FOLKTALES IN FORTY MINUTES
A CREATIVE DRAMATICS APPROACH TO INTEGRATED LEARNING AND CHARACTER EDUCATION

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Thesis

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To Mr. Oba R. L. Lloyd

for providing the cliff from which I jumped and took flight.
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I've Got a Problem

It’s Monday morning. Three days ago I was a kindergarten teacher. Today I am the Drama Teacher for the entire student population ranging from preschoolers to fifth graders. The only materials I have to work with are a circle of kindergarten-sized chairs, a record and tape player, a few miscellaneous hats and pieces of fabric, an overhead projector that could provide a semblance of a spotlight and a bookshelf full of stories. This was all my idea for saving my job which was about to be eliminated -- and my principal bought it. Now what do I do?

I spent the remainder of the school year struggling to engage students in an art form that was completely foreign to them. The open work space that I created in the classroom was an invitation to chaos. Only extremely structured activities worked -- sometimes. Lack of appropriate reading skills made script reading laborious and boring. Students were as confused about what was expected of them as I was about what I expected from them. Assigning them a grade for work conducted once a week for forty minutes became an absurd exercise. I had imagined that they would be thrilled to engage in dramatic activities that enabled
them to use their imaginations and express their feelings and also gain better communication skills along the way.

Several colleagues saw no relation between drama and the “literacy” teacher who was supposed to fill this position, and thus filed a grievance against the principal. His defense of what I was doing saved me from the chopping block. He continually encouraged me and reminded me often that I had to “reach them before I could teach them.”

I had some help from resident artists who were working in our building through a four year ICARE (Initiative for the Cultural Arts in Education) grant to encourage arts integration. I was the coordinator of the grant and enlisted our dancer and drummer to help me mount a small “play” based on a folktale. This was an extra-curricular project, although I managed to negotiate one forty-minute period per week to accommodate rehearsals in addition to after school rehearsals. The “play” was all of twenty minutes in length, but became my redemption. There were those who argued with me about my efforts to keep students in the play in spite of their demands to “kick them out” because they didn’t turn in their homework. It was those same teachers who came to me later asking that I find places for their students in my “special programs.” It was a small victory, but I took it.

The following summer I enrolled in graduate school to work towards licensure in Drama so that I could keep the position. I was overwhelmed with how much more I needed to learn in an art form that had been an avocation and how difficult it was to adapt what I was learning to the elementary aged children
who were my students. Fate would have it that two weeks after my summer graduate courses ended, I attended the American Alliance of Theatre and Education (AATE) conference in Minneapolis. It was here that I was introduced to the concept of process-oriented drama.

This concept valued the "process" of dramatic work over the production of performances. Using drama as a medium to teach students about themselves and their relationship to others and about valuing differing perspectives is the focus of the work. I attended workshops and bought so many books that I had to buy another piece of luggage (with wheels) just to get them home. For the last three years I have jumped from one theorist to another trying out every strategy that I thought might work with my students.

The Value of this Research Project

During my graduate studies in Theatre/Drama, I encountered very little material significant to my particular situation. I am unique in that I teach drama at the elementary level. There are very few of us. However, I felt that since my teaching license would cover the span of pre-school through the twelfth grade, and most of my work would be at the lower end of that continuum, I needed to conduct structured research in the area of educational drama and the process-oriented approach.

In this thesis I have organized some of the process-oriented theories into a workable model for myself as a drama specialist in an elementary school setting that also requires that I meet standards in literacy in addition to standards in the
art form. My goal is to engage urban elementary students in a dramatic process that will enhance learning in literacy, develop social and dramatic skills, and lead students to develop a deeper awareness of themselves in relationship with others and the world around them. I expect students to work at higher order thinking skills through reflection and writing about the process, take some risks in revealing a piece of themselves and ideally, achieve an “optimal experience.”

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi in his book *Flow*, describes *optimal experience* as “something we make happen. The best moments usually occur when a person’s body or mind is stretched to its limits in a voluntary effort to accomplish something difficult and worthwhile” (p.3).

In the course of my research, I found that the precepts of drama are founded on established principals in education best articulated by John Dewey, Jean Piaget, and Lev Vygotsky. In “Article I – What Education Is” of Dewey’s *My Pedagogic Creed*, written in 1897, he states his belief that the child’s intuitions and powers are the starting point for his education and that only through stimulation and interaction within a social experience will he be able to make sense of himself and his actions within society. Definitions of dramatic play come directly from Piaget who constructed intellectual development theory based upon patterns of play in the early childhood years (Van Hoorn, 34). Vygotsky furthered these ideas with his concept of the “zone of proximal development.” This zone is the gap between what a child can achieve alone and what he can achieve with guidance and/or peer collaboration in a problem solving experience (Wells,
1999). A teacher now enters the equation in the form of a guide within the learning experience.

Creative Dramatics, Drama-in-Education, Process Drama and Story Drama, hinge on these theories of social interaction, dramatic play, peer collaboration, problem solving, and teacher as guide. It is the blending of these educational and drama theories that provide an optimal experience in learning through and within the dramatic experience.

At a higher level of dramatic experience, Jerzy Grotowski explains art as:

the experience which we take upon ourselves when we open ourselves to others, when we confront ourselves with them in order to understand ourselves…. in an elementary and human sense (Grotowski, 59).

We learn…what our existence, our organism, our personal and unrepeatable experience have to give us; [we] learn to break down the barriers which surround us and to free ourselves from the breaks which hold us back….to destroy the limitations caused by our ignorance and lack of courage….Theatre only has meaning if it allows us to transcend our stereotyped vision, our conventional feelings and customs, our standards of judgement – not just for the sake of doing so, but so that we may experience what is real and, having already given up all daily escapes and pretences, in a state of complete defenselessness unveil, give, discover ourselves (Grotowski, 256-257).

The idea here is transformation, the precise goal of the educational dramatic process. The work endeavors

- to develop a child who is self-centered and lacks social skills to one who can appreciate and respect another’s point of view, and then, work collaboratively with that person to solve a problem and accomplish a task;
• to develop a child who has little or no confidence in his own ability to stand up on his own to accomplish a task to one who can take a risk, possibly fail, but try again and be successful;
• to develop a child with limited knowledge and understanding to one who can apply what he does know to a new situation or challenge come to a deeper understanding, and then communicate that new understanding;
• to develop a child who cannot read to one who can interpret a piece of literature from an informed perspective;
• to develop a child who sees no connection between his educational and/or dramatic experience and his own reality to one who not only understands the relationships, but can draw from the experience to create something new in his life.

Grotowski said, "Knowledge is a matter of doing." (Schechner, 376). In the process of “doing” drama and literature, the child engages in social interaction to solve a problem using his own instincts. A transformation occurs as the problem is solved. The change is not only in the situation at hand but optimally in the participants themselves. The four paradigms of dramatic experience that I have focused on for this particular research project all work towards a transformation of perspective, knowing, and understanding.

Chapter II of this thesis addresses many but not all educational drama theorists. My approach is to give an overview of the development of child drama in the areas of Creative Dramatics, Drama-in-Education, Process Drama, and Story Drama, highlighting those experts who pioneered and/or adapted theories
that I have found to be appropriate to the environment in which I teach. Volumes have been and are being written on the subject and it is impossible to address all published practitioners. For the purposes of this study, I look at the work of British pioneer Dorothy Heathcote, and her influence on contemporaries Gavin Bolton, Cecily O’Neill, and Canadians Juliana Saxton and David Booth. From the United States, I look at pioneers Winfred Ward and Geraldine Brain Siks, and more contemporary practitioners Nellie McCaslin and Ruth Heinig.

Chapter III, “Folktales in Forty Minutes” blends elements of Creative Dramatics, Drama-in-Education, Process Drama, and Story Drama into a practical model using folktales as the pre-text for the creative process. The model addresses the integration of educational standards in Drama, Literacy, and Social Studies, time and environmental constraints in the school setting, strategies and techniques to effectively and efficiently engage urban elementary school children, and methods of assessment and evaluation.

I intended to include strategies employed by some professionals in the field. Although I contacted several local teaching artists, I received minimal response. From the responses that I did receive, I found that the “process theorists” were relatively unknown to them. The artists that I was able to interview, use improvisational work to stimulate imaginations and creativity and employ many of the same management strategies that I use. See Appendix B for a complete listing of the interview questions. They also use rubric assessment tools and address literacy standards. One artist rarely works towards performance but
primarily focuses on the “process.” Another artist felt that the “process” was a necessary step along the way to performance.

These artists work collaboratively with a classroom teacher or in after school or alternative urban settings. However, none are solely responsible for the academic outcomes that need to be addressed on report cards. Assessments are necessary to be accountable to funding agencies, but those of us who are licensed to teach an art form must be accountable to school district grading policies. That adds a bit more to the formula of creating unit plans.

Chapter IV is a comprehensive unit plan using the folktale, Stone Soup. The plan includes goals and objectives in Drama, English Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science, a detailed description of strategies and techniques, a unit vocabulary list, and a plan for assessment and evaluation of both student work and lesson effectiveness.

While each of the four dramatic forms I have addressed in this project has its own characteristic goals and values, a blending of chosen elements best addressed my particular situation and approach to working with young students. I believe it is the same for any good teacher in any subject area. You take the ideas that work the best and weave your own method.
CHAPTER II
IN THEORY

From early in the twentieth century, a variety of terminology has been used to describe dramatic work that involves children. Phrases and titles such as dramatic play, creative dramatics, play making, Story Drama, children’s theatre, role-playing, Process Drama, Drama in Education (DIE), and Theatre in Education (TIE), are some of those that I encountered in my research. For the purposes of this study and the development of a workable model, I have chosen to focus on four of these concepts: 1) Creative Drama, 2) Drama-in-Education, 3) Process Drama, and 4) Story Drama, and those theorists who have continued to research and advance these forms of drama. A synthesis of characteristics of these forms will serve as a model intended to integrate the art form with literacy and character development as well as exploring other curriculum areas through the medium of drama.

Creative Dramatics in the United States

The American Alliance for Theatre and Education defines Creative Drama as follows:
[Creative drama is] an improvisational, non-exhibitional, process-centered form of drama in which participants are guided by a leader to imagine, enact, and reflect upon human experiences.

The creative drama process is dynamic. The leader guides the group to explore, develop, express, communicate ideas, concepts, and feelings through dramatic enactment. In creative drama the group improvises action and dialogue appropriate to the content it is exploring, using elements of drama to give form and meaning to the experience.

Participation in creative drama has the potential to develop language and communication abilities, problem solving skills, and creativity; to promote a positive self-concept, social awareness, empathy, a clarification of values and attitudes, and an understanding of the art of theatre (qtd. in Heinig, 4-5).

This definition was developed in the late 1970s and was based on the work of American pioneers in creative drama. Those that I include in this study are Winfred Ward, Geraldine Sikks, Nellie McCaslin, and Ruth Beal Heinig.

Winfred Ward

Early in the 1930s, Winifred Ward, from Northwestern University’s School of Speech, introduced Creative Dramatics and Playmaking in the United States. Creative Dramatics was informal, did not adhere to any written text, and demanded no memorization. The activity was not intended for any audience other than the members of the group participating. Improvisation was inherent in this form. Ward gave Creative Dramatics roots in antiquity, relating the concept to the pantomimes and dances of primitive cultures that performed their stories and life experiences for each other.
Ward recognized the attitudes of her time towards Creative Dramatics used in education. There were those who used it as a tool to teach a subject such as social studies, placing the children in the roles of those living in historical times. Another approach was to use it only as a joyful recreational experience. Some felt it should be used for therapeutic purposes only. Ward acknowledged the therapeutic value inherent in the experience, but felt this attitude “ignored its value for normal children.” Others held the view that it should be considered an art, a vital part of the educational curriculum, and deserving of a teaching specialist and not left to an untrained classroom teacher. Ward felt that it was a blending of these attitudes that could allow creative dramatics to be a valued and rewarding experience for children (Ward, 15-16).

