes – or put their hands over them – and relax. Tell them that you are going to take them through a day in the life of that character, from getting up in the morning to going to bed at night. They are to mime out everything that they are doing and concentrate on what their character is doing and not mind what others are doing. Please ensure you de-role the group by saying that when you wake them, they are to return as themselves in their space.
- Improvisation
Allow the group to improvise one of the images they created earlier, or a subsequent scene.
Or
Choose a key scene from the life of the character/s, set it up and improvise it.
Or

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Divide the group into smaller groups and allow them to improvise conversations between the characters from the picture/story.

Or

Allow each smaller group to hot-seat characters from the picture. Hot-seating is where someone remains in character and has to answer questions as that character. The object of the exercise is not to trick the person answering the questions, but to gather information on the character. Care is needed, as it is very tiring for the person in the hot seat.

• Tableaux

Allow the group to see and discuss each story and choose one or two that they feel are the most interesting. A vote, where they are not allowed to vote for their own, is a democratic way to choose.

Allow the members of one of the chosen tableaux to stay with their characters. The other group has to show that character in a different context. This context should relate either backwards or forwards in time to the initial picture story.

Allow the groups to choose a key moment from a character's life.

These are merely suggestions and I would certainly not conduct all of them with a group. It is important to keep ploughing the fiction for more and more material. If you find that one group, picture or stimulus leads nowhere, remember it and analyse it afterwards. It may be that those individuals don't work well together, that the picture didn't give the group enough choice or scope or that they were not warmed up imaginatively enough to be stimulated by the drama, theme, or stimulus. This is why evaluating each session immediately afterwards is such a vital component of drama.

Participants' Suggestions for Workshop Section 4

- Character questions (see above).
- Visualisation – everyone is put in a relaxed state and visualises part of their character's life or circumstances. This can be a very powerful tool.
- Developing characters by miming a daily routine in one's own space.
- Writing down the elements relevant to your own character – words and pictures.
- Individual tasks – creating different roles within smaller groups through brainstorming.
- Asking each person to write or express everyday activities they think their characters would do.
- Freeze frame – during the scene, someone shouts 'Freeze'. The audience then asks the character questions.
- Conflict & resolutions.
- Start with a simple character. Build up the character using different scenarios.
- In small groups, develop freeze frames into short moving pictures.

Workshop Section 5

Pouring out the tea: Showing/Sharing the work/Where might it go next?

In this section, you are beginning to wind up the workshop. This can be done by showing and/or discussing the work, and by de-roling.

Like our cup of tea, this section of the workshop is all a question of taste. Some groups and facilitators love showing the work they have created during a session. Some don't. It depends on you, the group and what you are working on.

Showing

There are a number of things you need to establish if you are showing work:

- Make sure when the group is preparing the piece that there is an end point or end line to the improvisation. If you don't ensure that they have an end point, scenes can ramble on – much to the embarrassment of the audience and some of the participants.
- Everyone wants to show their work and compare it to others'. You need to ensure that the atmosphere is not competitive.
- No negative comments should be allowed to come from the larger group – unless it is part of a facilitated whole-group discussion – and never when someone is on the floor performing.
- Each group will want to keep working on their piece until they are performing it. Ask them not to discuss their piece until it is their turn. If required, you can give them a few moments to prepare before they show.
- Make sure that everyone in the group is comfortable showing the work.
- Remember to factor in showings to your timetable when planning. It always takes longer than you think. There is nothing worse than showing the work when someone else is hovering, waiting to use the hall.

Sharing the Work

Showing has its merits. I tend to favour groups performing in the drama where they are both participant and audience in turn. I shy away from public showings, unless, of course, groups wish to show their work. I do believe that you can turn a person off drama for life if you force them to perform work that they are not happy with in front of others. As a rule, if a group is experienced, I'll let them show work. If they are not, I'll watch for strong individuals or groups who may feel like showing their work and will allow them the opportunity.

