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ADEM: Drama and Sustainability 2021

This Drama and Sustainability themed edition of ADEM comes 10 years after the publication of Drama Australia's Acting Green Guidelines (2011) and the associated Acting Green Case Studies (2012). Drama Australia was ahead of the game in creating these guidelines for drama educators and practitioners. The guidelines consider the ways that Drama can be used to raise awareness, deepen understanding and act on environmental issues. The guidelines also outline ways of being more sustainable in Drama education and theatre practices. In 2021, there is a pervasive sense of urgency for action on climate change and environmental protection, making the Acting Green Guidelines even more essential than when they were first created. As we begin to emerge from the global pandemic we are also cognisant of the need to keep sustaining drama education within a rapidly changing environment. Many teachers and students are feeling exhausted by the extended periods of teaching online, discouraged by cancelled theatre productions, and unsettled by all the uncertainties of returning to teaching in a post-pandemic world. We are also riding a period of review of our national curriculum for the arts and the challenges and opportunities that such changes bring. We recognise a need for encouraging and sustaining drama education, drama teachers and drama students in these challenging times.

In **Eco-anxiety and Drama Education**, Jo Raphael recognises the deep anxiety felt by both young people and adults regarding environmental degradation and related social injustices. She suggests that, through drama, eco-anxiety can be acknowledged (and thereby relieved or shared) and used in positive ways. Jo points out the risks of this approach but offers resources and strategies for safely feeling the fear and acting upon it.

In **Unity in troubled times**, Darcie Kane-Priestley, Emma McDonald, and Julia Prestia argue passionately for theatre's potential to transform society, offering a case study from their own classrooms. Together, Darcie, Emma and Jane taught the same unit across four different Year 8 classes, asking students to engage with climate change and develop Theatre as Activism performances. Student reflections showed that students overwhelmingly felt connected through the unit to the real world.

Two articles offer drama curriculum ideas based on children's literature. Susan Chapman writes about **Drama giving voice to sustainability through an Arts immersion approach**. Drama is viewed as having its own unique language particularly suited to addressing global issues of sustainability. Susan gives an example of using this approach through a case study with a Grade 6 class exploring the novel *Chelonia Green, Champion of Turtles* (Mattingly, 2008). In **'I wish I could fly': A process drama based on 'Circle' by Jeannie Baker**, Helen Sandercoe

highlights the power of process drama to deepen meaning and explore issues of sustainability. Helen shares a workshop plan, suitable for students in both primary and junior secondary school, that could be used as a one-off experience or as the basis for a term's work.

Learning about ecoscenography with Tanja Beer explains Tanja's relational approach to performance design, known as *ecoscenography*. This approach to design asks us to understand the social and environmental impact of theatre, both before, during, and after the performance. In this interview with Danielle Hradsky, Tanja discusses what ecoscenography is, how it can work in any performance, and how it can help you save money and bring in broader audiences while also contributing to sustainability.

In **Beyond the pandemic: Seeking sustainability in online drama education**, Andrew Byrne, Susan Cooper, and Nick Waxman take a different approach to sustainability, examining the fragility of drama education in a pandemic and rapidly changing world, and how online learning can be both a threat and a boon. Andrew, Susan, and Nick share two online learning projects developed by Drama Victoria, together with the Department of Education and Training. Overall, they found that teaching drama online can offer new ways to upskill generalist teachers and support a long term and sustainable approach to teaching Drama.

John Nicholas Saunders, Julie Dunn & Evelyn Chapman offer **A continuum of drama learning** (F-10) to support professional conversations and planning. The year 2021 has been a period of consultation and review for the national curriculum for The Arts. This contribution to ADEM presents a set of materials aimed to encourage debate and conversations between teachers, subject leaders and curriculum authorities. The continuum invites educators to think about how best to sequence and scaffold learning in Drama as we seek to sustain a strong Drama curriculum in Australia.

Joe Winston has provided an engaging review of the book **Stand Up for Literature: Dramatic Approaches in the Secondary English Classroom** by John O'Toole and Julie Dunn. The review was originally published in *Drama* the UK National Drama magazine of professional practice. As Joe notes, the text is written for the Australian context, but has valuable and clearly explained practical ideas for all teachers of Drama or English.

Finally, we present the **State and Territory Associations Year Reflections for 2021**. Most Drama Australia state and territory associations have had a busy year, either rejoicing in learning together in-person again, or battling the ongoing challenge of online learning. Diversity and advocacy are strong themes, with drama educators across the nation striving to make their practice more inclusive, and fight for the importance of drama in the curriculum.

This themed addition of ADEM was designed to focus on all areas of sustainability and is a precursor for the updating of the Drama Australia Acting Green Guidelines and Case Studies. We invite you to participate in the **Acting Green revision** survey within this edition to suggest

ideas and contributions for the renewal of Acting Green to better support drama educators into the future.

We would like to extend a special thank you to the contributors: the educators, researchers, practitioners, State Presidents and DALOs who have all written articles to create the Drama and Sustainability edition of ADEM. We hope it serves to sustain our work and our play in drama education, both in and beyond the Drama Australia community.

Jo Raphael
Editor

Danielle Hradsky
Associate Editor

Articles

Eco-anxiety and Drama Education

Jo Raphael

In 2019 Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg (then aged 16) addressed global leaders at the World Economic Forum in Davos. She said:

“I don’t want your hope. I don’t want you to be hopeful. I want you to panic. I want you to feel the fear I feel every day, and then I want you to act. I want you to act as you would in a crisis. I want you to act as if our house is on fire. Because it is.”

Following her example, young people and their adult allies were compelled to march the streets in School Strikes for Climate. In that same year unprecedented catastrophic Black Summer fires began burning the east coast of Australia, destroying properties and millions of hectares of wildlife habitat. Today in the news we are told of increased pollution, waste, depleting natural resources, species loss and endangerment, and of a United Nations report declaring code red for humanity in the face of inaction on climate change. Little wonder there is growing evidence of young people becoming increasingly concerned and anxious about environmental degradation and related socio-economic injustices. I frequently read about these mounting feelings of distress, but I have also come to know it in more direct ways, as a teacher and a parent of young adults, and through my own personal reflection on the state of the world.



School Strike 4 Climate in Melbourne

Image: Jo Raphael

With regular reports containing dire predictions about the future of the planet, young people feel the weight of environmental devastation. It is their future that is at risk. Young people may feel betrayed by adults, leaders and government. They can feel a lack of agency, and experience a sense of powerlessness to do anything to bring about change, especially when they are not yet voting age. These concerns may manifest as worry, grief, depression, or anger. This phenomenon, which has been increasingly widely reported, is known as eco-anxiety. Other terms to describe this emotional state are eco distress, climate grief, environmental despair, eco-guilt or solastalgia (Pihkala, 2020).



School Strike 4 Climate in Melbourne
Image: Jo Raphael

Eco-anxiety may also exacerbate pre-existing anxieties experienced by young people—including anxieties fuelled by conditions imposed by the current global pandemic, and growing awareness of social and economic inequities and injustices in the world amplified by news and social media. They already have much to worry about.

In this article, I consider the emergence of eco-anxiety from a drama education perspective and offer ideas for teachers and students to help acknowledge eco-anxiety and use it in positive ways.

Drama for exploring sustainability

Ten years ago, Drama Australia published *Acting Green* (2011), a set of guidelines focused on drama for teaching sustainability, and sustainable practices in drama. The guidelines and *Acting Green Case Studies* (2012) preceded the introduction of the Cross Curriculum Priority Area (CCPA) of *Sustainability* in the Australian Curriculum. Drama educators were ahead of the game in realising the potential for drama as a pedagogy for teaching the key concepts of sustainability and advocating for effective action for sustainability in our drama education and theatre practices.

Acting Green acknowledges the power of drama to engage students' affective and cognitive domains in learning about sustainability. Aesthetic experience in drama involves the senses, facilitating emotional and imaginative connections to ideas of sustainability. Playing roles of human and non-human elements within the environment can help shift participants from an anthropocentric view of the world as they view it from the point of view of other living things. Drama can build empathy, understanding of the interdependence of ecosystems, and a sense of connection to all life on Earth.

Drama exists to explore problems and conflicts and can find many within the CCPA of Sustainability. When we explore environmental sustainability themes through drama, teachers and students can experience a range of emotions. If these feelings are acknowledged and spoken about, students will realise they are not alone in experiencing them. For many students, it will be a relief to discuss their environmental concerns with others. However, when we open up these complex problems for exploration through the medium of drama, we may also be raising these issues in some young peoples' minds for the first time.

The many feelings that drama can bring to the surface can give rise to an important attitude of caring about the environment. Knowing about environmental issues is not enough to impel most people to act. Feeling the threat matters can be the very thing that causes us to want to do something about it. Experiencing and exploring these emotions together with others, through the protective frames that drama allows, can be reassuring.

While emotional engagement is one of the aims of drama and theatre, drama teachers need to consider the potential for increased feelings of anxiety and despair. Explorations through drama can raise sensitivity to environmental issues, potentially contributing to eco-anxiety. Although 'feeling' is important, having ways of managing these feelings is necessary so that individuals don't become overwhelmed. Fortunately, drama practices can also contribute to the solution, particularly the need for productive ways of encountering these emotions.

Drama education also aims to build skills in students for creating and presenting theatre. In many drama programs, students are given the opportunity to devise theatre about issues that are important to them. If they are drawing upon aesthetic and dramatic elements, they are creating theatre that will also affect and influence their audience.

Resources for eco-anxiety

The global environmental and existential crisis has necessitated the creation of resources to assist in managing eco-anxiety. In an education context, UTS academics Leimbach, Walker and Kent (2020) developed a resource to support student and staff well-being and resilience during the teaching of a course in Environmental Communication. They created a pedagogical resource, ['Staying sane in the face of climate change and other dilemmas: A toolkit of emerging ideas to support emotional resilience, mental health and action'](#). The resource supports teachers and students in acknowledging the emotional impacts of environmental issues, helping them to remain 'positive, resilient and effective'. The toolkit is available for downloading by students and educators.

The psychology of eco-anxiety is increasingly researched and resourced. 'A Guide to Eco-anxiety' by Anouchka Grose (2020) provides a psychoanalyst's perspective with practical ideas for easing anxiety through courage and humour. The Australian Psychological Society has produced ['Psychology for a Safe Climate'](#), a series of booklets, papers and podcasts for

including resources focused on the needs of children, such as [‘Raising children to thrive in a climate changed world’](#). The UK Royal College of Psychiatrists has a whole website on [eco distress for young people](#).

These and many other resources acknowledge that feeling anxious about the environment is a completely reasonable and emotionally healthy response. Instead of holding naïve hope, psychotherapist Hickman (2021) encourages embracing strong feelings of concern and care, standing in the discomfort, and finding ways to navigate and act, calling this a form of ‘radical hope’. Using emotions as impetus for taking action, as an individual and especially together with others, is a recognised way of easing anxiety. In her book about climate grief, Newby (2021) calls this strategy ‘active hope’.

When teaching about environmental sustainability, teachers need to factor in both their students’ and their own wellbeing. Pihkala (2020) argues that teachers need to practice self-reflection about eco-anxiety to enable them to help students develop emotional resilience. Practical activities include the ‘validation of eco-anxiety and ecological emotions, providing safe spaces to discuss them, and if possible, providing embodied and creative activities to more fully deliberate on them’ (p. 1). The teacher has the important task of ‘maintaining the balance between despair and empowerment’ and providing ‘time for both gravity and lightness’ and space for humour, as well as ‘joy and gratitude, even in the midst of troubling times’ (Pihkala, 2020, p. 25). This is where arts-based approaches such as drama come into their own.

Eco-anxiety and the drama practice

The following list outlines some ideas for drama teachers and students who are doing the important work of exploring sustainability. These are ideas for acknowledging eco-anxiety and channeling it in positive ways.

Face up and talk about it

Simply having an opportunity to talk about and explore environmental concerns can be a comfort. Knowledge is power, and it can be reassuring to explore the concerns together with others in a learning context. Drama, through use of movement, sound, role, symbol and metaphor, can offer a powerful way of understanding and communicating the complexity of environmental challenges and the diversity of world views. Through engaging the imagination, drama may even reveal some solutions.

Validate feelings

Feeling anxiety about environmental concerns is perfectly valid, normal and important. Anxiety can even be powerfully turned to good, when caring leads to action. Embrace your worries, because discomfort can be impetus to seek and find solutions. The fact that you worry shows you are a person who cares, and you are the kind of person the planet needs.

Connect

Many people experience strong emotions when thinking about sustainability issues. You are not alone. Share your concerns and work together with others. A problem shared is a problem halved. When thinking about connection, participation in drama makes sense. As a social art form, drama provides opportunities to collaborate creatively and work together to understand and share the issues and think about possible solutions and futures.

Avoid catastrophising

Catastrophic thinking can lead to believing things are worse than they actually are. This can turn a practical anxiety into a paralysing anxiety. If this occurs, reduce catastrophic language, and take time to remember the many new ideas, technologies and initiatives taken by people all over the world to improve environmental sustainability and reverse damage. Drama loves conflict, but in drama we can not only explore environmental problems, but also human ingenuity and a sense of beauty, joy, love and gratitude for nature. Many artists have shown ways that serious issues can also be powerfully explored and communicated with humour.

Imagine possible alternative futures

Drama involves imagination and can be a medium for exploring possible and more hopeful alternative futures. We need to be able to imagine it to make it happen. For example, in a drama class about endangered species, groups might research then create scenes to show how a particular species came to be endangered. In a second group exercise they could imagine a time, perhaps a decade or two into the future when that species is no longer on the list of endangered species. They create and perform a narrated scene to show what actions were taken to cause that species to be removed from the endangered list (full description in Raphael, 2015).

Take action

Perhaps the best way to relieve eco-anxiety is to use it as impetus to take some action. You can take the emotional energy and convert it into something more useful – do something. Even the smallest actions can make a difference when done by enough people. Your actions also set an example for others. Sustainability initiatives can be taken by individuals, at a class or group level, and by a wider community such as the whole school. There are plenty of examples of actions for schools suggested by organisations such as [Cool Australia](#) and First Nations focused ideas and activities for Caring for Country from the [Narragunnawali](#) website.

Be creative

Take the strong feelings and explore them through creativity and the arts. Drama provides an opportunity to explore, express and share ideas in multiple ways. Many artists explore deep feelings about the environment through all forms of the arts. Take some time to find and experience other artists' works as inspiration for creating your own. Being creative might include being resourceful to create more sustainable drama practice such as making puppets from trash or using recycled sets and costumes. (For examples of creative responses see: climacts.org.au, climarte.org, ecoscenography.com, artistsandclimatechange.com.)

Spread awareness

Use your art to help spread awareness. Drama performances can help share information, affect audiences, and inspire other people to take action. For example, students can create their own group devised performances, perform written plays with environmental themes, stage happenings, site specific performances, agitprop theatre or forum theatre.

Seek support when necessary

Sometimes eco-anxiety can combine with other anxieties and become debilitating. At these times professional counselling might be necessary. Counsellors and psychologists are increasingly aware of eco-anxiety and have tools to help individuals who may need referral to this kind of support.

Drama is a means for exploring and making meaning of some of the greatest human dilemmas. We should not shy away from the big issues of environmental sustainability for fear of the emotions they may stir. If drama and theatre can help participants and audiences to feel something, then it is serving its purpose, as they may be prompted to take action. Greta Thunberg told the world leaders in Davos, 'I want you to feel the fear I feel every day, and then I want you to act'. That is the opportunity eco-anxiety presents in education for sustainability, and one that we can take up in drama education. This is a chance for active and radical hope – feel the fear, and act.

About the author

Jo Raphael (B.Ed, M.Ed, PhD, SFHEA) is Senior Lecturer in Drama Education at Deakin University and Artistic Director of Fusion Theatre. Her areas of research and publication include teacher education, applied drama and theatre, drama for learning across the curriculum, and inclusive education. As Director of Projects for Drama Australia she oversaw the development of the Acting Green guidelines (2011) and case studies (2012). Long term collaborations with colleagues in the areas of drama and environmental science have resulted in the recent publication of an edited volume of research and practice bringing science & drama together: White, P.J., Raphael, J., & van Cuylenburg, K. (Eds) (2021). *Science and Drama: Contemporary and creative approaches to teaching and learning*. Springer.

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Unity in Troubled Times

**Darcie Kane-Priestley, Emma McDonald and Julia Prestia
Ruyton Girls' School, Melbourne**

“...doing theatre for activism... this really opened my eyes to how drama can be more than a make-believe script for other people’s entertainment.”

Context

Theatre’s potential to transform society, as well as its capacity to support agency and inspire feelings of hope, responsibility, and care, has been long known (Boal 2000). Aesthetic practices can contribute to deep emotional learning about sustainability (Benz, 2020). A moment of awakening for the world came in 2019 and presented an opportunity to explore these very ideas. In January, the then 16-year-old Swedish environmental activist Greta Thunberg, addressed the World Economic Forum in Davos to call for serious action on climate change, likening the crisis to a house being on fire. At the same time, environmental activist group Extinction Rebellion were staging non-violent protests to draw attention to the worsening global climate. A climate emergency was declared, and the UN urged that there were only 11 years to act to prevent the irreversible effects of climate change. Young people were leading the action on this issue. We saw it locally with #ClimateStrikeAustralia where thousands of Australian school students skipped school to highlight the inaction of the Federal Government.

