

# STORY DRAMA IN THE SPECIAL NEEDS CLASSROOM

Step-by-Step Lesson Plans  
for Teaching through Dramatic Play



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JESSICA  
PERICH  
CARLETON



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Step-by-Step Lesson Plans for  
Teaching through Dramatic Play

JESSICA PERICH CARLETON



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To VSA/NJ for giving me the opportunity to work with such extraordinary individuals. To the participants and parents who played with me each Saturday for inspiring and challenging me.

To my parents, two of the greatest teaching experts I know, for raising the bar of teaching excellence so high while mentoring the next generation that I may aspire to.

To my husband, for supporting and believing in me, particularly when I didn't.



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# PREFACE

I was hired by VSA/NJ\*, a Kennedy Center affiliate, as the Program Outreach Coordinator creating and championing programming for individuals of all ages, backgrounds, and levels of disabilities (mental and/or physical) for the state of New Jersey in all of the arts. It was an undertaking challenging everything I had learned, experienced, and practiced in and outside the classroom. The idea of working with individuals with disabilities, particularly elementary aged children (aged 5–12), can be daunting to the point of paralysis. Before I agreed to teach these classes, I nearly convinced myself out of this extraordinary opportunity, believing I could not possibly be qualified or knowledgeable enough to provide adequate programming for this group. I agreed to teach two sessions, each session an hour in length once a week for eight weeks, to groups aged 5–14 separated according to ability. The first session would be for the younger ages and the second session for the older students. The students were generally categorized as non-verbal, non-communicative autistic spectrum. I was told that most of the students would be low functioning but not severe and sensory needy. Past programming had consisted of music and movement whereby two teachers, one specializing in music the other in movement, worked with the students to

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\* Taken from the mission statement, VSA (Very Special Arts) is an international organization on arts and disability, that was founded more than 35 years ago by Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith to provide arts and education opportunities for people with disabilities and increase access to the arts for all. With 52 international affiliates and a network of nationwide affiliates, VSA is changing perceptions about people with disabilities around the world. Each year, seven million people of all ages and abilities participate in VSA programs, in every aspect of the arts, including visual arts, performing arts, and literary arts.

great success, but I should not let the labels or the change in artistic programming scare me. This was a great group of students and the parents would be there to be shadows and help out. No problem. I went on the internet and browsed several bookstores searching for a creative dramatics book for elementary students with autism. I found nothing, and books that looked like they might be what I wanted were priced over \$100 and sealed in plastic packaging. I'm a freelance artist, who at the time couldn't even afford to have health insurance, and was not about to gamble on the hopes that after I broke the packaging this would be my dream teaching book. I couldn't believe with all the proven research on how the arts improve many aspects of daily living, learning, and social skills that there was not a specific book aiding teachers and parents in and outside the classroom. Instead, I used my first week's pay to buy books about autism and instruction methodologies for individuals with autism in the classroom.

Then I received the background sheets from the parents with answers to a series of questions about their children to help in determining their level of ability and which group would be best for them. Reading over the sheets I became very overwhelmed. The students sounded extremely low functioning and I began to feel daunted and creatively and intellectually paralyzed. So I called in the big guns—my sister-in-law, who has worked with an impressive range of disabilities and is one of the most approachable and encouraging experts I know. I gave her an overall description of the groups' backgrounds, together with some of my ideas, and advocated that any advice she could impart would be greatly appreciated. She fulfilled all my requests, and echoed my original thoughts when teaching a class—that everything in theory based on the experts may or may not actually work, so don't take it personally if it does or doesn't. Remember that they are just people who happen to be able to do this and are not able to do that and adapt accordingly—a truism for any classroom.

Here begins the journey of this book. I reflected on the research, the stories and advice of teachers in the field, and my own theatre and education training and experience and knowledge of how to structure a lesson. The lessons described in this book can later be turned into a unit plan or into a year-long program which in a fun dramatic way will help the participants to accomplish and gain skills leading into a final theatrical assessment. The activities balance the sensory and physical overload to eliminate (to the best of one's ability) outbursts, and provide steps that any teacher (whether this is your first time trying theatre-in-education techniques with your students to the veteran teacher where these techniques are consistently used in the classroom) can understand and execute in many different classrooms.



## CHAPTER 1

# WHAT IS THEATRE/ DRAMA-IN-EDUCATION?

### INTRODUCTION

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One may hear either of these terms used interchangeably— theatre-in-education and drama-in-education. Theatre means the live performance of a theatrical piece. Theatre-in-education refers to live theatre entering the educational setting, either through a professional troupe of actors or in a student driven piece where the final result is a performance for an audience. The students themselves can be the spectators viewing a piece of theatre as a means of learning where the reflection process occurs with the actors (professionals or students) after the performance or with the teacher in the classroom. The manner in which a person or group of persons receives the information determines whether the play is a piece of drama or theatre. This simply means that when a person reads a play it is a piece of drama. However, when the text is presented (whereby actors perform the lines) to a live audience it becomes a piece of theatre.

Drama-in-education refers to using the dramatic piece of writing to be acted out by the students or as an impetus for creating a dramatic piece that results not in a performance

but in the study and exploration of the drama. The students participate in multiple roles throughout the drama-in-education process. The students will take the role of a character in the story experiencing his or her journey, the role of the design expert creating the world of drama through props, costumes and set pieces, and perhaps the spectator viewing the work of the other student actors, providing new information in the drama. Other roles may emerge depending on the sophistication of the story drama.

The teacher can decide the purpose of the story dramas to be executed as a source of drama-in-education or theatre-in-education. The story dramas in this book are presented as drama-in-education where the purpose is to explore the concepts and themes in the chosen children's stories through the use of dramatic techniques. They are presented this way to eliminate pressure to perform and also to focus on the complexity of the story and what the story teaches us by engendering the role of the protagonist. Theatre requires the focus to change from the exploration of the story to mastering performance techniques such as creating a character, acting techniques for performing the text, indicating through verbal and body communication the characters' intentions and desires as well as their relationship to others. Performance techniques are another level of complicated skills that the students must learn after mastering the deconstruction of the drama. This is not to say that the teacher should avoid theatre-in-education while working with these story dramas, as the results for performing their work for their peers is a wonderful assessment and achievement outcome. When moving from drama-in-education to theatre-in-education, the teacher should accomplish two separate learning outcomes that possess two different means of assessment. Performing the drama to a live audience requires another set of learning skills that the teacher must prepare the students for in advance in order for them to share their work successfully.

## KEY FIGURES IN EDUCATIONAL THEORY AND DRAMA EDUCATION

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Many theorists and practitioners past and present have contributed to shaping the validation of dramatic play as a means of intellectual growth in the early stages of child development. It is during play that students take on roles and responsibility that are foreign to them in real life but in the world of play they can actualize the emotions and position of others garnering a better understanding of the world around them. Children's stories have served as a means of communicating complex messages through the journey of the main character (also known as the protagonist). Messages such as: being mindful when entering the woods as there are animals that may harm children or that interacting with strangers requires a degree of caution as not to be lead into a dangerous situation, and so forth. The Arts Education Partnership and the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, funded by General Electric Corporation and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation detailed in their report, *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning* (Fiske et al. 1999), that the arts not only increased test scores and lower dropout rates but also succeeded in creating group camaraderie, cultural tolerance, and connections to real world situations from the new skills discovered (Jensen 2001, p.3).

There is safety in the world of play where assessing and trying new things freely advances independent learning from the information that follows. The work of Jean Piaget brought attention to the importance of play in the child's development. Piaget believed that children learn through doing versus being told how to accomplish a task. Play permits children to perform the task and therefore comprehend and reapply that learned task correctly in the future. The classic folktale *The Little Red Hen*, guides the students through the process of discovering some grains of wheat and transforming those seeds into plants

that can be made into flour and then into bread to eat. The students learn through performing these tasks how seeds are cultivated and harvested, and can eventually be transformed into making bread in real life. Many of the story dramas mentioned in this book tutor the students in independent living skills such as attending a costume party, planning a walk in the woods, negotiating with friends and individuals of power, playing in the snow, etc.

Piaget's work influenced many educational theorists, most notably Lev Vygotsky. Vygotsky reexamined the importance of play as a means of understanding one's culture and language, as well as actualizing one's desires through the notion of the zone of proximal development. This means that through guided participation with a teacher, coupled with creative individuals of the same age, the student's ability to understand concepts and conduct them independently increases. Students become independent learners using props as symbols to practice the skills needed to accomplish their final goal. During the story drama students are processing information through applying possible outcomes in order to solve a task. This constant self-assessment strengthens students' ability to analyze a task by refining their thinking or their performance of the task to make it more effective. The teacher theatics listed in this book serve as vehicles for student self-assessment. Students interview other characters in the story researching new information by collaborating among peers before making a decision (hot-seating), by physically portraying character emotions determining where the character is and where the character would like to go (tableau), and by vocalizing character sentiments with a sound, word or phrase evaluating and connecting with the other characters present to prevent isolation and encourage discussion and organization (thought tracking). The teacher theatics are fun to lead and participate in but they are also enormously influential in the student's emotional and intellectual development. Judith Burton

conducted a study at Columbia University of more than 2000 children and found that the students who engaged in arts curriculum were far superior in creative thinking, self-concept, problem-solving, self-expression, risk-taking, and cooperation than those who did not (Jensen 2001, p.5).

## HOW TO USE DRAMA/THEATRE-IN-EDUCATION WITH THE SPECIAL NEEDS CLASSROOM

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Following these titans' philosophies on education, everyone has the ability to learn, particularly through the use of dramatic play as a means of learning new concepts. Dramatic play is a form of kinesthetic learning, actively engaging the body to learn, analyze, and develop new skills. Howard Gardner's (1993) theory of multiple intelligences enhances a student's bodily kinesthetic intelligence where the application of the body and one's hands are the means by which an individual solves a problem. The body knows how to solve a problem even if the learner is unable to describe and/or write the necessary steps. Concepts attained through kinesthetic learning bear long-term application, like the ability to ride a bicycle after five years versus when asked to remember and give the name for what the capital of Peru is (Jensen 2001, p.74).

Children need to get up and move and engage in dramatic play. Children learn better through kinesthetic learning as seen in the arts than sitting through a class lecture and taking notes. Children develop higher critical thinking and emotion skills through dramatic play. And nowhere is it more keenly apparent than with children with special needs, particularly autism, where the arts conjure an immediate response to learning and where clearly these individuals excel. Time and time again, we hear stories of a savant with autism who drew a picture similar to one by Leonardo da Vinci or a student with attention deficit

disorder dancing with clean lines and form like that of Martha Graham.

The arts serve as an entry point for individuals with special needs to learn information. As detailed in this book, the balance of activity and inactivity when dealing with dramatic play are of the utmost importance. Hence the teacher will note that all the arts—not just theatre—are integrated into the lessons to ensure a balanced learning environment. The strength of the story dramas derives from integrating each artistic aspect into a complex final outcome. Each artistic aspect prepares the student with a skill that will be executed within the drama revealing how each skill is applied to a sophisticated final performance of those skills. Improvement, particularly over an extended period of time, is undoubtedly noted. In a short period of time, students begin to make eye contact, say the next line in the story during the drama, and the number of breakdowns decreases significantly.

Albert Einstein once said that the value of an education in a liberal arts college is not the learning of many facts, but the training of the mind to think of something that cannot be learned from textbooks. Perhaps following this credo from an individual whose name now is synonymous with genius and who battled his own learning difficulties during his education resonates a valid point in favor for the arts and dramatic play. When students enter into dramatic play they learn the most important intellectual and emotional skills to usher forth the next generation of contributors engaging in dialogue and making decisions based on empathy for another—a coveted skill reaped kinesthetically.

## CHAPTER 2

# GETTING STARTED

Before beginning a lesson, the facilitator must determine what the goals are for the lesson and the best way to present them to the class. It is also important to consider the number and type of students in the class, the time period in which to achieve these goals, and the space one is working with in order to set realistic goals for each lesson. I began by outlining the weekly goals for the program and preparing my materials for the classroom based on the research I had done. These key classroom structure techniques circumvented problems that had a strong possibility of arising, and were instrumental in encouraging the children to feel safe. The effective classroom and lesson structure was presented in a way they could understand, permitting them to trust their teacher. This structure facilitated the weekly lesson regardless of the number of students who attended. Particularly when dealing with autism, many things may occur that might prevent a child from consistently attending each week. Therefore, it was imperative that the lesson be consistent without any spontaneous changes that may occur based on the number of students who are in the classroom any particular week. Some weeks I had 14 students and then other weeks there were three, but by following these classroom structure techniques, the number of attending students was inconsequential to fulfilling the lesson's objective.

And—rather more importantly when reflecting on a teacher's salary—my budget for materials (which includes all props for each week, the classroom structure techniques, etc.) was \$100. These materials can be recycled from year to year or shared among several class sections for under \$100.

Here is a description of how the lesson was structured for each week and each lesson.

## VISUAL STORYBOARD AND SCHEDULE

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The visual storyboard was composed of a poster board numbering the order of activities for the day and a corresponding picture with a word for the activity, which the students could see immediately upon entering the session. This structure was followed in *every* class section. Again, consistency is key:

1. **Hello song** was written below a picture of a group of students sitting listening to their teacher.
2. **Sing** was written below a person singing. This is where we sang a warm-up song, for example, "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes."
3. **Group** was written under a group of individuals standing together. Here, we did our character walks.
4. **Art** was written under three crayons. Students sat and colored their props that they would use in the drama that day.
5. **Free dance** was written under stick figures dancing. Students would take their prop and would dance, play and move with their prop so that they would not be distracted by it during the drama.
6. **Act** was written under the tragedy and comedy masks. This was when we began the story drama.

7. **Read** was written under a person holding an open book. This is when we sat down and I read the story to them that we had just acted out.
8. **Goodbye song:** Like the Hello song at the beginning of the lesson and where the same image can be used to call students together and close out the lesson.

It was incredible how helpful this was. From the very first class, the students came up and looked at the order of events as their parents read and showed them when everything was happening. It was at this moment my mentor teacher leaned over and said, "This is brilliant." Every week students would come up and read the board and a feeling of contentment came over them because there were no surprises, therefore they were not overwhelmed.

#### POINTER

You can use a storyboard for disciplining in the classroom. For example, pictures with text showing the first warning, second warning, and so forth explaining that the first warning is a spoken warning and explanation why. The second is sitting out, and so forth. I sometimes used a storyboard for movements with the songs, for example, "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes." There was a stick figure with his hands on his head as I pointed from picture to picture so the children could understand the movements that went with the song.

## SINGING

In much of my research, singing and music were mentioned as helpful tools when working with children with autism. The first day of my class my mentor had advised, seeing my lack of transitions from activity to activity, that I sing a song between each activity incorporating directions, bringing the group together, and focusing them in order to move on to the next

task. What I wasn't aware of (and what was completely understated in the research I read) was that singing was like a magic wand that waved over the class and ameliorated any chaos or catastrophe that may have been occurring.

**POINTER**

When in doubt or overwhelmed, *sing*—sing and all will be at peace. Whenever I sang, the students would freeze and look at me with a calm I had not seen before. The singing calmed and focused them. You do not need to sing like you are on *American Idol* or have a composer write up complicated music and lyrics for the classroom. I picked melodies and songs I already knew so that I wouldn't forget the songs from week to week (consistency, again) and made up words as I went along, usually repeating the same sentences over and over again. For example, our goodbye song after reading the book was the melody of "Good Night Ladies" with the made-up lyrics: goodbye students, goodbye students, goodbye students, we'll meet again next week. Bum, bum, bum...

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## CLASSROOM STRUCTURE

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Your students spend their entire day in the same room—your classroom. Creating the world of believability for the classroom drama that is occurring in the same room must be at the forefront for the teacher. Changing the room can help: try moving a few desks or using another area of the classroom reserved for special subjects or activities.

### DETERMINING THE THEATRICAL SET-UP

The level of artistic sophistication when determining the set and playing space is entirely up to the teacher. The teacher can choose to represent the characters in the story drama in a variety of ways. Characters can be portrayed through teacher-in-role or puppets. I portrayed many of my characters by printing out copies of the animals from a coloring book, coloring them,

and taping them to a stick. And in some cases (when I couldn't afford the stick or was too tired) I simply held up the piece of paper. Puppets can come in a variety of forms: stuffed animals, sock puppets, paper origami, found objects, etc. Working with children with autism while creating a new lesson every week and gathering and preparing all my materials, I went for "the simple is best" approach. The point is you can use a piece of paper, set up the given circumstances ("This is a duck who lives by himself") and the children will believe this is the duck who lives on a farm and has no friends.

### **DESIGNATING THE PLAYING AREAS**

When setting up your story dramas, it is best to keep the playing places and identification of the playing areas consistent within the story but also from new drama to new drama. There are number of ways of doing this. The major way the teacher can set the stage for story drama time is to arrange the room indicating to the students that we are entering this imaginative creative play world. During another class, the students could plan out the set for the drama and indicate where all the places are located, props needed, and so forth. Desks can be used as part of the design creating pathways, bridges, or general obstacles.

### **USING THE SPACE**

The space I conducted my workshops in was massive to the point where my mentor told me this may not be a great space for children with autism and I might want the other smaller room. But I loved this room. It was clearly the game room where students could come to play pool (as there were several tables), a number of sofas for sitting areas to converse or play games, and foosball tables. Yes, all of this was certainly a distraction but in the center of the room were three long pillars on the right and left sides with different colored tile flooring

shaping a box, and for the purpose of this class became the activity area where we learned the key elements in preparation for the drama. When we engaged in activity outside of the colored tile area, we were entering the story drama where we were exploring new uncharted and imaginative areas. The pool tables served as supports for brown paper to lay above them, creating a cave to crawl through and encounter new characters in the drama. No space is perfect. You can make it as perfect as possible for what you are trying to achieve.

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## SUPPLIES

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One of my greatest necessities regarding supplies for the story drama was something that many teachers can get from the art room, and that was long reams of colored paper. I bought brown, white, red, green, black, and yellow. These colors served as locations for the story drama. For example, in *The Little Red Hen* I used the brown paper for the garden to plant the seeds. In *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* the blue paper with big black dots was the creek with the stepping stones to get across, the green for the waving grass, and so forth. The students would walk from paper to paper knowing that each paper represented where they were and how to return to a certain location in the drama. Especially in *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* there are multiple locations and the drama requires the student actors to return to the many locations over and over again. Because of this repetition, the students start to become the leaders pointing to the proper location of the creek, the fields, etc. I created the character representations through printouts derived from searching the internet and finding the images that I had in mind.

## VISUAL STORYBOARD

Here is a great website to get you started on your visual storyboard: Do2Learn at [www.dotolearn.com](http://www.dotolearn.com). Click on the Picture Cards box and you can select any of the highlighted categories to seize your desired visual aid and then click print. You can also find some of your animal characters for the story dramas. The best part is that everything is free.

## PROPS

Props are any objects mentioned or implied in the story drama. Particularly when working with students with disabilities, the more tactile the prop, the more they engage the students in the world of the drama, enhancing believability. Students are more focused using the props available versus trying to imagine size, shape, weight, and usage. Again, many times I cut out pictures from a website. These cut-outs at times were used for the art section in the dramatic formula (see Chapter 4 for an explanation of this term). Ideas are provided in the specific lesson plans for props.

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## SHADOWS IN THE CLASSROOM

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One of the benefits of being part of a non-profit organization that offered these classes outside of the classroom on a Saturday was that we could set the expectations from parents and students in advance on how the class would be most successful. One of the stipulations was that the parents served as “shadows” throughout the lesson, guiding the students through certain activities or disruptive behavior. This was tremendously helpful and necessary as it would have been impossible for the teacher to attend to all the distractions of student discontent and/or any special assistance to complete a task.

The purpose of this role is to literally shadow the student who needs extra help or attention throughout the lesson. The shadow is to stay behind and in the dark, allowing the student in need to independently try to complete the task. The shadow would emerge if tasks required an assistant to equalize the student's ability with the rest of the class. The shadows were also there to help in student outbursts that may occur during the class or provide dexterous assistance peeling off sticker backings to attach to a prop. Students, particularly those with autism, experience amplified emotions whereby they sometimes need to remove themselves from the experience. A shadow is imperative at these moments because these outbursts can spread to the other students in the class. The shadow can defuse the outburst and involve the student again later in the lesson.

