

Life in the Tenements

A Drama Scheme to unlock life at the time of 1916

by Sarah FitzGibbon

Drama scheme linking Drama with History (the context for the 1913 Lockout and the 1916 Easter Rising), SPHE (The Rights of the Child) and English.

Session 1

(Please note that this session is to build the context for the Rising)

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

Cleared desks

3 sheets of paper

The Royal Society of Antiquarians Ireland slideshow from the Me Mollser website.

Any resource history material you wish them to use from the History Curriculum.

I also recommend www.census.nationalarchive.ie/exhibition/dublin/poverty_health.html

Step 1

Ask the class what do human beings need to survive and thrive. Collect their answers on a list. This will be referred to later as the Survival Sheet.

Step 2

Explain to the class that you wish to explore life in a Dublin Tenement about 100 years ago. Just gather their initial thoughts about what Dublin would have been like 100 years ago?

Step 3

Show them the section from the National Archive site listed above to illustrate the development of the tenements and the density of population. It is worth pointing out the list of professions among the tenement dwellers. To illustrate the living conditions show them the RASI slideshow, taking time to fully appreciate the interior images for clues to how people ate, slept, toiletted, cooked and washed.

Step 4

Divide the class into groups of 5. Please bear in mind they will be in these groups for some weeks. Inform the group that for the next few sessions, they will be creating a family from the tenements around 1915. Give each group a sheet of paper to record the following:

Their names

On the other side of the page ask them to record the name of their created family and the roles that the members of the group will play in that family.

In each family there should be a

- Father
- Mother
- Grandparent – a person who still takes an active part in family life
- One 16 year old
- Any remaining children should be over the age of 8
- If you feel the group can manage it, you can use a prop baby.

Each member of the group must give their character a name. Allow each group to record their family's information.

Step 5

As a family group they must decide who is responsible for the following:

- Who fetches the coal?
- Who fetches the water?
- Who works? At what?
- Who washes the clothes?
- Who cooks the dinner?
- Who minds the money?
- Who tidies the tenement?
- Who empties the chamber pot?

Keep a record of all of these for use in the next session.

Suggested activity

Use the information gathered, the images and extracts that the family outlines together with the survival sheet, to create a collage for the project.

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Session 2

(Please note that this session is to build the context for the Rising)

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

Your collage

A cleared classroom/ hall

Lots of masking tape

Metre stick

A camera

The RSAI Slideshow

Please note: there is a degree of classroom and equipment preparation required for this session

Step 1

Inform the class that you are about to measure out the tenements. Show them the interior shots again. Ask them to list the common features in the rooms i.e. fire places; windows and a bed. Ask them about how a family might decorate their place. Give them their family information sheets to refer back to.

Step 2

As every classroom is different, you can gauge yourself how much space you allocate to each family. I would suggest that that you create a grid with 6 boxes about 1 metre by 2 metres. If you have access to a larger room that is fine but the main object of the exercise is to allow the class experience a simulation of the lack of personal space, privacy, poor hygiene but also the sense of community that came with life in a tenement. Each family can have one space each and the final space is a communal space like the entrance hall, Mark out the door and the front steps.

Mark out the spaces with masking tape.

Step 3

Allocate a space to each family. Allow them to decide where elements of the room are, such as the fireplace and the door. Decide whether they have a curtain for privacy and where it might be. Where does everybody sleep?

I found it useful for them to mark these with more tape.

Once you feel that there is consensus within each family, move to the next step.

Step 4

Tell the the families that using the information they have about their family's life and their tenement room, you wish to create a 'stop animation' or sequence of picture of tenement life over a 24 hour period. In preparation for this, you would like each family within the tenement to create a series of frozen images of the tenement at different points of the day.

Remind them that some people welcomed others into their space while others did not. Also, say that if a character leaves the tenement during the day for work or occupation, the student playing that character should just sit to the side and wait for their time to re-enter. It is important to check in with these students about where they are working and what they are doing.

Tell them that you will go through these images once in order to practice before you will use your camera.

Call out the following times if day and allow them to create their images:

- Dawn about 6 o'clock
- 10 o'clock
- 1 o'clock

Put in a break here for further conversation and exploration. If you feel the group can carry on straight through; but I found that the action got too 'high' and focus started to disapate.

- 4 o'clock
- 6 o'clock – the angelus
- 8 o'clock
- midnight

Step 5

Giving the group a count of ten to get from one image to the next start the day at 6am and work your way through the images for the last time, photographing each one as you go. I find it helps to remind them about their facial expressions before you start.

Step 6

Once done ask the pupils what they discovered about life in the tenement from the exercise. Ask them if there are things that we miss by living the way we do now from the way we did then?

Step 7

Ask them to fill in any new facts about the families that they discovered during this session, e.g. who was working and at what? Where was the family's money coming from?

Suggested activity

Create a slide show of the images in sequence to see the day in the life of the tenement.

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Session 3

Duration: 1 hour

Please note:

A version of this exercise will be used in the preshow workshop for Me Mollser. If you are receiving this performance piece, please skip to session 4.

Materials required:

Masking tape and a cleared classroom or give each family a desk

Chalk

Baby wipes

Step 1

Mark out a grid of 6 boxes and place each family in one box. Alternatively give each family a desk in the classroom to represent their room.

Step 2

This is a combination of Chinese whispers and Tag.

Tell the group that one of the good and bad things about the tenements is that every one was living so closely together. It could lead to great friendships but also it had a down side. Each family is going to send a family member to visit their neighbours for a gossip and a cup of tea.

Select one person from the family who will be the host and cover their right hand with chalk.

Each family selects who they will send for the gossip. This person's objective is to get as much information about that family as they can during their time in their room.

Step 3

The selected family members move in a clockwise direction to the tenement room (or desk) next door. Tell pupils that on your signal they have 1 minute to shake hands and gossip before they then freeze. Then you ask them to move on to the next room and the next family member leaves for a gossip. The hosts always stay put and must shake every visitor by the hand.

Allow it to continue until the first family representative returns home or the only family member left in their room is the host. Then stop the game.

Step 4

Assess with the group how the chalk has spread. Tell the class that you were trying to show them how TB could spread in the tenements.

Step 5

Allow them to clean up.

Step 6

Debrief about the gossip and see if there is anything they wish to add to their family's information sheet.

Suggested activity

Research into TB in Ireland at the beginning of the last century.