It was confronting but also easy to slip into a sense of helplessness about the all-encompassing climate situation. What gave hope were young activists, like Greta Thunberg, who were demanding change across the world. There is little doubt that today’s children will inherit a world with complex social-environmental challenges. Education plays a vital role in addressing these challenges and many have argued that it needs to be revised and restructured to provide conditions for transformative learning and meaningful climate action (Monroe et al., 2017; O’Brien et al., 2013; Sterling & Orr, 2001).

In the same year, Rachel Forgasz, senior lecturer from Monash University, invited members of the Drama Victoria Community to develop a unit that embraced the state of the world and empowered students to explore activism at school. With initial inspiration from Rachel, we began to develop our “Theatre as Activism” unit.

Implementation in the Classroom

In our initial meeting with Rachel, we built a pool of resources to draw inspiration. Being passionate and excited made the selection of stimulus material in the classroom challenging,

as we had so many ideas. The powerful words of Greta Thunberg and the concept of a ‘climate emergency’ was where we eventually landed to springboard the creation of our unit of work for use in Year 8 Drama (with a total of 84 students across 4 classes and 3 teachers).

We launched the unit by asking students what they knew about climate change. Responses ranged from, “we will soon die” to “Tik Tok is making it a meme.” With further probing into what the issue meant to students, we were able to gauge the level of awareness, anxiety, and interest in change amongst our cohort. We immersed students in provocative images of the ‘Red Brigade’ and ‘Extinction Rebellion’ in action and considered what these images made us think about and whether a provocative performance could bring about social change. Students furthered their understanding of theatre as a form of activism by conducting research into various theatre companies with activism as their aim, such as ‘Red Ladder’, ‘Belarus Free Theatre’ and ‘Queens of Syria’, alongside theatre styles such as Epic, Invisible, Theatre of the Oppressed and Eclectic Theatre. Comparing their research to the recent protests enabled our students to see the performative aspect of protest, which led us to use the concept of a “die-in” in our classroom. Students planned, developed, and took part in their own “die-in” on school grounds, where they used performance skills along with placards, compelling slogans, and costume/prop to shed light on their chosen issue. After completing workshops that focused on eclectic theatre and its conventions, the unit culminated in a major assessment task seeking a response to the question, ‘what is your call to change?’. For this, the students devised a short piece of ensemble theatre that required them to respond to the set stimulus of “Our House is on Fire” from Greta Thunberg’s speech. They were required to apply conventions such as transformation of object and character, the use of placard, chorus, and symbol.



On-lookers observe as Year 8 students as activists stage a ‘die-in’ on school grounds

Student Voice + Data

After completing the unit, we conducted a Google Form survey with our classes to gain an understanding of how the student cohort had responded to the unit. When asked about prior knowledge, most students reported that they had little knowledge of Theatre as Activism. Some students knew about climate activism and had seen some of the protests. A small minority had also attended protests.

Questions that garnered a range of interesting responses were, “What does this unit of work reveal about you as a learner? i.e. Are you political? Do you not like real events as a basis for learning? Do you like making your own theatre that means something to you? Do you prefer stories that aren’t real?”



Student actor/activist lies alongside protest sign in school yard ‘die-in’

Interestingly, approximately 57% of students who explicitly responded stated the unit had either fostered their passion for activism or provided them with opportunities for personal growth:

“During this unit, I discovered about myself that I am actually quite passionate about this topic and that I actually have quite strong opinions and views.”

“This unit really opened my eyes to what else is going on in the world and I really like creating my own theatre pieces on matters that mean a lot to me.”

“I can listen to other people’s opinions and have a broader perspective.”

Other students were quite challenged by the idea of being ‘political’:

“I liked studying real events and incorporating them into our performances. I don’t think I am political, but I liked being creative and creating our own theatre pieces. I feel as though stories that aren’t real are probably more interesting to watch and perform, but I still enjoyed the subject.”

“I’m not the political type but I feel I have definitely enhanced my knowledge on this topic.”

These student reflections gathered after the unit was completed, were analysed as a Drama team through the facilitation of a Data Driven Dialogue by the School’s Research Lead to help us make sense of the reflections and inform the next iteration of the unit. Overall, students

overwhelmingly felt that the unit of work connected them with the real world outside the classroom. When asked whether they felt the unit had changed any ideas students held, there was a disparity in the responses - some felt their ideas had changed, others did not. A common reason students responded negatively to their ideas being changed, was that they already had views that aligned with the topic. According to Pelowski and Akiba (2011), to be transformative and create new performance art, we must aim to challenge our students and disrupt their thinking, and this will in turn force them and their audiences to accommodate new information that does not fit their self-image. This leads then to a process where conceptions and worldviews are questioned and self-change of those involved may happen (Pelowski and Akiba 2011). It may be inferred from the data that it can be hard to measure the level of engagement and knowledge about climate change. However, we do know that the unit allowed participants to question and re-evaluate their perspectives, values, and worldviews, which enabled them to learn in a new way how to relate to the systems and structures that maintain the status quo (Bentz, 2020).



Student taking part in 'die-in' on school grounds

Lingering reflections + implications of this unit

Our thoughts on this unit of work have evolved and continued each year, guided by our students and the political landscape at the time, with the aim of co-constructing the learning each time we embark on the journey. We believe that passion, immediacy, and relevance are essential ingredients in creating powerful political theatre. We wanted our students to delve into the effects of real events, real theatre companies, real issues that impact them and to create theatre that does not merely replicate the status quo but is reflective of their lives and stories (Betzien, 2007). We must never lose sight of the fact that theatre has the potential to evoke social change and provide our students with the tools to challenge what they see in the mirror. Our aim is for our students to create work that illuminates this social reality, confronts these ideas, and provides a vision for a world that is changeable. Effective political theatre engages our students' thoughts about the world around them, and their place in it, and encourages conversations, social agency, and activism. As vulnerable as we may feel as educators guiding our students through the journey of creating theatre about our world, the climate emergency and activism, we need each other. We need students to question and rebel, and students need us to be there beside them, guiding them on this path of change for the future.

“We, the quiet people, need to rebel. We need our children to care about the planet like those who have saved the whales for the enjoyment and reassurance of all. We need our children to consider the orthodoxy of the world, and examine it for its merit. That is called education.” (Pascoe, 2020)

Education needs to transform in order to address climate change, yet sometimes we are unsure how. How do we engage young people with a topic that is perceived as abstract, distant, and complex, and which at the same time is contributing to growing feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and anxiety among them? Traditional science classrooms focus on explaining the greenhouse effect and discussing the potential consequences of rising temperatures. By leading this learning outside into the Drama classroom, we can also attend to and transform emotions, creating hope, responsibility, care, and solidarity (Ryan, 2016). Educating our students through Drama about climate change and sustainability, can expand young people’s imagination and empower them to co-create new scenarios for transformative change.

Our responsibility is to our students and their unique voices for their futures. We don’t have a recipe for climate change education in Drama, but we aim to articulate and reflect on the potential of drama practices, to prepare and empower young people to address complex global challenges and contribute to the broader discourse on climate change and societal transformation. From teaching this unit, adapting it from student reflections and the use of data driven dialogues to make sense of their experience, we continue to make changes as each year passes. We are happy to be contacted for further resources or ideas for lessons. We invite other Drama educators to challenge their students and themselves, to explore theatre as activism in their classrooms, and to feel empowered by the avenues for greater depth of learning and transformative potential that Drama education offers.

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Drama giving voice to sustainability through an Arts Immersion approach

Susan Chapman

Introduction

Drama helps us to explore ourselves and our world more deeply, so it is well placed to help us address sustainability. UNESCO's Education for Sustainable Development Roadmap outlines 17 Sustainable Development Goals from United Nations Agenda 2030 (United Nations, 2015). Goal 4.7 (*Acquisition of knowledge and skills to promote sustainable development*) is particularly relevant for educators and provides a great opportunity for students to come to understand this issue more clearly through Drama experiences. This aligns well with Drama Australia's Acting Green Guidelines (Drama Australia, 2011) which calls for sustainable education that can: sustain people, communities, and ecosystems; present an ethically defensible position that is fair, respectful and inclusive; embody healthy and nurturing relationships across system levels; and provide durable feasibility in practice (Drama Australia, 2011).

Arts Immersion

An Arts Immersion approach to learning views the Arts as a unique group of languages that can be used right across the curriculum (Chapman, 2018). Eisner described language as, "(t)he use of any form of representation in which meaning is conveyed or construed" (2003, p. 342). Therefore, Drama has its own unique language which can:

- Provide students with a sense of home and belonging
- Express understanding through drama literacy
- Represent viewpoints from different cultures and times
- Shape students' personal and learning identity.

Drama literacy

Barton (2014) defines arts literacy as, "interpretive and expressive fluency through symbolic form, whether aural/sonic, embodied, textual, visual, written or a combination of these within the context of a particular art form" (p. 3). Drama literacy provides learning experiences which can access all these symbolic forms. This makes Drama a very inclusive learning experience and acknowledges that there are times when our understanding and feelings cannot be

adequately expressed through words alone. Students can learn to manipulate the elements of Drama to make meaning as they discover a new way of knowing. This is important when addressing the global issue of sustainability because through Drama the quality of knowing can be made more vivid.

Chelonia Green, Champion of Turtles

In 2016, I organised an Action Research Case Study in a culturally diverse primary school in a low SES area, using an Arts Immersion approach in a year 6 class. One of their chosen novels was *Chelonia Green, Champion of Turtles* (Mattingly, 2008) which described the choices faced by a young girl who lived with her family on a beautiful island. Chelonia comes face-to-face with the problem of turtles dying from human-generated plastic pollution in the ocean around the island. An Arts Immersion approach was used to integrate drama strategies with other learning areas to deepen learning and address sustainability through exploring the role humans play in damaging ecological environments.

Drama and science

Students considered the biological and economic factors that contributed to the endangering of local species. This was done through class discussion and group research, demonstrating how informed decision making might influence policies regarding sustainability. The drama strategy of Conscience Alley was then used to explore two sides of the statement: “It is easy to save a threatened species”. In the Conscience Alley activity, the class was asked to choose a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ side of the argument and stand in two parallel lines facing each other, with each line representing one side of the argument. One student was chosen to first state their opinion and then walk down the ‘alley’ asking for the opinions of each student from both lines. In this drama strategy, the students in the lines take on the role of the walking student’s conscience. At the end of the ‘alley’ walk, the student who walked through the alley considers whether their opinion has changed and explains why or why not. This activity uses critical thinking to consider a range of different factors that can influence a viewpoint.

Drama and English

To consider the perspectives of animals in the novel, the drama strategy of Hot Seating was used. In this strategy, students sat in a seat and took on the role of one of those animals by responding to open-ended questions from the class. Open-ended questions are those which do not illicit a ‘yes’, ‘no’ or ‘I don’t know’ response. Hot Seating can involve one student at a time or three students at a time, each sitting in the ‘hot seat’. Having three students can share the task of replying, but they will need to present a cohesive narrative and avoid conflicting information in their responses. Students took on the role of several different animals

including seagulls, turtles, bats, sting rays, fish and curlews. From this beginning, the students expressed animal perspectives in the form of poems which made use of figurative writing skills. Another writing collaboration which grew out of a drama strategy was a persuasive writing task based on the Conscience Alley activity. These activities foster understanding of non-human perspectives through taking on the character of an animal. It builds empathy and compassion for non-human suffering and encourages awareness of human impact on ecological environments. In this project, the drama strategies also helped to unlock students' fear of writing which was important as the school had below average literacy scores according to national testing programs.

Here are some examples of poems which became scripts for recorded voiceovers. Differentiation naturally emerged, showing a range of skills as all students in the class (some with additional assistance) were able to provide responses. Pseudonyms are used for the year 6 students' names.

Damien's poem for voiceover

Grey grey stingray on its way
To the shining sea
Looking for food to calm
His angry mood
He's swimming in the
Glimmering sea
Looking for seashells
That he can sell

Ian's poem for voiceover

I am a curlew in a tree
Thinking I am free
Until I find
I'm not alone
There's someone right beside me
I turn to find a book
Sitting in someone's hand
She doesn't see me that's
Why I'm always free no
One will ever catch me

Zoe's poem for voiceover

The seagulls find food to eat,
But they push me off my feet.
My stomach cries for more food,
But there's nothing I can do.
My other friends eat it all,
My tummy shrinks and gets more small.
I soar against the deep blue sky
I spread my white wings and fly.
I find a lovely beach, to rest my weak wings.
Until I find an appealing thing.
It's food, a trophy for my eyes
I peck roughly, but I soon realise
The horrible truth of this treat,
That it is TURTLE MEAT.
By this time the others are here
Eating and chewing, but suddenly they disappear.
A girl chased them away with eyes full of sadness.
It's all my fault, I'm full of madness.
She starts crying, "Caretta! My friend!"
It's already too late; it's the end.
I soar away and I soar far,
But I'll always remember, Caretta.

Drama, music and media arts

Some of the poems that developed from the Hot Seating activity were recorded as first-person expressive voiceovers with sound effects, while others were used as the lyrics for a recorded song. A Claymation (short stop-motion animation) was created by combining a narrative voiceover with sound effects and improvised music to build the mood and atmosphere of the story. These activities used cross-modal art forms to strengthen their impact on an audience and drew on both the Hot Seating and Conscience Alley experiences to deepen students' understanding and engagement with aspects of sustainability. Students themselves were not prevented from feeling discomfort and even sadness, using these feelings as a catalyst for

potential future action to address similar situations. Sound effects were sourced from copyright free recordings such as Creative Commons or created through recordings of student-generated soundscapes to provide the aural environmental backdrop for the voiceovers. Students used their voices to make the sounds of the waves, the wind, or animal sounds such as the seagulls or curlews. Another option is to add a vocal collage using descriptive words over this layer of environmental sounds, either as a separate recording or in spaces between the words used in the voice overs. Audio recordings can be done using a phone, iPad or the recording feature on a laptop. Possible examples are explained here.

Option 1

Voiceover with sourced copyright-free recording of appropriate environmental sounds

Option 2

Voiceover with student-generated vocal soundscape to represent the environmental sounds

Option 3

Combine student-generated vocal soundscape with a vocal collage in the form of expressively delivered descriptive words. Words can be onomatopoeic, thematic or narrative in style (for example, crash, woosh, splash, peace, waves crash, glimmering sea, plastic, trapped, watch out, help me, walking on the beach, fly away)

Option 4

Using Options 1 and 2, including Option 3 in breaks between different parts of the voiceover.

Drama assessment regarding sustainability

The following suggestions can draw on the Hot Seating and Conscience Alley activities.

- Students record a voice over from an animal's perspective
- Students record a combined soundscape and vocal collage expressing either their aspirations for Chelonia's island – Utopia; or the dilemma facing Chelonia and the looming threat for her island – Dystopia
- Students present a monologue in the role of a policy maker organising recycling practices
- Students present a duologue expressing two opposing viewpoints on the feasibility of saving endangered species
- Students present an individual or group mime incorporating copyright-free music to depict either the Utopia or Dystopia scenario explained above

- Students present a series of group tableaux, with or without incorporating copyright-free music to depict either the Utopia or Dystopia scenario explained above

Conclusion

Drama strategies invite students into a space which offers embodied learning experiences to address sustainability issues. The drama strategies described maintain a light ecological footprint by requiring minimal resources and they are quick to set up in class. They encourage students to think deeply about aspects of sustainability and how they feel about the state of our earth. These activities can be incorporated into unit planning in the form of rich tasks which also provide inclusive assessment options. Drama empowers students to find their voice and express their opinions about sustainability issues by using collaborations with other arts subjects, such as Music and Media Arts, and different learning areas, such as Science and English. Within an Arts Immersion approach, the language of Drama can help students to understand how unsustainable practices are threatening our earth, to learn to care about the impacts of human decisions and policies, and to become active global citizens seeking to contribute to a sustainable, just and peaceful world.

About the author

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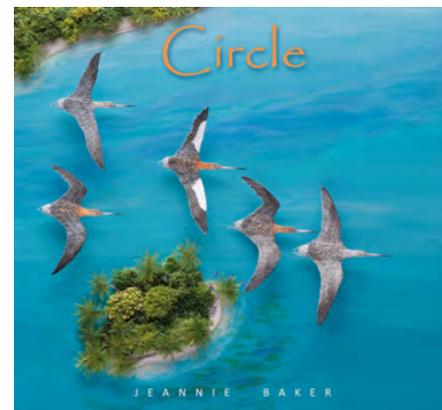
‘I wish I could Fly’: A process drama based on ‘Circle’ by Jeannie Baker

Helen Sandercoe



Photo by Bob Brewer on Unsplash

This article describes a workshop that has been designed to utilise process drama as a valuable tool for deepening meaning and the experience of picture books for Primary and Middle Years. ‘Circle’, a recent book by Jeannie Baker, will be used as an exemplar for this approach. This book deals with the fragile existence of godwits, small wading birds that migrate across the world and back again each year. The birds fly from Australia and New Zealand all the way to Alaska. This book would be a very useful stimulus for delving into the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#), of ‘Life on Land’, ‘Climate Action’ and ‘Sustainable Cities and Communities’ and in the Australian Curriculum Cross-Curriculum Priority area of Sustainability.



Cover of ‘Circle’ Image:
<https://classroom.walkerbooks.com.au/circle/>

Drama in more recent years is being seen as having a valuable contribution to play in STEAM, as Drama provides a learning medium where the learners ‘walk in someone else’s shoes’ or ‘fly in another’s wings’ in a science or environmental context. As we know, when we empathise with a particular situation, we are more likely to be sympathetic, which may lead to social action. Also, when the work is embodied, there is an immediate connection which is felt. When learning is felt then it is lasting learning.