Participants' Suggestions for Workshop Section 5

- Questions and answers of people in-role.
- Waxwork museum or statues in a museum, with people walking around looking at them.
- Freeform group art to music. Group art is a great way to wind down. Place large sheets of paper on a hard surface or wall. Play a tape of music. If possible, this music should be a montage of sounds and music. Each person in turns draws on the piece of paper with a large marker. The only rule is that they have to respond to the piece of music and that they are not allowed to lift the pen from the paper. When they feel they have done enough, give someone else a go. The new person must start where the other person stopped. Again they must not lift the marker off the page. You can have several sheets and groups going at the same time. Allow them to discuss the workshop as they do this or ask them to show something from the workshop in the drawing.
- Invite the group to relax on the floor and to close their eyes. Help the group to create a soundscape of the characters' world. You can help by giving informed decisions about the weather, atmosphere and location. It is an idea to record these character soundscapes and use them instead of music for the freeform group art work outlined above.
- Present ideas and thoughts as a team, using visuals and words – i.e. a flip chart – so that all can contribute together and individually. One person is responsible for writing, another person is responsible for drawing/visuals and a few people can present the finished product.
- Feedback in small groups – nominate a spokesperson – or in the larger group.
- After any tableaux/freeze-frame work, you can look for suggestions on how an emotion or character could have been portrayed differently.
- Create a human sculpture. As in 'Machines' (see pg. X), an individual strikes a pose that they remember from the workshop. One by one, the others join him or her, each striking a pose and each one having one point of contact with someone else. Together, you can create a group human sculpture based on the work generated in the session.
- A group discussion. What people thought of the session. Where they think the group should go next with the material they have generated.

De-roling

If you are using roles and characters, it is important to remember to 'de-role' the young people. This prevents them from bringing the character and their concerns back into the 'real world'. You can de-role in a variety of ways. You can get the group to physically shake off the character or take off their imaginary clothing. You could welcome them back into the group by name. A high-energy, fun, non-competitive group game can shake off any lingering thoughts and allow the group to work together again before they finish the session.

Workshop Section 6

Relaxing and enjoying the cup of tea:

Wind Down / Evaluation with the Group, with your Co-worker and yourself

The end is in sight. It is important to wind the group down. If they have been working in smaller groups, it is important to get them working as a whole group again before they finish. They may be tired at this stage so a high-energy, uncomplicated game is a good idea, after you have had any discussions you may need to have. I feel that wind-down games are particularly important for younger groups (12 to 15 years). They can -and should – be as simple as a game of tag.

Participants' Suggestions for Workshop Section 6

- Make a quick round of the group asking them to say one thing they liked about the workshop.
- Conduct a group analysis/discussion.
- Have a collective finish. Ask everyone to stand in a circle. Be sure everyone can see you and ask them to try and clap at the same time as you. Once they have clapped in unison with you, you can say that the next time you and they clap together it means that the workshop has ended and that they are free to go.
- Let them help you plan what they would like to do the following week. This may only be appropriate if the group is older and/or more experienced in drama.
- Sing a song together.
- Have five minutes' silence/meditation. Talk them through a scene of a happy, calm place.
- Just be in a circle.
- Create group knots. Get everyone into a circle. Walk across the circle and shake hands with someone in the group. Tell them that your hand is stuck until you hold someone else's hand with your other hand, thereby releasing the first hand. Have the group try and get from one side of the space to the other in this way. When everyone is in the middle of getting across, ask them to freeze. Each person should have one hand being held. Now, they have to link up the other hand with those around them. No matter how difficult it may seem, do not start the next section of the exercise until all hands are held. Once they are in this knot, invite the group to untie themselves and, as much as possible, reform their circle. This must be done in total silence.
- Everyone sits on chairs, in a circle. Every second person sits on the knees of the person to their right. Those on the chairs are asked to give the person in front of them a shoulder massage or a clap on the back and say well done.
- Clapping and clicking rainstorm.
- Welcome each person back into the group by name.
- Collect ideas for the next workshop.

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Self Evaluation

Evaluation of any activity with the young people is an established practice in youth work. It is also a vital component in drama work, particularly when you are building up your repertoire of workshops. It is ideal if you can take even five minutes after the young people have left to go through your workshop plan and evaluate how it went. You may think that you will be able to remember it when you get home or to the office but you won't.