Ward put forth five objectives for creative dramatics:

1.) To provide a controlled atmosphere where children could express feelings and emotions. She felt “…the arts offer[ed] opportunities for channeling emotions into constructive uses” thereby helping them “to grow toward emotional maturity” (4).

2.) To provide children with another “avenue of self-expression” in addition to visual art, music, or other forms.

3.) “To encourage and guide the child’s creative imagination.” Ward felt that the imagination needed to be exercised like a muscle in order to develop and grow. She was calling for opportunities for children to develop creativity that could be transferred into problem solving in the world of industry, a notion that she claimed was just beginning to be recognized.
4.) To provide young people the chance to grow in social understanding and co-operation, so that they may become more sensitive to those around them.

5.) “To give children experience in thinking on their feet and expressing ideas fearlessly.” She felt children needed to gain a respect for their own feeling and ideas and be confident enough to express them, while remaining sensitive to the feelings and ideas of others.

To these five objectives, she added the development of initiative, resourcefulness, freedom in bodily expression, enjoyment of good literature, and an appreciation for the dramatic art form (Ward, 3-9).

Ward based her ideas about creative dramatics on “sound educational principles” often recalling Dewey’s ideas about experience-based learning. Dewey’s *My Pedagogic Creed*, written in 1897, placed great importance on the active participation of the child in a social context, where the child can find meaning and relevancy for his own interests and instincts, and discover a sense of himself through the response of others to his decisions and actions (Dewey, 1897).

Ward’s strategies included improvisations, using literature for playmaking and creating plays, and integration. Her idea of integration is one that educators struggle with even today. She warns against just embedding facts into the dialogue of a drama, but instead to develop a dramatization that conveys attitudes of people as well as historical events.
Great value is placed on a teacher who has ability and training in the dramatic art form. Although Ward, herself, realizes that “such training will never be universal” (Ward, 267), she felt a teacher’s attitude towards creative dramatics was an important factor in how the art form is used and valued. Training and research would serve the teacher well in providing a meaningful and successful experience for students.

Challenges with class size, space, and time need to be considered and limitations need to be accepted and dealt with. Teachers must create an environment where children feel comfortable taking risks and experience a sense of freedom of expression within a place of trust and respect. The teacher’s enthusiasm is also essential in engaging students and keeping them vested in the experience.

The teacher must remember to guide and not direct. Children need the opportunity to achieve based on their own ideas, knowledge, experiences, creativity, initiative, and social interactions and collaborations. The teacher’s role is to guide students in a way that will allow them to expand their understandings and see new possibilities. Careful planning and flexibility are essential for successful work.

Ward concludes her book *Playmaking with Children* (1957, the first edition published in 1947) with a timeless statement. Though lengthy, it is worth including because it parallels how I feel about the value of the dramatic process in the education of children and why I continue in the face of the challenges
those of us in the arts face on a daily basis with budget cuts and the ever-
looming “importance” of test-scores.

For the challenging situations youth will meet in business, industry, science,
politics, in the arts, and in living itself, the need for creative thinking will be
great. What education has done in the past is far, far short of what it must
do now if our world is to be saved from destroying itself. Home, church, and
school must somehow build leaders who are more foresighted, more
understanding, more courageous in speaking and acting according to their
convictions. They must develop people who think independently, who can
live peaceably with others.

It is a grave responsibility, yet a thrilling opportunity for the teacher.
Whether she is a specialist or a classroom teacher she needs to believe in
her calling, have faith in its value. She must have a strong sense of the
direction in which she is guiding children, and know why she is guiding them
that way. One small classroom can influence the world. Let her remember
this when she reflects on her role as a teacher (Ward, 286).

As I reflect on my role as a teacher of drama, I often wonder if I am just
teaching drama or teaching life skills. I do not think the two are separate. As my
Directing Professor, James Slowiak once said, “Theatre is an art of human
relationships in action.” Every day that I do this work, my belief in its value
grows. It becomes a process for improving human relationships.

Modernizations in Creative Dramatics Theory

Geraldine Brain Siks was a student of Winifred Ward. She blended the
creative dramatics approach with stories. Her research in the 1960s and ‘70s
introduced new theories in process-oriented drama that originated in Great
Britain, which will be address later. However, I want to place her in the historical
perspective of how drama for children developed in the United States.
Nellie McCaslin and Ruth Beall Heinig are contemporaries from the early 1970s. Building on Sik's early work, they created detailed manuals full of strategies and techniques covering all aspects of creative dramatics for children. They continue to publish updated versions of their earlier works and these texts are often used as training manuals for drama educators. Their recent work recognizes and addresses new theories in drama as they develop. Both McCaslin and Heinig continue to provide comprehensive work in the area of creative dramatics education.

Siks, McCaslin, and Heinig recognized the inherent value of drama for the developing child. McCaslin considers drama the “most personalized and highly socialized art form” (McCaslin, 19). Early objectives for using drama with children dove-tailed with the learning objectives of “modern” education. Educational objectives include developing skills in communication and language arts, critical thinking and problem-solving, social growth and cooperation, creativity and imagination, and the development of morals, values, self-knowledge, and the ability to take responsibility. An understanding and appreciation of the cultures and the values of others, as well as an appreciation of literature and the art form, are by-products of the process (6). The flexible nature of creative dramatics was and still is considered valuable to special needs children as a way to strengthen skill and awaken abilities. (18-19).

Strategies and techniques in drama are designed to meet these same objectives within the realm of the creative dramatic experience and to strengthen
drama/theatre skills as well. Exercises in creative movement, pantomime, sensory awareness, and improvisations engage students in working cooperatively to problem-solve, communicate effectively and take responsibility for their decisions while learning about themselves. Story dramatizations, building plays from various genres of literature, storytelling, and puppetry lead to learning about plot and the dramatic structure.

There is a direct connection between social/life skills and creative dramatic skills. The development of appropriate social skills that involve respect, cooperation, decision-making, problem-solving, understanding consequences of choices, and the ability to concentrate, listen, respond, and communicate are necessary for a child to participate fully and effectively within the dramatic experience. Without such skills, a child will not be able to function fully in an art form that requires social interaction. It is the development of the drama skill set alongside the social skill set that is characteristic of creative dramatics.

It is important to remember however, that even early on, the idea of the “process” of drama was the focus, rather than working toward a “product.” Through the process, the child is learning in action. Siks reminds us that “the word “drama” comes from the Greek drao meaning I do, I struggle” (Siks, 33). Working through of a dilemma, a conflict, allows the child to experience life and its consequences within an imaginary world. By placing students in a situation within the safety of a drama, they use their abilities in creative thinking, problem-solving and collaboration to solve the problem. They are “practicing life” by
considering options, making decisions, and discovering the consequences of those decisions within the imagined world they have created.

This is where the lines of creative dramatics and process-drama start to merge. It was in the late 1970s that the work of Peter Slade, Brain Way, Dorothy Heathcote, and Gavin Bolton, all from Great Britain, came to the attention of drama specialists in the United States.

**Drama –in-Education and Process Drama – The British Influence**

Peter Slade in 1950 and Brian Way in 1967 were early writers on the subject of children and drama in Great Britain. They both advocated for drama to be taught as its own discipline and felt that the central aim of drama in education was the development of the person – that it enhanced the natural maturation process (Bolton, 138). Drama was not to be taught as a performance art.

**Heathcote, Bolton, O’Neill**

In the 1970s, Dorothy Heathcote, the recognized pioneer in Drama-in-Education, and Gavin Bolton brought drama into the classroom as a medium for learning subjects such as Social Studies and History. Their approach was in contrast to Creative Dramatics in the United States that tended to be teacher-directed and focused on story dramatization and building dramatic and social skills. Drama-in-Education (DIE) was about putting the students at the center of the dramatic experience.
Students and teacher negotiate the who, what, when, and where of a dramatic situation. Students are then responsible for cooperative decision-making and problem solving. It is their emotional engagement and interests that determine how the drama will evolve.

Heathcote uses drama with children “to expand their awareness, to enable them to look at reality through fantasy, to see below the surface of actions to their meaning…to enable them to use what they already know but don’t know they know” (Wagner, 15). She summons forth intuitive responses from the children by guiding them to make conscious their unconscious assumptions about what they know about themselves and about life as they know it and live it.

Heathcote employs improvisation, role play, and student reflection to lead students to a realization of the universal human experience. In order to begin a drama with students, she decides on one of three types of situations: 1) events that happen over which people have no control (such as a tidal wave or war); 2) people pushing other people around; and 3) ordinary people having difficulty getting along.

The teacher takes an active role as a guide leading the group with questioning techniques. Open ended questions that have no “correct” answers are the rule. Questions are used to seek information, supply information, guide students to decide between alternative courses of action, control the class, establish mood and feeling, establish belief, and deepen insight. Skill at questioning, the key to this process, must be practiced and developed by the teacher in order to guide the experience.
Building belief in what Heathcote calls the “Big Lie” is essential in keeping the class engaged and committed to the drama. It is also essential to connecting the inner experience of the child with the dramatic situation. Rather than developing characters, she starts at the inside “to get every child to put something directly personal into the role from the very beginning…and to try to assume a simple attitude…. It is only by the attitudes we reveal that we are known to each other. It is only when the child relates something in himself to something in the role that he will begin to internalize belief in the Big Lie (Wagner, 70). She uses concrete objects, pantomime, visual art, and symbols, to draw the child into the imagined world.

The “Brotherhoods Code” is another trademark strategy Heathcote uses to find material for a drama. She places students in the shoes of others to get them to empathize with a particular group of people who share a common situation. Students then come to understand that they are not alone, that there are others who share the same problems and dilemmas.

Since dramas are about the relationships between people, it is only necessary to dig below the surface to find the essence of the drama. “Each separate drama is the link between the story and the brotherhood of all those who have been in that same situation” (Wagner, 49). Heathcote stresses that “where you are going…is not to the end of a story, but through the story to an experience that modifies the children” (50). The purpose of this type of work in drama is a transformation, a change, a new perspective, a new knowing, and a way to find the universal human understanding in the situation. The pace is slow
and the drama may stay in one place for a long time in order to deepen the experience and allow for reflection.

Another of Heathcote’s vital concepts is “dropping to the universal,” the process of getting to the deepest level possible in the drama to understand what it is to be human. She uses six strategies to deepen the level of understanding:

1. Stopping the drama for reflection. Students tap into thoughts and feelings developing new insights.
2. Slowing the pace to increase the tension.
3. Imposing a ritual. This could be a non-verbal experience with all participating in a ceremonial activity or rhythmic movement, or a verbal exercise with each participant being addressed for a response.
4. Classifying responses into some meaningful order.
5. Using probes and presses to move into unknown territory.
   --Probes are diagnostic questions or statements to assess a group’s ability to respond or react.
   --Presses are deliberate reinforcements of probes demanding a response.
6. Using symbols to provide a focus. A real or concrete item may be assigned a meaning or used as a metaphor.

Reflection on the universal human experience is at the core of Heathcote’s work and it is through reflection that she guides her students to discovery. This element of her work sets her apart from many of her contemporaries.
Another core strategy developed by Heathcote is called “mantle of the expert.” By “withholding expertise,” the teacher places responsibility for solving problems on the students. “Mantle of the expert” places the students in the role of experts who must use their presumed knowledge to accomplish their work in solving a problem, or resolving the conflict within the drama. This work involves the students in higher-order thinking skills, communication skills, and often, further research.