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Session 4

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

Cleared desks

Print off the character briefs/ role cards (provided at the end of this session)

A Sheet of paper

Pre-drama work

Draw a line down the length of the page and tell the class that this is your timeline. It will go from 1900 – 1916. Ask them to think of any events they know fit in or happened in that period of time. While they may discuss The Rising for the drama purposes, it hasn't happened yet.

For session 5, you may need to help them identify the variety of political events and forces during this time-frame in Ireland. It would be great to include the Gaelic League; the Abbey Theatre 1904: Home Rule; the Ulster Covenant in

1912; the Dublin Lock Out 1913 and the First World War 1914-1918.

Ask the class to think about and talk about what effect these movements and events would have had on our families before Easter 1916

Step 1

Tell them that each family is going to have a meal together. Allow each group to set up their table and figure out what each member of the family will do to prepare for the meal. In each family there is a 16 year old. Ask them to come over to you as you wish to give them a piece of information while the others set up.

They are to tell the others their news over the meal. The rest of the family may have the gossip from the last session to share.

Invite each grandparent over and give them a role card. Again, they are only to bring the information up over the meal.

Step 2

Ask each group to set up for their meal and tell them that on your signal the 16 year olds will enter and the scene can begin. Allow each family play through the scene for as long as is comfortable. Freeze the action.

Step 3

Debrief each group about what was happening and how people are feeling. Ask each group to spend some time discussing what happened next. Allow the 16 year old say what happened in their story and invite the families to add any new information to their collage.

Suggested activity

I believe this is a good spring board into the exploration of the Easter Rising.

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Character Briefs for Session 5

16 year old Family 1:

You are going to join the Irish Citizen Army under James Connolly. You will be called to fight and give your life if the revolution comes.

Note:

The **Irish Citizen Army** or ICA, were trained trade union volunteers set up to defend workers during the Lock out in 1913 by James Larkin and Jack White. The Irish Citizen Army was reorganized in 1914. In October 1914, the Citizen Army was placed under the command of James Connolly. He felt that the ICA was a revolutionary organisation dedicated to the creation of an Irish socialist republic. He had served in the British army in his youth and knew something about military tactics and discipline.

The ICA was armed with Mauser rifles bought from Germany by the Irish Volunteers and smuggled into Ireland at Howth in July 1914. This organization was open to both men and women and trained them both in the use of weapons. The army's headquarters was the ITGWU union building Liberty Hall and they were almost entirely Dublin based. Other prominent members included Constance Markievicz, Francis Sheehy-Skeffington. In 1916, they took part in the Easter Rising— the armed insurrection aimed at ending British rule in Ireland.

16 year old Family 2:

You have coughed up blood. TB is rife in the tenement. It means you may spread it onto your family and you will die but you are not sure what to do.

Note:

Tuberculosis is a disease that was rife in the Dublin tenements. It attacks the lungs but can also affect other parts of the body. It can spread through the air when people who have an active TB infection cough, sneeze, or otherwise transmit their saliva. In many people there are no signs of infection, but about one in 10 infections eventually develops into the disease which, if left untreated, kills more than 50% of those that develops into a full illness..

The classic symptoms of active TB infection include a chronic cough with blood tinged sputum (spit), fever, night sweats and weight loss. It was also known as "consumption". Rates of TB infection among the Dublin poor were 50% higher than those in England and Scotland.

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Character Briefs for Session 5

16 year old Family 3:

You have decided to join the union the ITGWU and the socialist party of Ireland as you believe the workers have been exploited long enough. True communists, like you are against organised religion as the Catholic Church. You believe that they are used by those in power to keep the working man or woman grateful for what they have and not look or fight for more.

Note:

The Dublin Lockout was a major industrial dispute between approximately 20,000 workers and 300 employers. The dispute lasted from 26 August 1913 to 18 January 1914, and is often viewed as the most severe and significant industrial dispute in Irish history. Central to the dispute was the workers' right to unionise and have their rights, pay and conditions protected.

Many of those who fought in 1916 were linked to the labour movement, James Connolly and the Irish Citizens Army. Many communist didn't fight as they were waiting for a global workers revolution, nothing to do with nations.

16 year old Family 4:

You have joined Conradh na Gaeilge and you want everyone in the family to speak Irish. You think Pearse is great and you may join the Irish Volunteer Force.

Note:

Conradh na Gaeilge was founded in Dublin in 1893 by Douglas Hyde. The organisation developed from the Gaelic Union and became the leading institution promoting the Gaelic Revival. It published the Gaelic Journal; the League's first newspaper was An Claidheamh Soluis (The Sword of Light) whose editor was Patrick Pearse. The motto of the League was Sinn Féin, Sinn Féin amháin (Ourselves, Ourselves alone). It accepted women as equal members and they could play an active role in the leadership of the league, such as founder of the National Literary Society (later The Abbey Theatre) Lady Gregory. It didn't commit itself to the nationalist movement until 1915 but it was where people from many nationalist organizations first met. Many signatories to the proclamation were members.

The Irish Volunteer Force lead by Pearse was the main fighting force in the Easter Rising.

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Character Briefs for Session 5

16 year old Family 3:

You want to join the British Army and join in the war effort. It is a job with a good income and gets you out of home.

Note:

Ireland was still part of the United Kingdom when it went to war against the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires and their military expansion across Europe. Both Nationalist and Unionist initially backed the war effort, but this changed during the course of the war. Over 200,000 Irish men fought in the war and approximately 30,000 died. Many returned to Ireland with awful injuries and many families were dependant on war wages and widow's pensions.

Grandparents

Grandparent 1:

You have spent too much money on a hat for yourself or your wife and have to confess it to the family.

Grandparent 2:

You suspect your grandchild has TB

Grandparent 3:

You are a devote Catholic and go to mass every day. You fear the anti-church communists and socialist.

Grandparent 4:

Your family were from the countryside and spoke Irish but it was a struggle for them to get work because of their lack of English. You think Irish is a poor person's language.

Grandparent 5:

You are a Republican and think that Irish people should fight for Irish causes

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Session 5

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

Masking tape

The slideshow from session 2

The collage and materials gathered from the previous sessions

Paper and pens. A1 sheets and craft glue and scissors.

Step 1

Split the class in two and create two circles one inside the other.

Those on the outside are going to create a soundscape of the tenement for those on the inside to hear. They will then swap around. Discuss what might be the sounds in the tenement and allocate who is doing what sounds. Don't forget the more cheerful sounds such as singing, laughing and playing. They must try to remember what they did as they may wish to use it later.

Those in the inside circle need to cover or close their eyes and there should be no physical contact. Allow the outer group create the soundscape which you conduct by raising your hand to indicate to increase the volume and lowering it to decrease it. Conduct this for about 2 minutes.

