

## Elementary Drama/Dance: Junior - Public

Adapted from <https://www.code.on.ca/resource/or-out>

### Lesson 7: Building a Story Drama; Examining Impact

Students are introduced to the scenario of a boy who is staying home from school because of the emotional impact of exclusion and/or discrimination. The details of the fictional situation are determined by the students through a range of drama conventions including teacher in role, role play, hot seating, role on the wall, the wave and writing in role. Students explore and reflect on the following guiding questions:

*In what ways are exclusion and discrimination hurtful?*

*What strategies can one use to cope when feeling hurt and unjustly treated?*

*How can one reach out and encourage inclusivity?*

*In what ways can inclusivity be powerful?*

### Physical Distancing Adaptations

When conducting these warm-ups and conventions, it is important to adhere to the Physical Distancing guidelines from your school board. Students should remain 2m apart at all times. Students in grades 4 -12 are required to wear a mask. CODE recommends that all dance and drama work be done with 1-2 metres of social distancing. Think about using alternate learning spaces such as the gymnasium, library or school yard.

**Whole Class Instruction:** With floor tape, demark areas where students can stand in the classroom with a metre grid or a peripheral circle so that they can participate in drama/dance conventions at a safe distance from one another. Floor tape that is slip-resistant and made of vinyl to prevent wear and tear during cleaning is recommended.

**Partner work:** Students can face a partner 2m across from each other. When face to face, outstretched hands should not touch one another. Refer back to personal-space warm-ups.

**Small Group work:** No more than 3 or 4 students per group to allow for recommended spacing of 2m between students.

**If you must move your desks** to create space, please ensure that each student is moving only their own desk and chair and then retrieving their own desk and chair in order to avoid contact with others belongings.

Refer to **General Tips for Safety in our Classrooms** in the overview.

**Safety adaptations specific to the instructional strategies and drama conventions in this lesson are embedded in green throughout it.**

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#### How to use Materials and BLMs during Physical Distancing

In a classroom following physical distancing guidelines it is important to reduce the amount of paper and other materials distributed in class. Many Dance & Drama experiences include source images and text which can be projected safely instead of distributed to students. To avoid the use of hand-held manipulatives and artifacts, take photos of them and project the images to students.

Often *Black Line Masters* (BLMs) are given to students to generate ideas, report, self-assess, peer assess, reflect, and to use as final exit cards. BLMs in our resources are all PDFs. Some can be projected, however others will need to be converted for independent or group use.

A few ways to do this include:

1. Convert the PDF to a Word or Google Doc and assign it to individuals or groups of students via Google Classroom:
  - Download the PDF onto your hard drive
  - Upload the PDF into your Google Drive
  - Open *file as a Google Doc*
  - Reformat as needed
  - Share copies with students
2. Create slides and assign them to individuals or groups. The slides have the original document as a background and add a text box on top of it so that students can type into it.
3. Put the questions on a Jamboard or other collaborative interactive program and assign a board to each group.

#### Materials

- BLM #16 Letter to School
- Backpack with artifacts (see notes section in Minds On)
- BLM #22 Hot Seating the Object
- [Image of boy behind the glass](#) (printed out--the picture is also found in his backpack)
- CD player and appropriate music
- Chart with writing in role prompts written out (see "writing in role" section of lesson)
- Journals or paper for writing in role
- One strip of paper per student
- Index cards
- BLM #23 Rubric for Writing in Role
- Appendix #4 Teacher Observation Tracking Sheet

## **Elementary Drama/Dance: Junior - Public**

### **Curriculum Expectations**

#### **Drama**

B1.3 Creating and Presenting: plan and shape the directions of the drama or role play by collaborating with others to develop ideas, both in and out of role

B2.1 Reflecting, Responding, and Analysing: express personal responses and make connections to characters, themes, and issues presented in their own and others' drama works.

#### **Language - Reading**

1.5 students will use stated and implied ideas in texts to make inferences and construct meaning

#### **Big Ideas**

People feel excluded for many different reasons and exclusion is directly related to various forms of discrimination.

Power relationships and dynamics are always present in acts of inclusion, exclusion and discrimination.

There are different forms and expressions of power.

Awareness and understanding of different expressions of power is empowering to individuals and communities.

Dance, drama and critical literacy are effective vehicles for understanding power and combating exclusion and discrimination.

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### MINDS ON

#### *Whole Group > Setting the Context*

The purpose of this lesson is to investigate the following questions:

- In what ways are exclusion and discrimination hurtful?
- What strategies can one use to cope when feeling hurt and unjustly treated?
- How can one reach out and encourage inclusivity?
- In what ways can inclusivity be powerful?

Post the questions on a [Collaborative Digital Document/Wonder Wall](#) for reference. Draw student attention back to the list of common reasons that people feel excluded and the related forms of discrimination. Explain that in this drama, they will get to determine the form of discrimination or exclusion that is creating a problem for the boy.