Role-playing is not limited to the students. “Teacher-in-Role” is another Heathcote technique that has been adopted and adapted by other drama theorists. The teacher takes on a role in order to guide within the drama. The purpose is not to direct within the drama but to help it develop, present alternative points of view, or possibly rally the group to unity against an opposing force. The teacher can take on a role that is friendly and places her in league with the group. Or, she may become antagonistic and play “the devil’s advocate,” thereby actually uniting the group against her. The role can be one that is of higher status than the group that allows the teacher-in-role to organize and direct within the drama. For example, the teacher may play community leader calling a meeting in order to discuss a pressing issue facing the town. A role of equal or lower status may place the teacher as a character who needs help or advice.

It is very important that the teacher establish a clear signal when she is in or out of the role so as not to confuse the students. Governing rules for the Teacher-in-Role are: 1) never hold a role any longer than necessary to get the
emotional energy of the group going; 2) give information without saying much, choosing words carefully; 3) use the authority of the role to keep the group united or at least focused on the situation; 4) use the role to prompt reflection.

Using these strategies, especially Teacher-in-Role, can be a challenge to the teacher who is not accustomed to giving up authority. It involves risk taking and planning. Heathcote decides before the first session how to get the attention of the class, give them choices, activate their prior knowledge, and how to bring the class to reflection. She does not plan an outcome. The goal is discovery within a defining moment. Between sessions, adaptations and changes are made based on previous sessions. The third type of planning is the “on your feet planning,” knowing what to do in the very next moment. This is most challenging when the work is improvisational and there is no way of knowing where it will go and how the students will respond. It occurs to me that a great deal of knowledge about humanity is necessary to be able to guide children to new realizations and to form probing and pressing questions within the context of the drama. Indeed, Wagner reveals that Heathcote prefers to read not how-to manuals, but rather literature, history, sociology, anthropology, biography, psychology, mythology, fables, and poetry – books about the human condition, the inner experience.

Through this dramatic process she makes these guarantees: (Wagner 227-229)
• Students learn to cooperate, listen to each other, sustain and support each other’s efforts, share personal ideas and interpretations and respect each other.

• Students discover that they know more than they thought they knew, activate and adjust their knowledge and relate it to the present imagined moment, and gain a new perspective on themselves as well as others.

• Students see the real world more clearly after experiencing an imagined one, and navigate back without the real consequences. Through imagination and reflection they learn to make real choices.

• Students push past the pretend drama world to find real meaning and significance.

Heathcote uses drama as a vehicle to create new understandings in other curricular areas and lead the child to a realization of herself and her relationship to the world. Her work greatly influenced Gavin Bolton and Cecily O’Neill and others in Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Gavin Bolton, in his 1979 book *Towards a Theory of Drama in Education*, began to create a structure for Heathcote’s theory. He classified drama into four categories.

• Type A: Exercise -- a short term structured form consisting of games, and dramatic skill practice.
• Type B: Dramatic playing or creative dramatics -- a more loosely structured “living through” experience without depth, but holding elements of plot, content, and hidden theme.

• Type C: Theatre -- highly structured and performance oriented with a demand for developed presentational skills.

• Type D: Drama -- a blending of types A, B, and C characterized by the internal action happening within the participant in the creation of meaning.

He outlines four stages of learning in dramatic activity: 1) the artificial or prep stage that is not conducive to learning; 2) the reinforcement stage which is an unconscious reiteration of what is familiar; 3) the clarification or conscious stage of identifying what is known; and 4) the stage in which perception is modified or shifted (Bolton, 51). The aim of dramatic activity is to reach this fourth stage of inner knowing and transformation. In distinguishing this process from the Type C theatre activity, Bolton says:

Much theatre in school starts from this false position of making explicit what has never been implicit, of externalizing what has never been internalized. This can apply even where the theatre performance has come ‘from their own ideas’ for unless their rehearsing allows them to explore and investigate and learn more about the nature of their own ideas, before becoming re-encapsulated in the action of performance, what they will offer the audience is an active representation of concepts or stories that have little experiential foundation (Bolton, 130).
Changes in behavior, perspective, and maturity indicate the progress of students. Facilitating these changes is the challenge facing educators who, he says (and I must agree) “cloak their discussion in terms of apparent drama skills but as these skills are controlled by personal development it is impossible for an assessor to make a useful distinction (Bolton, 138).

Cecily O’Neill agrees. She continued this exploration in Drama Structures (1982) and more recently in Drama Worlds: A Framework for Process Drama (1995). O’Neill addresses Bolton’s challenge of assessment. She describes areas of learning in content, social skills, and communication skills that are somewhat “demonstrable and measurable;” but she reiterates how difficult it is to demonstrate and assess intrinsic learning and how necessary reflection becomes as a means to assess (O’Neill, 1982). However, she puts the theories into practice and offers detailed lesson units with commentary and specific methods of working the process. She outlines strategies for teachers regarding how to work in-role, assist students to work in-role, develop questioning and reflection techniques, and assess and evaluate outcomes. Teachers must assess throughout the dramatic process, checking back to the objectives for the work, and recognizing the engagement level of students and their growth of insight and level of commitment. Another important aspect in assessing the effectiveness of the learning experience is to evaluate methods of student reflection and student ability to make connections beyond the dramatic experience.

In Drama Worlds, O’Neill distinguishes her concept of Process Drama from Drama-in-Education with her use of pre-text. Her book represents, for me, the
most comprehensive look at this field of work. O’Neill recognizes Bolton’s modes of drama and how they blend for an aesthetic experience; and Heathcote’s work with improvisation, depth of content, and role playing. Her focus is on the connection between Process Drama and the theatre form. She characterizes her concept of Process Drama as:

an episodic organization [that] instantly entails structure, because it implies a more complex relationship between parts of the work than the linear connection of sequence or narrative, where the segments of the work are strung together like beads on a chain rather than being part of a web of meaning (xvi).

She further explains her concept of pre-text as being the source of the work. This is in contrast to the concept of a text generated by the process. Pre-text defines the “nature and limits of the dramatic world and …. [implies] roles for the participants” (O’Neill, 20). Pre-text determines the first moments of the drama. It may hint at previous events or foreshadow future events. It is the foundation on which the drama builds. As a leader, the teacher must find a starting point and decide the “name of the game” much as children do when they play “house” or “school” or “cops and robbers” (23). This pre-text also puts some boundaries on the unpredictability of the drama. While the emphasis in the work is on exploration and discovery, the participants must stay within the context set by the pre-text. Otherwise, O’Neill says, it becomes a never ending, wandering improvisation with no focus and thus no opportunity for a transformation of perspective.
O’Neill is not against using previously existing text. She makes use of literary text to “[extend] and [elaborate] the imagined world of the play” (O’Neill, 37). Taking classic literature and plays and reworking the action but maintaining the universal human experience falls well into the realm of Process Drama. Again the goal here is “transformation.”

O’Neill also addresses the “creative dramatics” work in the United States pioneered by Winfred Ward. She believes that this work focused more on recreation of a narrative -- “adaptation and dramatization rather than transformation.” “Reproducing the external features of a story will not necessarily elicit the internal coherence that is characteristic of process drama” (O’Neill, 40). She recognizes David Booth’s work with Story Drama as a more viable option for the use of story.

**Story Drama – A Canadian Perspective**

I was first introduced to the concept of Story Drama at the American Alliance for Theatre and Education Conference in Minneapolis in a workshop with Carole Miller and Juliana Saxton from the University of Victoria in British Columbia. It was through participation in this process that I became aware of the various stories within a story that could create small dramas of discovery using small groupings and utilizing an entire class in an improvisation. The work of David Booth from the University of Toronto provides us with a way of looking at storybooks for drama.
David Booth

David Booth uses the story or picture book as the pre-text, not for re-enactment or dramatization, but as a springboard for meaning. The participants confront the story and its characters and their relationships to one another to create new dramas. He was influenced by the work of Way, Heathcote, and O'Neill. He worked with Juliana Saxton at the University of Toronto in the 1960s, building the program there for training teachers in the use of drama in education. His studies with Gavin Bolton in the 1970s, led him to further his work by analyzing and defining his philosophy of working with children through drama. He realized the power of active student reflection upon their dramatic work as a means to create meaning and deeper understanding.

Booth uses the technique of role-playing extensively in working with story. He finds children gain the most from the activity of telling their own story within the context of a fiction. The child uses her “own thoughts, reacting and responding personally, entering as deeply as [she wishes] into a new world of meaning” (Booth, 19). He defines role as the juxtaposition of the self and the adopted persona “so that the learning is viewed internally but from a new or different perspective” (21). The self and the other meld, and it is through this connection that the child finds his identity with the story.

The social aspect of the art form also holds great value in the development of the child. Booth says:

Because drama is a social process, the children should be concerned with the ideas of others, with fitting their own thoughts and feelings into the
group effort. They will be negotiating for both shared and personal meanings through their interactions, both in and out of role, developing an awareness of form and control from inside the drama. But as in their sandbox deserts, pretending must be “real” (Booth, 30).

Booth uses “story” as a verb and writes to teach us to “learn to story.” To do this he differentiates between “story” and the “story of the drama.” The story is the written text. Booth prefers to use picture books because the language is succinct and the illustrations give us hints as to how the story may have “looked.” The key in choosing stories for Story Drama is to find those that have an unknown element that can be explored. This element can be the motivation for a character’s action, or it may be what happened before (O’Neill’s pre-text), or any element that connects the child’s identity, feeling, or thoughts to that of a character, setting, or struggle within the story. Therein lays the possibility of a drama that can be explored -- a new story…the “story of the drama.”

This concept is well addressed in Booth’s book, Story Drama: Reading writing and roleplaying across the curriculum (1994). Through the telling of his teaching “stories” he guides us through the process of planning, building a classroom community, understanding the effective use of role-play both for the student and teacher, and how to integrate reading and writing into the process. He has synthesized the paradigms of Drama-in-Education, Process Drama, Creative Dramatics, and literacy into an effective model for teachers.
Miller and Saxton

What O’Neill did for process drama, synthesizing the concept into a workable structure, Miller and Saxton have done for story drama. Their new book, *Into the Story: Language in Action Through Drama* (2004), is a very practical model for the classroom teacher for truly integrating literacy and drama.

Miller and Saxton guide the teacher as they weave a journey through a story, integrating language arts and drama in a form they call “story drama structures.” Their goal is to pave the way for more teachers to use drama as a classroom methodology. What is noteworthy about their approach is the following: 1) key understandings and questions; 2) a rationale for choosing stories; 3) a model for organizing the process into “doable” units with lessons that can be accomplished in short segments of time; 4) linking activities; and 5) a comprehensive, detailed glossary of process oriented strategies.

Key understandings and questions lie at the heart of the story and provide the direction of the drama and the reference points for reflection. Drama works best when the affective and the effective are integrated as universal understanding or questions; these may differ, depending on a person’s experience, interests, and culture (Miller and Saxton, 6).

Stories are chosen for their language -- the carefully chosen words that hold poetry, symbolism and metaphor. Miller and Saxton choose stories much the way Booth does, finding those that offer explorations into what may have happened before or after the story, a character’s relationship with another, or an alternative solution to the problem presented. New attitudes and perspectives in characters provide students with a chance to walk in someone else’s shoes
within the context of the story. Miller and Saxton also consider stories that allow students to “take on roles against type and against gender” (Miller and Saxton, 4).

Their unit plan format is one that I have integrated into my own planning format. It provides a clear focus for planning and leads the teacher step-by-step, complete with a scripted narrative for the teacher. While not all teachers need a scripted lesson, the format helps keep one focused. The units consist of a series of activities that the teacher can fit into whatever time period is available.

A critical element of their structure is “linking” activities.

Linking is a critical means of achieving coherence in the flow of meaning, not only for the students, but also for the teacher. Linking activities to create a dramatic flow that moves the story forward while at the same time deepening meaning, is fundamental to effective drama and is rarely addressed in the literature of practice. Linking is one of the most important elements in planning drama (Miller and Saxton, 7).

