

Using visible thinking in drama strategies for skilful writing

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Abstract

This action research examined the effect of drama strategies in improving the writing skills of Primary Two students in a Singapore School. The authors examined this through a series of lessons involving selected drama techniques to engage pupils in role play. Through effective questioning procedures, the motives and intentions of the characters in role were articulated and captured on thinking tool templates. The results indicated that students could use the variety of ideas and vocabulary generated during the drama sessions to add depth and creativity to their stories.

Introduction

Skilful Writing was one component highlighted by Primary Two teachers in our school as an area of concern based on the data analysis of the semestral assessments for Picture Compositions. Students had to compose a story that described the event or incident that had taken place in four pictures, shown in sequence. The teachers who taught these students in Primary Two observed that the students were unable to express their thoughts and views clearly and many used the teacher's model writing rather than generated their own stories. The students also interpreted the story in short, simple sentences which were not connected clearly and had few details and ideas.

The teachers believed that if the students collaborated through selected drama techniques, visible thinking could be initiated and this intervention would enable them to experience the depth of the characters and connect with the events shown in the four pictures to tell their story. At the same time, the teachers believed that they would be able to capture the authentic dialogue expressed by the students during role play on a word splash template and later the students could use them to write more elaborately and with greater imagination and diversity.

Literature review

The data collected in recent research on the effect of drama in improving writing skills confirmed that drama was a stepping stone that stimulated imagination, enhanced thinking skills, made learning visible for all to learn and led to better writing skills. Baldwin and Fleming (2003) argued that drama motivated imaginative thinking and enhanced the opportunities for children to write with a purpose by placing themselves within the context of the text. Brown (1990) posited that children were more likely to retain information taught through drama because it was multi-sensory and it gave a visual, physical and verbal representation of an idea.

Tandy and Howell (2008) felt that children's lack of experience led to limited vocabulary and imagination in writing. They emphasised that the ability, enthusiasm and inspiration of children to write were profoundly affected by where they had been, and what they had seen, heard, touched, felt, smelt or even tasted.

Wagner (1986) investigated the effect of drama on persuasive writing. She found that children who had engaged in role play wrote better letters than those who had been given a lecture. In another study that examined the influence of drama on imaginative writing, McNaughton (1997) observed that children who had experienced drama wrote more effectively and at greater length than those who had engaged in discussion alone. She posited that through drama they wrote more expressively, used more words that described emotions, thoughts and experiences, as well as made more appropriate word choices that best suited specific characters. She also discovered that participating in drama allowed the children to identify with their characters on an affective and cognitive level and, in so doing, made these characters come alive for their readers.

Giudici, et al. (2001) reported on the nature of learning in groups and how teachers could understand, support, document, and assess individual and group learning. The authors in Giudici, et al. (2001) argued that systematic and purposeful documentation of the ways in which groups developed ideas, theories, and understanding were fundamental to a meta-cognitive activity to make thinking visible. They also suggested that when a visual representation, chart, or table was used to capture a conversation or a set of students' responses during a given assignment, the students' thoughts and assumptions could become visible. The authors ascertained that even replaying of a video-recording or using a photograph of a class session during drama activities could be used by teachers and students to recall and interpret purposeful, social and emotional encounters that occurred during the role play (i.e. a video recording or photograph of a drama scene could be a resource for discussion). They found that it was possible through drama activities for teachers to document student observations and interpretations that were purposeful, social and emotional.

Our research questions were:

1. *Will drama techniques that allow for visible thinking influence the skilful writing of primary school pupils in Singapore schools?*
2. *Will there be an increase in the use of words in skilful writing when students are given a list of words generated through drama.*
3. *Will more students write about the internal perspectives of the characters in the story when they are involved through different drama techniques?*

Methodology

This research project investigated whether an intervention that was multi-sensory, experiential and guided could improve students' performance in skilful writing. and whether the use of different types of thinking tools and templates capturing the ideas, details and authentic vocabulary that surfaced during the drama activities would be beneficial in building in students an awareness of creating depth in their stories.

For this study, the students in two classes similar to the population of the school in terms of home language, socio-economic status and ethnic grouping were selected to adopt the interventions. It

was agreed that the two teachers would teach their own classes to avoid disruptions in the timetable.

All Primary Two teachers in the school had participated in a workshop 'Drama Techniques for Writing' conducted by Mrs Cheah Yin Mee, a trainer. The drama techniques learnt during this workshop were deployed by the teachers in planning the lesson plans and carrying them out in their classes. The titles of the picture compositions were in line with the themes in the Primary Two Stellar Units 1 to 7 and the duration of each lesson was an hour and all were to be conducted within a period of a year.

