

Drama

Guidelines for Teachers of Students with

MODERATE

General Learning Disabilities



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Introduction

One of the main aims in drama is to enable students to make sense of their world and begin to exercise control over their environment. Drama helps students to become aware of the emotional states of others and helps them to develop their ability to create an impact on situations.

It is well recognised that learning is a social activity: we learn by sharing and refining descriptions of our experiences. In drama, the teacher is trying to set up situations within which his/her students can discover and explore how and why people behave as they do, and thus are enabled to attend to, and reflect on, their own behaviour. Drama, in focusing on an aspect of human experience, helps students to become aware of the emotional states of others and helps them to develop their ability to create an impact on situations. The appeal of drama to students of all abilities is that they are caught up in situations that are fun and are intriguing. They are engaged in active learning, in contexts that are live, dynamic, and likely to be remembered.

Educational drama emphasises the active process of creating a story with an unfolding plot. This understanding of narrative—how events are linked—can help students with moderate general learning disabilities to see patterns and sequences, as well as the significance and implications of situations.

Communication is central to drama, and it is important for teachers to be aware of the various modes of verbal and non-verbal communication, of which language is only one. In dramatic activities, a student may reveal and express his/her thoughts and emotions through physical gestures and facial expressions, which may give a clearer impression of his/her thoughts and intentions than words could convey. Drama has a particular contribution to make to the development of communication and language. New vocabulary may be introduced in the naturalistic drama context. Alternatively, the drama may be manipulated so that a student is required to use a particular communication skill to obtain something. Drama may also provide the motivation to work on articulation skills and to organise ideas logically and concisely.

One of the main aims in drama for students with moderate general learning disabilities is to enable them to make sense of their world and begin to exercise control over their environment. The creative, interactive approach advocated in drama will open up a world of possibility and opportunity for students through the provision of sensory, perceptual, social, emotional and cognitive stimulation.

The range of situations experienced by students is important; it increases their self-confidence in the world. It is particularly helpful for students with moderate general learning disabilities who can get used to a secure environment in the school and are nervous of venturing out of it. Knowledge and skills have generally been acquired through experience of, and interaction with, the immediate environment. Drama provides the opportunity to reinforce these skills in new settings. It can provide a reason and sense of urgency to use and apply practical skills, concepts and factual knowledge such as counting and dressing skills. Targets from students' individual education plans, for example social interaction skills or turn-taking, may also be worked on in the meaningful context of drama, with drama helping to raise their self-esteem through experiencing satisfaction, fun and enjoyment.

Finding ways to motivate and empower students in school is a central concern of all teachers. Part of their role in teaching drama is to help students to consider ideas from different aspects, to demonstrate and explore the choices available to people in real-life situations. As a result of this informed experience and consideration, students are better able to resolve problems and issues. Drama functions as a way of 'playing at' or practising living.

The drama curriculum enables students with moderate general learning disabilities to

- experience how people behave in particular circumstances by exploring a variety of social situations and interactions
- explore and express a range of human feelings and responses to situations through acting out a range of emotions in a structured experience
- increase their perception of their environment and develop an awareness of why and how things happen
- enhance their memory skills and recollect past experiences
- explore choices and moral dilemmas

- achieve a sense of responsibility and confidence as decision-makers and problem-solvers in the real world
- play alongside their peers and begin to learn to compromise in order to sustain and develop the activity
- extend, enrich and prompt the use of language in simulated real-life contexts, where the use of language arises out of a genuine need to speak
- develop their ability to work in groups, trusting and relying on each other
- appreciate and respond positively to the part played by others in the drama
- experience anticipation and excitement through the use of the contrasting aspects of drama, for example, light and darkness, sound and silence, movement and stillness
- respond to dramatic stimuli through movement, music and art
- develop an imaginative response to various symbolic stimuli, such as toys, puppets, props, and dramatic characters and roles
- affirm a positive sense of self-worth and self-esteem through engaging in drama.

All students can participate in dramatic activities. There are no right or wrong answers. Drama places the students at the centre of the learning experience, and allows them to build their own bridges of understanding. In structuring activities, it will be important to ensure that all drama for these students will have a strong sensory component, as some students may always need to engage with drama on a sensory level. There are endless opportunities for developing sensory awareness through the use of costumes, props and the creation of atmosphere.

Overview of content

Content strand and strand units

The content of the *Primary School Curriculum, Drama* is presented in one strand:

Drama to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding

This is sub-divided into three strand units that describe aspects of drama exploration, experience and activity. The strand units are:

- exploring and making drama
- reflecting on drama
- co-operating and communicating in making drama.

These are further explored through eight specified elements of drama. While these are not taught formally, the student's attention can be drawn to these elements as they occur both naturally in the work and in structured drama sequences, where the teacher aims to provide the students with a specific experience. Opportunities for developing dramatic appreciation and awareness are built in to every lesson, but learning about the elements of drama is informal and in context.

Exploring and making drama

Drama activities for students with moderate general learning disabilities should be clear-cut, with an explicit turn-taking structure and a predictable narrative. Students are encouraged to relate to the teacher-in-role (TIR): a character in need is a particularly useful strategy for encouraging students to respond and show initiative, and it elevates their status in a reversal of the usual relationship. Props and objects within the drama also help students to maintain focus; they should have a strong sensory appeal, and their use should be carefully paced, working towards the more symbolic and representational.

These students develop the ability to make-believe through being immersed within the group drama experience that requires commitment from everyone to make it work—staff and students. Supporting staff members have a crucial responsibility in generating an appropriate atmosphere and modelling appropriate responses. Students need to experience, anticipate

and contribute to tension and excitement, interspersed with moments of calm. They also need opportunities to imitate others, to initiate actions, and to learn to adapt their behaviour in the light of the make-believe consequences.

Drama seeks to teach students why people think and behave as they do. Therefore, the teacher needs to select appropriate content for the drama that will challenge and extend students' existing frames of reference. The teacher working with students with moderate general learning disabilities needs to find a way to enable the group to become aware of, and empathise with, a basic emotional state (due to a particular set of circumstances), and to discover the consequences. The teacher might also use the opportunities presented by drama to consolidate and apply conceptual and factual knowledge and practical skills in context, as well as individual learning targets, for example, from communication and behaviour programmes. Interest levels should be sensitively monitored: too much stimulation can cause confusion, while too little can cause interest to wane. Working in role can capture their interest and attention, especially when accompanied by the use of attractive, appealing props.

Reflecting on drama

For drama to be an effective learning medium, participants need to be enabled to engage meaningfully with the themes and issues contained in the material. This can be challenging on a cognitive level for students with moderate general learning disabilities who have yet to consolidate understanding of representational thought and reasoning. For some students, it will be a matter of enabling them to engage on a feeling level with the content of a drama, in order to begin to perceive its meaning.

Situations in drama need to have a relevance to real life, so that students may begin to make connections and apply their experiences. While they may begin to relate to the content of the drama as it unfolds, reflecting after the drama is more challenging. It may be possible for some students to begin to extract significance from the drama by relating to key moments and concrete objects of reference, such as props and multi-sensory resources.

Reflecting on drama enables students to develop an awareness of their own potential influence through situations in which they immediately discover their impact on others. Teacher-in-role is a particularly powerful way of reinforcing this directly to students.

Co-operating and communicating in making drama

Students require sensitive intervention by the teacher and supporting staff, if they are to be enabled to make creative and imaginative contributions to drama. Challenges will need to be carefully paced to meet the needs of all students within the group.

At first, staff members may need to support, prompt and model appropriate responses for students to imitate and gain confidence, and then gradually lessen the amount of support required. The important point is that staff members should be sensitive not to dominate the activity.

Teachers need to be aware of the level of social challenge in drama work for some students, and aim to extend their ability to engage in the group activity. For students at the early stages of awareness, just being enabled to participate in a dramatic group activity will be a valuable experience for them. Having their preferences interpreted, in order to influence the choice of costumes, props or the course of the dramatic action, will require a conscious effort and a watchful eye on the part of all staff involved.

The elements of drama

Drama is characterised by certain features that give it its unique power. These may be called the **elements** of drama. They are:

Belief

The element of belief in drama depends on the ability of the students to temporarily suspend their disbelief and accept the fantastic, the wondrous, and the often seemingly impossible. In drama, a fictional world is created in which characters live out the consequences of a particular situation. The degree to which a student can enter into the imaginative world and believe in or accept the fiction, will, to a great extent, determine both the success of his/her drama experience and the learning experiences that will result from it.

The teacher plays an important role in building belief in drama. He/she should be receptive to the students' responses, and this fluid engagement builds up belief in the drama and allows it to take on its own life and significance.

The student should be enabled to

- become aware of a sense of occasion and difference when experiencing make-believe activities
- experience and participate in the use of the contrasting elements of light and darkness, sound and silence, and movement and stillness, to help evoke an atmosphere of make-believe and fiction.

Role and character

In the early stages of playing the part of a character in a drama, the student will do no more than 'assume a role', such as becoming a shepherd, a chef, a teacher, or a garda, exploring and developing what is still a strong instinct for make-believe play. He/she may assume one or two of the principal attributes of that role, such as changing the tone of their voice or standing in a particular manner. Gradually, he/she will use the ability to play at make-believe, in order to enter fully into participation in drama and begin to understand the relationship between role and character. Characterisation is an extension of role-taking and involves an attempt to assume the characteristics, desires, thought processes or physical attributes of a particular person. The benefit of characterisation is that the student learns to view the drama world from the point of view of someone other than himself/herself. This promotes understanding and empathy, which will enhance the student's ability to understand people with a personality different from his/her own. It can assist greatly in exploring relationships, in developing an awareness of different registers of language, and in using non-verbal means to communicate.

Action

Action springs from the interaction between character and situation and does not necessarily contain physical movement. In drama, characters and situations are chosen so that certain unresolved conflicts, tensions, questions or choices are highlighted. The nature of the engagement will vary depending on the stage of development of individual students. Once sufficient belief is established in the situation (i.e. students are familiar with the fictional context and characters involved), the teacher can develop and lead the story to a point where 'something happens' and the students, in or out of role, are called upon to engage with the action and attempt to resolve the problem or dilemma that has arisen.

Time

All dramatic action, like all human existence, takes place in the dimension of time. Time helps to frame the action and to constrain it. It can also contribute to the element of tension. Students with moderate general learning disabilities will need considerable reinforcement of the concept of time. The teacher will need to heighten the sense of the timescale involved through providing the students with concrete experiences of events while the drama is unfolding, rather than just narrating the passage of time, by including details such as eating a meal, and going to bed, before getting up, and then finding the beanstalk in the garden.

The student should be enabled to:

- become aware of patterns and sequences in the drama that indicate familiar activities and can help them anticipate what happens next
- attend to and appreciate the significance of time in relation to how characters in the drama behave (*when night falls all the hens go to sleep, but the fox is wide awake, getting ready to visit the farm*)
- develop an awareness of the significance of time in adding tension and urgency to the drama (if we don't find her before it gets dark, we'll have to go home and try again tomorrow).