These notions are corroborated in the description of Canada's 'Evergreen Theatre' which is devoted to performing Science and Environmental issues for schools and communities. Everett (2015) describes the work and writes:

Drama can be gainfully employed for teaching both the conceptual and social contexts of science. Drama, by its very nature, necessarily contextualises the content of science education. Through simulation of people and processes, students are able to 'get inside' the ideas and the feelings around scientific investigation, and to critically explore the relationship between humans and the natural world. (p. 46)

In 'Circle', there are two intertwined stories: one of a boy who appears physically limited and one of the birds and their migration. The book also tackles how the boy is able to transcend his seeming limitations. A wide variety of strategies from process drama will inform the exploration, suggesting ways that every child or participant is able to be part of the experience.

In my approach to exploring picture books through drama, there is a deep investment in exploring the themes and context physically before the book is read. With each strategy/convention, the skills are scaffolded which is essential to effective teaching.

This work is also designed to highlight the process drama strategy of 'Role on the Wall'. This strategy is very useful to track knowledge and understandings of a particular topic or character. If it is created at the beginning of the class, then it provides a way of recording the understanding of the class before the work begins and it provides a great way to keep adding to the knowledge as the work progresses.

In the next section I provide a description of the practical drama workshop.

'I wish I could Fly': A process drama

Workshop Resources

- Picture storybook: 'Circle' by Jeannie Baker
- Butcher paper and pens for 'Role on the Wall'
- Short video clip/s of godwits flying

Preparation for the Text – Building the Context

Role on the Wall – In groups of 4 or 5, participants draw a boy with wings. Inside the wings, they write their knowledge of birds and on the outside write any emotions, feelings, or socio-cultural understanding of birds. Around the edge of the page, participants write what 'flying' means to them.

In the same groups, students create an image of 'flying' using their bodies, inspired by the words around the border. The words may be incorporated into the image through use of voice.

Warm-Up and Preparatory Exercises

- **Drama Game: Crows and Cranes**

Purpose: This is for energy and focus and to start the group thinking about birds. This game is also known as 'Chalk and Cheese'.

The group is divided into two equal groups and line up in two lines down the space. One line is designated the 'Crows' and the other 'Cranes'. When their name is called the line runs to the edge of the room. The other line tries to catch them. If you are caught, then you join the other line. The facilitator or teacher calls 'Crrrr' and then 'Crow' or 'Crane'. The aim is for the facilitator to build suspense and keep the group focused. The aim for each line is to catch as many as they can.

- **Physical Preparation**

The work begins in the body with a number of short exercises as part of the preparation of understanding the story of the godwits that is to come. The work starts with simple physical movements and is developed into physicalised image making.

- **Walking the Space**

As one of the recurring images from the book is 'following an ancient invisible pathway', participants are encouraged to individually walk the space of the room, as if 'following an ancient invisible pathway'.

Participants are asked to find a partner. They repeat the walk, with the partner following the leader, then reverse, so each has a turn in leading and following.

- **Flying Warm-Up**

The group spreads out through the space, and each finds their own space to be still. The group explores what it is like to have wings and to fly, focusing on where the movement begins and ends and exploring movement qualities of tempo and flow.

- **Flocks of Birds**

Participants form groups of 5/6. Each group nominates someone to be the leader and rest make a clump or a V-shape depending on the size of the room and the number of groups. The group walks around the space with energy.

In nature, birds take it in turns to lead the group, to share the burden of creating the slipstream for the others, this phenomenon is reflected in this exercise. The leader sets the pace and ensures everyone is able to keep up. As soon as the leader has

established their leadership, another 'bird' seamlessly takes over the leadership. Most or all participants should have a turn at leading.

- **Image Making: 10 Second Constructions**

The participants walk around the room and then a number is called. Quickly, participants get into groups of that number and create the object that is called out.

Binoculars – Group of 2 or 4

Wheelchair – Group of 6

Plastic rubbish on a beach – Groups of 8 - 10

A map of the world, with all the countries that surround the Pacific Ocean – A challenge for the whole class to create together.

- **Picture Postcards**

A picture postcard is a development of the '10 Second Constructions' exercise, where each person chooses a 'role' to create an element in the picture.

The group creates a summer beach scene then with 10 counts transforms into a high-rise city. A short discussion follows about what has happened to the environment and how we express that through bodies in space.

Show a short video clip of godwits

Example videos:

Saving the Bar-Tailed Godwit – <https://youtu.be/oADB0kV7nRk>

Flying Godwits – <https://youtu.be/MyhAQ6T6Vs>



Bar-tailed Godwit – *Limosa lapponica*

Photo by Joshua J. Cotton on Unsplash

The Text

The book 'Circle' has few words, but very detailed pictures created through amazing collages by Jeannie Baker. Read the book with the group, interrogating the pictures, finding the details and collaboratively telling the story.

The first page shows an adult with a boy in a wheelchair gazing out across the sand to the sea while a flock of godwits takes flight. Explore the image and talk about what it makes them wonder about the story.

Read the text on the second double page spread showing the large flock of godwits.

a godwit with white wing patches flies up with his flock.
the moment is right for the long journey north.

The third double page spread shows an arc of land and water with the godwits flying high. The text reads:

The flock fly high
above the clouds,
chattering at times
to help stay close together.
Each bird takes a turn
to lead the way.

They follow an ancient,
invisible pathway
for six nights
and six days,
until they know they need to stop.

Readers' Theatre

Using the text from the second and third pages, divide the participating group into groups of five to develop a vocal interpretation of the text. Each group works out a way of presenting this text, exploring, pitch, tempo, volume and pausing and emphasising words. Other techniques that could be used are echo of words or sounds. The group also need to decide who speaks which words and whether they will use single or multiple voices.

The City: A double-page spread shows the high-rise buildings of a city along a developed waterfront. Show this picture.

Group Chorus

Create a group chorus of what the birds would be thinking, feeling, seeing, hearing as the birds come to where they expect to see their feeding grounds, but they have disappeared under buildings and development. Each person speaks a line as though perhaps they are reading a poem. This technique contributes to building empathy for the birds' situation.

The Mudflats: Show the page where women and birds are shown gathering food from the mudflats.

Picture Postcard – Food Gathering by People and Birds

In two groups, create an image of the birds feeding and an image of the women gathering, most likely shellfish, that live in the mud flats.

Overheard Conversation

This strategy is about imagining overhearing conversations. The participants represent the women and children gathering shellfish in small groups to imagine what they would be talking about. Do they notice the birds? What do they think about the birds? How do they react to the birds?

Participants then imagine what a documentary maker or news reporter would comment on in this scene. In small groups, decide how this scene is to be represented as if a scene from a news report or documentary, and discuss the position and views of the commentator. Then groups present the reporter's commentary with the scene in the background.

Hold a short discussion about what has been revealed about the people and their relationship to the birds and their environment.

Read the next few pages, stopping at the page where the fox takes the chicks.

Marking the Moment

Experiment with a couple of ways of interpreting that moment through positioning of bodies in space, show that there is no definitive way of showing these moments. Each interpretation is valid. Meaning can be made with shape and how close or far away the participants are from each other and from the audience.

Read on until stopping at the second last page where the image shows the boy trying to hold back a dog. Discuss the changes to the landscape from the first picture of the beach. In groups of five, they will improvise this moment with the possibility of including a narrator. The role of the narrator can have a big influence on how the story is told and received.

Two different narrative techniques:

1. Improvise the scene from the book bringing the picture to life.
2. Improvise with the role of a narrator who can be an impersonal observer or narrator who has a point of view to the scene or relationship with the scene, such as the boy, the boy's mother, a bird lover, even the dog, etc.

The Boy's Story

The boy's story is suggested but has little detail. In Drama, we are able to develop these stories further. Look at the very first page before the story begins, with the boy lying on his bed, thinking 'Ahhh- I wish I could fly', the first page with the boy on the beach looking at godwits, the second last page with the boy trying to hold the dog, and the last page of the boy imagining he was with the godwits.

In groups of five, participants create three freeze frames that tell his story. The Freeze Frames are presented with the class as audience, closing their eyes in between the transitions and seeing only the images. They ask and imagine:

- How did he come to be in a wheelchair?
- How did he become interested in the birds?
- What happened after the book when he is a few years older?

Hold a short discussion of how the images are communicated through line, shape and space and what are the stories of the boy.

Bring one scene to life and share it as a short rehearsed improvisation.

Hold a brief discussion on what made effective improvisations. What more was revealed about the boy's life?

The original groups go back to their 'Role on the Wall' and add to the drawing of the boy. On the outside of the drawing of the boy participants write what is suggested from the book, and on the inside, what the drama has suggested about him.

To conclude the work based on the book, make an interactive sculpture or art piece that sums up the theme 'I wish I could Fly' and/or expresses a message about the godwits. Each sculpture needs a title.

At the end of this experience, there should be time for reflection on the workshop experience. What aspect of the work resonated and why?

This story has the potential to be the stimulus, or the beginning point, for an environmental study of wetlands and their importance to many species, not just birds. However, wetlands are increasingly coming under threat across the world.

Some questions to help you consider more about wetlands. Where is your nearest wetland? It may be a coastal or inland wetland. Is it under threat or is it being protected? Who are the First Nations custodians of that country? Is there a group that works to protect the area? What is the historical, cultural and biological significance?

The following are some possibilities that could be explored to understand and lobby for a wetland preservation in class.

Documentary

Students could research another bird or animal in a wetland environment and through film or live drama or a combination of both, show the life or life cycle of a particular animal/bird.

Town Meeting

This is a drama strategy to present various stakeholders' points of view on a contentious topic or theme. For example, with a particular wetland, the stakeholders may be Land Developers, First Home Buyers, Environmental Lobby Group, Environmental Scientists, Tourist Operators who bring Bird Lovers to a particular area, a First Nations Land Council, Local Inhabitants, etc.

With research and assistance, the students in small groups create a short presentation to a local Councillor/State or Federal Parliamentarian representing the various stakeholders. Costume elements may also be added. The teacher or students may fill the roles of Council members and a MC for the meeting.

This may involve creating visual images and speaking for their stand on this issue. Students may take a creative approach and capture sound, write a poem, choreograph a dance, speak a monologue representing a bird or animal or the land.

The drama activities suggested here could be selected for a single workshop, a sequence of lessons or even a unit of work conducted over a term.

About the author

Helen Sandercoe has been a Drama/Theatre teacher for much of her life. Central to her practice is how to best develop expressive skills and create an aesthetic experience. Recently, she has been teaching the essentials of Drama for primary and secondary pre-service teachers. There is nothing more exciting for Helen than when a whole class is involved in the creative process.

This workshop was originally developed and presented for the 2019 Drama Victoria State Conference. This article has expanded the original structure and activities.

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Learning about *ecoscenography* with Tanja Beer

Interview by Danielle Hradsky

The reality of climate change is affecting our lives today, and will continue to affect our futures, and our children's futures. As drama educators, we need to help our students come to terms with this reality, and find their own sense of agency, as well as navigating our own paths. If this feels daunting, you're not alone! Ecological designer, community artist, and academic Dr Tanja Beer has developed a practice called ecoscenography, or ecological design for performance. Here I chat with Tanja about what ecoscenography is, what it means for us as drama educators, and how we can put it into practice.

Lovely to meet you! Can you explain what ecoscenography is?

Ecoscenography is about bringing a relational approach to the ways in which we make theatre. It's about understanding the social and environmental impact of what we're making, how we're making it, as well as the performance content itself, and what happens to our sets and costumes afterwards. My concept of ecoscenography has three cyclical stages (Figure 1). It starts with *cocreation*, which is about creating work in ways that are community integrated, place-responsive and environmentally responsible. *Celebration*, the performance season, provides a highly visible platform to showcase sustainable ways of thinking and doing. *Circulation*, the part we're probably the least effective at as theatre makers, is all about saying, "Alright, now that the show is over, how can I distribute the materials and ideas so that they might seed another production's preparation?" Or, "How can I donate some of the stage materials to the local community?" It's about restructuring, rethinking the way we make theatre in a way that's more holistic, and also speaks to the possibilities around the making and 'unmaking' of the work. This includes thinking about how we can co-create with communities, not just working in isolation. Understanding that we don't work in silos, that we are part of the community, is not only a great strategy for promoting sustainability, but also provides opportunities for us as theatre makers to diversify our audiences and build new networks.



Figure 1. Ecoscenography Framework

Illustration: Gisela Beer

Which is always a good thing! What do ecoscenography performances look like? Do they have to be a particular type of performance, or could you have an ecoscenographic production of Aladdin?

Totally! The whole point of working in a holistic and sustainable way is that it is totally inclusive. It's really important that ecoscenography can work across a variety of spectrums, performances, venues, and stories. Essentially, it is about putting social and environmental considerations at the heart of what you're doing. Now, that might not include the story. You might be working on *Aladdin* or *The Importance of Being Earnest*, where you think, "Well, it's not really an ecological story." But the way in which you make the work can still have an ecological focus and significance. For ecoscenography to work, it has to be accessible across a range of platforms, not just for eco-focused pieces. Of course, I would argue that when you have a show about climate change, it's even more important to consider the environmental impact of your production. If you're presenting work that tackles ideas of climate change, plastic waste or species loss, and you're not considering that in the making of the work, then there's a massive disconnect between what you say 'on stage' and what's going on 'behind stage'. But I argue that we have to include sustainability considerations no matter what. If you look at larger design fields, such as product design, architecture and fashion, you'll notice that sustainability is increasingly becoming 'part and parcel' with any form of design, no matter what the theme.

In a school drama situation, the biggest costs and probably the biggest environmental costs tend to be those big school productions and musicals. Are there particular concerns depending on the type of production?

Each production is very specific to the budget, context and the place in which it's being performed in. Musicals do tend to love a lot of sparkle.

Lots of glitter!

Yes! Glitter or spectacle might be a better word! There's an assumption that musicals need a spectacle. That often means more 'stuff' on stage than maybe a more traditional theatre show. If that's the case, you might be relying more on reclaimed materials to create your show. If there's money and resources for it, you might be using projection to help create different scenes, eliminating the need to make as much scenery. But then, of course, you've got to consider the energy expenditure of the production. But perhaps with more and more schools investing in solar panels that will already be looking a lot better in terms of environmental impact.

So, if you're trying to sell ecoscenography to your principal as part of your drama program, is it associated with higher costs or actually saving?

I would argue that it's not going to cost any more than a 'normal' production. If you take a place-specific approach, which means looking at what resources you already have in your school, or in your neighbouring schools, community centres and organisations, then you're going to easily eliminate costs. You might decide to borrow or hire technical equipment, sets, props or costumes, which would hopefully be cheaper than buying or making them from scratch. You might invest in a projector that you can use for multiple stage productions in the future.

Are there any examples of major professional productions using ecoscenography principles?

Yes! I often bring up the work of Donyale Werle, who is a Tony Award winning Broadway designer. Donyale won a Tony Award for her musical design of *Peter and the Starcatcher* which featured a design completely made out of reclaimed materials. Her process is all about scavenging New York's junkyards and recycle centres to find things that she can turn into exquisite, Broadway-appropriate set designs. You wouldn't necessarily look at Donyale's stage design and go, "Oh, it's all made from reclaimed materials". But it enriched the experience for those that noticed the upcycling features.

Awesome! If big school productions are at one end of the ecoscenography spectrum, what's at the other end?

Ecoscenography can work across all ways of doing theatre. At one end, you have traditional theatre integrating sustainability into the ways in which productions are produced. At the other end you've got 'theatre meets socially engaged art' projects, where community is situated at the heart of the work (Figure 2), with more of a focus on process than aesthetics.



Figure 2. Community workshops (The Living Stage, Castlemaine State Festival, 2013)

Photo: Gisela Beer

What might that look like?

The cyclical framework for ecoscenography was developed through a project I developed called *The Living Stage*. *The Living Stage* was an experiment in trying to reach for the highest possibilities of sustainability. It's about trying to push assumptions of what sustainable design is in the performing arts. It's all about taking a regenerative framework that is focused on abundance and thriveability – giving back to your community, and working beyond mitigation to contribution. Minimising our waste and energy is really important. But *The Living Stage* also pushes towards a more contributive way of doing things. It is about asking, “How can I create evocative stage design that not only contributes to our audiences, but our community and environment as well?” For the first Living Stage (Castlemaine, Victoria), I thought, “What if I can grow a stage that can be donated back to the community? A compostable stage? Wouldn't that be the best-case scenario?” To make the best out of that opportunity, I engaged the Castlemaine community throughout. Growing the stage, celebrating sustainability through performance, and then dispersing the planter boxes out into the community at the end for more growing was the work's central premise. One of the local schools who performed dressed up as all different kinds of vegetables and fruits – it was quite amazing! The students created these awesome costumes out of reclaimed materials around the notion of harvest (Figure 3). The people leading the song also played on carrots and vegetables. It was fun! That was just one of the many shows that were featured as part of the Castlemaine State Festival. The local council got involved and provided opportunities for more food growing projects, and the boxes went to the local TAFE, community cafes, local people. So, you've got all these social, environmental, vocational, and economic benefits coming through one little project.



Figure 3. School performances (The Living Stage, Castlemaine State Festival, 2013)

Photo: Gisela Beer

I'm inspired! Do you have any advice for teachers and students who want to create their own living stages?

