

DRAMA

INTRODUCTION

The Drama curriculum outline is part of the Reform of Secondary Education Programme (ROSE), developed under the Government of Jamaica/World Bank Education Programme.

The national goals of improved quality and access to education, and greater equity require that all Grades 7 – 9 students should have access to the same curriculum content.

A national Drama curriculum is a step in the right direction, as it is the first time in our history that our drama teachers will be working from a common curriculum. The Guide covers three Curriculum Bands across the three grades - 7-9.

A. Technique

B. Imagination

C. Appreciation

Grade 7 is the Exploration year

Grade 8 is the Development year

Grade 9 is the Interpretation year

A number of suggested readings and resource materials is listed at the back of the Guide. The main curriculum support material is the Teachers' Guide. A Teachers' Manual is being prepared. The activities suggested should not be followed slavishly.

WHAT ARE THE OVERALL AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE DRAMA CURRICULUM?

GENERAL AIMS

The Grade 9 students should be able to:

- Take pleasure in, and understand the distinction between portrayal and reality.
- Understand the usefulness of Drama as a way of “walking in someone else’s shoes.
- Recognise Drama as an art form which requires a seriousness of approach.
- Develop the depth of concentration necessary for inventive role play activities.
- Have acquired the ability to identify with characters and actions through role playing.
- Have a clear understanding of the diversity of opinion which may be likely to exist among individuals.
- Have developed sufficient confidence and ability to express a particular viewpoint.
- Be able to use Drama to explore issues with a practical social or moral dimension.
- Be able to invent and develop convincing roles in given situations.
- Be able to create, develop and participate in improvised scenes.
- Be able to demonstrate a clear commitment to a task.

- Be able to demonstrate a commitment to effort.
- Be willing to take risks and demonstrate trust in others.
- Know how to structure dramatic sequences in order to convey meaning.
- Carry out dramatic intentions with clear control over movement and voice.
- Prepare or create a space for Drama by organizing and deploying materials.
- Recognise and be able to use artifacts and properties as symbols in dramatic action.
- Experience the power of ritual and display and appreciate their contribution to dramatic meaning.
- Select, develop and use first hand material which is relevant and dramatically significant.
- Be able to identify good work in Drama through detailed and critical observation of characters created, issues involved and processes employed.

OBJECTIVES (CUMULATIVE OVER 3 YEARS GRADES 7-9)

GRADE 7

A. KNOWLEDGE

Students should be able to:

- Identify a range of physical skills and ways in which these skills might be further extended.
- Assess their own body reflexes, movement range and capability.
- Demonstrate an awareness of the need for safety in extending their range of physical capability, and in the general conduct of Drama activities.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of basic voice production and delivery.
- Examine the nature of trust and responsibility in the context of Drama as a social art form.
- Discuss the relationship between physical gestures, body language and communication.
- Examine the nature and function of facial expressions.
- Assess the importance of the relationship between movement and stillness for Drama.
- Assess the importance of the relationship between sound and silence for Drama.
- assess the importance of the relationship between light and darkness for Drama, both as a physical phenomenon and as a quality
- Examine the fact that experiences can be useful imaginatively to create new situations.
- Identify alternatives to sex and violence to create drama.

B. SKILLS

Students should be able to:-

- Extend and deepen their levels of concentration.
- Make use of listening skills in Drama work.
- Show increased confidence and participation in activities
- Carry out simple “warm up” activities.
- Adjust walking and running to different characters.
- Adjust walking and running to different situations.
- Apply physical control and accuracy to simple mime activities.
- Use an object e.g. a stick, symbolically.
- Hold and sustain a “freeze” position.
- Use imagination to create a dramatic situation.
- Employ a range of gestures and facial expression.
- Demonstrate greater spatial awareness.
- Work in pairs activities.
- Work at a task within a group.
- Work with others to produce a dramatic episode.
- Construct, dissolve and re-assemble a tableau.
- Demonstrate greater use of the voice and audibility.
- Practice clear articulation and correct pronunciation
- Draw conclusions from context clues.
- Be able to record Drama experiences in a Drama diary.
- Extend the use of memory in recalling and reconstructing experiences.
- Debate a point of view.
- Make clear reasoned decisions within the Drama work.
- Choose from a range of alternative actions.