Action Research Plan

The plan was for the students to dramatize the roles of characters and enact scenes from the story so that they became the 'voices' in a story and the role of the teachers was to question their motives and intentions expressed during the role play and to identify a variety of 'possibilities' that could be interpreted in the story line. The first challenge was in the selection of drama techniques that teachers could facilitate in the classroom and make experiential for the students. The drama techniques selected were *thought tracking*, *soundscapes*, *freeze frames*, *still images*, *tableaux*, *overheard conversations*, and *teachers in role*. *Thought tracking*, also called *thought tapping* is a quick fire technique enabling students to verbally express their understanding of characters and situations that allows the teacher to efficiently gather feedback from the students in role and make thinking visible for the audience watching the role play. *Soundscape* on the other hand is a technique to give students a setting in which to use their voices, bodies and other materials to make their surroundings come alive during role play. *Freeze frames* is more an editing tool used during role play to control and explore scenarios as students freeze as statues and allow the teacher or the audience to conduct *thought tapping* and bring the frozen picture or character to life by asking them questions. *Still images* and *tableaux*, on the other hand, can be used in solo work or in large groups to portray a given subject matter where the students focus on their physical positioning, body language and facial expression to convey a message. There is no speech in a *tableau* but the students put themselves into a scene as characters with thoughts and feelings. The audience can then describe the scene like a photograph or do *thought tapping* to reveal their intentions and motives. *Hot seating* involves asking a student sitting in the hot seat to answer in character. This technique gives the class the opportunity to explore and probe the intentions and viewpoints of the character in the hot seat. Occasionally, *overheard conversations* in group discussions or in pairs, which have not been overheard by others, can be enacted in order to add tension or provide background information based on the scenario. Besides students in role play, the *teacher in role* is an effective tool to break down the barriers between the teacher and the students. When the teacher is in role as a fellow participant alongside the students, the teacher can guide the students on a journey and deliver the subject content in a context not typical of the classroom setting and shape the course of the activity through their character, using their voice and actions for the students to imitate and to be also in role.

The next challenge in the planning sessions was how to initiate students into looking at the internal perspectives of the characters and events and taking greater ownership of thinking and making visible thinking come alive in the classroom. The teachers decided to use effective questioning techniques during the role play to ease out the thoughts and emotions experienced by the students during role play. The questioning techniques were basically 'who, why, what, where, when and how' to elicit the thought processes of the characters in role depicting an event in the story and to guide the students to linking how this part of the story affected the other parts of the story. WHO they were and what their relationship was with the other characters affected WHAT the situation was

and WHY they were behaving in such a way. WHERE the scene took place and WHEN it was happening established the time in the story. In this way the objective of the character was clarified and students could see clearly how the character influenced the setting of the story.

Finally to carry out these interventions effectively and meaningfully, the teachers teaching the classes designed lesson plans which incorporated the selected drama techniques best suited to the theme in their story and they designed many thinking tool templates such as *story maps*, *character maps* and *story boarding* templates and *word splash* templates to capture the details enacted during role play and use them as resources to guide the students to write more confidently.

First Phase

The project was carried out in three phases according to the types of drama techniques being deployed to suit the topic of each story and how the students were initiated into behaving and participating in drama lessons which had specific instructional objectives while at the same time enjoying the lessons meaningfully.

In the first phase of the project, two lessons were carried out for the students to participate in, 'An Underground Adventure', and 'A Walk In The Park'. They also participated in a choral recitation of a poem, 'A Fright In The Dark.' Through these lessons, the students were introduced to three drama techniques '*soundscape*', '*still images*' and '*teacher in role*' (see Table 1).

In this phase, *teacher in role* played an integral part in initiating the students into drama because both the students and teacher worked in role to participate in an imagined dramatic situation. It was not 'theatre' – a performance practiced, being presented to an audience. It was 'drama' – the immediate experience of dealing with tension, conflict, searching for solutions, planning, persuading, and defending. Through this orientation, the students realised that they were not creating a 'product' – a play or a performance – but they were agreeing to play a role and go through a 'process' of thinking and responding as the characters in that role. In the 'The Adventure In The Dark' the teacher narrated from the teachers' script and the students mimed appropriately to the teacher's narration, experienced the characters' emotions and understood the meaning of the words expressed in the script.

The second drama technique was *soundscape*. The *teacher in role* acted as the 'conductor', whilst the students became the 'orchestra'. Using their voices, the students painted a *soundscape* for the scene narrated by the teacher during 'A walk in the park.' The collection of sounds enacted by the students taught them to use their five senses to create the atmosphere for the scene and to become more aware of sounds, space and emotions They also learnt how to follow instructions, listen to cues, work collaboratively as individuals or in groups and express their emotions. That orientation motivated them especially to be fluent and confident in using different modes of expression and actions to complement the drama activities.

Table 1

First Phase : Lesson 1 & 2 : Introduction to Drama techniques : The Underground Adventure

SIO	Drama Techniques	Thinking Tools & Templates	Procedure
1. Students mime to add effects to teacher's script	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miming Narration with mime Teacher in role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher's Script: An Underground Adventure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the teacher narrated an experience of walking in an underground tunnel, students mimed and froze to show facial expressions and gestures of their involvement in the scene
2. Students to provide sound effects for objects, animals and people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soundscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task Cards: Role play as different objects found in the park. eg trees, birds, butterflies, bushes and joggers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher narrated a walk in the park and students mimed and provided the background sound effects happening in the scene.
3. Students to recite a poem with actions and sounds. 4. Students to write a short poem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role Play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poem: Fright in the Night Choral Reading Rubrics: guide students on the quality of recitation and coordination of appropriate actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choral recitation of the poem motivated students to use different modes of expressions and actions to complement the poem. Pupils work in groups to discuss and contribute ideas to compose a similar poem.