Lots of schools already have their own community gardens, right? The trick is to introduce the gardening and theatre groups to each other. You might be able to use reclaimed materials for growing containers, which then become part of your production scenery. Or you might think about performing a piece outside in the garden and get the parent and teacher community on board to help do part of the growing for the stage design. These gardening set components could then be donated back to the community, or the school, or you could use the theatre project to start a community garden if you don't already have one. I think there's plenty of opportunities. Schools are really well set up for that, because they're so embedded in their own communities. Use those networks. Say, "Hey, who knows a permaculturalist? Whose parent or carer is good at gardening? Who's got a whole bunch of boxes that we could use for growing?" Most people are quite happy to be involved, particularly if their children are part of the project (Figure 4).



Figure 4. CreateAbility and Born in a Taxi in Produce (The Living Stage, Castlemaine State Festival, 2013)

Photo: Gisela Beer

So many ideas! How do you hope to see ecoscenography integrated into schools in 10 years' time?

Ultimately, it would be great if there was no such thing as ecoscenography, if all scenography or stage design was just automatically eco, if it just becomes part of the way we do things. I'd love 'normal' or 'environmentally unconscious' scenography to become outdated. But unfortunately, we're not there yet, so I do feel that we need to bring a focus to it.

What message would you like to share with teachers who are inspired to help bring focus to ecoscenography?

My experience, both as a teaching artist in primary and secondary schools and a lecturer at university, is that students are all on board with ecological thinking. Increasingly, my students are telling me that they don't want to do things unless sustainability considerations are part of what they are doing. This is increasingly part of the way people (young people especially) think. So as a teacher you don't need to worry about that. If anything, students are going to be more on board if it has an eco-focus than if it's not. Bringing ecoscenography into the ways we make things is such a great tool for integrating our ecological aspirations with our creative and aesthetic considerations. It's going to be increasingly important for people to be able to do that as we navigate the future.

You've definitely inspired me! Where can people go to learn more?

My book, *Ecoscenography: An Introduction to Ecological Design for Performance*, should be out early next year. If it's something you want in the library, or for yourself, or to explore with students, you can pre-order it now. The aim of the book is to straddle both academia and practice, to make it accessible to practitioners and students as well as academics. We also have a great platform through the [Ecoscenography](#) website and [Facebook group](#).

Challenging! Well, I'm looking forward to reading it! Thanks so much for talking with me.

Thank you! Great to chat.

About the interviewer

Danielle Hradsky is a PhD student at Monash University, exploring how embodied professional learning can support teachers to engage with the supercomplexities of teaching for reconciliation. Before that, she taught Drama, Dance, and English for five years at Wonthaggi Secondary College. Danielle is the Reconciliation Portfolio Manager (previously the Drama Victoria Theatre Festival Portfolio) for Drama Victoria.

Beyond the pandemic: Seeking sustainability in online drama education

Andrew Byrne, Susan Cooper and Nick Waxman
Drama Victoria

The extended lockdowns of 2020 and 2021 have had a negative effect on both the arts industry and the arts in education. Theatres are closed and artists are out of work. As Victorian educators, artists, and researchers, we have observed a flow-on effect to education. Parents are seeing the arts industry as an increasingly unstable workforce and discouraging their children from studying Drama. Drama educators, especially in secondary schools, are seeing a decline in student enrolments in electives. School productions have been cancelled. VCE Theatre Studies and Drama ensemble performances: cancelled. Excursions to see live theatre: cancelled. Incursions and workshops: cancelled. Teaching a collaborative and practical subject like Drama online is difficult, especially to frequently switched off cameras and muted microphones. Drama education, always on the margins of mainstream schooling, is rapidly becoming endangered.

As frustrating as teaching online can be, the past couple of years have pushed us to take Drama education into hitherto little explored areas. Drama Victoria's current development of a five-year strategic plan, in consultation with a range of relevant stakeholders (educators and industry), has shown an overwhelming need for advocacy for our subject. While advocacy has always been a priority for Drama Victoria, the onslaught of lockdowns and remote teaching has made it even more pertinent, relevant, and timely. In partnership with the Department of Education and Training (DET), Drama Victoria has developed two extensive programs that support Drama educators and students through online learning. By describing these programs, we hope to inspire other Drama educators to view virtual courses as not just "better than no classes" (Loeb 2021), but as a way to create access to Drama education for people and places that would otherwise be excluded. To support our belief in the power and sustainability of online Drama learning, quotes from our participating teachers are scattered throughout.

Project 1: Drama Victoria presents...

At the beginning of the pandemic and the first extended lockdown in Victoria, the DET acted swiftly and commissioned a range of education content for students studying the Victorian Curriculum. This ensured that schools and teachers who were desperate for content and unsure

if they could make it work were given a buffer. Here was content to tide them over until they could get their heads around this remote learning phase – however long it was going to last.

Drama Victoria was commissioned to create originally a series of eight Drama lessons aimed at students studying Levels 5-8 of the Victorian Curriculum (later extended through the Blended Arts Education Program to include eight more lessons for Levels 3-4). Known as ‘Drama Victoria presents...’, each of these lessons comes with a plan for teachers, an interactive video, and an accompanying worksheet for the students (all of which can be viewed on the [FUSE website](#)). The aim was to have each class run for 30 minutes. The shortness of the lesson meant that the topics needed to be precise and were limited to one key concept (e.g. status, tension, improvising, empathy, or character). Creating these resources at the beginning of the pandemic, we wondered how well videos could really work to engage and educate Drama students.

To quell our uncertainties, we drew on what is known about learning through video. For example, Brame (2016) identifies three elements (cognitive load, student engagement, and active learning) to maximising student learning from educational videos. Drama Victoria utilised Brame’s recommendations to create engaging and interactive content. To ease students’ cognitive load, each video is brief, broken into bite size chunks and has clear places to pause the video to reflect on the learning using the worksheets. To engage students, our presenters use a conversational tone and speak quickly and enthusiastically. To encourage active learning, once a task is complete the students are requested to share their creations and give feedback to others. Afterwards they reflect on their work, again on the worksheet or with their teacher and class. Each video is part of a larger unit of work, increasing student motivation.

“... I can really see fantastic progress with my students. I have been using the videos for ... all 3 to 6 children. My 5/6 class was very reluctant at first and some students were very self-conscious. That is not happening now and I heard many say as they walked out, that the lesson was fun.”



Figure 1. Presenter Nick Waxman utilises green screen and uses enthusiastic body language and facial expressions to engage students in ‘Drama Victoria presents...’

Project 2: Blended Arts Education Program (Dance and Drama)

With our confidence and relationships strengthened by the success of ‘Drama Victoria presents...’, we were overjoyed to be approached by the DET to submit a proposal for their Blended Arts Education Program (Dance and Drama). Although drama educators can often feel ignored by the powers that be, the Victorian government is also advocating for the importance of an arts education for students, specifically targeting primary students in rural and regional Victoria. These students are often not as readily exposed to an arts curriculum. With fewer specialist teachers, rural and regional schools are often reliant on generalist primary teachers who may have limited or no experience in teaching the arts subjects. Drama and Dance are especially under-represented.

The Victorian Government initiated the Blended Arts Education Program to improve educational outcomes and address the disparity between regional and metropolitan schools. The aim is to give more regional students the opportunity to learn Drama and Dance in their primary education. The program pairs rural and regional schools with a need to initiate or support a Dance or Drama program at their school with industry experts. The aim is to improve teacher capability in planning and teaching the Dance and Drama curriculum. The program is designed to run for three years, with new schools and students getting the chance to experience a high-quality arts program each year.

Taking on the Drama half of the Blended Arts Education Program is one of Drama Victoria’s most ambitious projects to date. Designing and delivering high quality Drama learning to this year’s cohort of 15 rural and regional primary schools has been a whirlwind journey, punctuated by added complications from ongoing lockdowns. As well as two terms of Drama learning aligned with the Victorian Curriculum, the lessons are thematically connected to other key learning areas, capabilities, and cross-curriculum priorities. Each school cluster is assigned an expert Drama teacher, who engages with both the students and their teachers to build lasting relationships. The expert Drama teacher meets with their cluster online once a fortnight, as well as travelling to each school once a term (although this wasn’t possible this year – thanks COVID!). At the end of the program, students and teachers are supported to showcase their performances with their schools and broader communities.

“It has been great watching all classes progress from being unsure, to now being keen to participate, having fun and improving their skill development.”

Along with giving this year’s students an awesome Drama education, the Blended Arts Education Program aims to ensure sustainable arts learning for rural and regional students. The classroom teachers are offered professional learning, resources, and support, so that they have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to continue after the program has finished. They also develop ongoing mentoring relationships with the expert Drama teachers.

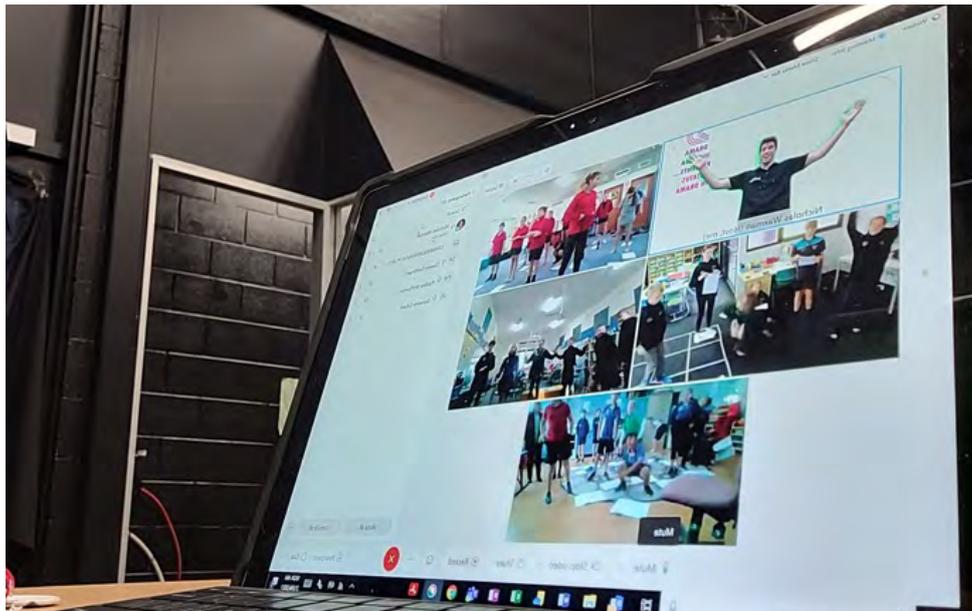


Figure 2. Online learning brings people together! Four regional and rural primary schools join one of our expert teachers based in Melbourne

These relationships will support the classroom teachers to continue trying out Drama-based teaching and learning, with opportunities to ask for advice and seek feedback. Geographically close schools are encouraged to continue working together to strengthen curriculum delivery.

So far, the classroom generalist teachers, expert teachers and students have reported positive experiences with the lessons. Our generalist primary teachers are feeling empowered to start using Drama concepts and content as part of their teaching. If this can continue to work, and rural and regional teachers and students can engage meaningfully in skill acquisition from their homes and schools, then we have a new tool for professional learning. Videos and other

“We had our first Drama lesson with you yesterday afternoon. The students absolutely loved it! Thank you so much. I especially appreciated the fantastic feedback that you gave the students, which is something I am not able to give the students quite so well, in the field of Drama.”

online learning tools can offer people who are otherwise marginalised from education the opportunity to be part of Drama-based learning, and not just in a pandemic!

Conclusion

While ‘Drama Victoria presents...’ was designed for remote learning during a pandemic, the Blended Arts Education Program was designed for generalist teachers to use in their classrooms with their students, guided by the online presence of the expert teacher. The fact that we entered a series of extended lockdown periods in 2021 did not inhibit the program from continuing, as all the lessons were filmed and made available to the participating teachers.

In turn, these resources have been added to FUSE as a free support to all teachers across Victoria, Australia, and even the wider world. Throughout 2021, and into 2022/2023 Drama Victoria will have researched, written, filmed, edited, and distributed 96 interactive videos with supporting worksheets and lesson plans on a range of Drama topics.

We specifically designed both the project resources to live beyond the DET's intended project life. Our overarching goal for both projects is to upskill generalist teachers so that they have the confidence to continue to teach a Drama program in their school, beyond their 12-month coaching period if they are part of the Blended Arts program, or even on their own. The creation of a library of 96 videos ensures that there is sufficient content to support a long term and sustainable approach to teaching Drama. Any primary school can run a Drama program with these free DET resources, as any teacher from Levels 3-6 can start at Lesson One and then be self-guided through a three-year program. Secondary teachers can also be supported by the older 'Drama Victoria presents...' resources.

These programs have been designed with sustainability in mind. As we step out into a (hopefully) post-lockdown world, it is more important than ever that we advocate for Drama education. Rather than regarding online learning as a threat to our subject, we need to embrace the opportunities it has offered us. Teachers around the world have worked tirelessly to create engaging, robust, rigorous online lessons with clear outcomes for students. The knowledge we have gained from this process should be valued, not thrown away. Guided self-teaching and accessible, engaging online resources are just two ways to make Drama education more sustainable in the years to come.

About the authors

Andrew Byrne is the current President of Drama Victoria and Drama Australia's Director of Projects and Guidelines. He is the Head of Performing Arts at Prahran High School and is currently studying of Master of Education (Research) with a focus on how teachers and students can produce Contemporary Indigenous Theatre in the Drama/Theatre Classroom.

Susan Cooper is the Executive Officer of Drama Victoria and a community development, project management, events, marketing and business development specialist. Susan founded Paragon United Artists where she produced, directed and promoted musicals, theatre, and major community events. In her time managing Kingston Arts Centre, she led the business to achieve four consecutive Australian Achiever Awards. As inaugural General Manager of Entertainment Assist, Susan devised and led world-first research to explore the negative impact the entertainment industry has on the mental health and wellbeing of its workers. She created significant industry partnerships to establish and convene the Australian Alliance for Wellness in Entertainment (AAWE).

Nick Waxman is an award-winning director, writer and teacher. He is the host of The Aside Podcast and Curriculum Manager for the Department of Education and Training's Blended Arts Project (Drama). Nick is on a PhD pathway at Monash University where he is researching teacher and student perceptions on interactive video.

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A continuum of drama learning: a resource to support professional conversations and planning from Foundation to Year 10

John Nicholas Saunders, Julie Dunn and Evelyn Chapman

This article consists of two components: a continuum of Drama learning for children and young people from Foundation/Kindergarten/Prep/Transition to Year 10; and an accompanying discussion paper which outlines its key features and some of the major concepts and thinkers who have informed its design. In creating this continuum, our goal was not to create a rigid set of requirements or to ignore learner diversity by developing a one-size fits all continuum. Instead, our aim was to create a set of materials that might stimulate conversations between teachers, subject leaders, and curriculum authorities about how best to sequence and scaffold learning in Drama.

In developing the continuum of learning, the authors wish to acknowledge our critical friends: Andrew Byrne (VIC), Lucy Flook (QLD), Adjunct Professor Mary Mooney (NSW), Professor John O'Toole AM (QLD), Robin Pascoe (WA) (NSW), and Jane Polley (TAS).

Introduction

When the three authors involved in developing this continuum of drama learning came together, we had several goals in mind. We wanted to generate a document that would be curriculum and syllabi neutral, serving as a broad-based companion resource without being prescriptive or linked to any particular curriculum authority. We hoped that a resource of this kind might prove to be sustainable in terms of its longevity, while also addressing the current situation where drama curriculum documents, especially those designed for teachers working in the primary and junior secondary years, are becoming increasingly open and flexible. While this flexibility can be useful for experienced drama educators, it can provide challenges for those who are new to teaching or to the field. We felt therefore that a continuum of drama learning might provide opportunities for a range of educators and curriculum designers to consider the developmental sequence of knowledge, understanding and skills, while also

determining which Elements of Drama, forms and styles, audiences, contexts and purposes may be more appropriate than others at particular learning junctures.