When the first group have finished, ask those on the inside what did they visualise during that exercise. Collect their images.

Swap around.

Step 2

Tell the class that we are going to jump forward to the end of the last century. Put the class into pairs, A's and B's.

The year is 1980. A's are the remaining family members of the tenement families. They are going to be interviewed by historians gathering their stories of tenement life.

B's are the historians. Each has a minute or two to think of what information do they want to get out of the interview. Ask them to think about what kind of questions they would need to ask to get that information.

Allow A's to think about their family and what they want to say. Remind them that they are old but not mentally frail. Ask them to set themselves up for the interview including a chair for the visitor.

On your signal allow B to interview A.

Step 3

Inform the groups that you are about to bid farewell to the tenement families and you would like them to create a book of their family and their story. Using all the material they have gathered, allow the class time to create a folder/ book of their family. Remind them to think about how they can include their soundscape and their stop animation/ film.

Suggested activity

Create an exhibition of their work for viewing within the school.

1913 Dublin Lockout

A Drama Scheme using the "Kiddies Scheme" to explore the Dublin Lockout

by Sarah FitzGibbon

Drama scheme linking Drama with History, SPHE and English.

Session 1

(Please note that this session is to build the context for the Lockout)

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

Images from the slide show

Any resource history material you wish them to use from the History Curriculum.

http://www.census.nationalarchive.ie/exhibition/dublin/poverty_health.html

Step 1

Split the class into groups of 4 /5. The class are going to be working in these groups for a few sessions so choose these groups carefully to make sure the pupils can work constructively together.

Allow the group to see the images in the slideshow. Ask the groups to use the images to discover as much as they can about how the people lived and what their everyday life was like. The national archive link is very useful to show the density of the population in the inner city at this time. It is also worth pointing out that there were slums like these in industrialised cities across Europe but Dublin's slums were among the worst.

Invite them to investigate the photos under the following headings: housing, work, food, children and play. Ask them to notice any aspects of life that seem similar today and to notice what's different.

Step 2

Tell the class that each group is going to become a family unit living in the tenement. There should be a father, mother and 1 child in each family unit. It can be an extended family with grandparents or uncles or aunts. Make the following provisos: no one should play a young child under 8 (younger children can be mimed or imagined); the grandparents should still be active and able to participate in daily events; any animals or pets should be imagined rather than played by a pupil.

Ask each pupil to choose their character and what their character's name, age and place in the family. Remind the class that at the time the families would have Irish names.

Discuss as a class what the family tenement might be like. Draw a rough plan of the tenement on your black or white board. The family have a door, a fireplace, a window and a bed.

Give them the following information about their family:

- The father of the house is a labourer working on the expansion of the tramway system for the Dublin Tram Company and it's boss, William Martin Murphy
- The income is just enough to pay the rent and for food and bits of clothes.
- The family work hard to keep what little they have looking good and clean, inc. their room.
- Other members of the family can earn extra money by doing laundry, cleaning and running errands but this work is dependant on those who employ them having money and it is not regular work.

Step 3

Ask them to make a series of frozen picture showing the family together. They can bring these images to life. Suggested images:

Cleaning the tenement

A family meal

Family entertainment like telling stories, singing, dancing, cards.

Step 4

Allow each group to write up the detail of their families and the inside of their tenement.

1913 Dublin Lockout

A Drama Scheme using the "Kiddies Scheme" to explore the Dublin Lockout

by Sarah FitzGibbon

Drama scheme linking Drama with History, SPHE and English.

Session 2

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

A cleared classroom

Step 1

I suggest a warm up exercise just to get them focused on working in character. I would ask them to walk the space 'as if...'. Or 'lead by' where they walk as if they are being pulled by a part of their body e.g. toes, nose, knees, etc.,. Not all groups will need this.

Step 2

Tell the class you are going to set up the father's workplace.

Then divide the class into the following groups of workers and tasks.

Give each group an area and get them to mime out what they will be doing.

- Digging up the ground and clearing rocks
- Laying down the sections of track
- Filling in the hardcore around the track
- Levelling the ground
- Replacing the cobbles
- Cleaning up the work
- Managing the workers – William Martin Murphy did not like employing people from the tenements as he didn't feel they were healthy enough to do a good days work. His managers would watch the tenement workers for slacking and sickness constantly.

Step 3

Once they are assigned their role and their workspace; tell them that you are going to talk them through their working day. Therefore, they need to find a space which is their bed in the tenement.

5 am – have a cuppa tea and a bit of bread and then straight to work with a bit of bread in your bag.

5.30 am leave home to walk to work

6 am clock in with the manager and get to work.

7 am, 8am, 9, am,

9.30 small break

10 am, 11 am,

12 am stop work for those who wish to say the angelus

12.10 am lunch,

12.30 pm back to work

1 pm, 2 pm, 3pm, 4 pm,

5.30 pm clock off

6 pm for those who are catholic, the angelus

6.10 pm home for tea, bread, butter and jam or a bowl of coddle

6.30 pm if there is a few bob you might go for a pint; have a cigarette by the fire; go to a meeting.

8pm, home to bed

Step 4

Ask the group what they think of the father's working day.

Tell them that you could loose your job

- if you were unwell
- if you were not able to work to the speed expected by your boss;
- if you were cheeky to the managers
- if you spoke out of turn
- if you looked for better pay and conditions
- if you joined a union.

Step 4 continued

You were expected to work in all weather and if the weather was too bad to work, you wouldn't be paid.

After working that hard, you were left with just enough money to keep your family in one room, enough food to buy meat once a week; fish on a Friday; bread and dripping for the week and maybe a pint or two one night in the week, unless you were saving.

If your income dropped (bad weather or illness) you had to take in a lodger. There was no social welfare so when you lost your job there was NO money coming in. If you lost your job because you were ill, no lodger would want to move in and your family would become destitute and would have to go to the workhouse- North or South Dublin Union.

Step 5

Ask the class was this fair? Tell them about Jim Larkin and that he set up a union to protect the pay and conditions for Irish workers. His plan was that if workers for one employer needed to strike, workers who were all part of that same union would walk out in a sympathetic strike. This aggravated the employers so much that they decide to close the gates and 'lock out' the workers. No one worked and no one had money.

1913 Dublin Lockout

A Drama Scheme using the "Kiddies Scheme" to explore the Dublin Lockout

by Sarah FitzGibbon

Drama scheme linking Drama with History, SPHE and English.