Place

Just as drama takes place in the dimension of time, it also has a location: it happens somewhere. The location helps the students know how to respond and behave in the drama.

The student should be enabled to

- become aware of the creation of a (make-believe) space through the use of props, objects or pictures
- attend, respond to and participate in creating the main features of the drama location (*what is needed to make the café in our classroom*)
- experience tactile and sensory stimuli to evoke a sense of place in the drama
- look at, handle and appreciate the props and signifiers that indicate the sense of place (*rows of goods placed on a shelf to create a shop*)
- become aware of being part of a make-believe space or location and begin to participate in the action, using appropriate language and gestures for that role
- distinguish between the make-believe location and the classroom (*involve the students in creating the location and then tidying it away when the drama is over*)
- experience how the use of space and objects help to create the 'reality' of the make-believe world (*sheets of paper as stepping-stones across a stream*).

Tension

Tension arises when characters in the drama are faced with conflicting needs, or want to take different courses of action. It is from a combination of the elements of action, role and character, time and place, that tension derives, and this helps to drive the action forward.

The student should be enabled to

- sense and experience the excitement and anticipation of a character faced with a choice, a dilemma or a problem
- participate in collective or individual role as the character facing the choice or difficulty
- become sensitive to the change in body language, tone and register when a character is facing a dilemma or problem
- experience the moment of tension in the drama (*a 'friendly' stranger offers sweets to members of the group who have to decide whether to take them or not*).

Significance

In the case of students with moderate general learning disabilities, the teacher's choice of signs, as well as how they are used, is centrally important in communicating meaning about the significance of the drama. The signs chosen must be clear, uncluttered, and absolutely focused on the learning area of the drama: for example, in *Jack and the Beanstalk* (see exemplars pages 32-53) the drawings of a fireplace, door and window signify the layout of Jack's kitchen, and the lighting of a candle signifies nightfall.

The student should be enabled to

- become aware of how objects, people, sounds, movements and changes in lighting can be used to enhance the significance of an event (*everyone bows when the king enters the room, a bell tolls when it is time for Cinderella to leave the ball*)
- become aware of how objects, people, sounds, movements and changes in lighting can be used to represent or signify something else (*the lights are dimmed to suggest nightfall, the character wears a hat, scarf and gloves to indicate cold weather*)
- participate in the selection of appropriate objects to raise the status of an event or character (*deciding to place a chair on a box so that the king is seen to be in a position of authority*)
- develop the ability to reflect on the significance of events as they occur in the drama (*she was carrying a big red bag: was that to ... ?*).

Genre

Genre refers to the form of dramatic expression—naturalistic, comic, tragic, absurd, etc. Naturalistic drama is the genre that imitates most accurately the details of life, and is the one that comes most easily to students. However, genres may become interwoven as a drama unfolds. For example, in *Jack and the Beanstalk* the kitchen scene is naturalistic, but Jack's encounter with the buyer of his cow borders on the comic.

The student should be enabled to

- experience, enjoy and participate in as many forms of dramatic expression and genres as possible
- begin to be sensitive to the differences in genre, for example between comic and tragic.

School planning

The efficient planning by the school and teachers will be crucial for the successful implementation of the drama curriculum. Much of the planning in the *Primary School Curriculum: Drama, Teacher Guidelines*, will be applicable when planning for students with moderate general learning disabilities.

The following section outlines some additional aspects of planning that may need to be considered when planning for these students.

Curriculum and organisational planning

A whole-school approach

When planning for drama, teachers should be concerned to make learning a rewarding experience for their students, and to ensure that communication skills, the ability to use language, and the development of problem-solving strategies are related to all aspects of the curriculum and to a range of social situations. The ability to work both independently and as part of a team should be constantly reinforced and developed as the drama contexts are created. It is essential to create a supportive climate throughout the whole school where students' creative work is respected and valued. Although the importance of engaging with new material is central to students' experience in drama, students with moderate general learning disabilities may need to revisit knowledge and skills several times, applying them to familiar and new situations each time. Drama provides the opportunity for consolidating and extending the same material through engaging in new contexts, which are developmentally appropriate and relevant to all students.

Some teachers may be more confident in engaging with drama than others and may be willing to take a leading role in sharing knowledge with other staff members. Time and resources might be organised to facilitate sessions where ideas are discussed. Shared teaching might be desirable in some situations. A good supply of high-quality, well-chosen resources are required to support learning for students with moderate general learning disabilities. Visual props are effective in enabling students to achieve meaning. They are particularly useful to the teacher and student in changing from one role to another. Costumes and props that have been made for previous activities and productions should be kept in the school as a common resource.

Make-believe play

To a great extent, drama relies on make-believe play. Students with moderate general learning disabilities may be developmentally capable of engaging in make-believe, but lack drive or initiative to sustain and generate the make-believe between themselves. The use of many well-structured drama strategies, such as teacher-in-role, clear signing techniques, and the use of the collective role, can assist students in entering the fictional mode more effectively and easily. Some students may have difficulty generating imaginary goals and sustaining make-believe responses.

Planning *what* to teach in drama is relatively straightforward. Issues will tend to be universal and have application and relevance to all ages and abilities. The challenge for the teacher in terms of planning is more to do with *how* material is to be accessed to meet a range of learning needs. Some may be more engaged than others, and the teacher is faced with the challenge of engaging all the students effectively. One possibility is to 'stream' drama according to the students' level of symbolic development, in order to form more homogeneous teaching groups. The alternative is to pitch activity so that it meets the range of needs in an inclusive group for some, if not all, of the time. It is possible to structure the drama to include activity that can be enjoyed at a range of ability levels, and which nevertheless promotes valuable learning for all concerned. For example, physical tasks, drama games, music or art activities may be contextualised within the drama.

Organisational planning

Space

The use of space is important, so students should have the opportunity to

- look, handle, feel, manipulate, listen, and respond with ease in different drama situations
- work effectively in groups
- use resources that specifically encourage active participation and exploration.

Establishing an appropriate physical space is the responsibility of the school. Although most drama activities can be conducted within the classroom (and indeed it is highly desirable to do so on occasion, especially if drama is to be integrated with other curricular subjects as and when they are timetabled) there are also occasions when a dedicated space can allow students the freedom to work without disturbing other groups close by. Students with additional physical and sensory impairments will need particular attention in this regard.

The following points will need to be considered when planning space and time for drama:

- What is the usual student-teacher ratio? Are there additional staff members or students available for drama? Does the ratio always stay the same? Is extra help available (students on placement, older students, or students from mainstream schools)?
- Be aware of other timetabling commitments and the need to negotiate the use of the space with other staff.
- Are there particular individual needs to be aware of— someone who dominates, someone who uses signing? Are wheelchairs or extra assistance required to negotiate the drama space? Are there students with sensory, visual or hearing impairment?
- What is the effect of the size of the available space?
- Are there any noise restrictions?
- How are clothing and footwear changes to be handled (if required)?
- Will all staff members need to be there for the duration of the lesson?
- What time is needed to move the students from one space to another?
- Consider the student's ability to sustain concentration (length of drama experience).
- Allow sufficient time to warm up, get into the drama, and come out of role at the end.

Support staff

Special needs assistants are an invaluable resource in any classroom where they support the activities of the teacher and learner. They can be a wonderful resource when doing drama and it is important that they are taken into account when planning for drama. It is important to bear in mind their personal comfort levels with the activity. Putting a colleague in role may help develop the drama but, for some people, working in role is a huge psychological hurdle and best left until they themselves feel ready to undertake the activity. When planning for the use of support staff, it is important to take the following into account:

- whether they are comfortable playing a role
- whether they are likely to over-support students
- the use of a discreet, shared signalling system to be used during the drama
- their other duties of care for students.

Subject specialists

While a teacher with special responsibility for drama may usefully be able to support the rest of the staff in their use of drama in the classroom, and direct them towards resources, courses, conferences, and available literature in the field, it is important that this person does not become identified as the thespian on the staff, and end up doing all the drama work in the school. Drama should be a central part of the student's learning experience and, since the content of drama encompasses every aspect of the student's experience including learning in other curriculum areas, it is essential that it is fully integrated with all facets of the student's learning in school. Clearly, if the school is preparing to mount a production, such as a musical, then it's 'all hands on deck'. Such sharing of skills and expertise among the staff will help ease the pressure on any one person and create a productive and enjoyable learning experience for the whole school community. The students, their parents and others in the community can also help out with stage management, costume design, props and set design, publicity for the event, sound and lighting, etc.

Extra-curricular drama experiences

Theatre-in-education groups can devise specific programmes for students with moderate general learning disabilities, and this can be done on occasion in consultation with the school, considering the needs of a particular group of students. For example, a play could be presented about the challenges faced by senior students with moderate general learning disabilities entering the world of work.

Theatre trips are always a good idea for students with moderate general learning disabilities. Teachers, however, should choose the play or production carefully, in order to meet the needs of their students.

Classroom planning

Many of the issues raised in the *Primary School Curriculum: Drama, Teacher Guidelines*, are also relevant for teachers working with students with moderate general learning disabilities. The following are additional considerations that may be useful when planning drama for these students.

Curriculum and organisational planning

Choosing content for drama

Teachers, by planning well, can provide settings within which purposeful work can take place in drama, and in which they can capitalise on the richest resource available to them: their own and their students' imaginations and initiative. Situations and stories that have a choice or problem in them are the most useful for engaging students' attention and participative responses. When working with students with moderate general learning disabilities, teachers can explore everyday situations for drama activities, thereby affording the student an opportunity to experience (or re-experience) and explore familiar situations in new ways.

In structuring a drama curriculum, content can be drawn from the following areas:

- curriculum material or topics such as bullying, friendship, language work, mathematics, SPHE, etc.
- elements of drama, such as pace, tension, timing, movement, rhythm, use of space, symbolisation, contrast (sound and silence, movement and stillness, light and darkness)
- dramatic skills, such as mime, masks, using light and sound, improvisation, physical drama
- explorative drama strategies, such as storyboards, role-playing, narrating, collective role.

Establishing a clear context for the make-believe

To a great extent, drama relies on make-believe play—on the ability to pretend to be someone or something else. Some students may only sense this or have an emerging awareness of make-believe and find working in the abstract quite difficult. Others may become easily confused between make-believe and reality, and will require clear signals to indicate when the drama has actually started or stopped. It is imperative that the distinction is crystal-clear at all times.

The use of many well-structured strategies for drama in education, for example, teacher-in-role, clear signing techniques, and the use of collective role and shadow role, can assist students in attending and responding to the fictional mode more effectively and easily. It is important that students are not left feeling bewildered during or after the drama experience.

