



Drama Appendix – Glossary of Terms



Term	Explanation
Action Clip	Bring freeze frames to life. Action Clip gives the children the opportunity to enjoy acting out a small part of the story without worrying about how to start or finish the scene. The teacher can easily control how much is shown, especially if the children start to repeat themselves or run out of things to say. After a few sessions of working in this way, the children will become more confident about devising and presenting short scenes. 1. Start with a freeze frame created by a group. 2. Use thought tracking to find out what each of the characters are thinking and feeling. 3. Explain that you would like the group to bring the scene alive for a few moments with speech and movement. Initiate this by saying "Action!" or simply clapping your hands to start the scene. 4. Let the improvisation run for a short time – ideally before the performers run out of steam – and then end it with another signal such as "Cut!", "Freeze!" or by clapping your hands a second time. The improvisation will usually last for just a few seconds and certainly no longer than one minute.
Conscience Alley	One person walks down an alleyway made by the group and listens to thoughts or advice. A useful technique for exploring any kind of dilemma faced by a character, providing an opportunity to analyse a decisive moment in greater detail. The class forms two lines facing each other. One person (the teacher or a participant) walks between the lines as each member of the group speaks their advice. It can be organised so that those on one side give opposing advice to those on the other. When the character reaches the end of the alley, she makes her decision. Sometimes known as Decision Alley or Thought Tunnel.
Cross-Cutting	Also known as split-screen, borrowed from the world of film editing, where two scenes are intercut to establish continuity. In drama and theatre the term is used to describe two or more scenes which are performed on stage at the same time. This makes it possible to juxtapose scenes or snippets of scenes that happen at different times or in different places, using separate areas of the performance space. The technique is used to highlight or contrast a particular theme or aspect of the story. Using different groupings, both scenes could happen at the same time, or one could be frozen while the other comes alive. This can have a similar effect to spotlighting particular areas of the stage or using a split-screen in a film.

Freeze Frames	The use of body-shapes and postures to represent characters or objects. Freeze frames are a quick and effective way to start a drama session. They can easily be used with any age from children to adults. Participants create an image using their bodies – with no movement. Freeze frames can be made by individuals, small groups or even the whole group. A good way to explain a freeze frame (also known as <i>still image</i>) is that it is like pressing the pause button on a remote control, taking a photo or making a statue. The images can be made quickly without discussion – or they can be planned and rehearsed. They are very useful as an immediate way of communicating ideas or telling a story. They can be used to represent people or objects and even abstract concepts like emotions or atmospheres. As there are no lines to learn, freeze frames can help shy performers to gain confidence.
Flashbacks and Flash Forwards	Performers in a scene are asked to improvise scenes which take place seconds, minutes, days or years before or after a dramatic moment. This enables the exploration of characters' backgrounds, motivations and the consequences of their actions. The method can be used to quickly bring depth to activities involving freeze frames or improvised drama. Adding Flashbacks or Flash Forwards creates a context – it shows what led up to a particular moment, how it might be resolved or how it may lead onto additional challenges. The technique helps to work out a dramatic moment or create the beginnings of a story. With a group that has created a still image, explain that when you clap your hands, you would like them to move silently in slow-motion to where their character was a few moments before. When they are frozen still in the new image, you can use thought-tracking to explore character motivation. Now ask them to move back to their original image – which is the present moment. Then you can use Flash Forwards – participants move in slow-motion to indicate where their characters might be a short time after this moment. In this way you have created an episode with a beginning, middle and end and can develop it in any number of ways.
Forum Theatre	A play or scene, usually indicating some kind of oppression, is shown twice. During the replay, any member of the audience is allowed to shout 'Stop!', step forward and take the place of one of the oppressed characters, showing how they could change the situation to enable a different outcome. Several alternatives may be explored. The other actors remain in character, improvising their responses. A facilitator (Joker) is necessary to enable communication between the players and the audience. The strategy breaks through the barrier between performers and audience, putting them on an equal footing. It enables participants to try out courses of action which could be applicable to their everyday lives.
Hot Seating	A character is questioned by the group about his or her background, behaviour and motivation. The method may be used for developing a role in the drama lesson or rehearsals, or analysing a play post-performance. Even done without preparation, it is an excellent way of working out a character. Characters may be hot-seated individually, in pairs or small groups. The