Second Phase

In the second phase of the project, three lessons were carried out to engage the students in drama techniques, such as *still images*, *freeze frames*, *thought tapping* and *tableaux*. The students played an active role in thinking and being in role according to instructions given by the teacher and making the characters and events come alive. After two drama lessons on the 'Underground Adventure' and 'Mother's Birthday Surprise', the third drama lesson 'Fire in the Kitchen' was carried out and observed by the expert teacher, a trainer. The recommendations made were to capture the pupils' responses immediately as the role play took place on templates such as *word splash* and *character map*.

Specific drama techniques such as *still images* and *freeze frames*, both of which are a form of *tableau*, were used to elicit the missing details in the story. With *freeze frame*, the action in the play or scene was frozen, as in a photograph or video frame. *Still images*, on the other hand, required students to invent body-shapes or postures, rather than freeze existing action. This intervention was more effective for students who were less inclined to improvise dialogue. When a signal was given, the *still images* were brought to life through the questioning technique. The questioning techniques (4W & 1H: What, Where, Who, Why and How) facilitated *thought tracking*. The responses made during the intervention helped to inform the audience about the student's inner thoughts at that moment in the drama. It also encouraged the students in role to think deeply and express their feelings, thoughts and views more clearly and logically. Words and phrases expressed during thought tracking were unique and different and they guided the students to write with greater depth and originality.

Flashbacks on the other hand encouraged students to insert details from the past into a present narrative and provided necessary plot information or insight into the character's intentions and motives. *Flash forward* provided clues as to what would happen later on in the story. All responses were tabulated in the Before/During/After template for future use in the storyline.

In *tableaux*, the students froze as a group to depict an event in the story. They narrated the story as depicted from their own perspective and that enabled the students to connect and link the ideas in the story more effectively. The *character map*, which is a thinking tool template, enabled students to generate interesting words and phrases to describe the character. The words and

phrases elicited, written on post-its, were displayed on a simple outline of a human figure drawn on a large sheet of paper and stuck onto the wall. This template also enabled the students to infer meaning about the character and visually map the relationship between characteristics (emotions) and actions (behaviours). It allowed the students to analyse context clues, and the students collectively explored and constructed a more complex understanding of the intentions and motivations of the characters in the storyline. The drama techniques, the thinking tools and recording templates, when deployed according to the plot in the story, enabled teachers to make learning visible and experiential for the students. These techniques and tools also guided students into developing a deeper understanding of the plot and the students were able to contribute more ideas and details to make their plot more creative and authentic.

In the second phase, the general procedures for carrying out the drama techniques were executed with fewer disruptions and greater effectiveness with the students participating more imaginatively and more spontaneously in the role play. The students also followed the teachers' verbal instructions with greater confidence and the role play became more realistic and the students contributed with greater conviction. More details and ideas to support the plot were captured on the *word splash* board and the contributions provided more scaffolding for brainstorming ideas and eliciting appropriate words and phrases for the students to express their ideas and viewpoints more elaborately.

Table 2

Second Phase : Lesson 3 ,4& 5 : Mother's Birthday Surprise , A Haunted House, A Fire in the Kitchen
Learning to role play and execute the drama techniques purposefully to gather details and views to support their writing skills.

SIO	Drama Techniques	Thinking Tools & Templates	Learning Outcomes
1. Awareness of the theme and topic of discussion	• Sharing personal experiences	• Video & Power Point	• Gather general background information about the topic.
2. Identify the sequential structure of story.	Story overview	• Story Map Template	• Order the sequence of events and characters in the four pictures to show beginning, middle and end of story.
3. Role play the drama technique to express feelings and intentions.	• Still images Thought tapping Thought tracking	• Character Map: Role on the wall template.	• Use questioning techniques: 4W & 1H to surface character's actions, feelings and intentions. • To capture descriptive words on character map. • To capture interesting words and phrases
4. Identify what happens before and after events in the picture story to link the story more realistically	• Tableau • Freeze Frame • Discussion In Role	• Before /After Template • Story boarding templates with helping words and phrases.	• Use before/after template to capture intentions and motives of characters in role. • Use teacher's script with sound effects for the scenes eg haunted house to make it experiential and realistic. • Use story boarding template with captured words and phrases articulated during role play.

Third Phase

In the third phase, the students were more familiar with the drama techniques and they emerged as initiators. Another three drama lessons were conducted using all the drama techniques already learnt together with two more added techniques, *hot seating* and *overheard conversations*.

In *hot seating*, a character was questioned by the group about his or her background, behaviour and motivation. The student sitting in the 'hot-seat' answered as the character in the story. That technique developed the role and provided the students with an opportunity to ask questions to a character in relation to the story.

In *overheard conversations*, the students, role playing in small groups, 'listened in' on what was being said by different characters in the story. A signal was given to freeze all the groups and then

each group in turn was ‘brought to life’ to continue its improvisation while the other groups watched and listened.

As the students accepted and acted out the different roles, they felt the freedom to express their feelings through the dramatic play. Slowly they emerged as actors in the story and broke through the walls of reality, pretending to be someone or something different from themselves, and dramatising situations and actions to go along with the roles they had chosen to play. They also improved their language skills. Even the students who did not talk much in class started to talk more with other students so as to be included in dramatic play. The active involvement in the stories developed their imagination and creativity and, at the same time, motivated them to role play and work collaboratively to express in depth details about the characters and to think of vivid words and phrases to describe the events.