Strategies to engage students meaningfully with the material:

- Plan the work so that it is well within the range of students' experience and they can perceive its relevance to their own lives. (Seek a balance between core competence, academic progression, life skills, independence training, and active enjoyment.)
- Use sensory and creative strategies to maintain the focus (props, visual, aural, sensory and tactile stimuli, repetition, manual signs and symbols, discussion and questioning to convey meaning).
- Special needs assistants or staff members in shadow role can broadly retain control of the drama without providing all the ideas.
- Emphasise the affective feeling and 'doing' aspects of the drama experience.
- Provide opportunities for all students to contribute something, if they so desire.
- Use simple props and visual, aural, sensory and tactile 'hooks' (cues) to support entry into the world of make-believe.
- Plan a clear focus and sense of purpose in the activities.
- Ensure that there are very clear transitions between one activity and the next.
- Ensure that all signals are clear and unambiguously communicated.

Roles should be sincere and not '*hammed up*' (over-acted). They must be sufficiently defined to serve an identifiable purpose and to avoid confusion.

Easing into make-believe

The following points will help ease students gently into working in fictional environments:

- Gently but concretely lead students in and out of make-believe (the fictional scenario).

- The nature of the fiction should be concretely demonstrated or physically explained 'in process' (with continuous checking and monitoring of students' security and engagement during the lesson).
- Students should be helped into symbolism by working from the concrete to the abstract.
- The pace should be adjusted according to the needs of students in order to gain as much as possible from each situation, as opposed to rushing onwards and failing to sense, experience and enjoy the significance of events.
- Roles should be signalled clearly (apron for cook, crown for king, etc.) and concretely demonstrated or physically explained before being entered into.
- Continuously monitor the drama and students' engagement and responses to the process.

Provide plenty of opportunities for reflection and evaluation during and after the drama experience (verbal and non-verbal).

Focusing on the task

It is important to keep students with moderate general learning disabilities focused and 'on task'. This can be achieved in the following ways:

- Divide the drama into relatively short episodes of sequential activities, ensuring a structured presentation of information.
- Employ a variety of active and static strategies to allow for the ebb and flow of energy (where students can listen, respond, physically participate, etc).
- Allow those with a very short concentration span to 'come and go' and vary the stimulus regularly.
- Use everything students offer if possible, and integrate it into the unfolding story or drama. Seeing their ideas incorporated in the drama at some point empowers the students. They begin to understand that they have the capacity to influence and affect events. (It is important to be particularly sensitive to students' non-verbal modes of communication. A shake of the head or a frown could be an important comment on the action and should be acknowledged).

- Special needs assistants can support students during the work, helping to keep them 'engaged' While being careful not to dominate too much.
- Use short sentences and functional language.
- Limit the number of extended periods of listening, and then reinforce by doing.
- Use the elements of drama to create tension and generate a sense of urgency and enquiry.
- Repeat drama episodes and stories until they become familiar and begin to accrue meaning through repeated experience. This will allow students to build up a group of associations that will make it easier for them to anticipate what is happening and so to participate.
- Adopt a 'layering' approach to experiencing drama, where each session begins with a repetition of the last episode, and gradually add or layer new experiences to the unfolding drama. (Once the general framework is familiar, elements can be varied to maintain interest and attention.)
- Use sensory, tactile, visual and aural props to gain and retain students' attention.
- It is important to have all props readily available to avoid losing the attention of the students.
- A record of the drama 'so far' can be kept as a visual or sensory stimulus and reminder for the students. The storyline and main characters could be put on a wall display, or a specific area of the room could be used to display the main 'props' concerned with this drama. Students' work in art or emergent writing, or audio or video recordings, completed as part of their drama activity, could be displayed and played as well.

Accommodating students with a diverse range of ability

It is important to consider the individual needs, social health, and group dynamics of the students when planning, using the following means:

- Establish how diverse the range of the group is, particularly in terms of conceptual and symbolic understanding and social development.
- Consider whether it would be more viable to combine students of similar abilities from other classes.
- Plan to meet the needs of all the students in the group at some point during the activity.

- Decide which strategies will reach students of different abilities at the same time: music, song, ritual, physical activity, sensory stimuli, or drama game.
- Identify aspects of learning in other subjects that can be integrated with drama, for example greeting friends and family, attending and listening to others, or a favourite story or piece of music.
- Plan to include topical content and issues and concerns of particular interest to the students in the content of the drama.
- Ensure that the content is age-appropriate, or if not, adapt it to make it relevant and accessible.
- Are there particular friendship groups among the students that could be exploited in improvised work?
- Ensure that boys and girls work well together.
- Take account of personality clashes among the students.
- Be generally vigilant about the social health of the group in all drama activities.
- In choosing content, beware of the susceptibilities of the different students and avoid, or be careful to accommodate particular fears or obsessions.

Other issues to consider

Do not offer too many options: opening up too many possibilities at the start may allow the activity to sink into a formless exercise, and the session will lose its sense of direction. Some students may get confused and suffer from information overload. (It is possible for students to experience sensory overload as well). It is a case of finding the middle ground between over-prescription and burdening students with too many options.

The teacher may feel that his/her intervention in students' play and drama activities (after the provision of the initial stimulus) will interfere with creativity or self-expression. The opposite is true. When working with students with moderate general learning disabilities, those largely left to their own devices are unlikely to create drama that extends or challenges them, or provides them with the opportunity to gain new insights and understanding. The teacher should challenge, arouse, motivate, give confidence and encouragement, co-ordinate and support students in their drama experiences.

It is possible to have games and exercises in which only one voice is heard at a time. However, in many cases it is desirable - and helps students to feel secure experimenting with voice and speech (often connected to movement) - if they are surrounded by sound with no one paying them any particular attention. Of course, high noise levels must be under complete control at all times. Every student must learn to come to an instant stop at an arranged signal. A game can be used to practise responding to this signal (traffic lights). It is vitally important to establish the two golden rules in drama: when the teacher or another student talks, others listen; and when they hear or see the agreed signal, they respond immediately. The fewer the rules, the greater the likelihood of implementing them. An appropriate signal could be the teacher saying the word 'freeze' or keeping an arm in the air until the students respond. Students could raise their arms in the air as a response, signalling to the teacher that they are listening and ready. Percussion instruments can also be used to establish their attention.

Much drama with students with moderate general learning disabilities is physical. Expressive use of face, hands and the whole body is within the domain of drama, as is a certain amount of physical contact between the students. Teachers need to intervene when 'push' becomes 'shove' and to remind students that we can let symbols, words and gestures do the work for us (communicating our feelings) in drama.

Planning cross-curricular drama

Drama, as an active learning strategy, aims to provide as many 'hooks into learning', or opportunities for students to engage with content and skills, in as many different ways as possible. In this way, drama aims to reach those learners who prefer to be physically active or rhythmically engaged, in order to help them learn more effectively. Drama in education affirms the notion that everything can be taught in several different ways. This is a particularly important concept for students with moderate general learning disabilities. It attempts to provide students with several different entry points to the learning area, in order to identify how best individual students learn.

Drama provides an additional opportunity to develop students' emerging literacy skills (communicating, listening, reading and writing). For students who require an augmentative approach to communication, signs, symbols and objects of reference are used to make the subject matter more easily accessible. Most drama activities provide the opportunity to actively gain students' attention, and through the investigation and experience of a 'human interest story', they are motivated to want to communicate. This desire to communicate can be harnessed in the context of the unfolding drama and expressed in many ways, including emergent reading and writing.

For example, in a story about a young man who wanted to work in a restaurant, menus, recipes, order forms, bills, receipts etc. could all be used to create the appropriate atmosphere and work environment. Through the real-life drama setting of a restaurant, students can relate their emerging literacy skills to society. Once they are familiar with the routine of running the restaurant, taking orders, making meals, writing the bills, etc., a crisis or problem could be introduced to add tension to the drama. The extent of such a problem or dilemma would depend on the needs and resources of the students, but would allow them to test their skills and knowledge in a challenging and new context, for example, how to deal with a rowdy customer, or a customer who has no money to pay the bill.

The special needs assistant or teacher could play the role of a demanding customer who orders a meal that the chef doesn't know how to make. What do we do? Can we find it in the recipe book and work it out? (The teacher could have recipe cards prepared that feature a core vocabulary and symbols to help students decipher the ingredients and stages of preparation.) The possibilities are endless.

Approaches and Methodologies

Games and exercises can be a valuable introduction to many aspects of drama.

Games and exercises

There are many varied games that one can play with students of all ages.

Games and exercises are useful

- when beginning work with a new class
- when the teacher or students have limited experience in drama
- as part of a warm-up routine
- as motivating introductions to a theme or topic work
- to allow students to take an active part in the work
- to help students understand the need for rules and codes of behaviour
- to develop physical and mental dexterity
- to inject energy into a lethargic group, or to calm down an over-excited one
- to help students learn how to manipulate space and time
- to develop a sense of trust by being non-threatening
- to develop and build trust and co-operation between the members of a group or within the whole class.

Warm-ups

Warm-ups can be done at the beginning of a class. They help to relax everyone physically and mentally, and reduce anxiety and inhibition. It is often a good idea to start warm-ups with stretching, curling, bending, relaxing and warming-up vocally to encourage members of the group to feel relaxed with each other.

Some practical guidelines

- Games and exercises can be done with the whole class at the same time or alternatively with smaller groups. However, care must be taken not to choose activities that will attract the attention of the others who may not be involved, for example, when a lot of noise or movement is involved.
- Plan these activities carefully.
- Let the students see that the teacher is also involved.
- All games and exercises take time to build up and students may need to repeat them regularly until they have acquired the format of the activity.
- The atmosphere should be calm and uncritical. This helps build trust between the teacher and student.
- If a lesson isn't going well, for one reason or another, the decision may be taken not to continue with it. Teacher tells or elicits from the students what is going wrong. It is important that belief and value in the work is established in the early stages, or it will prove increasingly difficult to contain problems later on when sincerity is needed.
- Aim to be constructive with criticism, using statements such as, *'It isn't easy to concentrate if people are talking'*. Encourage students to be responsible for their behaviour in class. To punish or embarrass an individual while doing the work will probably do nothing to help his/her concentration and may also destroy the atmosphere of the class. If a student is being extremely difficult, teacher should allow him/her to become a special assistant, or to sit outside the activity for a time. Hopefully, they may wish to rejoin later on. It is also important not to force a student to engage in an activity if he/she genuinely appears not to want to. There may be many reasons for this. After an initial period of observation, he/she may choose to participate quite willingly, when it is seen how much fun and enjoyment pertains to this way of working.
- It will be important to choose the right time for engaging in drama work, and in particular with games and exercises. Where there is flexibility with the timetable, these activities may be integrated with the rest of the curriculum. It is far better to introduce drama work in short sessions at first than to attempt one long block each week.

Games

Snake and snake charmer

This is done to Indian music with sitars or flutes, if possible. Students sit in twos, opposite each other. One is the snake, one the snake charmer. The snake charmers sit cross-legged and mime playing flutes. The snakes make themselves very small: cupped hands in front, twisting and turning to the music. The students then change roles.