A variety of drama strategies are utilized in each unit. Miller and Saxton have compiled a glossary that describes “action” and language strategies, and also those that involve the students in reflection, writing and sharing. The strategies can be used with individuals, pairings and small or large groups.

While they do not offer any guidelines, charts, or rubrics for evaluation and assessment of “student achievement,” they do address assessing effectiveness, whether it is of the book or story, a strategy, a structure, or a way of working. They look for activities that: 1) allow for student choices and reflection regarding the consequences of those choices; 2) give students active roles that allow them
to complete activities at varying levels of ability; and 3) involve some risk taking for both teachers and students (Miller and Saxton, 10).

Summary

There is risk for the teacher and students in engaging in a learning experience that gives students a large stake in decision making. Blending Creative Dramatics, Drama-in-Education, Process Drama, and Story Drama creates a powerful, and dynamic learning experience for the child, the effects of which may only be seen or observed over a period of time and through the future behaviors its participants.

The goal of Creative Dramatics is to develop social skills and dramatic skills. The more process-oriented approaches of Drama-in-Education, Process Drama, and Story Drama are designed to develop in the child a sense of self and recognition of that self in relationship to the world around them. Common to all these paradigms is the idea of placing participants and their thoughts, feelings, interests, knowledge and abilities, at the center of a dramatic experience that demands they interact with others in order to solve a problem. In this way they become committed to finding out how what they know and understand, will work when placed in collaboration with what others know and understand. The expected outcome is the transformation of the child into a more confident, self-aware, cooperative, compassionate human being, who can set and achieve goals through perseverance and risk-taking.
Each of the four approaches addressed above, has its place along the continuum of learning through the dramatic process, from the learning of basic social skills that lend themselves to the building of drama skills, to developing the ability to function within an ensemble-driven drama that requires respectful and insightful collaboration. By finding common strategies and techniques, I have been able to recognize elements that I have instinctively used, and those that I have adopted and adapted to my situation. My goal is to blend these theories to create a working model to use in the classroom as a drama specialist.
CHAPTER III
ELEMENTS OF A PRACTICAL MODEL

Key Understandings

Heathcote suggests teachers examine and clarify their own values and convictions in order to understand what draws them to teaching. Wagner explains:

What is central in our own personal lives will probably be the underpinning for the most important thing we want our students to experience when they are with us….we are all rooted in the rich soil of our beliefs. If our teaching stems from these, if it remains true to our values, we will find that we have what [Heathcote] has – an ever surging energy to go on, a drive to keep at the task, based on assurance that the goal is right (Wagner, 218).

As an exercise for myself, I began to look at my values and convictions and to try to translate them into the goals that I have for reaching my students. The list is long. I seem to have a lofty goal, a grand vision – in two words, World Peace. However, I realize that most of my values are inherent in the drama experience. So I will begin the cultivation of World Peace through drama and the arts, and plant the seeds in the garden of my classroom.

I examined the challenges that I encountered engaging my students and realized that these paralleled my goals, those key understandings that I yearn for
them to learn. Thus, I have adopted the following as my Dozen Drama Directives.

1. Cultivate a sense of respect for others.
2. Develop the ability to listen with appreciation.
3. Stay focused and committed to a task.
4. Explore and discover the *whys* and *hows* of life situations.
5. Explore and discover the universals of the human condition by connecting drama experiences to life situations.
6. Think in creative ways realizing that there is sometimes more than one right answer.
7. Consider a viewpoint other than your own.
8. Reflect upon and communicate thoughts, feelings, and attitudes.
9. Summon the courage to take a risk and reveal a piece of you.
10. Take personal responsibility for choices and actions and the resulting consequences.
11. Discover good literature.
12. Yearn to learn.

From this list, I can set my goals and create key understandings and questions that will direct my planning. In relating these goals to academic standards and drama standards, I found connections between drama, social studies, language arts and even science and math by way of inquiry and problem solving. Every teacher knows how vital effective social interaction is when trying to teach. The creative and social process of drama provides an invaluable
climate for learning. I refer again to a former principal of mine, Mr. Oba Lloyd who reminded me often, “You’ve got to reach them, before you can teach them.”

**Creating a Safe Climate**

In *Making Sense of Drama*, Jonothan Neelands offers a “learning contract for drama” to serve a number of purposes: 1) to establish a partnership between the teacher and the group; 2) to define the investment being made by both; 3) to reinforce the idea that drama makes certain demands on both teacher and student and those demands must be met or the drama will not work; 4) to provide a reference point for when problems arise; 5) to enable both teacher and students to comment and reflect upon the process (Neelands, 27).

The contract addresses the needs and interests of both teacher and student, brings together all available learning energies, and establishes a trusting openness (Neelands, 28). He phrases statements using “we” as a way of making both teacher and students accountable. I have merged elements of his contract and my Dozen Drama Directives to create my own learning contract.

**A B C Learning Contract for Drama**

**Activate – Explore – Discover**

We will:

- Activate and make use of our prior knowledge about the human experience in order to imagine new experiences.
- Explore and discover the hows and whys of life situations.
• Explore and discover the universals of the human condition by connecting experiences in drama to life situations.

• Think in creative ways, realizing that there is sometimes more than one right answer.

• Reflect upon and communicate thoughts, feelings and attitudes.

**Believe in the Dramatic Process**

We will:

• Stay focused and committed to our work.

• Summon the courage to take a risk and reveal a piece of ourselves.

• Think before we speak.

• Keep the drama relevant to the group’s work.

• Learn by considering thoughtful questions rather than from textbooks.

**Cultivate Trust and Respect**

We will:

• Develop the ability to listen with appreciation and respect.

• Discuss and evaluate successes and failures without references to individuals.

• Consider a viewpoint other than our own.

• Realize that each individual has experiences which are valuable to the group.

• Trust that our contributions will be respected, valued and not subject to ridicule.
• Take personal responsibility for our choices, decisions, and actions and the resulting consequences.

• Trust each other to abide by our contract.

As a working contract, I believe it has the potential to aid in classroom management, and to give teacher and students clear expectations for the work. Students from 5th grade and up can sign and keep a contract to refer to periodically as the work progresses.

Elements and Strategies for a Workable Model

After researching the theories of expert practitioners in the realm of drama and children, I identified the elements and strategies that rang true for me. Some I have used instinctively, some I have struggled with, and some will require my students and me to take some risks.

Process versus product

After years of teaching performance skills with little success in engaging students, I knew there had to be a better approach. I believe in the value of “process over product” but struggle to structure it effectively and efficiently. Trying to “put on plays” in the limited class time frame in which I worked resulted in trying to find scripts with enough parts for everyone in the class; students unwilling to participate because they couldn’t read well enough, and therefore not getting a “part”; disruption from inattentive students who were waiting for their turn to say their lines (or didn’t have a part); and never being able to finish before the bell rang and another class arrived at the door.
The students liked the idea of presenting a play to an audience but lacked the discipline, focus, and commitment to do so. My expectations of developing performance skills drove my planning, and proved frustrating and often failed except with inherently talented students. Even then, those more talented students seemed to dominate the class, leaving many hiding in the shadows unwilling to take a chance.

When I experimented with a more process oriented drama that required no audience and thus reduced the pressure of a polished performance, I could see a new level of commitment and risk-taking in the students. Still I did not have a plan for how to take the technique to the next step within the context of the story. I knew the “whys” and “hows” of the story provided the means to a deeper understanding through exploration and discovery. However, I struggled to find appropriate techniques to move students to that discovery.

Role Playing

The idea of role playing and Teacher-in-Role was not entirely new to me. I had often dropped into role to motivate the students to participate. Further experimenting provided me with some insights and some small successes in guiding the students, from within the drama, to understand how they could use what they already knew to solve a problem. The higher goal was to lead them to take on a role that would require them to imagine a viewpoint other than their own and to understand that there is always another way to look at a problem.
The teacher’s ability to use effective “questioning,” both in and out of role, is the key to moving the participants in the drama to new and deeper explorations and discoveries. This technique requires a lot of practice. Heathcote was a master at this process and was highly effective in eliciting reflective responses from the students working in the drama. However difficult this may be, it is the one technique that I feel I need to develop and improve in order to more effectively engage my students. It requires great attention and insight into what the students might be thinking, and then moving them from that place of understanding to a new one.

Pre-Text

O’Neill’s idea of “pre-text” was a concept that went beyond using only “story” as a pre-text. Finding an original source for the pre-text and then giving students the opportunity to make decisions on the who, what, when, and where, was the scary part. My challenge was how to put control mechanisms in place and keep the work focused.

Using the students’ ideas for beginning a drama within a given context attracted me, however, because they love to have a say in what is going on. My feeling was that giving them this power would help them to stay committed to the work. Employing this strategy would also help guide them towards respecting the ideas offered by others. At the same time, we all start to build listening skills.

As I work with sixth, seventh, and eighth graders, I would like to begin applying O’Neill’s strategies of “process drama.” However, I believe some less
complex strategies of working within a story drama may be good preliminary work, especially since drama will be new to them.

Using an improvisational process for creative thinking forces students to think on their feet, which they instinctively do everyday. The challenge is to get them out of the idea that there is only one right way to do something, approach a problem, or react and respond to a situation. They are very quick to “imitate” in an effort to please the teacher with the right way or answer. I found this to be especially true with students who were being taught and tutored to “pass the proficiency test.” They needed to get the right answers!!

They also resort to the only behavior they know -- what they have seen modeled either at home, in the community or through the media. I am not saying that this is a “bad thing” necessarily but it is a narrow view of how the world operates (and may not contribute to world peace).

The challenge, then, is to engage them in a process that gives each student a chance to contribute, to be recognized for the contribution, and to expect that what they offer is valued and respected. It is necessary to create the climate in which students feel safe in taking a risk, take personal responsibility for their words and actions, and learn to listen to what others have to offer.

Choosing Literature – Story as Pre-Text

Finding and using children’s literature has always been a passion of mine. A story that grabs my attention usually contains some universal human value or condition, whether it relates to human relationship with other humans, animals,
nature, or the self. In the past I used the term “universal truth” to describe this quality, but have come to realize that “truth” is relative to individuals. Nonetheless, we do share universal human experiences.

Using a story as the pre-text for a drama was, and will continue to be, my preferred way of introducing dramatic work. It gives me, as well as students new to drama, the security of context for characters and situations. Though the story may dictate the who, what, when, and where, the students can expand the story by finding those moments where an idea or question occurs to them, and begin to create a new drama. It is here that I can move them to a higher level of creative thinking as they explore and discover the why of character motivation and the how of solving the problem or conflict.

I use story almost exclusively when working with primary age students, grades PreK through third grade. My experience is that even fourth and fifth graders love a good story if it relates to their own life conditions; and, sadly, many of them rarely have anyone read to them. In a picture book the language is brief and carefully chosen and the pictures provide a visual stimulation. The fewer words the better, for then the children have to create their own dialogue.

Successful literature choices for me have been poetry and picture books for early grades PreK, kindergarten, and first grade. These students can enter a poem or short story quickly and begin to work creatively through movement, rhythm, and rhyme. I find these children to be the greatest risk takers and the most creative thinkers. While they may not solve complex problems or understand universals, they can drop into a role fairly quickly and willingly.
Dramatic play is a natural for them. I begin to use common fairy tales with first graders later in the school year, and folktales with second and third graders.

With fourth and fifth graders I have had success with historical biography and story poems. The students enjoy the rhythm of the poetry and taking moments in the story of the poem to explore and apply what they have learned in their social studies classes. I have used “tableau” - the creation of living pictures - and a strategy called “tapping in” to get them to think in role and communicate those thoughts through words, expression, gesture, and movement. Using tableau will often draw in shy students who are not secure in speaking a “part.” Risk taking is not so scary within the safety of a group, and it is a step forward for building courage and confidence.