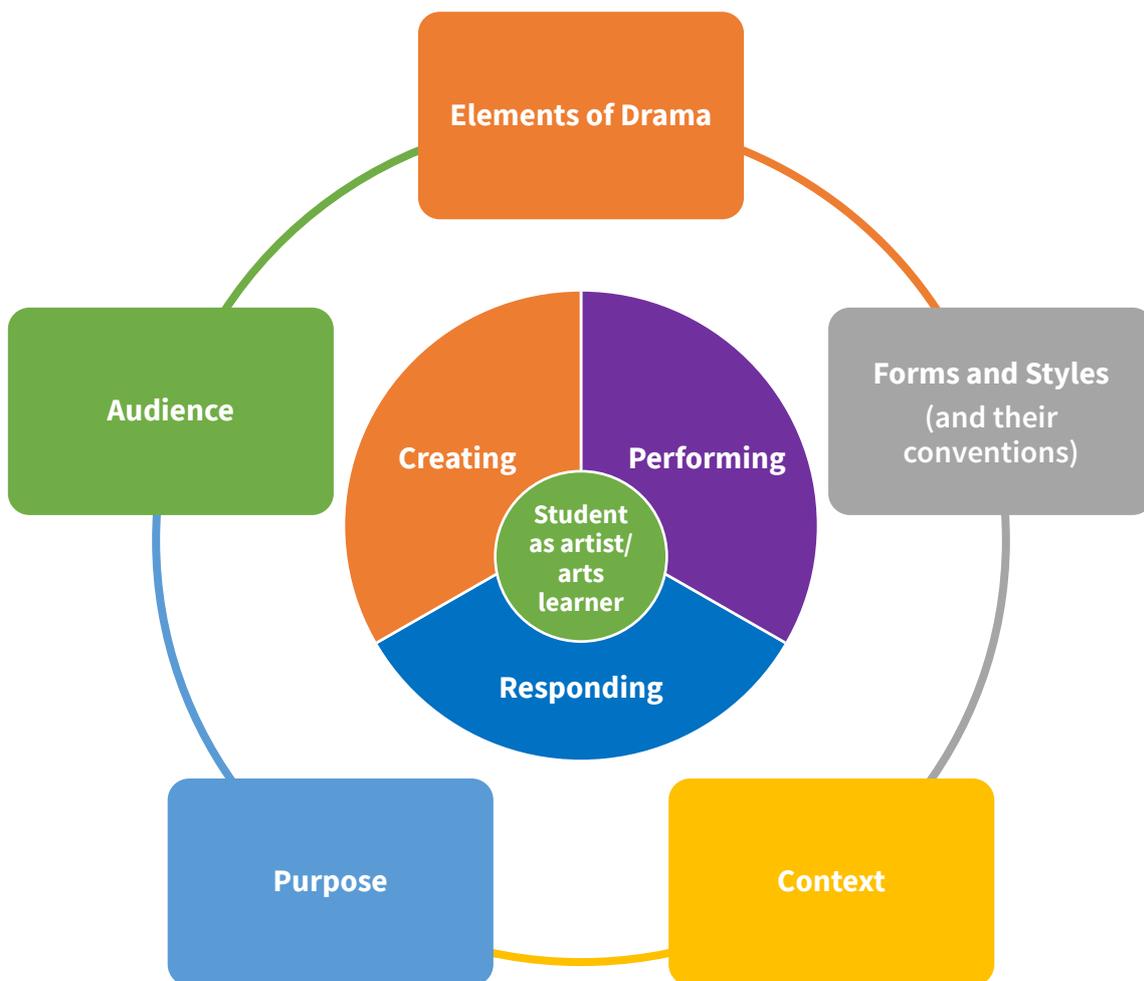
Before unpacking the features of our continuum, we would like to acknowledge that the subject of Drama must be shaped by key priorities beyond the subject itself. In the Australian context, these include: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures; Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia; and Sustainability (ACARA, 2021). These particular priorities aim to ensure that curriculum is culturally inclusive. We therefore encourage all drama educators to engage with culturally diverse practitioners and styles. In particular, we ask that drama educators seek out the works of First Nations artists, and acknowledge their ongoing and central role in Australian history and culture. We also suggest that when selecting texts and stimuli, drama educators attempt to ensure that all students are able to see themselves in these materials.

In terms of the continuum's audiences, we saw multiple possibilities. Initially, all three authors wanted to create a document that might serve as a scaffold for the beginning drama educators we each work with. For example, much of Evelyn's effort is focused on supporting experienced teachers who are new to drama, while Julie and John both work in pre-service teacher education contexts. Within these, our work attempts to support the planning and implementation skills of both specialist secondary and generalist primary teachers. For many individuals across all of these groups, the struggle to appreciate the scope of this complex subject and an understanding of how best to appropriately sequence learning within it, can be challenging and thus we felt that a resource of this kind was needed. However, as we worked on developing the continuum, we became increasingly aware of its additional value as a stimulus for dynamic conversations between more experienced teachers, subject leaders, curriculum development teams and academics. We noted that while most educators working in the discipline tended to have a keen understanding of what might be required to effectively sequence learning for the students they work with on a daily basis, not everyone has a complete understanding of the whole picture - namely, how drama skills and understandings develop from their foundations in dramatic play, through to the more complex work required to support young people as they move to study Drama in the senior years of schooling. Finally, we determined that this continuum might also prove to be a useful resource for curriculum authorities, both here in Australia and overseas, especially during the conceptual stages of designing a comprehensive drama curriculum.

Given this range of goals and audiences, we were pleased to be working as a team, with each of us contributing our different perspectives and drawing on quite varied experiences in the field. Importantly too, in constructing this continuum, we were also aware of the importance of acknowledging the strong conceptual foundations we were building upon. In the following sections then, as we explore each of the features of the continuum, we provide a brief outlining of key informing influences and frameworks.

The figure below (Figure One) provides an overview of these features and how they relate to each other. The outer circle identifies the specific aspects of Drama included in the continuum, while the inner circle describes the three distinct yet inter-related domains of drama learning: creating, performing and responding. The student as artist and arts learner is situated in the centre of the diagram - a decision which is reflective of the view that the students' interests, skills, and capabilities should always be of key importance when teachers engage in planning processes. This perspective contrasts with exegetical approaches where instead of the learner, the work of an external artist may be the central focus. While students may—particularly as they progress in Drama—explore the influence of particular drama practitioners, their influence on particular forms and styles, or specific theatre works, we would argue that in Drama, the student as both artist and learner should drive our practices.

Figure One: Key Components of the Drama Continuum and their Relationships



Feature One: A spiral curriculum

The first, and potentially most important feature of this continuum of learning is that it is based on the notion of the spiral curriculum, which has been keenly informed by the work of Bruner (1960, 1963, 1977). Bruner suggests that a spiral curriculum is one that “allows a concept to be revisited and explored with increasing degrees of sophistication” (1977, p 52). This means that once introduced, concepts are continually revisited at an increasingly complex level.

Recently, Drew (2019) has outlined three key principles that inform a spiral curriculum approach. These are:

1. Cyclical: students should return to the same topic several times throughout their school career.
2. Increasing depth: each time a student returns to the topic it should be learned at a deeper level and explored in more complexity.
3. Prior knowledge: a student’s prior knowledge should be utilized when a topic is returned to so that they build from their foundations rather than starting anew.

It is important then, that educators using this continuum to support their planning or as the basis for discussions about the scope and sequence of Drama learning, appreciate these principles.

Feature Two: A three domain approach – creating, performing and responding

In developing this continuum of learning in Drama, the work of Peter Abbs was critical. His aesthetic framework, outlined in his 1987 text entitled *Living Powers: The Arts in Education*, has been central to the development of many international Drama and Arts curriculum and syllabi documents and continues to provide a useful conceptual and practical framework for teaching and learning in the Arts. In that work, Abbs included six artforms: Dance, Drama, Music, Film, Visual Art and Literature, while the framework itself was comprised of four interrelated, yet distinct pillars or domains. These were:

- Making
- Presenting
- Responding, and
- Evaluating (Abbs, 1987).

Since then, a three-domain version has been commonly adopted across a range of Arts and Drama syllabi documents from various nations, including in every state and territory across Australia, many state curricula in the United States of America, several provinces in Canada

and local area syllabi in the United Kingdom, as well as parts of Europe. A range of words have been used to name these three domains, with common groupings including:

- Making / Creating / Forming
- Presenting / Performing / Sharing
- Responding / Appreciating.

We have also drawn on the Queensland School Curriculum Councils' (QCAA) 2002 syllabus which was known as "The Arts: Years 1 to 10 Syllabus", which we all agreed had been important in shaping our understanding of effective Drama curriculum. Its development is detailed in Madonna Stinson's (2007) thesis entitled "The Shifting Sands of Curriculum Development: a case study of the development of the Years 1 to 10 The Arts Curriculum for Queensland Schools".

Importantly, within that particular syllabus, there was a rejection of the notion of generic arts strands in favour of discipline specific ones, an approach supported by Best (1989, 1992a, 1992b), Robinson (1992) and Stinson (2007). Hence in line with these concerns, within this continuum, we have employed a three-domain conceptual framework using terminology specific to drama:

- **Creating** – developing original work as artist
- **Performing** – working as an artist to prepare and present work to an audience.
- **Responding** – reflecting, analysing and evaluating drama work. Students respond as both artist and audience.

These three discrete yet connected domains of learning within Drama require equal attention, as they work together to develop students' knowledge, understanding and skills. They also support teachers to organise curriculum, learning experiences and assessment.

Feature Three: Band Overview

The continuum of learning commences with an overview of learning for each year level band. These overview statements are organised according to the framework described above – creating, performing and responding. In developing these band overviews, careful and particular attention was paid to ensuring that there was progression in the various cognitive verbs employed. For example, within the creating overviews, there is a progression from exploring and using the Elements of Drama in the foundation year, to using, experimenting with and identifying them in Years 3 and 4, before progressing to applying, manipulating, analysing in the lower secondary years, and eventually, evaluating them within the Years 9 and 10 band. Similarly, these band overviews are designed to help educators select appropriate forms and styles, once again highlighting how these become increasingly sophisticated over time.

Feature Four: Identification of focus Elements of Drama

Within this continuum of Drama learning, we have offered a suggested sequence for focus elements of drama. Inspiration for this inclusion, and several others, was drawn from the very useful sequence of core content included in the Drama component of the 2002 Queensland Years 1-10 Arts Syllabus, developed by the Queensland School Curriculum Council (QSCC). This overview of core content included sections relating to elements, conventions, forms and styles, performance skills, audience and purpose. Along with focus Elements of Drama, in this continuum we have included all of these with the exception of conventions.

In proposing this sequence of Elements of Drama, we remind the reader of three important points:

- The sequence is intended as a guide only and is not intended to be prescriptive nor limiting.
- There are many frameworks that outline the Elements of Drama, and therefore, the Elements of Drama included here may not necessarily fit with those outlined at a local level.
- The notion of the spiral curriculum is especially important in relation to the Elements of Drama.

In Australia, the Elements of Drama are accepted as the building blocks of drama (Ewing & Saunders, 2016). O'Toole and Dunn (2002) note that Aristotle was the first to codify these elements in his book, *Poetics*, outlining six elements of drama: plot, character, diction, thought, melody and spectacle. Australian educators, Haseman and O'Toole (1986; 2017; and further explored by O'Toole, 1992) are well-known for their work in developing a contemporary set of elements. These have been widely used across Australia and around the world, with variations of the Haseman and O'Toole model appearing in international curriculum documents. Their model not only identifies individual Elements of Drama, but also suggests how they work together to communicate dramatic meaning to an audience.

Within our continuum of learning, we draw heavily on the Haseman and O'Toole's two models but do deviate slightly from their helpful lists. For example, while Haseman and O'Toole include 'narrative' in their 2017 version, we have not. In addition, within their 2017 version, role does not appear, however it is a key inclusion in this continuum. Additional elements added here but not included in the Haseman and O'Toole model are contrast, space, and voice.

Feature Five: Forms and Styles

The continuum of learning also outlines a range of forms and styles appropriate for each year level/band. Once introduced, most of these forms and styles are appropriate to be re-visited and built upon through the spiral curriculum model. According to Stinson (2015, p.35), the term forms refers to "the way devised and scripted drama is structured. Drama forms are shaped

by the application of the Elements of Drama, manifested in particular dramatic conventions, and are embedded in particular social, cultural and historical contexts”. However, within our continuum of Drama learning, we have used the term forms a little differently, suggesting just three forms: improvised, devised and scripted drama, with the word styles being used to provide further information about the particularities of these, as well as if they are contemporary, historic or hybrid.

Again, in offering this continuum, there is no suggestion that this list is exhaustive, prescriptive or limiting. Instead, it is offered as a guide only, with the additional reminder that once more, the included forms and styles are meant to be revisited as per the spiral curriculum model.

Feature Six: Contexts for exploration

We believe that this section of our continuum is highly innovative, but also critical as it suggests to educators a series of possible contexts for exploration within drama learning. These contexts are divided into two bands – those appropriate for children in the Foundation to Year 4 band, and those more appropriate for students up to Year 10. Included in both bands are cross-curricular contexts and First Nations’ stories, while community, school and cultural events also feature. Critically, we have also ensured that situations derived from children’s and young people’s imaginations and literature are highlighted. Once again, we encourage drama educators to engage with stimuli and texts that will enable all students to see themselves, as well as unfamiliar people and worlds.

Feature Seven: Purposes

The purpose section of this continuum, as was the case in the 2002 Queensland Syllabus documents (QSCC, 2002), outlines the purposes of drama, with three bands being used to group these (Foundation, Years 1-4, and Years 5-10). The separation of the Foundation purposes from those outlined for drama in Years 1-4 is particularly critical, as it reinforces the important point that in the first year of formal schooling, drama work should be focused on meaning making and the exploration of ideas and emotions through play, rather than on any purpose which may be related to communicating meanings to others.

Feature Eight: Audience

A suggested continuum of audience is a further inclusion in the continuum. Starting with Foundation, which focuses on informal sharing with peers and teachers only, the continuum extends to Years 9 and 10 where audiences may be both informal and formal, but should also include opportunities for students to perform to unfamiliar audiences.

Feature Nine: Drama processes and skills

Within this section the three domains of Creating, Performing and Responding are used to organise processes and skills across each year level/band. Of course, every child and young person is unique, and some will develop these skills more quickly than others, while some may achieve depth in one skill while their capabilities in others may progress more slowly. It is important to note therefore that this continuum of skills is not meant to suggest a lock-step approach. Instead, as noted above, its purpose is to guide the planning decisions of beginning drama teachers or to serve as conversation starters for more experienced ones.

One key point that needs further highlighting relates to the way the Foundation band has been constructed in this section. Here we see that the presenting dimension has been omitted in order to de-emphasise the role of an external audience during this important phase of learning. This approach is supported by the work of Vygotsky who argued that, especially for young children, drama should be closely connected to play which he described (1930/2004, p. 71) as the “root of all creativity in children”, going on to suggest that for young children:

attempt(s) to directly reproduce the forms of adult theatre are not suitable for children [...] plays written by the children themselves or created and improvised by them as they are played are vastly more compatible with children’s understanding [...] It must not be forgotten that the basic law of children’s creativity is that its value lies not in its results, not in its product of creation, but in the process itself. **It is not important what children create, but that they do create**, that they exercise and implement their creative imagination” (Vygotsky, 1930/2004, p. 72, our emphasis).

Conclusion

We hope that you find this resource useful and enjoy the process of debating our continuum as much as we enjoyed creating it. It was a process which confirmed for us the complex nature of the art form that is Drama, and the challenges associated with trying to capture in a rigid table its many inter-related components. We thank those who have attempted this before us, including, our colleague Madonna Stinson who created a similar continuum as part of her work with the QCAA back in 2002. Of course, we know that there will be many who want to challenge or question its structure and sequence. We encourage this! Nonetheless, we hope that through our collaboration, and the input of our critical friends (listed above), we have been able to generate a document that is capable of supporting the ongoing work of our colleagues and the learning of all young people who are fortunate enough to experience the joys of engaging in this rich, aesthetic form.

About the authors

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Evelyn Chapman works as an Education Officer for Brisbane Catholic Education. With a background in primary arts she has seen the transformative power of drama to enhance learning for all students across many learning areas. She believes that with professional learning and support, teachers both specialists and generalist, can build confidence and embrace drama as sound and engaging pedagogy across many contexts.

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A continuum of drama learning

John Nicholas Saunders, Julie Dunn and Evelyn Chapman

This continuum of learning in Drama is a resource to support professional conversations and planning from Foundation to Year 10. It is based on the concept of the spiral curriculum, where concepts, once introduced, are continually revisited at an increasingly complex level.

Year/Band Overview	Foundation Year	Years 1 and 2 Band	Years 3 and 4 Band	Years 5 and 6 Band	Years 7 and 8 Band	Years 9 and 10 Band
	<p>In this year, students explore and use the Elements of Drama as they experience and participate in dramatic play, process drama, and puppetry/object play.</p> <p>Students create role, place, language and situation, in both their own dramatic play, and also accept and participate within the fictional situations created by others.</p> <p>Students share their ideas and feelings about drama they have created or participated in. They also reflect on drama created by others, including professional artists. Their responses may be spoken, written or involve other arts disciplines.</p>	<p>In this band students explore, use and experiment with the Elements of Drama as they participate in dramatic play, process drama, puppetry/object play, improvisation, mime and movement, and readers' theatre.</p> <p>Students create and make decisions about role, place, language and situation, in their own dramatic play, and also accept role and participate within the fictional situations created by others. Together with elements from Foundation, they also consider and experiment with time and movement.</p> <p>Students reflect on their experiences and contributions to drama they have created or participated in. They also reflect on drama created by others, including professional artists. Their responses may be spoken, written or involve other arts disciplines.</p>	<p>In this band students explore, use, experiment with and identify the selected Elements of Drama as they participate in forms and styles from previous bands, as well as engaging in scaffolded devising processes.</p> <p>Students create and perform drama making decisions about elements from previous bands, while also creating and enacting character and relationship, using voice and movement.</p> <p>Students respond to their experiences and contributions to drama they have created or participated in. They also reflect on drama created by others, including professional artists.</p> <p>Within these responses they identify known elements and consider their impact on the dramatic action. Their responses may be spoken, written or involve other arts disciplines.</p>	<p>In this band students explore, use, experiment with, apply and identify the selected Elements of Drama as they participate in forms and styles from previous bands, as well as engaging in scaffolded playbuilding and scripted drama.</p> <p>Students create and perform work for familiar and informal audiences, making use of elements from previous bands, together with the various types of dramatic tension, mood/atmosphere and space.</p> <p>Students respond to their experiences and contributions to drama. They also respond to drama created by others, including professional artists.</p> <p>Within these responses they identify known elements and consider how their use impacted on dramatic meaning.</p>	<p>In this band students intentionally draw upon their artistry to experiment with, apply, manipulate and analyse all Elements of Drama across a range of dramatic forms and styles.</p> <p>Students create and perform work for formal and informal audiences, making use of elements from previous bands, together with contrast, focus and symbol.</p> <p>Students respond to their experiences within and contributions to drama. They also respond to drama created by others, including professional artists.</p> <p>Within these responses they analyse how dramatic action is created using the Elements of Drama, conventions of form/style and skills of drama. They consider the purpose of the work and the intended audience when considering the impact of these on dramatic meaning.</p>	<p>In this band students work with a conscious understanding of artistry to experiment with, apply, manipulate, analyse and evaluate all Elements of Drama across an increasingly complex range of forms and styles. They consider the purpose and audience of their work, actively selecting their own contexts and materials for exploration.</p> <p>Students create and perform work for an expanded range of purposes and to increasingly formal audiences. They make conscious use of all Elements of Drama.</p> <p>Students respond to their experiences within and contributions to a range of drama forms and styles. They also respond to drama created by others, including professional artists.</p> <p>Within these responses they analyse and evaluate how dramatic action is created using the Elements of Drama, conventions of form/style and skills of drama. They consider the purpose of the work, the intended audience and the contexts for exploration when considering dramatic meanings made and the aesthetic engagement of audience members and/or participants (for example in process drama).</p>