Take five minutes to go through your workshop plan and answer the following questions:

- Did the group feel safe?
- Did each exercise work in its context?
- Were they ready to engage in the drama when you planned it? If not, what further steps do you need to put into place to help them?
- Was the plan achievable?
- Section by section what will you alter?
- What activities will you repeat in the next session?
- What did you learn about your group's ability?
- What did you learn about your ability?
- What part did you enjoy most?
- What part did you enjoy least?
- Where would you and they like to go next?

If you have someone assisting you, ask him or her how he or she felt it worked. There are things that they will have seen in the workshop that you may have missed because you were leading it.

Stimuli for Drama



Stimuli for Drama

These are suggested, and commonly used, stimuli for drama. Hopefully, they will help you plan your workshops. Most of them are not a drama in themselves. They offer you an option when embarking on drama work. It is up to you, and your group, to navigate and explore that pathway further using a variety of techniques. The key is to keep it moving and to make it interesting for yourself and your group, so that you all want to go on the journey together.

Object as stimulus

I am always on the lookout for interesting objects. Old perfume bottles are great for magic potions for younger groups. Old and interesting hats, long gloves, watches and other elements of costume can be used in a similar way to the one outlined below. The objects you choose must not be immediately identifiable or branded, to allow for as broad an imaginative scope as possible.

Teacups – This is based on a workshop by Irma Grothuis. Please remember this is a section of a workshop, not a workshop in itself.

- The participants are invited to close their eyes. Place five teacups on the floor and cover them. Beside each participant, place a piece of paper and a pen. The participants are invited to open their eyes and look at the cups and select one that they are attracted to. When they select one, they are asked to answer the following questions:
 - Who owns the cup?
 - Who drinks tea out of it?
 - How do they like their tea?
 - Where do they drink their tea?
 - Do they have a routine?
 - Who might they have tea with?
- The participants are asked to answer these questions and to draw the person and the place where he or she has tea.
- The participants are then asked to find a space in the room and to re-create that place. Then, they are asked to become that person – making and having their cup of tea.
- Once established, the individuals can be asked to leave their space and to pair up. They might introduce themselves to each other and decide who is going to visit the other.
- Now that you have several characters and situations, you can take the workshop wherever you want it to go. You could explore how one particular cup passed from one owner to another. The object has given you a starting point for your drama.

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Image as stimulus

I have referred a lot to tableaux and freeze frames. These techniques are used to create a story from an image – i.e. using a picture as a stimulus for drama. Again, as with the objects, try not to use pictures that people are overly familiar with. Try and choose pictures that are suggestive of a person or situation.

The Using a Picture, Tell a Story workshop outlined in Section 3 and 4 is a good example of how pictures may be used as a stimulus for drama.

Word as stimulus

Choose a word. Write it in the middle of a sheet of paper and allow the group to write or draw anything that comes into their head in reaction to that word.

Belonging and Difference

- In two groups, brainstorm the words Belonging and Difference.
- The group is asked to sit down as I read 'Something Else', a children's book by Chris Riddell and Katherine Cave. It is a story relating to the themes of belonging and difference. The group is asked to identify the three key actions of the story. In this case it broke down as:
 1. He was rejected
 2. He rejected
 3. He accepted
- Using their brainstorm sheets, they are asked to tell/write a story using those three key actions.

Character as stimulus

You can use pictures of people from the past. 'Portraits' and 'Fr. Browne's Pictorial History of Ireland' are fantastic resources. Allow the group to choose a picture or character. Below is a section of a workshop I have conducted with many groups.

Creating a character

- Invite everyone to find a space on the ground away from everyone else. It is a good idea to tell them to put on a sweater or coat, as they will be on the floor for a while.
- Once they are ready, ask them to close their eyes. I talk them into a relaxed state by getting them to tense up sections of their bodies and, then, to relax them. Start from the feet and work your way up the body.
- Ask them to imagine themselves as the person they selected. Talk them through a day in the life of that person. Eventually ask the group to bring their awareness back into the room and to bring back some movement into their bodies, starting with their fingers and toes.
- When ready, they should roll to their side and slowly sit up. When they sit up, there is a pen and paper near at hand for them to answer the following questions:

What is their name?