Folktales as Pre-Text

Folktales are my favorite literature choice for integrating culture and tradition into the dramatic process. The tales cross cultural boundaries in providing lessons and examples of the universal human condition and it is possible to tell them in the limited forty minute time frame. I have found that a good tale will cross grade levels and can be adapted to meet the needs of each class. The tales are easily expanded and often have unanswered questions that the students can consider and answer with their own ideas. Folktales allow for improvised dialogue and lend themselves to process-oriented techniques and reflection on how the values or morals inherent in the tales connect to the students’ own lives.
Bobby and Sherry Norfolk say, “If we want children to hear and understand and practice the truth about the moral way to behave, then we need to tell stories, not preach truth!” They relate a version of a tale told in Eastern Europe about *Truth and Story* which ends with some very wise words: “No one wants to listen to the naked Truth, but everyone will listen when it’s clothed in Story” (Norfolk, 14).

Johnny Saldana’s book *Drama of Color: Improvisation with Multiethnic Folklore* (1995) was instrumental in moving me to a more process-oriented approach using folktales. Saldana uses process-oriented story drama with folklore and integrates social studies and language arts. His book provided me with great stories and techniques for using Teacher-in-Role. He also addressed the time constraint in which I worked and provided strategies for finding the essence of the story to dramatize. He states:

My personal goal for drama with children is not to develop formal acting skills but to use the art form as a method to provide each participant with personal insight into the multiethnic world in which we live… Folklore from different ethnic groups can be used as a springboard for examining different ethnic perspectives and worldviews. And if stereotypes can be dispelled along the way, so much the better (Saldana, xii).

Teaching in a “multiethnic” urban school district demands that I work towards exploration and acceptance of different ethnic perspectives, especially in regard to world peace. Norma J. Livo, author of *Bringing Out Their Best: Values Education and Character Development through Traditional Tales* (2003), says:
Stories have the power to reach within, to command emotion, to compel involvement, and to transport us into timelessness. They are a way of thinking, a primary organizer of information and ideas, the soul of a culture, and the consciousness of a people. Stories are a way in which we can know, remember, and understand... Young story listeners should be able to identify with characters in human situations as a mean of relating to others (Livo, 4).

Imagine the benefits of not just listening, but working within the story. It has become evident to me that folklore married to a dramatic process is an optimal learning experience, integrating curriculum in social studies, literature, language arts, literacy, and the fine arts. Added to these experiences is the value of reflection on all aspects of the experience. I believe that this is the best formula for the work I have set before myself.

Assessment and Evaluation

National, state, and district standards in the arts place an ever increasing focus on the assessment and evaluation of arts disciplines. While I often believe that these standards can be difficult to achieve, arts specialists are still faced with assessing, evaluating, and grading, that is to say quantifying, a discipline that is by its very nature unquantifiable.

Eric Jensen in Arts With the Brain in Mind (2001) addresses the arts in terms of whole brain development.

The arts... provide learners with opportunities to simultaneously develop and mature multiple brain systems, none of which are easy to assess because they support processes that yield cumulative results. The systems and processes are not, in and of themselves, the results. Testing the
processes instead of results can narrow the development of the very neurobiological systems they depend on. (Jensen, 2-3).

Jensen considers drama a kinesthetic art. I understand kinesthetics as a sense of feeling, of knowing, of understanding by doing. We express and communicate what we feel and understand through the creation of something. Yes, we can assess outcome according to some objective criteria of form and structure. However, without the process, the “thing” would not be manifest. It is practice through process that leads us to understand and know. All we can assess of the process is the effectiveness of the process – what worked, what didn’t; what caused a change in thinking or understanding.

A question arises for me about the assessment of dramatic skills. While the “process” is a main focus, some basic skill is still necessary to implement an effective process. After all, drama is a performance art. A certain level of skill in presentation makes the work more interesting and intriguing. Certainly, a higher proficiency in performance skill would come with middle and upper grade students, and that would be the appropriate time to assess those skills. However, some skill practice and recognition of outstanding performance skills in younger students should still be noted and encouraged. The question is how do I assess the process and dramatic skills and assign a grade? Every nine weeks I face this challenge.

I created a performance checklist with twenty-five different criteria for evaluating student performance skills. It became too cumbersome to use. I have since revised it to address process and reflection work in addition to performance
skills. I have posted the criteria on a chart and have given a copy to each of my students from the 4th through the 8th Grade. They are to keep it in their folders and evaluate themselves throughout the grading period and then meet with me to see how our assessments match. I feel this gives them the chance to set some goals for themselves.

I have given vocabulary tests that only evaluate a right or wrong answer. This exercise is valuable to the extent that they will need to learn and use the language of the art form in order to discuss and critique their work. I have also asked the students to keep journals for reflection. This takes extra time but is an invaluable vehicle to encourage students to articulate their understandings and perspectives. These strategies also address literacy and language arts goals by developing vocabulary and writing skills.

Jensen reminds us that:

[The] arts are not efficient, they are not about counting notes, brushstrokes, or dance steps. They are about life, growth, and expanding who we can become as human beings. They are about the long view of life (Jensen, 110).

I have had some success with taking anecdotal notes while observing the students work and compiling them into a notebook with a page for each student. I am able to track changes in behavior and work habits and get a better idea of progress made. I intend to continue this practice.

Jensen advocates for a Pass/Fail grading system. Although I agree whole-heartedly, I do not see this happening anytime soon. However, he does offer
some ideas for this system that could be implemented in the assessment process.

His criteria include good attendance and participation. He also suggests students keeping a “processfolio.” I really like this idea as a way to get students to think creatively and make connections. This processfolio could include artifacts, journals, learning logs, interviews, peer feedback, tape and video recordings, poetry, stories, monologues, and various work samples. I would begin this processfolio with students creating goals for themselves. During the course of the school year, and possibly over several years if the students remain in the particular program, students can browse their [folios], reflect on their own progress and reset their goals. Feedback on processfolios could come in a variety of ways including: peer editing, peer rubrics, matching work with agreed upon checklists, reflection on observed dramatic performances, peer observation, questionnaires, sharing with others and adults outside of class, and trial and error results (Jensen, 115). Student copies of the Assessment Checklist and Learning Contract could also be included.

Academic Content Standards

In reviewing English/Language Arts (ELA), Social Studies, and Drama/Theatre standards, I have found that while I would not be directly teaching Reading, Writing, and Social Studies, the drama process will create a need for those skills. My hope is that students will be motivated to improve those skills through the necessity of needing them to complete and participate in dramatic
work. ELA standards in speaking, listening, viewing and communication skills are developed by default within the discipline. Social Studies standards that address cultures, society, and citizenship also intersect with those of Drama.

Drama content standards include these goals:

- To appreciate and understand historical, social, and cultural contexts of drama in societies past and present.
- To creatively express and communicate within and through drama/theatre.
- To analyze and respond to the elements of creating and performing drama within appropriate criteria.
- To value drama/theatre and engage in aesthetic reflection.
- To connect, relate and apply drama to other subjects and life experiences.

Standards in English/Language Arts, Social Studies, and Drama/Theatre have overlapping goals and objectives that make them very compatible when developing integrated units.

Summary

The model I have proposed includes the following elements:

- Using key understandings as the basis for learning objectives.
- Establishing a safe and respectful climate for students to take risks in creative exploration and discovery.
- Using multicultural literature and customs as part of the pre-text.
• Engaging students in process-oriented work where students can contribute their ideas, thoughts and feelings.

• Using written reflection and discussion on the process to assess and evaluate student understanding and the effectiveness of the techniques and strategies.

• Observing and documenting changes in behavior and thinking.

• Linking the dramatic experience to other curricular subjects.

By incorporating these elements, I have created a unit plan that works the dramatic process with a folktale, in forty minute lessons.
CHAPTER IV

AN INTEGRATED UNIT

STONE SOUP

Why I Chose this Story

Mention *Stone Soup* and most folks will recall Marcia Brown’s 1947 tale of three hungry soldiers returning home from war, who, using only a stone, tricked fearful townsfolk into providing them with ingredients to make a wonderful pot of soup, which is then shared by all. It has always been a favorite of mine.

Searching local libraries yielded a dozen or so versions of the tale using a nail, a button, and even an axe, in place of the stone.

In 2003, I discovered a brand new version retold and illustrated by Jon J. Muth who “set it in China…. [and] used the Buddha story tradition, where tricksters spread enlightenment rather than seeking gain for themselves” (Muth, Author’s note). Muth makes use of Chinese symbolism in the names of the characters and in the art of the illustrations. It is a beautiful picture book, but it is the theme of generosity in this version as opposed to personal gain that appealed to me. As I looked back over the various versions I had discovered, there were few that involved an “enlightenment” theme, although most revealed a
realization on the part of the citizens when they understood they had been tricked out of their greed.

In any case, the story is a great one for creating cooperation and community. I am now involved in creating a new community. The school where I teach is a new arts-integrated program that is being developed in the midst of a crumbling system. The concept of a group of people working together to create something wonderful out of nothing seems fitting; and the theme can be adapted to almost any time, place, or setting.

An Integrated Unit Plan

With some adaptation, this particular unit can be implemented with students in the third through sixth grade. In third and sixth grade, students study rocks and the rock cycle. This study provides an interesting perspective when they can use “rock” knowledge to work through some of the lessons that deal directly with the stones.

The unit plan integrates Drama with Literacy, Social Studies, Science, and may include Dance and Music in a culminating performance. Artistic and academic objectives are based on those published by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) in Fine Arts, English Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science. Although my district has adopted its own standards, they go through revisions and adaptations. I have chosen to use ODE Standards for consistency. I have listed all objectives at the beginning of the unit referencing each with the lesson/s in which it is addressed, and given each of the lessons a specific focus.
Depending on the grade and ability level of the students, some lessons may take more than one forty-minute session.

At the end of the unit I have included my Drama Assessment and Evaluation Checklist. See Appendix C. It can be useful to assess skills necessary for students to be successful working the dramatic process, and to prepare them for subsequent performance if that option is taken. Vocabulary and strategies specific to the unit are also included. See Appendices D and E. Definitions for vocabulary and drama strategies are taken from ODE Content Standards in Fine Arts, Miller and Saxton (2004), and when necessary, the Webster’s New World Dictionary and Thesaurus (2002).

**Stone Soup: An Arts Integrated Unit Plan**

**Grade Level(s):** 3rd – 6th

**Academic Subject Area(s):** Literacy, Social Studies, Science

**Art Form(s):** Drama, Music, Dance

**Brief description of unit:** Based on the folktale, Stone Soup, students will engage in process-oriented drama exercises to explore the dynamics of human interactions and discover the benefits of working co-operatively.

Key understandings and questions to consider:
- People working together can create something wonderful out of seemingly nothing.
- Everyone has something special and unique to offer.
- When everyone gives, everyone wins.
- Why are people reluctant to share what they have?
- How can you share something that you value greatly?
- What makes a village a community?
Resources/Materials Needed: Several versions of the folktale including *Stone Soup* by John J. Muth; a variety of stones; journals and writing tools for reflection; camera and/or video equipment.

