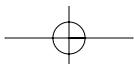
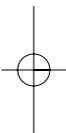
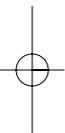
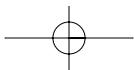
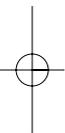
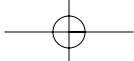


Part One:

How to Approach Speaking and Listening through Drama





1 How to Begin with Teacher in Role

Why use teacher in role?

The most important resource you have as a teacher when using drama is yourself. Learning demands intervention from the teacher to structure, direct and influence the learning of the pupils. One of the best ways to do that in drama work is to be inside the drama. Therefore, at the centre of the dramas that we include in this book, is the key teaching technique that is used, namely teacher in role (TiR). This chapter will set out approaches to TiR and give examples of how it works.

Many teachers see TiR as a difficult activity, particularly with older children in the primary school. However, it is our experience that when a teacher takes a role he or she becomes 'interesting' to the children, so that there are less control problems because they become engaged. Many times we have watched trainee teachers with a class of children struggling to get attention when giving instructions in traditional teacher mode. Yet, as soon as they move into role, they obtain that attention more effectively.

For example, a trainee was talking out of role to a class to explain that they were about to meet a girl who was having trouble with her father and needed their help (see 'The Dream' drama based on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*). The class were calling out and not listening properly. She was talking over them and trying to teach without getting their full attention. Then she explained that they could ask questions of one of the roles from the story and that she was going to become that role when she sat down. She picked up a ribbon with a ring threaded on it and put it round her neck as the role signifier. When she sat down as Hermia, they were focused entirely on her and were listening very closely, putting hands up to ask questions and taking turns in a very orderly way. They were interested in her problem, which was her father's insistence on deciding whom she should marry. The trainee was not doing anything different apart from using role and committing to it very strongly. She looked far more comfortable.

The trainee was using the simplest form of TiR, hot-seating the role, where the class meets the role sitting in front of them and can ask questions. TiR creates a particular context and can raise the level of commitment and the meaning-making. It can 'feel real' even though it is not.

You are not effective as a teacher if you do not at some point engage fully with the drama yourself by using TiR. Remaining as teacher, intervening as teacher, side-coaching, structuring the drama from the outside, and/or sending the class off in groups to create their own drama must at best restrict and at worst negate any opportunity for the teacher to teach effectively. It is far more effective for the teacher to engage with the drama form as artist and be part of the creative act.

It is very useful in a Literacy lesson for the teacher to use roles from the text. The very fact that you take on a key role can provide important ways of defining and exploring the text. How does hot-seating open up the ideas and issues of a story to the children? Let us look more closely at the Hermia role. It can be used with 10- or 11-year-olds as a way of introducing Shakespeare or for other objectives.

Negotiate with the class that you are going to be someone with a problem. This can be done by narrating an opening:

The teenage girl with a paper in her hand burst angrily into the room.

Then sit down on the chair and stare at the piece of paper:

What am I going to do about this? How dare he. He can't do what he wants. He's not me. How does he know what I want to do?

Go out of role:

What did you learn about her and why she's angry?

Having discussed the first entry you then give the class a chance to find out whether their speculations about her are correct or not by asking questions.

Here is another way that the role could be introduced. Set it up like this:

I am going to become someone else to begin the next piece of work and all you have to do is look at her and see what you think is going on.

Sit on the seat with a piece of paper in your hand reading it silently to yourself.

How stupid he is. He writes me a letter and thinks I like him and I will like him even more just because he likes me. He knows I like somebody else. I'll never like him, let alone love him. I will have to tell him – again. But he won't listen. Especially as my dad thinks he's really nice and is encouraging him. He doesn't know him.

Notice that the piece of paper means something different in each of the above situations. In the first it is the note from her father, Egeus, outlining her situation (she is under threat of death if she does not follow his wishes). In that case it will have a seal and look official. In the second instance it is a letter from Demetrius declaring his love for her and her blindness in seeking Lysander's love. It will look different and might be accompanied by a little gift, a token like a ribbon or a necklace.

In this case, again, you go out of role to talk about what the class have seen and heard:

How does she seem? What is the situation? Who are all these people she's talking about?

In both cases, when the class have speculated enough, they will have questions to ask Hermia and you have an interesting way to begin to tell them the basic situation at the beginning of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

You can then answer the questions by playing the role of Hermia based on the way that the character is in the play. She's obstinate, believes in herself and her love for Lysander, is adamant she won't do what her father wants and will want the pupils' help to influence her father and the Duke.

