



Drama

Whole School Plan

SCOIL ÍDE

Jesus & Mary Primary School

Drama

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles which underpin the teaching and learning of Drama in our school are:

1. Drama is a subject
2. Drama is for all teachers and all children
3. Process Drama explores the real world through the fictional world

Introductory Statement and Rationale

(a) Introductory Statement

This plan was developed in consultation and collaboration with the staff of Scoil Íde in March 2019

(b) Rationale

This plan is a record of our decisions regarding Drama. It reflects the Primary Curriculum, 1999. It is intended to guide teachers in their individual planning for Drama.

Vision and Aims

(a) Vision

In line with the mission statement of Scoil Íde, through the teaching of Drama as part of a balanced curriculum which aims to develop the whole spectrum of the child's intelligence, it is hoped that the child will have an opportunity to develop his/her aesthetic, intellectual, emotional, creative, expressive and cultural development through engagement in positive Drama experiences.

(b) Aims

We endorse the aims of the Primary School Curriculum for Drama

- To enable the child to become Drama literate
- To enable the child to create a permanent bridge between make-believe play and the art form of theatre
- To develop the child's ability to enter physically, emotionally and intellectually into the Drama world in order to promote questing, empowering and empathetic skills
- To enable the child to develop the social skills necessary to engage openly, honestly and playfully with others
- To enable the child to co-operate and communicate with others in solving problems in the Drama and through the Drama
- To enable the child to understand the structures and modes of Drama and how they create links between play, thought and life
- To enable the child to acquire this knowledge of Drama through the active exploration of themes drawn from life (past and present), whether they have their source in other curricular areas or in general areas relevant to the child's life
- To enable the child to begin the process of translating a knowledge of Drama into the active exploration of life themes from Drama literature, leading to the appreciation of world Drama culture.

Curriculum Planning

1. Strand and Strand Units

Drama has one strand at each class level – Drama to explore feelings knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding.

The strand is divided into three strand units

- Exploring and Making Drama
- Reflecting on Drama
- Co-operating and communicating in making Drama.

The objectives for each strand unit are detailed in the tables below.

Exploring and Making Drama	
Junior and Senior Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop the instinct for make-believe play into Drama • develop the ability to play in role as an integral part of the action • experience how the use of space and objects can help to create the reality of the make-believe world • experience how the fictional past and the desired fictional future influence the present Dramatic action • develop awareness of how he/she, as part of a group, helps to maintain focus in the Dramatic action • develop awareness of tension in the Drama
1 st & 2 nd classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use the ability to play at make-believe to enter fully into participation in Drama • use his/her emerging awareness of the differences in people in order to begin to develop an understanding of the relationship between role and character • experience how context is built and a Drama reality created through the use of space and objects • experience how the fictional past and the desired fictional future influence the present Dramatic action • develop the ability to help maintain the focus in the Dramatic action • begin to see how tension adds to Drama the suspense that ensures the interest of the participants
3 rd & 4 th classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enter into the fictional Dramatic context with the same spontaneity and freedom that he/she has earlier applied to make-believe play • understand the relationship between role and character and develop the ability to hold on to either role or character for as long as the Dramatic activity requires • discover how the use of space and objects can help in building the context and in signifying Dramatic themes • explore how the fictional past and the desired fictional future influence the present Dramatic action • begin, as a member of a group, to include in Drama activity the elements of tension and suspense • begin the process of using script as a pre-text
5 th & 6 th classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enter appropriately and with facility, whether watched or unwatched, into the fictional Dramatic context • extend playing in role and in character to include the ability to

	<p>accept and maintain a brief that has been decided on by either the teacher, the group or himself/herself</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discover how the use of space and objects helps in building the context and in signifying the Drama theme • explore how the fictional past and the desired fictional future influence the present Dramatic action • become adept at implementing the 'playing rules' that maintain focus in Dramatic action • help to plan Dramatic activity to include the particular tension and suspense appropriate to the theme being explored • distinguish between various genres, such as comedy, tragedy, fantasy • become comfortable with script and understand the basic processes by which script becomes action
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Reflecting on Drama