Artistic Objectives

Drama

Historical, Cultural, and Social Contexts
- Identify and compare similar characters and situations in stories/dramas from and about various cultures and time periods. (Lessons 2,5,6)
- Explain the role of writers in creating live drama, film, video, and broadcast media. (Lesson 8)

Creative Expression and Communication
- Sustain characters with consistency, using voice, body, movement and language. (Lessons 3,4,5)
- Create spaces where performances can be staged using technical elements of theatre. (Lessons 2,3,5,8)
- Demonstrate various ways to stage classroom dramatizations. (Lessons 1,3,4,8,9)
- Create scripted scenes based on improvisations. (Lessons 3,4,5)

Analyzing and Responding
- Use appropriate dramatic vocabulary, elements, and principals. (Lessons 2,3,4,5,9)
- Recognize and discuss the collaborative nature of the drama experiences as a vehicle for the expression of ideas. (Lessons 1,4,6,8,9,10)
- Articulate opinions in evaluating a dramatic work. (Lessons 1,2,8)

Valuing Drama/Theatre / Aesthetic Reflection
- Defend personal responses to a dramatic event. (Lessons 8,9)
- Compare personal responses with those of another. (Lessons 3,8,9)

Connections, Relationships and Applications
- Discover the interdependence of drama with other subject areas and other art forms. (Lessons 4,7,8,10)
- Discover and explain the relationship between concepts and skills used in drama with other curricular subjects. (Lessons 6,7,10)

Academic Objectives

Literacy objectives

Reading
- Describe and analyze elements of plot and character development. (Lessons 3,9)
- Differentiate between points of view. (Lessons 4,6)
- Demonstrate comprehension by inferring themes, patterns and symbols. (Lessons 4,6,10)
Writing
- Write responses to literature that extend beyond summary and support judgments with specific references. (Lessons 3,4,9,10)
- Use narrative strategies such as dialogue and action to develop characters, plot, and setting and to maintain a consistent point of view. (Lessons 2,3,4,5)

Communication: Oral/Visual
- Demonstrate active listening strategies by asking clarifying questions and responding to questions with appropriate elaboration. (Lessons 1,2,6)
- Use clear and specific vocabulary to communicate ideas and to establish tone appropriate to the topic, audience and purpose. (Lessons 2,4,5,8)
- Select an organizational structure appropriate to the topic, audience, setting and purpose. (Lessons 4,6,8)
- Give presentations using a variety of delivery methods. (Lessons 1,3,6,8)
- Vary language choice and use effective presentation techniques including voice modulation and enunciation. (Lessons 3,4,6,8)

Social Studies
Citizenship
- Explain how citizens take part in civic life in order to promote the common good. (Lessons 4,6,9,10)

People in Societies
- Analyze examples of interactions between cultural groups and explain the factors that contribute to cooperation and conflict. (Lessons 1,3,5,6,9,10)

Science
Physical Science
- Identify and describe physical properties of matter (rocks) in various states. (Lessons 7,8)

Scientific Inquiry
- Organize and evaluate observations, measurements, and other data to formulate inferences and conclusions. (Lessons 7,8)

Scientific Ways of Knowing
- Describe different types of investigations and use results and data from investigations to provide evidence and to support explanations and conclusions. (Lessons 7,8)

Lesson Plans
The following ten lesson plans are sequential and consist of several parts:
- A focus for the individual lesson
- The strategies used
- Student groupings
- Materials necessary
- New or relevant vocabulary
Each lesson begins with activating prior knowledge. This is a common strategy to review what students already know about a topic or to relate what they know to what they are about to experience. It can also be used to review any challenges from previous work that may need to be resolved before moving on to the next exercise. Reflection homework would also be reviewed and related to the current exercise. I usually have students write new vocabulary into their journals and may often pose questions for them to answer in their journals as a way to get them thinking before we begin the main exercise.

Reflection questions at the end of each lesson can be used for discussion or as written journal assignments. If time does not permit the writing to be done within the class session, the questions work well as a homework assignment and help to link one session with the next. The questions are also a way of assessing student understanding. Assessment questions address the process. The teacher can use this information to reflect upon the effectiveness of the lesson and adapt the experiences as needed.

Lesson 1: Something Unusual

Because the nature of the story requires characters to have some belief that a stone could be used as food, I have chosen to use creative transformation work and partner it with cooperative grouping to assess how well students are able to use imagination and collaboration. This is an early attempt to build an ensemble, introduce pantomime action that has a beginning, middle and end, and to engage
students in reflective thinking. All of these concepts and skills will be used throughout the unit.

Focus: To stimulate creative thinking.
      To begin cooperative work.
      To create something unusual by working collaboratively.

Strategy: Transformation

Grouping: Part 1: Whole group; Part 2: Small groups of 3-5

Materials: A piece of plain paper for every one, a variety of stones, chart paper, writing tool.

Vocabulary: Prop, transformation, pantomime, reflection

Activate prior knowledge:
1. Introduce new vocabulary.

2. Ask students to remember a time when they were younger and used some ordinary object as something else in their make-believe playing.

Exercise 1
1. Use a rolled up piece of paper as a prop as something other than what it is. (ex. - as a toothbrush, or a broom.)

2. Create a beginning middle and end to the action and demonstrate through pantomime.

3. Create a problem while using the object and solve it. Demonstrate through pantomime.

Exercise 2
1. Give each student a stone to examine. In turn, students offer suggestions as to how a stone could be put to good use. List these on the chart.

2. Creating small groups of no more than five, students work cooperatively to explore, discover, and create something unusual with their stones, or use them in some unusual way.
   Criteria: Cannot be used as a weapon.
   Every stone in group must be used.
   Must be used as something other than a stone.

3. Each group in turn will share their results.
4. Groups will view and discuss each others work.

Closure

Journal / Reflection questions
- Were you able to transform the paper and/or the stones into something else?
- What was interesting about another group’s creation?
- What kind of challenges or problems did your group encounter during the exercise? How did you solve these problems?

Assessment
- Did the groups complete the activity using the criteria given?
- Did they find creative solutions?
- Did each group demonstrate cooperative behavior?
- Were groups able to solve process difficulties?
- Did students actively participate?
- Were the students able to listen, observe, and appreciate the results of each group’s efforts?

Lesson 2: A Journey

We enter the story, draw on students’ real life experiences to build characters, and begin to understand how to tell a story through dialogue. After improvising a scene, the students are then given the circumstances of the story and are asked to improvise again. Students are asked to reflect upon differences between the first and second playing of the scene and how they were able to create and develop characters in both cases.

Focus: To enter the world of drama and the story
To begin to develop a character

Strategy: Role playing

Grouping: Small groups of three.

Materials: Student journals, writing tools

Vocabulary: Characterization, setting, dialogue, cue, role, monk
Activate Prior Knowledge
1. Introduce new vocabulary.

2. Review previous day’s work and any problems that occurred working the process. Generate solutions before proceeding with today’s work.

3. Ask students to remember a time that they were walking with some friends somewhere and to recall what they might have talked about.

4. In groups of three, have students briefly share with each other what they might have discussed.

Exercise
1. Begin the story by reading only the first two sentences. Discuss why the monks may be discussing those particular topics.

2. In groups of three, students should imagine themselves walking a mountain road discussing cat whiskers, the color of the sun, and giving.

3. After several minutes, cue students to stop and pose the following questions:
   - Where are you going?
   - Where did you come from?
   - How do you manage your walk along the mountains?
   - What are you carrying with you?
   - How long have you been traveling?
   - What is the weather like?
   - What are you feeling right now?
   - What might you be talking about with your traveling companions?

4. Have students re-enter the role and explore the same activity keeping in mind the questions just asked.

5. Again stop the students and reflect on the difference in their playing from the first time.

Closure
Journal / Reflection questions
- How did your playing the scene change from the first time to the second time?
- What made the difference?
- Were you able to become a character that was different than yourself or that of the actual story?
- If so, how was that character different?
• What did you have to change about your playing to show a different character?

Assessment
• Did students exhibit a change in role play the second time?
• Was there a variety of discussion among the travelers?
• Is there any evidence of distinct characters other than the self being exhibited by the students?
• Are students using body, voice, and movement to establish character?

Lesson 3: The Village

This lesson relies on the pre-text of the story about the dysfunctional nature of the village. I have moved this lesson around several times and chose to place it here. I felt it necessary that this lesson on creating characters, and the next lesson on creating the mood of the village, were needed to establish the situation in the village before the arrival of the monks. The villagers’ reaction to the monks’ arrival would then make more sense. It is important to remember that this unit is moving toward a specific understanding: the transformation of a suspicious and fearful village into a generous community. A surprise outcome of the students’ creation is not desired at this point in the unit. Thus I found it necessary to keep to the pre-text of the story.

In this lesson students will explore new characters and their relationships to each other. They will create their own characters and begin to take ownership of the story. By using tableau, the students create living pictures and learn how those pictures can communicate something about their characters. The tapping in also brings more character thought process into the story.
Focus:  To step deeper into role
To establish and develop village characters

Strategies:  Tableau, tapping in

Grouping:  Small group

Materials:  Journals, writing tools, chart paper

Vocabulary:  Tableau, collaboration, conflict, village

Activate prior knowledge
1. Introduce new vocabulary.

2. Read the story through the introduction of the villagers.

3. Discuss with students other kinds of “work” that people may do in a village.

Exercise
1. Tell students that they are going to collaborate to create their own village with the members of their “stone” group. Questions to consider:
   • Who are you in the family?
   • What does your “family” group do for a living in the village?
   • What is your particular “job” in your family’s business?
   • What has happened to your village that makes the families unhappy and unfriendly to each other and travelers?

2. Give students time with their groups to decide who they are and what they do. At a signal, students will mime the action of their “family profession.” Remind them to keep in mind the parameters set from the above questions and to work within the context that they have set.

3. Observe students in their mime. After several minutes, signal them to freeze and remember their positions. They may take a minute to adjust if necessary in order to hold their living picture – their tableau.

4. Again, have students observe each others’ tableaux and discuss briefly what they think each tableau is showing. Groups should confirm and/or correct observations made.

5. Have students then return to their tableau position and imagine a thought or feeling that their character may be experiencing.
6. The teacher will move around the groups and tap each student on the shoulder and that student will give his/her character's thought or feeling words.

7. Extension: Students can continue to repeat their thoughts in a choral speak.

Closure

Journal / Reflection questions
- Write your character's words, thoughts, and feelings.
- Are there any other thoughts or feelings or words that you had that you did not verbalize?
- What kinds of thoughts did you have that other characters also had?

Assessment
- Were students able to establish themselves as distinct characters within a family?
- Did students effectively mime a family at work?
- Were students able to articulate a thought or feeling?

Lesson 4: Mood of the Village

By working at creating a mood for the village, we begin to explore the underlying theme of the story and gain a greater understanding of the dysfunctional dynamic of the village. The students will refer to their journal entries from the day before on the feelings of their characters. Using words from those entries they will create poetry and add voice and movement to communicate a mood. Students will tap into individual talents to create a group presentation. Discussion afterward will focus on determining a common mood and whether or not this village is a community.

Focus: To create insight into characters and their relationship to each other.
To write and choreograph a presentation using voice, body, and movement.
Strategy: Found poetry, voice collage

Grouping: Family groups

Materials: Journals, chart paper, writing tools

Vocabulary: Community, mood, rhythmic movement, choreography

Activate prior knowledge:
1. Introduce new vocabulary.
2. Students should review their journals for the previous day’s writing on their characters’ thoughts.
3. Ask students to share some of what they wrote in their journals.

Activity
1. In their “family” groups, students will create a poem using their collected writings. Poems should convey the family’s emotions and feelings, some reference to the work they do, and their feelings about the other villagers.
2. After creating their poem, each group will find a way to express this vocally and to choreograph some movement and/or rhythm to their poem.
3. After sufficient time, each group will situate themselves in a designated area. In turn at a signal, each group will present their voice collage.
4. After presentations, groups will come together to reflect upon the process and decide upon the common mood of the village.

Closure
Journal / Reflection questions
- How did your group create a poem?
- How did you decide how to present this?
- What challenges did you have putting your presentation together?
- How did you solve these problems?
- What is the mood of this village?
- What is a community?
- Is this village a community? Why or why not?

