

**BBC**

Learning Scotland



# **TIME FOR DRAMA**

**Spring 2008**

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Programmes in this series may be purchased on CD.

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# **Time for Drama**

## **Spring 2008**

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*Programme notes by Marie Jeanne McNaughton and Jan Macdonald*

# Introduction

## The aims of Time for Drama

Welcome to the new BBC Scotland Learning *Time for Drama* broadcasts. This series has been devised to give teachers and their classes opportunities to listen to plays written especially with children in mind: they focus on many of the interests and themes relevant to children today. The accompanying ideas for drama activities have been designed to help the children to focus on some of the key issues in the plays and to respond to these in a dramatic way, using movement and voice, sometimes as individuals and sometimes as part of a group or even as a whole class.

Drama is a creative activity in its own right with its own sets of conventions and skills. These are important in terms of a child's overall educational experience. However, drama can also be a learning medium through which learning in other areas of the curriculum may be enhanced. Involvement in drama can help build a child's own self-esteem, confidence and ability to deal with difficult personal and social questions. In other words, drama can be a very powerful tool in many aspects of education. It is important therefore, that drama is seen by the children to be a normal part of the curriculum rather than a treat or an extra.

Drama makes a story. Listening to and telling stories is a fundamental human activity. In these drama lessons, parts of the stories are brought to life so that the children can act as if they are in the story rather than just listening to it.

We hope that the five programmes, and the accompanying ideas for drama lessons, based on the three plays from this series, will inspire you and your class to be inventive, creative and, most of all, to have some fun with drama.

## Clothing and space

Although drama often involves moving and using space, for a lot of the time during a lesson the children will be sitting or standing, thinking and discussing, either with the teacher or in small groups. Clothing should be comfortable and should facilitate easy sitting on the floor, standing and moving. Heavy shoes should be removed, as much for safety as for comfort. Drama is not PE and therefore there is no need for the children to change into shorts or other sportswear.

Some drama activities require that the children move around and spread into a clear space. Others may take place within the classroom with some furniture moved back. Most gym halls are not particularly conducive to drama, being too big and too bare. If working in the hall divide the space in half with some benches, ensuring that the children are not facing the empty space of the hall.

### Power source

Ensure that a power source is available and the CD player is within easy reach.

## Structure and stopping points

The notes for all three programmes follow the same format. A number of activities is suggested to accompany each programme. Not all of these activities need be undertaken during the programme, so it is important that teachers read the notes before the programme to familiarise themselves with the suggested conventions and to select the ones that they think will be most suitable for their class.

The stop signal are placed at moments when the teacher and class might want to discuss and reflect on what has just taken place in the story. There are one or two suggestions for drama activities at each stopping point.

The presentation of the notes has the following structure. Firstly, the stopping point is given, with the words after which the recording should be stopped. The 'key moment' notes the principal idea or emphasis of this part of the story, and the 'activity' names the drama convention to be used and describes the suggested procedure — further explanations of the drama conventions are given below.

This is followed by the 'Purpose', which states the main teaching and learning themes of each section of the drama, which suggests an appropriate class structure for the activity and offers teaching pointers and guidance, including questions that teachers might ask, things that they might say or do, and advice about how to tackle particular aspects of the drama.

In a two-part story, it's important to spend a few moments talking over the key ideas in Part 1 before listening to Part 2.

## The drama conventions used in the programmes

For a wider selection of drama conventions and more information about educational drama, see the Learning and Teaching Scotland website.

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/5to14/curricularareas/drama.asp>

### Still Image

A still image is a still picture, or image, of a generalised nature. It gives an impression of events within, action within, or reaction to, a situation. For example, at the end of a drama lesson the children might make a still image of what they consider to be an important part of the story that they have just been involved in. A still image can be used to elicit how much knowledge or understanding a class has about aspects of a theme, or it can provide a stimulus for reflection. A morphing still image is where one images slowly turns into another, usually contrasting, one. For example, showing good news then bad news.

### Freeze-frame

A freeze-frame is another form of still image. In this case, the still image is of a single, very significant moment during which the action is frozen. It is always important to examine and respond to a freeze-frame and there are various means of making that response, such as

- asking characters open or closed questions,
- speaking characters' thoughts,
- starting a dialogue, mime or action, or
- giving image a title or newspaper headline.

### Photographs

A photograph can be either a still image that gives a flavour of a time, place or event, or a moment frozen in time. Young children are particularly good at making very still photographs. This can be accompanied by a caption composed by the group or class.

### Role-play

Role-play is one form of unscripted drama. It involves participants taking on a role. These roles are often quite superficial and stereotyped. In role-play the scenes are generally more functional than creative, for example practising the use of language in an emergency services phone call, or composing a short dramatic ending for a story.

### Mime

Mime is the use of movement of the body and facial expression to communicate meaning or narrative without words. Mime can be either naturalistic or stylised, though participants need not rely on any formal or stylised mime technique and may simply use mime and gesture to indicate an action such as the pouring of wine from a jug or the passing round of a letter.

**Improvisation**

Improvisation is a generic name for any unscripted piece of drama. Much drama in education could be described as improvised, although we often use the word to refer to a scene that is acted out. The purpose of improvisation may be investigative, exploratory, responsive (either spontaneous or prepared), or expressive, (either prepared or rehearsed).

**Thought-tracking, voices in the head, thought-tunnelling**

*Thought-tracking* or *voices in the head* is speaking thoughts and feelings aloud. There are various ways of doing this. For example, characters in a freeze-frame or still image may speak their own thoughts. The class may suggest thoughts or feelings for characters in a freeze-frame. An improvisation can be frozen and characters asked to express the deeper feelings or thoughts going on within it (the teacher or other class members can prompt the characters with questions if necessary). The purpose of thought-tracking is generally to deepen the drama.

*Thought-tunnelling* involves the class standing in two straight rows, line A and line B, facing each other. The people in line A express thoughts, feelings and opinions on one side of an argument, and those in line B express ideas thoughts or feelings from the other side. The teacher starts at one end and moves slowly along between the two lines. As the teacher moves in front of each pair of pupils, the A side speaks first then B responds.

**Hot-seating**

Hot-seating involves a character being put in the 'hot seat', a chair in the middle of the circle, and questioned by the class either in or out of role. The chair is given a special space to stress its importance.