Because of the necessity of having shadows in the class, I have provided a few creative ways for the elementary teacher to secure help with a little organizing on the teacher's part.

## **GUIDANCE COUNSELORS AND IEP SPECIALISTS**

The primary function of guidance counselors and IEP specialists is to provide the teacher and students with the resources and adaptations to allow the students to thrive in the classroom as well as with their fellow classmates. These specialists can either be the shadows themselves or engage in the organization of scheduling outside shadows to be in attendance. IEP stands for Individualized Education Program which develops and describes specific goals set during the student's school year while providing special support for the student to achieve them. The IEP specialist works with a team of professionals (usually the classroom teacher, the student, and the guidance counselor, if the guidance counselor isn't the IEP specialist him- or herself) to set realistic goals for the student.

## HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

The trend in many U.S. states for high school students (aged 14–18) as a graduation requirement is to complete a determined number of hours of volunteer community service. These student shadows would require more planning on the teacher's part with the high school in order for the student to leave and attend the elementary class. Honor students, who could leave during a study hall or be exempt from class every so often or once a week, would be reliable and mature individuals to honor the expectations of the elementary school teacher and the story drama. Honor students are those students who maintain a grade point average of an A or higher. Each school determines what percentage constitutes an A, however the percentage for an A would not be lower than 90. The teacher can also set up a rotation of high school students so that one student is not missing a plethora of classes.

## STUDENTS WITHIN THE CLASS

Depending on the specific age group of the class and level of disability, the students within the class can serve as shadows assisting during specific sections like the walks where the shadow could model the behavior or help to construct a prop. This could also encourage the class to treat each other as an ensemble, working together and caring for each other while trying to complete a common goal.

## PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

The PTA will have a greater networking system within the community to locate and identify outside the school possibly experienced helpers to enter the classroom as shadows. The PTA can also organize the parents who are available and appropriate for the classroom as shadows.

## PRO-SEM (PRO-SEMESTER)

Professional-semester, also known as student teaching and includes the mandated observation hours conducted by the college students, is an appointed year for college students, usually their second or third year of college, where the students must complete a designated number of hours as determined by the Department of Education for each state in the United States. These requirements determined by the state for college students before entering their professional semester include but are not limited to: a completion of specified courses in their major, successful passing the Praxis exam (examinations required in order to receive teacher certification), completion of classroom observation hours, and criminal and child abuse background checks. These students (ideally special education majors) would be perfect shadows as they desire to be teachers in the classroom coupled with the fact that in order for them to pass and continue on to student teaching doing well as a shadow is at stake.

# CHAPTER 3

## TEACHER THEATRICS

Many teachers cringe at the idea of performing, far more so than being outnumbered in the classroom. The theatrics required by the teacher in these lessons can easily be executed by the debutante to the skilled thespian and require no formal training in advance. The fear that arises from either teaching a class of children with autism or portraying the bear in a children's story stems from our unpreparedness to perform the task. It is something that is foreign to us; something that is unknown. Perhaps we have never pretended to be a bear before or maybe we did for our nieces and nephews and they thought we were not very believable. And so the "not knowing" how to begin or be convincing can be immobilizing. Teachers should feel free to try each of these separately before they enter the drama with their class. The teacher can explain to the class they are going to do some theatre today and, for example, can have the students create a still-image (tableau) of playing baseball. Each student can participate in creating all the parts that make up playing a baseball game. Some could be players, fans, hot-dog sellers, referees, etc. Below are a series of teacher theatrics that can be utilized by the teacher to instill further learning in the story drama. Each of the teacher theatrics enrich the drama by drawing on mastered knowledge from other subjects. They promote dialogue among the students by discovering alternative outcomes and consequences,

encouraging decision-making, and sequencing among a large group.

**POINTER**

Throughout this book I will provide many examples clarifying drama-in-education techniques and concepts. Examples will be selected from the story, *The Little Red Hen*.

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## STORY DRAMA

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This book and the dramas detailed for the classroom focus around story drama. Story drama consists of actively engaging in a chosen story through the use of dramatic techniques. Story drama sticks with the narration and plot of the chosen story unraveling the beginning, middle, and end. Story drama brings to life the activity of the characters in the story through the eyes of the student actors engendering a specific role. The student actors empathize with a specific character's journey (usually the protagonist) to fulfill a quest whereby a lesson is learned. The level of complexity of the story drama is at the discretion of the teacher. The teacher can read the narration in the story and then engage in the dramatic activity outlined in the book (e.g. the Little Red Hen finds some grains of wheat and plants them) or the teacher can incorporate a number of teacher theatrics (listed later) to discover a richness in the plot, characters, message, etc. The teacher would then resume the drama by returning to the narration dictated in the book. Story drama does not stray from the story but rather develops and amplifies the information buried in the story. Story drama is an excellent methodology to introduce a class for the first time to drama-in-education. The structure is comforting to the teacher and the class is aware of each individual's responsibility before, after, and during the drama.

## PROCESS DRAMA

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Process drama, which is more advanced than story drama, is the action of an evolved idea that changes and grows and has no finished, predetermined ending. The purpose of the drama is to guide the students through a series of drama-in-education techniques that enhance and provide greater depth in the learning process. While embarking on this dramatic process, the teacher should be flexible to what is being offered by the students that may prove fruitful to the drama. The students may want to speak with a character, which is an activity that was not on the original list of dramatic techniques. However, by allowing this interview, the students are synthesizing the teacher's objective for the lesson, researching and gathering more information about the learning lesson presented in the drama. Process drama is an advanced form of drama-in-education where a dramatic catalyst instigates the drama. These catalysts could derive from a newspaper clipping, a picture, a story, etc. These catalysts raise an issue to be discussed and explored such as bullying or cliques.

## DRAMA-IN-EDUCATION TECHNIQUES FOR PROCESS DRAMA

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Drama-in-education techniques the teacher can organize into a process drama include tableaux, thought tracking, hot-seating, and narration.

### TABLEAUX

In a tableau, groups or individuals "devise an image [pose or shape] using their own bodies to crystallize a moment, idea or theme; or an individual acts as sculptor to a group" (Neelands and Goode 2000, p.25). (A tableau is also known as still-image.) There are five basic elements that make up an effective

tableau: levels, eye contact, facial expressions, use of space, and dynamic.

### *Levels*

Are there different levels in the picture or is everyone at the same height? This means there should be highs and lows in the alignment of the bodies. Chairs or stools or perhaps other actors are needed in order to make someone higher than the others. This can transition into reflection where the teacher can ask the students what the image says based upon who is the highest and who is the lowest? These answers can be transferred to the story discussing themes and plot developments.

### *Eye contact*

Where are the actors in the image looking? Are they all looking at the same person or at different actors or not at anyone at all? What does this say about the image? If eyes are the window to the soul, the choices the actors make in where and how they are looking at someone communicates volumes about the mood and purpose of the image. Eye contact also determines the *point of focus*. The point of focus is whom or what in the tableau is drawing the eye immediately.

### Opportunity for Further Learning

If all the students are kneeling on the ground and looking up to another student standing on a chair looking up, we can immediately conjure the meaning(s) behind the image. Now, if the teacher asks the student on the chair to look down at the students, what message is being conveyed and how has the image changed from its original intent?  
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### *Facial expressions*

The expression on the students' faces communicates internally and externally what is happening within and to the character in the image as well as to whom and what those sentiments are directed towards. By reflecting on the facial expressions of the students in the image, the viewer can determine the overall mood of the image, their individual intentions for themselves or towards another character in the image, and the internal feeling(s) of each character in the image.

### *Use of space*

How did the students in the tableau use space to communicate a message? Are the characters close together or are they very far apart? Are some characters closer than others? The use of space communicates the relationships between the characters in the image. Are the characters united or divided? Looking back at the other elements that make up an effective tableau, the question what is dividing them or uniting them can be determined through their facial expressions, eye contact, and levels communicating the internal and/or external conflicts within the characters.

### *Dynamic*

Dynamic refers to the energy frozen in the bodies of the characters in the tableau. If we were to pause a video of a character running away from a burning building we could still see the dynamic energy in the body and face of the character frozen in mid-action. By looking at that image, we can tell the emotions of the character and the extremes of those emotions or the objective of the character and what he or she is willing to do to achieve it. In order to dynamize the tableau the teacher can ask the students the following questions: What is at stake for these character(s) in the tableau? What is it that they desperately need and why? How might they go about fulfilling

their intention? And at what lengths are they willing to go in order to fulfill that intention? At the end of *The Little Red Hen*, the other animals discover that in order to eat bread they need to do the preliminary work as well. Because they really want that bread, they are willing to do something they don't like.

Ask your students to keep the position, intention, etc. just as it is but now show how they are looking and feeling bigger times ten. As the spectators, we should see the energy in their body and how that energy is directed. If the characters are to appear as if they were frozen in the middle of a sprinting race, we should see the energy in the body mid-sprint. The teacher should feel free to ask the students how would it look in real life? Have them physically do the image—if it is a mid-sprint, have the students sprint and when the teacher says “Freeze,” there is the image.

### THOUGHT TRACKING

The technique of thought tracking can be used at multiple places in the drama, either through tableau or freezing a moment in the drama. To thought track the teacher taps the student actor, to give a word, phrase, or sound describing how they are feeling in a particular moment.

The teacher can execute this technique in the “Walking the room” section of the dramatic formula before entering into the drama to prepare the students for making sounds, a word, or phrase dependent upon the activity and/or what their character is thinking and/or feeling. For example, if the students are told to walk around the room as if they are walking down a muddy path in the woods, the teacher could say “Freeze” and then use the thought tracking technique. The teacher may feel that at first asking the students to give a sound that describes how they are feeling is challenging. Therefore, the technique can also be used, in order to lead into some more challenging responses, to describe something externally. With the walking down a muddy path in the woods example, the teacher could

ask the students when touched to make the sound they hear when they lift their boot from the mud. These sounds can be used later in many of the selected stories for the story drama, particularly *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*.

**POINTER**

The method the teacher uses to thought track a student is inconsequential. You may find that tapping a student on the shoulder will not be a safe or effective way of promoting learning. Therefore, the teacher could choose a gesture, a sound, a prop piece (e.g. a magic wand when it's pointed at the student), or a physical movement that will be the student's cue to solicit a response.

**HOT-SEATING**

When a student, embodying a character, sits on a chair (the hot seat) whereby the other students can interrogate the character discovering his or her motivation, reasoning, feelings, etc., this is known as hot-seating. Where thought tracking helps to create mood and character development, hot-seating has the potential of delving deeper into the plot, character conflicts and relationships, ethics, themes, etc. This technique instigates dialogue perhaps with characters the students may never have spoken to before. Through this character discussion, the students develop empathy for those characters whom they may have prejudged.

**POINTER**

You may find as a teacher that the hot-seating technique at first is rather challenging, but students can build up to this moment throughout the year. I found the best way to first approach this technique was to treat the entire class of actors as the character and I, as the interviewer, hot-seated the character and whoever wanted to answer the questions was welcome to. Whatever answers were given, even contradictory as we contradict ourselves in real

life, served as the one voice of the character. Contradictory answers can be very useful in demonstrating that all the student actors encapsulate the voice of this character by pointing out how these mixed messages can come from one character—what's the real truth? This forces the students to focus on the truth of the character and story drama where the students may need to conference internally before answering the question. As the students become more familiar with answering questions in character, it will then become easier to isolate smaller groups or individuals as a specific character.

Hot-seating can be approached in many different ways. The teacher can have one student actor portraying the character who is to be questioned or a group of student actors representing the character and answering collectively. Listed below are the simplest to the most challenging approaches to this technique of hot-seating. By following this progression from the simplest to the most challenging, the students and teachers will find transitioning to the more challenging aspects easier. This may not be true for all classes depending on the structure of the class and the ability of the students, where starting at a more challenging technique is a fine place to begin.

#### *Going in groups: inside the story drama*

##### PUPPET AS CHARACTER OR TEACHER-IN-ROLE AS CHARACTER

The story dramas as depicted in this book use the method of hot-seating because it is a very simple introduction for the teacher and the students to ask challenging questions, as well as for the teacher and eventually the students answering those challenging questions. If theatre activities are new to the teacher or to the students, starting with the simple puppet technique is the best approach before moving onto more advanced approaches listed below.

### *Puppet technique*

As explained throughout the book, puppets can take many forms. For me the puppets were paper cut-outs from a coloring book that I held and moved their head from side to side. I was the voice of the puppet, answering the students' questions while standing off to the side of the paper and always looking at the puppet when it spoke. The students followed my example, so that when these puppet characters were introduced, the students didn't look at me but at the puppet character. The teacher remains the teacher of the class with this approach, assisting the process forward with questions for the character, particularly if there is certain information the teacher wants the students to learn before moving into the next plot point or activity in the story drama.

### *Teacher-in-role technique*

The teacher-in-role approach is described in great detail in the "Teacher-in-role" section later in this chapter. When the teacher has taken on a role in the story drama, the teacher-in-role can open up a hot-seating moment. Unlike the use of the puppet, the teacher now in role must lead the technique as that character would, perhaps asking why are they here and what do they want, encouraging the students to speak up. Teachers-in-role may need to just start sharing information about themselves and ask the student actors questions in order to instigate an interview.

### **PUPPET AS CHARACTER: REPRESENTED BY STUDENTS**

The student serves as the voice of the character, sharing information about the character and moving the plot forward. The teacher remains the teacher facilitating the activity by asking questions and perhaps helping with answers for the student actor as the voice of the puppet. The student taking on the voice of the character needs to be decided upon in advance, otherwise the world of believability may be compromised. In

the past, I have had students serve as interpreters or translators for the animal. The teacher can then speak gibberish or make the sound of the animal, say nothing and have the students invent the information, or help the students with the interpretation by asking questions as to what they think they heard the puppet character say. If the student feels comfortable, he or she can stand to the side as the teacher has in the past or put the mask in front of him- or herself, create a voice if desired, and answer the questions.

#### ENTIRE CLASS: REPRESENTING ONE CHARACTER

This approach is used inside of the drama where the entire class represents a specific character in the story drama. In the story dramas outlined in this book, this structure sets up the student actors as the protagonist in the story, allowing the transition into this technique to be seamless. The teacher takes on the role as the interviewer. The teacher/interviewer can be another character in the story. There are several places within the story dramas provided where the student actors on their journey to solving a problem encounter several characters along the way. Before reciting the dialogue provided in the book between the characters, the teacher (now in role) can hot-seat the protagonist, played by the student actors. The teacher (in role) can then revert back to the dialogue in the story to move the drama to the next plot point.

#### SMALL GROUPS: REPRESENTING DIFFERENT CHARACTERS, OUTSIDE OF THE DRAMA

Before the drama begins, small groups can be designated to represent specific character(s) in the story. For example, in the story *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, the family is the protagonist in the story. Each small group can represent a member of that family who embarks on their journey into the woods. Each small group assigned to a character can develop their character before the implementation of this technique in a variety of ways.

The teacher can use the Mini Mantle or Mantle of the Expert techniques (described later in this chapter) where students are given a packet of information and must discover who their character is along with creating new information about their character. From this exercise, the student actors have a strong sense of their character, reducing the anxiety of “performing.”

### Opportunity for Further Learning

The teacher can have the other interrogating groups ask the hot-seated group questions in character. For example, reverting back to the story drama of *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, the “brother” may be on the hot seat and the “sister” can ask him a question about their journey and what they are doing today. It could be fun for the teacher to line up the family oldest to youngest and so forth.

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#### **SMALL GROUPS: REPRESENTING DIFFERENT CHARACTERS, INSIDE THE DRAMA**

The teacher will find implementing the above approach makes transitioning into this more advanced method easier. This is not to say that it is necessary to practice the above approach before executing this method in the drama. Again, the teacher knows best how to gauge everyone’s comfort level and ability to achieve learning. At some point in the drama, a student actor is hot-seated either by the other student actors in various roles. *Note:* as this technique becomes more challenging, it is imperative that the students know who they are and what is expected of them in and out of role. The teacher should introduce the situation by referring to the students by their character names or clarifying that we are no longer in role and are students or outsiders asking questions to this character in order to understand the character’s world.

*Going solo***ONE STUDENT ACTOR: OUTSIDE OF THE DRAMA**

This means that the drama has not yet started, or the drama is over, but there are more questions that the student might have where perhaps this technique may help give some insight as to why certain events happened in the story and/or drama. Because you are outside of the drama, the teacher can set up the technique as a talk show, such as Barbara Walters or Oprah Winfrey, and introduce the characters while giving character background and context helping the student to get into character. The teacher can choose the student actors by a show of hands, or if students have been assigned a character in advance to follow throughout the drama to take on the role at this time. The teacher can go into role as the interviewer or can just facilitate as an interviewer would. The teacher can take questions from the audience to ask the characters.

**ONE STUDENT ACTOR: INSIDE THE DRAMA**

This means that during the story drama, a student actor is placed on the hot seat to gain further information about either the character or plot development. The teacher may want to have a character piece that the student feels is appropriate. Just like how the teacher enters into role, the student can and should have the advantage of taking on a role enhancing the world of believability for the student actor taking on the role and those interrogating the character. The student actor taking on the role has the opportunity to step out of role, distinguishing for the class and the student actor him- or herself when he or she is in character and when he or she is not at any time during the drama.

**NARRATION**

Narration can be teacher or student driven where new information is introduced propelling the drama forward.

Narration is the dominant technique utilized in the story dramas unveiling the plot, characters, themes, etc. in a clear and complete manner. With narration, the teacher can provide information without subtext or subtlety. Narration is an excellent tool to use when the teacher may feel that the students didn't perhaps understand something or where repetition of an idea or plot development is necessary. Narration is also excellent for detailing descriptive action mirroring the "Walking the room" section in the visual storyboard how the student actors are to move from destination to destination and what obstacles may appear on their way.

With the complete story dramas and suggested stories included in this book, the story narration is very repetitive in nature where the students have the opportunity to lead the narration. This is a very simple way of turning the drama over to the students empowering them to participate in the many other techniques listed in the teacher theatics.

## TEACHER-IN-ROLE

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In teacher-in-role, the teacher takes on a role in order to provide more knowledge in the drama, inspires student involvement, and stimulates the next task in the drama.

### POINTER

For the story dramas listed in this book, the purpose of the roles is to fulfill a task that is to be completed by the students and to provide information and instruction for their next task. These rules also apply if the teacher chooses to use a puppet or paper cut-out for the characters the student actors meet on their journey. The teacher will not have to create a new stance, but a voice must be selected and facilitating of questions and answers needs to be prepared in advance.

The technique of teacher-in-role merits more attention because in the story drama formula expressed in this book, teacher-in-role is executed in every drama. The idea of playing a character in front of one's students can appear an off-putting task, one that seems impossible to pull off unless you're Meryl Streep or Russell Crowe. This is far from true. The truth of the matter lies in the teacher's ability to *suggest* the role he or she is trying to convey to the students. These suggestions can take several forms—a different voice or patter, a different stance, or a costume piece (hat, scarf, cane, etc.). The teacher should *not* put on a theatrical demonstration confusing the students as to their involvement and etiquette during this performance. The students may assume they are being entertained and therefore should sit and watch the performance and laugh, clap, sit, and enjoy the show. The story dramas encourage student participation throughout as actor-learners and not as audience members. In England I gave a process drama in a middle school drama classroom on George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. The teacher-in-role technique was utilized to represent multiple characters—the pig (Comrade Napoleon) and Mrs. Jones (the farmer's wife). I had another teacher present to go into role as Mr. Jones (the farmer). To represent the different characters and to indicate when I was in and out of role, I made simple yet concrete adjustments: a pashmina draped around my shoulder crossed my chest and tied at the hips like a military sash to represent Comrade Napoleon. My stance consisted of hunching over staring at the students intimidatingly and when I spoke it was in a low quiet tone. For Mrs. Jones the pashmina was worn as a shawl. The students in this process drama played the animals. They were never given costumes or new stances or different voices. The given circumstances were defined in the narration given at the top of the drama that we were animals on a particular farm who were called forth late at night for a meeting in the barn by Comrade Napoleon.

