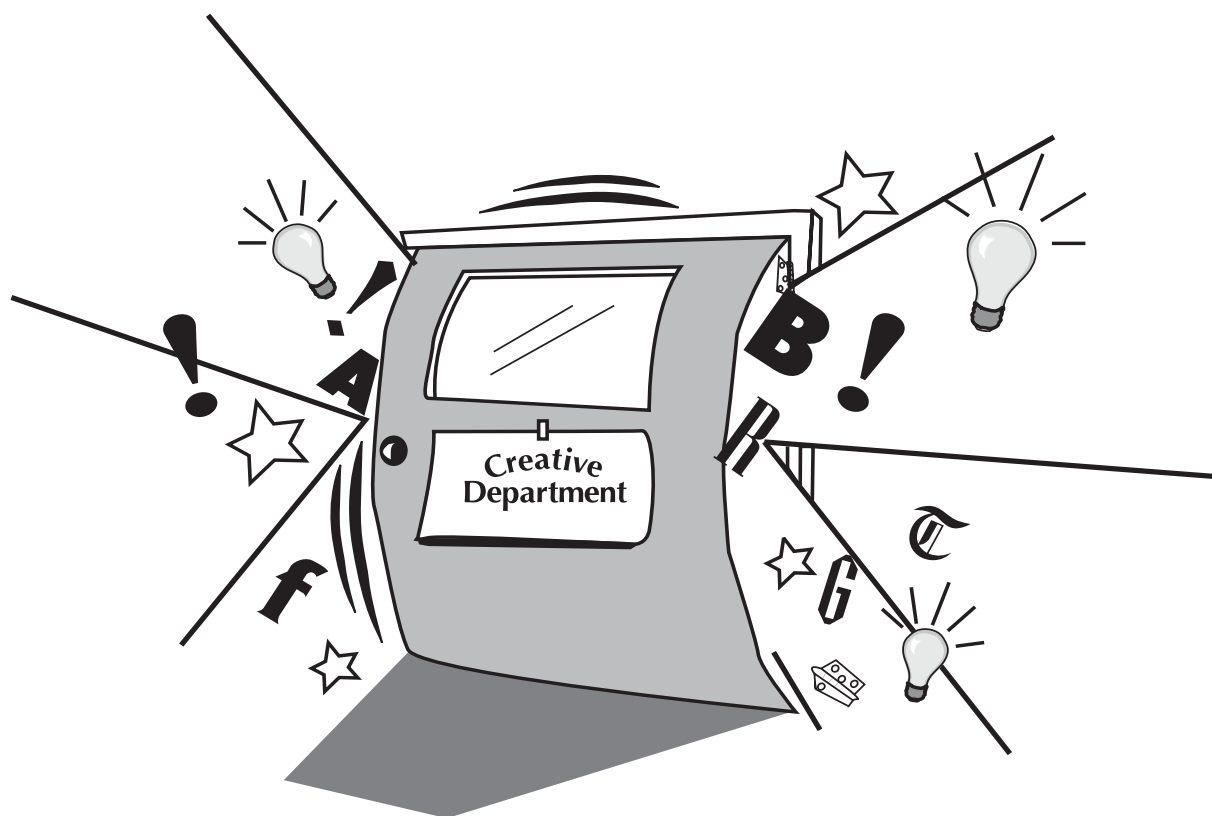


Collective Creations



Collective Creation: What is it?

The term “Collective Creation” refers to a creative venture made by group (or collective) decisions. A Collective is built upon the strength of the group as it makes the journey. The process may vary from group to group according to the topic selected and the makeup of the group. It is important for the teacher (facilitator) to listen well to the members of the group and allow the process to unfold accordingly. The following is an outline to assist you on your way - feel free to adapt it as you please.

Principles:

- 1. It is a Group Process:** everyone must agree to work together, contribute ideas, remain flexible.
- 2. It is Collaborative:** there is a sharing of power and decision making, everyone has a voice, respect one another.
- 3. It Requires Rigorous Thinking:** engage in a world of ideas and concepts; explore ideas through image, music and metaphor; it involves creative and critical thinking.
- 4. It Requires Trust:** building an atmosphere of trust and support is the most important task of the teacher or facilitator.
- 5. It is Aesthetic:** an aesthetic experience occurs; the need to think as artists; emphasis must remain on the work, decisions that make the play stronger (not catering to individual egos).
- 6. Document the Process:** this is invaluable to reflection and evaluation.