At the end of each drama lesson, the *story boarding* template, with the words and phrases captured during the interactive activities, prompted the students to compose their stories in their own imaginative way. Most of all, the students listened and responded to each other while in the dramatic play and they took on leadership roles to come up with different variations to the story. They were also very excited to present their own creative work and be critiqued by their peers.

Table 3

Third Phase : Lesson 6, 7 & 8 : The Honest Taxi Driver, A Visit to the Dentist, The Bully

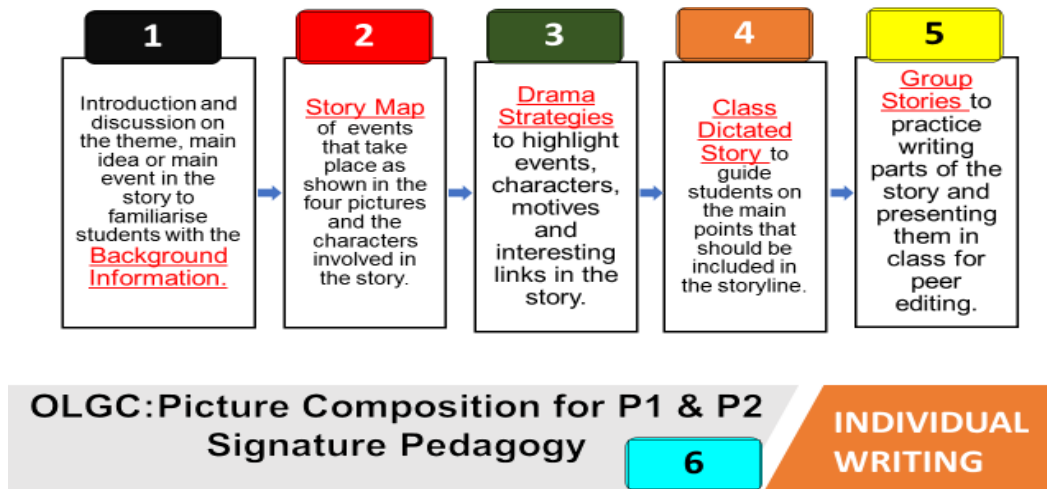
SIO	Drama Techniques	Thinking Tools & Templates	Procedure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of the theme and topic of discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing personal experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video clips Power Point presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Familiarise students with the general knowledge about the topic.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the sequential structure of story. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Still images 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Story Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present in order the sequence of events and characters in the four pictures to show beginning, middle and end of story.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role play the drama technique to express feelings and intentions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thought tapping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Character Map: Role on the wall template. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use questioning techniques: 4W & 1H to surface character’s actions, feelings and intentions. Capture responses on character map.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify what happens before and after events in the picture story And link the story more realistically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tableau Freeze Frame Hot seating Overheard Conversations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before /After Story boarding Template Class dictated stories Group Stories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use drama techniques to elicit interesting words and phrases Use before/after template to capture intentions and motives. Use teacher’s script with sound effects for the scenes eg haunted house to make it experiential and realistic. Use story boarding template with the word splash to write out the story.

Results and discussion

The drama techniques, the thinking tools and recording templates, when deployed according to the plot in the story, enabled teachers to make learning visible and experiential for the students and this gave them a deeper understanding of the topic, as well as the support and guidance to organise ideas more creatively and meaningfully in the plot, to develop the characterisation of the characters, and to explain the events happening in the storyline.

A fixed pedagogy for picture composition writing was established (see Figure 1). It always started with the introduction and a discussion on the theme, main idea or main event in the story to familiarise students with the Background Information. This was followed by filling in the Story Map of the events that took place in the four pictures and how the characters involved in the story linked

Figure 1: Stages in the fixed pedagogy for picture composition



with the events. To bring about depth to the storyline, Drama Techniques were initiated to highlight events, characters, motives and interesting links to the story. The cycle usually ended with a Class Dictated Story to guide the students on the main points that could be included in the storyline. The Group Stories covering certain parts of the story were done basically to help the students to collaborate and practise writing parts of the story and then presenting them in class for peer editing.

Evidence of impact on student learning

Higher Ability Group: Pupil A

Pupil A was already an able writer who was writing 216 words before the intervention. She was able to use a few interesting words like ‘sleeping soundly’, ‘streaks of sunlight’, ‘vase of lovely flowers’. After the intervention, the pupil wrote 371 words and used many of the words that were part of the *word splash*. (See Figure 2.)

Thinking tools such as *story map* guided students to explain the story in sequential order, with a realistic narration of events and a logical climax to the idea.



Figure 2: Progress by Pupil A

This progression was generally seen in the higher ability pupils, such as Pupil A, as they were already able to write with ideas that were fairly well connected and with relevant vocabulary. With the experiential drama techniques and the related *word splash* given, pupils were able to connect to the experience and use authentic dialogues and adopt a more personal style in their writing.