## WHEN AND HOW TO TAKE ON A ROLE

When picking a role to embody, the teacher should pick a role with the intention and foreknowledge of what you want to happen. The teacher must know in advance the purpose of the role to stimulate the next task. You reveal/conceal what will initiate where the drama will go. I chose the role of Comrade Napoleon because I wanted to incite the students (like Napoleon) to believe the animals should walk on two legs, making them superior to Farmer Jones, and to organize a takeover. Later as the animals were revolting against him, Farmer Jones was introduced sitting depressed because of the animals' hatred towards him after he had cared for them all these years. Here, the role was chosen to raise awareness of how one's actions affect those around us, particularly when we are swept away by unquestioning emotions. These roles served a purpose in moving the drama forward. In order for the students to sympathize with the characters in the book, they needed to feel what those characters were feeling and the power of their mistaken actions, the consequences that follow, and learn from it.

### POINTER

A wonderful video to watch that covers beautifully everything I have written, coupled with the fact you get to see the work in action, is at this website: [www.teachfind.com/teachers-tv/ks12-drama-workshop-cecily-oneill](http://www.teachfind.com/teachers-tv/ks12-drama-workshop-cecily-oneill). There are other videos to view as well. However, this one is led by Dr. Cecily O'Neill, a leading international practitioner in drama-in-education. She extended drama-in-education's reach with the invention of process drama and creating a methodology for teachers to implement in the classroom.

With going in and out of role, the teacher has the ability to change the tone of the drama, particularly if the emotions of the students become extreme. The teacher can step out of role

and narrate the next section of the story, changing the atmosphere and releasing the dramatic tension. A friend of mine told a story where she and her elementary class were engaged in a process drama where she was in role as the bad witch and the students were on a journey to defeat the bad witch who was discriminating against certain persons in the village. At one point nearing the end of the drama, the students were empowered to confront and defeat the witch for they had successfully completed all their tasks. She said the students began charging at her, ready to throw her to the ground, and she was completely unprepared for this visceral reaction. My friend survived and so will you. There are a few lessons to learn from this episode. My friend was successful in her drama because the students were genuinely engaged in the process drama and reacted accordingly. Success. Now looking at how to deal with this reaction, the teacher should have anticipated that this reaction would occur and therefore in the beginning of the drama could have made sure to explain how the bad witch might be defeated—perhaps by a certain chant, a dance, throwing water at her, or some other imaginative non-violent action that would destroy the bad witch whereby the teacher could act accordingly. The other alternative would be to have the teacher get out of role (preferably before the students came too close) and immediately go into the narrative, so that the students are aware that the witch is gone and their teacher has returned, and so they resume proper teacher-student behavior.

#### **POINTER: STUDENTS GETTING IN AND OUT OF ROLE**

This section has discussed the importance of how the teacher is to get in and out of role. It is just as important to have the same clarity for the students. The students need to understand who they are and at what moment so as to invest in the drama sharing appropriately. The examples given in the “Teacher-in-role” section are just as applicable for the students as well. The teacher can decide if using a physical costume piece such as a hat or scarf where the students would take the piece on and off is the most clear or if an invisible means of moving

in and out of character like a chant and movement is best. Some suggestions for determining when the students are in role and when they are not can be an invisible suit that the students step into and zip up like a wetsuit. Students can jump in and out of role. The teacher can possess a certain magic wand that transforms them into the character the teacher requests. The teacher needs to incorporate a “thing” that the class does to symbolize who we are. Students can then turn back into students if the teacher feels the students are distracted or overstimulated.

## MANTLE OF THE EXPERT

The most advanced and involved of the process drama experiences is a technique called the Mantle of the Expert invented by the great Dorothy Heathcote\*. This technique could sustain the drama over the course of a semester to the entire year crossing over several different subjects in order to complete the drama. Many teachers who use this technique select a certain time of the week (every Friday) and replace a certain class period or the last hour of the day (social studies, for example, if the drama requires a greater understanding of other cultures). It is during this time the students become imbued as experts in the area of exploration.

### POINTER

Any teacher theatrics listed in this chapter can be applied to any of the story drama lesson plans. The teacher has the authority to go to whatever lengths he or she deems appropriate for the class. The teacher can use all of the teacher theatrics spread across the entire curriculum, over the entirety of the semester, or pick and choose certain theatrics that are of interest to the teacher or the class in general.

\* Dorothy Heathcote is one of the most influential theatre education practitioners revolutionizing the field through her creation of theatre techniques in the classroom and her creation of the Mantle of the Expert. She is a retired elementary teacher and college professor who was appointed Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in 2011.

## MINI MANTLE

The Mini Mantle covers a shorter period of time, perhaps just one day or over the course of a week. The students take on the role as experts to complete a single task. This task can be broken up into smaller groups where each student group's work completes the overall task. For example, I conducted a Mini Mantle over the course of a week where we met for 40 minutes and the presentation was on the last day. It was a Mini Mantle on endangered species for fifth graders (10–11 years old) with special needs. The students were expert scientists with an expertise in determining uncategorized endangered species and these experts were to present their findings at the Endangered Species Conference (conveniently on the day they were to present what they learned to their parents and school). The students were given research boxes where each day the box yielded a clue as to their endangered animal, and aiding them in completing their tasks, such as filling in the animal's birth certificate, drawing or creating the food it eats and taping it to a plate, determining where the animal was in the food chain, and so forth.

## SETTING UP THE DRAMA

So how do we decide to go into a drama for the first time, when this may be our first time playing characters in front of our students? What if they think we're crazy? What if they won't believe us, laugh, and not move on with the drama and then our lesson is a failure? The first step that teachers should take with their class is to explain what is about to occur—explain that the class will embark on a journey. It is the journey of the Little Red Hen, what she discovers, and how her friends respond to helping her. Explain that during the drama they will encounter many different characters that the Little Red Hen comes in contact with—the teacher will show them these characters. Then ask the students if they think they can go on

the journey as the Little Red Hen. A useful tactic to include in your student preparation is to tell the students that before we enter the story drama they must put on their imagination hats. The teacher will then explain that something amazing happens when they put the imagination hats on their heads: students who are truly imaginative, can talk to animals, are accepting of all things seen and unseen, follow directions, work together with each other respectfully, and/or fulfill whatever expectations the teacher has of the students during the drama. Whether the teacher chooses to do the imagination hat technique is optional, however, the expectations of the teacher should be explained in some fashion. The teacher then has the ability to indicate what the classroom management procedure is if the students do not follow the expectations expressed for the story drama. The teacher should also explain what the classroom management will be, such as a warning system per individual. Students may be asked to sit out of the drama due to behavior, but those students can observe and participate during the reflection periods based on their perspective from the outside.

### CREATING THE WORLD OF BELIEVABILITY

There are many different entry points to creating the “world of believability.” It depends on the teacher, the amount of time the teacher chooses to dedicate to the dramatic process, and the experience of the students with process drama determining their ability to believe whatever the teacher deems as true in the drama. Before ever entering the story drama, there are a few simple techniques the teacher can do to create the world of believability.

#### *Design teams*

The teacher can choose all or some or just one of the following design teams, executing the tasks as a class or in small expert groups, depending on the time available.

#### SET DESIGN TEAM

The set design team could create a layout or map of the area as indicated in the story drama, maybe a diorama of the main playing space, which could be a house or particular part of a trail that the characters take in the drama.

#### COSTUME AND PROPS TEAM

The costume and props team can compile character profiles, indicating what the characters look like and are wearing. The profiles can be drawn and written out through journals or bio poems, which can be used as the puppets or characters that the class encounter on their journey.

#### COMMUNITY AND SOCIETAL STRUCTURE TEAM

The community and societal structure team pertains to the community or world in which the students live and the laws that govern this society. The class can create the flag for their community, motto, their pledge of allegiance, national song, and so on.

#### RITUAL OF THE DAY

This ritual clarifies the natural progression of the characters' days. This could be a day planner sheet where the times are filled in, revealing what a typical day is like for them from hour to hour. The ritual can also be what the farm animal community does every day. Perhaps, everyone is awakened by the cockerel at 8am and then says the pledge, sings the song, does a dance, raises the flag, etc. Whatever tasks are required of each design team can be presented as a daily ritual.

**POINTER**

The design team or teams have set up the given circumstances for the drama. The given circumstances contain the true information about the world of the drama. The given circumstances for *The Little Red Hen* are that there is a hen living on a farm with four other friends: the duck, the goose, the cat, and the pig (the friends may differ, depending on the version). The hen finds some grains of wheat and makes bread. This is the truth of the story that is unquestioned—needs to be on a farm, needs to have four animal friends who let her down, etc. Now, the class can go into greater detail about the farm—where things are located, what her house is made of, the proximity of the other friends' homes, etc. All of these questions and ambiguities would be fleshed out by the design teams. The ritual of the day is a wonderful way of entering the drama because the students have already taken on the role of the animals and are invested in the truth of the drama because *they* created the world of the drama.

**Narration**

Narration is discussed earlier in this chapter, but I would like to take narration a step further as a means of entering the world of believability. This requires more commitment to the reality of the drama from the teacher, who serves a bit like a master of ceremonies enticing the students to play. The teacher can have the book open on the first page and read aloud, indicating where in the classroom the listed places in the story are located. The students know that when they walk on the brown paper they are in the field or the garden. The right corner of the room with a chair is the hen's house where they will bake the bread. The teacher can then place the book down when action is required: the hen is walking on the farm and finds some grains of wheat. This can be an active narration where the student actors are performing the narration that is given to them simultaneously. The teacher can pick the book back up and start the next section. The story dramas in this book focus predominately on narration as means of creating the world of believability, setting up the given circumstances, and transitioning from task to task.

# CHAPTER 4

## DRAMATIC FORMULA

The dramatic formula is the outline of the lessons preparing the students to achieve the final goal—the story drama. The dramatic formula serves as the framework for further development of dramatic techniques, expanding opportunities for further learning. In sections of the lesson, the teacher will find *pointers* indicating which dramatic techniques would best serve a particular section and the purpose for choosing those techniques. These pointers can be omitted depending on the amount of time and commitment to the drama the teacher can afford in his or her classroom or based upon the students' readiness to engage in a longer involved drama. The teacher should approach the dramatic formula as a recipe for bread. No matter how one makes bread, there are key ingredients that are added in a particular order. The baker can jazz the bread up with raisins and cinnamon or more or less of another ingredient, but in order to make bread successfully the original framework of the recipe must be respected. The same is true for the dramatic formula. The structure of the formula prepares students with the tools they need in order to act out the drama.

The students are prepared for the story drama just as an athlete is prepared to play a game. Athletes challenge themselves by participating in a series of exercises during their practices. Basketball players will challenge themselves with dribbling exercises, lay-up drills, sprint drills, foul shot drills, passing

drills, etc. All of these exercises and drills must be practiced individually and mastered for the athlete to win the game. Games are composed of a series of combined exercises creating a sophisticated assessment of the players' knowledge and ability to master the exercises. Each section is an exercise educating the students with a new dramatic tool that will be assessed in the drama. Let's examine each section and the objective for each as seen in the chosen exercises.

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## SONG

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Song is reflected as 2. Sing on the storyboard providing the students with their first exercise. Each class starts off with a warm-up song. I always choose a song where the words or phrases would be found in the drama, the physical movements paralleling that of the drama, or depending on the mood of the class choose a song that motivates or calms down the class dynamic. I gravitated predominately between two songs—“Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes” (lyrics available from [www.lyricszoo.com/the-wiggles/heads-shoulders-knees-and-toes](http://www.lyricszoo.com/the-wiggles/heads-shoulders-knees-and-toes)) and “Shake Your Sillies Out” (lyrics available at [www.lyricszoo.com/the-wriggles/shake-your-sillies-out](http://www.lyricszoo.com/the-wriggles/shake-your-sillies-out)). The latter song was always a class favorite and we wound up singing it as the warm-up song almost every week. The song was a recommendation from my mother, who teaches first grade and is known throughout the school as the queen, therefore she was the perfect expert to tap. It was a perfect song for the children to shake their sillies out, wiggle their waggles, jump their jaggles out, and yawn their sleepies out. It was fun and active and immediately prepared the students to walk around the room using their bodies to express someone or something known or foreign to them. Teachers can use any song that they desire. However, always keep in mind the skills (language, movements, emotions, etc.) the teacher wants the students to be able to accomplish during the drama and choose a song that mirrors some or all of those skills.

## WALKING THE ROOM

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Walking the Room, represents 3. Group Activity on the Visual Storyboard, it was the exercise I chose for every class. Teachers are not obligated to execute Walking the Room every time when engaging in a new story drama during the Group Activity section. However, whatever Group Activity the teacher chooses for this section, the skills needed by the students to succeed during the story drama need to be practiced and mastered here. The next exercise implements classroom management protocol as well as prepares the students to isolate certain moments, characters, feelings, etc. that will be found in the story drama at the culmination of the lesson. Before the students engage in any acting or characterizations of place, the teacher must implement safety for the students and ensure and assess their overall understanding of the skills addressed in the exercises to be used later in the drama. Theatre, as means of classroom management, is an extremely subtle and effective way of slowing down the drama where emotions or movement may be getting out of hand. The advantage of this kind of management is that it deters from stopping the drama and disciplining or warning a child where the blaming and shaming of the student(s) involved could invite unwanted drama and dissention in the lesson. This is really the first exercise in the dramatic formula where there are several steps the teacher must properly facilitate in order for the students to transfer those skills to the drama.

The first step, which serves as the classroom management for the story drama and for the lesson, carries an importance for mastering right from the beginning. The teacher should spend more time on the beginning and explain that the students may hear these calling words in the drama particularly if there is a need to stop. These calling words can be implemented throughout any part of the lesson to either slow down or increase the activity in the lesson.

## "FREEZE, GO, JUMP, POINT" ACTIVITY

The exercise is exactly as it sounds:

- *Freeze*: when the teacher says "Freeze," the students are to freeze their bodies and mouths.
- *Go*: the students are to walk and should walk at a normal pace, with no running or talking but listening and ready for the next command.
- *Jump*: the students do one jump up in the air.
- *Point*: the teacher picks something or someone in the room for the students to point at. The teacher might say, "Point at the red chair," "Point at the floor," etc.

This whole beginning section clearly focuses the students to concentrate, pay attention, and listen for the next direction. This exercise can be applied throughout the entire dramatic technique to slow down, focus, or employ some of the teacher theatrics for further learning. This step is and should be a lot of fun. Teachers should take their time with each command, playing with the timing and the order. They can create a very fun activity just between "freeze" and "go." These two commands are very important to master because they serve as classroom management devices during the drama if the teacher feels they need to "freeze" and when the drama can "go" forward. The students will have learned this skill that can be applied at any time during the lesson.

*Note*: the teacher can also use the word "stop" as a substitute if "freeze" is too complicated to comprehend.

## LOOKING AT A SELECTION OF EXAMPLES IN THE LITTLE RED HEN

Some characters found in the book to be portrayed are (depending on the version) the duck, the goose, the cat, and the pig. Some experiences in the story would be to walk in the mud, carry a heavy bag, searching for something very big,

and later very small. These experiences can be a different walk when the teacher says, "Go." For example, the teacher would say, "Walk like you are looking for something very small. Go." The teacher can choose to say how they are going to walk, demonstrate how they are going to walk, say the explanation again and demonstrate. The teacher does not need to execute all three. In my classes, I only said how we were going to walk, said "Go", and off we went.

Emotions can be very difficult. It is common for students with autism and other disabilities to have difficulty expressing emotions with their faces and bodies. Therefore, when dealing with emotions during the "Walking the room" section it is important that the teacher describes and models what the face and body look like when expressing that emotion. For example, stand up very tall with head up (pride), curve one's body like there is weight on your chest pulling it down and weight on your shoulders pulling you down (sadness), like you can't stop laughing and throw your body back and forward very far (great happiness). "Walking the room" was a vital section in the dramatic formula because the teacher can isolate every moment in the drama and practice the complexity of these moments in a safe and dissected manner. When it is time for the drama the students can recognize and reproduce those moments without stress or anxiety.

Practicing and performing these character walks and emotions was always a highlight for the students, particularly coupled with the commands of freeze, go, jump, point. The teacher can also towards the end combine all these commands to reveal how these actions can tell a story. For example, walking to the bus stop very slowly because you're tired—Go; You see the bus driving past you—Freeze; You point at the bus shocked—Point; You jump up and wave your arms trying to make the bus stop—Jump and wave arms; You walk very fast towards the bus to catch—Go; You miss the bus—Freeze; You are very sad—bend over like a weight is on your back and look

at the floor; You walk home very very slowly because your mom is going to be very angry—Go.

#### POINTER

When working with children with autism, the teacher must model emotions physically, describe how an emotion looks, and then say what the emotion is, because a child with autism often will not comprehend and demonstrate pride, sadness, or excitement. Of course this statement is dependent on the degree of disability, but modeling and a verbal description never hurt. I remember going through the walks early on and I said to the children, "Walk as if you are walking in jell-o." And every student stopped and looked at me because they had no idea how that would look, feel, or be like. Quickly, I said, "It's like your feet can't come off the ground and your legs move slowly because of this sticky substance." Trying to describe emotions is very difficult as I was at a loss at first attempting to articulate how one would move through jell-o. When choosing emotions or certain experiences, the teacher should have the physical description pre-planned.

## ART

The art section is where the students will create a prop that will be used throughout the drama, or for a specific event during the drama. The art section is purposely placed here because it changes the momentum of the lesson from becoming too physically involved. In all lessons a teacher must find a balance between activity and non-activity in order for the students' concentration to stay focused. Students would mutiny if they were required to write for an eight-hour school day, as they would if they had a gym class for eight hours. Both are appropriate means of teaching, but there must be a balance. When I taught my classes, the sessions contained 45 minutes of teaching time, and from week to week the number of class participants would invariably change, so in order to accomplish all these tasks the expectations were realistic. Many times the task in art was not

to build a prop but rather color a coloring sheet cut-out that would be used for the drama. Any construction of a prop was greatly simplified. During a Halloween drama based on David Steinberg's *The Witches Ball*, the students created witches' or wizards' hats to wear during the drama. I cut out and prepared the hats from black construction paper in advance before the class. For the art section, I bought from a craft store pre-made stickers containing Halloween themes that could be chosen and placed on the hat. With their parents there to help with the art section, the completion of the prop was realistic and non-stressful for the students.

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## FREE DANCE

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After the completion of their props, the students participate in a free dance that can last for a few minutes or for the entirety of the song. Teachers should choose a song where the theme runs throughout the story drama. Suggestions are provided in the story dramas. The purpose of this section is to allow the students to play with their props freely in order for them to focus on the directions given during the drama versus playing with their prop.

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## THE DRAMA

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The Drama, as reflected in the Visual Storyboard as 6. Act, is the story drama that will be acted out by the students. Like the Group Activity, Act can be any form of final assessment of the learned skills developed in the previous exercises performed by the students. Depending on what type of drama the teacher decides to use in the classroom, for example Mantle of the Expert, Act could be the students performing the ritual of the day as determined by the Design Team(s) in preparation for their final

assessment where the ritual of the day is part of the performance of the story in its entirety at the end of the year. This is the true assessment for the teacher and the students how well the above exercises were instructed and learned. This is the basketball game where all the isolated exercises combine to create a sophisticated demonstration of advanced learning. The drama capitalizes on a learned skill set allowing other advanced levels of thinking to flourish. I remember around the fifth or sixth lesson one of the students with autism who rarely spoke not only began to anticipate the next line but also ad-libbed appropriate character dialogue with another character in the drama. I was only with these students once a week for a little less than an hour and wasn't expecting in that amount of time to witness any real change in the students. The impact of the drama reached far beyond an elementary literature class. It allowed the students to become a voice for the protagonist in the story, walking, talking, and overcoming impossible obstacles through the eyes and legs and voice of another. The barrier of "I can't" was replaced with the character's motivation of "I must." The teacher is the arbiter of the complexity of the drama by implementing Mantle of the Expert and/or the teacher theatrics (drama-in-education techniques). I choose specifically to use story drama, sticking very closely to the original text, which explains why, during the teacher narration sections after a character speaks, immediately the teacher as narrator states—"said the duck" when the duck may have spoken. Process drama would allow the drama to veer from the original story in order to investigate further a theme or issue that resonates with the students and/or an outcome of the school curriculum. Story drama can still conjure information that is not initially written in the selected story through the teacher theatrics techniques, however, the teacher through narration can always return to the selected story. Story drama can provide a great deal of comfort to a first time drama-in-education facilitator who may not feel comfortable portraying another character, or aligning the student tasks and other teacher theatrics to afford

a more profound understanding of a complicated theme. The benefits of committing to the story drama are to flesh out the emotional journeys of the characters, specifically the protagonist that many times are omitted. For example, in *The Little Red Hen*, the students understand and relate to the Little Red Hen working alone on a task and her justification for eventually denying her friends the bread which she labored on. The same understanding is applied to students who complete their homework versus watching television, and deny their friends the answers who chose the latter.

