School Drama Classic
Pre-Program Workshop 2017

Professor Robyn Ewing AM
John Nicholas Saunders
Agenda

• Welcome & Introductions
• Background to School Drama
• How School Drama works
• Practical Workshop
• Final Questions
School Drama Video
Drama as a discipline

Drama as pedagogy

Process Drama
Defining Drama & Literacy
What is Drama?

This strand focuses on students expressing and communicating understandings about human issues and experience through the enactment of real and imagined events. While interacting in a range of roles, relationships, situations and contexts, students investigate feelings, actions and consequences. They develop confidence and self-awareness as they collaborate to prepare and present drama. They develop understanding of the forms, styles and purposes of drama in various contexts.

QSA, 2002
Why Drama?

“At the core of our subject lies the familiar Deweyan notion that students learn best by doing. However, what is particular about drama is that experiential learning is not just a pedagogic tool, it is intrinsic to the art form itself.”

Nicholson, 2000, 8
“Drama provides a medium for exploration, social criticism, celebration and entertainment. It enables students to define and shape their own identity within social and cultural contexts.”
“Drama in Education is an enactive learning process which derives from our unique ability to imagine, empathize and project. It is a collaborative medium, accessible to all, the purpose of which is to explore past, present and future experiences, our own and others, in an attempt to make sense of the world in which we live.”

Norman, 1999, p9
Defining Literacy

[T]he ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute and use printed and written materials associated with varying contexts.

Belonging, being and becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (DEEWR, 2009)

Literacy is the capacity, confidence and disposition to use language in all its forms. Literacy incorporates a range of modes of communication including music, movement, dance, storytelling, visual arts, media and drama, as well as talking, listening, viewing, reading and writing. Contemporary texts include electronic and print-based media. In an increasingly technological world, the ability to critically analyse texts is a key component of literacy (p. 38).
School Drama & Literacy

• Inferential comprehension
• Confidence in oracy
• Descriptive language
• Creative & imaginative writing
The Research

Fiske’s (1999) *Champions of Change* indicated that the Arts:

- Provide ways of engaging those students who were otherwise difficult to engage
- connect students to themselves, to each other as well as to the world
- transform the learning environment itself and importantly
- challenge those students who were already successful
Critical Links

In *Critical Links* (Deasy, 2002) provided a compendium of 62 research studies that explored the relationship between the cognitive capacities developed through learning and communicating in dance, drama, music and the visual arts, and students’ academic and social skills. His major findings on the positive effects derived by those involved in arts-rich education programs included:

1. Positive achievements in reading, language and mathematics development
2. Evidence of increased higher order thinking skills and capacities
3. Evidence of increased motivation to learn
4. Improvements in effective social behaviours.
The Arts and Australian Education: Realising Potential (ACER) 2010

Those students whose learning is embedded in quality arts:
- Achieve better grades and overall test scores
- Are less likely to leave school early
- Rarely report boredom
- Have more positive self concepts than those students who are deprived of arts experiences.

(Ewing, 2010)
Direk Primary School in South Australia
Drama mentoring teacher professional learning program
Two Year 4 classes
The role of arts participation in students’ academic and nonacademic outcomes: A longitudinal study of school, home, and community factors – Martin et al 2013

Recently, a longitudinal, mixed method study from academics at the University of Sydney in partnership with the Australia Council for the Arts reported on the impacts of The Arts on student academic and non-academic outcomes. The study involved 643 primary and secondary school students from 15 Australian schools. The study denotes the positive student outcomes in both academic (motivation and engagement) and non-academic (self-esteem and life satisfaction) as a result of Arts engagement. Importantly, this study also found that Arts learning improved student academic achievement in non-Arts subjects.
School Drama – How it began ...
The Context

- High stakes, multiple choice testing
- Pressure on teachers to teach to the test
- Narrowing of the curriculum – focus on literacy and numeracy
- Ongoing criticism of teacher quality
- Cuts to arts and arts education
- The Review of the Australian Curriculum (2014)
- Innovation & Creativity Agenda
- PISA & NAPLAN
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)
- Grattan Institute's 2017 report finds 40% of school students are disengaged
At the same time

• Enormous body of Australian & international research demonstrating the importance of Arts Education to student academic and social wellbeing
• Acknowledgment in curriculum that literature is an artform
• A stronger focus on creativity in curriculum, industry and government
School Drama

A teacher professional learning program for primary teachers. The program aims to develop teacher confidence and capacity in using Process Drama as critical quality pedagogy with quality literature to improve student literacy.
Co-mentoring Teacher Professional Learning Model

• STC pairs each participating Classroom Teacher with a Teaching Artist and together the pair co-plan, co-mentor and co-teach the seven week program.