	technique is additionally useful for developing questioning skills with the rest of the group.
Image Theatre	Still images are used to explore abstract concepts such as relationships and emotions, as well as realistic situations. Children rapidly sculpt their own or each others' bodies to express attitudes and emotions. These images are then placed together and brought to life. The method is often used to explore internal or external oppression, unconscious thoughts and feelings.
Mantle of the Expert	Involves the creation of a fictional world where students assume the roles of experts. Mantle of the Expert is based on the premise that treating children as responsible experts increases their engagement and confidence. They can perceive a real purpose for learning and discovering together in an interactive and proactive way – providing them with skills and knowledge they can apply to their everyday lives. MoE encourages creativity, improves teamwork, communication skills, critical thought and decision-making.
Marking the Moment	A dramatic technique used to highlight a key moment in a scene or improvisation. This can be done in a number of different ways: for example through slow-motion, a freeze-frame, narration, thought-tracking or music. It has a similar effect to using a spotlight to focus attention on one area of the stage at a particular moment during a performance.
Meetings	The teacher in role, perhaps as an official, can call a meeting for the whole class to attend. Meetings enable information to be shared with the whole group so that a group decision can be made about the situation they face. Meetings encourage children to adopt a collective role, e.g. as islanders or Romans, which can help less confident children. Meetings used at the start of a drama can be an efficient way of creating roles or focusing on a problem.
Mime	Introducing the concept of performance or pretending.
Narration	A technique whereby one or more performers speak directly to the audience to tell a story, give information or comment on the action of the scene or the motivations of characters. Characters may narrate, or a performer who is not involved in the action can carry out the role of 'narrator'.
Paired Improvisation	This strategy helps to get children quickly into a drama. Pairs are given roles or agree them for themselves. They begin a dialogue on a signal, making the conversation up, in role as the characters, as they go along.
Role on the Wall	A collaborative activity for developing thoughts and ideas about a character. The outline of a body is drawn on a large sheet of paper, which is stuck onto the wall. This can be as simple as a drawing of a gingerbread man or the teacher can carefully draw around one of the participants lying on a roll of paper. Alternatively you can project an image onto the paper and draw around the silhouette. Words or phrases describing the character are then written directly onto the drawing or stuck on with sticky notes. This drama technique can be carried out as a group activity or by individuals writing about their own character. You can include known facts such as physical appearance, age, gender, location and occupation, as well as subjective ideas such as likes/dislikes, friends/enemies, opinions, motivations, secrets and dreams. You can vary the approach, for example known facts can be written around the silhouette, and thoughts and feelings inside.

