

Numbers 1-8

Drama

(with thanks to Rose Ryan)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To explore scenes and atmospheres through movement
- To apply text to movement
- To see how abstract movement can develop into scenes
- To respond to verbal cues.

SKILLS TARGETED

- Listening
- Speaking text
- Expressive movement.

SUGGESTED TIME SCALE

- 10-20 minutes. This exercise can be done in stages with Step 1 as a stand-alone process

Step 1

Work through the following actions, which correspond to the numbers 1-8:

1. reaching up with both hands
2. spreading arms wide
3. crouching down, hands on the floor
4. moving in slow motion
5. freeze
6. running and dodging
7. rolling and turning on the floor in slow motion
8. reaching out to touch as many other people as possible – using arms, legs, heads, elbows, knees, backs, etc

Step 2

Practise these until the children know them all well and can do them in any order.

Be very strict about the quality of slow-motion movement and freezing! If the class find number 6 (running and dodging) very exciting, you have number 5 (freeze) to stop them immediately afterwards!

Note the interesting shapes the children make with all the numbers, especially 7 and 8. These will be very helpful when the children create battlefield scenes later in the workshop

Step 3

Now teach the following words to go with each number. Instead of calling out numbers, call out the words below as prompts for each movement.

The children do the same movements they have been doing for each of the numbers, but now the language is a prompt. It may be that the movements need to be adapted slightly to respond to the words. For example, instead of just reaching up with both hands for 1,

“Charge” becomes more of a rearing movement with arms up representing the movement of a horse.

The children can echo the texts as they perform each new movement.

1. rearing up like a horse in battle – “Charge!”
2. arms wide, as if Albert reunited with Joey – “Joey!”
3. crouching down, searching through a rucksack – “quick! find your gas mask!”
4. slow-motion dragging movement – “hauling the guns”
5. freeze in listening position – “listen!”
6. ducking and dodging – “running from the guns”
7. rolling and turning – “trapped in the wire”
8. reaching out and making contact with as many people as possible – “on the battlefield”.

Step 4

Discuss with the class moments in which each of these actions might happen – for instance, in a gas attack (3), or battle (6). Experiment with the order and the shapes. Invite different leaders to call out the texts for the group.

The children can use the physical vocabulary they have developed here in developing the activities ‘The Soldier’s Journey’ and ‘Melt and Rescue’

One teacher who used the exercise said: “(you) could use some of this in PE lessons – an army challenge course!”

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- The children will learn a series of movements related to the story
- They will develop their understanding of the story through movement
- They will rehearse responding quickly to verbal cues
- They will make a range of interesting abstract and representational shapes and scenes