- What is their favourite colour?
- What is their favourite food or thing?
- What is a fact everyone knows about them?
- What is their hope?
- What is their fear?
- What is their secret?

or

Write a short diary entry for this person.

- From here, you can go anywhere you wish. Generally, I tend to ask them to lie back on the floor. Once everyone is down on the floor, I change the atmosphere by adding music and slowly get the group to shake off their characters. We come back together to share the work.



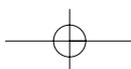
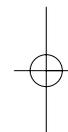
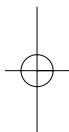
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Movement as stimulus

Movement and dance are art forms in their own right but they walk side by side with drama. You can create sequences of movement from frozen images. I have included these two exercises as a starting point in getting a group to move about a space.

Circle beats

- Invite the group to create a circle. Ask them to check that it is a perfect circle. Allow them to make any adjustments they need to. Ask them without speaking to create a triangle. Take them through a variety of shapes. This is a great way to develop a group's sense of itself, its rhythm and peripheral vision.
- Ask the group to go back to the circle shape and to check that it is perfect. The instructions for the next phase are as follows:
'I would like you to take one step back, clap together. Take one step forward and clap together. Take two steps backward, clap together, take two steps forward, clap together.'
- Continue going on this way up to seven steps back and forward. Once the group has reached seven, reverse the sequence, going from seven back to one. The objective is to return to the perfect circle at the end of the sequence.
- I choose seven steps, but you can go as high as you want. It is a great game if you are trying to create synchronised movement. If a group plays this a number of times, you will be able to sit back and observe them without counting. It looks great.



Place as stimulus

Creating a place - This is a technique commonly used in Drama in Education, a method used to create a drama environment where learning can happen. It is a great tool, if you are considering devising or developing your own play. If a group creates its own fictional environment, its participants are more aware of the logic, dynamics and what can be believable within that fictional world. Therefore, when it comes to placing characters within that environment, they have a lot of information to draw on. It can lead to a large-scale role-play where everyone plays 'as if' a person in the fictional environment they have created.

Looking at the play Romeo and Juliet

- The group and I created a marketplace in the centre of Verona. Those in the group become stallholders in the market and have to make decisions about how the conflict is affecting the townspeople.
- To create this fictional environment, you need to decide on your starting point. This is easy enough, once you decide where you would like the focus of the action to be – for example, a market square between Romeo and Juliet's houses, the petrol station and bus stop on the edge of the estate, the court of the Queen of the Elves.
- Once we had decided on the fountain in the middle of the market square as our starting point, the group was able to decide what goes where. I asked the group to consider what kind of area it was.
- When we built up our picture, I invited the group to look at it. I informed the group that each participant was a person inhabiting that environment and I allowed them to create their space within that environment – i.e. their stall – and allowed them to mark it on a map. We then recreated the market square in the room and they had to act 'as if' that person.

Creating a place where the facilitator manages the action from within the drama is a handy way of devising, but it can be tricky, as the participants have to take control of the direction of the drama. As such, they need to be experienced and able to work together safely.

Things to remember about stimuli

As a facilitator, you need to move among the groups asking them questions to keep the ideas flowing. You should also go around the groups and offer help and advice and keep them focused on the task in hand. This is called side coaching.

Keep records of all stories, as you never know when you may want to return to a story you developed earlier.

Techniques

Techniques

These are a few techniques that I have referred to throughout the manual. It is by using these techniques that you can help your group to explore its own response to the stimulus for drama you present it with.

Don't be intimidated. Once you have used a technique, you will remember it.

Improvisation

It is very important, if we want any young person to engage in drama, that we are willing to do it ourselves. Creating the belief in a fictional world is central to drama. Central to creating that belief is the ability to improvise. By improvising, we project ourselves into a fictional world, a situation or another person's reality. It is necessary to cover issues such as safety and group rules before we begin teaching improvisation. All too often, the facilitator's desire to 'make it work' directs the action and his/her panic about the subject matter can stop any action. It is important to watch for that in yourself when trying improvisation.

As reading material, I couldn't recommend Keith Johnson's *'Impro'* more. It is an accessible, practical and enjoyable read. It is also the kind of book that you can read on and off, dip back into, and find something new over the years.

