

Designing Kiola Park School playground

In this unit students participate in a whole-class improvisation in which they are enrolled as designers and make links with learning in Mathematics.

They will:

- consolidate and extend belief in roles
- manipulate drama elements to enhance meaning
- show the consolidation and extension of movement and language skills
- critically evaluate drama and through drama
- enhance their understanding of concepts of space and measurement as they relate to the design task.

Drama forms

- improvisation

Resources

- maps, architectural designs where needed



Learning activities

Getting started

- Students research different methods of measuring length, area and volume of large areas. They research scale drawing.
- Explain that for the purpose of the lesson the students will be in role as designers with expertise in architecture, landscape design and environmental problem-solving.
- Explain that the teacher will take on the role of someone who needs the students' help in a design task. Indicate the space in which the drama will take place and make clear when the teacher will be in or out of role, e.g. *When I am carrying this folder I am in role. When I conceal it I am out of role.*

• Taking on roles in situations • Developing drama • Performing

- Students are divided into groups of four or five. Students are in role as expert designers about to be employed to complete a design brief for the playground at Kiola Park Primary School. They decide on individual names and company names. Groups list on paper three fictional sites which they have designed and talk about the skills they are bringing to this task.
- The teacher-in-role introduces him or herself as assistant to the Projects Manager for Local Community Planning and thanks designers for being available at such short notice. S/he outlines the design brief by indicating on a board or on paper the shape and dimensions of the yard. The designers are to develop plans which show the best use of space to incorporate new gardens, playground equipment, an open playing field, bubblers and seats.
- Designers ask questions about the task, for instance: *How is the space to be used? How many students use it? What kind of landscaping and equipment exists already? What changes are required?* etc.
- Groups use chart paper to record their plans. Designs must be detailed with clear labelling. Teacher-in-role indicates that the designers have a week to develop their plans for presentation.
- Out-of-role groups draw on experience from their own playground, e.g. *survey uses of the playground, survey needs of present students in playground, measure playing areas, draw or obtain a map of playground showing present uses, investigate measurements of various playing fields and courts.*



- Students use information to draw a new design for the playground at Kiola Park Primary School, including correct measurements and completing it to scale. They decide on how to present their ideas in the context of the improvisation.
- Students-in-role gather a week later to present their designs to the teacher-in-role as assistant to the Projects Manager for Local Community Planning. S/he thanks them for their effort and informs them that the preferred design will be voted on at the next school community meeting.
- In role the students may present their designs again to a group of parents or to other students or teachers in the school and respond to questions from the audience.

Responding

- Discuss the improvisation and the use of teacher-in-role. Write about the experience in drama journals.
- Make statements about mathematical skills used and understandings developed. Discuss as a class.

Assessment of students

- Observe the students' drama work and their process of working.
- Analyse students' oral and written comments, drawings and other responses to their drama work.
- Consider the following questions about students' learning in drama:
 - ♦ How well are they able to consolidate and extend belief in roles? How effectively do they use voice and gesture to characterise and communicate the roles? To what extent are they showing a serious commitment to their roles? To what extent are they able to depart from stereotypes and create new and challenging roles?
 - ♦ What evidence is there that students are manipulating drama elements to enhance meaning in their work? How are mood, focus, contrast and tension being developed and used in their work? To what extent are new techniques being sought and tried? How is the use of symbol becoming more evident in their work? How effectively are students working together?
 - ♦ Which movement and language skills are being consolidated and extended as they perform? Which movement and language skills need further development?
 - ♦ How well are they able to critically evaluate drama? What else are they learning through their drama experiences?
- Consider the following question about other learning:
 - ♦ How has the drama work contributed to the students' understanding of particular concepts of space and measurement as required in the completion of the design task?

Extension activities

- Explore with students the possibility of using teacher-in-role in other lessons requiring students to be enrolled as experts hired to solve a problem or complete a task, e.g. Science and Technology. Have students report their findings in the context of a formal meeting set up for a particular purpose.