	Foundation Year	Years 1 and 2 Band	Years 3 and 4 Band	Years 5 and 6 Band	Years 7 and 8 Band	Years 9 and 10 Band
<p>Elements of Drama</p> <p>This sequence of elements is intended as a guide for their introduction and is not meant to be prescriptive nor limiting.</p> <p>Once introduced, it's intended that each element is revisited in each band with increasing complexity.</p>	<p>Students explore, and use the Elements of Drama to with an emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Role: adopting and enacting a role relevant to the fictional situation. - Situation: creating fictional circumstances to explore within child-structured dramatic play or accepting and contributing to the shared situations within process drama. - Language: employ language relevant to role and situation. - Place: creating and co-creating place in dramatic play and accepting the shared setting in process drama. 	<p>Students explore, use and experiment with the Elements of Drama included in Foundation with particular and additional emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Movement: using their bodies to communicate ideas and emotions, including in role. - Time: exploring time in drama: before, after, next – including moving forwards and backwards within a narrative/situation. 	<p>Students explore, use, experiment with and identify the Elements of Drama included in previous bands, with particular and additional emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Character: Within process drama, improvisation and scaffolded devised drama, students begin to develop and represent characters, supported, where appropriate, using character profiles. They consider the language and movement of their characters. - Relationships: Students experiment with the relationships between characters and how time, place, and situation impact on their relationships. - Voice: Students experiment with their voices, including volume, pitch and pace. 	<p>Students explore, use, experiment with, apply and identify the Elements of Drama included in previous bands, with particular and additional emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dramatic Tension: Within all forms and styles, students recognise and experiment with the various types of dramatic tension. - Space: Across all forms and styles, students experiment with and manage space to highlight relationships between characters and to contribute to the representation of place. - Mood/Atmosphere: Students experiment with and manage the mood and atmosphere created in and through the drama work. 	<p>Students intentionally draw upon their artistry to experiment with, apply, manipulate and analyse all Elements of Drama across a range of dramatic forms and styles, with particular and additional emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contrast: Students experiment with contrast between movement and stillness; sound and silence; light and dark; etc. - Symbol: Across all forms and styles, students develop an understanding of how dramatic symbol can be employed to enhance dramatic meaning for audience and/or participants. - Focus: Students develop an understanding of the various forms of focus and use this to support their work across all forms and styles. 	<p>Students work with a conscious understanding of artistry to experiment with, apply, manipulate, analyse and evaluate all Elements of Drama across an increasingly complex range of forms and styles. They consider the purpose and audience of their work, actively selecting their own contexts and materials for exploration.</p>

	Foundation Year	Years 1 and 2 Band	Years 3 and 4 Band	Years 5 and 6 Band	Years 7 and 8 Band	Years 9 and 10 Band
<p>Forms and Styles</p> <p>Teachers are encouraged to offer students experiences across forms (devised, scripted and improvised) and styles (contemporary, historic and hybrid) most appropriate to student interests and school context.</p>	<p>In Foundation, students engage in improvised styles such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – dramatic play (miniature world and socio-dramatic play) – process drama – puppetry/object play 	<p>In Years 1 and 2, students engage in improvised forms and styles such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – dramatic play (miniature world and socio-dramatic play) – process drama – puppetry/object play – improvisation – readers’ theatre – mime and movement 	<p>In Years 3 and 4, students engage in improvised and devised forms and styles such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – dramatic play (miniature world and socio-dramatic play) – process drama – puppetry – improvisation – readers’ theatre – mime and movement – scaffolded devising 	<p>In Years 5 and 6, students engage in improvised, devised and scripted forms and styles such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – process drama – puppetry – improvisation – readers’ theatre – mime and movement – devising – scaffolded playbuilding – clowning – scripted drama/script interpretation – narrative/non-narrative 	<p>In Years 7 and 8, students engaged in improvised, devised and scripted forms and styles such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – process drama – puppetry and object theatre – improvisation (short and long form) – playbuilding and devising – clowning – mask, mime and movement – scripted drama/script interpretation of realism and non-realism – Historic and Cultural forms and styles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic such as: Shakespearian/Elizabethan theatre, Ancient Greek, Comedy of Manners, Commedia dell’arte • Cultural such as: styles belonging to a specific time, place and/or people including First Nations theatre and Asian theatre forms and styles – Contemporary and Hybrid styles, for example: Collage Drama, Physical Theatre 	<p>In Years 9 and 10, students engaged in improvised, devised and scripted forms and styles such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – process drama – puppetry and object Theatre – improvisation (short and long form) – playbuilding and devising – clowning – scripted drama/script interpretation of realism and non-realism – Historic and Cultural forms and styles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic such as: Shakespearian/Elizabethan theatre, Ancient Greek, Comedy of Manners, Commedia dell’arte • Cultural such as: styles belonging to a specific time, place and/or people including First Nations theatre and Asian theatre forms and styles. – Contemporary and Hybrid styles, for example: Contemporary First Nations Theatre, Collage Drama, Cinematic Theatre/Screen Drama, Documentary Drama, Physical Theatre, Australian Gothic Theatre, Children’s Theatre, Political/ Protest theatre
<p>Contexts for exploration</p>	<p>Appropriate contexts for the F-Year 4 Bands may include: situations derived from or associated with children’s imaginations, children’s literature, and films; non-Western stories, plays and cultural works including those by First Nations peoples; other arts subjects; other Learning Areas; family, community, school events and celebrations; current and historical, local, national, and international events.</p>			<p>Appropriate contexts for Years 5 – 10 Bands may include: situations derived from or associated with young peoples’ imaginations; literature, plays and films; media and popular culture; non-Western stories, plays and cultural works including those by First Nations peoples; other arts subjects; other curriculum areas; family, community, school events; current and historical, local, national and international events; perspectives including: dramatic, philosophical, personal, historical, cultural, sociological, environmental, technological, geographical.</p>		

	Foundation Year	Years 1 and 2 Band	Years 3 and 4 Band	Years 5 and 6 Band	Years 7 and 8 Band	Years 9 and 10 Band	
Purpose	<p>The purpose of Drama in the Foundation year may include to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - make meaning of their worlds and those of others - explore ideas and emotions - empathise. 	<p>The purpose of Drama in Years 1-4 Bands may include to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - make meaning of their worlds and those of others - explore ideas and emotions - communicate personal and collective meanings to others - empathise - identify and explore multiple perspectives. - symbolically represent complex ideas - celebrate - entertain. 		<p>The purpose of Drama in Years 5-10 Bands may include to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - make meaning of their worlds and those of others - explore ideas and emotions - communicate personal and collective meanings to others - empathise - identify and explore multiple perspectives. - symbolically represent complex ideas - challenge or provoke - educate or inform - chronicle or document - empower - celebrate - entertain - affect and move others - reflect upon and transmit cultural understandings and forms. 			
Audience	<p>Audiences in Foundation year may include: self, peers and teacher within the experience of dramatic play and/or process drama.</p>	<p>Audiences in Years 1-4 Bands may include: informal – peers and teachers, small groups and class.</p>		<p>Audiences in Years 5-6 Band may include: informal and familiar – peers, another class or year level, family and friends.</p>	<p>Audiences in Years 7-8 Band may include: informal and formal – peers, specific target audience.</p>	<p>Audiences in Years 9-10 Band may include: informal and formal – peers and unfamiliar audience.</p>	

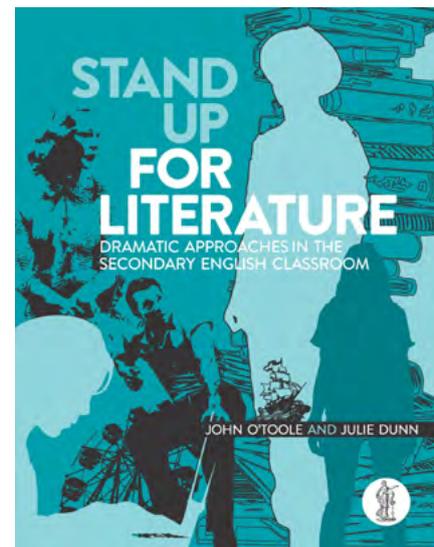
	Foundation Year	Years 1 and 2 Band	Years 3 and 4 Band	Years 5 and 6 Band	Years 7 and 8 Band	Years 9 and 10 Band
Drama processes and skills within Creating, Performing and Responding	Creating and Sharing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – participating in role – participating within the group in a classroom setting – creating roles, places and situations of their own (dramatic play and puppetry/object play), – accepting and participating within fictional situations – using relevant language. 	Creating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – creating role, place and situation (within dramatic play and puppetry/object play) – accepting and participating within fictional situations (in process drama and improvisation). 	Creating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – creating role, place and situation (within scaffolded devised or improvised work) – accepting, participating within and extending upon fictional situations (in process drama and improvisation). 	Creating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – devising scenes in response to a range of stimuli, including to experiences within process drama – improvising (long and short form), including within process drama – creating short monologues/ duologues – designing (managing basic theatre technologies such as sound, props and costume). 	Creating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – devising scenes in response to a range of stimuli, including to experiences within process drama – improvising – long and short form, including within process drama and short clowning scenes – creating short monologues/ duologues – designing (managing basic theatre technologies such as simple sound, props and costumes) – scaffolded playbuilding, including in collage style or from a specific stimulus – writing an additional scene for an existing playscript – developing and presenting a design for a play studied in class. 	Creating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – devising and playbuilding – improvising (long and/ or short form) or within process drama experiences – scaffolded scriptwriting (eg a monologue or an additional scene for an existing play) – directing (directing actors, or developing a directorial vision for a new concept) – designing (managing basic theatre technologies such as sound, lighting, props and costumes) – developing a directorial proposal/vision for a short production in a specific form/style such as collage or documentary drama – working in a small group to devise/play build an original short work in a particular form/style from a particular stimulus.
		Performing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – contributing to ongoing dramatic action in process drama, dramatic play and puppetry – maintaining role – using relevant language. 	Performing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – contributing to ongoing dramatic action in process drama or other improvised forms, including by using relevant language and movement – sustaining role or character within improvised or devised work – contributing vocally within readers’ theatre or through embodied responses in mime/movement. 	Performing: <p>Performing monologues, duologues and scenes from work that is scripted or devised, requiring skills such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – acting – script interpretation – characterisation – use of space – blocking and movement – ensemble work – voice and language – body and movement. 	Performing: <p>Performing work that is devised, scripted, or adapted from an existing script, requiring skills such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – acting – script interpretation – use of space – blocking and movement – ensemble work – voice and language – body and movement – performing a monologue. 	Performing: <p>Performing work that is scripted or adapted from an existing script, across a range of forms and styles, requiring skills such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – acting – improvising – script interpretation – use of space – blocking and movement – ensemble work – voice and language – body and movement – performing a monologue.

Foundation Year	Years 1 and 2 Band	Years 3 and 4 Band	Years 5 and 6 Band	Years 7 and 8 Band	Years 9 and 10 Band
<p>Responding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sharing their ideas and feelings about drama they have created or participated in - reflecting on drama created by others (live or recorded), including professional artists - presenting responses in forms such as spoken, written or making use of other arts disciplines. 	<p>Responding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reflecting on their own experiences within and contributions to their own drama work, including by writing in role or participating in discussions within the drama work - reflecting on drama created by others (live or recorded), including professional artists - presenting responses in forms such as spoken, written or making use of other arts disciplines - within responses, using introduced drama elements such as role, situation, language, place, movement and time. 	<p>Responding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - responding to their own experiences within and contributions to their own drama work, including by writing in role or participating in discussions within or following the drama work - reflecting on drama created by others (live or recorded), including professional artists - presenting responses in forms such as spoken, written or making use of other arts disciplines - within responses, using introduced drama terminology, such as role, situation, language, place, movement, time, character, relationships, and voice. 	<p>Responding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - responding to their experiences within and contributions to drama - responding to drama created by others (live or recorded), including professional artists - considering how elements impacted on dramatic meaning - presenting responses in a range of modes including written, spoken, multimodal and dramatic - within responses, using introduced drama terminology, such as role, situation, language, place, movement, time, character, relationships, voice, tension, space, and mood/ atmosphere. 	<p>Responding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - responding to their experiences within and contributions to drama - responding to drama created by others (live or recorded), including professional artists - analysing how dramatic action is created using the Elements of Drama, conventions of form/style and skills of drama - presenting responses in a range of modes including written, spoken, multimodal and dramatic - considering the purpose of the work and the intended audience and identifying the impact of these on dramatic meaning. 	<p>Responding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - responding to their experiences within and contributions to a range of drama forms and styles - responding to drama created by others (live or recorded), including professional artists - analysing and evaluating how dramatic action is created using the Elements of Drama, conventions of form/style and skills of drama - considering the purpose of the work, the intended audience and the contexts for exploration when identifying dramatic meanings made and the aesthetic engagement of audience members and/or participants (for example in process drama) - presenting responses in a range of modes including written, spoken, multimodal and dramatic.

Stand Up for Literature: Dramatic Approaches in the Secondary English Classroom by John O’Toole and Julie Dunn

Review by Joe Winston

The first time I participated in a drama led by John O’Toole was at Warwick University in 1995, in which we examined the historical and socio-political background of the Australian National Anthem *Waltzing Matilda*. It features as one of ten exemplary schemes of learning in this, the latest of many books by two of Australia’s leading drama educators, celebrated internationally for their pedagogy and their research. I found that, despite the gap of twenty-five years, I could recall many of the details of the drama before I read the account offered here; such is the memorability of powerful drama¹.



Doubtless this book has been written chiefly with Australian teachers in mind but never mind that: it is a gem, of relevance to all teachers everywhere and a welcome re-iteration of the educational value of process drama.

Divided into two parts, Part A is a model of clarity, relevance and detail, providing a lucid, thorough and concise account of how and why young people learn through drama and how English teachers can make it work in their classroom. Teachers of English will find it highly accessible and drama teachers will find it engaging and refreshing. It will be of particular use to any drama specialists involved in teacher education or in-service work, presenting as it does a basic rationale for drama pedagogy; a description of the elements of drama; an account of the key approaches and strategies of process drama; a guide to help teachers plan their own schemes and, very importantly, lots of tips on how to ensure that these will actually work in the classroom. Indeed, one of the many strengths of the book is its appreciation of the potential errors teachers might unwittingly make when using drama pedagogy and the straightforward strategies it suggests for pre-empting at the planning stage potential problems of classroom management. Years of practical experience are everywhere in evidence.

1 Judith Ackroyd analyses this scheme in her book *Role Re-considered*, Trentham Books, 2004.

The bulk of the book is devoted to a series of detailed schemes of learning in the field of literature presented in three sections entitled *Stand Up for Prose*; *Stand Up for Poetry*; and *Stand Up for Plays*. The authors admit that these and the title of the book are inspired by the RSC's campaign *Stand Up for Shakespeare*, launched in 2008, and driven by similar aspirations. Of the ten exemplars on offer, there are three each in the first two and four in the final section.

Two novels by Australian authors written for young people feature in the prose section, *Tomorrow When the War Began* by John Marsden and Craig Silvey's *Jasper Jones*. I had never previously read either book but I could see straight away how my old Year 8 classes would have loved the first of these, dealing as it does with a group of youngsters who return from a camping trip to find that their country has been invaded by a foreign army and their families placed in captivity. The schemes for both novels integrate with the students' reading and exploration of the text in different ways. The first encourages them to identify closely with a character of their choice after having read the opening chapters, entering the drama at a key moment of tension in the plot. The second explores a central theme of the book by enrolling the children as journalists investigating the context of the small town murder with which the book concludes. 'Mantle of the Expert' is one of the more famous drama conventions, of course, and has at times presented itself as its own, distinctive pedagogy. Here and elsewhere in the book it is handled deftly and intelligently and with no unnecessary fuss. Another convention, one which anyone who has read O'Toole's previously co-authored book *Cooling Conflict* will be acquainted with, is 'Enhanced Forum Theatre'². This is skilfully adapted from the Boal original and is particularly effective at exploring unresolved conflicts, of which there are many in Craig Silvey's novel. Teachers will find both the general guidance in Part A of the book, coupled with the detailed exemplar offered in this chapter, inspirational in helping them plan for their own use of EFT. As with the other exemplars in this section, it provides a clear model that English teachers will be able to use to plan similarly engaging dramas centred around a range of novels.

The scheme for *Waltzing Matilda* features in the Poetry Section but teachers in the UK will doubtlessly find the other two schemes more relevant. One of these explores *The Bully Asleep* by the Irish poet, John Walsh. I have yet to meet a secondary drama teacher who has not at some time or other been asked to cover the theme of bullying and here they will find an excellent resource to counter any over-simplification of the issue. The other exemplar demonstrates a particularly fine use of 'Mantle of the Expert', in which students are enrolled as employees in a new business venture, *Poems2Go*, intended to offer customers 'suitable poems for every occasion'. Here, students work in teams responding to specific client requests, some quite ingenious in the way they combine a fun process with a serious theme. I would particularly relish the opportunity to be teacher in role as the cloth-eared client bewildered by the verbal fireworks of Gerard Manley Hopkins's *Pied Beauty*!