You can introduce the fact that her father is threatening to invoke the law, to have her put to death if she doesn't obey him. You can set up the idea that in this society a daughter is expected to obey her father. This extreme social expectation and law makes the fiction like their reality but also different from it, something that helps drama create a useful distance, which helps the class reflect on their own beliefs and look at the drama world in a more balanced and thoughtful way.

All of this introduces an interesting set of issues which children at this age are beginning to experience and understand about their relationship with parents and about their relationship with the opposite sex. Even if the main aim of the work is not a study of the Shakespeare play, the role can be used to open up very

important areas for personal and social education that the children can identify with. It will motivate them and produce some very strong engagement with Hermia and later, if you introduce them, Egeus, and Demetrius and Lysander, the rivals for her love. (See the full drama set-up in Part Two of this book.)

For another example of the simple use of hot-seating see the Tim the Ostler section in 'The Highwayman' drama. This can show important elements of how the children see the text, what their comprehension of it is. It provides a more stimulating way of approaching comprehension than questions from the teacher. This is partly due to the shift in tense. We are talking 'as if' it is happening now as against the past tense, which so often dominates classroom talk.

Teacher as storyteller

The teacher as a storyteller is something all primary school teachers will recognise. Good teachers slip easily into it and use it frequently. In its most observable guise it occurs when teaching the whole class and engaging them with a piece of fiction. The pupil's role will be dominated by listening and this will be interlaced with questioning, responding and interpreting the meaning and sense of the fiction. The teacher's role will be to communicate the text in a lively and interesting manner, holding their attention and engaging their imagination. In making judgements about the quality of this method of teaching, the critical questions will be around whether the content of the story interests the class and holds their attention, whether the delivery of the teacher, i.e. voice, intonation and interpretive skills, are good and, where relevant, whether accompanying illustrations have impact and resonance. For many pupils the times spent listening to their teacher as storyteller will remain as significant moments in their education. The connection between the teacher as storyteller and the teacher using drama, lies in the fact that they both use the generation of imagined realities in order to teach.

The relationship between story and drama in education is a complex and dynamic one. It means a known narrative can still be used, the knowledge of the narrative is not a barrier to its usage. However, if the pupils are locked into the original narrative it is problematic. It is the negotiable and dynamic elements of the relationship between drama and narrative that liberate the pupils and the teacher from merely retelling the known story. A class can take part in a drama where all of them knows the story, where none of them knows the story, or a mixture of both. As long as some fundamental planning strategies are observed, knowledge of the story is not a barrier to participation. Broadly these pre-requisites are:

- 1 An awareness of those elements of the story that will not be changed – and agreements about these must be made with the class at the beginning or during the drama, in other words, the non-negotiable elements of the narrative.
- 2 A willingness to move away from the fixed narrative to an exploration of the narrative. The use of drama strategies to explore events and their consequences, to look at alternatives and test them. In these periods the class develop hypotheses, test them and reflect upon them.
- 3 If narrative consists of roles, fictional contexts, the use of symbols and events then the teacher needs to hold some of those elements true and consistent with the story so far. For example, roles and contexts may already be decided but new events may be introduced, the delivery of a letter, for example. How the class respond to this event is not known and it is at this point that they become the writers of the narrative.

Let us illustrate these ideas with an example from 'The Pied Piper' drama (a drama we designed for 6-year-olds but have used with secondary pupils: see Toye and Prendiville, 2000, p. 225).

The Mayor has got the Pied Piper to clear the town of the rats but has broken his promise of payment and in revenge the children have been led up the mountain. You put the pupils in role as the townspeople making their way up the mountain when they meet TiR as a child coming in the opposite direction. He is limping and carries one of his shoes. (In many versions of this story the child is a 'cripple boy'. This is patently inappropriate and unnecessary. The child who couldn't keep up because he had a stone in his shoe functions just as well in the story and avoids the stereotype of the disabled child not keeping up with the 'fit' children.) This provides the background to a simple hot-seating of the child.

Ask the pupils what would they like to ask the boy. They might want to ask him his name. They certainly will ask him why he is coming down the mountain and what has happened to the other children.

Preparation for the role

In preparing to be this kind of storyteller the teacher must have made particular decisions about this child.

Begin by asking the class out of role what they want to ask the child and the order of those questions. This not only provides the teacher with some security in knowing what is going to be asked, at least initially, but also allows some minutes to refine the planning, so that the teacher can be specific in answering their questions. The questions will, to a certain extent, be predictable because they are largely generated by the circumstances of the drama so far and the role the class has taken, which will be that of anxious parents.