Dramatic Elements to consider:

- focus
- tension
- contrast
- symbol
- rhythm
- mood

The Collective Process:

Theatre, by definition is about communicating meaning to an audience whereas *Drama Education* is about finding meaning for oneself through personal exploration. The Collective Creation is a way to successfully bring together both into one meaningful experience.

What shall we do a play about?

- Brainstorm
- Provide inspirations, thought provoking questions, dilemmas
- Create idea webs*
- Refine and reduce the ideas
- Group ideas into possible themes
- Journal: about your personal connection to the theme, determine your strengths, identify risks, and set a personal goal

Exploring Ideas

- Involve all of the senses through exploration (warm ups, games, meditation)
- Improvise situations and conflicts related to the theme
- Ask the group to complete “what if... ? questions
- Reflect on and share personal stories
- Turn the idea upside down, look at it from various angles and points of view (How would an alien/bug/mother/police officer see it?)
- Journal: writings on connections to the theme (try “stream of consciousness” writing to music)
- Create metaphors

Research

- Discuss all ideas and determine areas for further research
- Journal: complete the question “I would like to know more about” Or, “I wonder what” . Decide on a course of action for your research and the outcome expected.
- Research can take many forms: - in the library - talking to people - looking at artwork or films - conducting a survey - listening to music - recording dreams - guest speakers - guest artists - watching other plays - searching the web, etc.
- To consider: are there possible actors/dramatists/writers or related experts who may become involved in the process?
- Share your findings with the group – journal response to research

Explore Some More

- Journal: Where do we go from here? What is interesting at this point? What do we wish to discard? (Ideas which appeared humorous at first may now seem superficial)
- The teacher/facilitator may wish to assist by grouping ideas, finding common ground and helping to provide some direction
- *This is the point in the process where some groups may flounder for awhile – it is also usually the turning point, group loyalty increases and commitment to the idea solidifies. Be sure to continue using warm ups and games which require group trust and cooperation.*
- Use improvisation exercises* to change the context or to take an idea even further
- Look for framing devices, ie: talk show, diaries, gibberish language, fairy tale
- Work on character development, “Who am I?” Try the improv game called “Hot Seat” in which the character is interviewed and must give spontaneous answers, in character, to all questions
- Focus on certain situations and conflict
- Group discussion and feedback on ideas – journal personal reflection, consider the original goal set – should it change?

Using the Arts

- Create costumes, props, sets – consider various styles and materials*
- Make masks* or headpieces
- Explore face painting, body painting
- Try out various kinds of lighting from unusual sources (lamps, flashlights, overheads, video or slides)
- Create a soundtrack, a soundscape, a new composition
- Choreograph movement to indicate the emotions of the play - communicate the entire play without words
- Write poetry to explore the imagery and the metaphor
- Take photographs to document ideas
- Create a promotional video – “a Trailer” for the play

Scripting

- Invite a playwright/writer/storyteller (sometimes any outside observer can help) to sit in on a session and ask for direction on the story development
- Discuss sequencing
- TIP: try writing the ideas down on small cards and pin them on a bulletin board. The cards can be moved, added to or even deleted as the group sees fit

- This can be a formal script or an outline for “planned and improvised” scenes
- Assign several students to work on the script, they are responsible for making sure it is clear, legible and leaves room for blocking notes*. It must be clear that all scripts are open to revision
- Journal: write a character monologue* (inner voices) as a way to develop ideas – it doesn’t matter if they are used in the script or not, they help develop improvisational scenes

Rehearsal

- Assign a Rehearsal Director (or perhaps the teacher) and a Stage Manager to run the rehearsals and keep it running smoothly
- Depending on the demands of the play, the group may wish to assign other technical roles as well: assistant stage manager, lighting, sound, props and scenery
- Read the script and assign roles
- Read the play and walk through entrances and exits
- “Block” the play (use notes on the script to indicate where people move, use of props, costume, lights, or sound)
- Possibly videotape some rehearsals for discussion
- Journal: thoughts on performance, response to the work, and of the group

Perform

- Small or big, the audience is important to the culmination of the process as it validates the work and gives meaning to the experience
- The group should decide how they wish to share their collective
- Perhaps invite another class to view the play
- This may be an opportunity to invite in parents or possibly board members
- If they do not wish to show it to outsiders they can consider filming the performance so that they can watch it for themselves

Reflection

- Evaluation of self
- Evaluation of peers
- Evaluation by teacher/facilitator
- Refer to your journal - did you meet or exceed your goal?