

Tips on Dramatisation

Children's Services, Public Library Services
Questions, enquiries and feedback can be directed to: ASK@nlb.gov.sg

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What is Dramatisation?

Dramatisation is a process in which participants are invited to act out a story that their leader has shared with them. In traditional storytelling the leader acts as a storyteller and then the participants play out either the whole story or key playable moments.

Dramatisation can unlock the use of imagination, intellect, empathy and courage. Through it, ideas, responses and feelings can be expressed and communicated. It carries the potential to challenge, to question and to bring about change.

Dramatisation Tips

The Room Set-up

- The room set-up is of primary importance and should be considered well in advance.
- Try to plan ahead for an inspection of the venue to discuss how you wish the room to be arranged.
- Noise or movement in and out of a doorway distracts your audience and they will quickly tune out and lose the tread of your story
- If possible, rearrange the room and have any potential distractions removed.
- Ensure that everyone can hear every word clearly. If you speak while moving, some of the sound will be deflected and part of the audience will miss what you are saying.

Voice

- The way in which stories are passed on is very important. They should not be rushed, but should be simply and carefully told, so that the audience can visualize all the action.
- Vocal variety and intonation are very important. Use all of your vocal options. Vary the pitch (high/low); vary the pace (fast/slow); vary the volume (loud/soft); vary the tone (emotion: satire, mystery, joy, etc.)

Body and Movement

- When an actor speaks and lives on the stage or screen, his body supports and helps explain that character.
- Your voice is your least effective tool. Your body and face are more expressive. Use your eyes, mouth, eyebrows, and nose to communicate.
- When the body moves, people notice. Use gestures wisely, for emphasis of a word or mood. Do not let the free hand lie limp at your side.
- Hold the notebook in either your right or your left hand; brace it by placing your little finger in the spine, so it does not flop around.

Pauses work for you

- Do not be afraid of silence such as a long pause of standing and saying nothing in front of an audience.
- Pace your story to keep your audience with you. Pause and give people time to absorb your tale and participate in recreating your vision.

Rehearsals

- Rehearse your story over and over again, until you know it so well that you do not have to depend on your notes.
- Place your storyboard into a series of pictures on the floor. Glance down if your mind goes blank; the pictures will help you remember what comes next.
- Remember, if you make a mistake, you are the only one who know it, so move on to your next confident point, and do not get flustered.
- Plan your gestures & pauses.
- Read it before some peers for practice. Sit your audience 25 feet away and practice projecting to them.

Other Tips

- The beginning should indicate the time and location of the story. You need to introduce and explain what is happening to the characters.
- The middle part of your play should have some rising action. The rising action is a series of things that happen to the characters that they have to deal with before the end of the play. The rising action makes your play or skit more interesting for your audience.
- The climax of the story is the most exciting part of the story and usually occurs near the end of the play.
- The end is a good place for your characters to resolve any events that happened in the story. Many stories end with a moral – an important message that the audience can learn.

Sources:

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- ❖ Hugh, M. (1999). Acting skills. London: Theater Arts Books.
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Compiled by:

Mr. Koh Chee Boon, Librarian, Children's Services

