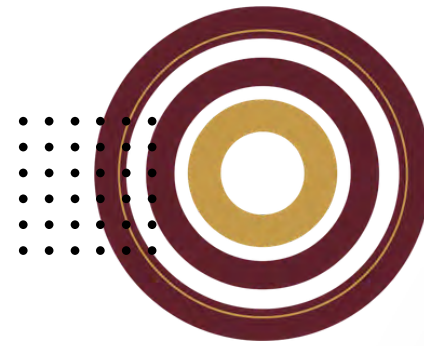




Climate Tales



# CLIMATE TALES TEACHERS TOOLKIT

## DRAMA EDUCATION FOR CLIMATE CHANGE



 <https://sites.google.com/view/climate-tales/home>

# OVERVIEW

Drama integrates across all curriculum subjects, embedding Climate Tales strategies and principles to create meaningful, cross-curricular learning experiences. This toolkit supports schools and teachers in developing a shared understanding of drama education as a powerful pedagogical approach for climate learning.

**Supporting  
Schools**

**Integration**

**Purpose &  
Goals**





# DRAMA EDUCATION: A SHARED UNDERSTANDING

## Drama as Practical Activity

Drama involves action, role, and space. Participants physically engage with ideas, embody different perspectives, and use space as a tool for exploration and discovery.

## Drama as an Art

Drama harnesses imagination, symbolism, and metaphor to create meaningful learning experiences that go beyond traditional teaching methods. It transforms abstract concepts into lived experiences.



## CORE ELEMENTS OF DRAMA

- Action: Physical engagement with ideas and concepts
- Role: Embodying different perspectives and characters
- Space: Using environment as a tool for exploration

## DRAMA EDUCATION CONTINUED

Drama provides a safe space where participants can explore reality, test ideas, and construct meaning without real-world consequences. This protected environment allows learners to take creative risks and examine challenging topics like climate change from multiple perspectives.

As Dorothy Heathcote (1984) observed, drama enables us to "see through the eyes of another," building empathy and deep understanding of different viewpoints and experiences.

As an intellectual discipline, drama develops critical thinking, reflection, and decision-making skills essential for addressing complex global challenges.



### SAFE SPACE & CRITICAL THINKING

Drama as pedagogy empowers learners to examine perspectives, question assumptions, and develop the analytical skills needed to engage meaningfully with climate issues and social responsibility.





# DRAMA AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Drama uses talk to explore events, feelings, relationships, and justify decisions. Through purposeful dialogue and contextual language use, participants develop meaningful communication skills.

Drama is highly effective for EAL learners, those with speech and communication needs, and participants with low confidence. Language becomes purposeful and contextual through dramatic exploration.



**Purposeful Talk**

**EAL Support**

**Contextual Learning**



# DRAMA, WELLBEING & SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Drama fosters essential life skills through meaningful engagement and creative exploration. Participants develop communication, cooperation, and collaboration abilities while working together in dramatic contexts. The safe, supportive environment raises self-esteem, builds confidence, and encourages healthy risk-taking. Through role exploration, learners develop deeper ethical and moral understanding, preparing them for complex real-world situations.



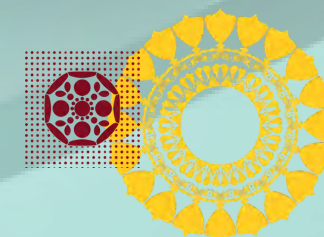
**Communication  
& Cooperation**



**Self-Esteem &  
Confidence**



**Ethical  
Understanding**



# DRAMA AND THINKING SKILLS

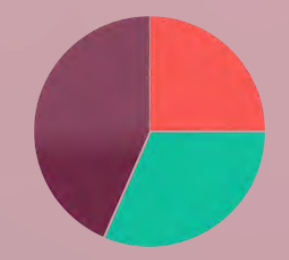
Drama engages higher-order thinking through immersive, participatory learning experiences. Facilitators use strategic questioning, guided reflection, and meaningful challenge to deepen understanding. Through drama, participants develop essential cognitive skills including analysis, evaluation, creativity, and metacognition—preparing them to think critically about complex climate issues.