**Role-on-the-wall**

In *Role-on-the-wall*, the outline of a character is drawn either on the board or life-sized on a huge sheet of paper. First, words are added outside the outline of the character to represent external circumstances or, 'what *other* people think' about the character or situation. Then the character's internal thoughts and feelings are written inside the outline. This can provide a reference point throughout the lesson and a useful record of pupils' contributions. It is important with this technique, as with other drama tasks, to clearly separate the external from the internal. The teacher should not move too quickly.

**Writing in role or Captions**

During or after performing a piece of drama, children are often stimulated to write from within the role that they have just played. Such writing may take many forms, such as a diary entry, a newspaper report, a confession or a letter. Children could also be asked to compose a short piece of text, such as a caption for a photograph or still image.

## Working with drama conventions

A range of drama strategies and conventions has been suggested for each play. It is recommended that a variety of conventions is selected in each lesson to avoid repetition and boredom. For example, although some lessons might suggest the use of *teacher in role* at several points in the drama, this convention should generally only be used once in any lesson. However, the use of the same convention (for example *still image*) in different lessons familiarises the children with the subtleties of the convention and gives them opportunities to develop their skills in its use.

You might have to play some extracts from the programme several times before the children tackle the accompanying drama activities.

When working using *teacher in role* one of the most important things that a teacher can do is to take the children's suggestions seriously. Remember to communicate to the children that what they do and say matters. You should accept the children's contributions, both vocal and physical, and respond to them with the same thought and care that you would do in any other educational situation.

Do not allow any one activity to go on too long. Most should only take a few minutes though some discussion activities might take a bit longer.

It is important to stop and check frequently during improvisations and other activities. A clear signal, such as using the simple phrase 'Stop the Drama' should be agreed with the children.

## Useful publications

Baldwin, P. (2004) *With Drama in Mind* Stafford: Network Educational Press. (Very full explanation of key drama ideas and techniques. Five useful units of work with worksheets and visual aids.)

Neelands, J. & Dickinson, R. (2006) *Improve your Primary School through Drama* London: David Fulton Publishers. (Excellent ideas for teaching and assessment. Many practical lesson ideas but no unit plans.)

Neelands, J. & Goode, T. (2000) *Structuring Drama Work* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. (A very good for a range of key techniques but no lessons.)

O'Toole, J. & Dunn, J. (2002) *Pretending to Learn* Frenchs Forest: Pearson Education Australia. (Good advice about teaching drama. Eight excellent units of work with lots of worksheets and visual aids. Very clear.)

Toye, N. & Prendiville, F. (2000) *Drama and Traditional story for the Early Years* London, Routledge Falmer. (Excellent ideas for lessons. Many could be adapted for older children.)

Toye, N. & Prendiville, F. (2007) *Speaking and Listening through Drama, 7-11* London: Paul Chapman Publishing. (Quite densely printed but lots of good ideas with examples of teacher's work. Fourteen excellent units of drama, clearly set out and easy to follow.)

Winston, J. & Tandy, M. (1998) *Beginning Drama 4 - 11* London, David Fulton Press. (Very good for an overall picture of drama – techniques, lessons, organisation, etc.)

# Dosh

## Key theme

How lies, deceit and betrayal of trust affect the relationships of the characters within the play.

## Programme synopsis

Alan's Mum and Dad are separated. He lives with his Mum but stays with his Dad some weekends. His Dad designs online computer games. Alan plays these computer games and has made friends with Rajeev in an online gaming chat room. Alan's Mum thinks he spends too long on his computer. Dad disagrees. Alan has bet Hooter, his adversary at school, that he will be the first to reach the treasure at the end of a new computer game, designed by Alan's Dad. Rajeev offers to help him in exchange for a small amount of money. But Rajeev is not the friend he seems to be and is, in fact, tricking Alan into giving away his Dad's credit card details. Alan does reach the end of the game first but not without implications and consequences.

## Curriculum links

### 7–9

Personal and Social Development  
Citizenship  
Language: Talking and Listening  
Drama and Expressive Movement

### Curriculum for Excellence

*Successful learners:* use literacy and communication skills  
think creatively and independently

*Confident individuals:* develop and communicate own beliefs and views of the world

*Responsible citizens:* evaluate issues

*Effective contributors:* work in partnership and in teams  
solve problems

## Learning intentions

- To explore the ideas and values of the characters, particularly in terms of the key themes in the play — honesty and dishonesty, trust and lies.
- To examine the way that people interact with a focus on the importance of being reliable and dependable, and what happens when people are not.
- To use drama conventions to examine the nature relationships, particularly adults and children.
- To use improvisation to explore the language of, for example, persuasion and explanation.
- To investigate and experiment with voice and characterisation.
- To use voice, mime and movement to convey elements of a story.
- To work collaboratively to create dramatic responses to real issues.

## Programme One **Dosh part 1**

Transmission date 8 January 2008

### Stopping point 1

 Rajeev says 'From Rajeev. Soon to be world champion.'

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#### **Key moment: Rajeev's boast**

Time: 0'44"

Activity: drama detectives

*Class discussion predicting the play's key issues from listening to Rajeev's opening speech*

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*Purpose* To help the children to tune into drama and to think about what today's play might be about.

*Whole class* After listening to this short opening, elicit from children from children what they

- know,
- guess or imagine, or
- want to find out.

Teacher records all the class's ideas on board or on paper.

### Stopping point 2

 Alan says 'Must get into the castle. *Must.*'

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#### **Key moment: Alan's parents give him conflicting messages about what is important in life.**

Time: 3'44"

Activity 1: still image and mime

*What does Dad think is important in life? Make a still image of Dad doing one thing. Bring this image to life in a mime and then return to the still image.*

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*Purpose* To identify and explore Alan's parents' values and the messages they are giving their son about money, possessions and attitudes towards others.

*Whole class as individuals* Ask the children to select a pose. They should try to be accurate in the shapes they make and hold the shape very still. They should also keep their eyes focused on what they are doing in the mime. On the count of three, they bring their still images to life. This mime should last about 30 seconds ending in complete stillness for a count of three. Some children (but not everyone!) may share their work with the others.