Middle Ability Group: Pupil B

There was an increase in the number of words written by the middle ability pupils. Pupil B was able to write 111 words before the use of dramatization and 218 words after dramatization was introduced. (See Figure 3.) She was able to write using a variety of rich vocabulary that had been verbalised during the role play and used in the context of the story, e.g.:

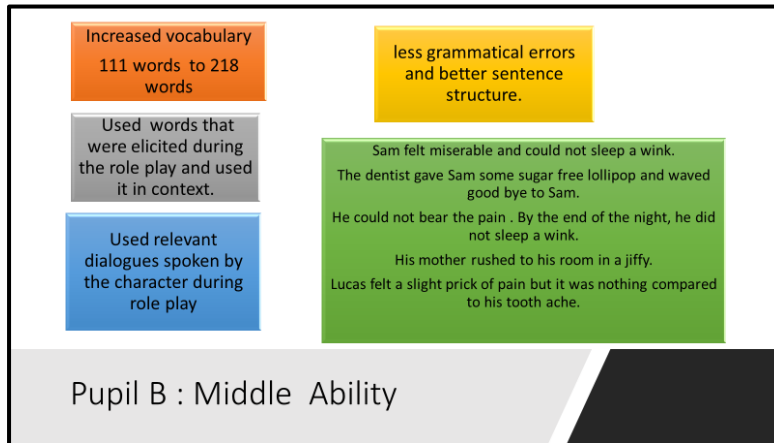


Figure 3: Progress by Pupil B

Sam felt miserable and could not sleep a wink. The dentist gave Sam some sugar free lollipop and waved goodbye to Sam. He could not bear the pain. By the end of the night, he had not slept a wink. His mother immediately rushed to his room. Lucas felt a slight prick of pain but it was nothing compared to his tooth ache.

These sentences showed that the pupils had internalised the events of the story and written in depth about what the characters were doing or feeling. Before the intervention their choice of words had been limited. There had been some repetition of words and pupils had been unable to expand on the experience.

Lower Ability Group: Pupil C

For Pupil C, there was an increase in the number of words from 122 words before dramatization to 181 words after. (See Figure 4.) Pupil C was able to use some of the words that were elicited during the *word splash* and use them in context, e.g.:

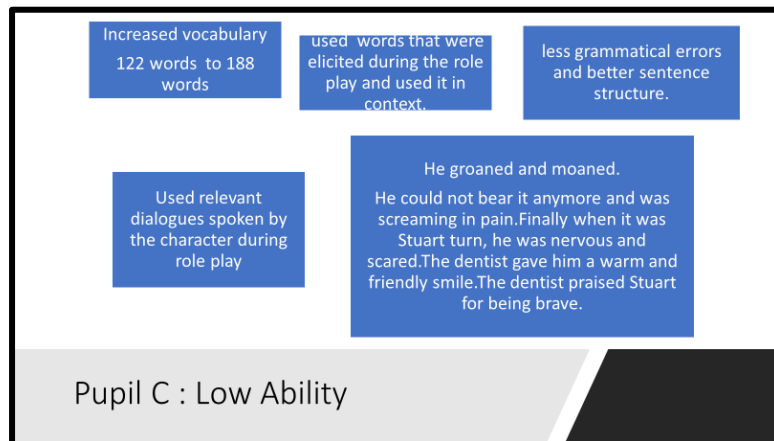


Figure 4: Progress by Pupil C

He groaned and moaned. He could not bear it anymore and was screaming in pain. Finally when it was Stuart turn, he was nervous and scared. The dentist gave him a warm and friendly smile. The dentist praised Stuart for being brave.

Greater exposure to drama and ideas and details shared by others gave the weaker pupils a chance to listen to relevant vocabulary elicited in context. Having these words documented in the *word splash* gave the pupils better guidance on how to construct meaningful sentences and use these words in context. It was also noticed that there were fewer grammatical errors and better sentence structures after the intervention.

Their written work showed that the intervention had greater impact on the writing of students of lower ability. The students who performed below expectations usually floundered under normal writing circumstances because they did not have the language to express themselves. They thus

needed the increased guidance provided in the intervention to explore and think more more deeply and explain the depth of the situation expressed in the plot.

Participation in drama techniques before writing increased the opportunity to be exposed to listening and use the language. The drama techniques together with the visible thinking tools acted as scaffoldings for students to write more effectively. The collaborative nature of this approach helped the weaker students to ride on the ideas of the more able pupils and improved their confidence to write better.

The findings of the present study were consistent with those of prior research that showed an increase in the length of written work (McNaughton,1997) and in the richness of storytelling after the participants of the study had engaged in drama activities (Wagner, 1996). One possible reason for this positive change found in the present study could be that the visual thinking templates made visible the thoughts, intentions and emotions of the characters during the role play of events in the story. The *story map* outlined the main ideas in the story. The *word splash* template captured the words and phrases that were elicited during the use of drama techniques and the *story boarding* template guided pupils to write more than three sentences for each of the four pictures in the story. Another reason for this increase could be that the pupils were more familiar with the words in the word lists and they used the words to express their ideas to describe the events and characters in the story more accurately. The *before and after* template also helped pupils to connect the events in the story in a logical manner.