**Problem Solving**

**Decision Making**

**Responding to Change**

**Critical Analysis**



# EXAMPLES FROM CLIMATE TALES

Two practical drama techniques that bring climate education to life through embodied learning and creative expression. These approaches help participants engage meaningfully with complex environmental issues.



**Still Images**



**Frozen Moments**



**Role Play**



**Lived Experiences**



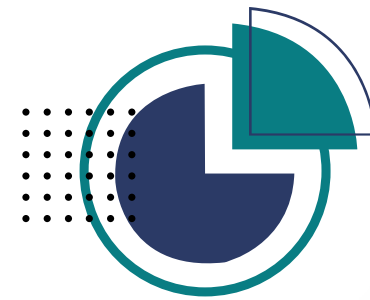
# PUPPETRY AND STORY ENACTMENT

Story enactment reimagines familiar tales like Jack and the Beanstalk as climate justice parables, exploring themes of greed, sustainability, and consequences.

Puppetry provides symbolic distance for sensitive topics, allowing participants to express complex emotions safely—including climate anxiety, loss, and hope—through creative, embodied storytelling.

## USING NARRATIVE IN CLIMATE EDUCATION

Through symbolic storytelling, participants can safely explore difficult climate themes while developing empathy, creativity, and critical thinking skills.





# LINKING STORIES AND IDEAS

Climate Tales workshops develop imagination, social interaction, and reflective skills essential for climate education. Through drama activities, participants build capacity for creative risk-taking, meaningful collaboration, and critical thinking about environmental challenges. These interconnected skills prepare learners to engage deeply with climate narratives and take action in their communities.



**Imagination**

**Social Interaction**

**Reflective Skills**



# INCLUSION, ENRICHMENT, AND PARTNERSHIPS

Drama as an inclusive pedagogy removes barriers and creates equitable learning opportunities. By reducing reliance on written language, drama opens doors for participants with disabilities, additional needs, and EAL learners. Everyone can contribute meaningfully through gesture, movement, and collaborative expression, valuing multiple communication forms beyond traditional spoken and written language.



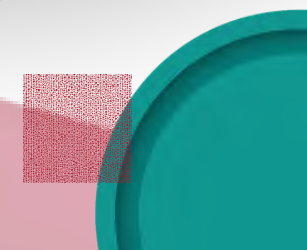
**Removes  
Language Barriers**



**Gesture &  
Movement**



**Collaborative  
Expression**



# INCLUSION & PARTNERSHIPS CONTINUED

Cultural partnerships enrich drama education by exposing participants to historical and contemporary cultural representations. These partnerships raise aspirations, challenge stereotypes, and encourage meaningful dialogue about climate issues.

Collaborations with artists and cultural organizations bring creativity, diversity, and expertise into the classroom, creating authentic learning experiences that connect students with real-world climate action.



## CULTURAL PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships with artists and cultural organizations bring creativity, diversity, and expertise to climate education, connecting learning to real-world action.



# QUALITY AND CONSISTENCY

Ensuring high-quality drama education requires skilled teaching, strong subject knowledge, and adequate time and space for meaningful exploration. Evidence demonstrates that strategic drama practice significantly improves student engagement and contributes positively to school culture. Climate Tales exemplifies sustainable, embedded drama practice that creates lasting impact across the curriculum.



**Skilled Teaching**

**Student Engagement**

**Embedded Practice**



# IMAGE THEATRE

Image Theatre is a powerful drama technique where participants use their bodies to create physical sculptures representing power dynamics, systems, and social injustice. Through embodied expression, learners explore complex concepts like waste systems, environmental impact, and transition from current realities to ideal sustainable states. This visual dialogue prompts critical discussion on change, responsibility, and collective action for climate justice.



**Practical Application**



**Body Sculptures**



**System Transitions**



**Critical Dialogue**



# STILL IMAGE

Tableaux Technique

Migration Stories

Agency & Power

Emotional Truth

Still images, also known as tableaux or freeze frames, capture powerful moments in time. This technique allows participants to physically embody emotions, relationships, and ideas without words. Through migration stories, learners explore themes of displacement, examining moments before and after life-changing events. Still images reveal agency, power dynamics, and emotional truth, making abstract concepts tangible and deeply felt.