Activity 2: stand on the line

*An imaginary line is drawn across the room. At one end stands a child representing Alan's Dad. At the other end, another child represents Alan's Mum. The remaining children are asked to place themselves along the line according to which parent they judge to be giving Alan the better message.*

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*Whole class as individuals or pairs* The line should be able to accommodate the whole class. Ask for two volunteers, to represent Mum and Dad. Ask the children to think about what each parent's behaviour is telling Alan about money and how to treat other people. Which one do they sympathise (side!) with more? When they have all selected their positions, ask the children to tell the person next to them their reasons for being there. Some pairs may then share their ideas with the rest of the class. The point here might be that neither parent is totally right or wrong.

### Stopping point 3

 Alan says (to himself) 'Get lost, bully.'

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#### Key moment: Hooter challenges Alan

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Time: 5'20"

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**Activity:** teacher in role as Alan, children as 'buddies' offer advice

*Roles are negotiated with the children who are asked to play 'buddies' (who help out younger children who have problems). The teacher negotiates the role as Alan. Alan asks the buddies to advise him on what to do about how Hooter treats him.*

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*Purpose* To help the children to deal with conflict and confrontation between peers.

*Whole class* The class is seated in a circle. They discuss the role of 'buddies'. The teacher seeks their agreement that they will take on the buddy role and try to help Alan. The teacher tells the children that when she is holding a computer game (a *signifier*) she will be acting as Alan.

In role, the teacher should explain Alan's problem and seek advice. This should not last more than a few minutes. If the teacher feels that the children need more help to respond authentically, she may say 'Stop the drama' and come out of role to discuss how things are going and how they might be improved.

Finally, out of role, the children and teacher list the things that they have discovered about Alan and Hooter's relationship.

### Stopping point 4

 Mum says 'You're his father. So act like one.'

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#### Key moment: Alan's father is not being wholly truthful with him

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Time: 9'47"

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**Activity 1:** hot-seating Alan's father, teacher in role

*The class is seated in a horseshoe shape with a chair placed facing them. The teacher takes the role of Alan's father and the children, as themselves, ask him questions about why he behaves as he does. Alan's Dad should be 'put on the spot' to try to justify and answer for his actions and choices.*

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*Purpose* To explore why people might feel the need to be less than truthful and the effects of deceit on others.

*Whole class* The teacher divides the class into pairs or trios. They are told that they will soon have an opportunity to meet Alan's Dad (and that this will be teacher in role). They should prepare some questions to ask him. For example, why does he have to pretend he owns a big car? Why does he tell lies to Alan? They may also want to consider what advice they might give him. Teacher should circulate offering advice and support.

After a few minutes, the teacher tells the children that she will now take the part of Alan's Dad (a signifier might be a pair of flash sunglasses). She responds appropriately to children's questions and challenges. If necessary, the teacher can stop the drama and come out of role to focus or extend the children's ideas.

**Activity 2: telephone conversation – improvised talk between Alan’s mother and her friend**

*Alan’s mother reports Alan’s father’s deception to her friend and seeks advice during a telephone conversation. Children work in pairs as Mother and Friend. They sit back to back and begin when the teacher gives a ‘ring, ring’ signal. The first two lines of dialogue should be given to the children — ‘Hello, you’ll never guess what he’s done now.’ — ‘Tell me more.’*

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*Whole class in pairs* The teacher divides the class into pairs, with one being the mother and the other being the friend. Teacher and children first discuss some important points regarding telephone conversations, such as the speakers cannot see each other, each person speaks in turn, and you have to listen carefully.

Each pair then sits back to back and begins the conversation at the teacher’s signal. The teacher should stop the drama on several occasions to highlight good examples of conversations from the children (pointing to words, tone, content, and so on). Other groups are encouraged to incorporate some of the ideas highlighted.

After several minutes, each pair is invited to share the best four lines of their conversation with the class. Note, however, that pairs should not show their whole improvised conversations.

**After the programme****Activity 1: still images depicting the key points in the story**

*Each pair decides what they consider to be the most important moment in the story. They make a still image of this. Then all of the images are put into sequential order.*

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*Purpose* To summarise dramatically the key relationships in the plot so far.

*Whole class in pairs* The teacher allows the children a few moments to prepare their still images, coaching with shapes and relationships where necessary. Then the pairs’ images are arranged in a circle in story sequence.

**Activity 2: narration and mime**

*Teacher narrates the key points of the story so far and at appropriate moments the pairs briefly bring their still images to life in mime.*

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*Purpose* As above.

*Whole class in pairs* The teacher explains that as she tells the story, each pair must bring their scene to life in mime. It does not matter if some aspects of the story are not depicted or if a number of pairs choose to depict the same moment.

## Programme Two **Dosh part 2**

Transmission date 15 January 2008

### Stopping point 1

 Hooter says, 'Tomorrow you bring the game. And you show me. Or else.'

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#### **Key moment: Alan steals Dad's credit card details**

Time: 2'59"

#### **Activity: role on the wall — Alan**


The class is presented with a large pen outline of a boy with a caption, 'Alan'. Around the **outside** of the figure the children write (or the teacher acts as scribe) words or short phrases representing other characters' ideas and opinions about Alan.

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*Purpose* To tune the children back into the drama by viewing Alan from different characters' perspectives.

*Whole class* The teacher should accept all of the children's contributions without comment. When the children are finished writing or dictating, the teacher and class should spend some time discussing the content and implications of what the characters have said.

### Stopping point 2

 Dad says 'They don't call me "Gamesmaster" for nothing you know...'

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#### **Key moment: Alan's Dad lies to Mum.**

Time: 4'25"

#### **Activity: morphing still images**

Children make a still image of Alan's Dad going to his business meeting. In slow motion, to the teacher's count of five, the image changes into him out gambling with his mates.

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*Purpose* To show how someone can say one thing but mean another.

*Whole class as individuals* Ask the children to select a pose which shows the image that Alan's Dad wanted Alan's Mum to believe (going to a business meeting). They should try to be accurate in the shapes they make and hold the shape very still. To a slow count of five, the shape changes into his real activity of the evening (out having fun).

Some children (but not everyone!) may share their work with the others. There may be a brief discussion about what the images tell us about truth and lies.