Before the drama session, decide what attitude you are going to take when questioned by the class. You are going to be telling them a story but it will be as if they had just met you and it will not be the voice of the narrator re-telling someone else's story but in the present tense as if it is happening now. There is no book symbolising the re-telling of someone else's words. This is your story re-told in a specific place (coming down the mountain path) at a specific time (within minutes of a significant event) and from the child's point of view, not a dispassionate onlooker or observer of events.

Of course, all these things are possible from the text of a book; however, the pupils will be defining what is important, which are the most important questions to be asked and how to handle the mood of the storyteller, whose views on the events may be very different from those of the audience whom he addresses. Be clear about his attitude towards being left behind, what has happened and how he feels about it.

Then run the hot-seating. The dialogue might go something like this:

Class member in role as parent: *Where are the other children?*

TiR as the boy left behind: *It's not fair!*

Parent: *What do you mean, it's not fair?*

The boy: *Them! They get to go into the fairground and I don't! Some friends I've got. So much for Joe and Kerry. Why couldn't they wait? They could see I had a stone in my shoe and had to take it out. I couldn't keep up.*

Stop and come out of role and discuss what they have found out. Negotiate what they need to ask next. At this point some questions about what the little boy saw will emerge. Then go back into role.

The boy: *You should have seen it! Lights, big dipper, toffee apples. Oh! the smell of the toffee apples ... and all free. He was standing at the entrance shouting 'It's all free. Help yourself. Any ride, any food, anything you want you can have.' It's just not fair!*

This interactive storytelling has an immediacy and urgency and is working at a different level of discourse than the read story, and yet it is still storytelling. It is essential that the teacher stops and comes out of role and reflects with the class on what has been said, but that is also true of the more traditional mode of reading from a book. It engages the class and gives them the opportunity to generate new questions and to make sense of what is happening in an interactive way. They are questioning from within the story, as if they were there. Next we consider this key skill of moving in and out of role.

Teaching from within

Moving in and out of role – managing the drama and reflecting on it

We are describing using role as 'teaching from within' because the teacher enters the drama world, but it is very important to step out of the fiction often and not let it run away with itself. When using TiR, the teacher is operating as a manager as well as participant and must spend as much time stopping the drama and moving out of role (OoR) to reflect on what is happening and give the pupils a chance to think through what they know and what they want to do. This OoR working is as important as the role itself. It manages the role and therefore the drama; it manages the risk, establishes where the class is and helps pupils believe in the drama. It provides time and space for the teacher to assess and re-assess the learning possibilities.

Let us look at an example to see how you as the teacher have the opportunity to negotiate how the role behaves with the class. This also shows a step from hot-seating to role-playing as a demonstration with a small group. As with all of this section of the book, we are using an example from drama based upon 'The Pied Piper' (see Toye and Prendiville, 2000, p. 225).

The class in groups of five have created tableaux as families taking part in bread-making in the kitchen. They then adapt the picture when a rat invades the space. You set up going into role with one of the groups that you know will handle the situation well. OoR you gather the rest of the class round: *You will be able to influence what happens when we stop the action. Otherwise you watch and the members of this family group can role play. You will find out who I am from what I do and say.*

You negotiate your entry: *I will enter as the rat runs out of the door. You pick up a rat trap and a notebook and pencil and enter saying, That was a big one, far too big for these traps. You write something down in your notebook, before continuing. That's another piece of evidence to take to the Mayor. I was hoping you could help. I cannot manage what he has asked me to do. There are too many of them for me as the town rat-catcher to catch. I want evidence to take to him to show how bad it is getting. Can you help?* At this point you go OoR: *Stop the drama. Who has entered? What do you know about him/her? What does s/he want? How is s/he feeling, do you think? How do you know. What would s/he look like?*

The whole class is involved in defining the role and can use their imaginations, their 'drama eyes', to help create the appropriate appearance/behaviour and their own understanding. This is in contrast to an actor who has to use acting skills to create the role in its entirety for an audience. We are making a

distinction between role behaviour and acting. Both depend on appropriate signing, but whereas the actor must give the non-participant audience the bulk of the signing, a teacher using role can get away with a committed minimum.

The class will see the Rat-catcher as overworked and probably needing help to put his/her case to the Mayor. When you have discussed enough (this process helps the class believe in the role) you can move back into role and take their stories about the problems the rats are causing. You can do this with all of the class or each family in turn. Give the groups time to prepare their evidence before you go into role to receive the input. The Rat-catcher 'writes down' the points and then asks the class/family if they could come to the Mayor to help put the case. We will look at setting up that whole class event later in this chapter.