Session 3

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

A cleared classroom

A large sheet of paper with a time line marking

15th August 1913

Start of the Lockout

31st August 1913

Bloody Sunday James Nolan died as a result of injuries received when the police baton charged a crowd of 30,000 who gathered to hear Larkin speak.

September 1913

400 employers and 20,000 workers involved

27th September 1913

The Hare, food ships start to arrive with 60,000 food parcels for the workers families. Countess Markievicz was the administrator of the soup kitchen in Liberty Hall.

Step 1

Get the class to reform into their family groups and rebuild their tenement. Tell the class that there has been no money in the house for about a month. The mother and other family members scrounged enough together to pay the rent for 1 month. The family have had little or nothing to live on until The Hare arrives. Each family has been given a food parcel. The food parcel has to last a week or more. Each group has to figure out how they can make the food stretch for that length of time.

Give each group the list of food in the parcel and tell them they have 10 minutes to figure out a weeks menu.

Step 2

Share their suggestions.

Step 3

Ask each family to show you a frozen picture of the family meal at the start of the week. Ask them then to show you a frozen picture of the family at the end of the week.

Ask them to move from one picture to another over a count of ten.

Step 4

Discuss what it might be like for that many families to be going hungry in the same area.

Would neighbours help each other?

The churches had opened soup kitchens and the Saint Vincent de Paul helped where they could but winter was coming and food and fuel were running out. Approximately 15,000 to 20,000 families were in trouble.

Add these things to the timeline:

October 1913

'Scab' labourers were brought in from England with more violence. James Byrne was beaten to death by the Police (RIC) and fourteen year old, Alice Brady was shot by a scab labourer on her way home from Liberty Hall with a food parcel for her family.

Sept.- Dec

The rate of children dying from infectious diseases has increased by 50%

Step 5

Discuss what the workers and employers should do.

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The Food Parcel contains:

Bread – 1 loaf per person over the age of 12

Milk – 1 pint per person over the age of 12

Tea – enough for the family for the week

□ 1lb of sugar

1 piece of corned beef or bacon

1 lb of oats

1913 Dublin Lockout

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Drama scheme linking Drama with History, SPHE and English.

Session 4

Duration: 40 minutes

Materials required:

A cleared classroom

Your time line

The character brief at the end of this session

Step 1

Put the class into their family groups. Tell them they are preparing for the father to return from Liberty Hall with a food parcel. The family are to set the table and invite the father to come to you and give them the character brief.

Step 2

Ask the groups to decide where the door is and the father stands at this with their imaginary parcel. Ask the rest of the family to take up their positions and on your signal the father arrives. Allow the scene to play out.

Step 3

Share how each group got on and what decision they came to.

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Character brief for the Father

You have worked hard all your life.

This is the first time you have been at home most of the day and you don't like it. It has been very hard watching your family get hungry and cold.

Winter is coming and there is no sign of the employers giving in.

When you are down in Liberty Hall, you hear about a thing called the Kiddies Scheme. A couple of the women are talking about sending groups of the strikers children to the families of union members in England.

You love your children: This may give them a chance to have good food, a warm place to sleep and clean clothes.

You love your children: They would be travelling further than you have ever gone to a place where everything would be different.

The families would have different accents, different food and maybe different religions.

You are going to talk to your family about it .

1913 Dublin Lockout

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Drama scheme linking Drama with History, SPHE and English.

Session 5

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

Set up the classroom like a meeting

Your time line – add in

21st October

'Kiddies Scheme'

28th October

Jim Larkin sentenced to seven months in prison.

Step 1

Tell the class that they are members of their family attending a meeting about the Kiddies scheme. Welcome them and explain the following:

Dora Montefiore is a wealthy Jewish lady who made her fortune in Australia and she is helping to send 300 children of the striking workers to union members' families in the UK. These families are good families and are affiliated through the union. No one can guarantee that the families that the children are going to are Catholic, most will be Protestant or Presbyterian. If the workers' families choose to send their children, no one can guarantee that they will receive their Catholic education but they will be guaranteed good food, warm houses and clean clothes until the strike ends.

Ask the families how their meeting went and get a sense of how many are thinking of sending their children. Ask them if they have any concerns. Gather their responses. Tell them there is something that they should know.

Dr William Walsh, the Bishop of Dublin is very concerned about the kiddies scheme. He fears that the children of Irish Catholic workers could be corrupted by spending time with Protestant families. It could effect their faith.

He is also concerned that by spending time within households better off than their own, that they will find it difficult to return to slum life when the strike ends. It might give them aspirations beyond what they can reasonably expect to achieve. They may expect their parents to give them many things that they simply won't be able to.

Gather their responses to this and give them a moment to see if it has changed their decision. Collect their thoughts. If they are still determined to send their children, warn them that Dr. Walsh is planning to publish the names of the families who choose to send their children in the newspaper.

Gather their thoughts.

Step 2

Tell the class that you are out of role. Ask them did they think the “kiddies scheme” worked? In the end 18 children were all that went out of the possible 300. A warrant was put out to arrest the women who transported the children on the charge of kidnapping but no arrests were actually made.

Tell the class that the Kiddies scheme marked a turn in public opinion against supporting the striking workers.

Step 3

Add into your timeline.

November 1913

Jim Larkin is released and the Irish Citizen's Army is set up.

January 1913

Building workers returned to work.

Step 4

Ask them to decide what happened to their families and add this information to the time line.

GPO 1916

A Drama Scheme using the siege of the GPO as a vehicle to explore the complexity of the Rising

by Sarah FitzGibbon

Drama scheme linking Drama with History, SPHE and English.

Session 1

(Please note that this session is to build the context for the Rising)

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

Cleared desks

Images from the slide show

Any resource history material you wish them to use from the History Curriculum.

http://www.census.nationalarchive.ie/exhibition/dublin/poverty_health.html

Step 1

Explain to the class that you wish to explore life in Dublin about 100 years ago.

Just gather their initial thoughts about what Dublin would have been like 100 years ago.

Step 2

Show the class the slide show of the images from the Royal Society of Antiquarians Ireland. Also pull up the details of the web page above which illustrates how over populated the tenements were.

Step 3

Divide the class into 5 groups. Explain that each one will have a research topic:

- Food and water
- Living conditions and heating
- Work
- Family life and Health
- Entertainment

Step 4

Allow each group to make a presentation on their findings. Invite them to create a tableau or frozen picture of their topic based on what they have found, for example, demonstrating a family dealing with health issues.

Show the images and thought track them if you wish.

GPO 1916

A Drama Scheme using the siege of the GPO as a vehicle to explore the complexity of the Rising

by Sarah FitzGibbon

Drama scheme linking Drama with History, SPHE and English.