Note: Green tights could be used and decorated as a snake and put over the student's arm.

My name is Margaret

A student takes a step forward into the centre of the circle and claps four beats while saying 'My name is ...'. The others then repeat this, taking a step into the circle and clapping four times while saying 'Her name is ...'.

Variation: A student performs a little action or gesture (such as a wave of the hand, a wiggle of the hips, or a nod of the head) as they step forward and say 'Hello, my name is ...'. The other students repeat. Encourage the use of vocal and facial expression.

Kim's game or the memory game

Teacher sets out a number of objects from the prop box on a tray or cloth. The group is given a minute or two to concentrate and remember what is there. Objects are removed or covered and students attempt to recall them.

Note: The number of objects on the tray can be limited according to the ability level of the students.

Variation: Students whose language skills are not developed could point to the objects (have the same object or a picture of it elsewhere in the room as a point of reference for the student). Spatial awareness can also be developed if students are asked to communicate about the position of the objects on the tray.

The gloves that have a life of their own

An old pair of gloves is used (they could be washing-up gloves). They are magic. When someone puts them on, the magic begins.

The teacher can decide what the magic properties are. For example, they make you big, small, happy, dance, jump, write, draw, and students respond accordingly.

Variation: A number of students can wear gloves at the same time (but taking it in turns to call out a magic property).

Note: This can also be played by substituting a magic hat, shoes, etc. for the gloves.

Background music to the movement creates a nice effect.

Musical bumps, freeze like this, statues, and musical chairs

Musical bumps: Students dance to the music. When it stops, everyone flops down on the ground.

Freeze like this: This game can be used to encourage the development of any particular skill: standing with arms stretched out, standing on one leg, hands on head, elbow on knee, etc. Students move around and respond to the music. On a signal, the teacher says, 'Freeze like this ...' (and demonstrates a physical position). Students immediately look at the teacher and copy the image he/she is making.

Statues: This works in a similar way, only this time when the music stops everyone stops absolutely still, like a statue; anyone who moves is 'out'.

Game: Mirroring or image work

Students stand in pairs facing each other (A and B). A performs a simple movement, which B copies as exactly as he/she can. Then A performs another one, B copies again. All movements should be slow, so that the partner is enabled to reproduce the movement. Each movement should follow naturally from the last. The teacher urges students to be attentive, even to the smallest detail of body movement or facial expression. Swap roles, with B leading and A mirroring.

Variations

- Students can be asked to make their movements happy or sad, and the partner copies. If working on a story, however, they could be asked to take on some of the actions of a character (anger, disappointment).
- Students kneel down and face each other, with music playing in the background. One leads, the other following the same movements exactly. Improvised patterns may provide another way in to make-believe activities: brushing the teeth, combing the hair, shaving for boys, doing their make-up for girls. The same exercise can be repeated, exchanging roles of leader and mirror image.
- The exercise described above could be developed into a simple improvisation. Students face each other, and one begins a simple miming activity, such as eating an apple or making a cup of tea. The other responds by asking them questions about what they are doing, and a short dialogue ensues.

Dance patterns

Students stand in a circle, with the teacher in the centre. The teacher starts a strong, easily repeated movement or dance pattern and vocal rhythm. Everyone picks it up. When the group has had enough time to practise, the teacher calls 'Freeze'. This is the signal for the next person to come into the centre, which the teacher then leaves, and start another movement/dance pattern and vocal rhythm. The teacher can discreetly and positively offer support in helping to keep these short and simple.

Drums mime

The class mimes accompanying the music with drums. They sit or stand behind an imaginary drum kit (they may need to be shown a picture or a real drum beforehand). They can do fancy flips etc., while interpreting the music. After a while the teacher calls, 'Spotlight on Martin'. Martin continues playing as a solo drummer. The others fall on one knee, hand extended in the direction of Martin to show him off. Everyone gets a solo turn.

Note: This is best done to a piece of music with a good, strong rhythm. Different kinds of music will extend the repertoire.

Developing games into drama

The name game

Aims

- to encourage students to initiate and respond to a greeting
- to move confidently around the room or space
- to practise attending to and responding to an instruction
- to foster a sense of group co-operation
- to develop students' social interaction skills
- to provide students with opportunities to engage in physical contact with other students.

Method

Students are invited to move around the room, avoiding contact with each other. On a signal, (*'Turn to the person/people nearest to you and say hello!'*), students stop and look for the person or people nearest to them and shake hands. They can say hello and exchange names. Then the teacher calls *'Walk'* and everyone begins to move around the room once again until the signal is given to say *'hello'*.

Variation

- The students walk around the room, stopping to say *'hello'*, and introduce themselves to everyone they meet.
- They can be invited to give their name and perhaps add a line to say what their favourite food is. Pre-verbal and non-verbal students can be encouraged to communicate using signs and symbols to represent their favourite food. Leave plenty of props and pictures of food lying about to prompt students to communicate using the representational object.
- Once familiar with this game, students can be encouraged to greet each other with a sad, happy, scared, brave, excited or angry face and tone of voice. (Practise these first with the students and explore occasions when people might experience these emotions).

- For a real challenge to students, and to inject a sense of humour and fun, they can be encouraged to greet each other in silly ways, such as shaking fingers instead of hands, rubbing backs together (gently—a demonstration may be necessary first), touching knees, shoulders, hips, elbows, wrists, feet, etc.

Note: Appropriate music can be played softly in the background. It will help students to move or walk more easily around the room, and may lessen the feelings of self-consciousness on the part of some students.

Follow my leader

Aims

The student should be enabled to

- to move with freedom, expression and confidence
- to attend to and imitate an action
- exercise responsibility for others
- ease gently into the world of make-believe play
- make simple choices and to solve problems.

Method

Students are invited to form a line behind the teacher and when the music starts, the teacher leads them around the room, wagging a finger, nodding or shaking his/her head, wiggling his/her hips, jumping, hopping, turning, going around furniture (or under, over or through if desired), sliding along a bench, etc. Large, exaggerated movements are used, but care is taken not to encourage them to wave their arms about, or at least not too wildly, so that they avoid injuring someone else in the line.

Variations

- The child behind the teacher can become the leader, and so on, to allow others the opportunity to lead.
- The line can become a train, with students holding on to the hand or waist of the person in front of them. If they do not wish to hold each other's hands, an object can be placed in between and the teacher can suggest that these are the mechanisms that connect the carriages of a train together. The sound of a train can be added, or appropriate music played. The teacher can develop this game into 'drama mode' by beginning to point out to students various objects on their 'trip'.

These can be real and concrete items that are visible in the room at first (the teacher can place these deliberately, if desired, before the activity), and later extended to looking at fictional objects and people that one would expect to meet on a journey through the school, on the students' regular bus route home, on the way to the swimming pool or the seaside, through the countryside, through the park, etc. The 'train' can be stopped at any point if the teacher wishes to develop the drama further. He/she may pause and present the students with a dilemma, for example which direction to go in next.

■ This game can be developed into an activity similar to 'We're going on a bear hunt'. The language and concepts can be changed to accommodate the needs and resources of the group, for example, 'We're going on a shopping trip' or 'We're going to the swimming pool' etc. The principle is the same, with students following the teacher through a series of obstacles in order to get there. These can be narrated, or sung if desired. Sensory and visual experiences can be built in along the way to evoke the idea of crossing the river (*a blue cloth on the ground gently shaken by the special needs assistant to suggest motion, or students drink a sip of water*), going through the forest (*leaves and smooth branches can be rubbed against student's faces or hands*), the wind is strong and howling (*a fan blowing on the student's faces as they pass by*), we're getting near the house and dinner is being prepared (*the smell of cut lemons, strawberries or onions etc.*) The possibilities are endless.

Moving from story to drama work

Storytelling

Stories of all types can be brought to life by being told dramatically, using gestures, sound effects and the various appropriate character voices. Props and puppets can also be used to help establish, communicate or enhance meaning and maintain student's interest and attention.

Storytelling can stimulate drama, and in turn, the drama can generate further stories. Stories provide the opportunity to experience and explore different environments and cultures, and equally to encounter familiar situations in new contexts. Through enactment, students can become increasingly familiar with the pattern and sequence of events. The teacher can gradually find ways of approaching familiar material that will deepen the student's experience and understanding of it.

This is one of the most comfortable and easiest ways of moving into drama. Work can be confined to the classroom or a corner of the school hall, with the class sitting informally around the teacher, or in a story corner in the classroom.

Collective storytelling or story building

Students with moderate general learning disabilities need plenty of stimulation in relation to creating atmosphere and evoking mood and meaning. Props of all kinds can be used to stimulate their attention and responses. The elements of drama can also be used to help create the appropriate atmosphere, like darkening the room a little, to indicate the onset of nightfall or a storm, or having to sit very still and quiet while the lions drink water from the river before they can get across to the other side.

It is important not to neglect the opportunity of deviating from the main storyline (even in published texts) to provide students with opportunities to respond to the story, and to take decisions and make choices themselves as participants or as the characters who are undertaking the journey or adventure. This will serve to empower and enable them to participate more fully in the unfolding drama, and allow them to experience a sense of achievement, self-esteem and confidence in relation to their role in solving a problem or making a decision.

Teachers should not be afraid to try to create their own stories, which will be a much more productive activity, by including the learning areas that they wish to concentrate on, for example, greeting people or providing opportunities to purchase items from a shop. The teacher can start with an anecdote, or by telling the students about a very big house that he/she has to visit, as the woman living there needs help with cooking and cleaning, etc. This way of telling stories allows the teacher to pause for responses from the students, and to develop the story according to these responses. For example, *'Do you think we should bring her a present? What would she like? How do you feel when you get a present?'* The story could then be diverted a little to pause and allow the present to be bought. This could involve simple mathematical skills (dealing with money, adding the cost of getting a drink as well for yourself, the shape of the present and how to wrap it for the woman, etc). Additional problems and tensions can be introduced as the students become comfortable and secure with the characters and the context of the story. For example, *'No one answers the door when we knock but look, there is a note sticking out of the letterbox. Should we read it? Perhaps the woman needs our help.'*

Sound stories: Before the teacher begins, students are told that he/she is going to try to bring the story to life and will need their help. First, practise one or two of the sounds or movements that will arise in the story. It is wise to have a simple means of control built in to the lesson. Teacher can use his/her hand or a simple arrow. He/she explains that when the arrow is pointing downwards, like the volume on the television or radio, there will be no sound at all; as the arrow begins to turn upwards, the sound increases. When it begins to turn down again, it fades away. Have a practice run first, and remind them to keep their eyes on teacher and the arrow, so that they will know when their help is required. Allow them to make the sounds and appropriate gestures, then fade it down and continue with the story. If possible, let the students discover for themselves how to make the sounds (and possible gestures), otherwise they will continue to copy teacher. If there are concerns about the noise of a particular sound, either keep the arrow low or cut it out of the story altogether. The teacher may prefer to use his/her own stories and incorporate desired sounds that he/she wishes the students to practise.

