

Sport and fitness

In this unit students develop improvisations based on sport and fitness activities and make links with learning in Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

They will:

- sustain and build belief in roles
- use drama elements to create effects
- show the development of movement and language skills
- form opinions about drama.

Drama forms • improvisation

Resources • classroom space

Learning activities **Getting started**

- Students research and list favourite sport and fitness activities. Students find a space on their own. Students move in their space as if participating in these, for instance *jogging, cycling, tennis, soccer, swimming, aerobics, judo etc.* Freeze and think about your role and the situation. Repeat in slow motion to focus the type of movement being used. Freeze again at a moment of, for example, *victory, pain, disappointment.* Discuss with students the choices they have made and their potential in drama.
- In small groups students create depictions of team sports. Students select roles e.g. players, spectators, coaches, relatives, friends, reporters etc. Students bring these moments to life on signal from teacher. Students freeze again on signal. Discuss focus and moments of tension. *What was happening?*
- Begin a whole-class improvisation based on a sports event e.g. local sports carnival, a national championship or tournament, Olympic games etc. Students research its background. Brainstorm possible roles and situations. Select a moment to be explored e.g. the finish of a running race.

• **Taking on roles in situations • Developing drama • Performing**

- As a whole group select and allocate roles for this scene e.g. athletes, time-keepers, spectators, coaches, team members, reporters, etc. Discuss the physical layout of the scene. Students sketch ideas on board. Decide on location of characters and key landmarks.
- Decide on shape and size of drama space in room. Use items to symbolise landmarks if needed. Students experiment with ideas by walking into space and taking a position in role. Discuss with students and make changes where needed.
- Teacher explains a technique called sculpturing, where a person shapes the movements and positions of others in a dramatic context to create a depiction or a moment frozen in time. Select some students to work with the teacher in sculpturing small groups within the piece as if creating a photo of the finish of the race. *What is happening at this moment? What are the characters in this part of the scene doing and thinking? Where are the characters looking?*
- Rest of class sits in space and observes as each small group presents its depiction. Discuss ways to improve and structure group work and the whole piece. *Where is the focus of the scene? How can we use contrast between different types of movement to improve the scene? How can gesture be used more effectively? What is the mood of the scene?*
- Continue to build and make changes to improve the piece. Help students to make final decisions and practise ways of entering the space, taking positions and freezing the action. Take photographs to show students their process and progress.
- Ask students to consider the thoughts of characters. Suggest that something unexpected may be revealed by listening to them. Tap a few students on the shoulder as a signal for them to speak their thoughts in role at the moment in time being



enacted. Class steps out of role and discusses what happened. *What did we learn about the characters and the situation? What happened that was unexpected?*

Responding

- Discuss the work with students. *Were the roles and situation clear and convincing? How could they be improved? Where was there tension in the piece? How could the tension be heightened?*
- Students write in their drama journals about the process of working with the *sculptor* and others in developing the piece. Include sketches of the map created by the class. Students examine photographs of the scene and write about what was happening from the point of view of their characters.

Assessment of students

- Teacher observation of students' drama work and their process of working.
- Analysis of photographs.
- Analysis by the teacher of students' oral and written comments, drawings and other responses to their drama work.
- Consideration of the following questions about students' learning in drama:
 - ♦ How well are they able to sustain and build belief in roles? How convincing are they? How effectively do they sustain roles while interacting with others?
 - ♦ What evidence is there that students are using drama elements to create effects as they work with others to develop drama? How was tension developed? How was mood created? How effectively are they working together?
 - ♦ What evidence is there that students are developing movement and language skills? Which particular skills were developed in this unit? How well were students able to use voice, gesture and different types of movement to communicate their ideas? Which movement and language skills need further development?
 - ♦ What opinions about drama are students forming? What other learning in drama is evident as they observe and respond to their drama and the drama of others?
- Consideration of the following questions about other learning:
 - ♦ How has the drama work contributed to the students' understanding of the impact that some sporting events may have on people's lives? What are the students saying about some of the characters and their involvement in the event as depicted?
 - ♦ What else are they saying as a result of this experience?

Extension activities

- Experiment with ways of developing the depiction into a movement piece which tells the story in a number of scenes building up to the finishing line e.g spectators arriving and taking position, athletes warming up, coaches speaking with them, reporters moving around the crowd etc. Explore ways of using stillness and movement to focus on small groups or individuals. Experiment with music and sound effects to underscore the action.
- Students take the hot seat in role as characters from the original scene and are interviewed by other students in role as reporters.
- Students develop an improvisation around a victory ceremony to follow the race. Organise the location, layout and sequence of action and allocate roles. *Consider the thoughts and feelings of characters from the original scene. What are their thoughts and feelings now?*
- Develop a movement or reader's theatre piece around a number of key competitions at a sports event.