For another example of using OoR to help establish a role see 'The Governor's Child' drama for the entry of Maria, a travel-weary woman carrying a baby. OoR a blanket is openly rolled up to become the baby and the class describe how they will see the woman – possible answers are: *tired, dusty, bowed-down, tear-stained*. The person playing the role can then simply walk forward adopting a serious tone, holding the blanket, without having to pretend any of those outward signs an actor would have to portray if it were a play being performed to an audience. This is because the class will see it as they have described it themselves. The effect in this context can be more powerful.

OoR is very important as a way of negotiating the intent and meaning of the role and is the way the teacher can best control and manage learning. For the class are both an audience and observers of their own activities. When the drama is stopped they can describe, recap, interpret, think through, consider next moves and understand what is the significance of their work.

It is very important to get the participants to look at and interpret what is going on, frequently by stepping out of the drama. Depth in drama depends on the very clear and regular use of OoR negotiation so that the awareness of the co-existence of two worlds is effective at all times. Children commit to the fictional world of the drama but need always to be aware that it is fiction and to step outside it often to look at what they are doing. Contrary to some opinions, depth is not dependent upon maintaining the fiction all of the time nor does it depend upon the children losing themselves in the drama. Learning depends upon awareness, not total immersion. In fact, if the latter takes over, children will get an experience but not understanding.

In effective drama, children can actually feel the 'as if' world as real at certain points. The teacher must make sure that if the drama does engage in that way, the pupils know it is a fiction at all times, especially by stopping and coming out of role frequently. That is also a protection.

A class reflect together in order to draw conclusions and consequently can influence each other far more in their understanding. They are in the process of negotiating a group meaning, something that can be held true for all of them.

The relationship developed by the teacher with the class is dependent on the movement between these two worlds. TiR changes the nature of the contract entered into by the class. What is that contract? It is 'the imaginative contract':

- It is not, *I will teach you by telling you what you need to know* – the style of much classroom teaching.
- It is not, *I will present a play before you and you will watch me*, as the actor contracts with an audience.
- It is not, *Listen and I will tell you a story. It is my story and you must not interrupt it.*
- It is, *You will become a playmaker, an author with me and will be a part of the story that I start and we create together.* The result is to make the creative community.

Drama then teaches in the following way. Taking a moment in time, it uses the experiences of the participants, forcing them to confront their own actions and decisions and to go forward to a believable outcome in which they can gain satisfaction. (Johnson and O'Neill, 1984, p. 99)

The requirements of working in role

The teacher, working in this way, is an important stimulus for the learning. It is not necessary to use role throughout the piece of work. It can be used judiciously to focus work at strategic points or to challenge particular aspects of the children's perceptions whilst other techniques and conventions are used to support the work and develop it.

In order to make the TiR most effective, we need to look at educational drama from the point of view of the 'audience', an audience who in this instance are participants at the same time. This will help us shape up the TiR elements particularly according to how the audience is seeing things. Here are two responses to considering the 'audience' position.

Audiences are people who make sense of what they see in front of them.
(Year One drama student)

In drama the pupils are making sense actively, knowing their meaning can be acted upon.

You're asking a very complex thing of the group of children. They have to switch from operating as audience to participant and back again often and suddenly. It could be that they find this difficult or, my hunch is, they're very good at it. (Experienced teacher watching a video of a class in a drama)

This is why this sort of whole group drama has so much learning potential. It involves the 'audience' in the process of the play-making, at the same time providing the teacher with ways of influencing directly the situation and the meanings. But that is only most effective if the teacher is skilled in genuinely responding to the contributions of the class members at moments where they take the initiative and make suggestions, those critical incidents where they are teaching themselves and each other.

An example of responding to the critical incident occurred in a session on the drama based on *Macbeth*. When considering the way of showing the overthrow of Macbeth, one of the class of 10-year-olds said, *I want to sit on the throne and stop him sitting on it*. The teacher took this up and put two of the servants on the thrones of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, with the rest of the servants gathered behind the thrones. He then set up the entry of Macbeth to the throne room. TiR as Macbeth entered slowly and stopped as though taking in the situation. *How dare you sit on the sacred seat of power! Relinquish it at once*. Of course, the pupils sat firm and outfaced him. He froze and one of the servants, picking up the idea of the situation, strode up to Macbeth, ordered him to kneel and took the (imaginary) crown from Macbeth to carefully and ceremoniously place it on the head of the usurping servant. The overthrow was fully symbolised, created by taking and formalising a very powerful idea from a pupil. The class cheered as Macbeth bowed his head and the two pupils stood up, triumphant.