C. ATTITUDES

Students should:

- Empathize.
- Display tolerance and give support where needed.
- Show a willingness to contribute ideas.
- Exhibit a sensitivity to group dynamics.
- Appreciate the importance of teamwork.
- Respect their own artistic heritage and those of other cultures.
- Recognize the importance of listening in acquiring vocal skills.
- Exhibit the discipline necessary for successful accomplishment of tasks.
- Appreciate the need for a seriousness of approach.
- Co-operate with others in the development and successful completion of Drama projects.
- Appreciate the importance of developing the creative imagination.
- Value the contribution an audience can make to the Drama.
- Value the constructive criticism of others.
- Show willingness to adapt a Drama to accommodate the contributions of others.

- Show a willingness to commit effort to a task.

GRADE 8

A. KNOWLEDGE

Students should be able to:

- Assess the importance of sequencing in storytelling and Drama plots.
- Examine different ways in which characters can be portrayed.,
- Identify the different areas of the stage, and be conversant with basic stage terminology and a simple glossary of theatre words.
- Discuss how symbols are used in life, rituals and Drama.
- Examine the nature of theatre conventions.
- Explain the differences between the strategies and devices used in communication Drama and those use in the interpersonal communication.
- Examine the universal nature of the mask in culture and World Theater.
- Demonstrate an understanding of different styles of mask.
- Identify the range of external decorative, physical and inner aspects of characterization.
- Assess the range of relationships which can be portrayed through Drama.

B. SKILLS

Students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an ability to adopt a role.
- Portray a range of characters.
- Create simple situations in appropriate settings.
- Organise and sequence simple plotlines in a clear, unambiguous way.
- Develop or write a simple dramatic scene, either alone or with others.
- Draw references and make linkages within the Drama.
- Show increased physical control e.g. slow motion, voice projection etc.
- Use games in dramatic situations.
- Use pictures or newspaper articles to create scenes.
- Use objects as a basis for developing Drama activity.
- Extend characterization to a range of physical activities, e.g. work/play.
- Use and sustain physical tension in characterisation, e.g. limp, stoop etc.
- Demonstrate a range of possible mannerisms or ideosyncratic behaviour.
- Design, construct and decorate simple masks.
- Extend movement and gestures while using masks.
- Use simple properties, e.g. umbrella, spectacles, handbag etc. in character.
- Adjust voice to enhance characterisation.
- Adjust posture to enhance characterisation.
- Use simple costumes effectively to enhance characterisation.

- Use improvisation to explore issues which may have a practical, social or moral component.
- Use language more effectively for negotiating or persuading.

C. ATTITUDES

Students should

- Display objectivity in assessing Drama work.
- Show a willingness to accept constructive criticism of their work.
- Criticise the work of others constructively.
- Show a willingness to contribute to the decision making process in Drama.
- Show a willingness to share ideas.
- Accept responsibility for actions, decisions and tasks.
- Value the opinions of others.
- Show respect for personal and school property, as well as that of others.
- Demonstrate a commitment to task.
- Recognise the need to work within a structured Drama framework.
- Show willingness to trust and take responsibility for others.
- Value the efforts of others, and be supportive of them.

GRADE 9

A. KNOWLEDGE

Students should be able to:-

- Identify and explain the concept of dramatic irony.
- Examine the nature of status in relationships and how it can be changed.
- Assess the possible use of relative status in portraying relationships.
- Identify the range of possible relationships.
- Make comparisons of stereotypical and atypical behaviour.
- Discuss the relationship between text and context.
- Demonstrate an understanding of sub-plots as they relate to the main action of a play.
- Assess the importance of combining the different elements of voice, gesture, decoration etc.
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of different theatre personnel .
- Structure a rehearsal timetable.
- Understand the importance of setting deadlines for the completion of specific tasks.
- Identify contrasting styles and genres, and be acquainted with examples of each.

B. SKILLS

Students should be able to:

- Interpret characters from written texts.
- Demonstrate contrasting roles.
- Refine and deepen their characterization.
- Demonstrate shifts in role status.
- Use levels in creating authority, social or spiritual distinction between characters.
- Make use of objects, space and bodies symbolically.
- Shift comfortably between formal and informal language.
- Use sound to increase or reduce perception of space.
- Experiment with ideas in improvisation.
- Use voice to create or alter mood.
- Find ways to create tension in the Drama.
- Make use of contrasts in sound and silence/movement and stillness.