² John O'Toole, Bruce Burton and Anna Plunkett, *Cooling Conflict: a new approach to managing bullying and conflict in schools*, Pearson Education Australia, 2004

Many readers of this journal will inevitably be drawn initially to the final four exemplars, which deal with *Twelfth Night*, Sophocles' *Antigone*, *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *Cyberbible*, this last a verbatim-based drama on teenage cyber bullying, written by the award winning Australian playwright, Alana Valentine. Here the book's usefulness as a resource for drama specialists is at its most evident, for the prioritisation of process drama as its central form of pedagogy never detracts from the themes of the plays or from work on the actual text. Quite the opposite: it is used to stir curiosity and motivate close reading, to examine only that which is integrally related to the play itself. In *Twelfth Night*, for example, students first of all engage with the main plot through active strategies and work with text extracts not too dissimilar from approaches to be found in the RSC Toolkit. In order to explore the Malvolio subplot, they are then enrolled as two separate teams of lawyers, employed either to plead on his behalf or to defend the house of Olivia in a court case that we are to imagine he has initiated after his final threat of revenge. As well as questioning the teacher in role as key witnesses, students will now need to examine transcripts of text in order to build their case and devise the trickiest questions to ask. This deeply playful approach is further illustrated in short examples of other Shakespeare plays that have been taught so as to appeal to teenagers while remaining true to the central themes; and if any reader feels that exploring *Macbeth* as a western will undermine Shakespeare's integrity as a classic playwright, the authors have their answers already prepared, one of which is the success such approaches have been seen to have in national examinations with previously disaffected students.

In brief, this book will prove to be an invaluable resource for any secondary drama or English teacher who buys it, studies it and makes practical use of its many excellent ideas.

Stand Up for Literature: Dramatic Approaches in the Secondary English Classroom.

Currency Press, NSW, Australia

ISBN 9781760622862

This review was first published in *Drama* magazine, UK National Drama's magazine of professional practice - Volume 27.2 Summer 2021.

About the reviewer

Professor Joe Winston has a background in primary and middle school education before joining the staff at Warwick University in 1991. He was responsible for co-ordinating the Arts subjects in degrees including the MA in Drama and Theatre Education until his semi-retirement in 2016. He has been an editor of *Research in Drama Education* widely recognised as the leading academic journal in its field and has published a wide range of articles and books both of an academic and professional nature, including '*Beauty and Education*' (2010), '*Second Language Learning through Drama*' (2012), '*Transforming the Teaching of Shakespeare with the Royal Shakespeare Company*' (2015) and the forthcoming '*Performative Language Teaching in Early Education: Language Learning through Drama and the Arts for Children 3-7*' (2022).

The Acting Green Revision: an invitation to participate

Jo Raphael and Meg Upton



In 2011 Drama Australia launched its [Acting Green Guidelines](#) followed by the [Acting Green case studies](#) published in 2012, as examples of Acting Green in practice. Acting Green began as a Drama Australia Special Project and both of us were involved, Jo as Drama Australia's Director of Projects and Meg as Special Project Officer and author of the guidelines. The project was conceived in the lead up to the 2009 Drama Australia Conference, 'Footprints', hosted by Drama Victoria.

The Drama Australia national conference theme 'Footprints' focused attention on our impacts as drama educators – we reflected on the drama footprints of the past that we follow and considered how we to create vibrant and sustainable drama and education practice as we step into the future. As host of the conference, Drama Victoria was committed to making sustainable choices in the conference planning, reducing the carbon footprint by carbon offsets, recycling and reducing waste, principles that all Drama Australia member associations were encouraged to pursue. A feature of the conference was the 'Footprints over Melbourne' project in which delegates walked or rode trams to attend a workshop in one of nine different cultural institutions. One of these included a group devised performance by year 9 students from Thomas Carr College within 'Wild! Amazing Animals in a Changing World', a brand new exhibition of endangered animals curated by Melbourne Museum. The year 9s worked on sustainable theatre design ideas with Tanja Beer, the ecoscenographer interviewed for this edition of ADEM, and that project became one of the three Acting Green case studies.

Drama Australia’s Acting Green guidelines were built on the understanding that sustainable drama and theatre practice and teaching about sustainability through drama are ways to directly involve students in understanding their connections with the natural environment, and the interdependence of systems that support life on Earth. Acting Green guidelines aimed to guide and support classroom drama practice and performance making, engage students and educators with contemporary thinking and practice on ways to address themes and issues connected to sustainability.

The guidelines and case studies were developed before the cross-curriculum priority area of Sustainability in the Australian Curriculum was written and implemented. Ten years have passed and the students who devised their performance for ‘Wild! Amazing Animals in a Changing World’ are in their mid-20s. Environmental challenges are even more pressing now than they were ten years ago, and young people are leading the charge, voicing their concerns, and calling governments to account. This has been evident in movements like the School Strike 4 Climate rallies occurring around the globe. It’s time for Drama Australia to renew the vision and the commitment to Acting Green and re-consider, update and re-write the guidelines in collaboration with industry practitioners and educators. Drama Australia aims to ensure the new Acting Green guidelines respond closely to and even guide the implementation of current curriculum, practices in drama education, theatre production, and to the needs of drama educators when tackling sustainability and climate change issues in and through drama.

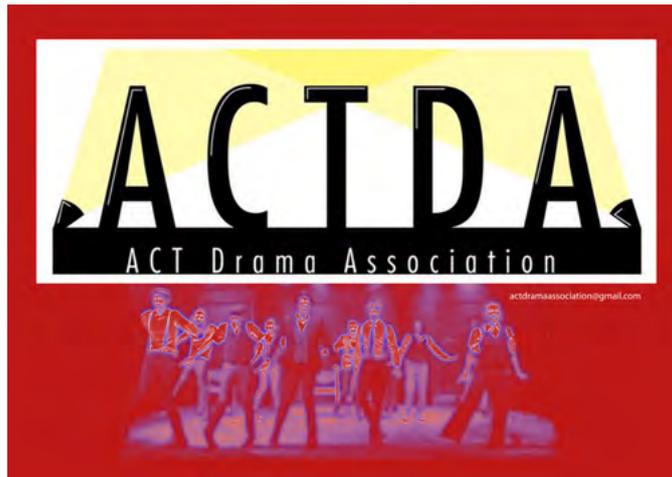
We invite you to participate in the revision of Acting Green, and to consider contributing to the resources that bring the guidelines into practice. We welcome your responses to the survey questions accessible [here](#) or via the QR code. You can also email us directly –

jo.raphael@deakin.edu.au

meg.upton@deakin.edu.au



State and Territory Associations' Year Reflections for 2021



President: Robert Howatson
Drama Australia Liaison Officer: Sarah Smith

ACTDA has been responding to the challenges and opportunities that the pandemic has presented for drama education in the ACT over 2020-21. We have been grateful for our fellow Drama educators across the nation who have so generously shared their resources and inspired our own creations of work during lockdown.

Our focus has been on the review of the year 11 and 12 Drama curriculum in the ACT. This has allowed teachers across the state to collaborate to share their expertise to create a new direction for the future actors of the state. We foresee the development of this curriculum will continue to foster close teamwork between ACT educators and creators.

ACTDA is a small association of around 10 members, but we look forward to renewal and growing in strength as we emerge from the pandemic in 2022.



DRAMA NEW SOUTH WALES

President: Sonia Byrnes

Drama Australia Liaison Officer: Tamara Sweetman

In 2021, Drama NSW focused on the diversity that we see in our schools and world, to build our capacity as educational leaders. The theme of our year, and also the Drama NSW State Conference, was *Raise Your Voice*. This focus came from a desire to enrich our Drama teachers in NSW to assist our students in raising their voices to perform, and also the need for us as teachers to advocate for Drama, and how as a Drama community, we can foster safe environments to hear new ideas. *Raise Your Voice* was also inspired by our desire to have more inclusivity for our community. The theme urges us to engage with and share narratives from minority groups and our regional and rural members, to become more involved, engaged and supported.



Figure 1. Drama New South Wales president with life members and top of the state for drama student and teacher

Professional Learning Launch

We began the year with our Professional Learning Launch, held at Matinee, Marrickville which was a great way to come together and celebrate the year ahead and the upcoming offerings. The professional learning program this year focused on presentations in person, as well as online, and in the case of our state conference, across both platforms.

Australian Theatre for Young People Partnership/ Director's Workshop

Drama NSW continued our partnership with the Australian Theatre for Young People (ATYP), the voice of young people. We held a joint Director's workshop on the 27 February, with Fraser Corfield, the Artistic Director of ATYP presenting. The workshop focused on improving strategies for directing young people to help them tell stories with authenticity. Fraser unpacked his process and led participants in a practical exploration of core techniques he employs to create professional productions with young performers, including script analysis, performance coaching and play building.

Drama NSW State Conference – *Raise Your Voice*

The Drama NSW State Conference this year took an innovative approach on the 15 May, with a streamed keynote from the Sydney base at Sydney Theatre Company (which included in-person attendees) and gatherings in-person across Regional Hubs in NSW. The keynote featured Shari Sebbens and Jessica Arthur who spoke about the importance of raising your voice and what this means to them personally in the Arts. Other workshops at the Sydney Hub included the *Silenced Voices of Minority Students* with Sylvia Morris and *Something to shout about, Exploring the possibilities of a drama-led curriculum* with Dr Christine Hatton, Isabella Mistry and Georgia Wohlfiel. Various other presenters led workshops regionally. Conference convenors, Rhema Tieu and Hannah Bamford, led 'Creative Connections' as a conclusion to the conference, with participants sharing insights on their teaching practice.



Figure 2. Key note presenters at the Drama New South Wales state conference



Figure 3. Participants in 'Something to shout about' hold up puppets that they've made



Drama for EAL/D Development

On the 27 March, Dr Rachael Jacobs, a lecturer at Western Sydney University, guided participants in integrating and embracing students from different language groups. The practical workshop introduced participants to some basic strategies to aid language development through drama. activities combined with translanguaging approaches with forum theatre, storytelling and physical theatre.

Using Culturally Specific Art Forms

On the 22 July, Dr Carol Carter, a lecturer at the University of Newcastle, enlightened participants on how oral art forms promote intercultural understanding. Participants explored oral art forms and drama processes that have been seen to be useful in creating dialogical spaces, particularly for working with students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Different Approaches to NESA Advice

In response to the changing situation of the HSC Drama NSW Curriculum, Drama NSW held an online zoom event, *Different Approaches to NESA Advice*, which was strongly attended by Drama NSW members. Presenters discussed the individual ways they were going to incorporate the changes as directed by NESA, and suggestions for programming and HSC assessment.

Programming and Planning for 2022

On the 19 October, Tahnae Luke, Vice-President of Professional Learning led a workshop on planning for 2022, including scope and sequences, assessments and unit mapping.

Advocacy and The Arts – How we can be great advocates for Drama and The Arts in our schools

Dr John Nicholas Saunders, a leading figure in Drama Education in Australia and our Drama Australia President, conducted a professional learning event on the 11 of November, on what we all believe in: Drama and the Arts and how we can be great advocates for Drama and The Arts in our schools.

Expanding Drama NSW Committee Roles

With Drama NSW's commitment to ensuring that there is a diverse representation of voices, we created a new role of Diversity Officer, Dr Carol Carter, who focuses on our content and offerings to include a diverse range of presenters and creates and implements new initiatives. Also, Ryan Whitworth is our newly elected Aboriginal & Torres Strait Island Arts Liaison Officer.

This role is to help ensure that Drama NSW focuses on and values Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices. Dan Jones and Gretchen Prowse were appointed to the new roles of Rural Officers, and they are responsible for the advocacy of all our rural members.

Communications

Our Communications portfolio, led by Brenton Fletcher, continues to be a highly valued contribution to our members, particularly in COVID-19 times. This has included *JEDA* (Journal of Education in Dramatic Arts – Editor Dr Paul Gardiner) publications in Semester 1 and 2, as well as the quarterly Drama NSW – *E-Magazine* (Editor – Zan Cross). These publications have included teaching pedagogies, high-quality practical resources, units of work, creative projects from the theatre industry and lesson approaches. The Drama NSW social media presence (Facebook and Instagram) has also continued to grow in strength, overseen by Tara Graetz. The Drama NSW Podcast has also published many interviews with resources, led by our President, Sonia Byrnes. The Drama NSW website update, led by David Quaglia, continues to be developed and we are hopeful to share this with our members soon. During COVID-19, additional teaching resources, with a focus on HSC Drama, were also shared with our members.

The focus on diversity and a wider range of representation of voices has expanded all our offerings in 2021, in our Professional Learning Programs, our State Conference and also our communications, online resources and publications. The Drama NSW Committee continues to support our members in 2021, despite the challenges of COVID-19. We are looking forward to building on our work this year and continuing to grow our work for the Drama teachers of NSW in the year ahead.



President: Stephanie Tudor
Drama Australia Liaison Officer: Dana Holden

It was always going to be a big year with DQ hosting the National Conference, and it did not disappoint! We are thrilled to have been able to deliver both an in-person and digital conference, with a suite of resources which were then in a digital library for conference delegates to access. The strength, flexibility, generosity and good humour of our community did not go unnoticed and is greatly appreciated by the whole DQ team.

We've continued professional development opportunities with Nuts and Bolts, which takes place in Term 4 and covers a range of topics which we feel best respond to the challenges we face each year.

2021 has also been a big year for advocacy and we have been working hard to advocate for our subject, teachers and students in both feedback to ACARA with the National Curriculum review, and the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority with a review of the new Senior Syllabuses. We have encountered a range of issues with the implementation of our new syllabus and we strive to represent our members and work with the QCAA to continue a long and rich history of strong Drama education in our state.



Figure 4. Drama Queensland masked up and ready to go!



Figure 5. Matching sunnies! Drama Queensland enjoying the sun



Figure 6. Drama Queensland in a prep meeting for La Boite



Figure 7. Dr John Saunders presenting at the 2020 Drama Australia National Conference (held in 2021)



Figure 8. Behind the scenes at the Drama Australia National Conference



President: Graham Cox

Drama Australia Liaison Officer: Valerie Harrold

Drama South Australia has again had a very busy and rewarding year. We would like to thank all the hardworking executive committee members, and also thank our members who have attended our professional learning sessions. Here are some of the highlights:

The 2020 Educators SA World Teachers' Day awards

The *Leading Educators Forward Award* was presented to Drama SA for the *Walking Together* workshops, where pre-service and practicing educators build the confidence to celebrate and teach about the diversity and richness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People's histories and cultures.

Two awards were presented by Drama SA for Outstanding Service at the Educators SA World Teachers' Day awards. Those awards were presented to: Rebecca Wigg who, as the Secretary and Membership Secretary, has supported the Association to grow and thrive over a number of years, and Daniela Zagari, the Professional Learning Officer.

3-Way Mentoring Project

In 2021 Drama SA were the successful recipients of an Educators SA grant to launch an innovative mentoring project, which had been in the planning stages for some time. The group of 24 pre-service, early career and experienced teachers have been involved in over 25.5 hours of workshops with creative artists from theatre companies, and other professional learning opportunities.



Figure 9. Graham Cox receives his life membership award from Drama South Australia

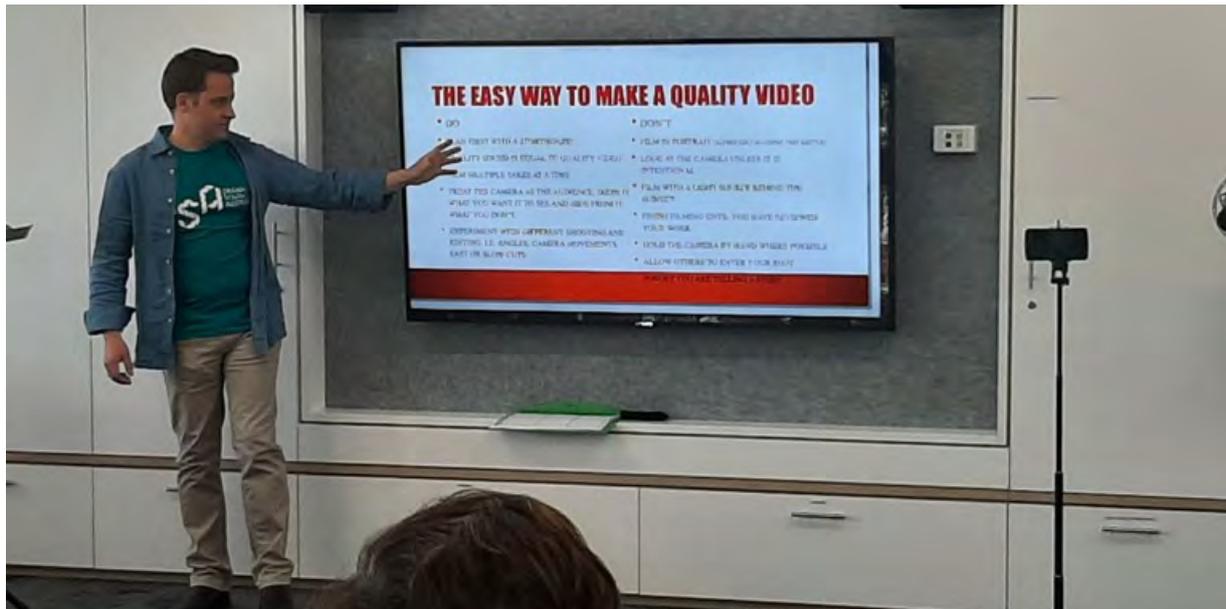


Figure 10. Media Workshop led by Trent Phillips and Matthew Maloney

We are very excited to know that, once the short film depicting the participants' journey with the project is edited, we will be able to share this with not only other professional associations here in South Australia, but with the wider drama community.