How should a teacher using role relate to his or her class/audience? One of the key issues is seeing them as co-creators. If sufficient ownership is not given

to the class, it is possible to turn them into the wrong sort of audience, giving them too passive a role. When they are given opportunities to influence the outcomes, to make decisions, the drama becomes partly theirs.

Disturbing the class productively

Discovery/uncovering – challenge and focus

The ownership also arises out of the way the teacher operates. The teacher's function is to provide challenge and stimulus, to give problems and issues for the class to have to deal with. The drama is developed through a set of activities that build the class role, which is usually a corporate role.

We have to help them into the drama, making them comfortable, and then disturb that comfort productively. The fact that, as in any good play, the class discover things as they go along provides the possibility of productive tension.

In setting up the drama we are doing what Heathcote calls 'trapping [them] within a life situation' (Johnson and O'Neill, 1984, p. 119). The result of constructing the situation thus is that they can then discover what it all means. There, and in the resulting choices and decisions, lies the learning potential, borne out in an exciting challenge.

The key is how children are given information. They can be handed it on a plate or they can be given opportunities to uncover/discover/be surprised by information. In this last case there is much more involvement and ownership, especially if they have to work to get the information from someone who is reluctant to give it (as with Tim the Ostler in 'The Highwayman'), someone who only gives clues as to what is really going on (the central TiR in the 'Macbeth' drama), someone who does not realise the importance of the information (Icarus in the 'Daedalus and Icarus' drama). Hence the skill of the teacher lies in the art of the unexpected.

If pupils acquire knowledge and understanding by working for it, stumbling upon it or having it sprung upon them such that their expectations are challenged, their learning experiences will be more dynamic than simply being told. An example of this occurs in 'The Governor's Child', a drama based on Brecht's *Caucasian Chalk Circle*. The class are in role as a village community helping a woman with a baby, who, unbeknownst to them, has fled a revolution. The villagers discover later who she really is and then have to deal with the consequences.

It is important to withhold information early on, as any good playwright will do. Planning the 'how' and the 'when' of strategies is all-important here.

Responding to your class

The art of authentic dialogue – needing to listen – two-way responses

The class working as a community is the key to the use of drama as a teaching method. This is another reason that the class have more ownership.

This community is made most effective by the teacher participating in role. The art of teaching and learning should be a synthesis from a dialectical approach. If a teacher runs drama without using TiR there tends to be a lack of dialectic because the teacher produces the structure that the children engage with, but the teacher can only manipulate it from outside that structure. The result looks like the diagram in Figure 1.1.

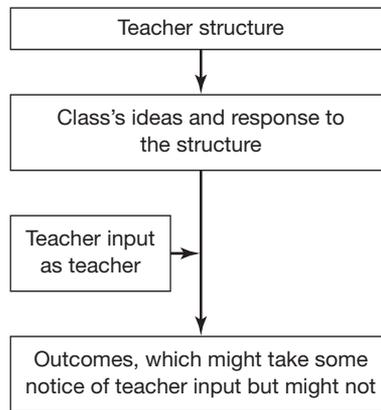


Figure 1.1

On the other hand, if the teacher participates through TiR then there can be a meeting point at which creation takes place because, in addition to planning the structure, the teacher's ideas can operate within the drama and challenge and engage with the children's ideas in a dialectic. The teacher can fully manipulate the structure from within and the resulting activity can be shown diagrammatically as in Figure 1.2.

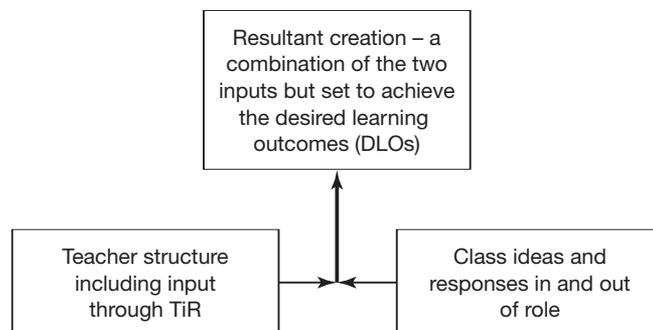


Figure 1.2

The second diagram shows the two inputs as equal, but that is not the case in practice. The teacher gives the impression of handing over the power and does so in a way that allows him or her to teach properly and yet empower the participants significantly. A TiR has to be properly planned and thought through so that the class are presented with an entity to respond to that embodies possibilities for learning.