## READ THE STORY

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Read the Story represents 7. Read on the Visual Storyboard. Like Group Activity and Act, Read can take on another form of reading depending on the type of drama chosen in the Teacher Theatrics chapter. For example, if the teacher chooses The Mantle of the Expert approach, Read might be the student scenes they have written between the characters in the story, a letter a character wrote, or a diary entry. In the context of the type of drama chosen for this book (story drama) this is where I read the book to the children. At the conclusion of the lesson, when we would sit down to read the actual story, the children were extremely attentive and fascinated with how close their interpretation of the story through the drama paralleled that of the real book. Again, like the art section, reading the story balanced the activity level in the lesson by focusing the students. The students can truly listen and appreciate the story because they know the plot, the characters, and the ending. The reading of the story is not interrupted with questions or a desire to know more about this world. But rather, the reading of the book is as the author intends, teaching the students the flow and use of language, withholding without anxiety important plot information to create climax or resolve a conflict, and the lesson the author is trying to impart.

## CHAPTER 5

# STEP-BY-STEP STORY DRAMAS 1

### *The Little Red Hen*

This book revolves around two classic folktales—*The Little Red Hen* and *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*. Both of these stories are easily accessible and can be found online and the text printed out for the purposes of the story drama. Any version of the story that you can get hold of will do as they basically use the same language. Two readily available versions of these stories are the following:

- Miller, J.P. (illustrator) (2001) *The Little Red Hen*. New York: Golden Books, Random House.
- Rosen, M. and Oxenbury, H. (2009) *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*. New York: Little Simon.

These editions have particularly detailed pictures interpreting the story and nice character presentation. We discuss *The Little Red Hen* in this chapter and *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* in Chapter 6.

## BACKGROUND DESCRIPTION

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*The Little Red Hen* is a wonderful story to use early in the classroom year as a classroom management tool reminding students that the behavior they demonstrate in the classroom will echo their rewards or lack thereof in the future. We reap what we sow. If students do not listen during math class, they will have great difficulty counting numbers, adding, and subtracting. If students do not do the penmanship homework a teacher assigned, they will not be able to write their name or write words and later sentences. However, if a student does all his or her homework and listens in class, this individual will move forward in his or her learning, advancing to the next grade or receiving a class award.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING

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- *Literary techniques*, specifically in poetry or speeches, are identifiable, for example, onomatopoeia, repetition, and dialogue.
- *Science* is found throughout detailing the processes of farming, photosynthesis, and soil testing.
- *Math* is created through counting the number of seeds to calculating the growth rate of wheat by graphing and charting the results. The class could follow a recipe and measure the ingredients to make bread. Combine this with the science of how yeast activates making bread rise and you have covered two subjects at once!
- *Art* activities arise by creating the props for the drama, creating costume renderings for the animals as well as their homes.

- Writing class could include making a recipe book of all the hen's favorite bread recipes (raisin bread, peanut butter bread, etc.) or a newspaper article about how the Little Red Hen wins a bread competition (students can rewrite the steps how she grows her grains that create the perfect bread taste).

*The Little Red Hen* is a wonderful book for exploring how hard work and preparation yields food and nourishment for the coming days, months, and years. Hard work is rewarded. The Little Red Hen spots an opportunity in the wheat grains. She recognizes that these grains coupled with other grains will make bread. This bread will carry her through the winter. Despite the time and patience that goes into cultivating the grains, the Little Red Hen recognizes that in the end she will be eating fresh baked bread. This has always been one of my favorite books as a child. I loved the ending of this story where the Little Red Hen is eating her bread and all the other animals are salivating over the very last crumb. I remembered thinking, "good for her." This book also resonated with me because the Little Red Hen, even when let down by her friends and colleagues, continued on the arduous journey of cultivating the grains, picking and grinding the grains, and then taking the flour home and making bread from scratch. Many times we compare ourselves to other people, evaluating their successes thinking, "Why is that happening to him/her? I'm smarter/faster/funnier/[insert adjective] than she/he is." Why does that person get to be the leader? Well, she made bread—she demonstrated that she could follow directions and model good behavior in the hallway and in the classroom. When I asked for her help, she didn't say she didn't feel like it, or take a nap during class, or look out the window and not pay attention to the directions. She made bread. She was not distracted by the tempting attitude to just check out and relax. When other students were coloring on their desks, she was reading the assigned story and looking up words she didn't understand.

## STORY BREAKDOWN

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There is a great deal of activity in this story drama which also means there are a lot of potential props. The Little Red Hen goes through a series of steps to make the bread. She hoes the garden, plants the grains, reaps the wheat, carries the wheat to the mill, and finally makes the bread. Depending on what version of the story you get, the Little Red Hen sits down to eat her bread. Later the other animals (having watched her eat the delicious bread) help her clean the house and tend to the fields so they too can eat the next batch of bread. In this version, the animals learned a valuable lesson of reaping what they sow.

I bought this book in France (*La Petite Poule Rousse*) where the story ended in this fashion, and one can imagine how well reading this story in French would have gone. I had a very difficult time finding this story in the United States. The version I finally found ended with the hen eating her bread. I'm sure online you can find other versions. And any version will work. The version I picked up was written much more simply than my French edition. Each started with the Little Red Hen moving onto the next activity—she found the wheat. Next page, she planted the wheat. Very simple, easy to memorize, easy to follow directions with very little description in between. Sometimes in my classes I added in some description to make the activity more real. For example, when it came time for us to plant the wheat, we grabbed our shovels and rakes (pieces of paper) and I would tell the students how the lines had to be very straight and the ground was very hard so they had to really concentrate on what they were doing. If I was a science teacher, I could go on about how plants grow and the process of photosynthesis during this section.

This book serves as a reminder throughout the year about paying attention in class, completing homework, and how each

step of the process must be completed before the final result is revealed.

### Opportunity for Further Learning

There are opportunities to distribute "The Little Red Hen Awards" to students who are modeling good behavior. Recipe cards made for each subject can warrant bread when completed.

For example, in math: Recipe for Writing an Equation = Step 1—counting to 20. Step 2—Ability to count placed objects and giving a group of objects a numerical value. Step 3—Understands the difference between a single digit number and a double digit number. Step 4—Ability to add single digit numbers. Here students also see what all this learning is for, addressing my favorite student complaint, "Why are we learning this?" Looking at the recipe card, students can see how each task is important to reap the benefits of solving an equation, reading a sentence, writing their names, etc.

Or an equation can be placed on the bulletin board and explained that at some point during the year in their math classes, they will learn and be able to solve this equation. They will be that smart. When students can answer the equation correctly and show how they solved it to the teacher, they will receive a "bread" prize (i.e. sticker, extra point in math, etc.). The teacher will give them the recipe for acquiring the proper knowledge to solve the equation. As they complete each step in the recipe, they can check it off their recipe card. The following is an example of a recipe card, the teacher can adapt the list of objectives based upon the needs and abilities of her class.

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## RECIPE CARD FOR MATH

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### SOLVING AN EQUATION

$$4 + 10 = ?$$

1st Counting to 20.

2nd Ability to count placed objects and giving a group of objects a numerical value.

3rd Understands the difference between a single digit number and a double digit number.

4th Ability to add single digit numbers.

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## DRAMATIC FORMULA

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### SET DESIGN AND PROPS (REAL OR IMAGINED)

- *Wheat*: grown wheat, real or imagined, that will have grown from the seeds. An image of grown wheat was used as the art project to be colored by the students.
- *Seeds*: "holes" punched from brown construction paper.
- *Dough*: roll up a white or off-white sheet and place in a large bowl for the students to knead.

- *Brown paper*: the garden or field\* where the wheat is planted.
- *Bag*: carry the wheat to the mill.
- *Oven*: box with lid to put the bread in to be baked.
- *Recipe cards*: master recipe sheet with boxes drawn and a number written inside. Each box corresponds with a picture showing the correct order (as detailed in the book) in which to make bread. Pictures include: planting seeds, hoeing the garden/field\*, watering the seeds, cutting the wheat, etc.
- *Watering cans*: photocopied cut-outs that can also be the art project.
- *Hand shovel or rake*: photocopied cut-outs.

\*Please choose either garden or field depending on your version.

### THE DRAMA (PRE-SET)

- Grains of wheat
- Little Red Hen's home
- The garden or field
- Rakes, hoes, and shovels by the garden
- Hide grains of wheat under the brown paper garden or field
- The animal friends—duck, goose, cat, and pig (depending on the version)
- Recipe cards in Little Red Hen's house.

## VISUAL STORYBOARD AND SCHEDULE

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### 1. HELLO SONG

### 2. SING

- Sing “Shake Your Sillies Out” or “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes.”

### 3. WALKING THE ROOM

- Freeze, go, jump, point.
- Walking through ferns or wheat.
- Duck, goose, cat, pig: make the sounds of these animals as well.
- Walking in mud.
- Picking flowers—blow the seeds or petals off.
- Carrying a heavy bag or shovel.
- Cutting through thick vines.

### 4. ART

Color the wheat and/or color the pictures for the recipe card to be used later in the drama.

### 5. FREE DANCE

When using *The Little Red Hen* as a source for the drama I suggest “Old MacDonald had a Farm” for this “Free dance” section (see lyrics in Appendix). This is merely a suggestion (as are all the ideas for songs for the “Free dance” sections presented later in this book) and may not be the best reflection of your culture or community of learners. Teachers should choose a song that represents the story but is also familiar to the students.

### 6. THE DRAMA

**7. READ THE STORY****8. GOODBYE SONG****POINTER**

The teacher will notice in the drama section a series of abbreviations:

- *TM*: Teacher models (the teacher should model the desired behavior for the students).
- *SA*: Student actors (the students playing a role in the drama).
- *TIR*: Teacher-in-role (the teacher takes on the role of one of the characters).
- *Dramatic dialogue*: the dramatic dialogue is very repetitive where at some points in the drama the teacher may not have to model the line for the student actors. Instead, they'll know what their next line is based on the action given in the teacher narration.

**THE DRAMA**

*Teacher narration:* So the Little Red Hen on a beautiful summer day

(*TM: students can feel the warmth here of the summer sun or squint at the sun's brightness—sensory connections*) was walking around

(*TM: indicate that the students should follow these instructions*) the farmyard when she came across something very interesting. Do you know what it is? A grain of wheat. And the Little Red Hen said to herself: "I will plant this grain of wheat!"

(*TM: have students repeat line.*)

**POINTER**

Either the grains of wheat should be pre-set before the drama begins or the teacher can place the seeds on the ground as the student actors are on their hands and knees looking for the seeds.

### Dramatic dialogue

TM: "I will plant this grain of wheat!"

SA: "*I will plant this grain of wheat!*"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

Teacher narration: And so she picked up the seeds and carried them back home.

(TM: *picking up the seeds and carrying them back home.*)

### POINTER

If the teacher chooses to go into role, the teacher can create or take on the activity that the animal is doing in the story. For example, in my version, the goose and duck are off to a play date with swords and shields. The duck could enter first with a sword and then acknowledge the children. I also like to take a few minutes to show that I as the teacher with a costume piece am someone else, so there is no confusion that the student actors are about to engage in a conversation with someone who is not their teacher, but a character in the drama.

The Little Red Hen then thought that if these seeds were to grow and make rows of wheat she would need some help and who do you think she might ask? Her friends.

(Teacher moves towards the duck's location.)

So first she went to her friend the duck and asked the duck if he would help her plant the grain of wheat.

(Teacher brings out the duck—TIR or puppet)

**Dramatic dialogue**

TM: "Will you help me plant this grain of wheat?"

SA: "Will you help me plant this grain of wheat?"

**Teacher narrator:** said the Little Red Hen.

**TIR as duck:** "Not I!"

**Teacher narrator:** said the duck.

**Opportuniy for Further Learning**

The teacher can interview the duck to develop a stronger character relationship among the student actors and the friends in the story drama comprehending the themes of the story through an emotional connection to the journey of the Little Red Hen.

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**Teacher narration:** The Little Red Hen went on her way to visit the goose and she asked the goose: "Will you help me plant this grain of wheat?"

**Dramatic dialogue**

TM: "Will you help me plant this grain of wheat?"

SA: "Will you help me plant this grain of wheat?"

**Teacher narrator:** said the Little Red Hen.

**TIR as goose:** "Not I!"

**Teacher narrator:** said the goose.

**Teacher narration:** And so the Little Red Hen went on her way. On her travels she found the cat and so went up to the cat, who was fishing, and asked: "Will you help me plant this grain of wheat?"

### Dramatic dialogue

TM: "Will you help me plant this grain of wheat?"

SA: "*Will you help me plant this grain of wheat?*"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as cat: "Not I!"

Teacher narrator: said the cat.

Teacher narration: And so the Little Red Hen went on her way to visit her final friend for help. She went to the pig, who was playing the violin, and asked: "Will you help me plant this grain of wheat?"

### Dramatic dialogue

TM: "Will you help me plant this grain of wheat?"

SA: "*Will you help me plant this grain of wheat?*"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as pig: "Not I!"

Teacher narrator: said the pig.

Teacher narration: So the Little Red Hen stood straight up and said to herself: "Then I will plant it myself!"

### Dramatic dialogue

TM: "Then I will plant it myself!"

SA: "*Then I will plant it myself!*"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

Teacher narration: And so she did. Off she went to the garden/field, picked up her small shovel and began carving a

straight deep line in the earth. She pushed back the earth and carefully placed the seeds into the hole. She then pushed the extra earth over the seeds and grabbed her watering can and watered the seeds and returned back home. For several weeks the Little Red Hen returned to the garden/field to water her seeds.

#### POINTER

Either the wheat is pre-set (underneath the paper garden/field) or the teacher has the wheat in her hands and after the student actors leave this last time—the teacher should place the wheat on the brown paper.

But one day, when the Little Red Hen returned to the garden/field she discovered something extraordinary—the seeds had grown into wheat stalks. And there were a lot of stalks.

#### Dramatic dialogue

**TM:** And she said to herself—“Then who will help me reap the wheat?”

**SA:** “*Then who will help me reap the wheat?*”

**Teacher narrator:** said the Little Red Hen.

**Teacher narration:** So she went looking for help and ventured out to visit her friends to help her reap the wheat. She met the duck playing outside and she asked him: “Will you help me reap the wheat?”

**POINTER**

TIR technique: while the students are walking around the room to meet the next animal friend, the teacher has the opportunity to get into the next role and when ready can continue the narration, guiding the student actors to notice the animal friend, walk over and find the animal engaging in whatever activity is listed or chosen.

**Dramatic dialogue**

TM: "Will you help me reap the wheat?"

SA: "*Will you help me reap the wheat?*"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as duck: "Not I!"

Teacher narrator: said the duck.

Teacher narration: Off she went to find the goose playing with a toy sword and asked him: "Will you help me reap the wheat?"

**Dramatic dialogue**

TM: "Will you help me reap the wheat?"

SA: "*Will you help me reap the wheat?*"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as goose: "Not I!"

Teacher narrator: said the goose.

Teacher narration: And off she went again to find the cat catching butterflies and she asked him: "Will you help me reap the wheat?"

**Dramatic dialogue**

TM: "Will you help me reap the wheat?"

SA: "Will you help me reap the wheat?"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as cat: "Not I!"

Teacher narrator: said the cat.

Teacher narration: And off she went to find the pig playing a clarinet and she asked him: "Will you help me reap the wheat?"

**Dramatic dialogue**

TM: "Will you help me reap the wheat?"

SA: "Will you help me reap the wheat?"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as pig: "Not I!"

Teacher narrator: said the pig.

Teacher narration: So the Little Red Hen stood straight up and said to herself: "Then I will reap it myself!"

**Dramatic dialogue**

TM: "Then I will reap it myself!"

SA: "Then I will reap it myself!"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

Teacher narration: And so she did. She walked back to the garden/field and took her reaper and cut the wheat where it was close to the earth. She piled up all the wheat in her arms,

knowing that she would need to take the wheat to the mill where the grains would be ground into a powder making flour for baking. The Little Red Hen thought to herself: "Who will help me carry the wheat to the mill?"

**Dramatic dialogue**

TM: "Then who will help me carry the wheat to the mill?"

SA: "*Then who will help me carry the wheat to the mill?*"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

Teacher narration: And so she needed help and once again asked her friends. She stumbled across the duck, who was still playing around: "Will you help me carry the wheat to the mill?"

**Dramatic dialogue**

TM: "Will you help me carry the wheat to the mill?"

SA: "*Will you help me carry the wheat to the mill?*"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as duck: "Not I!"

Teacher narrator: said the duck.

Teacher narration: And off she went to find the goose playing with his sword and she asked him: "Will you help me carry the wheat to the mill?"

**Dramatic dialogue**

TM: "Will you help me carry the wheat to the mill?"

SA: "*Will you help me carry the wheat to the mill?*"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as goose: "Not I!"

Teacher narrator: said the goose.

Teacher narration: And off she went to find the cat taking a nap and she asked him: "Will you help me carry the wheat to the mill?"

### Dramatic dialogue

TM: "Will you help me carry the wheat to the mill?"

SA: "*Will you help me carry the wheat to the mill?*"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as cat: "Not I!"

Teacher narrator: said the cat.

Teacher narration: And so she found the pig playing the guitar and she asked him: "Will you help me carry the wheat to the mill?"

### Dramatic dialogue

TM: "Will you help me carry the wheat to the mill?"

SA: "*Will you help me carry the wheat to the mill?*"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as pig: "Not I!"

Teacher narrator: said the pig.

Teacher narration: So the Little Red Hen stood straight up and said to herself: "Then I will carry it myself!"

### Dramatic dialogue

TM: "Then I will carry it myself!"

SA: "*Then I will carry it myself!*"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

*Teacher narration:* And so she did. She gathered up all the wheat in her arms and carried the wheat to the mill to give to the miller to be made into flour.

**POINTER**

The teacher has a number of options regarding the miller:

- The teacher can go into role as the miller.
- The teacher can use a puppet as the miller.
- The teacher can interview or hot-seat the miller.
- The teacher can have the student actors drop the wheat off and wait a few minutes and then carry the wheat back home.

In my classes, I had the student actors drop the wheat off in a box, which I closed and pretended to turn a crank on the outside as I, as teacher narrator, explained that the wheat would turn into flour by the next day. The student actors went home to go to bed after a long day's work and awoke the next morning to walk down to the mill to collect the flour. The Little Red Hen then carried the flour while asking her friends for help to make the dough.

*Teacher narration:* And so the Little Red Hen had collected the flour which could then be made into dough. She decided to ask her friends if they could help her take this heavy bag of flour along with some other ingredients to be made into dough. The Little Red Hen asked herself: "Who will help me make the flour into dough?"

**Dramatic dialogue**

*TM:* "Who will help me make the flour into dough?"

*SA:* "Who will help me make the flour into dough?"

*Teacher narrator:* said the Little Red Hen.

Teacher narration: And so she found the duck taking a swim and she asked him: "Will you help me make the flour into dough?"

### Dramatic dialogue

TM: "Will you help me make the flour into dough?"

SA: "*Will you help me make the flour into dough?*"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as duck: "Not I!"

Teacher narrator: said the duck.

Teacher narration: And off she went to find the goose stretching and she asked him: "Will you help me make the flour into dough?"

### Dramatic dialogue

TM: "Will you help me make the flour into dough?"

SA: "*Will you help me make the flour into dough?*"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as goose: "Not I!"

Teacher narrator: said the goose.

Teacher narration: And off she went to find the cat reading a book and she asked him: "Will you help me make the flour into dough?"