This is a section of a workshop. You can select other warm ups, focus exercises and wind-down exercises to suit your group of young people.

Who? What? Where?

Simple Improvisation exercises can be found in Workshop Section 3 (page 20)

Status and how it works

Status is the easiest and most comprehensible way for a group to grasp the basics of improvisation. See Workshop Sections 3 & 4 (Page 20, Page 24).

Image work

When you have a group of young people creating a frozen picture/image/tableaux it is important to:

- Remind them where their audience is.
- Remind them that they cannot use words.

You can add depth to an image by Thought-Tracking the individuals in the picture.

- Tell the group to think of a word that describes how their character is feeling in that picture. Tell them that you will go around and when you place your hand on their shoulder, they can speak.

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- Don't be afraid to analyse and move around the image. Older groups of girls really enjoy analysing images and the relationships between individuals in the picture.

Leader in role

Consider placing yourself in role and talking to your group. It is particularly effective for younger children as you are enabled to get into the drama with them and lead it from within, if you like. The level of role you take on is entirely up to your own level of comfort in role. It can assist you in challenging the ideas of the participants in a non-threatening way and helps you give information to forward the drama. There are a variety of types of roles you can take on, from information-giver to the challenging devil's advocate. The role has to be one you are comfortable in.

Role on the wall

This is a therapeutic tool that was adapted for drama use by Jonathan Neelands and is a great way to develop a group character.

- Draw an outline of a person on a large piece of paper. Information is written inside and outside the outline.
- The information sought for the outside of the outline has to differ from that on the inside. It is the contrast and commonalities in the different information that is being sought.
- For example, the outline is for a character of Juliet. On the outside of the outline we may write what the larger society thinks about Juliet as a teenager and daughter of Capulet.
- On the inside, we write what Juliet thinks about herself as she goes through this stage in her life.
- At a distance, you can observe what this may tell us about Juliet and her wider society.

Plays and Productions

Plays and Productions

As I mentioned at the beginning of this manual, drama becomes theatre when you add the elements outlined in the diagram. Theatrical productions are a wonderful experience if planned properly.

There are several factors to consider before embarking on a production:

1. Have you given yourself enough time to prepare and plan your production?

From applications for funding and fundraising to part-time rehearsals, you should be considering a lead-in time of between nine and twelve months. If you are working with the group part-time, you should allow approximately three months for rehearsal and should consider workshopping the script for at least a month before that. If you are planning a video project instead of a production, the lead-in time should be about the same to allow for up-skilling of the group and editing. The Drama Spaces participants have suggested time frames for both a production and a video project later in this section.

2. Have you found the right script?

The play should reflect the abilities and the interests of the group. If you are considering a production and are running into difficulty finding a play, there are a number of options open to you:

- Contact the National Association for Youth Drama (NAYD) about its Playshare programme. This scheme allows youth theatres and youth groups to pool scripts that they have already used. It is a great way to get a play specifically written for young people. As with all published plays, you must seek permission from the author to perform the piece and you may have to pay performance rights. Performing a play without the author's permission is illegal.
- Commission a writer to write a specific piece of work for your young people. There are funding schemes through the Arts Council or local authorities to facilitate these kinds of partnerships. However, they are time-consuming and you need to be that sure you and your group are ready to engage with an outside artist. Check out the NAYD guidelines for engaging outside artists.
- Devise your own piece for performance. This is a good option if you and your group have the skills, time and ability to develop a piece for performance through drama workshops. Undoubtedly, it is a fulfilling way to develop a piece that speaks to your group. However, be sure to allow yourself enough time to devise, script and edit the piece before rehearsing it.