# ROLE ON THE WALL

Role on the Wall is a powerful character exploration technique that builds deep understanding and empathy. Create an outline of a figure on paper, then place factual information about the character inside the outline and questions or uncertainties outside. This visual mapping develops perspective-taking skills essential for climate education.



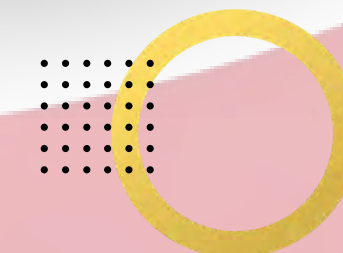
**Facts Inside  
Outline**



**Questions  
Outside**



**Develops  
Empathy**



# WHOLE GROUP STORYTELLING

## Shared Narrative Ownership

Collective meaning-making where all participants contribute to and shape the story together.

## Collaborative Techniques

Collaborative narration, still images, and thought tracking deepen engagement.

## Climate Justice Parables

Familiar tales like Jack and the Beanstalk reimagined to explore environmental themes.

Whole group storytelling transforms familiar narratives into powerful climate justice parables. Through shared ownership of the story, participants collectively explore themes of sustainability, consequences, and responsibility. This approach ensures every voice contributes to the narrative journey.

By reimagining classic tales through a climate lens, learners connect personal experiences with global challenges. Techniques include collaborative narration, embedded still images, and thought tracking to deepen understanding.

# THEATRE IN EDUCATION (T.I.E.)

Theatre in Education transforms students into actor/teachers who deliver powerful messages to younger audiences through interactive performance.

This approach creates meaningful engagement with moral dilemmas and environmental themes, allowing audiences to participate in the narrative rather than passively observe.

## PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

Adapt stories like The Lorax to explore environmental disasters. Students perform key scenes, then pause to engage the audience with questions about choices and consequences.



# REFLECTIVE PROMPTS FOR CPD

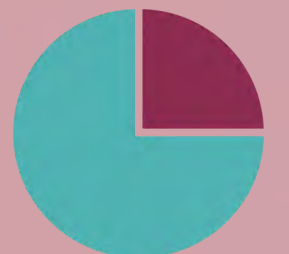
**Inclusion of All Participants**

**Removing Barriers**

**Drama as Art Form**

**Curriculum Embedding**

Use these guiding questions to reflect on your drama practice and professional development. Consider how drama education can be embedded across your curriculum as both an art form and a powerful teaching methodology for climate learning.



# ENGAGEMENT & CHALLENGE

Creating captivating moments for meaningful climate exploration requires intentional design. Embed ethical dilemmas and decision-making opportunities through strategic questioning and reflection. Drama promotes critical analysis of complex environmental issues, encouraging participants to grapple with real-world challenges and consider multiple perspectives on climate action.



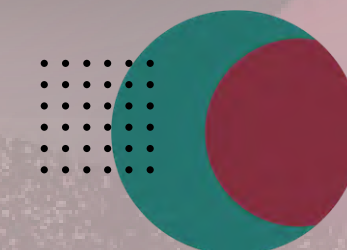
**Captivating  
Moments**



**Ethical  
Dilemmas**



**Critical  
Analysis**



# CURRICULUM & PROGRESSION

Drama education supports learning goals across multiple curriculum areas including science, history, geography, and PSHE. By embedding drama strategies into cross-curricular teaching, educators build transferable skills that prepare young people for future learning, employment, and active citizenship. Reflect on how drama can create progression pathways in your school.



**Science Integration**



**History & Geography**

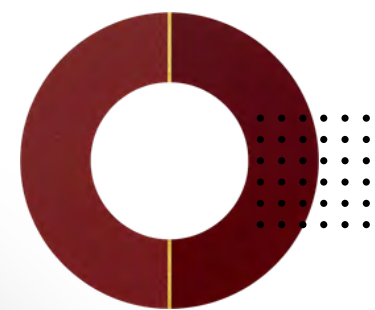


**PSHE & Citizenship**



**Transferable Skills**





# PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE & IMPACT

Effective drama education requires teachers who are comfortable taking creative risks and modeling curiosity and openness for their students.

Reflect on your own practice:

- How do you demonstrate creative risk-taking in your teaching?
- Are you comfortable stepping into role alongside your students?
  - How do you create a safe space for experimentation?