Direct enactment: As the teacher tells (or retells) the story, the students perform the actions (usually a non-verbal activity, although sounds and dialogue can be used). A reasonably large space is required for this activity, although students can be asked to push back the chairs and tables in the classroom. If there are limited numbers of characters in the story, several students may play each role, or the story can be repeated several times to allow each one to perform. The addition of costumes and hand props can enhance the students' experience of the story. If possible, they should be allowed to choose these for themselves. The costumes and props can form the basis for a wider discussion on the characters in the story. *'Why do you think Cinderella is wearing a pink dress?'* *'Why not grey?'* *'Why did you choose that prop for your character?'*

Creative storytelling: The teacher calls out instructions to get everyone warmed up, for example, the morning washing routine or working on a farm, and the students respond to the instructions and dig the fields, sow the seeds, water the plants or feed the animals, as appropriate. The students are divided into groups, put in different places throughout the room and assigned their collective roles, such as the hens, the villagers, and the thieves. The teacher narrates the story in a good, lively voice and the students respond accordingly. For example, *'Down in the valley, the villagers worked on their farms all day (calls out various tasks the villagers perform). After a while they sat down to rest. However, high up on the hill, the thieves (another group of students) were hiding, and from behind the trees they watched the farmers carefully. They began to form a plan, and sneaked back into their hideout to discuss it. Meanwhile the hens (the third group of students) were scratching about in their yard, looking for worms. They stretched their long necks in the sun and shook out their dusty feathers, and chatted to one another'....* The story can be built up for a while, *'Until night falls and the villagers go to sleep, and the thieves sneak down the hill to steal the farmers' corn. The hens hear them and screech out loud to alert the farmers, who catch the thieves. If there are fears about the noise or confusion when the farmers wake up to catch the thieves, simply adapt the story so that, for example, all the other thieves get away and only one is left behind.'*

This approach can be used with well-known stories or with stories that the teacher or the students create.

Use the original story to prompt you in a new

direction: This is a very useful way to lead into drama.

Using a story that the students are familiar with, teacher introduces the idea that the main character took another route or made a different choice. For example, *when Goldilocks went to the Bears' house, there was no porridge, so she decided to go to the house next door where the three little pigs lived, or Little Red Riding Hood took the wrong path and got totally lost.* The teacher can continue the tale or allow the students to interject and speculate on what happened. It will be important to introduce choices that the characters have to make. *'Will Goldilocks go home when there is no porridge in the Bears' house? Will she knock at the Three Little Pigs' door? Will Little Red Riding Hood speak to the stranger she sees in the distance?'* This increases students' involvement in the activity, and it can gradually move more easily into becoming a drama (where the action is slowed down and students get to explore the characters a little more as they face decisions and challenges).

Drama to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding

The student should be enabled to respond to music and movement activities.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Exploring and making drama Respond to musical sounds/ recorded music: <i>participate in movement sessions/musical games using movements that are spontaneous and unrehearsed.</i>	Exploring and making drama Respond to music as a stimulus for dance: <i>move freely and expressively, move and dance in front of a mirror.</i> Perform a controlled sequence of movements: <i>individual dance work/ dance work with a partner.</i>	Exploring and making drama Express ideas imaginatively and communicate feelings through dance and movement: <i>show awareness of musical time, rhythm, mood.</i> Rehearse and perform more complex, clearly expressive movement.

The student should be enabled to acquire the instinct for developing make-believe play into drama.

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Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Exploring and making drama Can make-believe with regard to objects: <i>take part in small world play with play mats, farm animals, etc., play with and 'talk' to dolls, teddies, etc.</i> Take part in action songs and rhymes: <i>express emotions, and interpret facial expressions and gestures.</i> Begin to show signs of co-operative play. Express a view in a collective role (for example as villager, worker, friend of a character): <i>sign to teacher-in-role playing the wolf that she is 'bad'.</i>	Exploring and making drama Express ideas from experience imaginatively when dressing up and acting out stories: <i>represent objects, animals and people through movement, dance, mime, sound and gesture.</i> Take on a role and sustain role-play generated by the home corner, dressing-up box: <i>can maintain the make-believe through movement and actions—move from playing a chasing game to being tigers playing the same game.</i> Use puppets and props to communicate feelings: <i>use actions and language to create and sustain imaginary play situations.</i>	Exploring and making drama Create and sustain imaginary contexts using objects, activities, role-play to represent meaning beyond the concrete present: <i>communicate with other participants in ways which sustain the role-play.</i> Move from dressing-up play into making dramas about the dressed-up characters: <i>maintain the make-believe verbally, using appropriate vocabulary in specific roles.</i> Show an awareness of a variety of roles: <i>convey mood and differentiate character types through voice and gesture, mime appropriate actions.</i>

The student should be enabled to
respond to sensory stimuli in drama activities.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Exploring and making drama Develop awareness of sensory stimuli in drama activities: <i>be enabled to use all his/her senses to become aware of costumes and props, become aware of a change in classroom environment when props are set up.</i> Respond to sensory stimuli in drama activities: <i>show interest in particular props and costumes, show preference for one material/ texture/colour over another.</i>	Exploring and making drama Explore and communicate about sensory stimuli in drama activities: <i>experiment with props and costumes, seek to wear a favourite costume.</i> React appropriately when sensory signals are used at the start/key moments/finish of drama.	Exploring and making drama Make choices between a variety of materials and textures while choosing costumes and helping to create props and masks. Show interest in wearing stage make-up and assist fellow students in applying same. Explore how he/she can use own body to tell a story in drama: <i>use speech and movement to create effects (to illustrate the effect of the wind through the trees).</i>

The student should be enabled to
develop the ability to play in role as an integral part of the action.

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Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Exploring and making drama Become aware that he/she is caught up in a make-believe situation and accept a notional or general role: <i>accept and participate with assistance in playing a notional or general role, such as a brother or friend of a character.</i> Participate in a short routine with decreasing assistance: <i>imitate a supporting adult pouring a drink for a teacher-in-role.</i> Play the part of a parent or teacher when playing house or school.	Exploring and making drama Carry out a short familiar routine: <i>pretend to buy a cup of tea in the restaurant, hand over a coin and hold out hand to receive the cup.</i> Develop the ability to play in role as an integral part of the action: <i>take on different roles in a puppet drama.</i>	Exploring and making drama Use the ability to play at make-believe to enter fully into participation in drama: <i>adopt the role of the helper/waiter.</i> Use his/her emerging awareness of the differences in people, in order to develop an understanding of the relationship between role and character: <i>increase audibility and change tone of voice when playing the role of a king/judge/reporter.</i>

The student should be enabled to

experience how the use of space and objects can help to create the reality of the make-believe world.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Exploring and making drama Be responsive to the teacher's use of an object: <i>a hat, a cloak, a box of treasure.</i> Become aware of the creation of a make-believe space through the use of props, objects or pictures: <i>look at and handle goods placed on a shelf to create a 'shop'.</i> Experience tactile and sensory stimuli to evoke a sense of place in the drama: <i>smell or feel seaweed/ pampas grass/sand, listen to taped sounds of the sea during a drama about a seaside holiday.</i>	Exploring and making drama Experience how the use of space and objects can help to create the reality of the make-believe world: <i>a table and chair represent a king's or queen's throne, a ruler becomes a saw or a magic wand, imagine what is happening in a certain space if chairs and objects are arranged in a certain way.</i> Become aware of being part of a make-believe space or location, and begin to participate in the action, using appropriate language and gestures for that role: <i>stepping gingerly onto sheets of paper, representing stepping-stones across a stream.</i> Distinguish between the make-believe location and the classroom: <i>be involved in creating the location and then tidying it away when the drama is over.</i>	Exploring and making drama Experience how context is built and a drama reality created through the use of space and objects: <i>set out different objects to represent aspects of a room/scene (what is needed to make a café in the classroom), explore the limitations and possibilities of movement inside this given space.</i> Use a widening range of materials and props, and explore how props can be used to create a make-believe world: <i>imagine PE mats as magic carpets that fly to different places.</i> Show sensitivity to the positioning and grouping of others: <i>work in groups in a given space, without intruding into the space of other groups.</i>

The student should be enabled to

develop awareness of how he/she, as part of a group, helps to maintain focus in the dramatic action.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Exploring and making drama Encounter cause-effect situations with immediate consequences: <i>give teacher-in-role a present, who is promptly delighted.</i> Use objects and props in a familiar sequence within the drama: <i>put a doll in a cardboard box for a bed, and cover with a blanket while helping teacher-in-role to look after her new baby.</i> Show recognition of a key moment in which he/she was involved: <i>during a video replay of the drama.</i>	Exploring and making drama Actively take part in short, whole-class performances: <i>follow and be reactive to the teacher-in-role.</i> Respond to questioning about his/her role in the drama: <i>indicate 'yes'/'no' in response to the question, 'Was X happy when you helped him?'.</i>	Exploring and making drama Use movement, voice and gesture in a controlled manner in order to convey meaning. Sustain, in role, an intended emotion: <i>fear, anger, sadness.</i> Collaborate in actions with others.

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The student should be enabled to:

respond to change in atmosphere in drama activities

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Exploring and making drama Become aware of a sense of occasion and difference when experiencing make-believe activities. Notice a change in atmosphere: <i>tense at a sudden crescendo of voices and percussion instruments at a key moment of a drama game.</i>	Exploring and making drama Experience, and participate in the use of contrasting elements of light and darkness, sound and silence, and movement and stillness, to help evoke an atmosphere of make-believe and fiction. Anticipate a change in atmosphere: <i>show signs of anxiety at the sight of a teacher-in-role playing the wolf creeping up on Little Red Riding Hood.</i>	Exploring and making drama Contribute to a change in atmosphere by responding appropriately to a cue or signal: <i>tip-toe quietly past the sleeping giant played by a student-in-role, dim the lights at a particular place in a familiar drama sequence, create a drum-roll to announce the arrival of the king.</i>

The student should be enabled to
develop awareness of tension in the drama.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Exploring and making drama Become aware of patterns and sequences in the drama that indicate familiar activities and can help him/her to anticipate what happens next. Attend to and appreciate the significance of time in relation to how characters in the drama behave: <i>when Jack's mother calls him in for his dinner, the student-in-role moves to the dining-area of Jack's house.</i>	Exploring and making drama Develop an awareness of the significance of time in adding tension and urgency to the drama: <i>if we don't find her before it gets dark, we'll have to go home and try again tomorrow/when night falls, all the hens go to sleep but the fox is wide awake getting ready to visit the farm.</i> Sense and experience the excitement and anticipation of a character faced with a choice, a dilemma or problem: <i>participate in collective or individual role as the character facing the choice or difficulty.</i>	Exploring and making drama Become sensitive to the change in body language, tone and register when a character is facing a dilemma or situation. Experience the moment of tension in the drama: <i>a friendly stranger offers sweets to him/her and to other members of the group, who decide whether or not to take them.</i> Consider what might happen next, discuss possible outcomes.