Session 2

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

Cleared desks

3 sheets of paper

Copies of the proclamation

Cut copies of Document 1 at the back of this scheme.

English dictionaries

Step 1

Ask the class to list off all the services a post office provides including payments. Collect their answers. Ask the class in what ways did people communicate 100 years ago and what role would the post office play in this.

Collect their responses.

Step 2

Explain to the class that you wish to explore the events that took place in the GPO in the Easter Rising in 1916. As you are their class teacher, you will have a better idea of their knowledge of this event. However, if you have not got to it at this point of the year, the key facts that they need to grasp before embarking on the scheme are:

- England is involved in the First World War in which there are a lot of Irish men fighting.
- Conditions in the inner city in Dublin are very poor.
- The movement for Irish independence and the Gaelic revival were strong.
- A number of groups came together to plan and start a rebellion during Easter week 1916. Many individuals belonged to more than one group and each group had their own wishes but all were united in a stand against the Empire.
- All the groups involved agreed to a statement (the proclamation) which was to be read to the people outside the GPO and was signed by representatives of these groups.
- To keep everything secret, this statement was printed in two halves which is why the text and font looks unusual.

Step 3

Divide the class into 5 groups. Give each a copy of the proclamation and a paragraph from the cut document 1. Explain that the cut document is a modern version of the proclamation. Ask them to read the proclamation and see if they can match up the piece of cut text to the piece of the proclamation. As some of the language and its style will be unfamiliar to the class, support them in analysing the text.

Step 4

Discuss the document. Explore what they wanted to achieve? How they were going to achieve it and what were they willing to sacrifice?

Ask the class to imagine themselves writing and printing such a document in secrecy.

Step 5

In the two groups, ask them to show you a frozen picture of those involved debating, agreeing and printing the document in secret.

Step 6

Thought track the characters and collect the words they choose.

GPO 1916

Session 2 additional document: Alternative version of the proclamation

Cut this up paragaphy by paragraph

Irish men and Irish women we call you to rise up and demand Irish freedom in the name of God and for those who fought for freedom before.

The Irish Republican Brotherhood has organised and trained the soldiers of the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army for the right moment. With the support of her supporters in America, Europe and her own citizens, Ireland is ready to fight and is confident of victory.

We say that only the people of Ireland have the right to own and control the future of Ireland. Even though we have been controlled by the British Empire, we have always had that right and it is a right that can only be taken when the last Irish person is gone. Every generation has fought for that right (six times in 300 years). Because of that right, we declare that Ireland is an independent state and we will give all of our lives to ensure Ireland's freedom, welfare and place among the other independent nations of the world.

The Irish Republic should have the support of all Irish people and the Irish Republic will support its citizens in return. The Irish Republic promises religious freedom, equal rights and equal opportunities for all citizens. The Republic will work for the wealth and happiness for all. It will mind all children equally and ignore the social divisions (like the divide between rich and poor) that have taken place under the British Government.

A national government will be set up and proper elections (with a vote for both men and women) in time, but for now the Provisional Government will manage the state and the military.

We will ask God to bless our fight and we leave the result to his wisdom. We pray that no one will be cowardly or use the excuse of the battle for cowardly acts. Now is the time for our nation to show that it is ready to grab its destiny, because of the willingness of its fighters to die fighting for this cause.

Signed

Thomas J Clarke

Sean Mac Diarmada

Thomas Mc Donagh

PH Pearse

Eamonn Ceannt

James Connolly

Joseph Plunkett

GPO 1916

A Drama Scheme using the siege of the GPO as a vehicle to explore the complexity of the Rising

by Sarah FitzGibbon

Drama scheme linking Drama with History, SPHE and English.

Session 3

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

Hand outs at the back of this session.

The history text books you are using when covering this period of history.

A piece of paper and a pencil for each participant.

Step 1

Remind the class of the different kinds of people that lived in Dublin especially the tenements. If required revisit the slide show. Tell the class that one of the unique things about the 1916 Rising was that there were people from all kinds of backgrounds and classes fighting along side each other in a common cause. Tell the class that you want to look at all the different people who fought during the Rising.

Step 2

Ask the class to play the following game:

- 1 clap means stop
- 2 claps means turn right
- 3 claps means go

Remind them of group safety and that they are to walk alone and avoid others. Play this once or twice before introducing a range of characters. Invite them to walk around the space as the following characters and using the claps to stop and change character.

- You are a young well dressed chap. Your belly is full of a nice breakfast and you are walking down Grafton street to be fitted for a new suit. It is a lovely day and you might wink at one or two young ladies on the way.
- You are a hard working labourer walking home on a Saturday in the rain. In your pocket you have your meagre wages. You are trying to decide if you are going to go for a pint or take your wages home to your wife and kids in a big tenement house. Money is very tight and if you spends it, there might not be enough for food during the week and you will hear all about it all week. But you have had a hard day. You jingles the coins in your pocket as you walks through the rain.

You are a child walking from their tenement to school. You are hungry and cold and your belly is empty, but you are used to that. You have to walk past the biscuit factory.

- You are a young man on your way for your first day in a good job as a trainee book keeper. It means that you can bring badly needed money into your home. You hope you are clean enough for your first day but you have worked very hard to get this position.
- You are a young woman on your way to Trinity College. You are one of the few women that have got to study there and you are studying botany, plant life. You are carrying lots of books across a busy college green.
- You are a fancy lady from Rathmines with a fancy hat and gown taking the air around Stephen's green.

Ask the class to remember the range of people in the city.

Step 3

Divide the class into four or five groups* and allow them to look at their history books. Give each group a hand out and ask them to read through it and with your help explain who they are going to be. The groups listed are Na Fianna Eireann, Irish Citizens Army, Cumman na mBan, The Irish Volunteers – both Redmondites and non.

* with some groups of all boys, I have omitted Cumman na mBan as I feel it may sabotage the flow of the scheme.

I explain that the Rising was planned by the Irish Republican Brotherhood, a secret organisation. Members of the IRB were involved in all groups except Cumman na mBan, to which they were closely affiliated. When it comes to the Rising it is important for the class to remember that people were often members of several groups including Sinn Féin, Conradh na Gaeilge and the GAA.

Allow the group to process the information.