Assessment
- Were students able to work cooperatively to complete the task?
- Did they meet the criteria of the task?
- Did they overcome their challenges?
- Did the students discover a common mood for the village?
Lesson 5: No One at the Village Gate

Now that the students have established the travelers and the village, we place them in contact with each other and the conflict grows. The students put together some of the previous exercises in an improvisational re-enactment of the monk entering the village and the villagers’ reactions to their arrival. The students will begin to develop some dialogue for their characters.

Focus:
- To present a dilemma
- To connect the scenes with previously developed work
- To deepen the drama
- To create dialogue from improvisations

Strategy: Improvisational re-enactment

Grouping: Families in own space

Vocabulary: Ensemble, scene, dialogue, script, playwright, improvisation

Activate Prior Knowledge
1. Introduce new vocabulary.
2. Review the plight of the travelers, and ask three students to take on the role of the travelers.
3. Review “family work” from previous session.

Exercise
1. Read the part of the story that shows the monks coming to the town and no one greeting them at the gate and no one answering their knocks on doors.
2. Each “family” should find a “home.”
3. Begin the scene with the families re-playing their movement poem up until the travelers arrive, and continue with the families hiding in their homes and not answering the knocks of the travelers.
4. Ask students to improvise some dialogue that reveals what their characters might be thinking during this scene.
Closure
Journal / Reflection questions
• Why do you suppose the village people did not greet the travelers?
• Why do you suppose they would not open their doors to the travelers?
• What are the travelers thinking about these villagers?
• Write down some of the dialogue that you improvised during the scene.

Assessment
• Were students able to re-enact the situation with characterizations developed from the previous session?
• Were the players able to improvise appropriate dialogue staying in character?
• Are students’ dramatic skills improving?
• Are students beginning to show evidence of ensemble work?

Lesson 6: Who are These Strangers Knocking on Our Doors?

The gossip-mill strategy used in this exercise allows students to expand the story and interact as characters in addressing the issue of strangers in their town. The town meeting gives the teacher-in-role the opportunity to keep the students focused and lead them to understand how dysfunctional the village is and to possibly come to an agreement about how to find out what the strangers are up to in their village.

Focus: To develop interaction within the group
To develop the conflict and plot

Strategies: Gossip mill, Teacher–in–role (TIR), private instruction

Grouping: Whole group

Materials: Journals, writing tools, a “written message”

Vocabulary: Gossip, rumor, truth, conflict, elder

Activate Prior knowledge
1. Introduce new vocabulary.
2. Recall the choice the group made for the mood of the village and the situation at hand with strange travelers coming to the village.

3. Students should maintain the characters they are developing.

4. Discuss with the students the words *gossip* and *rumor*, what they mean and what might be the consequences.

Exercise
1. Instruct students to recall their individual characters’ feelings and thoughts about the strange travelers that have come to their village.

2. Inform the students that you will enter the activity this time as a village elder.

3. Students are to mill around stopping at a predetermined signal and share their thoughts with one another staying in character. This should be repeated several times and students can choose to spread their own rumors or those that they have heard.

4. Private instruction should be given to one or two students to aid the teacher-in-role as a village elder, in passing a message around that there is to be a “town meeting” to discuss the rumors going around. The message should indicate the time, place, and reason for the meeting. This message can also be posted by TIR and “instructed” students can bring it to the attention of the others.

5. TIR at the town meeting, should pose questions to keep the discussion focused.
   - Who are these strangers?
   - Why are they in our village knocking on our doors?
   - Should we trust them? Why or why not?
   - How can we find out what they want?

6. Close the meeting by having someone (privately and previously chosen) volunteer to approach the strangers to find out what they are doing and why they are in the village.

Closure
Journal / Reflection questions
   - Why do people gossip?
   - Is gossip always true?
   - What is the best way to find out the truth?
Assessment
- Were students able to create a gossip mill that remained focused?
- Did they respond appropriately to the message?
- Were students able to function in a town meeting without shouting over each other?
- Were students able to stay in character?
- Was a solution to the problem found?

Lesson 7: Succulent Stones

For this lesson, we refer back to our first lesson on transformation of stones and the students’ knowledge of stones. They will now be required to use their expert “rock” knowledge in a new and creative way. We are having fun here and extending the circumstances of the story.

Students in role as villagers will “forage” for succulent stones for the soup based on the particular characteristics of the stone they choose. The term “oxymoron” will be discussed in relation the “succulent stones.” This was an idea I had to develop another song that could be used in an adaptation of the story for performance.

Focus: To continue to stimulate creativity.
- To enter into a deeper imaginary world.
- To determine and use specific criteria.
- To make individual choices based on specific criteria.
- To make a case for the choice.

Strategy: Mantle of the Expert

Grouping: Whole group (making individual choices)

Materials: Variety of stones placed around the working space, journals and writing tool, chart paper.

Vocabulary: Expert, forage, succulent, oxymoron
Activate prior knowledge
1. Introduce new vocabulary.

2. Review and recall the previous session. Then read the part in the story about the little girl approaching the monks and finding out that they are making stone soup.

3. How do you choose something to eat? On chart paper, list criteria as related to the senses needed to choose something to eat.

Exercise
1. Ask students to imagine that stones are edible and that they are expert stone collectors looking for the most succulent stones for making soup. Discuss the term *oxymoron* as it relates to “succulent stones.”

2. Refer to list of criteria for choosing food and ask students to begin to imagine how a particular stone might taste and if it would be suitable for the soup. Characteristics of rocks should be considered in the choices made.

3. Students should begin to forage for stones using the criteria set forth on the chart.

4. Have students gather and share their findings with each other explaining their reasoning for choosing their particular stone for the soup.

5. Extension: Students could make up a chant or song as they forage for the most succulent stones.

Closure
Journal / Reflection questions:
- Could you imagine that stones are edible?
- How did you go about choosing a stone for the soup?
- Were you able to make up a working song as you went foraging? Write it down in your journal.

Assessment:
- Were students able to enter the imagined world of eating stones?
- Were students able to work individually to find their stones?
- Were students able to support their choice of stone based on the senses criteria?
- Was any foraging song developed?
Lesson 8: Have I Got a Stone for You!!

This is an extension of the previous lesson and gives the students a chance to explore broadcast media in creating a commercial to “sell” their stone as the most succulent and suitable for the soup.

Focus: To create a persuasive presentation.

Strategy: Create a commercial for your stone.

Grouping: Small groups

Materials: Stones, journals and writing tool, chart paper, Video camera for taping the commercials.

Vocabulary: Persuasion, broadcast media

Activate Prior Knowledge
1. Introduce new vocabulary.
2. Review previous work on selecting stones for soup.
3. Address any challenges that occurred and reflect on how to overcome them.
4. Question for discussion: Have you ever been convinced to do something that you just knew was not quite right or normal? Share stories.
5. Discuss commercials and what makes them effective. Make a list on a chart of criteria for a convincing commercial.

Exercise
1. In small groups, students choose a stone and write a convincing commercial for their “succulent” stone. Criteria to consider:
   - Stone must have a name.
   - Why is yours the most succulent stone?
   - Each person in the group must play a specific character.
   - Use rock cycle vocabulary to relate your stone’s characteristics to its suitability for making soup.
   - Use food vocabulary. (Keep in mind the five senses –taste, smell, sight, sound, and touch)
   - Create a slogan or song.
2. Each group in turn should present their commercial. Videotape of the presentations can be used for student evaluation of their work.

Closure

Journal / Reflection questions:
- Were you able to work with your group to create a convincing commercial? Explain any challenges you had to overcome. What could you have done to make things go more smoothly?
- Were you convinced by some other group's commercial? What was it about their commercial that made it convincing.

Assessment:
- Were students able to work together?
- Did the groups stay focused and complete the task?
- Were the students respectful and attentive to each other's presentations?
- Were students able to incorporate “rock cycle” vocabulary effectively in their commercials?
- Were students’ commercials convincing?

Lesson 9: Making Soup

Making soup is the climax of the story and the realization of community and generosity. It may be necessary for the teacher to work in role long enough to guide the students through the “ritual” of making soup. If they do not react with generosity, it may be necessary to stop the drama and refer back to the story and read through the part where the villagers begin to contribute to the soup.

It is important here to remember that a key understanding for this unit is that when everyone gives, everyone wins. While it is valuable for the students to develop their own version, the point of the unit would be lost without an ending that illustrates generosity and community.

Focus: To address key understandings about community and giving.

Strategy: TIR, private instruction, role-playing and ritual
Grouping: Whole group

Materials: Large container to serve as pot, journals and writing tool

Vocabulary: Curiosity, generosity

Activate Prior Knowledge
1. Introduce new vocabulary

2. Review the following:
   - plot sequence of the story
   - the mood of the village.
   - the monks’ statement about the village not being happy.

Exercise
1. Read from the story through the part where the villagers become curious about what the strangers are doing.

2. Students take on previous roles of the travelers and village families.

3. Re-enact the story up to the villagers coming out of their homes.

4. Staying in role, students improvise the monks beginning to make the soup and commenting on how the soup will taste with the particular “succulent” stones they are using and what might make the soup taste better.

5. Before hand, teacher should privately instruct one family to be very suspicious and another family to be a bit more willing to contribute to the soup.

6. Establish a particular “ritual” by creating language and gesture for contributing to the pot.

6. Continue the drama until all families have contributed something.

Closure
Journal Reflection questions
- What made your village family change its mind about the strangers?
- How does your family feel about the rest of the families in the village?
- Why are people not willing to share what they have?
- How can you share something that you greatly value?
- Is your village a community? Why? How did this happen?
- What did you learn about yourself from the work you did with this story?
- How did this project change your thinking about how you relate to others?
Assessment

- Were privately instructed students able to carry the drama to the desired purpose?
- Were the rest of the students able to stay in role and work as an ensemble to develop and bring the scene to a “generous” end on their own, or was it necessary to directly lead them there?
- Were students able to create and maintain a “ritual”?

Lesson 10: Planning a Celebration

The objective of this lesson is for the students to use writing skills in role to create a proposal for a celebration. This is a strategy to practice using real world skills in a dramatic setting by imagining how the villagers might have created and organized their own celebration.

Focus: To determine the theme of the story
      To write a convincing and well organized proposal
      To culminate the process with celebration of community

Strategy: Writing in role, Teacher–in-Role

Grouping: Small groups, whole group

Materials: Journals and or writing paper, writing tools.

Vocabulary: Community, celebration, theme

Activate Prior Knowledge
1. Introduce new vocabulary.
2. Ask students to share some of their reflections on the previous session, especially their thoughts on the willingness to share or not share.
3. Ask students to decide on the theme, or moral of the story.
4. Review the definition of community.
5. Read to the end of the story.
6. Discuss why and how the village community had a celebration.
Exercise
1. Ask students to assume their characters again and to brainstorm some ideas on their own celebration. List these on a chart.

2. Arrange students in groups of “mixed families” to write to the town elder proposing their celebration. The proposals should address the following questions:
   - Why should there be a celebration? (Can you use the “theme” of the story to answer this question?)
   - What specific kinds of things will happen during this celebration?
   - Where can this celebration be held?
   - Who will organize all the different parts of the celebration?
   - Who will provide everything that is needed for the celebration?
   - Who will be invited and how will people know to come to the celebration?
   - How long will the celebration last?
   - Who will clean up after the celebration?

3. Teacher-in-role should call a town meeting to review proposals and choose the proposal that best addresses all the issues.

Closure
Journal / Reflection questions
   - Do you think that you can really organize the celebration that you proposed?
   - Do you want to do it? Why or why not?
   - If you want to do it how could you really make it happen?
   - What kind of help would you need?
   - Who could help you?

Assessment
   - Were students able to articulate a theme and the key understandings?
   - Were students able to complete an entire proposal addressing the criteria set forth?
   - Did they offer a convincing proposal?