• More than a traditional ‘artist in residence’ model.
The Artistry in School Drama

- Process Drama
- Drama Strategies
- Creative Pedagogy
- Professional Learning Conversations

Teaching Artist

- Literacy & literature
- Student learning
- Classroom management
- Follow up activities
- Benchmarking

Class Teacher
No performance outcome

It is all about the process
Dual Focus

1. Teacher Professional Learning
2. Student Learning & Engagement
The School Drama Process

Class teacher attends School Drama Professional Learning workshops

Planning Meeting 1: Class teacher and TA define literacy outcome and text

Planning Meeting 2: TA and class teacher discuss draft learning experiences for first 5 in-class workshops

In-class workshops: Class teacher and TA team-teach 7 x 90 min. in-class workshops focussing on the selected literacy outcome
The Term Timetable

Pre Program Workshop → Pre-Program Teacher Survey → Introduction to Teaching Artist → Pre-Program Meeting #1

School Holidays

Week 1 Pre-Program Meeting #2 → Week 1 Pre-Program Benchmarking → Week 2 Workshop 1

Week 3 Workshop 2 → Week 4 Workshop 3 → Week 5 Workshop 4 → Week 6 Workshop 5

Follow Up Literacy

Week 7 Workshop 6 → Week 8 Workshop 7 → Week 8/9 Post-program Benchmarking → End of Term – Post-Program Teacher Survey
The 7 Workshops

• No teacher = No workshop

• Each workshop is followed by a 10 minute reflection/debrief between the Teaching Artist and the Classroom Teacher

• Follow up literacy exercise between each workshop
The Responsibility Split
Class Teacher & Teaching Artist

• Teaching Artists (TA’s) have NSW Working With Children Checks.
• TA’s go through rigorous training.
• TA’s are from a range of backgrounds (Actors, Applied Theatre, Educational Theatre).
• Teaching Artists **CANNOT** be left in the classroom with a Class Teacher.
• The workshop will only go ahead if the Class Teacher is in the room.
• If Class Teacher is sick, there is no workshop.
• Co-Teaching / Team-Teaching – joined at the hip.
• Class Teacher leads literacy, follow up activates, classroom management.
• Teaching Artist leads drama aspects, lesson planning, facilitates the professional learning conversations.
School Drama Research

Students + Teacher + Teaching Artist + Literature + Process Drama Strategies = Teacher
Increased confidence and capacity

Student
Academic (Literacy) Non-Academic (Confidence, Motivation, Engagement and Empathy)
The Research

• Annual evaluations over four year pilot (2009 to 2012) (Gibson)
• Meta-Analysis of pilot evaluations (Gibson & Smith)
• Sustainability study (Smith)
• Teacher learning case study (Robinson, Sze)
• Student learning case study (Saunders)
• Impacts on Teaching Artists (Ewing & Saunders)
The Findings

- Significant increases in teacher confidence & capacity to use Drama in their English classrooms.
- Teachers continue to use School Drama methodology after conclusion of program.
- Significant increase in student literacy over 7 weeks.
- Shifts in student non-academic outcomes: empathy, collaboration, attendance, confidence, engagement & motivation.
Developed increased confidence in using drama strategies in English.
How likely are you to continue to use drama in English and literacy lessons?
Saunders 2015 Case Study

- Year 6 class at Connie Beach Public School (pseudonym)
- 7 weeks during Term 3, 2014
- Class Teacher, Linda O’Connor (pseudonym)
- John Nicholas Saunders as Teaching Artist & Researcher

**Aim:** to address a gap in the research

**Research question:**
Does using Drama pedagogy (particularly Process Drama strategies) enhance academic and non-academic outcomes in young learners? If so, why and what evidence is there to support this? If not, what evidence is there to support this conclusion?
The ‘episodic’ pre-text model (Saunders, 2015)

Drama Strategies/Devices
- Role play / improvisation
- Freeze frames
- Word banks
- Visualization
- Mapping
- Hot-seating
- Conscience circle
- Tableau & tapping in
- Teacher-in-role
- Proximities
- Postcard
- Dream sequences
The Findings

• Increased student academic outcomes in literacy (inferential comprehension & descriptive language).