Step 4

Ask each person to find a space for themselves to write and give them a piece of paper and a pen. Tell them that the handout might give them an idea of their character but you are going to ask them a series of questions so that they may develop their character further:

Step 4

Ask each person to find a space for themselves to write and give them a piece of paper and a pen. Tell them that the handout might give them an idea of their character but you are going to ask them a series of questions so that they may develop their character further:

- What is your character's name?
- What is your character's age?
- What is your character's favourite food? Remind them of the time frame, so no pizzas or chips.
- What is your character's favourite colour?
- What makes your character happy? A past time or hobby
- What makes your character sad?
- What makes your character angry?
- What makes your character proud?
- What is their secret? It is not a big secret it is just something that they would prefer others not know about them.

Step 5

Ask them to get up and play the clapping game. Stop them and make sure they have a space for themselves. Tell them you are going to ask them to act through the night before the Rising for one minute. Tell them the following:

"It is the night before the Rising, you know there is going to be a battle and you have prepared for it. The Redmondites are heading to the war in France and you too are preparing to leave the next day.

You may be leaving home tomorrow for sometime so you are checking what you are bringing with you. You are making sure your uniform is in order and deciding what to bring with you: a set of rosary beads, a photograph, a pack of cards, a medal."

Allow them to act it through. When you freeze the action, collect their words such as nervous, excited, anxious. Tell them to remember that character and that feeling for the next session.

Handouts

Hand out 1

You have joined the Irish Citizen Army under James Connolly. You will be called to fight and give your life if the revolution comes. The Irish Citizen Army or ICA, were trained trade union volunteers set up to defend workers during the Lock out in 1913 by James Larkin and Jack White. The Irish Citizen Army was reorganized in 1914. You may have been one of those workers.

All members were required to be members of a trade union. James Larkin left Ireland for America in October 1914, leaving the Citizen Army under the command of James Connolly. He felt that the ICA was a revolutionary organization dedicated to the creation of an Irish Socialist Republic, equal rights for all citizens. He had served in the British army in his youth and knew something about military tactics and discipline.

Other prominent members included Constance Markievicz, Francis Sheehy-Skeffington. In 1916, they took part in the Easter Rising— the armed insurrection aimed at ending British rule in Ireland.

Handouts

Hand out 2

A few years ago you got involved in the Gaelic League and you want everyone in Ireland to speak Irish. Conradh na Gaeilge was founded in Dublin in 1893 by Douglas Hyde. The organisation developed from the Gaelic Union and became the leading institution promoting the Gaelic Rival. The motto of the League was Sinn Féin, Sinn Féin amháin (Ourselves, Ourselves alone).

It accepted women as equal members and they could play an active role in the leadership of the league, such as founder of the National Literary Society (later The Abbey Theatre) Lady Gregory. It didn't commit itself to the nationalist movement until 1915 but it was where people from many nationalist organisations first met. Many signatories to the proclamation were members.

Your connection to this organisation led you to join Padraig Pearse in The Irish Volunteer Force.

The Irish Volunteer Force was launched on 25th November 1913 in response to the establishment of the Ulster Volunteer force who were opposed to Home Rule for Ireland. In September 1914 there was a split in the IVF when John Redmond called on the members to go and fight "for the freedom of small nations" in World War I. So many left to join the British Army.

The Home Rule Bill was promised to Irish people when the war was over. The Redmondites joined to up speed up that process.

The Irish Republican Brotherhood who were a secret organisation were involved in the foundation of the IVF and the planning of the Rising.

The IVF were the main fighting force during the Rising in Easter week.

Handouts

Hand out 3

You are a young man and you would like freedom for Ireland. You are a member of Na Fianna Eireann.

Set up in 1909 by Bulmer Hobson (of the Irish Republican Brotherhood) and Countess Markievicz (of the Irish Citizen's Army and Cumman na mBan). It was established as an Irish republican scouting movement. This organisation wanted to educate the youth in the ideals of the nationalist movement and the struggle for independence. Many young members were used as messengers during the Rising. As they were young, they were less likely to be stopped and arrested.

Many were killed and injured during the Rising. However, many stayed involved in the armed struggle and became members of the Irish Republican Army in the War of Independence.

Handouts

Hand out 4

You are a young woman and a member of **Cumann na mBan**.

Cumann na mBan, the league of woman was formed in 1914 as a female wing of the Irish Volunteer Force. They were from all classes of society and walks of life. Before the Rising when they were integrated with the IVF and the Irish Citizen Army as the Army of the Irish Republic. Many prominent members like Constance Markievicz were involved in the Irish Citizen Army and in the fight for a female vote.

Sadly, while many were trained in combat and were experienced in riot situations, most were consigned to caring for the wounded, feeding the troops and running errands, messages and arms. Their uniform during the Rising was the same as the men.

Many members went on to play leading roles in the Rising and the War of Independence.

Handouts

Hand out 5

You were a member of the **Irish Volunteer Force** but when the split in the organisation came in September 1914, you went with John Redmond and agreed to join the British Army 'to fight for the freedom of small nations.' It is a job with a good income and you believe that by fighting with the British you are helping the cause for Home Rule.

Ireland was still part of the United Kingdom when it went to war against the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires and their military expansion across Europe. Over 200,000 Irish men fought in the war and approximately 30,000 died. Many returned to Ireland with awful injuries and many families were dependant on war wages and widow's pensions. Sadly with the rise of nationalism after the Rising, many war veterans had to keep their stories silent and were treated with shame by their families.

GPO 1916

A Drama Scheme using the siege of the GPO as a vehicle to explore the complexity of the Rising

by Sarah FitzGibbon

Drama scheme linking Drama with History, SPHE and English.

Session 4

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

The eye witness accounts about the start of the Rising on the slide show.

The character questions created in the last session.

Step 1

Put the class into the 5 groups they were in last week. Tell them that for now you want to explore events that happen in the lives of ordinary people the morning of the Rising. As a whole class read through the accounts and talk about them.

Step 2

Ask each group to decide on one situation based on the accounts to recreate it as a frozen picture. Please make sure that where it may appear that there is only one or two people in the scene, that the group consider where the scene is taking place and who else may be around.

Allow them to set up the frozen images and go into a lot of detail about the image. Tell them that on a signal they are going to bring the image to life for 10 seconds.

Discuss the images and re-read the accounts if you feel the group would like to.

Step 3

Give everyone back their character sheet to remind them of their character. Ask them to lie on the floor or put their heads down on their desks and to close their eyes. Tell them that it is the morning of the Easter Monday. It is a beautiful sunny day. You as the teacher are going to talk them through their morning but they have to, like the eyewitnesses remember the detail.

Allow them to wake up, get dressed, put on their uniform and pack their bag. Interrogate what is going to go into the bag e.g. cards, photos, rosary beads, a diary. They eat their breakfast. Ask them to think about who made it, served it and are they alone? At the door, who do they say good bye to?

