

Whole School Plan

For

Drama



Scoil Naomh Peadar
Droichead Átha

St. Peter's N.S
Curriculum Policy Document
Drama

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❖ Guiding Principles

The guiding principles that inform the teaching and learning of Drama in our school are:

- ❖ Drama is for all teachers and all children.
- ❖ Drama is a subject in its own right.
- ❖ Drama explores the real world through the fictional world.

❖ Introductory Statement and Rationale

Introductory Statement:

Following in-service training it was decided to commence the development of the school plan in Drama. The teachers had an opportunity to try out different elements of the revised Drama Curriculum in their classrooms before a detailed school plan was formulated. The school staff has now devised this school policy for the teaching and learning of Drama in St. Peter's N.S..

Rationale:

We have written this plan to ensure a consistent approach to the planning and teaching of drama. We recognise drama as an integral and valuable part of the Visual Arts and indeed the entire Primary School Curriculum. This plan will place Drama within the context of the entire school community, and be a vital reference points for individual teacher planning.

❖ Vision and Aims

Vision:

In St. Peter's N.S. we hope that every child will be able to explore, clarify and express ideas, feelings and experiences through a range of arts activities. We wish to provide for aesthetic experiences and to develop aesthetic awareness in all of the arts. We hope to foster a sense of excellence in and appreciation of the arts. Through drama children will be encouraged to explore life through the creation of plot, theme, fiction and make-believe. We hope that children in our school will develop empathy with and understanding of others. We hope to help children to become confident and help them to develop personal adaptability, spontaneity and the ability to co-operate with others.

Aims:

We endorse the aims of the Primary Curriculum for drama, which are:

- ❖ 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
- ❖ To form the criteria with which to evaluate the drama texts, written or performed, to which he or she is continually exposed.

Prerequisites for making Drama

- Content
- The Fictional Lens
- Creating a safe environment

Elements of Drama

- Belief
- Role and Character
- Action
- Place
- Time
- Tension
- Significance
- Genre

Approaches and Methodologies

Content Objectives for Drama are to be found in the Primary School Curriculum and will form the basis for all teacher and whole school planning in St. Peter's National School. These objectives are a basis for promoting Drama and encouraging the emotional development of children through Drama.

Other sources which will form the basis for Drama planning are:

- The children's own experiences and ideas/ opinions.
- Stories and Poetry.
- Local school/ community issues which need to be/ are interesting to address.
- Other Curriculum areas and the topics being covered.

The stimuli that will be used for Drama will include:

- Warm-up Games
- Stories and Poetry
- Song
- Other Curriculum Subjects
- Discussion
- Problem Solving Scenarios e.g. puzzles

*All of the following **elements of Drama** will be covered and utilised by all teachers on a regular basis:*

- **Belief**

A combination of environment, stimulus, encouragement and example will ensure that all children believe in the Drama lessons.

- **Role and Character**

Role and Character will be fostered through such strategies as *role on the wall* and *hot spotting*. Children in senior classes will be encouraged to explore characters in detail and identify and explore roles within the Drama.

- **Action**

Using an extensive range of warm up games and Drama strategies will ensure that action in the Drama is highly motivated.

- **Place**

A sense of place in the Drama will form from the stimulus and strategies employed.

- **Time**

A sense of time will be developed in Drama according to the topic being approached and will be utilised at times to increase tension and action.

- **Tension**

Tension will be provided in the Drama lessons through carefully constructed scenarios, problem solving activities and the involvement of children in teamwork and planning.

- **Significance**

Drama should in so far as possible be relevant to the children and have a very clear purpose or possible outcome. Children will understand the reasons behind Drama and fully partake in the lessons.

- **Genre**

Different genres will be employed by all teachers to foster and develop the Drama programme in the school.

Drama environment

- A safe, comfortable, motivating environment will be developed for children during Drama time in the school, throughout all classes.
- Children will be involved in drawing up rules/considerations for Drama time.
- Children will understand the conventions of discrete Drama time and adhere to Drama rules.
- Warm up and cool down activities will be used to further create a positive, vibrant, safe and fun atmosphere for Drama.

Reflection on Drama

Children will be actively encouraged to reflect on their own and others experiences of Drama. This reflection will include the forms of discussion, recording, comparing, analysing, predicting, questioning and drawing.

Differentiation and Special Needs

All children will be encouraged to participate in Drama no matter what their abilities. Abilities will be catered for through pair-work, modelling of activities, mixed-ability groupings, varied expectations and task cards.

Children will have an option of opting out of any Drama activities which they are not comfortable with, however they will be actively encouraged and facilitated to partake at all times.

Multi Class Considerations

St. Peter's National School is a small four teacher school with two class levels in each room. As a result the following will be part of Drama effectiveness and enrichment:

- Mixed-ability groupings will be utilised.
- Children's individual strengths in Drama will be utilised above their class level or age.
- Varying levels of difficulties may be used within Drama activities and Drama lessons.
- Topics covered in Drama will be made relevant to all the class levels involved.

Linkage and Integration

The strand units of the Primary school Curriculum are intrinsically linked and as such will form part of our Drama planning and process in an interlinked and sequential manner.

Children will at all times be actively encouraged to explore and make Drama and in doing this, communicate well with one another. As a follow up or pre-cursor to Drama activities children will be encouraged to reflect on the process and to communicate their reflections to others.

Assessment and Record-Keeping

The following assessment tools will be utilised when assessing Drama:

- Teacher Observation
- Teacher Designed Tasks
- Samples of Reflective Journals
- Work Samples

The following will be assessed through teacher observation:

- How and to what extent children participate in the Drama lessons.
- Children's appreciation and understanding of a particular character and role.
- Children's ability to reflect on the process of Drama.
- Children's ability to use their reflections in order to inform their practice in future Drama activities.
- How children enrich the Drama experience within a group and the level to which they contribute to the discussion and action.