• Positive shifts in student non-academic outcomes (empathy, motivation, engagement and confidence).
Student pre- & post-program benchmarking
Inferential comprehension

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<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Pre-program</th>
<th>Post-program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ella</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adam</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Sandro</td>
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<td>65%</td>
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<td>Zac</td>
<td>45%</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Anna</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Milo</td>
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<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim</td>
<td>50%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eamon</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>70%</td>
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Eamon: I think it does because all of this Drama stuff that you have been doing with us helps us connect to the character and we really know what he is feeling like or maybe how he is feeling at that moment and we can really relate to the character, especially in a diary entry. We can sort of step into a character’s shoes easily, because we know a lot about him.
Joshua: And putting yourself in the character’s shoes, it like, when you are in character you feel a better prediction of what could happen next ... because you’ve been through what they have been through ... kind of. And so you know what’s going to happen, roughly.
Zac: When we first met you [John Nicholas] and we had to do the writing task, I thought you were going to be really boring because we had to do writing, but then the next week and all these other ones, it’s actually been a lot more fun because you haven’t made us do writing, we’ve done all these fun activities. So it was a good way to learn about the Stolen Generations and how life was back then. Yeah, because we didn’t have to do any writing or research, we just got to learn it our way. A fun way. Yeah.
Literacy Outcomes

- Inferential comprehension
- Confidence in oracy
- Descriptive language
- Creative & imaginative writing
Selecting a Text
Texts for K, Yr 1 & 2

- Herb, the Vegetarian Dragon
- The Day the Crayons Quit
- Lost and Found and Amy & Louis
- Farmer Duck
- Frog Prince Continued
- Who’s Afraid of the Big Bad Book?
Texts for Yr 3/4

- The Werewolf Knight
- The Duck and the Darkling
- Phileas’ Fortune
- Voices in the Park
- Two Summers
- Flood
- Rules of Summer
- Storm Boy
- Fox
Texts for Yr 5 / 6

• The Treasure Box
• The City
• Home and Away
• The Island
• The Rabbits
• The Burnt Stick
• The Dragon Keepe
• Pennies for Hitler
## School Drama Classic Fee Structure 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Unit price per teacher</th>
<th>Total school contribution</th>
<th>Foundation contribution</th>
<th>Full cost of program</th>
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School Drama Delivery

School Drama Classic
School Drama Cluster
School Drama @ Conferences
School Drama Staff Days
School Drama @ University

Sydney
Blue Mountains
Adelaide (STCSA & Flinders University)
Albury Wodonga (HotHouse Theatre & Murray Arts
Darwin
Melbourne

The School Drama Book: Drama, Literature & Literacy in the Creative Classroom (Currency Press)
The School Drama Companion iBook (in partnership with Apple)
Journal articles & chapters in edited books

School Drama Digital – EdTV & Department of Education & Communities
– Association of Independent Schools NSW
Resources

Further reading:
- *Beyond The Script*, Ewing and Simons
- *Transforming the Curriculum through the Arts*, Gibson & Ewing
- *Creative Arts in the Lives of Young Children*, Ewing
- *Into the Story*, Miller & Saxton
- *Inspiring Writing Through Drama*, Baldwin & John
- *Teaching Literacy through Drama*, Baldwin & Fleming
- The School Drama Companion (iBook)
Accredited Professional Learning

NSW Education Standards Authority
Student Benchmarking

- 6 to 8 Students from a range of academic levels
- Same 6 to 8 students do the pre- and post-program benchmarking tasks
- Pre-program task – based on a book the class worked with this term
- Post-program task – based on the book you worked with on School Drama
The Space
Letter of Agreement
The Sustainability of School Drama in Schools
Contact us

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Questions?