Capturing evidence of impact is essential for leadership and inspection purposes.

Document improvements in student confidence, communication skills, and engagement through drama activities.



**Creative Risk-Taking**

**Evidence Capture**

**Leadership Impact**

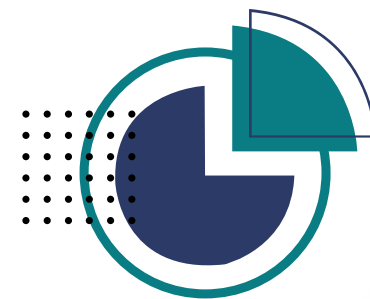


# A POWERFUL PEDAGOGY

Drama is a powerful means of empowering young people to become decision-makers and problem solvers.

— Hornbrook (1991)

Drama education develops essential capabilities across multiple dimensions: critical thinking and analytical skills, language development and communication, and social-emotional wellbeing. Through embodied learning experiences, young people are prepared to navigate uncertain futures with confidence, creativity, and resilience.



## DRAMA AS EMPOWERMENT

Climate Tales Teachers Toolkit



# GLOSSARY OF DRAMA TERMS (PART 1)

**Action Narration**

**Collective Character**

**Improvisation**

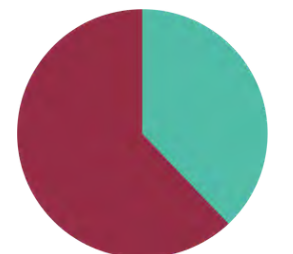
**Mantle of the Expert**

**Action Narration:** Describing actions aloud while performing them to deepen engagement and understanding.

**Collective Character:** A group works together to represent a single character, sharing responsibility for voice and movement.

**Improvisation:** Spontaneous, unscripted drama created in the moment without prior planning.

**Mantle of the Expert:** Participants take on roles as experts in a field, making decisions and solving problems from that perspective.



# GLOSSARY OF DRAMA TERMS (PART 2)

**Tableau**

**Forum Theatre**

**Thought Tracking**

**Teacher-in-Role**

Tableau: A frozen picture or living photograph that captures a significant moment, emotion, or idea without movement or speech.

Forum Theatre: An interactive technique where audience members can stop the action and suggest or demonstrate alternative approaches to change the outcome.



# RELEVANT QUOTATIONS

## Teacher in Role

"Teacher in Role is perhaps the most powerful strategy... challenging, supporting and extending children's thinking." — Winston & Tandy (2001)

Winston and Tandy emphasize that when teachers adopt roles within drama activities, they create unique opportunities to model thinking, challenge assumptions, and guide students toward deeper understanding. This approach transforms the teacher from instructor to collaborative participant in the learning journey.

## Still Image Strategy

"Still image is one of the most powerful and flexible strategies... visual metaphors that speak across language barriers." — Baldwin (2012)

Baldwin highlights how still images transcend verbal communication, making them invaluable for inclusive classrooms. These frozen moments capture complex emotions and ideas, enabling all learners to participate regardless of language proficiency.

## Drama Education Wisdom

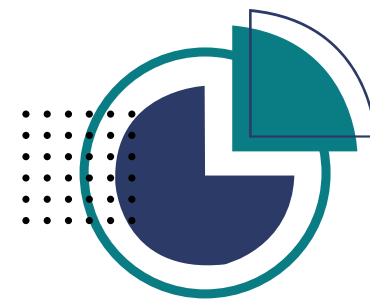
These strategies form the foundation of effective drama pedagogy for climate education and meaningful learning experiences.

## CLOSING THOUGHT ON EMPATHY

"Drama's power lies in its ability to help us see through the eyes of another..."

— Dorothy Heathcote (1984)

This capacity for perspective-taking and empathy is at the heart of meaningful climate education. Through drama, participants develop not just understanding, but genuine connection to the experiences of others affected by climate change.



### A FINAL REFLECTION

"Earth: not ours, but ours to look after."  
Climate Tales Teachers Toolkit



# THANK YOU!

Let's collaborate on bringing drama education for climate change to your school. For further information contact us on the links below.



InternationalY5@hwbcymru.net



<https://sites.google.com/view/climate-tales/home>



Thank you.





Climate Tales



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