## Stopping point 3



Mum says 'What? Must be dreaming. Sweet dreams, son'

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### **Key moment: Rajeev persuades Alan to steal from his Dad's credit card.**

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Time: 7'17"

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#### **Activity: speaking object — the voice of the computer**

*Children sit in a circle. The teacher tells the children that Alan's computer has understood everything that has happened between Alan and Rajeev. A computer mouse symbolises the computer in the story. This is passed round the class. When a child holds the mouse, he will be the voice of the computer and is asked to give Alan advice about what he should do or to comment on what has happened.*

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*Purpose* To allow the children to reflect and comment on Alan's actions.

*Whole class as individuals* The teacher should explain the rules of the activity clearly. Only the person holding the mouse is allowed to speak. If any child should be reluctant to speak, he may pass the mouse onto the next person. He should indicate to the teacher if he has something to add later in the activity. There should be no pressure on anyone to contribute (similar to *Circle Time* activity).

#### **Activity 2: movement and mime – a dream sequence**

*The teacher tells the children that, when Alan goes to sleep, he dreams that he has entered the world of the video game and is being chased by a dragon. He tries to escape down twisty paths, along narrow edges and under and over various obstacles. The children, working in pairs, are asked to devise a short sequence of movements that show Alan's dream. (The teacher may want to play a short piece of music to create the atmosphere.)*

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*Purpose* As above.

*Whole class in pairs* The teacher tells the children that, in pairs, they are going to create a dream sequence of Alan being chased by a dragon. She elicits what kinds of movements would make it clear that the action is happening in a dream or nightmare and not in real life (such as moving in slow motion, exaggerated movements and facial expressions, huge gestures, and jerking and mechanical movements). While the children are rehearsing, the teacher should circulate, encouraging the children to incorporate various elements of movement such as travelling, turning and jumping. It is important to emphasise (as a safety precaution) that there should be no physical contact during the movement piece.

After some time, all of the pairs should perform their piece simultaneously. Some pairs may then show their work to the rest of the class for appreciation and evaluation.

## Stopping point 4

 Hooter says to Alan 'Liar! Liar! Cheat! Cheat!'

**Key moment: Alan's Dad discovers that his credit card account has been cleaned out. Hooter suspects Alan of lying.**

Time: 9'36"

**Activity: voices in Alan's head**

*The teacher and children discuss the fact that Alan knows that he has done something wrong. In this activity, the children working as a class, speak the thoughts of Hooter and Alan's Mum and Dad. In his imagination, he hears these voices in his head: Hooter, his Mum and his Dad are all accusing him of lying, stealing and cheating.*

*Purpose* To help the children to think about the consequences of Alan's cheating.

*Whole class working as individuals to create a collective effect* Because of his own guilt, what does Alan feel that the other characters think of him? The teacher asks the children to suggest the kind of things that Hooter, Mum or Dad might say to Alan. The class stands in a circle, with the teacher in the middle. The teacher will take the role of Alan. Each child should think of a phrase that one of the characters would say to Alan. The teacher should criss-cross the circle stopping randomly at a child. Each time the teacher stops, that child speaks or whispers the phrase in a stage whisper. If a child can't think of something to say, the teacher can pass on.

It is possible to develop this activity into more dramatic choral speaking where phrases can be repeated or echoed by groups of children or the whole class. Phrases may also be built into a round or be spoken at different volumes (loudly or softly) by different numbers of children.

## After the programme

**Activity 1: role on the wall — Alan (ii)**

*In this activity the children are presented again with the large outline of Alan that was prepared at Stopping Point 1. This time, the children will write in the inside of the outline what Alan thinks and feels when reflecting on his recent behaviour. Teacher and children discuss the similarities and differences between the inside and outside comments.*

*Purpose* To summarise the key ideas and feelings that emerged from the play.

*Whole class* The class is encouraged to think about how Alan feels about what he has done and how he might express this. As before, the teacher should accept all of the children's contributions without comment and, once finished, they should discuss the content and implications of what Alan and the other characters have said.

**Activity 2: photographs and captions**

*To finish the drama, the children in groups of three should compose two 'photographs', one showing Alan and his parents at the beginning of the story, and one showing them at the end. Each group may then compose a short caption to accompany each photograph.*

*Purpose* As above.

*Whole class in trios* The emphasis here should be on good, strong images and on a clear contrast between the two photographs. The teacher may want to photograph these visual images to give a record of the children's work.

# Birds

## Key theme

The behaviour of human beings and wildlife can have either mutually harmonious or mutually damaging effects. People's lifestyle choices can cause significant changes in the behaviour and habits of wildlife.

## Programme synopsis

Hugh's widowed Granny is finding it difficult to cope living alone. She does not want to leave her beloved garden and the wild birds that visit it (though there seem to be fewer of them each year). One Sunday at Granny's house, Hugh is so eager to go out fishing that Hugh's Dad decides to postpone building a promised bird-nesting box for Granny until they return. The decision to put the fishing trip ahead of Granny's needs has serious repercussions, as Granny falls and is injured while trying to erect the box by herself.

Back in Hugh's house, things go from bad to worse when a family of herring gulls make a nest in the roof. When Dad tries to get rid of them, things get scary. Dad is hurt and damage is done to Hugh's home. Is this revenge for man's destruction of the birds' natural habitats? How will it all end?

## Curriculum links

7–9

Sustainable Development Education  
Language  
Drama and Expressive Movement  
Personal and Social Development

### Curriculum for Excellence

*Successful learners:* use literacy and communication skills  
think creatively and independently  
work as part of a group

*Confident individuals:* develop and communicate own beliefs and views of the world  
assess risk

*Responsible citizens:* respect for others and for the environment

*Effective contributors:* work in partnership and in teams  
solve problems

## Learning intentions

- To explore different ideas, feelings and values in caring for the environment, especially wildlife.
- To observe and examine relationships and duties within a family.
- To consider and discuss a range of conflicting views and ideas about environmental issues.
- To use improvisation to explore language.
- To examine ways of communicating verbally and non-verbally.
- To investigate and experiment with voice and role.
- To use voice, mime and movement to convey elements of a story.

## Programme Three **Birds part I: Sparrows**

Transmission date 22 January 2008

### Stopping point 1

 Hugh says 'Well it's true. I hate him. I hate you. And I hate going to see Granny Sparrow.'