Allow them to line up like soldiers.

Step 4

Without talking send them back to their character sketch and ask them to write about their last morning at home. Once done, you can discuss the experience.

GPO 1916

A Drama Scheme using the siege of the GPO as a vehicle to explore the complexity of the Rising

by Sarah FitzGibbon

Drama scheme linking Drama with History, SPHE and English.

Session 5

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

* Please note: there is a bit of classroom preparation for this session

Both versions of the Proclamation

The eyewitness accounts from the GPO

Step 1

Tell the class that all of their characters except those in the British Army are going to occupy the GPO. Tell those who are in the British Army that you have a new role for them in this session which you will tell them later.

Step 2

Involve the class in dividing the classroom on two creating a barrier to simulate the barricading of the GPO. Read out the first few eyewitness account and recreate what will go where in the GPO. Allow the whole group to be involved in this.

Step 3

Remind the class who might be inconvenienced by the closing down of the post office. Ask those who were the Redmondites, to be the non-military witnesses to the siege of the GPO. A few suggestions are:

- a 12 year old child from the tenements
- a fancy lady who wishes to send a telegram
- a war widow desperate for her pension to feed her children.
- a coal man who will not be able to get to the coal depot if violence starts.
- a young man who needs to send off his boss's letters
- shoppers
- a retired member of the British army who thinks that the rebels are in league with the Germans

Tell them to identify out who on the barricade they are going to talk to about their problem. Then help the group of fighters to place themselves on the barricade at the GPO. Ask the ordinary people to place themselves in the scene. Of those on the barricade at the GPO; appoint a flag raiser.

Step 4

Set up the scene and on your signal ask the group to bring the scene to life for a few seconds . Ensure that ordinary people are airing their problems. After a certain point tell the group to imagine the flag being raised and freeze the scene. If you can; record the feelings of all the eyewitnesses to the 'event' by thought tracking the students in role.

Step 5

Derole the group and discuss what it would be to be a witness to these events. For a writing exercise their characters could record their own 'eyewitness account'.

It also may be opportune to discuss what the British Army's next move might be.

GPO 1916

A Drama Scheme using the siege of the GPO as a vehicle to explore the complexity of the Rising

by Sarah FitzGibbon

Drama scheme linking Drama with History, SPHE and English.

Session 6

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

*Please note that this is an optional session to look at the looting.

The character sheets

A cleared classroom

Step 1

Put the class into pairs A's and B's.

It might be an idea to play the yes/ no game. A has to question B and to get them to give a yes or no answer. B has to avoid saying "yes", "no", "yeah", "nah", nod or shaking their head. It forces the pairs to listen to each other.

Step 2

Tell the class the during the first few day of the Rising there were skirmishes but there was not a battle. However, with Martial Law imposed it was difficult for people in the city to get provisions or go to work. Civilians were being caught in the crossfire. However, by the Wednesday, this lead to shops being looted. The first shop to be looted was Noblett's sweet shop. Many of those looting this shop were local children. However, the looting spread and no shop on O'Connell St. was safe.

Step 3

Again ask A's to line up as if they are on the barricade. Remind them that they have been under fire since Monday with little sleep or food. Ask them to remind themselves what they are fighting for.

Tell the B's that they are a member of the local community in the tenements. You have nothing and you have not been able to work or shop since Monday. Now you see that the shops are all broken into and things are just there for the taking. Ask them to decide what to do. Collect their responses. If they choose not to join in, they must ask the volunteers to stop the looting. If they are joining in they must decide what they have taking. Remind them that Sackville St./ O'Connell St. was one of the major shopping streets in the city so you can buy furs, pianos, fancy clothes and goods.

On your signal B goes to their partner, A says 'Halt who goes there?' and begin the improvisation.

Step 4

Freeze and discuss the concept of looting.

Step 5

Play take a stand. One end of the room is Disagree and the other end is Agree. Tell them that you are going to read out a number of statements and they decide themselves where they feel they stand. Tell them you don't mind where they stand but they may have to explain their choice.

- stealing is a bad thing to do
- stopping someone stealing is the right thing to do.
- if you found sweets on the ground in front of a sweet shop, it is ok to take them
- if they are going to be taken by someone else anyway, it is ok to take them.
- it doesn't matter if you steal from a big shop, as they have loads of money
- if you are hungry, it is ok to steal food
- if you have no clothes, it is ok to steal clothes.
- if you are not going to get caught, it is ok to steal.
- Did the looting help the fighters in 1916

Use this as a discussion spring board on civic responsibility and how situations get out of hand.

Step 6

Again ask A's to line up as if they are on the barricade. Remind them that they have been under fire since Monday with little sleep or food. Ask them to remind themselves what they are fighting for.

Tell the B's that they are a member of the local community in the tenements. You have nothing and you have not been able to work or shop since Monday. Now you see that the shops are all broken into and things are just there for the taking. Ask them to decide what to do. Collect their responses. If they choose not to join in, they must ask the volunteers to stop the looting. If they are joining in they must decide what they have taking. Remind them that Sackville St./ O'Connell St. was one of the major shopping streets in the city so you can buy furs, pianos, fancy clothes and goods.

On your signal B goes to their partner; A says 'Halt who goes there?' and begin the improvisation.

GPO 1916

A Drama Scheme using the siege of the GPO as a vehicle to explore the complexity of the Rising

by Sarah FitzGibbon

Drama scheme linking Drama with History, SPHE and English.

Session 7

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

History books

The pictures of Sackville St. before and after.

Quotes

The copy of the Walter Pagett's painting of the GPO

Step 1

Show the class the images of Sackville Street before and after. Explain that the Helga's guns started on the Wednesday. The sound had a greater psychological damage than the ships ability to bombard the rebels. It also signalled a turning point as the people of Dublin were a bit more sympathetic to the rebels as the British army used heavier weapons.

It was the fires that stretched from the Four Courts to the GPO and on the other side of O'Connell St. that were beginning to impact the insurgents.

Read the accounts as a whole group. Remind them of their characters in the GPO and outside. Ask them to think about how they might be feeling by the Wednesday.

Step 2

Set up your GPO as in session 5. Go into detail, giving those who had been outside specific roles inside and areas inside, i.e. a priest, a medic/nurse, a cook.

Tell them that you are going to bring the scene to life when you clap your hands once. When you clap your hands a second time, you want them to react as if they have heard the biggest explosion in their lives. When you clap your hands three times you want them to freeze. Thought track a few.