The student should be enabled to
develop an awareness of significance in drama.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Exploring and making drama Become aware of how objects, people, sounds, movements and changes in lighting can be used to enhance the significance of an event: <i>everyone bows when the king enters the room, a bell tolls when it is time for Cinderella to leave the ball.</i>	Exploring and making drama Become aware of how objects, people, sounds, movements and changes in lighting can be used to represent or signify something else: <i>the lights are dimmed to suggest nightfall, the character wears a hat, scarf and gloves to indicate cold weather.</i>	Exploring and making drama Participate in the selection of appropriate objects to raise the status of an event/character and add significance to the drama: <i>deciding to place a chair on a box so that the king is seen to be in a position of authority.</i> Develop the ability to reflect on the significance of events as they occur in the drama: <i>she was carrying a big red bag: was that to ...?</i>

The student should be enabled to
sustain interest for the duration of the drama.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Exploring and making drama Sustain interest in a task for the duration of moments of active participation: <i>show excitement on hearing his/her name mentioned, take his/her turn with assistance, listen and clap hands when the tune of a favourite song is adapted in the drama, look when a favourite staff member enters the drama.</i>	Exploring and making drama Independently seek to help teacher-in-role in the drama. Anticipate own action or rehearsed response.	Exploring and making drama Watch others, take turn independently and then resume watching the action. Make observations on specific role-play situations and recall the 'story' in the right sequence, using appropriate vocabulary.

The student should be enabled to
develop the ability to reflect on the action as it progresses.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Reflecting on drama Experience the immediate consequence of an action within the drama: <i>become aware of what happens when he/she makes a loud noise and wakes up the sleeping boy/girl played by teacher-in-role.</i>	Reflecting on drama Make guided choices during the course of the drama: <i>consider what bears should put in their picnic baskets or what Jack should do next.</i>	Reflecting on drama In preparing for a drama that involves a hospital scene, reflect on appropriate behaviour when visiting people in the hospital—how do we show we care? Show sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others: <i>explore ways of helping the sick old man in the restaurant/café.</i>

The student should be enabled to
experience the relationship between story, theme and life experience.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Reflecting on drama Experience the consequences of an action that replicates a real-life situation: <i>comfort teacher-in-role pretending to cry (who then instantly cheers up), shake the hand of teacher-in-role playing a special visitor.</i>	Reflecting on drama Relate with some assistance to a character in need: <i>with prompting, show the lion/giant who can't make friends some of the strategies that the student uses in making friends.</i>	Reflecting on drama Share insights gained while experiencing the drama: <i>communicate about how he/she felt when ..., would mother or father do things differently from one of the characters in the drama?</i> Explore issues with a practical, social or moral dimension: <i>is given the role of an active moral agent, such as helper, rescuer, and encouraged to articulate, either in or out of role, the differences between right and wrong.</i>

The student should be enabled to
develop awareness of being part of an audience.

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Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Reflecting on drama Have opportunities to attend a dramatic performance (short play, puppet show, pantomime, etc.): <i>in school, in locality, a special trip to a big performance.</i> Respond to the unfolding storyline: <i>visually and/or aurally follow what is happening, show pleasure/boredom/fright/excitement at the action.</i>	Reflecting on drama Experience, enjoy and participate in as many forms of dramatic expression or genre as possible. Show curiosity when he/she is brought to see a dramatic performance: <i>show anticipation and curiosity, ask about what is happening.</i> Relate to character in role: <i>shout to warn of impending danger— 'Look out, he's behind you!'</i> Behave appropriately with some prompting when he/she is part of an audience.	Reflecting on drama Be able to recall the characters in the drama and explain their function in the unfolding plot. Recollect a situation in the drama: <i>the consequences of an action.</i> Communicate about the order of events in the story. Begin to be sensitive to the differences in genre: <i>for example, between comic and tragic.</i>

The student should be enabled to

develop the ability, out of role, to co-operate and communicate with others in helping to shape the drama.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Co-operating and communicating in making drama Co-operate in making and organising props and costumes for the drama: <i>participate with an adult in painting backdrop, participate in placing props in their correct places.</i> Show interest in making and organising props and costumes for the drama and co-operate with others with decreasing assistance: <i>look with interest at the attractive costume materials, hold material as an adult cuts it, help to cut material with scissors, help another student or adult to paint and place props.</i> Have reaction interpreted that will influence the drama: <i>choose costume items from dressing up box to be worn by the teacher-in-role.</i>	Co-operating and communicating in making drama Co-operate independently with an adult or another student in making and organising props and costumes: <i>communicate about what materials to use for costumes or where to place props.</i> Help teacher/other student prepare to go into role by assisting him/her in putting on a garment. Help teacher to choose the location for the drama.	Co-operating and communicating in making drama Make a clear decision to influence the context for the drama: <i>indicate where there will be a door on the façade of a house, help teacher create it using masking tape to outline details, stick cardboard door on façade.</i> Contribute ideas on the choice of props, costumes and music. Work, individually and in groups, to paint the backdrop and various props and set out chairs for the audience. Exchange roles so that each member of the group has a chance to contribute to the drama.

The student should be enabled to

develop, in role, the ability to co-operate and communicate with others in helping to shape the drama.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Co-operating and communicating in making drama Engage in tasks within the drama that require co-operation: <i>take part in follow-my-leader drama game.</i> Participate in a drama performance: <i>play a collective role, participate as a member of the crowd.</i>	Co-operating and communicating in making drama In a drama about <i>Noah and the Ark</i>, take turns making the sounds of his/her animals. Contribute ideas about what Jack can do to get away from the giant. Participate in a drama performance: <i>play an individual role: carry out actions on cue from a narrator...</i> Co-operate with others, in small groups, in making a scene between puppets.	Co-operating and communicating in making drama Help others to decide how to deal with the bully: <i>contribute suggestions.</i> Participate in a drama performance: <i>play a character role, recall rehearsed actions, show ability to improvise.</i>

Exemplars

Drama

The following pages outline some ideas for developing a theme in drama for students with moderate general learning disabilities. The exemplars of lessons outlined are intended to provide some ideas from which teachers can develop their own activities and experiences to meet the needs of their particular students.

Exemplar scheme: story based on *Jack and the Beanstalk*

No.	Exemplar title	Page
1.	Introduction: Jack and the beanstalk	33
2.	Jack and the beanstalk	36
3.	Jack milks the cow	38
4.	Jack having breakfast	40
5.	Jack on his way to the market	42
6.	Jack sells the cow for magic beans	44
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11.	A bag of gold	52

Exemplar 1: Drama

Title: Introduction: Jack and the Beanstalk

Story to be dealt with episodically

Method Strategies

- simple narration of section of story by teacher, followed by drama work based on it
- teacher-in-role – Mother/old man/Giant's wife/Giant
- class in role – collectively, individual roles, in pairs
- guided imagery
- mime.

Material/ Resources	Learning outcomes	Language development
• working space containing table and chairs • apron, man's hat, shawl, candle, cloth/bandage • seeds, pots, compost • pictures of cow, cottage, window, door, old-fashioned hearth, giant beanstalk, crock of gold.	• working co-operatively • communicating • negotiating • developing imagination • role-taking • awareness of passage of time throughout day.	• listening skills • negotiating skills • responses in role through speech/gesture/sign.

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Linkage

- SESE
- PE - movement
- SPHE
- English - poems
- Maths
- Arts education - music.

Exemplar 1: Drama

Title: Introduction: Jack and the Beanstalk

Material/ Resources	Learning outcomes	Language development, Listening skills
- apron, candle, man's hat, shawl, bandage/cloth - pictures of – cow, kitchen, door, window, cottage, fireplace (old fashioned hearth) – all above with appropriate titles - seeds for sowing, pots and compost.	- role-taking e.g. Jack, buyer (old man), Jack's Mother, Mrs Giant, Mr Giant - developing imagination - working co-operatively - communicating/negotiating - use of mime - planting of seeds: <i>observing their growth</i> - awareness of different times of day: <i>morning/breakfast, night time/bedtime</i> - awareness of seasons: <i>spring</i>.	- listening to narrative - Jack listening to Mother's instructions - Jack listening for Giant's footsteps.

Negotiation skills

- role-playing in pairs – Jack and the old man
 - Jack and Mrs Giant
 - eliciting appropriate responses in role
 - gestures/activities
- e.g. Jack driving cow to market
 Jack standing holding rope on cow
 Mother throwing out beans in disgust
 Jack closing window
 Mother lighting candle
 Jack climbing the beanstalk
 Jack gathering herbs for poultice and making of poultice.

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Methodology

Story telling/narration

Teacher-in-role as Jack's Mother/old man/Mrs Giant/Mr Giant

Role-taking collectively

. in pairs

. individually

Guided imagery . . Jack's journey to market

Mime milking cow, climbing beanstalk.

Exemplar 1: **Drama**

Linkages

Nature study – planting of seeds

Maths – counting of beans, counting of coins

Time – showing breakfast time, afternoon and bedtime on clock, thereby leading to learning to read a clock (long-term aim)

Language (reading) – door, window, table, chairs, apron, hat, fireplace, beans, poultice, etc. (written on pictures).

Physical activities

Curling, stretching, yawning on awakening, driving cow to market, '*climbing up*' beanstalk

Nature study planting of seeds

Artwork for example drawing of chairs, table, door, scenes from story

Music/Jingle To market, to market...

. Henny, Jenny, jingle...

Exemplar 2: **Drama****Title:** Jack and the Beanstalk**Lesson:** 1

Resources	Pre-context Preparation
• apron • picture of a cow • picture of a bucket • yoghurt carton/cheese carton/milk carton • pictures of different types of houses including a cottage.	The teacher tells the class he/she is going to begin a story called <i>Jack and the Beanstalk</i>. He/she shows pictures of an old cottage and of a cow with words cottage and cow printed underneath. A short discussion based on the pictures takes place.

 TEACHER TALK*Let's begin the story now***Narration**

There once was a boy called Jack, who lived with his mother in a little house called a cottage. They had one cow that gave them lovely, fresh milk, and Jack milked her every morning and evening.

Suspend narration **TEACHER TALK***Let me pretend to be Jack's mother and all of you can be Jack.***Contract***Let's try it shall we?***Signing***Shows apron.* **TEACHER TALK***I'll wear this apron when I'm pretending to be Jack's mother but when I take it off I'm Teacher again.***Practice***Puts apron on and asks: Who am I?**Takes apron off and asks: Who am I?**Puts apron on.***Teacher-in-role (TIR)**

Jack! Get up out of bed and go out and milk the cow. I'm in the kitchen putting on the porridge for breakfast. Do you hear me Jack?