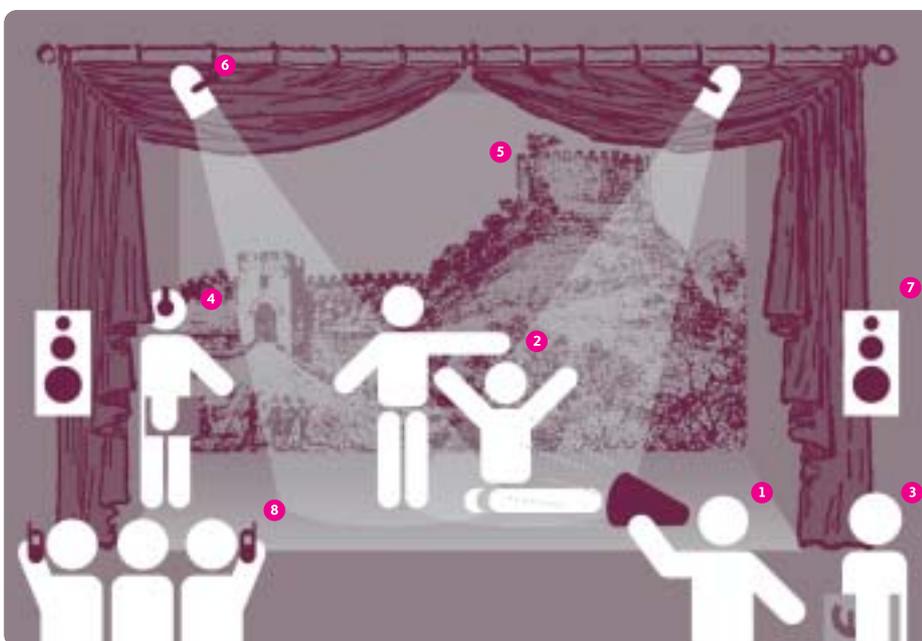
3. Have you considered whether your group is ready for a production?

It is important to consider what skills your group will need for this production. They will need technical skills, e.g. an ability to project the voice and, depending on the piece, they may need movement workshops. Most importantly, they need to be made aware of the responsibility and commitment required of them to be part of a production.

4. Have you got enough help and support?

As you can see from the diagram, there are several production roles to be filled. It is crucial for the sanity of all involved and for the success of the piece that the director/producer has the ability to delegate responsibilities. It is a vital skill. All too often, the director is the writer, production manager, stage manager, costume designer, set builder and lighting operator. If one person is expected to complete all these tasks, they will not succeed in any or they will collapse and never direct again.

Drama becomes theatre when you add the following:



1 Director

He/she is responsible for interpreting a play or the creation of a devised piece of theatre, for casting and rehearsing the play for performance.

2 Actors

They are responsible for interpreting the role that they are portraying under the guidance of the director, for taking direction, for learning their lines and moves on stage and for attending rehearsals.

3 Production Manager

He/she co-ordinates all of the elements of the production and ensures it is on time and on budget. He/she calls the production meetings and draws up the production schedule in consultation with the producer, director and stage manager.



4 Stage Manager

He/she manages the production once it opens. During rehearsals, he/she organises the rehearsal schedule, ensures that the actors have their props and prompts the actors. The stage manager also keeps the book (a copy of the script where he/she records the actors' actions, lighting and sound cues and set changes). Once the show has opened, he/she uses this book to cue all of the elements of the production such as lights, sound and actors.

5 Set Designer

He/she designs the space in which the action of the play happens. The designer has to ensure that the set is safe, functioning, within budget and that it enhances the performance of the play.

Costume Designer

He/she designs and creates the clothing worn by the actors. He/she must ensure that the costumes are in keeping with the play, the set and the lighting design and that they fit the actors and are comfortable.

Construction Team

The construction team is responsible for the physical creation of the set designer's set.

6 Lighting Designer

The lighting designer is responsible for lighting the play. He/she works with the set designer and director to ensure that the lights complement the set and the mood the director is trying to create.

7 Sound Designer

Depending on the play, the sound designer may be responsible for the amplification of stage sound – i.e. actors' voices, singing or live music – or for the recording of appropriate sound effects or atmospheric music or sound that will enhance the director's vision of the play.

8 PR and Marketing Team

The PR and Marketing team is responsible for selling the show, creating appropriate posters and co-ordinating any media coverage.

Choreographer

He/she may be brought in to enhance the physical element of a production or to design a specific movement or dance within the production.

Musical Director

He/she may be brought in to co-ordinate and rehearse any live musical element of the production.

Fight Director

He/she may be brought in to ensure that any stage fights are well choreographed, rehearsed and safe.