### Dramatic dialogue

TM: "Will you help me make the flour into dough?"

SA: "*Will you help me make the flour into dough?*"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as cat: "Not I!"

Teacher narrator: said the cat.

Teacher narration: And so she went to find the pig taking a mud bath and she asked him: "Will you help me make the flour into dough?"

### Dramatic dialogue

TM: "Will you help me make the flour into dough?"

SA: "*Will you help me make the flour into dough?*"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as pig: "Not I!"

Teacher narrator: said the pig.

Teacher narration: So the Little Red Hen stood straight up and said to herself: "Then I will make it myself!"

### Dramatic dialogue

TM: "Then I will make myself!"

SA: "*Then I will make it myself!*"

Teacher narrator: said the Little Red Hen.

Teacher narration: And so she did. She took the flour into her home so that she could make bread. The Little Red Hen

entered her home, put the flour down on the table, and began searching for her recipe to make bread.

**POINTER**

The teacher can either have the recipe card and pieces hidden in the area of the home (i.e. pre-set) or the teacher can have the pieces nearby and then set the recipe pieces down in the hen house when the student actors are sleeping or when they walk down to the miller to collect the flour.

*Teacher narration:* When the Little Red Hen found all the pieces for her recipe for making bread, she studied each section and put the pieces in the correct order on the recipe card.

**POINTER**

The teacher can make the recipe cards as detailed or as short as desired depending on the length of time and the amount of student involvement. The recipe cards could include the steps already achieved by the Little Red Hen as dictated by the story—find a seed, plant it, water it, etc. and then they can continue onto how to make bread—add  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup honey to the flour, amount of water, beat the dough, etc. The students can see how far they have come in achieving their goal and how much more they need to do, giving them some perspective on how hard the Little Red Hen worked and why she is entitled not to share the bread in the end if she doesn't feel like it. The teacher can choose to make bread in class or after the lesson for the students to enjoy the fruits of their labor.

## RECIPE FROM SEEDS TO FLOUR

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- Find the seeds
- Hoe the garden
- Plant the seeds
- Water the seeds
- Reap the wheat
- Take the wheat to the miller
- Carry the flour home

## RECIPE FOR MAKING BREAD

- 3 cups warm water (110 °F/45 °C)
- 2 packages (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast
- 1/3 cup honey
- 5 cups bread flour
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 3½ cups whole wheat flour
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted

### Directions

1. In a large bowl, mix warm water, yeast, and 1/3 cup honey. Add 5 cups white bread flour, and stir to combine. Let set for 30 minutes, or until big and bubbly.
2. Mix in 3 tablespoons melted butter, 1/3 cup honey, and salt. Stir in 2 cups whole wheat flour. Flour a flat surface and knead with whole wheat flour until not real sticky—just pulling away from the counter, but still sticky to touch. This may take an additional 2 to 4 cups of whole wheat flour. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to coat the surface of the dough. Cover with a dishtowel. Let rise in a warm place until doubled.
3. Punch down, and divide into 3 loaves. Place in greased 9 x 5 inch loaf pans, and allow to rise until dough has topped the pans by one inch.
4. Bake at 350°F (175°C) for 25 to 30 minutes; do not over-bake. Lightly brush the tops of loaves with 2 tablespoons melted butter or margarine when done to prevent crust from getting hard. Cool completely.

*Note: this recipe is taken from <http://allrecipes.com>, Simple Wheat Bread. You can use whatever bread recipe you wish for your class to make (or pretend to make).*

*Teacher narration:* Soon the bread was ready to go into the oven and the Little Red Hen thought to herself: "Who will help me bake the bread?"

**Dramatic dialogue**

TM: "Who will help me bake the bread?"

SA: "Who will help me bake the bread?"

*Teacher narrator:* said the Little Red Hen.

*Teacher narration:* And off she went in search of her friends. She walked around outside and found the duck making a soldier's hat and she asked him: "Will you help me bake the bread?"

**Dramatic dialogue**

TM: "Will you help me bake the bread?"

SA: "Will you help me bake the bread?"

*Teacher narrator:* said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as duck: "Not I!"

*Teacher narrator:* said the duck.

*Teacher narration:* And off she went. She walked around and found the goose sharpening his pretend sword and she asked him: "Will you help me bake the bread?"

**Dramatic dialogue**

TM: "Will you help me bake the bread?"

SA: "Will you help me bake the bread?"

*Teacher narrator:* said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as goose: "Not I!"

*Teacher narrator:* said the goose.

**Teacher narration:** And off she went. She walked around outside and found the cat knitting a scarf and she asked him: "Will you help me bake the bread?"

### Dramatic dialogue

TM: "Will you help me bake the bread?"

SA: "Will you help me bake the bread?"

**Teacher narrator:** said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as cat: "Not I!"

**Teacher narrator:** said the cat.

**Teacher narration:** And off she went. She walked around outside and found the pig again playing his violin and she asked him: "Will you help me bake the bread?"

### Dramatic dialogue

TM: "Will you help me bake the bread?"

SA: "Will you help me bake the bread?"

**Teacher narrator:** said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as pig: "Not I!"

**Teacher narrator:** said the pig.

**Teacher narration:** So the Little Red Hen stood straight up and said to herself: "Then I will bake it myself!"

### Dramatic dialogue

TM: "Then I will bake it myself!"

SA: "Then I will bake it myself!"

**Teacher narrator:** said the Little Red Hen.

**Teacher narration:** And so she did. The Little Red Hen returned home to put the bread dough into the oven to bake. The bread began to rise and when the top of the bread was golden, the Little Red Hen knew the bread was ready. She took the bread out of the oven to cool and placed it on the windowsill.

The smell of the bread made the animals stop what they were doing and walk towards the Little Red Hen's house. The Little Red Hen, noticing the duck was approaching, asked: "And now who will help me eat the bread?"

### Dramatic dialogue

TM: "And now who will help me eat the bread?"

SA: "And now who will help me eat the bread?"

**Teacher narrator:** said the Little Red Hen.

TIR as duck: "I will!"

**Teacher narrator:** said the duck.

TIR as goose: "I will!"

**Teacher narrator:** said the goose.

TIR as cat: "I will!"

**Teacher narrator:** said the cat.

TIR as pig: "I will!"

**Teacher narrator:** said the pig.

TM: "No, I will eat it myself!"

SA: "No, I will eat it myself!"

**Teacher narrator:** said the Little Red Hen.

**Teacher narration:** And so she did.

(Student actors playing the Little Red Hen gobble down the bread.)

The end!

# CHAPTER 6

## STEP-BY-STEP STORY DRAMAS 2

### *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*

#### BACKGROUND DESCRIPTION

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*We're Going on a Bear Hunt* is a wonderful classic tale for the elementary classroom of journey and adventure. There are many educational and creative possibilities based upon the use of language describing sounds and experiences. The students understand how flexible language can be to create new words through sound known as onomatopoeia. The repetition of the text pacifies students, who may be uneasy and engaging in a drama for the first time. They have a map to follow the narration that can be used as a reference tool to look at when journeying from place to place. Particularly at the end when the stakes for the student actors are at their zenith, students have the ability to see, remember, and retrace their steps back to their home escaping the bear chase.

## SCRIPT

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The words used in the following story drama have been adapted by Michael Carleton and are available in full in the Appendix at the end of the book. The teacher should change the language in their story to reflect the language used in either the listed story drama or whatever version the teacher is using in the classroom to reflect the language in that story for the narration, character dialogue, character names, etc.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING

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- *Literary techniques*, specifically in poetry or speeches, are identifiable, for example, onomatopoeia, repetition, and dialogue.
- *Science* is found throughout detailing the process of hibernation for animals. The family walks through several different ecosystems to research and learn more about.
- *Math* is created through counting the number of steps from the starting point to the ending point of the student actors' journey until the end in order to calculate the number of "feet" (literal and/or figurative) to complete the expedition.
- *Art* activities arise by creating the props for the drama, creating costume renderings for the children as well as their homes.
- *Writing class* could include making a journal by each of the children and how they experienced each place. For younger learners a drawing of the place and a word that describes how the place felt for them when they were there.

*We're Going on a Bear Hunt* was successful for me because it allowed the students to really experience what it was like to be a character within a story. With each page the student actors explored a new place, and coupled with the paper on the floor as the set, the students believed they were truly in those places, jumping from rock to rock, fighting through the snow, and tripping over logs in the woods. All this activity focused the students to work together to prepare for these experiences and to check that everyone had successfully completed the task. The students recognized through the map and visualizing all the locations how much they had accomplished and how far away they were from finding or escaping from the bear.

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## STORY BREAKDOWN

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This classic tale chronicles a family outing through nature in the hopes of finding a bear. The family is going on a bear hunt. It is a story of a family working together to overcome the difficult terrain and an enraged bear. The story repeats how they are unafraid because they are together, and together all things are possible. And from their arduous journey they learn a valuable lesson not to disturb a bear ever again.

There are many main events that occur in this story—every page is an event filled with movements and sounds. These movements and sounds require attention and patience to fulfill. This story is constructed with very little descriptive narrative between each place and therefore every place mentioned was utilized in the story drama. The narration is always the same, which is perfect for beginning learners. The story makes up this literary deficit in the plethora of physical and oral encounters. These main events were all executed on long reams of colored paper.

## DRAMATIC FORMULA

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### SET DESIGN AND PROPS (REAL OR IMAGINED)

- *Green paper*: the long and wavy grass.
- *Blue paper with black round circles*: the blue paper represents the creek the students must cross and the black dots (attach construction paper or use a marker to color the circles on) represent the stepping stones.
- *White paper*: snow storm where the students trudge through the snow.
- *Brown paper*: the mud path on their journey.
- *Tree forest*: photocopies of tree cut-outs randomly taped to the floor or pillars in the room that one can walk around.
- *Snowflakes*: strewn on top of the white paper to drop over the students' heads for a storm effect.
- *Map*: a map indicating the path from where the students' journey begins, all the places they will walk through, and where the bear cave is.
- *Map places*: from place to place I drew a line that connected to a box that the students colored and then placed in the correct box.
- *Brown and black paper over two desks or chairs*: this served as the narrow dark cave where the students will meet the bear.
- *The bear*: photocopy cut-outs, stuffed animal, TIR.

### THE DRAMA (PRE-SET)

- The bear in the cave
- Snowflakes on the white paper.

## VISUAL STORYBOARD AND SCHEDULE

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### 1. HELLO SONG

### 2. SING

- Sing "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes."

### 3. WALKING THE ROOM

- Walking through long and wavy grass: hands can glide over the top of the grass.
- Cold, wet snow: can make snow angels, throw snowballs, etc.
- Walking in mud: feet sink and get stuck—pull feet out of the mud.
- Walking the woods: trees are in their path, stepping over logs, ferns at their feet, pushing back vines, etc.

### 4. ART

Color the places to be placed on the bear hunt map and/or make snowflakes.

### 5. FREE DANCE

When using *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* as a source for the drama I suggest "A Hunting We Will Go" for this "Free dance" section (see lyrics in Appendix).

### 6. THE DRAMA

### 7. READ THE STORY

### 8. GOODBYE SONG

## THE DRAMA

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Setting up the world of believability (TIR as parent): Alright everyone, today we are going on a special journey. We are going on a bear hunt. Have you ever gone on a bear hunt before? Well, today we are, hopefully, going to find a bear at the end of our journey. Now in order to find this bear, we need some supplies. We need to put on our hiking boots, and our jackets for the outside, and we need a map telling us where to go.

### POINTER

The teacher can take this opportunity to develop the world of believability more, and ask the students if there is anything else they may need and then either put on or grab those imagined/real objects.

*Teacher narration:* We're going on a bear hunt, hunting for bears. We're going to catch a big one, we're not scared! It's a beautiful day.

*Activity:* Can you feel the sun? How nice. It's such a nice day. We can see for miles, etc.

*Teacher narration:* And we're not scared!

*(Teacher and students should be at the green paper for the wavy grass: green paper with possible grass paper taped up.)*

*Teacher narration:* Oh no, what's that ahead? Long wavy grass, taller than our heads! Can't go over it—no, no, no! Can't go under it—oh, oh, oh! We'll have to go through it!

**POINTER**

Just like in the walks, it is imperative that the teacher model this behavior. Feel the grass and run one's hand over it—let the student actors do the same. The teacher should show how one cannot go over or under it—have the student actors see and try modeling teacher behavior as this repetitive movement will prove useful throughout the drama.

**Dramatic dialogue**

**TIR (parent):** "We'll have to go through it!"

**SA:** "We'll have to go through it!"

**Teacher narrator:** said the children.

**TIR (parent):** "Swishy, swashy, swish! Swishy, swashy, swish!  
Swishy, swashy, swish!"

**SA:** "Swishy, swashy, swish! Swishy, swashy, swish! Swishy, swashy, swish!"

**Activity:** Student actors follow the teacher through the long and wavy grass.

**POINTER**

The teacher has the opportunity to mimic the behavior occurring in the actual book. In my version, the parents and the children are reaching back and pulling each other up the hill of wavy grass. Ad-libbed lines can occur such as—"Hold on" and "Billy, help your sister/friend/fellow explorer up the hill."

**POINTER**

The teacher should take liberties with viewing the map to determine the path they need to take in order to get to the next place. Here, the students have the opportunity to become guides taking on responsibility and investing in the world of believability.

*Activity: Begin walking towards the next place, the river: blue paper with black dots on floor.*

**Teacher narration:** We're going on a bear hunt, hunting for bears. We're going to catch a big one, we're not scared! It's a beautiful day, and we're not scared!

**TIR :** Oh no, what's in our way? A cold and rushing river, wet and grey! Can't go over it—no, no, no! Can't go under it—oh, oh, oh! We'll have to go through it!

*(Possible dialogue) SA: Can't go over it—no, no, no! Can't go under it—oh, oh, oh! We'll have to go through it!*

### Dramatic dialogue

**TIR (parent):** "We'll have to go through it!"

**SA:** "We'll have to go through it!"

**Teacher narrator:** said the children.

**TIR (parent):** "Splash, splosh, splish! Splash, splosh, splish! Splash, splosh, splish!"

**SA:** "Splash, splosh, splish! Splash, splosh, splish! Splash, splosh, splish!"

*Activity: Student actors follow the teacher across the river, taking big steps and pulling their legs out of the mud on the brown paper. Splash, splosh, splish! Splash, splosh, splish! Splash, splosh, splish!*

**Teacher narration:** We're going on a bear hunt, hunting for bears. We're going to catch a big one, we're not scared! It's a beautiful day, and we're not scared!

**TIR :** Oh no, what's that below? Thick, oozy mud, squishy and slow! Can't go over it—no, no, no! Can't go under it—oh, oh, oh! We'll have to go through it!

*(Possible dialogue) SA: Can't go over it—no, no, no! Can't go under it—oh, oh, oh! We'll have to go through it!*

**Dramatic dialogue**

**TIR (parent):** "We'll have to go through it!"

**SA:** "We'll have to go through it!"

**Teacher narrator:** said the children.

**TIR (parent):** "Squelch, squerch, squish! Squelch, squerch, squish! Squelch, squerch, squish!"

**SA:** "Squelch, squerch, squish! Squelch, squerch, squish! Squelch, squerch, squish!"

*Activity: Student actors follow the teacher through the oozy mud, taking big steps and pulling their legs out of the mud on the brown paper.*

*Activity: Begin walking towards the next place, the dark forest: trees randomly taped to the floor or pillars.*

**Teacher narration:** We're going on a bear hunt, hunting for bears. We're going to catch a big one, we're not scared! It's a beautiful day, and we're not scared!

**TIR :** Oh no, what do we see? A big, dark forest, full of big, dark trees! Can't go over it—no, no, no! Can't go under it—oh, oh, oh! We'll have to go through it!

*(Possible dialogue) **SA:** Can't go over it—no, no, no! Can't go under it—oh, oh, oh! We'll have to go through it!*

**Dramatic dialogue**

**TIR (parent):** "We'll have to go through it!"

**SA:** "We'll have to go through it!"

**Teacher narrator:** said the children.

**TIR (parent):** "Stumble, trip, bump, crash! Stumble, trip, bump, crash! Stumble, trip, bump, crash!"

**SA:** "Stumble, trip, bump, crash! Stumble, trip, bump, crash! Stumble, trip, bump, crash!"

*Activity: Student actors follow the teacher through the forest, navigating through the vines, around the trees, and over the logs. Stumble, trip, bump, crash! Stumble, trip, bump, crash! Stumble, trip, bump, crash!*

*Activity: Begin walking towards the next place, the snowstorm: white paper on the floor with snowflakes scattered on top.*

*Teacher narration:* We're going on a bear hunt, hunting for bears. We're going to catch a big one, we're not scared! It's a beautiful day, and we're not scared!

*TIR :* Oh no, what's coming in? A swirling, whirling snowstorm, with icy wind! Can't go over it—no, no, no! Can't go under it—oh, oh, oh! We'll have to go through it!

*(Possible dialogue) SA:* Can't go over it—no, no, no! Can't go under it—oh, oh, oh! We'll have to go through it!

### Dramatic dialogue

*TIR (parent):* "We'll have to go through it!"

*SA:* "We'll have to go through it!"

*Teacher narrator:* said the children.

*TIR (parent):* "Brr, stomp, swoosh! Brr, stomp, swoosh! Brr, stomp, swoosh!"

*SA:* "Brr, stomp, swoosh! Brr, stomp, swoosh! Brr, stomp, swoosh!"

*Activity:* Student actors follow the teacher through the snowstorm where the teacher can pick up and drop the snowflakes above them as the student actors cover themselves with their coats and shield their eyes from the prickling flakes.

*Activity: Begin walking towards the next place, the cave: brown paper taped on top of two chairs or desks.*

*Teacher narration:* We're going on a bear hunt, hunting for bears. We're going to catch a big one, we're not scared! It's a beautiful day, and we're not scared!

*TIR :* Oh no, what's over there? A narrow, dark cave, perfect for a bear! Can't go over it—no, no, no! Can't go under it—oh, oh, oh! We'll have to go through it!

(Possible dialogue) SA: *Can't go over it—no, no, no! Can't go under it—oh, oh, oh! We'll have to go through it!*

### Dramatic dialogue

TIR (parent): "We'll have to go through it!"

SA: "We'll have to go through it!"

Teacher narrator: said the children.

TIR (parent): "Tiptoe, whisper, shush! Tiptoe, whisper, shush! Tiptoe, whisper, shush!"

SA: "Tiptoe, whisper, shush! Tiptoe, whisper, shush! Tiptoe, whisper, shush!"

*Activity: Student actors follow the teacher through the narrow dark cave. The teacher should lead so that she can obtain the bear to reveal himself.*

TIR hears a noise!

TIR (parent): What's that?!

SA: What's that?!

TIR: (*Slowly teacher should start bringing out the bear.*) One shiny wet nose! Thick furry hair! Two big goggly eyes! (*Reveal bear.*) YIKES! IT'S A BEAR!

QUICK! Back through the cave! Tiptoe, whisper, shush!

*Activity: Exit cave and head towards the snow.*

TIR : Back through the snowstorm! Brr, stomp, swoosh!

*Activity: Exit snowstorm and head towards the forest.*

TIR : Back through the forest! Stumble, trip, bump, crash!

*Activity: Exit forest and head towards the mud.*

TIR : Back through the mud! Squelch, squerch, squish!

*Activity: Exit mud and head towards the river.*

TIR : Back through the river! Splash, splosh, splish!

*Activity: Exit river and head towards the grass.*

TIR : Back through the grass! Swishy, swashy, swish!

*Activity: Exit grass and head towards the house.*

TIR : Get back to our house, open up the door. Rush up the staircase, run down the hall!

OH NO! We forgot to shut the door!

Back down the staircase, shut the door tight. Back up the staircase, turn off all the lights!

Into our bedroom, climb into bed. Pull all the covers over our heads.

We're never, ever, ever going on a bear hunt again!

The end!

# CHAPTER 7

## FURTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR STORY DRAMAS

The stories presented in this chapter are not complete story dramas but ideas and suggestions are given for the dramatic formula and/or for Mantle of the Expert. You will need to obtain a copy of the original story and follow the guidelines below. Also read Chapter 8 "How to Write Your Own Story Drama" to develop these ideas into full story dramas.