Collective role as Jack*Encourages responses from all as Jack.***Teacher out of role***Teacher takes off apron.**Helps class to mime getting up.*

Exemplar 2: Drama

Mimed activities in collective role as Jack

Stretching/yawning/dressing/washing faces and hands/fetching bucket/going to cow/patting cow/fetching stool/milking cow/talking to her/carrying heavy bucket into kitchen.

Reflection

Did Jack get up when his mother called him? Was he kind to the cow? What do you think? etc.

Topics for discussion

Various types of houses.

What kind of house do they live in?

Where does milk come from?

What products are made from milk?

Jack and the Beanstalk.

Exemplar 3: Drama

Title: Jack Milks the Cow

Lesson: 2

Resources	Reviewing
• apron • table • chairs • cereal boxes • pictures of door/window/fireplace – open hearth • marmalade jar • tea carton • sugar packet • coffee jar.	<i>Teacher reviews work of previous lesson through well-posed questions and reminders. Shows apron and reminds them of its significance.</i>

TEACHER TALK

Let's set out Jack's kitchen. Where will we put the table? Here?

Setting out the drama place

Does so with their help.

And the chairs?

(using space available)

Ditto.

Look at these pictures.

Shows pictures of fireplace, window, door.

Where will we place the fire? the window? the door?

Places them

We'll pretend we have spoons and bowls for porridge.

Now I'll be Jack's mother again and you're coming in with the heavy bucket of milk.

TIR

Dons apron.

Good lad Jack. Dip the jug into the bucket and put it on the table.

Mimed activity

Encourage all to fill the imaginary jug from the imaginary bucket and put it on the table.

Mime

Teacher mimes stirring porridge in a pot.

TIR

The porridge is just ready. Hold up your bowl Jack and I'll fill it for you.

Exemplar 3: Drama

Interaction responses

Teacher mimes filling bowls with porridge as students hold imaginary bowls. Encourages Jack to say, *'Thank you mother'*.

Help yourself to the milk out of the jug. Eat up now!

Students and teacher mime eating porridge.

Building belief

Was it cold outside when you were milking the cow? Was the sun shining? Was it raining?

Conversation

Encourage responses as Jack.

Teacher out of role

Teacher removes apron.

Discussion

Various types of breakfasts nowadays vis-à-vis Jack's.

Exemplar 4: Drama

Title: Jack Having Breakfast

Lesson: 3

Resources	Reviewing
• apron • table • chairs • pictures of door/window/fireplace – open hearth.	<i>Teacher reviews work of previous lessons.</i> <i>Sets up kitchen again.</i> <i>Shows apron and reminds the students of its significance.</i> <i>All seated at breakfast table.</i> <i>Teacher dons apron.</i>

TIR

Jack – I've some bad news for you.

Tension

This is the last food we have and we've no money to buy any more. The cow is all we have and I'm afraid we'll have to sell her to get money for food. So, go straight outside and take the cow to the market and sell her. Make sure you get a good price for her and buy some food for the dinner. Hurry back before it gets dark.

Interaction/Responses

Jack, how much do you think she's worth?

Encourage responses as Jack.

Teacher out of role

Removes apron.

Mime activity

Teacher helps class to mime the following:

- untying cow
- finding a suitable (imaginary) stick to drive her to market, emphasising to Jack not to hit the cow but just tip her gently, to guide her safely along.

Guided imagery

Class responds to the following by moving around the room 'driving' the cow, responding appropriately to the images created (i.e. may sit/stand/or work as appropriate).

Jack! Guide the cow carefully here – look out for that big pothole! Don't let her wander into that gap – she might fall into the little stream and you'd never get her out. Look – she has started to eat the grass along the side of the road.

Let her do that – and you can have a look around.

See – there's your cottage away behind you – it's impossible to see your mother from here, and the cottage looks quite small from this distance.

There's another cottage over there – Oh! Look at the mother cat and her kittens playing in front of the door.

Let's all stand and have a good look around. There's a farmer working in the field just beside that cottage – that must be where he lives.

Exemplar 4: Drama

Students stop to smell flowers, look at the stream, listen to birds etc.

*See the lovely green hills far away, with the sun shining and the little stream gurgling beside the road here.
Listen to the birds singing in the trees.*

Building belief

Oh! Look at the twig in that bird's beak – they must be building their nests. Oh isn't this a lovely day in spring!

Reflection

Why is Jack going to the market? Why does he have to sell the cow? What did Jack's mother tell him to buy?

To do

Sow seeds in pots in classroom

Topic for discussion

Money: *buying/selling/shopping etc.*

Food for dinner: *discuss favourite dinner etc. What might Jack buy?*

Caring for animals – *cow/cat/kittens/dogs*

Farmer and his work in spring/four seasons

Birds: *building nests in spring etc.*

Exemplar 5: Drama

Title: Jack on his Way to The Market

Lesson: 4

Resources	Reviewing
• hat for old man • picture of stile • picture of beans • pictures of a market.	Teacher reviews work of previous lessons. Reminds the students that Jack has stopped for a little rest on his way to market to sell the cow.

TEACHER TALK

Let's go on with the story.

Narrative

Oh! Isn't this a lovely day in spring! Look! There's someone in the distance coming towards you Jack. It looks like a man – yes! It's an old man with a funny looking hat on his head. Look, he's sitting down on a stile now. Let's go and meet him.

Signing

Teacher tells the class he/she will pretend to be the old man when he/she puts on a hat.

Practice

Puts on hat and asks: *Who am I?*

Takes off hat and asks: *Who am I?*

Teacher puts on hat.

TIR

Good morning young man.

Elicit responses as Jack.

Good morning Sir.

What's your name?

Jack

Jack – that's a fine name.

You can call me 'Old Man'. Everybody does.

Conversation ensues perhaps as follows:

Conversation in role

Where are you going Jack?

To the market.

Why?

To sell this cow.

Why must you sell the cow?

We need money for food.

Look what I have here. These are magic beans. Look at the size of them, the shape of them and their strange colour.

Exemplar 5: Drama

Mimes

Hold out your hand Jack and I'll put some on your palm. Feel them – wouldn't you like to keep them Jack? Taste one – not so nice! That's because they're not supposed to be eaten – they're meant to be sown in the ground. It's springtime now and it's just the right time for sowing seeds.

You could have them for yourself Jack – but what would you offer me in return? That's a fine cow you have there. Tell me why I should give you these magic beans for that cow.

Teacher removes hat.

Teacher out of role

Everybody, turn to the person near you. That person will be your partner. One of you will be Jack and the other will be the Old Man with the magic beans. Old Man, put on your pretend hat.

Classroom Assistant to help

Teacher makes sure everybody in class knows which role they are taking before proceeding.

Teacher talk

Now, Old Man, you must try to get Jack to agree to give his cow to you in return for the magic beans.

Jack, how lovely it would be not to have to go on the long journey to the market and maybe nobody there would be willing to buy your cow? Remember those beans are 'Magic'!

Now Old Man and Jack, start your bargaining.

Working in pairs In role

Teacher goes to each pair encouraging discussion: examining cow, Jack praising cow's milk-yield, resisting sale at first, finally agreeing. They shake hands to seal bargain. They part – Jack carrying beans and Old Man drives cow away.

Reflection

Who did Jack meet? What was his name? What did he show Jack? What did he want Jack to give him?

Topics for discussion

Market.

Bargaining.

Stile.

Rhyme

To market, to market

To buy a fat pig.

Home again, home again

Jiggety-jig.

Verse 2 ... hog

... jiggety-jog.

Exemplar 6: **Drama****Title:** Jack Sells the Cow for Magic Beans**Lesson:**5

Resources	Reviewing
• apron • table • chairs • pictures: fireplace/window/door.	<i>Teacher reviews work of previous lessons, reminding the students of Jack selling the cow for magic beans.</i> <i>Sets up kitchen again.</i> <i>Shows apron and reminds the students of its significance.</i> <i>Teacher dons apron and looks out the window.</i>

TIR

What's keeping Jack? He should have been home hours ago. I hope he remembered to buy the food for the dinner.

Oh, I see him coming without the cow. I hope he got a good price for her. I'll put some turf on the fire and fill the kettle.

Teacher out of role

Removes apron.

Mimed activity

Teacher gets class to fetch sods of turf and bank up the fire, to go to the pump and fill the kettle, and to place it on the fire, having carried it carefully inside.

TIR

Puts on apron.

Ah! Here he is.

Collective role of Jack

Jack, where's the food?

Teacher gets response from students as Jack.

Do you mean to say you sold our good cow for a handful of beans?

We can't even eat them, you silly boy.

What's so special about them?

Elicits response re: 'Magic' beans.

What do you mean, 'magic'? I never heard such rubbish.

Here! Give them to me.

Teacher goes to window, mimes pushing up window, throws 'beans' out, and closes the window.

I'm tired and hungry and very disappointed in you, Jack.

Exemplar 6: Drama

Mimed activities

Lock the window now please. *Wait for activity.*

Close the curtains. *Wait for activity.*

Put the bolt on the door. *Wait for activity.*

Put the guard in front of the fire. *Wait for activity.*

I'm going to bed. Goodnight.

Time of day (bedtime)

Fetches candle and lights it. Walks slowly towards the 'bedroom'. Blows out candle.

Teacher out of role

Takes off apron.

Reflection

Was Jack's mother pleased with the magic beans? What did she do with them?

Did they have anything to eat?

Topics for discussion

Home-heating nowadays/long ago.

Boiling of kettle then and now.

Candle vis-à-vis electricity for light.

Safety-factors (candle-flame).

Times of day.

Exemplar 7: Drama

Title: The Beanstalk

Lesson: 6

Resources	Reviewing
• apron • table • chairs • pictures: fireplace/window/door.	<i>Teacher reviews work of previous lessons through well-posed questions.</i> <i>Sets up kitchen again.</i> <i>Shows apron and reminds the students of its significance.</i>

Narration

During the night the magic beans grew and grew. They grew so tall that they covered the window and reached way up into the sky. It made the kitchen very, very dark.

Suspend narration

Guided imagery

Let's pretend we're the beans in the ground where Jack's mother threw us.

Mimed activity

Let us curl up under the ground; we're beginning to stir and move bit by bit. We are now ready to BURST! through the earth. We're growing bigger and bigger, stretching up towards the sun and waving in the breeze of the spring morning.

Teacher-in-role

Dons apron.

Yawns and stretches as if waking up in the morning and walks into the kitchen.

Time

Why is it so dark here in the kitchen? This is morning-time. I'd better open the curtains and let in the light.

Teacher mime

Opens the curtains and looks startled.

Tension

Jack! Wake up! Come quickly! There's something strange growing in front of the window! Oh do wake up! Come along, Jack. Have a good stretch and yawn and hurry into the kitchen.

Collective role of Jack

Mimed activities

Encourages Jack to wake up – stretching/yawning/rubbing eyes coming into the kitchen and responding to Mother as Jack.