The Question of Timing

When considering a production the two key elements are delegation and timing. Many people underestimate the length of time required to mount a production. If it is underestimated it can lead to a stressful experience and one that no one will want to go through again. Below is a suggested production time frame for a group that usually meets once a week.

Participants' Suggestions for a Production Time Frame

Time frame for theatrical production of a play to be performed on St. Patrick's Day:

September

- Decide on the venue and the script.
- Conduct a series of skills based workshops – e.g. lighting, sound, costume, voice.
- If appropriate, conduct a series of workshops about the issues that arise in the play.

Mid-October

- Workshop the script and experiment with roles and characters.

December

- Cast and delegate roles such as assistant director, production manager, set designer, etc.
- Conduct the first production meeting.
- Draw up the production schedule.
- Take the group to see a show to illustrate the commitment involved.

January

- Start rehearsing two nights per week.
- Have another production meeting.

Mid-February

- Extend rehearsals to three a week.
- Posters should be up and tickets selling and the local media should be alerted.
- Have another production meeting to ensure that everything is on schedule.

Beginning of March

- Arrange for your get-in to the venue.
- Arrange front-of-house and refreshments.
- Arrange costume fittings.

March 15

- Get the set into the venue.
- Hang and focus the lights.
- Check the sound.

March 16

- Conduct a dress rehearsal

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If you feel you are not ready for a theatrical production, you should consider a video project. The same conditions apply to these as a theatrical production where delegation and timing are everything. Below is a suggested timeframe for a small-scale video project.

Participants' Suggestions for a Video Project Time Frame

This time frame involves a two-hour session weekly with intermittent longer sessions.

September

- Introduce the idea of producing a film.
- Brainstorm to get ideas and/or workshop the ideas in the text.
- Allow the group to experiment with the equipment.
- Brainstorm and discuss the different roles necessary for the production.
- Allocate production roles.
- Decide on concepts and style to be used.

October

- Workshop on the script.
- Decide on scenes and characters.
- Workshop to develop the characters and allocate roles.
- Storyboard the sequence of shots.

November

- Decide on and select atmospheric music to be included when editing. It will help the participants focus on the atmosphere for the shoot.
- Select locations and consider your lighting requirement.
- Conduct rehearsals.

December

- Shoot
- Edit the piece. If you shoot sequentially you won't require an editing suite but if you are planning to edit your piece may not be ready for viewing until January or February.
- Conduct a post-production party or have a premiere if the piece is ready.

Script



Script

When we began to look at play texts (scripts) in Drama Spaces, the point was made that the warm up and other exercises during the sessions/rehearsals should relate to the themes of the piece. Participants should be comfortable with drama before you introduce them to a text. Trying to find a suitable text is half the battle but your nearest Youth Theatre or the National Association for Youth Drama should be able to help.

A Note of Caution

Please be sure that the content and language are appropriate to your group. With younger age groups, it may be advisable to get some parents to read the text before you embark on it.

Introducing a Group to a Text

(This is based on Emelie FitzGibbon's Text Workshop)

This requires a lot of work by the director but it is a great way to 'de-intimidate' a group when faced with a text.

- I took the group through the exercise as directors using Philip Ridley's play, 'Sparkleshark'.
 1. Read through the text
 2. Identify the three movements in the text.
 3. Within each movement, select three significant moments and, within each moment, three significant lines.
- When you get working, divide the group into several groups, thus allowing you to have a number of lead characters.
- In the first movement, you have three mini-scenes involving many of your characters. Select three groups and allow each group to play out what they think is happening in that mini-scene. Play them out in sequence while the rest of the group acts as the audience.
- You can have other groups working on the three mini-scenes from the middle and end movements.
- You can play the scenes out sequentially (what happens next?), or the last act after the first (how did we get from the first situation to the last?), then play the middle mini-scenes.
- By the end, lots of people have had a chance to play the lead characters so you don't have anyone predicting your casting decisions. More importantly, the group is familiar with the arch of the play and is now better equipped to deal with the actual text.



