

TOOL KIT



FORUM THEATRE PLAY IN CLASSROOM

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PURPOSE

GOAL

The aim of Forum Theatre is to facilitate generative dialogue among students, encouraging the emergence of creative and collective searches for solutions on the theme under study.

DESCRIPTION

INSTRUCTION

1. SETTING (Before the session)

Depending on the topic to be discussed with the group, the facilitator writes a story related to the topic.

INSTRUCTION

It is mandatory the story follows these characteristics:

- It should represent a situation as close as possible to the real experiences of the group.
- It has to represent a clear conflict
- It should be short, no longer than 10 lines.
- That the characters can be differentiated among, at least, Perpetrator (who has the power and does the violence), Oppressed (who receives the violence) and Witness (who observes without intervening).
- That the ROLES (who is he/she?), DESIRES (what does he/she want?) and FEARS (what is he/she afraid of?) of each character are clear.
- The oppressed person loses the conflict in the ending part of the scene.

INSTRUCTION

2. DEVELOPMENT (50')

- Once with the group, the facilitator asks for volunteers to act out the previously written story. The volunteers are given the story and given 5 minutes to learn and rehearse it, possibly outside the classroom.
- In the meantime, the facilitator explains to the group that they will see a short play twice, and that, the second time, they will have the possibility to stop the action and replace one of the actors or actresses to try to change the ending of the story. To stop the play, they will have to clap their hands and shout **STOP!** whenever they think that something could be said or done differently.
- The facilitator rehearses the use of the **STOP!** rule with the audience, trying it out collectively.
- The group of volunteers is invited to act out the scene in front of the class audience for the first time.

INSTRUCTION

- At the end of the scene, the audience is asked about the theme of the play, to make sure that everyone is clear about the facts seen.
- The use of STOP is reminded again.
- The scene is repeated a second time, this time inviting the audience to stop the action, enter the stage and look for alternative solutions, substituting an actor or actress.
- Each time an intervention is given by the audience, at the end, the facilitator asks the audience about the intervention, with the aim of generating a dialogue oriented to deepen the theme. Possible script questions could be:
 - What have we seen?
 - How does it relate to your life?
 - How do you think this can be put into practice in real life?
 - Would it be easy/difficult? Why?

INSTRUCTION

3. CLOSING (10')

- At the end of all the proposed interventions, at a time when the dialogue has progressed sufficiently, the facilitator invites the audience to generate a collective summary of everything that has been experienced, going through those moments of the dialogue that have represented an insight for the group.

PROS



- The tool facilitates student participation through the use of the body and improvisation, making the activity more dynamic.
- It is possible to clarify the different points of view on the situation thanks to the staging of the different thoughts among participants.

CONS



In order to create an effective space for dialogue, a group of at least 10 students is recommended

TIPS



- Once an audience member replaces a character, the rest of the audience will have to wait for the end of the proposal to enter.
- In case someone from the audience replaces the oppressive character and magically changes its attitude, the facilitator can use these guiding questions with the audience: What should happen in real life for this person to have this behavior? How did he come to generate this behavior in the first place?
- In case no one wants to come out and stand in for the characters, the facilitator can probe with the audience about what they think are the difficulties, in real life, in modifying events like the ones depicted on stage.

SOURCE

RESOURCE

- <https://teachersactup.com/theatre-games/for-umrainbow-of-desire/>
- <https://theactivistclassroom.wordpress.com/tag/forum-theatre/>
- <https://organizingforpower.files.wordpress.com/2009/03/games-theater-of-oppressed.pdf>

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