The more we observe the use of TiR and the more we use it, we have come to the conclusion that if it is set up correctly, it does not require the person playing the role to have the same skills needed by the aesthetic actor. We are making the distinction here between the aesthetic actor and the social actor. The aesthetic actor will have learned skills related to voice, gesture and physicality that are not required by the teacher using TiR. The teacher in role will already have the skills of the social actor that are used in everyday life. These are skills that are learned in the presentation of self in every day life, the skills

that demonstrate an awareness of the relationship between who we are, where we are and how we are feeling. It is the ability to adopt an attitude, to behave as oneself 'as if' you were in a particular situation that is required.

Because we work in close proximity to the class there is not the need to project oneself over the distances an actor does when playing in a theatre. The class will use their creativity to see the role in a particular way that has been indicated as long as it has been properly signed to them.

Whereas the actor defines for the audience the message of the play within the circumstances of the plot, the teacher uses signing as an indication to the audience to join in the encounter, effecting and affecting the enterprise. (Heathcote and Bolton 1995, p. 74)

As a result of this difference, an actor, using lines written as a script, behaves in a very different way from a teacher improvising within a planned structure, who has to take account of what the class will say in response to the moves he or she makes.

The audience in the theatre waits for something to happen, but the participants in a drama session make it happen. (O'Neill 1989, p. 20)

As the class feed back their responses and make possible development of the role's importance the teacher must respond appropriately and therein lies the skill of the 'subtle tongue' and the possibility for authentic dialogue.

The teacher must respond to these responses in an authentic way, honouring how the class see the role. For example, when the servants discover that their king is a murderer in the 'Macbeth' drama, they can respond in two ways: to want to tackle this problem and bring him to justice *or* to see themselves as powerless to do anything. The TiR as the Steward must honour the truth of both possibilities and, in the first case, be the weak and fearing servant who cannot see how this can be done *or*, in the second, begin to challenge whether doing nothing in such a situation is going to work in keeping them safe. TiR in both instances must make the problems of choice apparent whilst not taking over the decision-making.

At other times the class can be given more input to developing the idea of the TiR themselves directly. The class must be made to work to achieve the aim they have been given in the drama.

Let us look at handling an extended example from the 'Pied Piper' drama (Toye and Prediville 2000) when the class as the villagers finally arrive at the mountain. At this point in the drama they have accepted the main aim as the villagers of getting their children back from the Piper. Mark the space in front of the class, where the children have been said to have entered the mountain, with two chairs. OoR ask them to describe the mountain in front of them and whether there are any clues as to whether the children have, in fact, gone into the mountain as they have been told. This will give them more ownership of setting the current context.

How are you going to attract the attention of the Piper if he's inside the hill? Work to use whatever idea they come up with, usually a chant or something like playing a pipe. Set them up to carry this out and then retire to the side. When they are not aware of you, slip behind them and when they are carrying out their task 'appear' behind them as the Piper. This simple, theatrical surprise engages the children even more. It is more effective than having a simple hot-seating.

Then as the Piper: *What do you want? You chant my name/play the flute/beat the rhythm that will summon me so you have made me appear.* Consider how you

deliver the opening lines. Is the Piper angry or just irritated? Is he amused in a superior way or is he genuinely intrigued to find out what they have to offer him? The dialogue that transpires here is critical to the outcome of the drama.

You need to bring out the key learning area, such as the fact that the Piper is not concerned any more about money: *You can offer me as much money as you like now, but I don't want that; you have upset me by trying to trick me. If you feel that I didn't do a good job then you should have said so rather than insult me with refusing to pay what we agreed. You should never break a promise. It's not about money any longer.*

Go OoR to discuss the Piper's attitude. The burden placed on the class at this point is to offer some way of showing their thankfulness, their sincerity and their trustworthiness to the Piper so that he will accept the apology and return the children. Accept any imaginative offer as long as it is not materialistic but is related more to establishing a human relationship of trust and honour with the Piper.

A different learning area would be to have a Piper who is too full of himself, someone who needs to be taught a lesson about justice and fairness. Hasn't he over-reacted to the original refusal to pay the full amount of money? Isn't stealing the children a much more serious offence than what the Mayor did?

The drama is set up as a framework and is not finished in the same way as a play written by a playwright. In fact, the secret of educational drama is to have the framework, even a tight framework, such that the class feel they have some ownership because of the parts that they are developing.

For example, in 'The Dream' they can create the feelings and thoughts of any character. The pupils can thought-track TiR. It is important not to define everything yourself. If they challenge Egeus and ask, *Why are you making Hermia marry Demetrius?*, the teacher can stop the questioning and come out of role to consider the possible answers to this question with the class.

