

Drama Glossary

atmosphere

In television, much of the atmosphere of the programme is created in post-production through editing and the inclusion of music. In theatre, the actor hears and sees all the elements of sound and lighting and special effects and uses his or her body and voice to help create the atmosphere.

body sculpting

Small groups or individuals use a person's body to form an image. They arrange limbs and torso, instruct the person to have a particular expression, make sure their eyes are looking in a particular direction. A collection of body sculpted people could be grouped to form a tableau.

building belief

To engage fully in role students need to build belief in the fictional situation created in the drama. The teacher will need to do a variety of things to assist the class into believing in the drama. It might be putting on costumes (the teacher and/or the students), reading a newspaper cutting from the era, hearing music from the time or creating tableau photographs. Building belief is often part of creating a role ♦ students will engage in activities that will help them develop a past, present and future for their role. "Making a role credible to ourselves and to others present" - Gavin Bolton.

chorus

More than one character speaking the lines together for effect.

coach

The students or teacher can give advice, instruct or model ways of responding while the activity takes place. Sometimes called side coaching.

collective drawing

The class or small groups make a collective image to represent a place or people in the drama. The image can then be used as a reference for discussing ideas about the place or person.

collective mapping

The class or small groups make a collective map of the drama setting. This convention is particularly useful for building belief. An example would be drawing a map of the imaginary island where the action is taking place ♦ marking in the important places mentioned so far in the story. As the drama unfolds more places may be drawn on the map.

comedy

In television, sitcom is the most common form of comedy, literally where the humour arises from the situation that a group of characters find themselves in. Sitcoms often have "canned

laughter" attached. In theatre, there are many types of comedy. One example is character comedy, which comes from a tradition known as *commedia dell arte*. A modern form of this is improvised comedy such as Theatre Sports. http://www.tki.org.nz/r/arts/drama/glossary_e.php - top

composition

Deciding how things should be placed to make up a shot; usually constructed with a series of drawings in a storyboard.

contextual ideas

Ideas that are appropriate within the context of the drama.

conventions

Established ways of working in drama and or theatre for example hot seating and soliloquy. They provide different ways of working in drama around the same content.

defining space

Marking out areas within the available working space and at times endowing them with significance. Available furniture and props can be used to represent the place where the drama is happening. For example a sacred space may be set up within the drama ♦ the students may enter this space but may have to perform some agreed ritual first.

derolling

In the same way that students need to be assisted in to a role, usually via building belief, so they need to be taken out of role at the end. This can be via reflective activities (discussion, journal entries, thought tracking and voices in the head).

devised drama

Drama that is developed for performance from the improvisation and work of the participants. Although it doesn't originate from a script, it may generate a script.

dialogue (conversation)

In television, script may be written by a number of writers working with a script editor. In theatre, there may be one playwright or the actors may devise or improvise their script.

elements

The key ingredients of drama. They are things that make drama work. They are action, role, time, tension, space, and focus.

farce

A farce is a light, humourous play in which the plot depends upon the situation rather than the character. http://www.tki.org.nz/r/arts/drama/glossary_e.php - top

focus

An element of drama in which a particular moment in time or position in space captures the essence of the dramatic action, or a theme, character, or other aspect that gives purpose or impetus to the drama.

found objects

Objects that are collected by the teacher or students often given symbolic significance to provide a stimulus within the drama.

freeze frame

A convention in which the members of a group use their bodies to make an image or tableau capturing an idea, theme or moment in time, also called a group sculpture or tableau or still image.

gesture

A movement that can have meaning or be part of establishing a character. A repeated or shared gesture may help to add significance to a role or drama.

hot seating

A convention in which class members question or interview someone who is in role to bring out additional information, ideas, and attitudes to about the role.

improvisation

Spontaneous invention and development of drama from within a role.

map

Making a convention in which maps or diagrams are made in order to develop or reflect on the drama.

meetings

The group are gathered together within the drama to hear new information, plan action, make collective decisions and suggest strategies to solve problems that have arisen. The group would generally be in role in the meeting.

mime

A form of theatre performance in which action and character are expressed through gesture, movement and facial expression without the use of words.http://www.tki.org.nz/r/arts/drama/glossary_e.php - top

non verbal communication

Gestures, body language, facial expression, sign language are all ways of communicating without the spoken word.

over heard conversations

A convention in which a conversation that would not normally be overheard is disclosed.

process drama

Dramatic exploration based on extended, connected improvisations and structured through a sense of theatre and drama structures. A form of drama in which the primary focus may not be to present a product to an audience. Teacher in role is a central convention in process drama.

reflection

Moving from within the drama to thinking and talking about the drama ♦ and back into the drama. It can be in role.

ritual

Stylised enactment bound by traditional rules and codes, usually repetitious and requiring individuals to submit to a group culture through their participation.

role

Covers all aspects of creation, interpretation and sustaining of a character in a dramatic action.

role card

A card given out by the teacher indicating the role that the student/s are to take up.

role on the wall

A role presented in picture or diagram form to put on the wall ♦ information can be added as the drama progresses. May be created via collage of found words and images from magazines.

role playing

Participating through using attitudes, stereotypes or given and predetermined points of view. http://www.tki.org.nz/r/arts/drama/glossary_e.php - top

scene

Division of drama into sections, marked by a change of time. place or characters leaving or entering.

scriptwriting

Taking material (from improvisation, discussion and exercises) and putting them into a permanent form for future performance.

soundscape

Sequence of sounds shaped to enhance action and mood in a drama.

speaking thoughts aloud

A means of reflecting on the complexity of a difficult choice facing a character in a drama. The teacher may tap each student in turn and ask them to speak what is going on in their character's mind.

stance

The position you take physically or philosophically or metaphorically. A teaching stance ♦ may be enabler, manipulator or facilitator.

still images

A convention in which the members of a group use their bodies to make an image or tableau

capturing an idea, theme or moment in time, also called a group sculpture or tableau or freeze frame.

storytelling

A story can be presented through action, dialogue and narration (by an external narrator or by characters within the drama).

strategies

Ways in which the students are taken into the action and the means by which they will explore the dramatic focus. The teacher will need to choose a range of strategies and may have to change strategies mid drama to get the desired

outcomes. http://www.tki.org.nz/r/arts/drama/glossary_e.php - top

tableau

A convention in which the members of a group use their bodies to make an image or picture capturing an idea, theme or moment in time, also called a group sculpture or freeze frame or still image.

teacher in role

The teacher manages the learning possibilities and opportunities provided by the dramatic context from within the drama by adopting a suitable role in order to achieve such results as exciting interest, controlling the action, inviting involvement, creating tension, challenging superficial thinking, or developing narrative. The teacher mediates the teaching purpose through involvement in the drama.

techniques

Methods or procedures used to achieve a specific purpose in drama. The term relates to the use of voice, facial expression, gesture and movement.

tension

Sense of excitement, anticipation or suspense used to animate and sustain interest and forward movement in drama.

voice

A technique used in dramatic presentation ♦ it has various aspects such as:

- Loudness
- Clarity
- Emphasis
- Pace
- Pause
- Pitch
- Rhythm
- Tone

warm up activities

This may be a literal warming up of people's bodies and/or voices. It may also be part of the building belief process or games that relate to the theme of the drama.

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