

Simple Drama Techniques



1. Hot Seating
2. Tableaux / Freeze Frames
3. Thought Tracking
4. Conscience Alley
5. Drawing Around Body
6. Collective Role Play
7. Monologue Writing & Performance

1. Hot Seating

The child in the Hot Seat will take on a character and answer questions from the rest of the class as they think that character might answer. You could choose to provide the child with a character card or verbally brief the child. This activity works well when two different characters are contrasted e.g. a factory owner and a young factory worker.

2. Tableaux / Freeze Frames

One scene per group:

Split the class into small groups. Give each group a scene for their Freeze Frame. You could choose to provide an image, newspaper article or just bullet points of what is in the scene. Each member of the group should think about how their character might think or feel. The groups then present their Freeze Frames in sequence and watch the story develop as the children find out what happens to their character at different points of the story. The children can ask each group what the characters might be feeling in that scene.

Multiple scenes per group:

Give each group the same event or story to tell through a sequence of Freeze Frames. As each group performs, allow the other groups to provide positive feedback on what they liked about the performance that they hadn't thought of including in their own.

3. Thought Tracking

A character is at a crossroads and needs to make a decision. Invite the children to suggest what they think the character should do. This can be discussed in pairs or groups. Alternatively, either an adult or a child could act as the character and the children can tell the character their thoughts directly.

4. Conscience Alley

Use the Thought Tracking (above) but instead of the children walking up to the character, the children form two lines facing each other, as if to create an alley or a tunnel. The character walks through the tunnel and the children tell the character what they are thinking as he/she passes through.

5. Drawing Around Body

Give each group a different character or person that they are going to research (e.g. WWII evacuee, a Victorian Matchmaker, James O'Brien). Each group draws around a person to create the body of the character. The children then fill the inside of the body with everything that they know about the person and write around the outside questions / things they would like to find out. They can then present their person to the other groups. This is a good activity to start a new topic and can be referred to towards the end to see if any of their questions have been answered.

6. Collective Role Play

Instead of role play where each member of the group has a character, each group has one character to create together. Give each group a mini-profile of the character and allow them to develop this. One member of the group is then chosen to Hot Seat the character and to take questions from the rest of the class.

7. Monologue Writing / Performance

Every character has a story to tell. Writing and performing a monologue allows the children to express their understanding of the events and feelings of a character's life or experiences. This activity can be differentiated by providing varying amounts of information about the character that they will take on.