

The King Who Banned the Dark

A drama lesson based on a picture book by Emily Haworth-Booth

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Teacher in Role	<p>You are in role as the King. The class are the king's advisers. Tell them you intend to ban the dark. Answer their questions, listen and respond to comments.</p> <p>Ask them how they think that news of this law should be worded and released to the kingdom? What ideas and advice do they have? What will the people be told and how?</p>
Thought-tracking	<p>What are the advisers thinking about the king and the new law but are not saying?</p> <p>As king you pass by each adviser and they speak their inner thoughts aloud.</p>
Rumours	<p>They are people in the marketplace. Ask them to create and spread negative rumours about the dark, e.g. it is dangerous, boring, the dark steals toys! The rumours can get increasingly ridiculous.</p> <p>In role as 'one of them', you spread rumours and end up suggesting that everyone should go together to the king and demand that the dark is banned. You might find that a child suggests this anyway.</p>
Teacher in Role	<p>They are waiting for the king to appear. Ask them to think about how they will speak to him and what they might say? How will they greet him? Bow and say 'Your Majesty' etc.</p> <p>You could suggest that they practice before the king arrives. Now you enter as the King and listen to their demands. End by saying, 'Very well! From now on, the dark will be banned from this land!'</p>
Tableau	<p>In turn, they enter the space and get into position, enjoying the sun. As they get into position, they each speak one positive sentence about the sun, 'e.g. 'The sun makes me feel happy' etc.</p>
<p>Small group play-making</p> <p>Still image</p> <p>Freeze-frame</p> <p>Performance Carousel</p>	<p>Groups of 4. Ask them to make a short scene showing a happy group of people enjoying the sun, e.g. parties, on the beach, eating outside, etc.</p> <p>Tell them that the scene should start with a still image. Then the scene comes to life and freezes again at the end of the scene. Tell the they will be showing/presenting their short scene, (which should be no longer than 10 seconds long).</p> <p>The groups then perform their scenes seamlessly in turn, as a continuous performance of episodes.</p>
<p>Improvisation</p> <p>Performance Carousel</p>	<p>Now ask them to replay their short scene differently (without rehearsal), as if they are exhausted and are no longer enjoying themselves. They can hardly stay awake and the scene will end with them falling asleep.</p>
Rumours	<p>Ask them to move around the room, complaining to each other, about it always being daylight. Explain that you will be in role as a light inspector. If the inspector is near anyone, they stop complaining and just say positive things about the sun.</p>

Teacher in Role	You are in role as the king and the children are your advisers again. They need report to you that the people are getting fed up with your law and don't want daylight all the time. You seek their advice and end up deciding to have a big party for the people, with a great firework display to celebrate the 'dark ban'.
Meeting	Explain that the people are going to meet secretly in a room. You could mark the entrance to the room in some way, (e.g. the gap between two chairs). You are the light inspector and the people need to sneak into this secret room, when your back is turned. Once they are all there, explain that they need to try and come up with a plan to get rid of the constant artificial sunlight.
Improvisation	People are turning their lights out! <i>The Light Inspectors began to panic and called for back up.</i> They now become light inspectors and individually make an imaginary phone call for 'back-up'. Or, the activity could be done back to back in pairs, with one of the pair receiving the call.
Human Keyboard	They then all gather with their eyes closed. When the teacher touches any Light Inspector's shoulder, they will start calling for back up again. Shoulders of the same children may be touched repeatedly.
Game	This activity is based on the game, 'Keeper of the Keys'. The switch for the artificial sun is behind the person seated in the centre, with their eyes closed. One at a time, the children can try to get to the switch without being heard. If they make a sound and the 'blind' guard points towards it, then they have to go back to the circle. The lights all go out, when someone manages to get to the centre, without being heard.
Conscience Alley	The class stand in two straight lines, facing each other. As the king, you walk between the lines, looking up at the firework display. As you pass by each child, they can each say aloud what you might be thinking. When you reach the end of the lines, you will turn and declare that you have decided to lift the ban on the dark and that there will now be an annual firework display.
Teacher in Role	

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