SPOTLIGHT ON DRAMA

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Act 1:
Why Drama?

3   Examples of drama activities or games.

2   Benefits of using Drama.

1   Example of a drama game or activity which you have used in your classroom.

"Drama takes as its starting point ´life´not language (…). The Drama environment builds on the personalities, energy and ideas of the participants, so is alive and always changing and evolving. One Drama idea or plan is therefore very versatile and can be used and adapted for multiple levels and ages"

Dr. Shivali Singh. English Learning Made Easy. Strategies and Approaches.

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Top Tips for using Drama in the classroom

- Introduce Drama gradually, with short activities.

- Establish **freeze-commands** so that you can control the action in the room.

- Include regular moments of **rehearse, present, review and improve.**

- Be willing to participate and get involved!

- Give students time and space to experiment and rehearse.

- Leave time for reflection and feedback. The process of self and peer-evaluation builds critical thinking skills. Avoid questions about what they liked or didn´t like. Instead focus on what worked and what they could improve next time.

Drama Terms **in bold** are explained in the glossary section at the end of this booklet.

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Act 2:
Storytelling and Drama

Creates opportunities for:
- Fantasy and imaginative play.
- Understand themselves and the world around them.
- Explore issues which are relevant to them.

Develops:
- Concentration skills.
- Emotional intelligences like empathy.
- Appreciation of other cultures.
- Literacy Skills

When choosing stories we should consider:

- ✓ Is the content relevant?
- ✓ Is it interesting?
- ✓ Is it memorable?
- ✓ Are the illustrations clear, attractive and will they help children´s understanding?
- ✓ Is the language level appropriate?
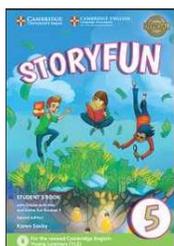
The story in this section was taken from Storyfun 5 by Cambridge English. Story-based practice for the Cambridge Young Learners English (YLE) Tests.

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Drama activities and tips for Storytelling:

Pre-Storytelling:

- Plan how you are going to read the story. Where will you pause and ask questions? How will you change your voice for different characters?

- Pick out the main vocabulary from the story. A mixture of known and new words. Create some movements and sounds for each word and practise these through games like `Simon says …´ or through writing activities like gap fills or matching activities (words to definitions / synonyms to antonyms). This will help students to understand the story and they may like to do the movement or make the sound when they hear the word later.

- Take the title of the story and ask the students to think about what the story might be about. Creating interest and intrigue before you read the story will help to maintain the students´ interest.

- Pick out the emotions and feelings expressed in the story and ask students to create statues or

move around the room expressing that emotion in posture or movement. For example, sadness might be reflected with a slow pace, head down and weighted steps. This helps students to recognise these emotions in the story and empathise with the characters.

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While-Storytelling:

- Read the first part of the story to the class. Take your time and use lots of expression in your voice, gestures and face.

- Give the learners time to think about the story, ask regular questions and encourage a personal response. Students can even participate in the storytelling by expressing the emotions or by responding with the movements and sounds which they created for the main vocabulary.

- Break the story down into sections and ask students to create **freeze-frames**. For younger students you may wish to facilitate this with a few volunteers at the front of the class, with older students they could be split into groups and then present to each other.

- Take some direct speech from the story and practise these lines with the students. Think about the emotion and message of the line and experiment with stress, intonation and pause.

- Pause before the end of the story, ask the students how they think it will end. Ask them to

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create a short scene in groups to show their ideas.

- Give a student a character from the play and use **hot-seating**. They must answer any questions as that character and the rest of the class can help to ask the questions.

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After-Storytelling:

- In groups students can re-create the story, in three stages: A beginning, a middle and a final scene. Ask students to help to summarise the story in these three sections before you start and write the notes on the board for reference. Give them time to create each scene and include regular moments of **rehearse, present, review and improve.**

- **Hot-seat** the characters again. Explore the moral issues of the story with questions which explore the emotions of the characters: *Was it the right thing to do? How did you make other people feel?*

- Ask students to choose a character from the story and `become´ that character. Older students could write a letter / a diary entry / a postcard as this character.

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Glossary of Drama Terms

Freeze-frames – The action is frozen as in a photograph. Students should consider gestures, body language and facial expressions.

Hot-seating – A character is questioned by the rest of the class about their motivation, behaviour or background.

Rehearse - Present - Review – Improve – Regular opportunities to see the work in progress, allowing students to continuously reflect and improve their work and allowing the students to evaluate others.
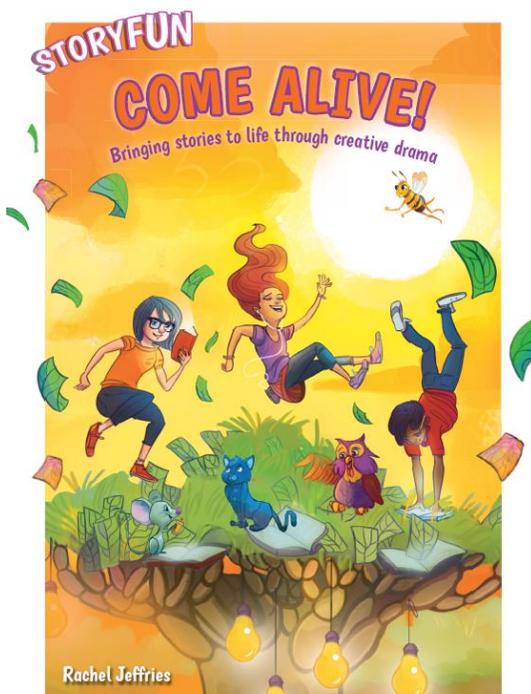
Freeze-commands – a word or action which tells the students it´s time to stop and listen to the teacher.

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Download your free drama resource booklet at …

http://worldoffun.cambridge.es/resources

Come Alive – Drama Activities Booklet