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#### **Key moment: Hugh asks why he has to go**

Time: 1'08"

Activity: drama detectives

*Class discussion predicting the play's key issues from listening to Hugh's opening speech.*

---


*Purpose* To help the children to tune into drama and to think about what today's play might be about.

*Whole class* After listening to this short opening, elicit from children from children what they

- know,
- guess or imagine, or
- want to find out.

Teacher records all the class's ideas on board or on paper.

### Stopping point 2

 Hugh says 'Nothing changes. Smudge was her pet name for me. I know – nightmare!'

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#### **Key moment: Dad and Hugh don't get to spend much time together because of Cameron's and Granny's ill health.**

Time: 3'05"

Activity: role on the wall — Dad


*The class is presented with a large pen outline of a man with a caption 'Dad'. Around the **outside** of the figure the children write (or the teacher acts as scribe) words or short phrases showing all the ways that the other characters (Mum, Granny, Hugh and Cameron) rely on Dad.*

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*Purpose* To allow the children to begin to think about the different relationships and needs within families.

*Whole class* The teacher should accept all of the children's contributions without comment. When the children are finished writing or dictating, the teacher and class should spend some time discussing the content and implications of all of these demands on Dad's time.

## Stopping point 3

 Hugh says 'The back door's open... Dad! In the garden, look!' Dad says 'MUM!'

**Key moment: After spending a lovely afternoon together fishing, Dad and Hugh discover Granny lying in the garden after having fallen while trying to put up the bird box.**

Time: 6'42"

**Activity 1: teacher in role as Granny — children, in role as Hugh, ask questions**

*Roles are negotiated with the children playing Hugh, who wants to find out more about Granny's life and love of birds. The teacher negotiates the role as Granny.*

*To introduce the character, the teacher repeats Granny's words from the play: 'You don't need to travel the world, Smudge. Not when the world can travel to you. Birds from all over the world visit my garden. But still, the sparrows are my favourites, they're like family. And they'll eat just about anything you pop in front of them, much like your father.'*

*Purpose* To investigate Dad and Hugh's reactions and feelings on discovering Granny lying prone and moaning at the foot of the ladder.

*Whole class in collective role as Hugh* Children are seated in a circle and given the instruction that they are about to be in role, collectively, as Hugh. The teacher divides the class into pairs or trios. They are told that they will soon have an opportunity to meet Hugh's Granny (and that this will be teacher in role). They should prepare some questions to ask her. For example, why does she like the birds so much? Why does she feed them and keep notes about what they do? They may also want to consider what advice they might give her. Teacher should circulate offering support.

After a few minutes, the teacher tells the children that she will now take on the part of Hugh's Granny (a signifier might be a pair of specs or a pashmina). She responds appropriately to children's questions and challenges. If necessary, the teacher can stop the drama and come out of role to focus or extend the children's ideas.

**Activity 2: freeze frame and thought tracking with teacher narration**

*The teacher tells the children that they are going to decide how Hugh and Dad react to seeing Granny lying at the foot of the ladder. They make a still image of this. They will then be asked to speak the thoughts and feelings of their character aloud. To provide a context and contrast for this activity, before the children speak as the characters, the teacher narrates the passage below.*

*Purpose* As above.

*Whole class in pairs* The teacher divides the class into pairs. One of each pair is Hugh, the other is Dad. They must make a freeze frame of the moment when they spot Granny lying in the garden.


The teacher allows the children a few moments to prepare their still images, coaching with shapes and relationships where necessary. The pairs' images are then arranged in a circle.

The teacher explains that, as each pair takes a turn, Dad and Hugh each speak out one phrase or sentence that expresses his thoughts or feelings when they see Granny at the foot of the ladder. It does not matter if a number of pairs express the same thought or emotion.

To set the scene, the teacher narrates this short introduction.

*Narration* 'That afternoon, Hugh and his Dad spent a wonderful time together, casting their fishing lines into the harbour, sharing stories or in a friendly silence, waiting for the fish to bite. Happy and contented, they headed back to Granny's house. But the house was empty. Where was she?'

## Stopping point 4

-  Dad says 'Ambulance, yes. Can you send an ambulance right away please? Where? Oh, yes. 20 Oakwood Lane...'

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### Key moment: Dad makes an emergency services phone call.

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Time: 7'36"

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**Activity:** telephone to emergency services

*In discussion with the teacher, the class establishes what is required to make an emergency phone call. Then the class works in pairs acting out the call as if Hugh had to be responsible for making it.*

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*Purpose* To elicit and rehearse what factors and features are involved in making an emergency services telephone call.

*Whole class* The teacher questions class to elicit:

- a) how Hugh should respond to the operator after contacting the emergency services by dialling 999 (keep calm, speak slowly and clearly), and
- b) how he should answer the following questions.
  - Which service do you require? Police, Fire? Ambulance?
  - What is the address of incident?
  - What has happened?
  - How many people are involved?

*Whole class in pairs* The teacher divides the class into pairs. One of each pair is Hugh, the other the emergency telephone operator then the service operator. The teacher and the children should discuss telephone conversations, and note that the speakers cannot see each other, and it is important that each one each speaks in turn, and the listener has to listen carefully. Each pair then sits back to back and begins the conversation at the teacher's signal. The teacher should stop the drama on several occasions to highlight good examples of conversations from the children (pointing to words, tone, content, and so on) or to give support or clarification. After several minutes, a few pairs are invited to share their conversation with the class. Note, however, that not all pairs should show their improvised conversations. Just select two or three as examples. In a short evaluation and appreciation of the calls that have been shared with the class, highlight the qualities and points for improvement.

## Stopping point 5

 Granny says 'There must be a lot more cats...'. Dad (laughing) replies, 'She's not wrong.'