Junior and Senior Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop the ability to reflect on the action as it progresses • experience the relationship between story, theme and life experience • share insights gained while experiencing the Drama
1 st & 2 nd classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use reflection on a particular Dramatic action to create possible alternative courses for the action • experience, through Drama, the relationship between story, theme and life experience • share insights while experiencing the Drama or insights that arise out of the Drama
3 rd & 4 th classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use reflection on and evaluation of a particular Dramatic action to create possible alternative courses for the action • learn, through Drama, the relationship between story, theme and life experience • use the sharing of insights arising out of Dramatic action to develop the ability to draw conclusions and to hypothesise about life and people
5 th & 6 th classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflect on a particular Dramatic action in order to create possible alternative courses for the action that will reflect more closely the life patterns and issues being examined • learn, through Drama, the relationship between story, theme and life experience • use the sharing of insights arising out of Dramatic action to develop the ability to draw conclusions and to hypothesise about life and people

Co-Operating and Communicating in Making Drama

Junior and Senior Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop the ability, out of role, to co-operate and communicate with others in helping to shape the Drama • develop, in role, the ability to co-operate and communicate with others in helping to shape the Drama
1 st & 2 nd classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop, out of role, the ability to co-operate and communicate with others in helping to shape the Drama • develop, in role, the ability to co-operate and communicate

	<p>with others in helping to shape the Drama</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop fictional relationships through interaction with the other characters in small-group or whole-class scenes as the Drama text is being made • re-enact for others in the group a scene that has been made in simultaneous small-group work
3 rd & 4 th classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop, out of role, the ability to co-operate and communicate with others in helping to shape the Drama • develop, in role, the ability to co-operate and to communicate with others in helping to shape the Drama • develop fictional relationships through interaction with the other characters in small-group or whole-class scenes as the Drama text is being made • enact spontaneously for others in the group a scene from the Drama, or share with the rest of the class a scene that has already been made in simultaneous small-group work
5 th & 6 th classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop, out of role, the ability to co-operate and to communicate with others in helping to shape the Drama • develop, in role, the ability to co-operate and communicate with others in helping to shape the Drama • develop fictional relationships through interaction with the other characters in small-group or whole-class scenes as the Drama text is being made • enact spontaneously for others in the group a scene from the Drama, or share with the rest of the class a scene that has already been made in simultaneous small-group work

The school recognises that the strand units and the content objectives for Drama are interlinked and therefore we encourage all teachers at each class level to plan for all of the objectives.

Outlines of the lessons suggested for implementation are attached to this plan. (cf: *Appendix 1*)

2. Approaches and Methodologies

Belief is central to all drama and should be characterised by a willingness to believe in the drama itself, sincerity in playing roles and characters, a willingness to accept the fictional consequences of drama and a willingness to explore.

Building a safe environment based on trust and mutual respect

(a) Drama Contract

Each teacher is also encouraged to use a drama contract to establish a safe environment. A sample drama contract is attached to this plan (cf: *Appendix 2*)

The safe environment is important for effective drama work to take place. In our school each class may develop a drama contract. To build confidence and further embed the safe environment, classes will play appropriate warm up games to develop various drama skills necessary skills for their drama work. Discussion about the contract and the safe environment may be included where appropriate, both before and after the drama activity.

(b) Warm-up activities

Warm-up games should be seen as an integral part of the drama process and are essential in allowing children the opportunity to develop the three Cs:

- Concentration
- Communication
- Co-operation

The development of these skills contributes to the creation of a safe environment, as well as deepening the children's ability to engage in the dramatic process.

Content for Drama

The strand 'Drama to explore feeling, knowledge and ideas leading to understanding' will be important for teachers in this school in informing the content that they choose for Drama activities. Content for Drama will come from life experience.