C. ATTITUDES

Students should

- Accept different forms of artistic expression and interpretation without prejudice.
- Appreciate the possibility of alternative interpretations of dramatic meaning which are equally valid.
- Adhere to the discipline of dramatic rules and conventions.
- Realise that each individual has a responsibility to the successful completion of a collective Drama project.
- Remain positive and be supportive in the face of difficulties and disappointments which may be encountered.
- Appreciate the need to remember lines, blocking movement and cues, since Drama is a social art form, where individuals rely on each other.
- Recognise and respect the position of the project leader, and all who have been designated specific tasks.
- Pay attention to detail and authenticity.

WHAT IS DRAMA?

Drama is an aesthetic discipline which possesses its own body of knowledge, namely, the art of the theatre, at the centre of which lies active communication. This communication in Drama is achieved through the use of role play and the simulation of human behaviour. As an art form, however, it is unique in that it embraces many facets of other visual and performing arts. Because of this particular characteristic, Drama can legitimately lay claim to operate in almost equal measure, within the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. It is for this reason, too, that Drama has been identified as an extremely effective methodology in the teaching of other subjects.

Drama is concerned with people's relationships with one another, and through their rituals and traditions, with their ancestors and deities, and uses the conventions of the theatre to actively explore and demonstrate these relationships. It is about conflict and

the resolution of conflict, about values, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions and the way people behave toward one another. It is about “standing in other people’s shoes”. Drama can, therefore, be used to illuminate and give life to moral concepts, codes of behaviour, the lives of people in other times (social studies, history, language arts, religious education) and other places (social studies, geography, modern languages, art, language arts, religious education) and in any area of education where relationships are important.

Drama As A Methodology/Service Or Support Subject

While Drama represents an area of study in its own right, it can also be used as an effective teaching method across the curriculum. Indeed, role play activities and simulation are accepted methods of instruction and reinforcement among Jamaican classroom teachers.

Unfortunately, Drama as a method of teaching is frequently misunderstood, resulting in superficial and quite often bad practice, which makes little or no contribution to students’ development at all.

In the development of this Drama curriculum the whole question of the effective use of Drama as a methodology will be treated separate and apart from the main curriculum for Drama as a subject. Particular emphasis will be laid on the unique ability of good Drama to provide “fictional contexts” for the tasks which students' are expected to undertake. Properly structured, this type of Drama provides a meaningful context for effective learning.

A Balanced Approach to Drama

A fierce debate has raged for some time now, most notably among Drama educators in several Commonwealth countries, regarding the status of Drama in schools as a subject/art form versus its use as an educational method.

This Drama curriculum for Jamaican schools attempt to present a balanced approach, therefore, recognising Drama as a subject in its own right and as an educational method having a valuable contribution to make to other areas of the curriculum.

In addition, it seeks to establish the main elements of Drama, paying close attention to appropriate emphases for particular age groups. It attempts to balance the need for workshop activities with those of performance, since involving students prematurely in performance runs the risk of producing work of a largely superficial nature.

By evaluating Drama competencies broadly the way is then opened to weigh the quality of students’ experiences as an equally valid indicator, along with skills, of both artistic and aesthetic growth.

Why Should We Teach Drama?

- Integration of the imagination, thinking and feeling through drama helps to develop self-esteem.

- Drama encourages students to explore their personal values and to appreciate the values and attitudes of their own and other communities.
- Drama enables students to develop an ability to analyse and assess social, moral, ethical, and aesthetic values.
- It helps students to process, understand, express and communicate present and past experiences and to consider possible outcomes and future actions.
- Drama assists students in appreciating their own cultural heritage and in developing an understanding of cultural change and diversity.
- Through Drama students can explore, generate, shape and communicate their own ideas in creative ways.
- Drama is a powerful form of personal and social expression and develops a wide range of skills essential for effective communication.
- Knowledge, skills and attitudes developed through Drama can provide a firm orientation in the pursuit of a wide range of career goals, and the creative use of leisure.
- Drama provides a different but equally viable alternative to the scientific approach to knowledge, in that it seeks to use intuition and the imagination in addition to rational thinking as a method of learning.