#### *Whole Group > Role Play\**

Explain that you will be in role as the teacher of the central character in the drama, and they will be in role as his classmates. Set the scene by inviting them to imagine that the students are aware and concerned that their teacher seems somewhat distressed. The teacher has asked them to stay in from recess, because he/she needs their help with something. Advise students that when you sit down the drama begins. Explain that you want everyone to sit in silence to allow some tension to build for a minute or so. The role play will begin when someone says, "What is it Miss/Sir?"

Once a student cues the role play to begin, present the class with a letter.

#### Teacher Prompt Narration:

*Students, this letter was shared with all of the staff at our school and we don't really know how to address this matter. We decided as a staff that this letter should be shared with you, as you may be able to help. Please listen carefully and understand that I am really counting on you to be as helpful as you possibly can.*

Read the letter aloud. (see **BLM #16 Letter to School**). Select a name for the boy in the letter, ensuring that you do not use the name of anyone in your class, or school, if possible.

*I have no idea why he is staying away from school, if he is not ill. Do you have any knowledge whatsoever that might help us understand why he isn't coming to school? Can you suggest who I should speak to that might be able to share more information?*

Invite students to interact with you in role, sharing some ideas and observations, and make a list of people who might be able to provide more information. Conclude the role play by thanking students for their help.

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**\*Notes:** *Note about working in role: Role is the combination of one's own life experience combined with what we know about the character. It is important to be as authentic as possible. Keeping the drama open allows students to build the context.*

#### *Whole Group > Artefacts*

Present a backpack filled with items to the class and invite students to imagine that this is the boy's backpack.

Slowly remove each item from the backpack and show each one to the class. During physical distancing these objects cannot be shared safely so the teacher can number them and display them throughout the room so that everyone can see them. Other safe alternatives include using a document camera (or phone/ipad) to project the images of the objects, or project images of the objects one at a time in a slide show. Play some quiet music, give the students an opportunity to look at each of the boy's items (if *live* in the room) by inviting the number of students that correspond with the number of objects to take a closer look and then switch to the next object on a signal. Encourage students to be silent and reflective as they complete the activity. If using a slide show, the final slide could include an image of all the objects (numbered).

At the end of the viewing, students indicate the number of the object that stands out to them by holding up their fingers (e.g., #2 is the baseball so those interested in the baseball would hold up 2 fingers).

*NOTE: If students haven't done this activity before it is a good idea to model it for them. Using an object from the classroom would be a good way to do this. They could even practise in partners or small groups with objects from the classroom before moving on to the boy's backpack.*

#### *Whole Group > Writing in Role*

Explain to students that they are going to take on the role of someone who knows the boy really well. Refer back to the list that was generated in the role play to give them ideas. Ask them to take a moment to decide who they are in relation to the boy (e.g., friend, aunt or uncle, mother, coach, sibling, etc.).

Prompts: *From the perspective of your role, what does this object mean to the boy? What information can we gain about the boy when you tell your story about him and this object?*

Students can write on a piece of paper, notebook, a file card, or digitally in a document. Ask students to write in role, using and expanding upon the following writing prompt:  
This \_\_\_\_\_ (object) is important to him because \_\_\_\_\_.  
He always \_\_\_\_\_.

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#### *Whole Group > Pairs > Hot Seating*

Invite three student volunteers who are comfortable with improvisation to leave their writing aside, and be hot-seated. *Three chairs can be placed (2 metres apart) facing the rest of the class to maintain safe physical distancing.* Explain that the students in the hot seat will explain who they are in relation to the boy, and then tell their story about the boy and a particular object. Students are then invited to ask questions about the boy and the object, to gain a better understanding of him. Encourage students to look for clues that might relate to his unwillingness to come to school.

Organize students in pairs and direct them, in turn, to interview each other in role about their selected object and the boy. *You may consider an outdoor space if students are able to focus there. If physical distancing presents a challenge to have students interview in pairs, facilitate a larger class discussion. For example, in response to a student's comment you can say, "Oh, I see. Who else here saw him at lunch on Friday? What did you think... etc.*

#### *Optional Extension or Variation*

*Another creative way to gain information about the boy and his relationship to each object is to give voice to the objects themselves. In this activity, direct students to write in role as the objects, and then invite students to hot-seat students in role as the objects. See **BLM #22 Hot Seating the Object**.*

#### *Whole Class > Role on the Wall*

Display an enlarged version or project the [image](#) onto a white surface from a projector. Use a jamboard or google slide to project the image and invite students to take turns contributing (either by typing into the page or verbalizing it and the teacher or a scribe can add the comments to the page).

Prompts: *What do we think we know about this person? What is he feeling or thinking inside? What are his hopes? Does he have power to change things? What power does he have within?*

Have each student record their answer to these questions somewhere on the **inside** of the boy.

Ask: *What is going on in the world around this person that is causing the things we've listed on the inside of his body? What are other people saying or doing that is affecting him? What expression of power does he have to contend with (e.g., power against)?* Instruct the students to post these thoughts on the outside of the boy in the photo. Continue to engage students in a discussion about this representation of the boy.