Extension: School as Community

In an extension exercise, students can integrate Social Studies understandings and Language Arts writing skills with the unit’s dramatic experience. Students will determine whether or not their school is indeed a
community and how they might plan and organize events to build a greater sense of community. Collaboration with the Music and Dance departments could result in a production of *Stone Soup, the Musical*.

**Focus:**
To connect the dramatic experience to the student’s own world.
To use the skills developed in the unit to create something of meaning for the school community.

**Strategy:**
Cooperative groups

**Materials:**
Journals, writing tools, chart paper

**Vocabulary:**
Committee, organize, publicity

**Activate Prior Knowledge**

1. Introduce vocabulary.
2. Ask students to consider their school as a community. On a chart, list how the school is and how it is not.
3. Ask them to brainstorm ideas on how they could encourage the rest of the school to become a community.

**Exercises**

1. Using the knowledge the students gained through their experience, guide them to develop a plan to implement their ideas.
2. Ask Dance Department to help students choreograph a dance for a community celebration.
3. Collect favorite recipes for soup that could be served at the celebration.
4. Create a working script for *Stone Soup the Musical* from studio work.
5. Enlist assistance from the Music and the Dance Department to mount the production.
Assessment Plan

Student reflection journals will be reviewed for thoughtful responses, evidence of understanding and new learning, use of new vocabulary, and any change in perspective. The Drama Assessment and Evaluation Checklist & Rubric will be used to record observable behaviors and responses during actual dramatic work, reflective discussions, and to record evaluations of written work.

Attachments included in the appendices

Drama Assessment and Evaluation Checklist & Rubric

Stone Soup Vocabulary List

Glossary of Drama Strategies used in this particular unit
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

At the start of this project, my focus was on students from pre-school through fifth grade. It soon became evident that a pure process-oriented concept might prove to be too complex to use with these younger students. They did not have enough practical dramatic experience or skill to work a drama process without a framework. Thus the blending of process-oriented elements became more practical in that a story or folktale "pre-text" provides the structure from which to build a dramatic experience. It also provides a context for looking at dramatic plot structure before building one from scratch.

In the restructuring of my school district, the elementary level now includes students from pre-school through the eighth grade. Therefore, I have found that my research into Process Drama will be of great value as I work with older students. They have a wider experience base and, hopefully, a better grasp of story structure and may be more capable of taking personal experiences and infusing them creatively into original dramatic experiences that hold some relevancy to their own lives. This will be new territory for me and I expect the students and myself to experience a new level of understanding.
Is the model I proposed indeed a “practical model?” That remains to be seen. I have taken the ideas and concepts that I think will work best and have crafted a model unique to my methods, my love of folktales and literature, and my working environment. I intend to test this unit this school year and revise it based upon results. The questions I ask myself are:

- Can the students think reflectively upon the “process” as well as on the “story” elements and will they be able to communicate their reflections?
- Do the theories prove effective in engaging my inexperienced-in-drama urban students?
- Are my assessment and evaluation tools effective?
- How can I blend process with product since drama is inherently a performance art form?

In spite of these questions still needing answers, I intend to use the results of this research to re-work my current file of folktale units, and to develop new ones.

As I reviewed the transformations I anticipate in students as they work through the dramatic “process,” I realized that this research project guided me through many of the same kinds of transformations. Just as I expect my students to come to a greater awareness of themselves in relationship to their world, experience a transformation in perspective, and be able to communicate all this, I have a greater awareness of myself in relationship to the work I am doing with these students. My research gave me a new perspective in working the dramatic process more effectively with children. I have had to interpret and communicate
my understanding of child drama theories that were new to me. I then took this new found knowledge, connected and applied it to what I already understood, and created something that I believe will be an improvement in my teaching methodology. My understanding of the process approach has given me more confidence to risk handing over to the students some control of the outcome of a dramatic experience. The research has also forced me to begin to create more effective and efficient assessment and evaluation tools and look more closely at academic standards in planning integrated units. The transformations I have experienced, have given me tools with which to work my classroom garden, cultivating students that can bring enlightenment to their futures and the future of their world.

Much of what I have studied was an affirmation of my instinctual methodology, but in more organized frameworks and structures. The labor of this thesis has enabled me to articulate and organize my instincts, passions, understandings, and goals, within a structure of my own design. And if I can continue to model my process (as a student of drama) for my students, they may be able to transform themselves and still maintain their unique selves.

Martha Graham, a pioneer in modern dance, once said:

There is a vitality, a life-force, a quickening that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and be lost.

My hope is that I can bring my students to a realization of this thought.
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Stone Soup Bibliography


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL

March 21, 2005

Ria Terra Nova Webb
1601 Cook Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44109

Ms. Terra Nova Webb:

The University of Akron's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) completed a review of the protocol entitled "Folktales in Forty Minutes: A Creative Dramatics Approach to Integrated Learning and Character Education". The IRB application number assigned to this project is 20050311.

The protocol was reviewed on March 18, 2005 and qualified for exemption from continuing IRB review. The protocol represents minimal risk to subjects and matches the following federal category for exemption:

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior.

Enclosed is a copy of the informed consent document, which the IRB has approved for your use in this research. In addition, your request for a waiver of documentation of informed consent, as permitted under 45 CFR 46.111(c), is also approved.

Annual continuation applications are not required for exempt projects. However, you must immediately notify the IRB if any changes or modifications are made in the study's design or procedures that do not fall within one of the categories exempted from the regulations. Any such changes or modifications must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to their implementation.

Please retain this letter for your files. If the research is being conducted for a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation, the student must file a copy of this letter with the thesis or dissertation.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Sharon McWhorter, Associate Director

Cc: Neil Sapienza, Department Chair
    James Siowak, Advisor
    Phil Allen, IRB Chair

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APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Folktales in Forty Minutes: A Creative Dramatics Approach to Integrated Learning and Character Education.

Interview Questions for Drama Professionals who teach students aged 4 – 12 years of age.

1. Do you teach creative dramatics, process drama, or story drama to young children?
2. What is your target population?
3. How are these students recruited for your classes?
4. How old are the students that you teach?
5. How many students are enrolled in any particular class?
6. How long is the class session?
7. How often does the class meet?
8. Do you prepare for a culminating event/production?
9. Where is class held? Please describe the facility.
10. Do you work with a script, story, or original material?
11. What kinds of activities, lessons, and strategies do you use to engage the students? Please describe a typical class session.
12. What theories of drama education do you apply to working with children?
13. What kinds of time and class management strategies do you use?
14. Are students required to critique and assess themselves?
15. How do you assess the students’ work and your effectiveness?
### DRAMA ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION CHECKLIST & RUBRIC

**Student _________________________________ Grade____________**

#### Attendance / Timeliness / Preparedness
- Attends class every day and on time  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Comes to class prepared to work  
  - 1  2  3  4  
**Total (8):** _________

#### Commitment and Focus
- Follows direction – focuses on task  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Sustains involvement with energy – participates  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Cooperates / contributes to the group effort  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Listens and observes with appreciation and respect  
  - 1  2  3  4  
**Total (16):** _________

#### Physical Awareness
- Uses whole body, facial expression, gesture  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Demonstrates co-ordination / control / posture / poise  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Reacts with sensory and spatial awareness  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Movements have clear purpose  
  - 1  2  3  4  
**Total (16):** _________

#### Vocal Expression
- Uses good diction – clear and distinct  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Projects voice with appropriate volume  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Uses vocal variety and inflection  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Makes appropriate responses  
  - 1  2  3  4  
**Total (16):** _________

#### Creativity and Imagination
- Creates unusual and original solutions  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Uses body and voice in ways unlike self  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Takes risks – is free and uninhibited  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Can improvise  
  - 1  2  3  4  
**Total (16):** _________

#### Critical Analysis / Evaluation
- Makes constructive contributions using established criteria and appropriate vocabulary  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Responds and reacts from an informed personal perspective  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Takes direction well and applies suggestions  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Mastery of relevant Social Studies Content  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Mastery of relevant Science Content  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Quizzes and tests  
  - 1  2  3  4  
- Journal work  
  - 1  2  3  4  
**Total (28):** _________

**Grand Total 100 pts.:** _________

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APPENDIX C

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC
APPENDIX D

VOCABULARY LIST

Stone Soup Vocabulary List

broadcast media  Information that is made public via electronic media such as radio or television.

celebration   A festive occasion.

characterization  The method an actor uses to create the appearance and personality of imaginary characters in a piece of fiction often developed by describing a character’s physical appearance, by revealing a character’s nature through the character’s speech, thoughts, feelings or actions, by using the speech, thoughts, feelings or actions of other characters and by using direct comments from the narrator.

choreography One who arranges or directs the movements and details of a dance or other performance.

collaboration  The ability to work effectively with one or more people.

committee A group of people chosen to report or act upon a certain matter.

community  Any group living in the same area or having interests or work, in common.

conflict  The struggle between opposing forces that brings about the action in a dramatic work or story; can be internal (within a character) or external (between a character and an outside force).

cue A signal in dialogue for an actor’s entrance or speech; any signal to begin something.

curiosity A desire to learn or know.
dialogue  A conversation between two characters in a work that is used by writers to give insight into the characters themselves.

elder  An older person with some authority, as in a tribe.

ensemble  A small group of actors working together.

expert  One who is very skillful or well-informed in some special field.

forage  To search for food.

generosity  The act of giving or sharing unselfishly.

gossip  To chatter idly about others.

improvisation  The spontaneous, unscripted use of words and actions to create a character or represent an object.

mood  The feeling or atmosphere created by a dramatic work.

monk  A wise holy man.

organize  To provide with an orderly structure or arrangement

oxymoron  A figure of speech in which contradictory ideas or terms are combined.

pantomime  Acting without speaking.

persuasion  The act of convincing someone to believe something by reasoning.

playwright  A person who writes plays.

props  Objects used on stage to enhance the believability of characters and actions.

publicity  Any information or action that brings a person or an event to public notice.

reflection  Thinking about one’s own thought processes and actions.

rhythm  Movement characterized by regular recurrence of beat or accent.

role  A part played by an actor.
rumor General talk not based on definite knowledge.

scene A unit of action in a play.

script Written dialogue and directions for a dramatic work.

setting Time and place of the action of a dramatic work.

succulent Full of juice.

tableau A scene or picture depicted by silent and motionless actors.

theme The meaning or message of a literary or dramatic work.

transformation A change from one form to another.

truth Conforming to fact; reality; actual existence.

village A place where people live that is smaller than a town.
Drama Strategies

found poetry  Words and images in a text used to create a new text that layers in the participants’ own thought and feelings.

gossip mill  Participants think about one reason that caused a situation or to share a memory of an event. On a signal, they mill about stopping on a signal to share their information with another participant. The gossip should be shared, valued, or discounted with the entire group in reflection.

improvisational re-enactment  A re-creation of the actions in a text without scripted words or actions

Mantle of the Expert  Placing students in the role of experts who must use their presumed knowledge to accomplish their work in solving a problem, or resolving the conflict within the drama.

private instruction  Giving information to only part of a group, in order to help move the drama forward and deepen the experience for everyone.

ritual  A set form of ceremony.

role-playing  Assuming the attitude and points of view of a fictitious person.

tableau  A scene or picture depicted by silent and motionless actors.

tapping in  Participants are frozen in tableau as teacher move through the group placing a hand on each participant’s shoulder asking a question such as “Tell me what you are thinking.” “What are your concerns?”

teacher-in-role  The teacher part in the drama as a way of monitoring and facilitating learning from inside the story.
transformation  Used to stimulate imagination; students imagine a change of form of an object, place, or even person.

voice collage  Participants speak aloud a phrase of sentence from a piece of writing; often used to create a mood or let participants hear what other members of the group are thinking.

writing-in-role  Used as a means of reflecting inside the drama on the experience in the drama. The writing is purposeful and motivated by the context of the drama.