**Key moment: We find out that human activity (such as putting decking in gardens and using mobile phones) is causing a major decrease in the number of birds.**

Time: 10'00"

**Activity 1: press interview (teacher in role) and environmental experts (children as experts)**

*Using a simple form of 'mantle of the expert', children are put into a high status role as experts in environmental issues. The teacher sets up a meeting or press conference. In role as a local journalist, the teacher questions the experts to discover if there is any truth in the claims of a local elderly lady that the bird population is declining drastically.*

*Purpose* To explore the impact of human behaviour on the environment and, in particular, the wild bird population

*Whole class in trios then back together in a circle* The class and teacher discuss the roles of 'environmental experts'. After the initial discussion, the children, in groups of three, negotiate their selected area of expertise in areas like, for example, birds, water, weather, trees and plants, or animals. In their groups, they talk about their knowledge and offer some background information – how long they've been doing their job, where they work, what they've discovered, and so on.

The teacher should explain the procedure of the meeting, and emphasis that only one person should speak at a time. If the teacher feels that the children need more help to respond authentically, she may ask leading questions or say 'Stop the drama' and come out of role to discuss how things are going and how they might be improved.

Finally, out of role, the children and teacher list the things that they have discovered about how humans' behaviour affect wildlife and the environment.

## After the programme

**Activity 1: good news/bad news**

*At the end of the play, Dad asks, 'Do you want the good news or the bad news?'*

*The children are asked summarise the story so far as a series of 'good news' or 'bad news' statements.*

*Purpose* To summarise dramatically the key relationships in the plot so far.

*Whole class as individuals* The children sit in a circle. An object such as a small stick is passed round. As each child takes the stick they must say a line or phrase describing something positive or negative that happened in the story, raising the stick to indicate positive and lowering it for negative.

**Activity 2: photographs and captions**

*To finish the drama, the children in groups of three should compose two 'photographs', one showing Alan and his parents at the beginning of the story, and one showing them at the end. Each group may then compose a short caption to accompany each photograph.*


*Purpose* As above.

*Whole class in trios* The teacher allows the children a few moments to prepare their still images, coaching with shapes and relationships where necessary. Then the trios show their images to the class. After a short discussion, the class votes on which ending might be the most likely.

## Programme Four **Birds part 2: Gulls**

Transmission date 29 January 2008

### Stopping point 1

 Hugh says 'I'll save the birds. Mustn't sleep...'

**Key moment: Hugh's Dad plans to get rid of the seagull nest from the roof.**

Time: 2'14"

**Activity: three-part still image: Hugh's dream**

The class discusses how, as Hugh drifts off to sleep, he thinks about (and perhaps then dreams about) ways to stop Dad getting rid of the birds and the nest. In pairs, plan the **first still image** of Dad setting a trap while Hugh watches. How did they feel about what's happening? The **second image** shows Hugh freeing the birds/getting rid of the trap. The **third image** shows what happens when Dad finds out what Hugh has done. The children then put the three images into a slow motion dream sequence with the teacher directing the move from one image to the next.

*Purpose* To help the children to think about what our responses to birds and wildlife might be.

*Whole class in pairs* Tell the children that they are going to make Hugh's dream. Ask them to work in pairs to plan a pose that shows Dad and Hugh as Dad sets the trap. Then ask them to plan a second pose showing how Hugh gets rid of Dad's work. (Dad should also be in the image – but maybe he doesn't see what's being done.) They should then devise a third image to show what happened when Dad found out.

The children should try to be accurate in the shapes they make and hold the shapes very still. After a short planning time, they should practice each image and practice moving slowly from one image to the next and then to the final image. At a given signal, they make the first image. Then, to a slow count of five, they change to the second image and then the third. Hold the third image for a few seconds then relax.

Some children (but not every pair) may share their work with the others.

### Stopping point 2

 Mum says, 'Hold on Joe!' Dad falls. Hugh says: 'Dad!'

**Key moment: Dad has an accident.**

Time: 4'55"

**Activity: telephone call to emergency services (revision)**

In discussion with the teacher the class revises what is required to make an emergency phone call. Then the class works in pairs acting out the call as if Hugh had to be responsible for making it.

*Purpose* To allow the children to revise the skills of making a phone call to the emergency services.

*Whole class* The teacher questions class to revise the procedure for making an emergency services call (see Birds lesson 1).

*Whole class in pairs* The teacher divides the class into pairs. One member of each pair is Hugh, the other is the emergency telephone operator, then service operator. *If possible they should be in the same pairs as before but this time taking the opposite roles.*

After several minutes, pairs are invited to share their conversation with the class. Note that not all pairs should show their improvised conversations — select two or three as examples. In a short evaluation and appreciation of the calls that have been shared with the class, highlight the qualities and points for improvement.

## Stopping point 3

 Dad says 'Don't remind me. Come on then'

**Key moment: Dad, in hospital, is more determined than ever to get rid of the birds.**

Time: 6'43"

### Activity 1: hot seating — teacher in role as Dad

*The class is seated in a horseshoe shape with a chair placed facing them. The teacher takes the role of Hugh's father and the children, as themselves, ask him questions about why he is so opposed to the birds. Are his actions and beliefs justified? Dad should be 'put on the spot' to try to justify and answer for his actions and choices.*

*Note that according to the RSPB website there has been a 50% decline in the numbers of herring gulls over the past ten years.*

*Purpose* To examine the two sides of the argument: are the birds just a nuisance or should they be protected?

*Whole class* The teacher and class have a brief discussion about why a species might be listed as endangered. The teacher divides the class into pairs or trios. They are told that they will soon have an opportunity to meet Hugh's dad (and that this will be teacher in role). They should prepare some questions to ask him. For example, what does he have against the birds? Does he know why they are an endangered species? They may also want to consider what advice they might give him. Teacher should circulate offering advice and support.

After a few minutes, the teacher tells the children that she will now take the part of Hugh's dad (the signifier could be a hammer). She responds appropriately to children's questions and challenges. If necessary, the teacher can stop the drama and come out of role to focus or extend the children's ideas.

### Activity 2: thought tunnel: Dad listens to Mum and Alan

*Mum and Hugh have different views about the birds. Both are going to give Dad advice. The teacher will take the role of Dad and the children will be either Hugh or Mum, with half the class in each role. They form two parallel lines facing each other. Teacher, as Dad, walks through the thought tunnel listening to all of the advice. At the end, Dad must weigh up all advice and try to reach a decision about which to accept.*

*Purpose* As above.

*Whole class divided into two groups* The teacher and children discuss the different points of view that Hugh and his Mum have about the birds. How would they advise Dad? The teacher then divides the class into Mums and Hughs. Pairs within each group are given time to talk about and prepare their advice statement.