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Once your young people are ready to get on their feet and play with their script on the workshop floor, remember the exercises we have done:

- Play around with the status levels in scenes.
- Play out parallel scenes, scenes we don't see but are referred to in the text or take place before or after events.
- Use still images of the themes/emotions in the text. Still images can help the group be aware of their own blocking.
- Try hot-seating the characters or using role on the wall.
- Remember to find games that suit the text. For example, with *'Sparkleshark'* you might play *'Sword and Buckler'*, an exercise in which the group walks around the space. Ask each person, without speaking, to select someone they want to stay close to in the group as they walk around. Once they have done this, ask them to select someone that they want to stay as far away from as possible, as well as trying to stay close to the other.



Appendices



Appendix 1: References

1. Individuals and organisations

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Writer and youth drama practitioner

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Artistic Director of Graffiti Theatre Company

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Outreach Director of Graffiti Theatre Company

Director of Activate Youth Theatre

National Association for Youth Drama

www.youthdrama.ie

32 Upper Gardiner St., Dublin 1

Tel: 01 - 878 1301

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Appendix 2: Glossary of Terms

Blocking

This is where one person stops an improvisation or stops the flow of creativity and is unacceptable in these situations. It is your role to ensure that this doesn't happen.

(The) Book

This is a copy of the script where the actors' actions, lighting and sound cues and set changes are recorded.

Devising

This is where a group creates a piece for performance through drama workshops.

De-Roling

To assist an individual when they are no longer required to play a role in a drama workshop.

Distancing

Creating a clear distinction between the person and their role or character they are playing

Drama in Education

A range of techniques designed to assist formal educational learning through engagement in drama.

Get-In

This is when the set and other equipment, e.g. lights are installed in the venue.

Hook

This is something that will hook your group's imagination or interest and through which you can explore the issue

Hot-seating

Others question an actor while he or she is in role. The actor has to answer as his or her character would. Be aware that it is clear that this is not done to 'catch out' the actor on his or her knowledge of a character but it is to enrich that knowledge. Be aware also that this is a very high-focus exercise for the person being hot-seated. As facilitator, you will need to watch them for stress and fatigue.

In Role

When an individual plays through a situation 'as if' he or she is a character they created in a drama workshop.

Isolations

Using a series of general physical exercises you isolate, or create an awareness of different sections of the body.

Leader in Role

This is where the leader takes on a role within a drama.

Process Drama

This is used a lot in Drama in Education. It differs from role-play in that the participants are enabled to live through a drama experience 'as if' they are the characters that they create.

Role

A character created by an individual in a drama workshop.

Role-play

There are two types of role-play:

- One is a form of simulation, where the leader will give the participants roles to play through, e.g. you are the mother and you are the child.
- The other is role work where participants develop roles and situations in an exploratory way. These characters develop depth over time.

Role on the Wall

This is a therapeutic tool that was adapted for drama use by Jonathan Neelands. Information is written inside and outside an outline of a person drawn on a large piece of paper. The information sought for the outside of the outline has to differ from that on the inside. It is the contrast and commonalities in the different information that is being sought

Shadow Role

When the entire group are placed into a group role – e.g. you are all stall-holders in the market square of Old Verona.

Side coaching

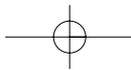
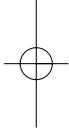
This is a technique where you go around the groups and offer help and advice to keep them focused on the task in hand. Using this, you can help the group think of the motivations driving the characters or the emotional thread running through the story. The trick is not to be intrusive.

Thought Tracking

Questioning a player about how their character is feeling when they are in a frozen image.



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Over the last ten years, **Sarah FitzGibbon** has worked as an actor, actor-teacher, workshop facilitator, education officer and writer in Theatre-in-Education. She has worked in a variety of capacities with TEAM Educational Theatre Company, Graffiti Theatre Company and Replay Theatre Company. Sarah has been largely associated with youth drama in the non-formal sector in Ireland for the last seven years; her approach has been one of using educational drama techniques when working with young people in non-formal contexts. She has conducted drama training for the National Youth Arts Programme, New York University, Dublin City Council, Dublin Inner City School Partnership and a variety of youth services, youth groups and arts organisations. From 1998 to 2001, she was Development Officer with the National Association for Youth Drama, the umbrella organisation for youth drama in Ireland and is currently Artistic Director of Dublin Youth Theatre. She is also a writer and director of theatre for young audiences.

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