	Key lines spoken by the character can be added. The class can return to add more ideas, thoughts and feelings as they discover more about the character over time. Sticky notes can be moved around and grouped thematically. Role on the wall can be used as a way to develop ideas for improvisation or rehearsal. The approach can be used for historical people or for creating fictional characters. The strategy works well in combination with other approaches such as hot-seating.
Role Play	The ability to suspend disbelief by stepping into another character's shoes. Through the structure of the drama lesson this can be used to great effect, challenging children to develop a more sensitive understanding of a variety of viewpoints whilst sharpening their language and movement skills. By adopting a role, children can step into the past or future and travel to any location, dealing with issues on moral and intellectual levels. Role play can be easily utilised to illuminate themes across the curriculum.
Soundscape	The leader or one member of the group acts as conductor, whilst the rest of the group are the 'orchestra'. Using their voices (and body percussion if appropriate!), the group paints a soundscape of a particular theme or mood, for example the seaside, a city, a jungle. The leader can control the shape of the piece by raising her hand to increase the volume or bringing it to touch the floor for silence. You may also use simple percussion instruments for this exercise.
Spotlight	A useful teaching technique for sharing improvised drama when you have divided the class into smaller groups. When it is time to show their work, ask all the groups to sit on the floor. Explain that you will walk around the room and as you get closer to each group, that group will stand up and show their performance. As you move off towards the next group, they will stop the drama and quietly sit down again so that they can watch other groups. This is an effective way of controlling the time each group takes to show their work and overcomes the problem groups often have of not knowing how to end an improvisation. The teacher controls the time taken by each group and the order in which they perform. Just like a real spotlight, the technique focuses the attention on one part of the room at a time and makes it clear as to which group is taking its turn.
Storytelling	One of the simplest and perhaps most compelling forms of dramatic and imaginative activity. A good place to start is by telling stories to your pupils and encouraging them to share stories with one another. All of us can become engaging storytellers with a little practice. There may also be members of staff who are particularly skilled at telling stories. Listen to each other, watch videos of storytelling and encourage the children to identify techniques they could use in their own stories.
Tableau	Participants make still images with their bodies to represent a scene. A tableau can be used to quickly establish a scene that involves a large number of characters. Because there is no movement, a tableau is easier to manage than a whole-group improvisation – yet can easily lead into extended drama activities. It can be used to explore a particular moment in a story or drama, or to replicate a photograph or artwork for deeper analysis.

	Students stand in a circle, or around the performance area and a theme is given. One by one, they step into the space and establish freeze frames in relation to one another until the tableau is complete. At this point, thought tracking can be used to find out more about each of the characters. The scene can also be brought to life through improvisation, with the teacher clapping their hands to signal the beginning and end of the action. Once students are familiar with the technique, they can also work in small groups on different aspects of a theme. The class can discuss each group's tableau in turn, mentioning what they can see happening, what they would like to know more about and what they think could happen next. Afterwards, each group can comment on how these viewpoints compared with their initial intentions.
Teacher in Role (TiR)	An invaluable technique for shaping the dramatic process and developing children's learning. Simply put, the teacher or facilitator assumes a role in relation to the pupils. This may be as a leader, an equal, or a low-status role – whatever is useful in the development of the lesson. The teacher may ask questions of the students, perhaps putting them into role as members of a specific group and encouraging them to hot-seat in return. The teacher is able to directly participate in the dramatic process and influence it from the inside. This makes it possible to present challenging and controversial points of view and to stimulate thought, discussion and action by pupils. Teacher in role validates and supports the children's involvement in a make-believe situation by enabling the teacher to work and 'play' alongside them. It is an instant way of setting a scene and directly involving the pupils. Children are used to stepping into and out of role in everyday play and are likely to be keen to participate. Teacher in Role does not require great acting skills. The strategy simply involves 'stepping into somebody else's shoes' for a while to put forward their point of view. This can be done by subtly changing your tone of voice and body language to communicate key attitudes, emotions and viewpoints. A role can be adopted quite simply to communicate the key attitudes and emotions of a particular character. It won't take much for most children to believe in your character although the use of a token prop or piece of costume will clarify when you are stepping in and out of role: "When I put on this scarf I will be Anne Frank", or "When I sit in this chair I will be the King". Although not essential, you may wish to place furniture and props to represent a different place – but keep it simple.
Thought Tracking	A way to speak aloud the thoughts or feelings of a character in a freeze-frame. Thought tracking (also called thought tapping) is a quick fire strategy enabling children to verbally express their understanding of characters and situations without the need for rehearsal. Students gain confidence to speak in front of others, preparing the ground for them to move into extended improvisation. It is surprisingly easy for pupils to identify with a role and express their thoughts after holding a still image for a few moments. The teacher can efficiently gather feedback from all the students.