It will be from something:

that the children have experienced

something that they have read

something that emerged in another subject area a worry or

concern that the teacher might have

or something generally that the teacher wants the children to explore.

The Fictional Lens

The fictional lens is the story used through which specific themes or content are explored. Teachers will carefully select a fictional lens for their chosen content. A character or story will be selected in which the children will easily believe, whose context will allow for the content to be explored.

Exemplar

Fictional Lens: Goldilocks and the Three Bears

Content Covered:

Number Three: The ritual of setting the table

Respect for other people's property

Telling the truth

Reflection

We see reflection as being of vital importance to the drama process. We will strive to ensure that reflection takes place at the appropriate points in the drama experience. We will also strive for a balance of methods of reflection using

discussion

writing

visual arts

speaking

listening

doing &

questioning

A list of drama reflection methods are to be found in the appendix.

Strategies

In this school we recognise the usefulness of Drama strategies. Below is a table showing some suitable strategies for the different class levels. This is not an exhaustive list, rather a list of suggested strategies. Teachers have the freedom to introduce other strategies that they might find useful in their own particular class or in a particular dramatic context.

Class Level	Suggested Strategies
Junior & Senior Infants	Defining the Space, Still Images, Teacher in Role, Mimed Narration
1 st and 2 nd Classes	Defining the Space, Mimed Narration, Teacher in Role
3 rd & 4 th Classes	Defining the Space, Teacher in Role, Mimed Narration, Still

	Improvisation, Ritual, Flashback/flash forward
5th & 6 ^t Classes	Defining the Space, Teacher in Role, Mimed Narration. Still Images, Thought Tracking, Improvisation in Pairs, Briefing, Conscience Alley. \Whole Group Improvisation, Small Group Improvisation , Hot seating, Ritual, Flashback/flash forward,

An explanation of each strategy is contained below.

Still Image

Groups use their bodies to create an image of a moment(s) in the drama e.g. the moment the bears see Goldilocks asleep in the bed. Older groups may depict a more complex or abstract idea ('winning ', 'fear'). Similarly an individual can act as a sculptor to another student or group.

Thought-Tracking

This technique involves the teacher freezing the action and tapping her hand on the shoulder of some student (or students) in the still image or drama. This student-in-role then reveals publicly her private thoughts/reactions at that specific moment e.g. one of Christopher Columbus' sailors thoughts when they finally sight land.

Mime

The class mime an action as the teacher describes what a character or occupation or as she narrates astory. Older students may develop more abstract mime sequences.

Narration

The teacher can narrate in or out of the lesson text. Narration has many uses. These include: providing a link or commentary between drama moments ; creating an atmosphere; initiating a drama; moving the action on; create tension. Similarly the participants might report back in story form, providing narrative to accompany or bridge action - 'We came to the river and saw that the bridge had been destroyed, so we....'

Hot-Seating

This involves students questioning a character (teacher-in-role or student-in-role). The students who are questioning the character may be working as themselves or in role as journalists. Hot-seating canbe used to start a drama or improvisation may be frozen at any point so as in-role characters are released to answer questions often formally seated facing questioners.

Caption-Making and Headlines

This strategy can be used at any point of action. Individuals or groups are asked to give a title or caption or newspaper headlines/slogans to a piece of drama. They summarize their own scene or another group's scene in When used with still images several headlines can be given to the same still image in order to highlight points of view and bias.

Conscience Alley

A character who has a difficult decision to reach, walks down a corridor of people who, one after another from either side, give conflicting advice about a given situation. This can be done in role by other characters in the lesson and by voices in the character'shead played by other members of the group. It is possible to develop this convention by allowing the character to engage in conversation with the voices and thus challenge the advice being offered.

Defining Space...

Available furniture, objects, clothing are used to represent the 'ship', 'castle', 'bears' house' where the drama is happening. They may also represent the physical scale of someone (Daddy Bear) or something (the beanstalk) in the drama. Also they may be used to fix the position or proximity of rooms, houses, places where events have taken place.