A drama technique can be used to help them define possible reasons. They can thought-track Egeus about his daughter's opposition or why he must have her obedience. The TiR is not exclusively the teacher's creation. They will know as much about why a father tries to dominate a child, particularly from the child's point of view.

The 'play' we are creating is a joint enterprise and, when the beginnings of a role are in place and we have established the givens, the class will know what we are creating and why and can develop that role by the way they respond and the way they see it. TiR creates an ownership dynamic that is attractive to the participants.

The teacher-taught relationship

In all teaching situations there exists a power relationship between the learners and the teacher. The learners are bound together as a group merely by being the learners and, of course, as there are more of them than there are of you, they hold the power.

If the class decide as a group they do not want to learn and they wish to make your attempts to teach them impracticable, they can do it. The power in the classroom lies with the class. Of course, it does not look like this when the class are responding and contracting into the tasks set by the teacher but should some or all decide not to, the cohesion can be broken. In drama this power relationship is made overt. We must start from the point of view that if the class do not want the drama to work then it will not.

What we have to counter this with is a methodology that, if set up right and handled judiciously, offers interest and engagement to hold the class's attention. So much so that if a minority of the class start to undermine it, the committed will demand they stop; the disrupters are seen as spoiling the enjoyment and it is not unusual to see the majority let them know this fact.

We must begin with the interest level of the class: the plight of Goldilocks will interest the class of 4- or 5-year-olds and a mission to rescue Kai from the Snow Queen, children of 7 and 8. For those aged 10 or 11 it may be the jealousy of Tim the Ostler that gains their attention. The nature of drama makes the interest level a dynamic and flexible dimension. The pupils will, to a certain extent, define a level of interest in a drama by focusing upon the issues that interest them. There is not a hard and fast rule on age groups because we have used Kai with younger children and dramas from our Early Years book have been used with 12-year-olds. It depends upon how you do it.

In the classroom, the pupils enter into an agreement with you the teacher that you are in charge. This may be a tacit agreement, it may depend upon many factors but in it the teacher is in charge and there are certain rights and privileges attached to your role. The power relationship is asymmetric. Of course, in drama we have the possibility of shifting the power when we are inside the fiction because we may choose a role that has low status and has little power. This shift in status and power is very engaging for pupils. It can result in a different kind of dialogue from the usual teacher/pupil one and this can be very attractive to pupils.

So what are the possibilities in terms of power and choosing a role? There are five basic types of role and mostly can be illustrated from the 'The Dream' drama.

The authority role This is a role like the Duke in the 'The Dream' drama, who is presented with Egeus's problem and has to rule on it. This figure is usually in charge of an organisation and has the class in a role subordinate to him/her. The role is fair, applies rules and governs properly, but often does not know the full facts and issues and needs the class to investigate and enlighten him/her. It is very close to being teacher and can be reassuring for a class, but also has the negativity of not changing the teacher-taught relationship enough to allow more ownership for the class.

The opposer role This is a role that is often in authority but dangerous to and/or creating a problem for another role and, by extension, the class. Egeus is an opposer role who is against Hermia and therefore in opposition to the class role, as they take her side against his dictatorial treatment of her. This is a stimulating position for many pupils as the opposition of parents is something they have all experienced. The opposer role has to be used carefully because the response to it can be difficult to handle if it becomes too strong. We have to know what response to expect and be able to channel it productively.

The intermediate role This is often a messenger or go-between, as the servant role used in the 'The Dream' drama. This role is then caught between opposing sides and can appeal to the empathy in the class to help them out of the predicament. In the 'The Dream' it might be a servant to Egeus who is sympathetic to Hermia but does not know what best to do as she cannot just tell her employer what she thinks he should do. So she seeks the help of the class to solve her dilemma.

The needing help role This is a role like Hermia, who is in need of help to fight the injustice of her father's decision. This role, like the servant described above, is the best way to get empathy from a class and most raises the status of the class, putting them in a position of responsibility and thus generating interest and learning possibility because the teacher is the one who does not know what to do for once.

The ordinary person This role is in the same position as the role given to the class. We do not have this sort of role in our 'The Dream' drama but the Steward in the 'Macbeth' drama is like this. He faces the same problem and danger as the other servants represented by the class. Even though he is in charge of them, he needs them to sort it out for him and make decisions. Therefore this is a lower status role, the teacher being 'the one who does not know', a very powerful position of ignorance that teachers cannot ordinarily occupy. It is powerful because it shifts responsibility more to the pupil roles.