After a short time, the children stand and make two lines, with Mums down one side, Hughs down the other. The teacher as Dad walks slowly down between the lines, listening to all the advice but saying nothing. At the end of the line the teacher, still as Dad, summarises the key advice and tries to make a decision based on this. The final decision may be postponed and Dad may go off to 'think about things'.

## Stopping point 4

 Mum shouts 'Look out Joe!' and there is the sound of breaking glass.

### Key moment: The birds 'attack' the house.

Time: 9'41"

#### Activity 1: improvisation, slow motion and Freeze frame — bird attack

The family are in the living room eating chips and talking about Dad being attacked by the gulls. Dad sees the birds, and he bangs on the window. Suddenly, the birds fly at the window putting all of the family in fear. Groups produce a short improvisation of the scene up to the point when Dad bangs on the window. Then they move into a slow motion effect as they see the birds coming towards the window. As the birds attack, they freeze frame, showing fear and surprise by facial and body language. They may add a short phrase (such as 'help!' or 'look out!') to be said by the whole group.

- Purpose* To highlight the dramatic effect that the birds' aggressive behaviour has on the family.
- Whole class in trios* The class discuss the effect that the attack would have on the family. How would they feel and react? The teacher tells the children that, in trios, they are going to re-create the bird attack.
- The teacher explains that it is important that the groups do not spend more than a couple of minutes working on the improvisation, as the key dramatic effect is the slow motion into freeze frame. The main coaching should be in the transition from normal speed to slow motion and the freezing of the action. Where are the people looking? What can they see? How do they react?
- Some group may show their work to the class (focus on the slow motion and freeze frame).

## After the programme

### Activity 1: improvised play-making

The play ends with a question. We don't know the final outcome. In trios, groups compose and act out a short scene that shows what happened next.

- Purpose* To examine and summarise, dramatically, the key ideas in the story, especially those relating to conservation issues.
- Whole class in trios* What happened next? The groups make up a short improvised scene and act it out. Some groups may show their scene to the class.

### Activity 2: teacher and children in role — a local meeting

The teacher in role as environmental spokesperson answers questions and defends the position of protecting the gulls. Children, as local residents, are worried about the damage caused and danger posed by the gulls.

- Purpose* As above.
- Whole class as individuals* The teacher and children discuss what effects the gulls are having on the local area and why they should still be protected. They are told that they will be the neighbours of Hugh's family and that they have called a meeting with the local environmental officer to find out what the position is. They are given a few minutes to talk in groups about what they might ask the officer and to think about their complaints. The children sit in a semi-circle. The teacher in role comes in and greets the residents. Teacher must answer questions honestly, and if there are some questions that need further exploration the children might research these later in the classroom.

## Programmes Five **Dash**

### Key theme

Being popular because of what you have, rather than who you are, doesn't always make you happy.

### Programme synopsis

Erin has discovered that she has won a competition for a 'supermarket dash': she will have one minute to fill her trolley with as many items as she can. Suddenly she discovers a new-found popularity as all of her classmates (and some relatives) urge her to grab something for them. However, in her excitement at having new friends, Erin turns her back on her real friend, Anna. As the day of the dash draws near, Erin feels under increasing pressure to try to please everyone: even her Gran who is usually so level-headed is asking for a cappuccino machine. How can she please them all? However, when the time for the dash final arrives, her head clears and she knows what to do. She'll get something for the one person who hasn't asked for anything – Anna. And so she does, but it's too late. Anna, it seems, has grown tired of being second best and has found herself a new friend.

### Curriculum links

7–9

Personal and Social Development  
Citizenship  
Language: Talking and Listening  
Drama and Expressive Movement

#### Curriculum for Excellence

*Successful learners:* use literacy and communication skills  
think creatively and independently

*Confident individuals:* develop and communicate own beliefs and views of the world

*Responsible citizens:* respect for others  
evaluate issues

*Effective contributors:* work in partnership and in teams  
solve problems



### Learning intentions

- To examine our values about material possessions: can having lots of things really make you happy?
- To explore and discuss the effects that our words and actions can have on other people.
- To be aware of and sensitive to the emotional needs of others, and to treat others with respect.
- To develop self-esteem through active participation in drama, showing respect for personal views and the views of others.
- To investigate and experiment with voice and characterisation.
- To use voice, mime and movement to convey elements of a story.
- To work collaboratively to create dramatic responses to real issues.

## Programme Five **Dash**

Transmission date 5 February 2008

### Stopping point I

  Erin says 'I bet no one shouts at Victoria Beckham!'

**Key moment: Erin's win seems to have got her noticed in school.**

Time: 1'51"

**Activity 1: drama detectives**

*Class discussion predicting the play's key issues from listening to Erin's diary and her school-mates' comments.*

*Purpose* To help the children to tune into drama and to think of what today's play might be about.

*Whole class* After listening to this short opening, elicit from children from children what they

- know,
- guess or imagine, or
- want to find out.

Teacher records all the class's ideas on board or on paper.

**Activity 2: drama detectives**


*Class discussion predicting the play's key issues from listening to Erin's diary and her school-mates' comments.*

*Purpose* As above.

*Whole class in pairs or trios (with one child as Erin)* The class is divided into pairs or trios. The groups are spread across the floor space. Each group is asked to plan some short statements that they might make about Erin, or some questions that they might ask her. They must then select one good statement or question for each group member. After a few minutes, someone is asked if they would volunteer to be Erin. Erin walks among the groups and as she passes each group, she (and the rest of the class) hears what they are saying about her. Only one person should speak at a time.

The emphasis here is on a dramatic reconstruction of the playground scene, so tone and volume are important. Speakers should be clearly heard by all, even if they whisper.

## Stopping point 2

 Erin says 'It was so cool...'

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### **Key moment: Anna is upset that Erin has a new best friend.**

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Time: 5'06"

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#### **Activity 1: morphing still image (in pairs)**

*In pairs, plan two still images. The first is an image of Erin and Anna before Erin won the supermarket dash. How did they feel about each other? What kinds of things might they do? The second is an image of the pair at the end of this scene. What has changed? How do they look at each other now?*

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*Purpose* To explore why Erin has changed and what effect this has on Anna.