Soundtracking...

Sound may be used in different ways in a drama; narration can be devised to accompany some mime; animal sounds, human sounds, environmental sounds can be devised to accompany a moment of action. Voices or instruments are used to create a mood.

Living Picture

The teacher asks the group to bring their improvisation alive for a few moments. She does not add tension by briefing some students. The living picture, however, may develop into an improvisation the difference being that 'living picture' has no particular tension in it whereas the improvisation usually features some tension.

Briefing

Before a whole group improvisation, the teacher takes aside an individual or a number of individuals, and gives him/them a set of instructions that create tension. This will drive the drama forward. The teacher may choose to give another set of further conflicting instructions to a different individual/individuals. As the children develop their drama skills, they will begin to offer their own briefs. Briefing is a key strategy in creating **tension** in drama. The teacher can build tension by suggesting any of the following – 'You have a secret....'; 'Something strange and mysterious has happened', 'You are planning a surprise', 'You are in a hurry', 'You are all crowded together', 'You have an unusual object' or through a challenge.

Small-Group Play-Making

Small group and whole group improvisation constitute the heart of the drama curriculum. The children make up the story as they go along. This story usually explores a character(s) in a dilemma. Small groups plan, prepare, sequence and present their improvisations to show their understanding of that moment in the drama. Briefing (see above) helps to drive the improvisation forward. The teacher can greatly enhance the drama by adopting a role herself.

Flashback Flash forward

The children select and depict a moment through such strategies as still image, mime and narration or improvisation. They can then move backwards and forwards in time creating other such moments in time in the drama. This enables the children to reflect on the characters and their dilemmas.

Ritual

Ritual in Drama is a stylized activity that shows a special occasion or some daily routine that shows that a character is part of a community. Some rituals in drama include: a meal, saying goodbye, the night before a battle, praying.

Teacher-in-Role

The teacher takes on a role in the drama. This allows her to do a number of things. She can manage the learning opportunities within the drama by adopting a suitable role in order to excite interest, control the action, invite involvement, provoke tension, challenge superficial thinking, create choices and ambiguity, develop the narrative, create possibilities for the group to interact in role.

3. Children with Different Needs

In line with the underlying principles of this curriculum, we believe drama to be for all children and all teachers. Therefore, each child in this school will be involved in drama, regardless of difference or ability.

It is the policy of our school that all children will participate in Drama activities. Based on a teacher's professional judgement, and in co-operation with other teachers and special needs assistants, Drama activities will be differentiated as necessary in order to meet the needs of the children in a particular class. This will be done by careful grouping of children, consciousness by the teacher of children's abilities when giving briefs and by providing opportunities for different

methods of reflection.

Resources and specific activities for children with different needs are contained in the Resource Pack.

4. Linkage and Integration

Drama can be integrated with many curricular areas e.g. English, Gaeilge, SESE, SPHE, Music, Visual Arts, "Aistear" Play Programme

Exemplars

English/Gaeilge

- Using story or poetry as a fictional lens, or exploring themes from story or poetry. E.g., the story of Goldilocks, with, e.g., the social theme of learning how to set a table.

SESE

- Dramatising actual historical events, e.g. the Famine, through a fictional lens in order to explore specific themes, e.g. family loyalty, making difficult choices, poverty.

SPHE

- SPHE issues can be explored, e.g. bullying, relationships, healthy eating.

Music

- Music can be used as a stimulus to draw the children into a drama activity, to create a scene.

Visual Arts

- Visual art can be used by the children themselves to help create a scene, and is also useful as a means of reflecting on the drama.

Linkage occurs naturally throughout the 3 strand units. Each lesson will include aspects of exploration, reflection, co-operation and communication.

5. Assessment and Record Keeping

As has been outlined in our schools Assessment & Record Keeping Policy we recognise the importance of assessment and record keeping in the delivery of the Drama Curriculum.

Teachers will use teacher observation as a primary tool when assessing drama work in class.