Furthermore, the reason why the pupils wrote more about the internal perspectives of the characters in the story could be because they had had the opportunity to put themselves in the shoes of the character and give reasons for their actions and intentions during their role play of the events and characters in the story. The lessons were also engaging and the pupils loved the interactive approach, where they could express their feelings and emotions. The conclusion drawn was that drama techniques selected for visible thinking contributed to more imaginative and diversified ideas In the eight lessons

Conclusion and implications

Drama is multisensory learning and it provides for the holistic development of the child. Its focus is primarily on children's learning, confidence, self-esteem, creative and critical thinking and communication skills through role taking. Drama enables students to speak or write from their own point of view and helps them to develop abstract concepts, pictures, or make events come more to life. In role playing, students mimic behaviours and verbal expressions of someone or something they are pretending to be. At first, they imitate one or two actions, but, as time progresses, they expand their roles by creating several actions relevant to the role they are playing and become more imaginative and creative in developing new ideas. In dramatic play, students pretend to be the mother, fireman, driver, etc. and, by imitating the actions they have witnessed others doing and as the use of dramatic play increases, they begin to use more and more words to enhance and describe their re-enactments.

All the drama techniques enables students to learn in a collaborative and engaged learning environment. At the same time, the pupils constructively use rubrics and checklists that identify the features of a well written composition.

Dramatic play promotes the development of social skills through interaction with others, peers or adults and dramatic play promotes the use of speaking and listening skills. When children take part in this type of play, they practice words they have heard others say, and realize that they must

listen to what other 'players' say in order to be able to respond in an appropriate fashion. It also teaches them to choose their words wisely so that others will understand exactly what it is they are trying to communicate.

In dramatic play experiences, students have to agree on a topic, negotiate roles, and cooperate to bring it all together. By recreating some of the life experiences they actually face, they learn how to cope with any fears and worries that may accompany these experiences. Children who participate in dramatic play experiences are better able to show empathy for others because they have 'tried out' being that someone else for a while. They also develop the skills they need to cooperate with their peers, learn to control their impulses, and tend to be less aggressive than children who do not engage in this type of play.







When children are involved in make-believe play, they make use of pictures they have created in their minds to recreate past experiences, which is a form of abstract thinking. When children come together in this form of play, they also learn how to share ideas, and solve problems together. In order to work together in a dramatic play situation, children learn to use language to explain what they are doing. They learn to ask and answer questions and the words they use fit whatever role they are playing. Personal vocabularies grow as they begin to use new words appropriately, and the importance of reading and writing skills in everyday life becomes apparent by their use of literacy materials that fill the area.

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Appendix A: The three phases of the intervention to incorporate Drama Techniques to motivate skillful writing

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>First</u> <u>Phase</u></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>DRAMA TECHNIQUES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define Space • Teacher in Role • Narration with Mime </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>COMPOSITION TOPICS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Underground Adventure • A Walk in the Park • A Fright in the Dark </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; background-color: #333; color: white; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><i>Introduction to Drama Techniques</i></p> <p>Teacher's Script:</p> </div>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Second Phase</u></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>TOPIC: Mother's Birthday Surprise</p>  </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>TOPIC: A Fire in the Kitchen</p>  </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>TOPIC: A Haunted House</p>  </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; background-color: #333; color: white; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><i>Learning to role play and execute the drama techniques purposefully to gather details and views to support their writing skills.</i></p> </div>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Third Phase :</u></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>THE HONEST TAXI DRIVER</p>  </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>THE BULLY</p>  </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>The HAUNTED HOUSE</p>  </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; background-color: #333; color: white; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><i>More familiar with the drama strategies so students emerge as initiators. Use all drama techniques learnt and two more. (hot seating and overheard conversations)</i></p> </div>
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Appendix B: Visible Thinking Templates to capture and record details and vocabulary to guide Students to write more skillfully.

Rain

- What you can do when it rains?
 - I can bring an umbrella just in case.
 - I can bring a phone so when it rains I can call my mother.
- How do you feel?
 - I feel sick
 - I feel cold
 - I feel frightened
 - I feel wet
- What did you do?
 - I played in the rain
 - I ran home
 - I called my mother
 - I ran to take shelter
- What was unlucky?
 - I was sick because of the rain
 - I got struck by the lightning because I played in the rain
- When it rains, there is thunder and lightning.
- When it rains, it is dangerous.
- It is really cold when it rains.

Title: The Bully

Character Map

Character's Name: Alvin

Words to describe:

- mean
- strong
- cheeky
- mischievous
- bossing
- bossy

What the character saw (sights):

- Quick to notice a weaker, timid, gentle, kind.

What the character did (actions):

- Quick to think of a mischievous plan.
- He will encourage his friend to cooperate.

What the character said (dialogues):

- "Come on, let's do it!"
- "Oh, it will be fun!"
- "Come on, let's bully that girl!"
- "Hey! It will be fun!"
- "Are you with me?"

What the character felt (feelings):

- pride
- feels like a king
- excited
- invincible
- proud
- strong
- powerful
- confident

Subject: _____ **Date:** 21 May 2015

Schemer

words to describe a schemer:

- sly
- cunning
- coward
- crook
- sneaky
- creepy
- pretender
- untrustworthy

what he will say:

- It is a good idea!
- Let's do it!
- Don't be scared!
- I'm with you
- It's going to be fun!

what he did:

- encourage
- praise the bully
- more ideas
- will not be faithful
- scary cat
- will run away
- will give more suggestions.

what he felt:

- excited
- strong
- brave
- invincible
- powerful
- daring

Subject: _____ **Date:** 21 May 2015

Wimp

what he saw:

- two good friends to be with
- he can join in the fun

what he felt:

- happy
- excited
- comfortable

words to describe a wimp:

- shy
- coward
- untrustworthy
- scared
- quiet
- frightened

what he did:

- tag along
- enjoy the fun
- "I will watch you!"
- "It is okay."
- "Yeah! It is a good idea!"