Prompt: *What is he refusing to tell his mom?*

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#### *Small Groups > Tableau*

If space permits students can work in small groups, ensuring that each group and each member of the group are able to maintain the 2 metre distance. You may also consider an outdoor space if students are able to focus there. Students may need to work 3 groups at a time while the rest brainstorm and ideate. Alternatively the class may create tableaux one at a time with the teacher guiding and sharing explicit prompts for the observing students.

Direct students to create a tableau that clearly depicts the act of exclusion or discrimination that has upset the boy to the point that he is refusing to return to school. Invite two groups at a time to present their tableaux and engage viewers in an analysis of the images.

Prompts:

- *What do you think has occurred here? What suggests that to you?*
- *What emotions do you read in this image?*
- *What form of exclusion or discrimination is depicted in this image?*
- *What is the impact on the boy?*

*Small Group > The Wave: Expressions of Power* (A version of The Wave could be performed if it is performed by 3 or 4 students and they are not standing and moving together shoulder to shoulder) **You may also consider an outdoor space if students are able to focus there.**

Explain to students that they are going to use another non-verbal technique to explore expressions of power in relation to the situation this boy is facing.

Ask for a group of about 4 volunteers. Direct these students to stand in a straight line at one end of the room. Instruct students to walk slowly to the other side of the room, while staying in a straight line. Their focus needs to remain completely ahead of them and they should not look side to side. Encourage students to feel the energy of the group and move slowly and controlled in order to stay in line with each other.

Once they have reached the opposite side of the room, instruct them to turn around and walk back in the same straight line. Instruct all members of this group to refer to the role on the wall and choose an emotion or expression of power.

Direct the group to perform the wave again, however, this time only one person will make it to the end of the room. Instruct the other students to drop off the wave at any point and freeze into a shape that shows either the boy's inner feelings, hopes, and power, or the outer expressions of power that are working against him. The person who has been chosen to walk to the end of the room will then turn around and walk back.



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Instruct students who are in tableaux to join the wave again when the person walking passes them. Students should end up in their line at the end of the room at the closure of the activity. Repeat the activity with a new group of students, this time instruct them to choose words from the outside of the boy.

#### *Individual > Writing in Role*

Connect to previous learning.

Teacher Narration:

*We have been exploring the life of a boy who was not comfortable because he was possibly being excluded by his peers. By learning about this boy, we have examined what can really happen when we exclude people in the classroom, on the playground, and in our community. Today we are going to communicate what we have learned during our exploration by doing some writing.*

Before continuing with the writing, review the role on the wall that was completed in the previous class. Ensure students all have an understanding of what we know about this boy, and why he may not be coming to school. Inform students that they will complete a writing in role assignment. Using the Differentiated Instruction structure of RAFT, invite students to choose a role, audience, format and topic or purpose for this writing in role task. Emphasize that this task is intended to address the questions:

*What strategies can one use to cope when feeling hurt and unjustly treated? (What can the boy do?)*

*How can one reach out and encourage inclusivity? (What can others do?)*

Post/Project the rubric (**BLM #23 Rubric for Writing in Role**). Ensure students understand that their writing may contain questions, explanations, feelings, apologies, an explanation of what they might have done differently if they had a chance, or plans for what they may do in the future if they should ever encounter a situation like this one. Encourage students to draw from ideas presented in the role play and object work, role on the wall, the wave, the poem, previous lessons, and their own experience to help them construct ideas for this writing task.

*Whole Class > - Have the students stand in 2 lines each line facing out in the opposite direction (back to back, but not too close). **You may also consider an outdoor space if students are able to focus there. The original convention is Inner/Outer Circle if you have a large room.***

Invite students to bring their letters to the centre of the room. Arrange students in 2 lines each line facing out in the opposite direction (back to back, but not too close). One line contains all of the students who wrote the letter from the boy's perspective. The other line contains all of the students who wrote the letter from the perspective of a friend, teacher, or excluding peer.



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Ask students to select a section or sentence from their letter. Encourage them to choose whatever they believe will have the most impact. Inform students that they will be reading this section of their letter when the teacher nods at them to give them the signal.

Each time they speak they must begin with the salutation of the letter (e.g. Dear Friend, Dear Diary, Dear Mrs. Grover), so that everyone will understand who is speaking and to whom they are speaking. Instruct students to begin reading when they are and stop when they hear someone else begin to speak.

*Individual > Adding to the Collaborative Document /Wonder Wall.*

Students choose one strong line or phrase from their letter. Direct students to write the chosen phrase on a strip of paper. Guide students one at a time to say their line and contribute it to the collaborative document.

*Whole Class > Discussion*

Engage students in a discussion about the drama. Revisit the questions introduced in the Minds On.

- *In what ways are exclusion and discrimination hurtful?*
- *What strategies can one use to cope when feeling hurt and unjustly treated?*
- *How can one reach out and encourage inclusivity?*
- *In what ways can inclusivity be powerful?*