### DRAMATIC FORMULA 1: *CLICK, CLACK, MOO: COWS THAT TYPE* BY DOREEN CRONIN AND ILLUSTRATED BY BETSY LEWIN

#### GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES

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*Click, Clack, Moo Cows That Type* by Doreen Cronin and illustrated by Betsy Lewin follows the farmyard animals demanding better living conditions (electric heating blankets for the cold nights) or they would not produce milk and eggs. The cows, who love to type on the typewriter, send notes to Farmer Brown dictating their demands. The cows inspire the hens to join the cause and demand electric blankets too. The

seemingly neutral party, the ducks, serve as the messenger between the parties. After witnessing the success of the cows and hens, the ducks decide to type a note to the farmer asking for a diving board since the pond requires some fun accessories.

## THE DRAMA: BREAKDOWN OF MAIN EVENTS

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- *Click, clack, moo:* the cows are typing away in the barn all day long. Farmer Brown cannot believe that his cows love to type. All he hears all day long are the sounds of the cows typing on the keys making the *click, clack, moo* sound.
- *First note on the barnyard door:* the cows place a note on the barnyard door explaining that because it gets rather cold at night, the cows would like to have electric blankets.
- *Farmer's refusal:* Farmer Brown is outraged and refuses to give the cows heating blankets.
- *Second note on the barnyard door:* the cows place a second note on the barnyard door explaining that they will not provide the farmer with any milk.
- *Third note on the barnyard door:* the third note states that the hens are cold as well and would also like electric blankets.
- *Fourth note on the barnyard door:* the cows and hens post another note claiming that they will not produce any eggs or milk.
- *Farmer Brown's reaction:* Farmer Brown is outraged and screaming the words on the note outside the barnyard door.
- *Farmer Brown's note:* his note states that he will not give them electric blankets and they are to produce eggs and milk.

- *Duck gives note from Farmer Brown to animals.*
- *Barnyard meeting:* all the animals lock the barn to have a meeting as to what to do, however, none of the animals could understand *moo*.
- *Duck gives Farmer Brown their answer (fifth note):* the cows and hens create a deal that they will hand over their typewriter to the ducks in exchange for the electric blankets.
- *The deal is made:* the exchange is made. All are happy.
- *The ducks' dilemma:* the ducks feel that they too need something. They learn to type, and demand a diving board for the pond. A diving board is granted.

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## VISUAL STORYBOARD AND SCHEDULE

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### 1. HELLO SONG

### 2. SING

- Sing “Shake Your Sillies Out” or “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes.”

### 3. WALKING THE ROOM

- Freeze, go, jump, point.
- Walking down a long path in a hurry.
- Ducks, cows, hens—make the sounds of these animals as well.
- Walking in mud—try to lift legs up in the air one-by-one like they are glued to the floor.
- Cold night—arms crossed, hands on shoulders and rub up and down for warmth.

- Locking up every inch of the room so that no one can enter.
- Walking in the complete dark—slowly and looking around.

#### 4. ART

Here is a list of ideas for art activities. The teacher can choose to implement some or all of them in the “Art” section prior to the “The drama” section, or perhaps select specific ones to implement at appropriate times during “The drama.”

##### *Typewriters*

Color them so that the students each have their very own and then can create the place by setting up their station in the barn where they type. This can also be a designated space set up by the teacher so that the students know that when they enter this area they are in the barn. This could be an extended activity in “Creating the World of Believability (set design).”

##### *Letters*

Students can write or type out letters that will be posted on the barnyard door.

##### *Creating the map of the environment*

See set design in “Mantle of the Expert.” Where all the characters live, the space between all the locations and what resides among and between these environments. Are there paths leading from area to another? What path does Farmer Brown take to get from the barnyard to his house? A floor plan could indicate where each animal sleeps, and character profiles can be created as well.

## 5. FREE DANCE

When using *Click Clack Moo: Cows That Type* as a source for the drama I suggest “Old MacDonald had a Farm” for this “Free dance” section (see lyrics in Appendix).

## 6. THE DRAMA

The Breakdown of Main Events lists the actions that occur in the story drama. The teacher with the help of this outline can write the narrative transitions as seen in the earlier examples linking these main events. The chapter entitled “How to Write Your Own Story Drama” details how to write these transitions and suggests how the teacher can implement a teacher theoretic within the drama as well.

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# TEACHER THEATRICS

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## TEACHER-IN-ROLE

In this drama, the students are consistently the animals, that is the hens, the cows, and possibly the ducks. The teacher will take on the role of Farmer Brown. The teacher should determine what represents Farmer Brown, for example, a straw hat, a pitchfork (can be a photocopy of a real pitchfork), a bandana or kerchief tied around the neck, a piece of straw to put in the mouth, etc. The purpose of going into role as Farmer Brown is to stimulate the next action. Narration coupled with teacher-in-role will direct the students as to what is happening and should happen next. If Farmer Brown refuses to give them electric blankets and sits in his house, what will the animals do? How will they respond in order to get what they want? This will motivate the student animals to type another letter.

## NARRATION

The book itself moves from one event to another with very little description in between. Here is an area where the teacher can incorporate more of the further learning opportunities that were accomplished throughout the year or in a previous day session. Here, the narration indicates what happens next in the drama so that the student actors have orally heard their stage directions and therefore can set up the next task. For example, Farmer Brown returned to his home outraged stomping his feet all the way home. The animals in the barn sat down at their typewriters and begin to type a second note. The student actors will take their cue, sit down at their typewriters, and begin to type.

## TABLEAUX

Here is a list of possible tableaux the teacher can implement throughout the story drama.

### *Character typing*

Students can place their typewriters in the barn and either sit or stand in the position as their character showing how their cow or later their duck would type. Here students can discover the differences between the size, mass, and mobility of the two animals. Teachers can take time in science class discussing these attributes through the elements of creating a good tableau (levels, eye contact, facial expressions, use of space, and dynamic) for the students to gain a better understanding of animals whereby the actors can use that information to create a character.

### *Soundscape*

Onomatopeic language is featured throughout the book. When the students have created their above listed tableau (character

typing), the teacher can designate certain parts of the tableau as either click, clack, or the moo sound that occurs in the book. The teacher can point to each section (where a gesture of typing can occur) and say their designated sound.

## HOT-SEATING

Hot-seating can occur either through tableau or through *freezing* a moment in time and then asking the student actors questions. The purpose of hot-seating is to *reflect* on what is happening in the drama for further critical thinking skills and/or to *assess* what the students have learned and/or to evaluate their understanding of the story. The teacher can choose, depending on the group, to hot-seat a particular animal, the animal of the student actors one at a time, or the collective student actors as the single voice of the character.

### *After each teacher-in-role technique*

Whenever the teacher discontinues being in role (through disrobing a costume piece or otherwise), the teacher can move into the next piece of narration (such as, Farmer Brown slams the door of his house behind him). The teacher disrobes his or her costume piece and turns to the student actors, asking the cows questions as a group, for example, the farmer is really angry, how does that make you feel? Do you think the farmer has the right to be angry? Why or why not? Why do you think the farmer is angry? What do you think you should do next? The teacher can then return to narration to see what happens next in the drama.

### *Freezing a moment in the drama*

Freezing can be used at any moment in the drama where the teacher feels the students need to gain more information in order to move onto the next task or where the teacher feels the student actors are lost in the drama. The teacher can address

questions about past events, how those events are influencing their present situation, and what this means for their future outcome.

### THOUGHT TRACKING

Where hot-seating is a series of questions like an interview or interrogation, thought tracking is comprised of a simple response that can assess or reflect on the students' learning but more so to enrich the drama through characterization, given circumstances, feelings, themes, etc.

### 7. READ THE STORY

### 8. GOODBYE SONG

## DRAMATIC FORMULA 2: THE WITCHES' BALL BY DAVID STEINBERG AND ILLUSTRATED BY LIZ CONRAD

### GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES

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*The Witches' Ball* by David Steinberg and illustrated by Liz Conrad revolves around a group of witches who are congregating for a witches' ball. The witches travel from all over the world to attend this yearly event. After casting their spells to bring on the night, they eat wonderful witchy treats and play wonderful party games. But the night comes to a close and all the witches must fly into the night until next year when they will meet again.

## THE DRAMA: BREAKDOWN OF MAIN EVENTS

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- *Bing, Bang, Boom:* the witches begin their journey, desperately trying to stay on their brooms, to their special spot where the annual witches' ball takes place.
- *Midnight falls:* as the day closes and the time for their party approaches, the witches cast a spell.
- *The party begins:* all of the activities and atmosphere are described and are acted out.
- *Party games:* let the games begin! The witches play several games all night long.
- *Party's over:* the party ends as day approaches and the witches make a promise to meet again next year and fly back home on their broomsticks.

## VISUAL STORYBOARD AND SCHEDULE

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### 1. HELLO SONG

### 2. SING

- Sing “Shake Your Sillies Out” or “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes.”

### 3. WALKING THE ROOM

- Freeze, go, jump, point.
- Walking with wiggles.
- Very quietly—tip toe.
- Walking like you are so happy—laughing uncontrollably.

- Like you're flying or you're a plane—make wings with arms and bend knees to go lower in the air and stand up on tip toes to fly higher in the air.
- Like you are playing a guitar, beating a drum.
- Walking in the complete dark—slowly and looking around.

#### 4. ART

Here is a list of possible art opportunities to be utilized before and/or during the story drama.

##### *Hats*

When I did this with my group, it was very primitive. I cut out big triangles (one-dimensional) and then cut out long strips about 2 inches in width that could tape around their head for the hat brim after they were finished decorating their hat.

##### Opportunity for Further Learning

With this the teacher could spend classes creating these decoration pieces (perhaps crossing curriculums in a history class learning about Indian, Egyptian, or other cultures' hieroglyphics and the meaning and purpose of using those symbols as a means a storytelling)—however, under my time restraints—I bought foam Halloween stickers from a crafts store and handed out two or three of each type of sticker to the students to place wherever they desired on their hat.

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##### *The brooms*

These can be made from finding sticks from the school nature center and binding them together or cut long strips of different yellow-colored pieces of paper on taped paper towel cardboard rolls or whatever creative means imaginable. Or the very simple route as achieved in those Saturday mornings, print out a coloring book version of a broom and have the students color it.

### *Party games*

Have the students design and create the party games that perhaps the witches might play—the rules, the game pieces or possibly game board, the purpose or goal of the game, the opponents or opposition and how they function, the number of participants, etc. The book lists a number of party games that are normally apparent at parties of all ages. For example, pin the tail on a donkey where the donkey was substituted with a newt. Students could explore what animals or otherwise would be a better substitute. They could pin the hat on the witch or tail on the cat.

### Opportunity for Further Learning

The students could create their mascot or the mascot for each of the different countries the witches come from and introduce their mascots that represent their country and teach the other witches how to play a game based on their mascot. Party favors and treats from each country. Creating the candy based on which materials are most available in that country (crumpets in England, pastries in France, cupcakes and apple pie in the United States, and so on). The possibilities are endless.

## 5. FREE DANCE

When using The Witches' Ball as a source for the drama I suggest "Monster Mash" by Bobby Picket for this "Free dance" section.

## 6. THE DRAMA

The Breakdown of Main Events lists the actions that occur in the story drama. The teacher with the help of this outline can write the narrative transitions as seen in the earlier examples linking these main events. The chapter entitled "How to Write Your Own Story Drama" details how to write these transitions and suggests how the teacher can implement a teacher theoretic within the drama as well.

## TEACHER THEATRICS

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### TEACHER-IN-ROLE

In this drama, the students are consistently the witches who are planning and leaving for the night of the party. There are possibly two layers happening here—where the students are in character as witches but also as representatives of their countries. The purpose of going into role as head witch party planner is to lead the students through the activities that would occur at a party so that each country has the opportunity to share their knowledge with the rest of the group. A second purpose is to prepare the students for the journey to and from the party. The teacher can take the role of the flying instructor, who teaches the students how to ride their brooms. Here the teacher can control the movements of the students. I taped the students' brooms around the edge of the room and when the time came the students ran to their brooms and from the "Walking the room" section "flew" on their brooms to the desired location without moving from their paper. There was no movement around the room. The students stayed on their broom with their arms out like wings bending their knees following the description I provided as to what they were encountering on their flight. They bent their knees if we were flying below the tree line or had to rise up on their tippy toes to fly over the mountain ahead, etc. This helps to eliminate any anxiety that may occur as the students are more prepared for this event when it occurs in the drama. Another option is that the teacher should also feel free to step into role when the students have gotten their brooms and returned to the playing place. The teacher can put on her flying instructor hat and get her special wand and broom to instruct how this flying will take place. After the teacher puts on her costume and possible props, the flying instructor would introduce herself and give the witch student actors the instructions and rules on how to fly their broom and what will happen as a consequence if they do not follow instructions. The teacher can choose to slip

out of role in two places. The teacher can slip out of role before the witch student actors fly off, that is the teacher narrates the journey the witch student actors take, *or* the teacher can stay in role and fly with the students describing what is coming next (for example, the same instructions how to fly from the top and then all the movements to fly and move around objects). The teacher can slip out of role when they arrive at the party. She can disrobe and narrate what happens when they arrive, describing each country like a sports announcer whereby other witches can join the commentary as well. All of the countries gathered together in the center of party space and waited for the head witch party planner to arrive and tell them what was the order of party games!"

#### Opportunity for Further Learning

Make a map of the journey. Narration coupled with teacher-in-role will direct the students as to what is happening and should happen next. When I first engaged in this drama TIR was not used and narration was the dominant means of moving the plot forward. There are many clear moments to incorporate TIR throughout the drama.

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#### NARRATION

The book itself moves from one event to another with very little description in between. Here is an area where the teacher can incorporate more of the further learning opportunities that were accomplished throughout the year or in a previous day session. Here, the narration indicates what happens next in the drama so that the student actors have orally heard their stage directions and therefore can set up the next task. For example, "The witches and wizards flew through the sky swerving to avoid the clouds by lowering their brooms and ducking their heads down. They always flew through the air very slowly and in control because no human could see them so high in the air."

## TABLEAUX

Here is a list of possible tableaux the teacher can implement throughout the story drama.

### *Flying on broomsticks*

Students can place their broom and their bodies in relationship to their brooms demonstrating how they fly in their cultures incorporating the elements of creating a good tableau (levels, eye contact, facial expressions, use of space, and dynamic) for the students to gain a better understanding of country and can use that information to create a character.

### *Spell casting*

Students create a spell in their language and share it with the rest of the class. They can translate it and have another student read it or interpret it on the spot or explain it themselves.

## HOT-SEATING

Hot-seating can occur either through tableau or through *freezing* a moment in time and then asking the student actors questions. The purpose of hot-seating is to *reflect* on what is happening in the drama for further critical thinking skills and/or to *assess* what the students have learned and/or to evaluate their understanding of the story. The teacher can choose, depending on the group, to hot-seat a particular witch or country, the witch student actors one at a time, or the collective student actors as the single voice of the character.

### *After each teacher-in-role technique*

Whenever the teacher discontinues being in role (through disrobing a costume piece or otherwise), the teacher can move into the next piece of narration (for example, the flying instructor flies up into the air for all the other witches and

wizards to follow back home after the party). The teacher disrobes his or her costume piece and turns to the student actors, asking the sorcerers questions as a group, for example, how was the party this year compared to last year? Best or worse and why? Do you think you'll come back next year? Why or why not? What was different about this year that you will really miss? Is there anything you would like to change for next year? The teacher can then return to narration to see what happens next in the drama.

#### *Freezing a moment in the drama*

Freezing can be used at any moment in the drama where the teacher feels the students need to gain more information in order to move onto the next task or where the teacher feels the student actors are lost in the drama. The teacher can address questions about past events, how those events are influencing their present situation, and what this means for their future outcome.

#### THOUGHT TRACKING

Where hot-seating is a series of questions like an interview or interrogation, thought tracking is comprised of a simple response that can assess or reflect on the students' learning but more so to enrich the drama through characterization, given circumstances, feelings, themes, etc.

#### 7. READ THE STORY

#### 8. GOODBYE SONG

**DRAMATIC FORMULA 3: SNOWMEN AT NIGHT**  
BY CARALYN BUEHNER AND ILLUSTRATED  
BY MARK BUEHNER

**GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES**

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*Snowmen at Night* by Caralyn Buehner and illustrated by Mark Buehner revolves around a little boy who made a snowman and returns each morning to visit his snowman, only to find him disheveled. The snowman seems to fall apart in the night, making the little boy question what the snowman was doing overnight. The following pages imagine that all the snowmen get together at night engaging in numerous activities.

**THE DRAMA: BREAKDOWN OF MAIN EVENTS**

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- *The building of the snowman:* the little boy is rolling up snow in big balls for the body and the face. When the story takes up, the boy is putting the final touches on the face.
- *Returning the next morning:* the next day the snowman is sagging and missing his accessories. The boy reflects on the night-time possibilities that the snowman experiences.
- *The snowman gathering:* all of the snowmen get themselves to the park. While they wait for everyone to arrive, they drink iced cold cocoa.
- *Snowman races:* let the games begin! They race through the park as many times as they please.
- *Ice skating:* next, they head to the frozen pond to show off their ice skating tricks.

- *Snow angels*: returning to the park, the snowmen lay down and create snow angels.
- *Snowball fight*: ducking, finding shelter, and creating snowballs dominate this next activity.
- *Sledding*: hiking up the hill to slide down is filled with great fun.
- *The evening comes to an end*: the snowmen are exhausted and it's now time to gather their things and head to bed.
- *The next morning*: the boy comes out and sees his snowman a mess knowing what he must have been doing at night.

## VISUAL STORYBOARD AND SCHEDULE

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### 1. HELLO SONG

### 2. SING

- Sing “Shake Your Sillies Out” or “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes.”

### 3. WALKING THE ROOM

- Freeze, go, jump, point.
- Skipping can be a difficult concept. You may need to have the children hop with one leg bent and then hop with the other leg bent up in the air and then combine the two.
- Very quietly—tip toe.
- Walking like you are so happy—laughing uncontrollably.
- Like you have something warm in your tummy—rubbing your stomach and making an “hmmm” sound like you’ve eaten your favorite warm cookies or hot chocolate.

- Roller skating—slide one foot on the floor with the other behind you and then switch. Close to running in slow motion but your feet slide on the floor. You can even have students do some tricks—jump and turn around in the air, turn on the ground, leap, etc.
- Walking in the complete dark—slowly and looking around.

#### 4. ART

Here is a list of possible art opportunities to be utilized before and/or during the story drama.

##### *Snowflakes*

There are multiple options with making the snowflakes. Students can cut out snowflakes from paper or it can be a printout that can be colored or have glitter glued onto it, etc. These snowflakes can be used to set the scene as the teacher can have the snowflakes falling on the ground and the students can head outside to make their snowman. The snowflakes can then be used to create the snowman. The snowflakes can either be rolled in a pile or placed in the circle indicating the bottom circle of the snowman where the rest of him is piled upon. Then they will know where to return to at the end of the play.

##### *The costumes*

The face of the snowmen and their accessories can be created many different ways. The teacher can have the students make masks out of paper plates or of white construction paper. Students can choose their eyes, nose, mouth, arms, and any accessories (mittens, gloves, scarf, broom, hat, bowtie, jewelry, etc.).

### Opportunity for Further Learning

Science class can be dedicated to learning about different kinds of stones (minerals, quartz, gems, etc.) for the students to choose later for their eyes and buttons on the body. Different vegetables for the nose (carrots, cucumbers, zucchini, etc.). For the arms, these can be made from finding sticks from the school nature center and binding them together or by cutting up long strips of different yellow-colored pieces of paper on taped paper towel cardboard rolls or whatever creative means imaginable. Or the very simple route as achieved in those Saturday mornings, print out a coloring book version of a broom and have the students color it.

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## 5. FREE DANCE

When using *The Snowmen's Ball* as a source for the drama I suggest "Frosty the Snowman" for this "Free dance" section (see lyrics in Appendix).

## 6. THE DRAMA

The Breakdown of Main Events lists the actions that occur in the story drama. The teacher with the help of this outline can write the narrative transitions as seen in the earlier examples linking these main events. The chapter entitled "How to Write Your Own Story Drama" details how to write these transitions and suggests how the teacher can implement a teacher theatric within the drama as well.