*Whole class* Ask the children to plan a pose that shows an image of Erin and Anna as good friends  
*in pairs* Then ask them to plan a second pose showing the two girls at the end of the scene. They should try to be accurate in the shapes they make and hold the shapes very still. After short planning time, practice each image and slowly moving from one image to the next. At a given signal, they make the first image and then, to a slow count of five, they change to the second image. Hold the second image for a few seconds then relax. Some children (but not every pair!) may share their work with the others. There may be a brief discussion about what the images tell us about friendship and how things can change.

#### **Activity 2: teacher in role as Anna, children as 'buddies' offering advice**

*Roles are negotiated with the children who are asked to play 'buddies' — people who help out younger children who are having problems. The teacher negotiates the role as Anna. Anna asks her buddies to suggest reasons that Erin is behaving as she is and whether there is anything can she do to get the old Erin back.*

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*Purpose* As above.

*Whole class* The class is seated in a circle. They discuss the role of 'buddies', introduced in the last drama lesson. The teacher seeks their agreement that they will be buddies and try to help Anna. The teacher tells the children that when she is holding a skipping rope as a 'signifier' – something she and Erin shared – she will be acting as Anna.

In role, the teacher explains Anna's problem. She and Erin used to be close but now Erin doesn't seem to want to know her. She asks for advice. This should not last more than a few minutes. If the teacher feels that the children need more help to respond authentically, she may say, 'Stop the drama' and come out of role to discuss how things are going and how they might be improved.

Finally, out of role, the children and teacher list the things that they have discovered about Anna and Erin's relationship.

## Stopping point 3



Gran says 'You're quiet all of a sudden. Let's have some music.'

**Key moment: Erin is beginning to feel the pressure of the demands being made on her.**

Time: 8'15"

**Activity 1: photo-shoot and caption — Erin and the photographer**

*In pairs, the children recreate the scene of Erin being photographed for the local newspaper. When they are happy with the pose, they should create a caption to accompany the photograph.*

*Purpose* To examine the effects on Erin of winning the supermarket dash, initially liking the attention then feeling the pressure.

*Whole class in pairs* The class is divided into pairs, with one member of the pair playing Erin and the other being the photographer. They are ranged in a circle round the room. The photographer must ensure that he takes a good photo of Erin, so deciding on the pose and overall look is important. When both are happy with the photograph, they should compose a caption of no more than six words to accompany it. This may be written or spoken.

Each group shows their work to the rest of the class with 'Erin' posing and the photographer 'snapping' then speaking the caption.

**Activity 2: voices in Erin's head**

*The teacher and children discuss the fact that the pressure might be getting too much for Erin – everyone is asking her to grab things for them. She knows that she can't please everyone. In this activity the children working as a class, speak the requests of all of the children and adults who have asked Erin for something. In her imagination, she hears these voices in her head becoming louder and more insistent.*

*Purpose* As above.

*Whole class working as individuals to create a collective vocal effect* Because of all demands, Erin is beginning to feel pressurised. She feels that all the requests are crowding in on her so that she can't think straight. The class will recreate this using their voices (and possibly other sounds). The class stands in a semi-circle, with a chair placed at the front to represent Erin. Each child should compose one request, trying to ensure that a variety of items are asked for, and that the requests come from a mixture of males and females, children and adults. Each class member speaks their request in turn, at normal volume, tone and speed. They then repeat the round of demands, but sounding more pleading or whining or even threatening. On the third round, they speed up and each person continues to repeat their phrase so that more and more voices are added. The teacher might keep time by beating a drum or by 'conducting' the voices.

As in Dosh, it is possible to develop this activity into more dramatic choral speaking where phrases can be repeated or echoed by groups of children or the whole class. Phrases may also be built into a round or be spoken at different volumes (loud, soft) by different numbers of children.

**Activity 3: hot-seating Erin's Gran (teacher in role)**

*Does Erin's Gran understand the pressure that Erin is under or is she just adding to it? After discussing this, the teacher, negotiates the role as Erin's Gran and the children plan how to tell her how Erin is really feeling.*

---

*Purpose* As above.

*Whole class with teacher in role, children planning in pairs* The teacher and class discuss how Erin's Gran is responding to her win. Is she being supportive or is she being like everyone else? What are the clues in the play that help us to figure this out? The children are told that they will soon have an opportunity to meet Erin's Gran (teacher in role). In pairs, they should prepare some questions to ask her and some advice they might give her. The teacher should circulate offering advice and support.

After a few minutes, the teacher tells the children that she will now take the part of Erin's Gran (the signifier might be a set of car keys). The main focus for the role here is for the Gran to be unaware that Erin is under pressure and that she is adding to this. The teacher should respond appropriately, not being too quick to understand that Erin may be unhappy. If necessary, the teacher can stop the drama and come out of role to focus or extend the children's ideas.

**After the programme****Activity 1: still images depicting the key points in the story**

*Each pair decides what they consider to be the most important moment in the story. They make a still image of this. Then all of the images are put into sequential order.*

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*Purpose* To summarise the key points in the story and to look at what might have happened when things returned to normal.

*Whole class in pairs* The teacher allows the children a few moments to prepare their still images, coaching with shapes and relationships where necessary. Then the pairs' images are arranged in a circle in story sequence.

The teacher explains that as she tells the story, each pair must bring their scene to life in mime. It does not matter if some aspects of the story are not depicted or if a number of pairs choose to depict the same moment.

**Activity 2: time travel – six months in the future****still image or short improvisation with Erin, Anna and Michelle.**

*It may have been a shock to the children that Anna changed allegiance so quickly at the end of the play. Teacher and children discuss why she did this and how Erin might have felt. The children travel six months into the future to find out how the three girls are doing. Who is friends with whom now? How has the story turned out? The groups compose their own ending.*

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*Purpose* As above.

*Whole class in trios* The class is divided into threes. They are asked to discuss what they think might have happened after the end of the play. What happened to the friendships? They must compose an ending for six months in the future. They can choose whether to make it sad, happy or somewhere in between. Groups then either:

- a) make a still image of the three girls, or
- b) create a short piece of improvised dialogue with action.

Groups may share their work with the rest of the class.

A final discussion might focus on the why money and possessions alone can't make us happy.