Equality of Participation and Access

Gender issues will be addressed as part of Drama and stereotypes will be actively challenged, in order to promote an open and equal atmosphere for all children in the school. Different cultures will be explored through Drama and presented in a positive light. Here again stereotypes will be challenged and increased understanding and empathy will be encouraged.

ORGANISATION

Timetable

Discrete Drama time will be allocated 1 hour per week by the senior classes (3rd to 6th Classes) and 45 minutes for the junior classes (Infants to Second Class). However Drama will often flow through other subject areas.

Drama will have a significant amount of blocked time in the run-up to the Christmas Nativity Play, along with music and some other areas.

Resources

A wide range of varying resources will be used for Drama time and these include the following:

- Range of stimulus poetry
- Range of stimulus story
- Newspaper and magazine images
- A range of music on c.d. for use in Drama
- Puppets
- Drama Books e.g.
- Drama Task cards
- Props e.g. blindfold, hotspot chair, dress up clothes, magic boxes and hats etc.

Health and Safety

Careful and strict consideration is given to health and safety during Drama. By its very nature, drama is an active and busy process. Therefore through discussion with the children, guided by the teacher, children will become aware of some of these issues and identify ways of overcoming/avoiding them. Routine and structure are vital in order to address health and safety during Drama.

Refer also to *Health and Safety Policy* of the school.

ICT

ICT will be used to enrich Drama time in the following ways:

- The production of task cards and activities.
- Reflective Journals/ pieces of writing.
- Research into a non-fiction character.
- Research into a particular role.
- Powerpoint Presentations
- Script Writing

Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting

This plan will form the basis for teachers' planning and reporting.

Discussion between the teachers, both formal and informal will ensure that Drama planning is consistent and sequential as well as spiral the whole way through the school.

Teachers consider and utilise all elements and strategies of the Drama curriculum in their planning and teaching. Team teaching is a possibility where a teacher has strength in a particular Drama strategy or element.

A thematic approach may be used at different times in Drama and other subject areas could form the stimuli for these themes.

Using their Cuntas Míósúil, teachers will reflect on the implementation of this Drama plan and inform their future planning and teaching.

Staff Development

- Team teaching will be used when necessary as detailed above.
- Teachers will endeavour to complete relevant Drama courses being offered by various organisations.
- Cuideitheoir support will be sought for assistance with implementation.

Parental Involvement

- Parents will have access to this plan.
- Reflective Drama materials will be sent home as homework from time to time.
- Parents are actively encouraged to attend the Christmas Nativity Play & Service each year which has a significant element of Drama within it.
- Parents will be encouraged to partake in Drama activities periodically e.g. discuss their careers as stimulus for activity, partake in warm up games, pair work with their child, provide the story or poem as a prompt for Drama etc.,

Community Links

- External Drama teachers may be used from time to time.
- An actor, playwright, storyteller can be invited in to complete a workshop.
- Pupils will regularly be brought to see plays in the local theatre.

Success Criteria

We will judge the implementation of this plan based on:

- Teacher's preparation in accordance with the plan, a clear parallel.
- The consistent adherence to the procedures and suggestions outlined in this plan.

We will judge how well this plan has achieved its aims by:

- Teacher/parent feedback
- Children's reflections and feedback
- Assessment tools and recordings
- Inspectors' suggestions and reports.

Implementation

This plan will be supported, developed and implemented by the teachers and Board of Management of St. Peter's National School. It will be monitored and evaluated at periodic staff meetings.

This plan will be implemented in the year 2008/09.

Review

This plan will be reviewed by staff and Board of Management of St. Peter's National School after 2 years and thereafter on a regular basis.

This plan will first be reviewed in the year 2010/11.

Ratification & Communication

This school plan for Drama was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Peter's NS.

Signed:

Chairperson BOM

Principal:

Ratified on:

JUNIOR & SENIOR INFANTS

Drama to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding

Exploring and making drama	The child should be enabled to;- <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
Reflecting on drama	The child should be enabled to <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
Co-operating and communicating in making drama	The child should be enabled to <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.

FIRST & SECOND CLASS

Drama to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding

<p>Exploring and making drama</p>	<p>The child should be enabled to</p> <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
<p>Reflecting on drama</p>	<p>The child should be enabled to</p> <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
<p>Co-operating and communicating in making drama</p>	<p>The child should be enabled to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Develop, out of role, the ability to co-operate 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 ❖ Re-enact for others in the group a scene that has been make in simultaneous small-group work

THIRD & FOURTH CLASS

Drama to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding

Exploring and making drama	<p>The child should be enabled to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Enter into the fictional dramatic content 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❖ Become aware of the rules that help maintain focus in the 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
Reflecting on drama	<p>The child should be enabled to</p> <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
Co-operating and communicating in making drama	<p>The child should be enabled to</p> <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 with others in helping to shaper 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.

FIFTH AND SIXTH CLASS

Drama to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding

Exploring and making drama	<p>The child should be enabled to</p> <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 accept and maintain a brief that has been decided on by either the teacher, the group or himself/herself ❖ Discover how the use of space and objects helps in building the context and in signifying the drama in 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 ❖ Become comfortable with script and understand the basic processes by which script becomes action ❖ Distinguish between various genres, such as comedy, tragedy fantasy
Reflecting on drama	<p>The child should be enabled to</p> <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	<p>The child should be enabled to</p> <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 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