Other forms of assessment can include basic teacher-designed tests and tasks, projects, recordings of children's work, and graphic / pictorial scores.

Progress will be recorded and communicated in teachers own notes, Cúntas Míósúil, end of year report and at parent teacher meetings.

Teachers should approach assessment in Drama by referring to the Curriculum Statement p 43-44 and examine children's engagement in terms of the three strand units. e.g:

- o Exploring and making Drama - the extent to which the child enters into a role or a character and develops it in the context of the action
- o Reflecting on Drama - the extent to which they use reflection to create alternative courses for the action or the quality of the insights they gain from the Drama experience
- o Co-operating and communicating in making Drama - the child's ability to contribute to the shaping of the Drama, both individually and in group in-role and out-of-role discussion about the Drama as the action takes place

The table below outlines how the teacher might begin to observe the development of the elements in

Elements in Drama	How the elements might look ...
Belief	How can the child be encouraged to enter into the drama with full belief? <i>Evident in the child's trust in and ease with make-believe play</i>
Role and Character	How will the child move from role playing to entering into character? <i>Taking on the characteristics, attributes and thought process of another person</i>
Action	What is happening in the drama? <i>Action in drama comes from the interaction between characters and situations in which they find themselves in the drama</i>
Place	Where is the action taking place? How is real place and space used to represent this?
Time	When is the action taking place? <i>The fictional past and fictional future will have a bearing on the drama</i>
Tension	How will tension drive forward the action of the drama? <i>The characters will be faced with choices, desires and uncertainties. Such tension causes characters to make decisions and moves the drama forward</i>
Significance	What is the relevance of the drama to the child's life? In what way can the child relate to the drama?
Genre (Fifth and Sixth Classes only)	Is the drama naturalistic, absurd, tragic, comic or fantasy? <i>Genre is the style of the drama</i>

6. Equality of Participation and Access

Equal opportunity of access to Drama will be given to all children.

Organisational Planning:

Timetable: Infant classes will have a minimum of 50 minutes of Drama per week while 1st to 6th classes

will have. 1 hour per week. This time allocation may be broken down at the discretion of the individual

Teacher. Teachers may choose to block times for Drama at particular times of the year.

8. Resources

Books

A selection of drama hooks have been sourced, a list of which is attached to this plan. (cf; Appendix 3)

Internet

A selection of short videos dealing with all curricular areas and teaching issues: www.teachers.tv
 Association for Drama in Education in Ireland: <http://www.ict.mic.ul.ie/adei/>
www.creativedrama.com

Teachers will source a variety of props for use in their classrooms. A selection of props for use by all classes will also be stored in the storage press on the landing.

9. Health and Safety

As with all curricular areas, the Drama Curriculum will maintain due care to our school's Health and Safety Policy.

Care and attention will be given to the following:

- o Hidden dangers if children are moving around the classroom
- o Storage facilities
- o Ventilation of the classrooms
- o Amount of space for children to sit or stand when engaged in Drama work
- o Particular care will be needed when children are setting up the Drama space.
- o Appropriate volume levels when using audio equipment or when engaged in a very loud activity.

10. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting

Long term plan:

Each teacher will be given a copy of this school plan and will be encouraged to refer to it. When doing their own long term and short term planning. Teachers teaching the same level are encouraged to plan together

The elements of Drama should be carefully considered in the short term planning of Drama.

Themes

As mentioned in the integration section, teachers in the school approach much of their teaching thematically and are encouraged to do so with Drama also. A list of possible themes may include:

- Everyday situations requiring social skills
- * Halloween
- Autumn
- Winter
- Christmas
- Summer
- Pirates
- The Sea
- A journey

11. Staff Development

Teachers have access to reference books, resource materials, equipment and websites dealing with Drama. We will continue to add to this in the coming years.

Drama will be on the agenda at one staff meeting per year. This will allow for review of the policy and also give an opportunity for members of staff to share ideas that are working for them. This arrangement will be subject to review.