The three low status roles present more possibilities for the pupils' learning because the teacher-pupil power relationship is shifted and they have a semblance of power. We say 'semblance' because the pupil power only lies within the fiction and, as always, the teacher is running the class and can come out of role at any time to assume control. 'Semblance' is not a pejorative word here. It does mean a shift of some power, but not a takeover of power. In a fiction what seems to be the truth is as powerful as if it were real.

Related to issues of power and role is the issue of power and control in the classroom. Drama has for many teachers a Health Warning attached to it: 'This substance is dangerous, handle with care!' The fear of chaos is one that puts many teachers off using drama. However, if basic rules are applied, there is no more danger of chaos than in any other lesson. Let us look at what might appear to be a potential recipe for chaos in the planning of a lesson on 'The Pied Piper' (see Toye and Prendiville, 2000, p. 225) and analyse how it is handled and chaos avoided.

The class have been told they must confront the Mayor. The angry crowd of townspeople are making their way to the Mayor's parlour:

Before we can confront the Mayor we must set out how his office looks.

You take two chairs and place them at one end of the class and place a table and a chair behind it at the other end of the class.

This is the Mayor's parlour. First you must tell me how big the doors into his parlour are.

The distance between the chairs indicates how big the class want the door to be.

Now I want you to look at the table and chair over there. This is the desk and chair in which the Mayor sits. Tell me about the desk. What is it made of? What is it covered in? Is it simple or ornate in its design? Use your 'drama eyes' and tell me what you see.

The class offer suggestions, building the image of the desk. They then do the same with the Mayor's chair. The contributions are valued and embellished. The class describe the whole room and visualise where they will work.

The townspeople are marching down to the Mayor's parlour. They are getting near enough to be heard. What are they chanting?

Suggestions are made and those that have a rhythm and meter and words that will maintain the seriousness of the event are chosen. This strategy binds the group together, makes concrete their community and an attitude they can hold as a group. The chant is rehearsed and when it feels and sounds like an angry crowd it is ready to be used.

So, we have a parlour, we have an angry crowd and a chant. When you arrive at the door who is going to be the person to knock on these great doors? How are we going to make the sound to go with the knocking on the door? Are you going to stamp your foot? We need someone to give a signal to stop the chant otherwise we won't hear the knock on the door and the conversation with the Mayor.

Someone volunteers to stop the chant like a conductor stopping the music.

Finally we need one person to be spokesperson to say to the Mayor what you all think.

A volunteer is chosen and exactly what is to be said is worked out.

OK. I am going to take the role of the Mayor and I am going wear my chain of office. When I take it off I will be your teacher again and we can talk about what has happened. Listen to the story and you will know what to do:

'The mayor sat at his desk and outside he could hear a crowd chanting getting louder and louder, nearer and nearer.'

You signal for the chant to begin, which may be something like.

Get rid of the mayor.

Get rid of the rats.

Get rid of the mayor.

Get rid of the rats.

This gets louder and louder until the signal is given to stop and there is a loud knock on the door. As Mayor you get up and move around to the front of the table, half sitting on it in an informal way.

Come in, do come in.

The townspeople come in and the spokesperson delivers his/her speech.

We're fed up of you and we're fed up of the rats. We want your resignation, you're sacked!

The mayor is acquiescent, compliant and biddable.

Yes, you are right to be so angry! Every right. It's a dreadful situation and I have let you down. I have one last hope and that is a man who is due to arrive tomorrow.

You break out of role:

OK, let's stop the drama there and look at what has happened.

This response is not expected by the class. It surprises them, defuses their anger. They expect the Mayor to argue.

The key issue in this example is the way in which a potentially chaotic event in the drama is managed by careful structuring and rehearsing before it takes place. In this way, the lesson remains under control and the learning possibilities are maintained while at the same time the class has a carefully managed experience of the confrontation.

If you consider the points, rules and suggestions we have offered, you can construct very influential roles for all sorts of teaching.

Summary of points to consider

- Why we use teacher in role – pupils listen to teachers in role
- How we expand the possibilities of story and explore story
- Operating the two worlds of drama, inside and outside the fiction
- Moving in and out of role – managing the drama and reflecting on it
- Building the teacher role with the support of the class
- What, when and how to give information for maximum influence and effect
- How to dialogue with the class – teachers learning to listen well
- How we work with the class as collaborators
- Choosing the role – the low status roles offer more learning possibilities
- Handling drama – structuring for control – imposing shape and constraint.