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## TEACHER THEATRICS

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### TEACHER-IN-ROLE

Depending on the teacher's intent, the story as written doesn't immediately beckon for teacher-in-role. When I used this story, I was the narrator throughout the entire drama and never went into role. I narrated the events that happened and then could ask questions for further reflection and detail. However,

teacher-in-role can absolutely be a useful tool in this drama. For example, one of the purposes of going into role could be as the head snowman leading the student actors (as snowmen) and possibly modeling each activity. Another option is for the teacher to be the little boy, who walks out each morning to see the snowman and conjures all the activities that the snowmen act out. The teacher can help the students as snowmen get into their places and frozen forms in the playing area. The teacher now getting into role as the little boy can walk around and assess the physical states of the snowmen. (See *thought tracking* and *hot-seating*.)

## NARRATION

The book *Snowmen at Night* is written from the perspective of the little boy and his imaginings of what his snowman is doing at night. The boy states what he thinks is happening and where the snowmen are going. Narration can be used exclusively if the teacher prefers.

## TABLEAUX

Here is a list of possible tableaux the teacher can implement throughout the story drama.

### *Snowmen in front of their homes*

Students can place themselves in front of their homes where they were originally created. How would the snowmen stand when they are playing in the park, and how would they stand when they felt tired and out-of-sorts the next day? The teacher can isolate half of the tableau and have the other students/snowmen in character comment on the elements of creating a good tableau (levels, eye contact, facial expression, use of space, and dynamic) for the students to gain a better understanding of the different relationships present and character intentions that can be used as information to create a character.

### *Snowball fight*

The snowball fight gives the teacher the opportunity to control this activity if he or she feels the class is overstimulated. Students can create a pose of what might be happening to them during a snowball fight. The teacher can also thought track the students in their poses. Then, the teacher can provide directions to commence the snowball fight in slow motion.

### **HOT-SEATING**

Hot-seating can occur either through tableau or through *freezing* a moment in time and then asking the student actors questions. The purpose of hot-seating is to *reflect* on what is happening in the drama for further critical thinking skills and/or to *assess* what the students have learned and/or to evaluate their understanding of the story. The teacher can choose, depending on the group, to hot-seat a particular snowman, the snowmen student actors one at a time, or the collective student actors as the single voice of the character.

### *After each teacher-in-role technique*

Whenever the teacher discontinues being in role (through disrobing a costume piece or otherwise), the teacher can move into the next piece of narration (for example, all the snowmen went to the table to drink some hot chocolate). The teacher disrobes his or her costume piece and turns to the student actors, asking the snowmen questions as a group, for example, so what activities are you hoping to do next? Do you think the boy will be upset that he returns to a mess in the morning? Why or why not? Do you think that anyone notices what you are doing at night? Why or why not? The teacher can then return to narration to see what happens next in the drama.

*Freezing a moment in the drama*

Freezing can be used at any moment in the drama where the teacher feels the students need to gain more information in order to move onto the next task or where the teacher feels the student actors are lost in the drama. The teacher can address questions about past events, how those events are influencing their present situation, and what this means for their future outcome.

*Tableau of student snowmen*

The students are in their places and showing a tableau of how they would look after playing game after game. The teacher could ask the students the following questions: Would their legs be tired? Would some of their snow melt from their sweat and overheating? Where would their accessories be? Would they even be on correctly or draped on the ground? (Here the boy must put these accessories back on the snowman.)

*Tableau of a winter activity the students like to do*

Students can reveal to the teacher either in-role or in general before the drama begins what activities or games the students/snowmen like to play. The teacher can go further with thought tracking with a sound, motion, gesture, etc. to give a clearer picture what some of the activities might be. By showing the snowmen's favorite snow time activity the teacher can next hot-seat the character(s), enriching the students' believability in the drama.

**THOUGHT TRACKING**

Where hot-seating is a series of questions like an interview or interrogation, thought tracking is comprised of a simple response that can assess or reflect on the students' learning but

more so to enrich the drama through characterization, given circumstances, feelings, themes, etc.

*Tableau of a snowball fight*

When the students are in their places and showing a tableau of what would be happening to them during the fight, the teacher can ask what is happening and what the snowmen are going to do next. The teacher can also ask to have the snowmen identify who they might throw a snowball to next and what the consequences of that action might be—will the other snowmen be angry or will they laugh and keep playing? The teacher could ask the students after the snowball fight the following questions: Have they been hit by a snowball already and by whom? Which snowmen are they working with and which snowmen are they fighting against? How and why did this come about?

**7. READ THE STORY**

**8. GOODBYE SONG**

## CHAPTER 8

# HOW TO WRITE YOUR OWN STORY DRAMA

Because we are working with children's stories, the task of writing your own drama is not an overwhelming task. The stories are written very simply and it is easy to identify the different parts and the overall message of the story. The text is simple and direct, which means that in order to transform the story into a drama the teacher will have to interpret certain details in order to achieve the message he or she wants the students to learn. The interpretations that the teacher and the students will create through the teacher theatrics to enrich the given circumstances may include the relationships between the characters, the characters' experiences and how those experiences affect their behavior, the difficulty of solving certain obstacles based upon previous experiences, the consequences after solving those obstacles and the effects, and the choices the character makes on how to achieve his or her goal. Children's stories dictate what happened, for example, the Little Red Hen went to the mill to change the wheat into flour. However, the story doesn't explain how far the mill is from her house or how arduous the journey is, if she has to complete the task by hand or just drop it off and negotiate with the miller to perform the task, etc. These are the details that the teacher makes clear to

the students either through stating them during the narration or through the use of one or more teacher theatrics either before or during the drama whereby the given circumstances should become clear. If the teacher wants the student actors playing the Little Red Hen to work very hard in order to finally sit and enjoy her bread, the student actors will render the same response as the protagonist at the end of the story. The students outside of the drama will value the importance of hard work, which will spill over into their everyday life. The message the teacher wants the students to learn must be present in and throughout the story drama narration and the objective of the chosen teacher theatrics.

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## READ THE STORY

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This seems like a very simple thing but it is necessary to read the story looking at and for the action that occurs in the story, the characters and their purpose, and the overall message of the story.

## THE CHARACTERS

Take in all the characters in the story and what purpose they serve in the story. The teacher must first identify the protagonist in the story as this will be the character role the students will take on during the drama. The protagonist is the character that the story follows who is trying to do the right thing by achieving a specific goal. The next step is identifying the antagonist, the character that is preventing the protagonist from achieving his goal. After identifying these characters, the teacher will be able to identify the conflict in the story as well as all the obstacles that the antagonist creates thwarting the protagonist. It is the role of the antagonist and the other characters that the teacher will take on during the drama. For example, in *The Little Red Hen* the protagonist is the Little Red Hen, who is trying to

grow, harvest, and make bread for nourishment. Her friends (duck, goose, cat, and pig) are the antagonists who make the process more difficult for her but then want to share in the results of her work.

It is important for the teacher when reviewing these characters to answer the following questions:

- Do they help the protagonist achieve his or her goal? How?
- Do they prevent the protagonist from achieving his or her goal? How?
- What are the characteristics or the personality of each character?
- What do those characteristics teach us as positive and/or negative attributes that the students can try to emulate or learn from in class and in life?

By identifying the answers to these questions the teacher can create and direct the story drama with the intention of learning the desired lesson. This message will reveal itself on the journey upon which the protagonist (student actors) embarks encountering unknown personalities and challenging obstacles that in the process of overcoming them the students' critical thinking skills become augmented.

Once you have identified who the characters are and the role they play in the story and the role you want them to play in your drama, the next step is identifying the action that happens in the story.

## **OVERALL MESSAGE**

Discovering what the overall message is of the story is the most crucial element before one begins to write a story drama. The chosen story may possess several messages that are of importance and will surface throughout the drama even when the teacher focuses on one main message. It is important that the teacher

chooses one message in the story to focus on or the drama will not yield the result the teacher and the students are hoping for in the end. The point of the story drama will become clouded with a lot of unfulfilled information. Therefore narrowing the story down to one message is of the utmost importance. Keep it simple; keep it clear. The teacher can always teach another message through another story.

In *The Little Red Hen* the message found in the story drama at the end of book reiterates the importance of hard work that is consistent over a designated period of time. The journey to achieve bread at the end was arduous, therefore validating the decision that the Little Red Hen should not have to share the bread. Once the teacher has chosen that message, he or she is ready to begin outlining the story drama.

### OUTLINING THE STORY DRAMA

Now that you know where you want to go, it's time to begin outlining the main plot points in the story. Children's stories are straight to the point, which means the teacher may not have to edit the work. Each page may constitute a plot point. The teacher can then number these events from first to last, mapping the journey the protagonist takes to achieve his or her goal. From this plot breakdown, the teacher can see how and why the protagonist makes the decisions he or she made learning from mistakes and making better decisions because of it. These character choices help the teacher create the narration and choose appropriate teacher theatrics bridging each plot point for the student actors to experience the same journey as their protagonist.

Let's use *The Little Red Hen* as our example text on how to begin writing the outline of events and transforming those events into a story drama. These events are listed based upon the book I used for my Saturday classes. Depending on the version you use the events may be different or there may be fewer events. However, the basic events (as listed below) will

be close to the version that you are using and will serve as a sound example for you to follow in order to create your own version.

## OUTLINE OF THE MAIN PLOT POINTS

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Here is a list of the basic events in the story:

1. Little Red Hen finds some grains of wheat.
2. Decides to plant them.
3. Decides to ask her friends—duck, goose, cat, and pig.
  - (a) Duck—Not I!
  - (b) Goose—Not I!
  - (c) Cat—Not I!
  - (d) Pig—Not I!
4. She decides to plant them herself.
5. The wheat grows and it needs to be reaped.
6. Little Red Hen decides that she needs help.
7. She decides to ask her friends.
  - (a) Duck—Not I!
  - (b) Goose—Not I!
  - (c) Cat—Not I!
  - (d) Pig—Not I!
8. She decides to reap it herself.
9. Then, it needs to be taken to the mill.
10. She decides to ask her friends.
  - (a) Duck—Not I!
  - (b) Goose—Not I!

- (c) Cat—Not I!
  - (d) Pig—Not I!
11. She decides to take it there herself.
  12. She needs to make the flour into dough.
  13. She decides to ask her friends.
    - (a) Duck—Not I!
    - (b) Goose—Not I!
    - (c) Cat—Not I!
    - (d) Pig—Not I!
  14. She needs help baking the bread.
  15. She decides to ask her friends.
    - (a) Duck—Not I!
    - (b) Goose—Not I!
    - (c) Cat—Not I!
    - (d) Pig—Not I!
  16. She decides to bake it herself.
  17. The bread needs to be eaten or it will get stale.
  18. She decides to ask her friends.
    - (a) Duck—I will!
    - (b) Goose—I will!
    - (c) Cat—I will!
    - (d) Pig—I will!
  19. “No,” she says that she will eat it herself.
  20. And so she does.

### WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS OUTLINE?

We begin to see a pattern where the Little Red Hen identifies what needs to be accomplished to make the seeds into bread. She realizes that in order to complete the task she will need help. She decides to employ her friends who could share in the reward of eating bread. We learn that her friends decide not to help her as they are enjoying other amusements. However, they would like to participate in eating the bread after all the work is done. This pattern is repeated six times as there are six main tasks to yield bread. The story drama contains six main plot points where the teacher and/or the students need to determine how they get from one point to another.

### WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT THE CHARACTERS?

We learn a lot about the protagonist and her ability to make decisions independently outside the negation of others. We also learn how she values hard work and her decision that only those individuals who worked on creating the bread are permitted to eat the bread. The other animals prefer to engage in other amusements versus helping the Little Red Hen when asked. We also notice that each time (and she visits them several times) she asks for help they are also engaging in leisurely activities. She never asks them to leave their work and help her but rather to stop catching butterflies or wake up from a nap. The work ethic of the two groups is very clear.

### HOW TO MAKE CHOICES IN ORDER TO GET TO THE NEXT STEP?

Teachers need to always remind themselves of the overall message they want their students to have learned when the drama is over. The second the teacher makes a choice or writes narrative that doesn't fulfill that message, the drama will not be clear and the students will not receive the desired message.

Teachers need to ask themselves these questions with each line they write and every teacher theoretic chosen:

- What is it that needs to be accomplished in this task in order for the student actors to move onto the next task? What is the information they need?
- Is there an opportunity for further learning, drawing in other subjects in the curriculum?
- Is there an opportunity for a teacher theoretic?
- Who's playing what role in each task? Teacher-in-role? Student-in-role? And how and when do these individuals get in and out of role?
- What, if any, props are needed in the next task? Do they need to be planted somewhere before the drama begins? Do the student actors need them at the beginning?
- Is the language in the narration active language? For example: "They went to the garden." This means nothing and gives the students nothing to do. In comparison to: "They walked very quickly in a straight line to the edge of the garden and stopped." This is active and informs the students how they are moving from point A to B and what they are to do when they arrive at point B. The language needs to inform the student actors how they went or came or entered a situation. Think of this language as verbal stage directions that might be found in italics in a play-script.
- Is there a pattern in events or language or character choices? These patterns can be repeated in each action step with the same narration or teacher theatics as was previously performed? Or if the first action was narration, does the teacher want to incorporate a teacher theoretic with the repeated action the second time?

## INTRODUCING THE FIRST ACTION

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The choice taken in the story drama in this book uses narration as the means for driving the drama to the first action. The teacher can take as much time with the narration and setting up the actions of the drama as quickly or as unhurriedly as he or she feels necessary. For example, the teacher can take the student actors on a long walk around the Little Red Hen's property and unexpectedly they find the seeds. Another option is to prep the garden for its first planting. The teacher and students can plan in advance what that entails and what equipment they may need. The students can plan the narration, which will lead them into the first action. Or the teacher can choose an opening that is short and simple and take the students to the garden and then begin the narration by saying, "One day the Little Red Hen was in her garden when she found some grains of wheat." Narration is the best option when introducing the story drama as it establishes the student-teacher dynamic and leads the students into the world of believability.

Action #1: The Little Red Hen finds some grains of wheat.

## TYING THE ACTIONS TOGETHER

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If the students are aware of the given circumstances of the story drama before they enter into the drama, the teacher can use one of the teacher theatics such as hot-seating, where through a series of questions the teacher can guide the students towards understanding the amount of work involved and imagine solutions for dealing with this problem to discover the next step. In order to use one of the teacher theatics successfully the students can either engage in a Mantle of the Expert project throughout the year where they are well aware of the other

characters and where they live, the process of taking some grains of wheat and transforming them into bread, etc., or if the teacher implemented the design team where the students would be well informed of the given circumstances having created them in order to leap to the next action. If the students are not aware of the given circumstances and specifically that the Little Red Hen has friends nearby who could possibly help her, teachers may find themselves in a process drama situation where the students drive the action veering from the original plot and the teacher needs to incorporate a series of teacher theatrics to yield the overall message. Of course, narration is simple and takes the student actors to the next step, where for the first time the student actors make the process more relaxed. The teacher does have the ability with narration to pad the story with information that isn't provided in the original story but supports it. For example, from reading the book, it is unclear how far away each house is or how long it takes her to find them. Do these characters play in the same areas? Are there spots where the Little Red Hen finds them? Does she immediately know where they are because they talked the day before? The teacher can get this information from the student actors and then use it in the narration or the teacher can narrate the drama providing this information as the student actors perform the actions.

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## MOVING TOWARDS AND SETTING UP THE NEXT ACTION

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The next action entails that the Little Red Hen will visit four of her friends. The teacher needs to be aware in advance and make a note where each of the friends lives and how the friends will be revealed.

## LOCATION

Whether the students construct the places where each of the friends lives or plays or the teacher takes the student actors to a specific place in the room, the location of friends needs to be consistent. The place where my classes were held had these huge square columns on the periphery of our playing space. Each column represented one of the friends' houses where a paper cut-out of one of the animals entered the scene from behind the column. I wanted the student actors as the Little Red Hen not to feel guilty eating the bread by themselves because they had done all the work. In order to achieve this, the student actors in each section visited each friend to ask for help and every time they heard "No." By visiting each friend every time, the journey of convincing the friends to help out was also work and part of the task that she needed to complete. At the end of the story, the friends are seen helping her with the housework with the hopes of eating the bread the next time. Again, the teacher must review what the message of the story is that he or she wants the children to understand at the end of the story drama. That message will determine if each friend needs to be visited separately and the length of the visit and if there needs to be a conversation trying to convince the friends to help out or if the friends could be all in the same place. This is something for which the teacher needs to revisit the purpose of the story drama, which will determine where physically the student actors are going to complete the next task.

## WHO OR WHAT IS PLAYING THE ROLE?

Once the location(s) are determined the teacher needs to determine who or what will represent the friends and how that transformation or revelation will occur. Will the friends be puppets in some form? Will they be portrayed by the teacher(-in-role)? Will it be the students-in-role? Particularly if the

friends are to be portrayed by the students, the story drama must prepare for this transformation to occur by cueing the student when to change into role and also when to get out of role and join the other student actors. This will eliminate confusion as to who's who and what's happening at that moment. However the teacher determines this moving into character structure, it can be repeated each time the Little Red Hen visits her friends. This way the students will more readily accept that their fellow student actor is now going into role as someone or something else. It is also very important that the teacher establishes before the drama commences that the student is fully prepared to take on the role. Review the *Student getting into Role*, discussed on pp.44–45.

Action #2: She asks her friends:

- Duck
- Goose
- Cat
- Pig

## MOVING TOWARDS THE NEXT ACTION

What needs to be accomplished from the last task is that the friends will not help the Little Red Hen and now she needs to decide what to do with these seeds. Does she do nothing or does she plant the seeds herself? How the teacher gets to this decision can arrive in multiple forms. Narration is the easiest transition from one action to the next but the teacher can use one of the teacher theatics as a means of reflection to come to this decision. The teacher can use thought tracking and have the student actors freeze right after the last friend leaves and for the students to express how the friends' refusals have made them feel. After everyone has shared their sentiments, the teacher can then dialogue with the student actors or use

hot-seating to identify what the next steps should be. What is it they can do with these seeds and what is the best thing for the Little Red Hen? The teacher can then move into narration to guide the children back to the Little Red Hen's house to plant the seeds in the garden.

Action #3: She plants the seeds herself.

### OPPORTUNITY FOR TEACHER THEATRICS

The teacher (or another colleague, perhaps the science teacher) can enter the scene in role and explain how the process works, also allowing the student actors to hot-seat this expert (for examples see below). Together they can prepare the garden. This will move seamlessly into the next task.

#### Opportunity for Further Learning

Teachers can decide if they would like to take the time during this action to incorporate the science behind planting and growing seeds. It doesn't need to be a sit-down science lecture but bits of information about a seed's life cycle and the duration of time that passes from seed to wheat, etc. The next action has the Little Red Hen asking her friends for help because the wheat needs to be reaped. The teacher can make this action more elaborate with watering the seeds (measuring the water and creating a chart of how often the wheat gets watered), if they would like to grow organic wheat and what that entails, weeding the garden, creating a scarecrow if need be, etc. The process of creating and preparing the garden can be an opportunity for further learning.

## MOVING INTO THE NEXT TASK

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As the teacher can see, a period of time has elapsed between the previous task and this one. The teacher can explain during the narration that a period of time has passed and the wheat had grown and grown or through narration have the students go to bed, wake up and water the wheat and perform this action several times to show the passing of time and the work that was performed during that time.

### PROPS ISSUE: SHOWING THE CHANGE FROM SEEDS TO WHEAT

The teacher needs to think about how this is going to occur. When I did this story drama, I narrated the events as the student actors went to bed and then watered the wheat several times until we moved into the next task. When they were sleeping for the third time, I pulled out the wheat that they had colored during the art section and placed this wheat under the long brown paper that served as our garden. When the student actors did wake up and go to the garden, they were so pleased to see their wheat in the garden.