Name: _____ **My Story Map**

Title: An Unlucky Day

Setting: school, Mrs Lee's house, on the road

Characters: John, Mrs. Lee

Beginning: John was walking to Mrs Lee's house from school to visit. A few minutes later it starts to rain cats and dogs luckily he had an umbrella.

Middle: John was going to cross the road when a dashing blue car drove past him and a puddle of water splashed on him.

End: He finally got to Mrs Lee's house but he caught a cold and couldn't eat Mrs Lee's special ice-cream that she had made.

Appendix C: Students' Sample Written Work

BEFORE INTERVENTION


HA Mothers birthday Date: 20 January
 Lyla woke up early in the morning to prepared her Mothers birthday but she did not have a plan. She rushed to her brothers room to tell him to tell him about their Mothers birthday and shook him well he was still sleeping softly and streaks of sunlight coming into the room. The clock was going tick tick, tick, tick, tick, Lyla was a caring and kind girl and did not forget about her Mothers birthday so she prepared a vase of lovely flowers and a wrapped present and a card sent for her. She also prepared Ham sandwiches and butter on the table but then, Lyla carefully carried a tray of a pot of coffee along with four cups.

Ending ?

At last Lyla's brother wake up, he saw what Lyla was doing and started to remember about his Mothers birthday. He quickly ran to the kitchen and put a frying pan on the stove to fry some eggs. Mean while Lyla's parents have wake up and when they looked out the hall they had a pleasant surprised. Lyla's Mother was so surprised that she praised Lyla and her brother for making such a wonderful birthday. Lyla took her mother to the table and waited for her to sit down. Lyla's Mother did enjoy the food and had the best birthday ever!

Student A

AFTER INTERVENTION




HA

Paragraph 1

1. felt a sharp pain.
2. screamed
3. swallow
4. rushed to the mirror
5. panicked
6. great pain
7. unbearable
9. fearful

One morning, Tristen woke up with great pain. He felt a sharp pain in his teeth and did not know what was it. He quickly rushed to the mirror to take a look "oh my goodness!" Tristen screamed. He realized his face was swollen. Tristen could not stand the unbearable pain so he started to panic and would not stop and then "ouch ouch!" It is so painful, I wish this would not happened at all! he said. Tristen was fearful that it would take a very long time for the pain to stop but he knew there would be a cure to the pain.




HA

Paragraph 2

1. jiffy
2. groaning in pain
3. no choice
4. a glass of salt water
5. gurgle
6. afraid

Just then Tristen's mother heard him groaning in pain. She rushed to his room and asked him what was his problem. Tristen then said "its my tooth, it hurts so much and I can't stand the pain". His mother was very worried so she rushed to the kitchen. In a jiffy, she came back with a glass of salt water and told Tristen to gurgle it. Tristen then did as he was told and felt a little bit better. Tristen's mother told him to rest on the bed and she will call the dentist for a appointment. Tristen was really afraid when his mother told him that but had no choice to go to the dentist.




HA

Paragraph 3

1. dental clinic
2. dental chair
3. reached
4. decayed
5. asked

It was 9 o'clock. Tristen and his mother had reached the dental clinic, the nurse led Tristen to the dental room and there he saw the dentist Mr Lee. Tristen then sat on the the dental chair. Mr Lee asked Tristen what was his problem. Tristen told Mr Lee that his teeth was hurting. Mr Lee asked Tristen to open his mouth to take a look. Mr Lee told Tristen that one of his teeth had already decayed and will have to remove it.



HA

Paragraph 4

1. Thanked
2. few minutes
3. removed
4. treatment was over
5. remind

After a few minutes. The treatment was over. Tristen was glad that the pain was over. Tristen and his mother thanked Mr Lee for the appointment and hope to see him again. Mr Lee told Tristen that he had removed his tooth already. "Wow! I did not even feel my tooth being removed" said Tristen. Before Tristen and his mother left the clinic, Mr Lee reminded Tristen if he wants to eat sweets, he must brush his teeth.

BEFORE INTERVENTION

Subject: composition Date: 27 January





MA **Mother's Birthday** **Student B**

On a quiet Sunday morning, Sandy woke up early. She tiptoed to Max's room and whispered in his brother's ear, "Wake up! The children had planned a surprise breakfast for their mother."

Sandy went into the kitchen and boiled water to make coffee. While the water was boiling, she toasted the bread with her mother's favourite strawberry jam. Then she set the table. Later she put a bunch of lovely flowers into a beautiful vase, specially for their mother.

Max fried some scrambled eggs. He carefully flipped the eggs around on the frying pan and put them on the plates. After that, they woke their parents and showed the breakfast table. Their mother had a pleasant surprise.