Industry and Education Partnerships

Drama SA has gone from strength to strength with negotiating Industry Partnerships. Drama SA now has partnerships with:

- Adelaide Festival of Arts
- DreamBIG Children's Festival & centrED
- Windmill Theatre Co
- Slingsby Theatre
- Adelaide Film Festival
- University of South Australia

Inaugural Student Awards

2020 saw the creation of the Drama SA Student Awards. These awards have been developed to recognise the dedication of Drama students across South Australia.

The inaugural awards saw 17 nominations across the 3 categories.

- Primary (one nomination)
- Middle (four nominations)
- Senior (12 nominations)

Drama SA Constitution

The Drama South Australia Constitution has been redeveloped by a sub-committee of DSA, been out for consultation with the Executive Committee, and endorsed by the Committee.

Professional Learning Opportunities offered by Drama SA:

In 2020, the Senior Drama Forum was a virtual event that focused on the new SACE Stage 2 Drama course.

- The first Professional Learning Workshop for 2021 was the Media Workshop
- The rest of the Professional Learning events for 2021 were:
 - Capturing your impact and Guiding your Growth with the Teacher Standards
 - Country Vision PL
 - Creating Documentary Theatre (delivered online)
 - Part 1 of Finegan Kruckemeyer's 'Writing Worlds and Those Within Them'
 - Real stories vs Fiction (delivered online)
 - Part 2 of Finegan Kruckemeyer's 'Writing Worlds and Those Within Them'
 - Drama in Action Resource Swap



Figure 11. Finegan Kruckemeyer's 'Writing Worlds and Those Within Them'

In October we will be holding the Drama SA mini conference which will be available via Zoom to all states and territories (Patrice Baldwin and our own wonderful John Nicholas Saunders will be presenting).

In November, the year will conclude with our Senior Forum.



President: Michelle Weeding
Drama Australia Liaison Officer: Marty Crerar

‘A Year of Collaboration’

This year has been a year about our members! Our focus has been on collaboration, supporting each other in these unpredictable times, sharing resources, moral support, and having the collegial and creative fun that happens when a bunch of enthusiastic and dedicated Drama Educators get together. On the back of a successful state conference in 2020, we were keen to focus on opportunities to work together face to face, after the plethora of online teaching and professional development we all experienced. We were always conscious of how lucky we were and are to be in our Tasmanian bubble, relatively unrestricted and operating as normal. This was brought home particularly as national theatre companies were able to bring their shows to our state such as Shake N Stir, Bell Shakespeare and an array of musical productions that went ahead as normal.

Our model of professional learning this year was to offer North and South events, as we still try and gauge the best time of year for teachers across the year groups. Sincere thanks to



Figure 12. Collaborate 2021, Drama Tasmania State Conference, Launceston, March

St Patrick's College for hosting Collaborate 2021 in March where workshops explored: Winning Drama Activities, Breaking the Ice, Mentoring, Mudlark Theatre, Between the Lines, Cultural Storytelling in the Classroom, One Room Multiple Courses and more.

Huge thanks to Rosny College for hosting Collaborate Act II in September where we redid some workshops and more were offered: Voice Fun for Primary Students, Drama Teaching in Primary Schools, the IRS (Individual Reflective Study), Building Consent and Confidence in Drama, Character Development Ideas and using Acting Theorists, Gabrielle Roth's Five Rhythms: Using the Body to Unlock the Voice, and The Space Between: Imagining the Empty Space.



Figure 13. Collaboration Act II, Drama Tasmania, Hobart, September

A Christmas Function at the end of 2020 reiterated the importance and joy of being together and how much we value and benefit from working together across schools and sectors. We are also conscious of how such get-togethers establish and sustain crucial networks for critical conversations and feedback on things like the Australian Curriculum Review of the Arts.

We hope the joy of our gatherings in these photos illustrates the vibrancy and dynamism of the Drama Tas cohort. Sending love, energy and positivity to our mainland friends and hoping 2022 is an open and collaborative new normal for us all, where we can once again meet face to face as national colleagues and collaborators.

DRAMA TERRITORY

President: Mark Bunnett

Drama Australia Liaison Officer: Ambrose Nicholls-Skene

Over the last 12 months Drama Territory has had a steady membership of 20 people, made up of primary, middle, secondary teachers and teaching artists. The members are primarily from Darwin but we have members in Alice Springs and Utopia, a small Indigenous community two and a half hours east of Alice Springs.

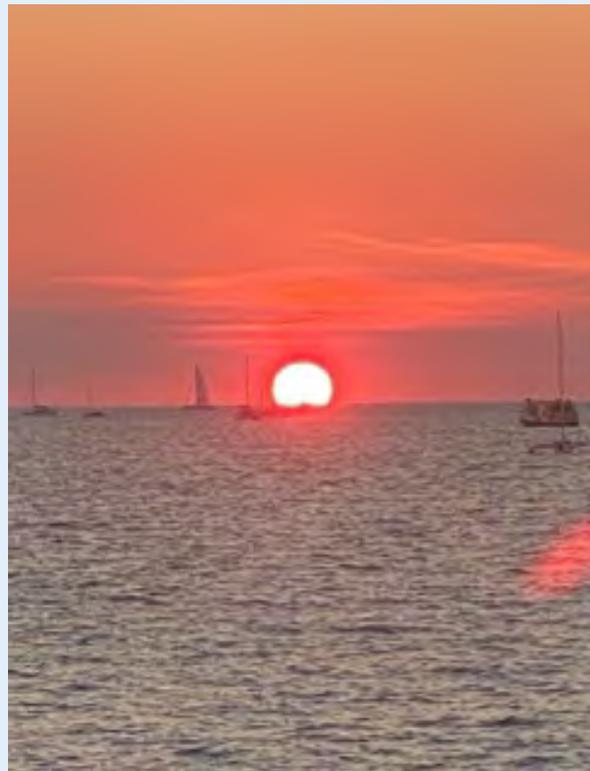


Figure 14. Lucky Drama Territory members at Florence Falls (left) and watching the sunset over Mindil (right) in Northern Territory, Australia

We had hoped that after the disruptions caused by COVID in 2020 that 2021's PD program would have been back on track but that was not to be. We again teamed up with Browns Mart Theatre and their education program to organise a professional development workshop with

director Ciella Williams. Ciella was directing Mary Anne Butler's play, *Highway of Lost Hearts* and the workshop gave the participants an insight into the production and information on what to direct students to look out for.

At the beginning of term three we were very fortunate to engage Travis Wesley, a performing artist, film maker, comedian and teaching artist currently based in Sydney, Australia. Travis's passion lies in creating emotionally engaged art, most commonly comedy or expressive movement. A core company member of Zen Zen Zo Physical Theatre, Travis is an expert in theatre devising, and movement-based performance training. Travis ran workshops for students, teachers and Corrugated Iron Youth Theatre. We ran a PD for Stage 2 teachers to discuss processes that we could use for the new group presentation external assessment, which we had filmed and shared with members in the Alice Springs region.



Figure 15 (top). Ciella Williams' *Highway of Lost Hearts* workshop with Drama Territory
Figure 16 (above left). Drama Territory's *Mark and Cat* with visiting artist Travis Westley
Figure 17 (above right). Drama Territory professional development with Travis Westley

Just recently I have also been in discussions with a film maker regarding created videos for teachers about film technique for the classroom and an acting workshop with Indigenous actor Rob Collins (*Extraction, Mystery Road, Cleverman*). Some exciting innovations to look forward to.

Drama Territory continues to be an active and innovative association that continually is trying to find ways to support members and overcome the tyranny of distance by providing quality professional development opportunities, and to create links between industry and education.

DT looks forward to continuing this work in 2022.



President: Andrew Byrne

Drama Australia Liaison Officer: Lyndy Clarke

DALO's Report (Lyndy Clarke)

It feels a little like 'Groundhog Day' in Victoria with Melbourne and several regional areas on a revolving door of lockdowns again in 2021. Once again, the need to band together and support our own tribe, once again an urgent need to be innovative and reach out to all drama educators. We learnt a great deal in 2020 about developing online resources and the passionate commitment of our creative association continues to amaze me.

President's Report (Andrew Byrne)

In 2020 we convened a panel of key stakeholders for Drama Victoria: teachers from a range of sectors, primary, secondary and tertiary, and industry partners. This collective gathering of minds informed the development of our five-year strategic plan. Interestingly, across all sectors, what arose was the need for Drama Victoria to focus on advocacy. The effects of lockdowns (Melbourne is the most locked down city in the world) on drama education, the loss of excursions and incursions, productions cancelled, teaching a practical collaborative subject online often to cameras turned off, elective numbers down, the tragic effect on our arts industry. How do we advocate for the importance and relevance of our subject? How do we encourage parents and schools to understand the transferable employability skills that studying Drama offers students? How do we continue to advocate for our essential subject?

A special acknowledgement to our vibrant and dynamic committee of management for all their contributions to Drama Victoria in 2021. To our Executive Officer, Susan Cooper, and our administrator Suzie Martens, thank you for steering the ship and for going above and beyond to service and support our members.

In 2021 we have created a new role within our organisation, a Community Engagement and Development Coordinator. This role will focus on developing our membership base, securing funding and supporting the Curriculum and Resources Manager for the DET project.

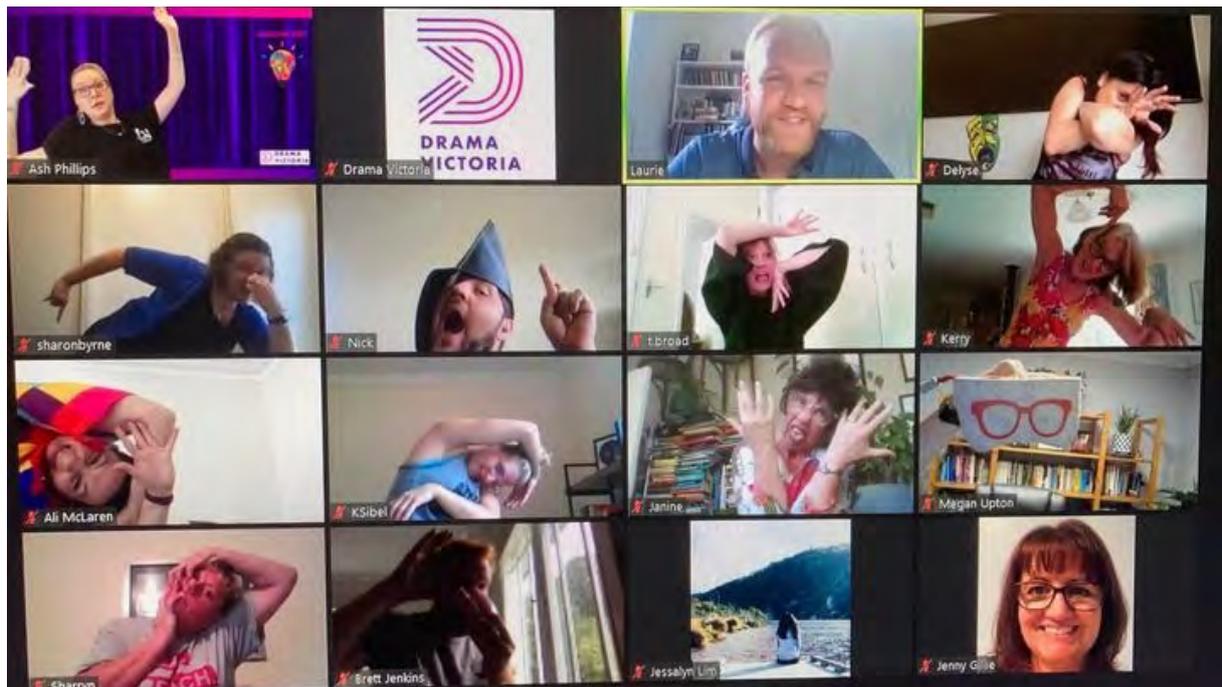


Figure 18. Drama teachers stay awesome, even in never-ending lockdowns!
(Drama Victoria Jumpstart Mini-Conference, 2021)

Connections Festival

The Drama Victoria Theatre Festival became the Connections Festival in 2021 with an ongoing theme of ‘Connect. Challenge. Create.’ The 2021 theme of ‘Get Back to the Land’ saw approximately 250 students from 15 schools devise and record a 15-minute video performance using stimulus from First Nations Performing Artist, DRMGNOW. This new format will continue and grow in 2022 supported by a detailed resource pack that includes eight units (16 hours) of drama-based work which respond to a First Nations artwork and results in the devising of an original dramatic work. The Connections Festival has been primarily designed for Years 7–10 Drama students with strong links to other learning areas and capabilities including Humanities, English, Music, Critical and Creative Thinking, and Personal and Social Capability.

Resources/Workshops and Professional Learning

We continue to be increasing our membership as more teachers ‘lean in’ for support in these ongoing difficult times with workshops, resources and the ever popular ‘Boozoom’ end of term celebrations! As always, we commenced the year with our mini conference, Jumpstart, for new and returning teachers with over 54 participants online. A series of senior video resources for both Drama and Theatre Studies were developed and filmed with past successful solo, monologue and design students discussing their processes and performing their interpretations. We also continue to offer VCE Resource packs and Zoom events with the chief examiners of both Drama and Theatre Studies. With our ever-present concern of wellbeing in the forefront, we offered an online opportunity with Will Centurian: ‘the Mental Health Toolkit’.



Figure 19. The amazing team behind this year's Drama Victoria's Jumpstart

Advocacy

Drama Victoria has been engaged in an innovative program for regional primary schools and generalist teachers in partnership with the Department of Education and Training and specialist drama teachers. The program is conducted both online and in person, bringing the magic of drama to primary students who may not otherwise have had these opportunities. This project aims to upskill primary generalist teachers, providing them with scaffolded resources comprised of a sequence of videos that the teachers can continue to use with their students in following years. Fifteen primary schools from across Victoria have participated in the project in 2021, with a further 15 schools to participate in 2022 and 2023.

The Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership has secured a grant from the Victorian Government to develop a Teaching Excellence Program for enriching highly skilled, expert teachers. In 2022, 250 teachers from across the state will participate in this program across most of the Key Learning Areas. Drama Victoria was successful in acquiring a grant to develop the curriculum for the participating expert Drama teachers.

Drama Victoria was also successful in acquiring a grant from the Department of Education to develop career pathways resources for Drama and Theatre. This project will advocate for our subject and the employability skills it develops in our students through interviews and testimonials from ex-drama/theatre students who don't work in the entertainment industry.



President: Brooke van Aalen

Drama Australia Liaison Officer: Felicity Glendinning

Report written by James Dove (Professional Development Directorate)

AGM Opening of Emerge

2021 kicked off with a new vision ‘Emerge’, reflective of our Drama Community dealing with the impact of the global pandemic, as well as the global cultural challenges of inclusivity. This vision of change was further echoed by our guest speaker Hannah Sorenson, a non-binary person who engaged teachers with advice on approaching young people about gender, identity and LGBTIQ+ issues. Hannah’s Keynote included an excerpt from their Fringe Festival solo performance “Justin Sider is D!ickless”. Hannah’s address encouraged teachers to consider how we can play a positive role in the gender and sexuality space within our varied contexts.

DramaWest Written and Practical Good Answers Guide

Following on from the success of the *2020 Study Companion for the 2019 Good Answers Guide* and *Practical Good Answers Guide* for ATAR Drama students and teachers, our *2021 Written Good Answers Guide* is designed to assist teachers and students in preparing for the Drama ATAR course written examination. Good answer samples from the Drama ATAR course examination, 2020 (written), are annotated to identify key features in successful responses. The guide also includes activities designed to extend student knowledge and guide them to apply the skills required for future written examinations.

The *2021 Practical Good Answers Guide* allows students and teachers to view successful students as they engage with the Drama ATAR course practical examination. Each video contains a complete student performance with detailed annotations and information about what makes their work worth closer study. The video resource also includes interviews with all three students, with advice about how to prepare for the upcoming ATAR course examinations (practical) for Drama. Both guides have been well received by the DramaWest and teaching

community. We look forward to developing resources that embed the recent changes to ATAR Drama, which start in 2022 for Year 11 and 2023 for Year 12.

Impact of COVID-19 and Changes to DramaWest

Given the impacts of Covid-19, social media and online platforms have been pivotal in communicating with our members. We have continued to develop our Facebook page to promote key events and share pressing news and information. Our Instagram has further helped us to stay relevant. To assist educators with the shift towards online learning, we continued to develop a group where teachers could share resources and reflect on key learning experiences.

DramaWest has responded well to the current challenges and unknown trials ahead. During all of our workshops we have embraced the ability for members to attend online and in person. We also spread the load of our usual conference model, and have broken down PD to separate committees. In 2021 we were able to spread various workshops across the year. Our subgroups (split into Primary, Middle and Senior school) have extended our expertise within the committee so that we support teachers across the state. Attendance to these events has been very healthy and has encouraged members, often restricted by travel and time, to attend and receive expert advice from our guest presenters including Irma McCullen and Adam Mitchel. Each of our working parties have managed to deliver a range of great resources available to all Drama Teachers in WA. Our blended learning model is a great example of successful practice, serving our members, and staying true to our course.