Action #4: She asks her friends to help her reap the wheat as it has grown:

- Duck
- Goose
- Cat
- Pig

## REPEATED ACTIONS AND MOVING INTO THE NEXT STEP

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Again, we see the Little Red Hen go to ask her friends if they will help her with the wheat. The teacher can repeat the same process that happened in the previous action to demonstrate

and reiterate how often the Little Red Hen asks her friends for help and how many times she is denied. This also justifies the ending of the story where she eats the bread herself, because she had given them many opportunities to participate in the process.

### OPPORTUNITY FOR TEACHER THEATRICS

Each time the Little Red Hen asks her friends if they will help her and they say “No,” she learns something about herself and her friends, which establishes her final decision at the end of the book. There is an opportunity for using a teacher theoretic for reflection investigating the friends in the drama and how their actions affect the Little Red Hen. At some point in these repeated actions, the Little Red Hen may make the decision that if they don’t help her, she isn’t going to share her bread and therefore her objective is to teach her friends a lesson because she knows she makes the best bread in the area and they are going to want to eat it. The Little Red Hen has nothing to lose in asking her friends for help because if they help her that’s great and if they don’t she doesn’t have to share her bread with them.

Action #5: She decides to reap the wheat herself.

### Opportunity for Further Learning

Like the planting of the seeds, there is an opportunity for further learning with the reaping of the wheat. Another expert (either a teacher or a colleague-in-role) can teach the students how to harvest the plant correctly in order to yield the best product. Here the expert can also guide the student actors into the next step: what to do with the wheat once it has been harvested. What purposes does wheat serve and how? When wheat is turned into flour, does that serve the Little Red Hen? A conversation based upon the student actors’ previous

choice of how to grow the wheat and the kind of wheat can lead into the differences between whole wheat flour, white flour, etc. and how that affects the taste and color of the bread they will be making.

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## MOVING INTO THE NEXT TASK

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After the student actors have reaped the wheat, the next step is to take the wheat to the mill to be made into flour. Regardless of the number of wheat props that the students literally harvest (as they can and should also be harvesting imaginary ones as well) the teacher must reiterate the abundance of wheat the student actors have grown and harvested and that without help, the Little Red Hen is going to have a hard time taking all this wheat to miller. Here the teacher can hot-seat the student actors as the Little Red Hen to brainstorm ideas on what she can do to get the wheat to the miller as easily as possible. This should lead the students into the next step, as this solution of asking her friends for help should undoubtedly present itself and when it does the teacher should immediately move into narration and conclude that is exactly what the Little Red Hen did—she went off to ask her friends for help.

Action #6: She asks her friends to help take her wheat to the mill:

- Duck
- Goose
- Cat
- Pig

## REPEATED ACTIONS AND MOVING INTO THE NEXT STEP

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Again, we see the Little Red Hen go to ask her friends if they will help her with the wheat. The teacher can repeat the same process that happened in the previous action to demonstrate and reiterate how often the Little Red Hen asks her friends for

help and how many times she is denied their help. This also fulfills the ending of the story where she eats the bread herself as she had given them many opportunities to participate in the process.

### OPPORTUNITY FOR TEACHER THEATRICS

Each time the Little Red Hen asks her friends if they will help her and they say “No,” she learns something about herself and her friends, which establishes her final decision at the end of the book. There is an opportunity for using a teacher theoretic for reflection investigating the friends in the drama and how their actions affect the Little Red Hen. At some point in these repeated actions, the Little Red Hen may make the decision that if they don’t help her, she isn’t going to share her bread and therefore her objective is to teach her friends a lesson because she knows she makes the best bread in the area and they are going to want to eat it. The Little Red Hen has nothing to lose in asking her friends for help because if they help her that’s great and if they don’t she doesn’t have to share her bread with them.

Action #7: She takes the wheat to the mill herself.

### Opportunity for Further Learning

How the Little Red Hen gets to the mill can be facilitated in multiple ways. It can be as easy as narration taken directly from the book—and that’s what she did. She took the wheat to the mill all by herself. And off the student actors go to the mill. Or the teacher can choose to reflect back upon the given circumstances obtained through a Mini Mantle where the students made the map of the area and can map out their journey to the mill. This team can explain all the obstacles that will be in the way—hills, bridges, the length from point A to

B, etc. An opportunity to incorporate math, determining the amount of wheat, the weight of each bag, the number of trips the Little Red Hen will have to take to complete the task. However the Little Red Hen takes the wheat to mill, the teacher should make clear through narration or a teacher theoretic how difficult the task is requiring physical labor and hard work where her friends' help would have been greatly appreciated.

After the wheat has been given to the miller, the teacher needs then to decide if the student actors will wait at the mill until the wheat is done and then make the same journey back home with the wheat or if the student actors need to return the next day, etc.

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## MOVING INTO THE NEXT TASK

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Now that the flour has made it back to the house, the next step is what to do with it. If an expert or teacher theatics was implemented and the student actors have already decided that the wheat will be used for bread, the teacher can narrate or use another teacher theoretic to indicate that with the amount of flour they have produced, the Little Red Hen is going to need help making all these loaves of bread. If narration has been the basis of moving the story drama from point to point, then the teacher could narrate right into this next step or can choose to incorporate a teacher theoretic to develop the next point.

Action #8: She asks her friends to help make the flour into bread:

- Duck
- Goose
- Cat
- Pig

## REPEATED ACTIONS AND MOVING INTO THE NEXT STEP

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Again, we see the Little Red Hen go to ask her friends if they will help her with the next step in the process, making bread. The teacher can repeat the same process that happened in the previous action to demonstrate and reiterate how often the Little Red Hen asks her friends for help and how many times she is denied their help. This also fulfills the ending of the story where she eats the bread herself as she had given them many opportunities to participate in the process.

### OPPORTUNITY FOR TEACHER THEATRICS

Each time the Little Red Hen asks her friends if they will help her and they say "No." she learns something about herself and her friends, which establishes her final decision at the end of the book. There is an opportunity for using a teacher theoretic for reflection investigating the friends in the drama and how their actions affect the Little Red Hen. At some point in these repeated actions, the Little Red Hen may make the decision that if they don't help her she isn't going to share her bread and therefore her objective is to teach her friends a lesson because she knows she makes the best bread in the area and they are going to want to eat it. The Little Red Hen has nothing to lose in asking her friends for help because if they help her that's great and if they don't she doesn't have to share her bread with them.

Action #9: She makes and bakes the bread.

### Opportunity for Further Learning

In the story drama presented in this book, the student actors had to complete the recipe card revealing everything they had accomplished

up until this point and also reveal the steps involved in making bread. The student actors have the opportunity to be a bit creative with their bread, following the recipe and then improvising on that recipe to make their personal version. Perhaps adding a little cinnamon and raisins or whatever extra ingredients to make the bread they desire to eat.

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## MOVING INTO THE NEXT TASK

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Now that this wonderful creation is completed, the teacher through narration can lead the student actors into this next step or incorporate a teacher theoretic discussing why it might be a good idea to show her friends what they are missing because in the future she is going to need their help. She can't possibly do the work she has just completed year after year after year. She is going to need their help if she is going to have bread next year. The student actors can discuss how best to teach the friends a lesson ensuring they will help out the following year. If the next step in the book does not come up as a suggestion, the teacher can move into narration—and so the Little Red Hen decided that the best way to teach her friends a lesson and ensure they help her the following year was ask them one final time if they would help her eat the bread.

Action #10: She asks her friends who will eat the bread:

- Duck
- Goose
- Cat
- Pig

## REPEATED ACTIONS AND MOVING INTO THE NEXT STEP

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Again, we see the Little Red Hen go to ask her friends if they will help her with the final and best part of the entire process, eating the bread. This time the student actors have the privilege of asking the friends to engage in a task that is fun because of the work the student actors put into it. In the book, the Little Red Hen visits all of her friends and asks them to help her, but when the bread is baked and sitting in the window the friends come to her, lured by the smell and wanting to participate in the task of eating the bread. In this final task, the Little Red Hen does not go to them; they come to her.

Action #11: She decides to eat the bread herself.

## FINAL ACTION

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The student actors get to sit and eat the whole bread by themselves.

## FINAL REFLECTION

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The teacher can incorporate a teacher theoretic or just sit with the students and discuss what they liked about the drama, what they didn't like or understand, and what they learned from the story. Particularly if this the first drama with the students, reflection serves as a wonderful opportunity for the teacher and students when engaging in the next story.

## A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

The purpose of this book is to give teachers a clear understanding of drama-in-education and theatre-in-education techniques, empowering teachers to implement these creative techniques in their classroom. If every teacher tries just one teacher theatric in the classroom, this book is a success. Many wonderfully creative teachers have not the time or the resources to plan and eventually implement the arts in their lessons despite the fact they are all too aware of its rewards. This breakdown of the techniques and complete story dramas should help the teacher to ameliorate those obstacles.

Every class is different. Teachers should feel free to change the language in the story dramas based on their personal style or choose a different art project that is better suited for their classroom. I have no doubt that each teacher will use the dramas and formulas to reflect the rhythm of their classes. Teachers may find that some of the teacher theatrics come easily to them, while others may take some time. The relationship between classroom teachers who have bonded with their students for a month to half a year is very different from the teaching artist who is meeting the participants infrequently and perhaps bonded for only 45 minutes in the previous session. These are all things that can affect how the story drama and other activities play out. The teacher should reflect after the lesson as well to determine how to approach any difficulties the next time to ensure success.

I wish every teacher the best of luck. Applying a simple methodical approach allows you to enjoy creating art with your students. As pioneered by the educational greats mentioned in

the beginning of this book, these techniques incorporate the best methodology for achieving multiple higher level skill sets while maintaining student desire to learn and research more. Now, go and make bread!

## APPENDIX: SONG LYRICS

### *A Hunting We Will Go*

A hunting we will go, a hunting we will go,  
Heigh ho, the dairy-o, a hunting we will go!  
A hunting we will go, a hunting we will go,  
We'll catch a fox and put him in a box,  
And then we'll let him go!

A hunting we will go, a hunting we will go,  
Heigh ho, the dairy-o, a hunting we will go!  
A hunting we will go, a hunting we will go,  
We'll catch a fish and put him on a dish,  
And then we'll let him go!

A hunting we will go, a hunting we will go,  
Heigh ho, the dairy-o, a hunting we will go!  
A hunting we will go, a hunting we will go,  
We'll catch a bear and cut his hair,  
And then we'll let him go!

A hunting we will go, a hunting we will go,  
Heigh ho, the dairy-o, a hunting we will go!  
A hunting we will go, a hunting we will go,  
We'll catch a pig and dance a little jig,  
And then we'll let him go!

A hunting we will go, a hunting we will go,  
Heigh ho, the dairy-o, a hunting we will go!  
A hunting we will go, a hunting we will go,  
We'll catch a giraffe and make him laugh,  
And then we'll let him go!

*Frosty the Snowman*

Frosty the snowman was a jolly happy soul,  
With a corncob pipe and a button nose  
And two eyes made out of coal.

Frosty the snowman is a fairy tale, they say,  
He was made of snow but the children  
Know how he came to life one day.  
There must have been some magic in that  
Old silk hat they found.

For when they placed it on his head  
He began to dance around.

O, Frosty the snowman  
Was alive as he could be,  
And the children say he could laugh  
And play just the same as you and me.  
Thumpetty thump thump,  
Thumpetty thump thump,  
Look at Frosty go.  
Thumpetty thump thump,  
Thumpetty thump thump,  
Over the hills of snow.

Frosty the snowman knew  
The sun was hot that day,  
So he said, "Let's run and  
We'll have some fun  
Now before I melt away."  
Down to the village,  
With a broomstick in his hand,  
Running here and there all  
Around the square saying,  
Catch me if you can.  
He led them down the streets of town  
Right to the traffic cop.  
And he only paused a moment when  
He heard him holler "Stop!"  
For Frosty the snow man  
Had to hurry on his way,

But he waved goodbye saying,  
"Don't you cry,  
I'll be back again some day."  
Thumpetty thump thump,  
Thumpetty thump thump,  
Look at Frosty go.  
Thumpetty thump thump,  
Thumpetty thump thump,  
Over the hills of snow

*Old MacDonald*

Old MacDonald had a farm, E I E I O,  
And on his farm he had some chicks, E I E I O.  
With a chick chick here and a chick chick there,  
Here a chick, there a chick, ev'rywhere a chick chick.  
Old MacDonald had a farm, E I E I O.

Old MacDonald had a farm, E I E I O,  
And on his farm he had a cow, E I E I O.  
With a moo moo here and a moo moo there,  
Here a moo, there a moo, ev'rywhere a moo moo.  
Old MacDonald had a farm, E I E I O.

Old MacDonald had a farm, E I E I O,  
And on his farm he had a pig, E I E I O.  
With an oink oink here and an oink oink there,  
Here an oink, there an oink, ev'rywhere an oink oink.  
Old MacDonald had a farm, E I E I O.

Old MacDonald had a farm, E I E I O,  
And on his farm he had some geese, E I E I O.  
With a honk honk here and a honk honk there,  
Here a honk, there a honk, ev'rywhere a honk honk.  
Old MacDonald had a farm, E I E I O.

Old MacDonald had a farm, E I E I O,  
And on his farm he had a horse, E I E I O.  
With a neh neh here and a neh neh there,  
Here a neh, there a neh, ev'rywhere a neh neh.  
Old MacDonald had a farm, E I E I O.

Old MacDonald had a farm, E I E I O,  
And on his farm he had a mule, E I E I O.  
With a hee haw here and a hee haw there,  
Here a hee, there a hee, ev'rywhere a hee haw.  
Old MacDonald had a farm, E I E I O.

Old MacDonald had a farm, E I E I O,  
And on his farm he had a duck, E I E I O.  
With a quack quack here and a quack quack there,  
Here a quack, there a quack, ev'rywhere a quack quack.  
Old MacDonald had a farm, E I E I O.

*We're Going on a Bear Hunt adapted by Michael Carleton*

We're going on a bear hunt,  
Hunting for bears.  
We're going to catch a big one,  
We're not scared.  
It's a beautiful day,  
And we're not scared!

Oh no, what's that ahead?  
Long, wavy GRASS, taller than our heads!  
Can't go over it—no, no, no!  
Can't go under it—oh, oh, oh!  
We'll have to go through it!  
Swishy, swashy, swish!  
Swishy, swashy, swish!

We're going on a bear hunt,  
Hunting for bears.  
We're going to catch a big one,  
We're not scared.  
It's a beautiful day,  
And we're not scared!

Oh no, what's in our way?  
A cold and rushing RIVER, wet and grey!  
Can't go over it—no, no, no!  
Can't go under it—oh, oh, oh!  
We'll have to go through it!

Splash, splash, splash!  
Splash, splash, splash!

We're going on a bear hunt,  
Hunting for bears.

We're going to catch a big one,  
We're not scared.

It's a beautiful day,  
And we're not scared!

Oh no, what's that below?  
Thick, oozy MUD, squishy and slow!  
Can't go over it—no, no, no!  
Can't go under it—oh, oh, oh!  
We'll have to go through it!  
Squelch, squerch, squish!  
Squelch, squerch, squish!

We're going on a bear hunt,  
Hunting for bears.

We're going to catch a big one,  
We're not scared.  
It's a beautiful day,  
And we're not scared!

Oh no, what do we see?  
A big, dark FOREST, full of big, dark trees!  
Can't go over it—no, no, no!  
Can't go under it—oh, oh, oh!  
We'll have to go through it!  
Stumble, trip, bump, crash!  
Stumble, trip, bump, crash!

We're going on a bear hunt,  
Hunting for bears.  
We're going to catch a big one,  
We're not scared.  
It's a beautiful day,  
And we're not scared!

Oh no, what's coming in?  
A swirling, whirling SNOWSTORM, with icy wind!  
Can't go over it—no, no, no!  
Can't go under it—oh, oh, oh!  
We'll have to go through it!  
Brrr, stomp, swoosh!  
Brrr, stomp, swoosh!

We're going on a bear hunt,  
Hunting for bears.  
We're going to catch a big one,  
We're not scared.  
It's a beautiful day,  
And we're not scared!

Oh no, what's over there?  
A narrow, dark CAVE, perfect for a bear!  
Can't go over it—no, no, no!  
Can't go under it—oh, oh, oh!  
We'll have to go through it!  
Tiptoe, whisper, shush!  
Tiptoe, whisper, shush!

One shiny wet nose!  
Thick furry hair!  
Two big goggly eyes!  
YIKES! IT'S A BEAR!

QUICK! Back through the CAVE! Tiptoe, whisper, shush!  
Back through the SNOWSTORM! Brrr, stomp, swoosh!  
Back through the FOREST! Stumble, trip, bump, crash!  
Back through the MUD! Squelch, squerch, squish!  
Back through the RIVER! Splash, splosh, splish!  
Back through the GRASS! Swishy, swashy, swish!  
Get back to our house, open up the door,  
Rush up the staircase, run down the hall!  
OH NO! We forgot to shut the door!

Back down the staircase, shut the door tight.  
Back up the staircase, turn off all the lights!

Into our bedroom, climb into bed,  
Pull all the covers over our heads.

We're never, ever, ever going on a bear hunt again!

# GLOSSARY OF DRAMA-IN-EDUCATION TERMINOLOGY

**Drama-in-education:** This refers to the use of any dramatic material accessed in the classroom to create and explore an issue in the classroom through the use of story.

**Given circumstances:** These are the circumstances or conditions that are given in the story or drama. For example, in *The Little Red Hen*, the protagonist is a red hen who is little. This is information that is given and taken as truth based upon the information the author has provided and deemed as true.

**Hot-seating:** This is when a student, embodying a character, sits on a chair (the hot seat) where the other students can interrogate the character in the hot seat.

**Intention:** (also known as motivation, objective, desire) Intention refers to each character in the story determining what it is that character is trying to do. Each character wants to do something, such as go to sleep, finish off homework, fall in love, etc.

**Mantle of the Expert:** The most advanced and involved of the process drama experience is a technique called the Mantle of the Expert, whereby the drama would play out over the course of a semester to the entire year crossing over several different subjects in order to complete the drama. Many teachers who use this technique select a certain time of the week (every Friday) and replace a certain class period or the last hour of the day (social studies if the drama requires a greater understanding

of other cultures). It is during this time the students become imbued as experts in a specific area of exploration.

**Narration:** This can be teacher or student driven where new information is introduced propelling the drama forward.

**Obstacles:** These are the circumstances that prevent the character from fulfilling his or her objective.

**Process drama:** This is the action of an evolved idea that changes and grows and has no finished ending. The purpose of the drama is to guide the students through a series of drama-in-education techniques that enhance and provide greater depth in the learning process.

**Prop:** This is any item needed in the drama whether real or imagined in order to move the story forward.

**Set:** This is the constructed or imagined location of the drama.

**Stakes:** Stakes, often referred to as high stakes, are the height of emotional investment of a character who must achieve his or her goal. In order for there to be high stakes, the student actors must feel as if there is an element of failure. This element of failure must be palpable, forcing the class to work together and compose alternative outcomes in order to achieve their goal. For example, the three animal friends in *The Little Red Hen* at the end of the book clean the house and do their chores because they must have the bread to eat or they will starve.

**Story drama:** This is a classroom drama that follows the plot of a chosen story perhaps with some drama-in-education techniques (teacher theatics) to enhance further learning. The purpose of the story drama is to explore character motivations and feelings, themes, relationships, and the overall message.

**Student actor:** I use the term student actor to indicate when

the students are engaged in the drama as characters versus being students who are not engaged in dramatic activity. When the students are in this student actor role, the teacher should treat the students as the roles they are playing.

**Tableau(x):** Groups or individuals “devise an image [pose or shape] using their own bodies to crystallize a moment, idea or theme; or an individual acts as sculptor to a group” (Neelands and Goode 2000, p.25). Tableau is also known as still-image.

**Tactics and strategies:** These are the actions the character engages in to fulfill his or her objective. The character objective could be to finish off homework. A possible strategy is to go to a library to study.

**Teacher-in-role:** The teacher takes on a role in order to gain more knowledge in the drama, invoke student involvement, and stimulate the next task in the drama.

**Theatre-in-education:** This refers to a theatrical performance that occurs in an education setting, for example, a school tour show.

**Thought tracking:** This technique can be used at multiple places in the drama either through a tableau or freezing a moment in the drama where the teacher taps the student actor to either give a word, phrase, or sound describing how they are feeling in a particular moment.

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