AFTER INTERVENTION

 <p>Paragraph 1</p> <p>uncomfortable howling in pain tossing and turning Sleep a wink</p> <p>MA</p>	<p>A visit to the dentist Lucas had a bad toothache. He has a sweet tooth but did not like to brush his teeth. One day he was very uncomfortable and was <u>howling in pain</u>. He tried to sleep but he was <u>tossing and turning</u>. He could not bear the pain. By the end of the night, he did not manage to sleep a <u>wink</u>.</p>	 <p>MA</p> <p>Paragraph 2</p> <p>no longer bear it jiffy Painkillers an appointment</p>	<p>Finally Lucas <u>could no longer bear it</u> and screamed. His mother rushed to his room in a jiffy. She gave him some salt water together with some <u>painkillers</u>. He felt better soon after. The next morning, his mother called the dentist and made an <u>appointment</u>.</p>
 <p>MA</p> <p>Paragraph 4</p> <p>fill the cavity Slight prick of pain Surprised learned his lesson Promised floss</p>	<p>she had to Dr. Mathu said, fill the cavity. Lucas felt a <u>slight prick of pain</u> but it was nothing compared to his toothache. Soon, it was done. Lucas was <u>surprised</u>. It was not so bad after all. Lucas thanked the dentist. She gave him a sticker. After <u>home</u> that he went with his mother. That day, Lucas <u>learned his lesson</u>. He <u>promised himself</u> to brush his teeth and <u>even floss</u> his teeth regularly.</p> <p>Next day Word flow comp</p>	 <p>MA</p> <p>Paragraph 3</p> <p>begged reached their destination ushered examined mouth mirror deep cavity</p>	<p>On the way to the dental clinic, Lucas begged his mother to find another way to help his toothache. He hated visiting the dentist. When they reached their destination, Dr. Mathu <u>ushered</u> Lucas in. She was friendly. She examined Lucas's teeth with a <u>mouth mirror</u> and found a deep cavity.</p>

BEFORE INTERVENTION: LOWER ABILITY : STUDENT C

Subject: _____ Date: 27 January

Mother's Birthday Student C

LA It was a quiet Sunday morning. Kimberly got up early so she can make the present and card. ~~from~~ ^{make a} ~~she~~ ^{make} her brother, Brandon ~~was~~ ^{was} still in bed. ~~she~~ ^{she} ~~walk~~ ^{was} her ~~father~~ ^{father}. Kimberly and Brandon are going to ~~celebrate~~ ^{celebrate} their mother's birthday.

They went into the kitchen and started ~~teaching~~ ^{teaching} breakfast. ~~Brandon~~ ^{Brandon} ~~is~~ ^{is} ~~cooking~~ ^{cooking} the egg with a frying pan. ~~Kimberly~~ ^{Kimberly} is doing the tea. We are ~~also~~ ^{also} ~~also~~.

Kimberly is ~~getting~~ ^{laid} the table and also ~~put~~ ^{put} the present and card on it. The eggs and the past also, the tea ~~are~~ ^{are} all ready. Kimberly also put a vase of flowers to ~~beautify~~ ^{beautify} the table. ~~is~~ ^{is} ~~finishing~~ ^{finishing} the vase and the flowers.

Later, ~~Kimberly~~ ^{Kimberly} and Brandon ~~tip~~ ^{tip} ~~to~~ ^{to} their parents' room. ~~We~~ ^{We} ~~wake~~ ^{wake} them up. ~~They~~ ^{They} ~~were~~ ^{were} ~~surprised~~ ^{surprised}! Their parents were ~~and~~ ^{and} proud of them, as they ~~saw~~ ^{saw} the table ~~for~~ ^{for} they. We took her to the table ~~to~~ ^{to} eat ~~and~~ ^{and} we had a wonderful

AFTER INTERVENTION

	<p>A Visit To The Dentist Stuart ^{was} having a bad toothache. It ^{was} because he did not brush his teeth everyday and he had been eating sweets every night. He <u>groaned and moaned</u>. He <u>couldn't bear it anymore</u> and was <u>screaming in pain</u>.</p>		<p>Mom heard the <u>screaming</u>. "What happened," she asked. Stuart ^{kept} opened his mouth to show the <u>cavity</u>. She told Stuart lie in bed. ^{to} She ^{to} rushed to ^{to} make a <u>glass of salt water</u> and ^{and} <u>passed a painkiller</u> for Stuart to eat.</p>
	<p>Mother brought Stuart to the <u>dental clinic</u>. They ^{had} have to wait <u>about 10 mins</u>. Finally, when it is ^{was} Stuart's turn, he is <u>nervous</u> and <u>scared</u>. Mom ^{and} said <u>everything will be fine</u>. The dentist gave him <u>a warm and friendly smile</u>. Next, he put on <u>gloves</u> and a <u>mask</u>. He started <u>filling Stuart's cavity</u>.</p>		<p>When it is over, Stuart was happy. Mom came in <u>to check on him</u>. The dentist <u>praised Stuart</u> for being <u>brave</u> ^{but} <u>reminded him to brush his teeth everyday</u> and not to eat too many sweet things. Mom brought Stuart to McDonald <u>for a Sundae</u> to <u>end the day</u>. But Stuart brushed his teeth <u>after</u> ^{after} <u>reaching home</u>. <i>7</i> <i>Nice pretty good letter!</i></p>