

Collectively creating or re-creating an imagined culture

Creating imaginary cultures through drama enables:

- A community of enquiry which is distanced through role and can consider philosophical questions
- A forum for the exploration of citizenship and PSHE – self in relation to others - inter and intrapersonal awareness and development
- Opportunity to enhance the self esteem of selected children within imagined worlds
- Meaningful contexts for work across different curriculum areas, particularly the humanities
- A forum for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education
- An appreciation of the generic aspects of cultures

How do we know about past cultures?

Paintings on skins, walls, canvas etc.

Maps

Rituals, Festivals, Celebrations

Archaeological findings – artefacts, mosaics, pots, jewellery etc.

Sculptures and carvings

Writings and documents

Music

Dance

Oral storytelling

Excavations and building remains

Graves and burial chambers

CREATING THE SETTING

1. MAP-MAKING - On a large sheet of paper in turn people have the opportunity to add something to a pictorial map. This creates the physical environment of the imagined culture. As people add something to the map, they have opportunity to give some information linked to what they add.
2. ADDING MULTI-SENSORY ENVIRONMENTAL DETAIL
“ I can hear.....” and “I can smell....”

CREATING THE CULTURAL IDENTITY AND VALUES

3. OCCUPATIONAL MIME each person makes a still image of themselves carrying out an everyday task in the village. This is narrated to life for a few seconds and then frozen at a signal (freeze-frame).
4. As the teacher passes by each person in turn each person they have the opportunity to complete the sentence, “We are the sort of people who...” This can be with eyes closed. This should help a shared cultural identity to become established. Contributions should be congruent with each other.
5. TEACHER IN ROLE and COLLECTIVE VOICE/MANTLE OF THE EXPERT
The teacher as a “shadowy” stranger asks questions of the villagers if still necessary:
 - How are decisions made in this village?

- Do the villagers live in fear of anything?
- How are meetings called in this village?
- What do the villagers believe in or worship?
- How are important moments in the history of the village remembered and commemorated?
- Are there any special sites, places, buildings of significance?
- How are messages, news and warnings passed between people in this village?
- What is the attitude of the villagers to strangers?

CREATING THE CULTURAL HERITAGE

6. **STILL IMAGES OF THE PAST** In groups of about 4, important moments in the history of the people are portrayed through still image and spoken caption. These are then presented in a **PERFORMANCE WAVE** or **PERFORMANCE CAROUSEL**.
7. **OCCUPATIONAL MIME** and **TEACHER IN ROLE**
The villagers carry out everyday tasks and a stranger arrives. He wants to talk to the decision makers of the village. How this is set up is for the group to decide based on what they all already have decided about the village procedures.

THREATENING THE ESTABLISHED CULTURE

Possible problems that the stranger might present to the village include:

- I have a very sick child nearby and have come to ask that we are looked after in the village until the child has recovered.
- I would like to buy something from the villagers that they have already decided earlier is precious to them
- I have come to warn them that there are people heading this way who will take the village by force. They have burned a nearby village.
- I would like to trade with the villagers
- They have a rare medicine plant that I need for my child and I will ask for it

Once the community has a problem to solve, they have a new episode in their history emerging that can be remembered in various ways.

How will they remember?

- In pairs a parent passes on to their child, the story about what happened when the stranger came
- An artist, writer, sculptor, playwright, stained glass window maker, musician, photographer, potter or carver commemorate the story through their art.
- Group body sculpture which commemorates the moment in history.
- It is recorded formally in a sacred book.

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