Exemplar 7: Drama

TIR continues

Look at the window! There's something strange there – what do you think it is? Let's go outside and have a look.

Activity

TIR and class as Jack go towards picture of kitchen door and go 'outside'

Oh my goodness!

Jack looks upwards.

It seems to go up and up – right up into the clouds!

Teacher out of role and class out of role

Teacher takes off apron.

Teacher questions the students about Jack's reaction to the magic beanstalk.

Prediction

What might happen next?

TIR

Dons apron.

Reinforcing story

So the beans were really magic - the old man told you the truth after all!

Time

Comparison between fast growth of magic beans and the actual growth of seeds sown by class following Lesson 3.

Exemplar 8: Drama

Title: Jack Climbs the Beanstalk

Lesson: 7

Resources	Reviewing
apron.	Teacher reviews work of previous lessons. Shows apron and reminds the class of its significance. Teacher dons apron.

Teacher in role

So the beans were really magic! The old man told you the truth after all, Jack! What will we do with this giant beanstalk?

Collective role of Jack

Maybe there is something to eat up in its branches. Would you try climbing up, Jack? I'll guide you from here.

Guided Imagery

Pull yourself up by your right hand and your right foot – now your left hand – catch that strong branch there.

Class mimes activities

Test it first to make sure it takes your weight – bring up your left foot.

Have a little rest and tell me what you can see?

Elicit responses in role as Jack.

Questioning in role

Can you see the stream sparkling in the sun, Jack?

Can you see the farmer in the field? Is the cat still sitting at the door? and the kittens – are they still playing? All right, Jack! Continue climbing, but be very careful.

Continue guiding Jack for a short while.

Teacher out of role

Takes off apron and invites the class to sit and listen to the story.

Narration (to be read slowly and with meaning)

As his mother watched from below, Jack continued climbing upwards. Soon his mother could no longer see him, as he disappeared into the clouds.

Jack looked around him fearfully. He was tired from the long, long climb up. Turning around, he saw a lovely little nook. He lay down to have a little rest and fell fast asleep.

Reflection

How do we know the beans were magic?

Was Jack frightened climbing up the beanstalk?

Did his mother go up with him?

What did she do?

Topics for discussion

Weather in spring.

Danger of climbing high.

Danger of exploring unknown places on ones own.

Exemplar 9: Drama

Title: Mrs Giant

Lesson: 8

Resources	Reviewing
- shawl - picture of giant.	Teacher reviews work of previous lessons, ending with Jack asleep in nook high up in the beanstalk.

Teacher out of role

Today we will meet new people in our story who live high up in the beanstalk. First of all we will meet a lady who wears this shawl.

Signing

Shows shawl.

Do you remember each time I pretended to be Jack's mother I put on the apron? Well, now, each time I put this shawl around my shoulders I will pretend to be the lady who lives in the beanstalk.

Practice

Puts on the shawl and asks – *Who am I?*

Takes the shawl off and asks – *Who am I?*

Teacher ensures class understands significance of the shawl before proceeding.

Now, let's find out what happens next in the story.

Narration

When Jack woke up, he found a very strange lady standing staring at him.

Teacher dons shawl.

Teacher in role

Who are you? Where did you come from? How did you get here? Why did you come?

Elicits responses from class as Jack.

Collective role

So, your name is Jack. I'm very glad to meet you – you seem to be a kind boy, looking after your mother. I wish I had a nice, kind son like you to help me. My name is Mrs Giant. I hope you are not frightened at how big I am. Have you ever met a giant before?

Elicits responses.

Building belief

My husband is Mr Giant – he's even bigger than I am. Here is a picture of him. Isn't he HUGE!

Shows picture of Giant and elicits comments.

Exemplar 9: Drama

He used to be a lovely, kind, and gentle person, but now he has changed completely. He hurt his hand chopping wood for the fire a few weeks ago. A splinter of wood stuck in his hand but I took it out and bathed it. However, his hand has swollen up and is all red and sore. He seems angry all the time. He shouts at me and frightens me – nothing pleases him, no matter what I do or say. He storms out of the house, bangs the door and tramps so heavily that the ground shakes, and his voice is like thunder.

Teacher out of role

Teacher takes off shawl.

Reflection

Who did Jack see staring at him when he woke up?

Was he frightened?

Had he ever seen a giant before?

What did Mrs Giant tell Jack about her husband?

What happened to Mr Giant's hand?

What effect did that have on him?

Topics for discussion

Teacher explains to class that in the olden days there were no chemist shops or doctors. Some people in the country had cures made from herbs and roots of plants. Sometimes they made a *poultice by boiling up certain herbs and plants in a cloth and applying it while hot to a wound.

***N.B. necessary for further lesson.**

Linkages

- Nature Study
- History
- Folklore
- Language.

Exemplar 10: Drama

Title: The Giant's Sore Hand

Lesson: 9

Resources	Reviewing
shawl.	<i>Teacher reviews the story as far as the Giant's wife, telling Jack about the recent change in Mr Giant. Reminds the students that Mrs Giant wears a shawl.</i>
Narration Jack remembered that some time ago his mother had cured the cow's sore foot by putting on a hot poultice made from certain herbs, which Jack had picked in the fields. The cow had got a big nasty-looking thorn stuck in her foot, which was very painful. After having the poultice on overnight, the cow's foot got better. He wondered if a poultice would cure the Giant's sore hand.	
Teacher in role Teacher puts on shawl.	
Collective role <i>Thank you for telling me about the poultice, Jack. Will you show me which herbs to collect? The herbs you described are growing over here – will you help me to pick them? Here's a big basket to put them in.</i>	
Mimed activity Teacher places pretend basket in centre of space. Guides class in selecting/picking/placing herbs in basket. <i>Let's go inside to put on the big pot of water to boil. Will you carry in the basket of herbs for me please, Jack? Good lad. Help me put the herbs into the pot and stir it for me. Would it be ready yet? It has been boiling for a few minutes now, so perhaps it's ready.</i> Elicits responses.	
Suitable mimed activities <i>Help me smooth out this cloth so that we can fill it with the boiled herbs. Fetch that big spoon; dip it into the pot and lift it out carefully onto the cloth. Now we'll roll it up tightly and it's all ready. Good!</i>	
Tension <i>Oh! Do you hear that sound like thunder? That's Mr Giant coming. Quick! Hide in this cupboard. He mustn't see you, or he will be very angry.</i>	
Mimed activity Class as Jack finds hiding place.	
Teacher and class out of role Teacher removes shawl.	
Reflection <i>I wonder how Jack is feeling now? Is he feeling frightened? Who is coming? Is Mrs Giant afraid too?</i>	
Distancing Elicit their views on Jack's situation in order to protect them from Jack's fear of the giant.	
Linkages Modern-day medicines. Ancient cures – folklore.	

Exemplar 11: **Drama****Title:** A Bag of Gold**Lesson:** 10

Resources	Reviewing
cloth/bandage.	<i>Teacher reviews work of previous lessons, ending with Jack hiding from the Giant in the cupboard.</i> <i>Shows cloth/bandage.</i>

Signing

Do you remember when I put on the shawl, I pretended to be Mrs Giant? Well, now each time I wrap this cloth/ bandage around my hand I shall pretend to be Mr Giant.

Practice

I put the bandage on – *who am I?*

I take the bandage off – *who am I?*

Teacher ensures class understands the significance of the bandage before proceeding.

Now let's find out what happens next in the story.

Teacher in role

Teacher puts on bandage.

*Fee-Fi-Fo-Fum,
Watch out everyone -
Here I come!*

Teacher tramps heavily to table and sits.

Teacher removes bandage and leaves it on chair.

Teacher out of role

Oh! The giant seems so angry. What should Jack do now, do you think?

Prediction

Teacher encourages suggestions.

 TEACHER TALK

Well, let's see what did happen in the story.

Narration

Jack couldn't keep awake in the cupboard, and so he fell fast asleep. While he slept, Mrs Giant put the poultice on Mr Giant's hand, so that when Jack woke up the giant's hand was better! Then Mrs Giant told Mr Giant about Jack, and she went over to the cupboard and brought Jack out, telling him that the giant was not angry or a bully any more.

Exemplar 11: Drama

Signing

Teacher drapes bandage across arm.

Teacher in role/ Class: Collective role as Jack

Jack – I want to say thank you for telling Mrs Giant about the poultice. Look! It has cured me. I am sorry I was such a horrible angry person – but the pain was very bad and it wouldn't stop. Now, as a thank you gift I am giving you this bag of nice, shiny gold coins. You will be able to look after your mother forever and ever.

Teacher out of role

Teacher guides class as Jack climbs down beanstalk carrying the bag.

Mimed activities

Teacher removes bandage.

Narration

Jack climbed back down the beanstalk and gave his mother the bag of gold coins. They built themselves a lovely house and lived happily ever after.

Reflection

Why did Mr Giant become a bully?

When did he change?

Is Mrs Giant happy now?

What did Mr Giant give Jack as a reward?

Was Jack's mother happy to see Jack back with a bag of gold?

Linkages

- Bullying
- Social Skills – politeness/gratitude
- Maths – counting coins.

Appendix

Basic props and equipment

Simple props can help a student attend to, respond to, or assume a role.

Basic equipment

- cassette player or CD-player and tapes or CDs
- stage blocks
- table and chairs
- mirror
- notice-board
- good-quality make-up for special occasions.

Costumes: including masks, bags, coats, cloaks, animal costumes, domestic costumes (fireman's helmet, nurse's outfit, doctor's outfit, etc.)

Props

- hats
- scarves and shawls
- good masks
- coats and cloaks
- unusual long skirts, trousers, exotic coloured tops
- bags
- pieces of flimsy, flowing fabrics
- old sheets
- pairs of reading glasses and sunglasses
- a variety of wearable pairs of shoes
- telephones
- clip-board
- old computers
- bells
- newspapers
- vase of (plastic) flowers
- hairbrushes and combs
- football rattle
- rubber gloves
- knitting
- books
- pack of cards
- doll/teddy in shawl
- tea things – plastic teapot, mugs, etc.
- sweeping brush
- clock
- mirrors and masks
- old TV with inside taken out or a home-made frame
- walking sticks.

Character bags and sensory boxes

Familiar roles and characters can be introduced to the students through the use of ‘a *character bag*’ (for example, a garda, a teacher, a fire fighter, a doctor, a dentist, a nurse, a farmer, a cook, a cleaner, a refuse-collector). This character bag can contain sets of clothes and tools characteristic of that role. If a specific character from a well-known story or television programme is being explored, personal effects can be added that might be associated with that particular character, and that indicate their job, hobby, or personal habits; for example, *Little Red Riding Hood* with her basket of goodies on her way to Grandma’s house, or the sunglasses and jewellery worn by a pop singer like *Puff Daddy* or *Ronan Keating* of Boyzone.