



Soapy Bubble

Soap and Sitcom Scripts for Young People

Introduction

Background

This pack has been developed as a sustainable resource to support 5 – 14 Expressive Arts and was originally commissioned as part of East Ayrshire Council's Children's Service Plan aiming to explore Rights and Responsibilities as set out in the Council's Children's Charter and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Much of the material in this pack was devised during after-school drama activity in East Ayrshire Schools, funded by the Scottish Arts Council - New Opportunities Fund. The remainder has been devised, edited and compiled by Theatre Replico, maintaining the style initiated by the young people involved in the original workshops.

5 – 14 Expressive Arts

Emphasis has been placed on a practitioner's rather than an academic approach. We have therefore avoided making slavish reference to all the learning outcomes and key-stages in the guidelines. We are confident, however, that the suggested methods will not only cover all the requirements of 5 –14 but also lead to a much stronger understanding of the art form and yield even wider educational benefits, particularly in terms of literacy, PSD and aspects of citizenship.

The scripts broadly progress through 5 –14 age bands but each script has a certain amount of playing range. Teachers may wish to challenge pupils with the more advanced material. Application will sometimes depend on reading ability and for early primary there should be a greater emphasis on the suggested games, exercises and improvisations. In practise, however, some scripts been used with children as young as P2.

The Scripts

Style and Content

The emphasis of these materials has been placed on providing concrete contexts for pupils and teachers to work with. Teachers have often commented that existing drama resources focus on more abstract techniques such as “image” theatre which some find difficult to disseminate without input from specialists. While recognising the value of this approach, the producers felt that readily identifiable scenarios in the familiar genres of soap and sitcom would be more useful, accessible and relevant to young people.

Although the scripts adopt a fairly televisual style, they have been written in the format of stage-plays. They are deliberately open-ended, episodic and non-judgemental. This will allow for a variety of interpretations, flexible casting opportunities and the possibility of further exploration and discussion.

The majority of these scripts have been restricted to one or two pages to ease the pressure on photocopying budgets. However, pupils should have their own copy to work with and be encouraged to make notes and alterations (in pencil) especially if you are planning to present the material in a performance context.

Language

The producers recognise that some of the language may be considered unsuitable or even inappropriate in the classroom. Teachers should exercise discretion in this respect and feel free to make cuts or suggest paraphrasing as they see appropriate. Unfortunately, any attempt to ignore aspects of society that are unpalatable or even offensive would result in meaningless not to say boring drama, particularly in this context. When tackling topics such as racism and bigotry, for example, it is difficult to avoid reference to certain terms of abuse.

We have strived, however, to avoid any gratuitous expletives and there is nothing in these scripts that would be unacceptable on prime time TV.

We have attempted to adopt a reasonably “neutral” Scots dialect to broaden the geographic appeal. Paraphrasing the text using local colloquialisms should be encouraged at all times. This will give pupils a sense of ownership.

Format

Characters are indicated in **bold**.

Some characters have been deliberately left unnamed (e.g. A and B). This allows either gender to take on the characters. In instances where characters have been named it isn't necessarily the case that gender must be assigned as stated. Slight script alterations may be needed to justify gender changes.

Stage directions are indicated in *italics*.

Most pupils are able to recognise this distinction but for those with little or no experience of working with scripts this may need to be pointed out.

The font size has been selected as pt12 for the earlier scripts and pt11 from page 25 as the material becomes gradually more expansive for older pupils.

The Lesson Plans

Each script is accompanied by a structured lesson plan with exercises relating to movement, voice, acting and directing technique. The lesson plans are by no means essential to an understanding of the script but offer a suggested approach, which may be especially valuable where reading ability is an issue. Many of the exercises can also be used as freestanding elements.

We recognise that certain exercises may not be suitable in certain spaces. We would stress that if there is the slightest possibility of compromising children's safety, the exercise should not be attempted.

A variety of warm-up games and exercises have been included in appendix 1.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

At first sight, some of these scripts may not appear directly relevant to the Rights of the Child, however, it should be noted that they have been designed as a stimulus for further discussion. We have attempted to identify the crossover between the wider issues arising from the UN Convention and the experience of young people in East Ayrshire.

Each lesson plan suggests a link to relevant articles of the UN Convention. However, these articles are open to a variety of interpretations. Teachers and pupils should be encouraged to challenge our suggestions, bearing in mind that the material should provoke debate and question the balance of rights against social responsibilities. The producers have taken pains to avoid making judgements in this respect and pupils should be encouraged to adopt a similarly objective stance.

A summary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is appended on page 69.