Teachers will be informed about upcoming courses in the education centres and other bodies providing professional development through the staffroom notice board.

Over the coming years we will, if possible, engage with the PDST *cuiditheoireacht* service to come to the school to aid individual teachers with planning, to model lessons and to target the weaker identified areas of the curriculum.

12. Parental Involvement

The subject of Drama should be introduced to and summarised for parents at welcome meetings at the start of the year and in the course of parent-teacher meetings.

Where appropriate, and with managerial consent, parents may be invited to assist the teacher with the process of Drama within the classroom.

13. Community Links

The local community, actors, theatre professionals living locally, local arts centres and education officers, theatre, local Drama events and national support structures will all be considered as valuable resources as support for The Drama Curriculum.

Events in which the school will participate in or attend:-

- External children's theatre productions. e.g. Baboro, Salerno Secondary School Transition Year Musical, The Live Crib
- Invitation of theatre productions to the school, e.g. "The West Midlands Theatre Company", "Brannar".

Relevant education packs to deepen the children's experience will be provided.

Success Criteria

The teacher's classroom planning will be based on this plan. The aims and objectives of this plan will be followed with emphasis on developing a whole school programme that allows for development and progression. Based on this, we hope that our Drama plan will prove successful in its implementation. Success of this plan will be based on teacher/pupil feedback and also inspector's reports and recommendations.

Implementation

(a) Roles and Responsibilities

The plan has been drawn up through collaboration with the teaching staff of Scoil Ide. Each teacher has the responsibility to implement the Drama Curriculum in his/her classroom. Mrs. Claire Hynes and Ms. Anne-Marie Hennigan will support staff in implementation, encourage feedback and update the plan again, if necessary.

(b) Timeframe

The policy will be reviewed again in 2022

• Review

Roles, Responsibilities and Timeframe

After the initial review at the end of the 2015 school year, each teacher and the staff as a group evaluate the progress in Drama by referring back to our set of stated objectives as stated in this plan once every three years. A short session at staff meeting will be allocated to this work

Ratification and Communication

This plan will be ratified by the Board of Management in April 2019. A copy of the plan is also available in the school for perusal by individual parents. The plan was drawn up in January 2016 and was reviewed again in 2019 and will be reviewed every three years after. Reviews will be based on the success criteria stated above.

This plan was ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Ide on:

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Inventory of Resource Books

1. "Drama and Traditional Story for the Early Years", *Nigel Toye*.
2. "Ideas for Drama, Key Stage One, Ready to Go", *Alison Chaplin*.
3. "Creative Activities for Plot, Character and Setting, Ages 5-7", *Teresa Grainger, Kathy Gouch and Andrew Lambirth*.
4. "The Toymakers' Workshop and Other Tales", *Jo Boulton*.
5. "Drama and Role-Play, New Bright Ideas", *Nichola Rees*.
6. "On Stage: Theatre Games and Activities for Kids", *Lisa Bary-Winters*.
7. "Drama 7-11", *Neil Kitson and Jan Spilby*.
8. "Step by Step Educational Drama", *Joanna Parkes and Sarah Fitzgibbon*
9. "100 + Ideas for Drama", *Anna Scher*
10. "Another 100 + Ideas for Drama", *Anna Scher*
11. "Drama Lessons for 5-11 year olds", *Judith Ackroyd and Jo Boulton*
12. "Ideas for Drama, Key Stage 2, Ready to Go", *Alison Chaplin*
13. "Improvisation with favourite Tales", *Ruth Beall Heinig*
14. "Beginning Drama 4-11", *Joe Winston and Miles Tandy*
15. "101 Drama Games and Activities", *David Farmer*

Useful Websites for Drama

www.seomraranga.com
www.dramateachers.co.uk
www.artsonthemove.co.uk
"youtube"
www.enchantedlearning.com
www.dramatoolkit.co.uk
www.pdst.ie/files/Drama
Activities