

# **DRAMA**

## **Syllabus for Primary Schools**

# RATIONALE

# THE DRAMA PROGRAMME

## For Primary Schools

### Rationale

#### Why Drama?

It is a matter of choice really. Do we want our education to be *subject oriented* or *learner oriented*? Through Drama we can get at all subjects and help learner to *really learn* and not merely learn a subject well enough to pass an examination. Through Drama we give the learner first hand experience, creativity is promoted and, therefore, we provide a preparation to life, because the learner is our focus.

Let us remove the myth that one has to be theatrically inclined, or at least, an extrovert in order to teach Drama successfully. There is a wide range of introverts and extroverts among drama teachers as there is among people in other walks of life, whether they be lawyers, university professors or deep sea divers, or indeed other subject teachers.

To better understand the aims of Drama let us quote from “Development Through Drama” by Brian Way:

The answer to many simple questions might take one of two forms – either that of information or else that of direct experience; the former answer belongs to the category of academic education, the latter to Drama.

For example the question might be, “*What is a blind person?*”

The reply could be, “*A person who does not have the faculty of sight*”.

The reply could also be, “*Close your eyes and keeping them closed, try to find your way out of the room*”.

The first contains concise and accurate information; the mind is possibly satisfied. But the second answer leads the inquirer to moments of direct experience, transcending mere knowledge, enriching the imagination, possibly touching the heart and soul as well as the mind.

This is, in over-simplified terms, the precise function of Drama.

## General Aims of Drama Education

Drama is a wide range of activities. It is suggested that when tackling any of these activities, a physical warm up and some concentration exercises should be used to introduce it:

- To give learners a wide range of experiences and show them how the use of their imagination can create situations sufficiently alive as to make them interesting, exciting, absorbing and useful.
- To show learners that we accept the concept of play which many children reserve for moments when adults are not present. This is always a pity because the combination of true child play and the unobtrusive leadership of a teacher can bring to life anything it chooses.

Some learners have never been taught how to play and some of those regard it as a sort of naughty behaviour when “freedom” is offered. Do not worry they will learn.

- To create for learners opportunities for mistakes, without the consequences of life in reality. Much social Drama fits in this category. It follows that Drama is essentially a practical activity, but we must ensure that we devote our lessons to the development of children rather than the development of Drama, and this will enable us to make the correct value judgement when we observe a particular piece of work.
- To give learners opportunities for discovering self control and so be better able to make a positive contribution to the needs of family, friends and the wider community.
- To show learners how to develop and use the tremendous potential they have for learning through:

Creative Movement	Speech and Voice	Sensory Awareness
Body Awareness	Improvisation	Interpretation

It must be made clear that Drama does not have an immediate and obvious good result. No matter how many times learners improvise, for example, a scene between ‘*worried mother*’ and ‘*naughty child*’, it should not be expected to answer the problems between a particular learner and own mother. The aim is the natural and necessarily slow maturation process which will be more likely to establish a better understanding between learners and their own children when the time comes.