Step 3

Inform the class that by Thursday night the situation was grave. There were lots of injured and dying but there was limited medical care. The rebels were bombarded. They had little or no sleep and little to eat for a few days. Ask them to repeat the pattern from the last sequence. It is 6p.m. the priest may be starting a rosary and the troops may have been given some tea.

One clap for begin, two claps for a shell being fired and three claps for freeze again. You can stop start this scene if you wish.

Step 4

Ask the group to stay where they are and to look at the board. Show them the Walter Paget painting. Tell them by the Friday the GPO was on fire and by 8pm they had to evacuate. This painting depicts the desperate nature of the situation.

Tell them that you wish to fast forward their picture to 6 pm on the Friday. Tell the group that you will tap a few people on the shoulders. They are injured and dying. Those who had been feeding people are fighting the fire.

Tell the class to listen for your signal.

When you clap your hands they are to bring the scene to life.

When you clap your hands twice you want them to act as if they have been told that they will be evacuating the building and to remove what and who they can to the other side of their barricade.

When you clap three times you want them to take their last look at the GPO and freeze.

Thought track them at this point.

Step 5

Ask the group to relax and ask them to compare how they felt at the beginning of the week to the end of the week. Inform the group of the surrender and the aftermath.

I suggest that as the leaders were executed that most of the other fighters were interred in Wales. Ask them to write a letter home to their families about their fight and how they felt about the surrender. Remind the group that the War of Independence was only 5 years away, when many of these prisoners were released.

Buy Your Rights Workshop

A Drama Scheme looking at the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

by Sarah FitzGibbon

Drama scheme linking Drama with History, SPHE and English.

Session 1

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

Paper and pens

The wants and needs list at the end of this document

The child friendly version of the rights of the child

I find it helpful to study this topic after studying World War 2 in history.

<http://www.youtube.com>

Story of a hero Janusz Korczak. It gives a brief intro to his story but has a strong message in support of the State of Israel at the end. Love Every Child by Janusz Korczak massively informed the Childrens Rights movement and the development of the UNCRC.

Step 1

Divide the class into groups of 5 students. Give each group a sheet of paper and pens. Ask the group to put a line down the sheet of paper and to write Wants on one side and Needs on the other. Read out each item on the list and allow them to discuss where to put it or a related object e.g. a hoodie may go in as a Want but Clothing is a need. Tease out these subtleties with the class.

Step 2

Ask the groups to number the needs in the order of their importance, 1 being vital and 10 a desire to be hoped for. Discuss their findings.

Step 3

Ask each group to create a frozen picture of what they believe to be the most important need and ask them to remember it.

Ask them then to show you a frozen picture of what would happen if that need wasn't met. Allow the group to move from this second image to the first image over a count of 10. Allow a practice and then reminding them of the feelings that a person may experience going from one state to another.

Play it through again and allow the group to explore the transition.

Step 4

Ask the group if they have ever heard of the Universal Declaration for Human Rights (UDHR). Explain that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 10 December 1948 and was the result of the experience of the Second World War. With the end of that war, and the creation of the United Nations, the international community vowed never again to allow atrocities like those of that conflict happen again and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) was sanctioned in 1989.

Step 5

Ask the class why they believed the UDHR and the UNCRC was necessary.
If you would like to, show them the Janusz Korczak video.

Buy Your Rights Workshop

A Drama Scheme looking at the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

by Sarah FitzGibbon

Drama scheme linking Drama with History, SPHE and English.

Session 2

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

The UN CRC poster on www.oco.ie

7 A1 sheets, rough paper and art supplies.

A blank wall

*** Please note that this is a visually creative session rather than drama.**

Step 1

Divide the class into 7 small groups. Give each group 3 rights each. They are to write the 3 rights on to the page and decorate it with images that they feel reflect those rights.

Step 2

Allow each group to create and later show their poster to the class. Mount the rights on the classroom wall.

Buy Your Rights Workshop

A Drama Scheme looking at the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

by Sarah FitzGibbon

Drama scheme linking Drama with History, SPHE and English.

Session 3

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

The UN CRC poster on www.oco.ie

The first letter from the World President at the end of this document

Step 1

Ask the class to remember why the UNCRC came into being?

Step 2

Tell the class that you received a letter that you need them to read. Show them the Letter from the World's President. Allow them to read it and allow them to react. You as teacher are in a light role, saying that while the situation is far from ideal but at least they are getting a say. Suggest that they go into their poster groups and see if they can select one from the three that they did the poster for.

Then as a group they can decide what the remaining three should be.

Step 3

Divide them up and start the process. See if they can articulate how it will affect children if these rights are taken away.

Once they in their groups have agreed on the seven, see if the class can agree on the three remaining. If required conduct a vote.

Step 4

If you think the group would like to, allow them to record a letter back to the World President recording their response to these cut backs.

Step 5

I suggest you get scrap paper and loosely cover over the 'redundant' rights.

Buy Your Rights Workshop

A Drama Scheme looking at the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

by Sarah FitzGibbon

Drama scheme linking Drama with History, SPHE and English.

Session 4

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:

Marbles

The UN CRC poster on www.oco.ie

The second letter from the World President. at the end of this document

Post-its

Step 1

As a warm up game or exercise, put the class into groups of three, an A, B and C. Give A a marble. Tell B and C that they have one minute to persuade A to give them the marble. They can use whatever tactics they wish except from anything outside the drama class and/or any form of physical contact. Play out the game and if you wish rotate the roles.

Step 2

Gather the class together; explain that you have got another letter. Read the letter and check their response.

Step 3

This depends on the group.

- a) If they are outraged but will still reduce it to 5, allow them to do that.
- b) If they sigh and are reluctant to cut more, allow them to discuss how they can protest at these cut backs.
- c) If they point blank refuse to cut and that is their form of protest, skip to step 5.

Step 4

Tell the class that those who co-operate will be given a card with an extra right. Stress that this is worth €10,000. Allow the group to discuss whether they will co-operate for benefits.

Step 5

Ask the class to return to their threesome. Explain that each threesome are going to play out a situation so ask B and C to set up three chairs, ask A's to come to you and give each one a role.

Tell the A's that they are:

- a teacher with a scholarship to college
- a doctor with medication
- a travel agent with a round the world ticket
- a farmer with health food
- a builder with a house
- a person with a loving home.

Tell A's that they have to hear out B and C but if someone has a "rights card- post it", they get what you have.

Tell B and C that A will be coming back to them in a minute and they will tell them who they are and what they have got. B and C will have to persuade A to give them what they have. They have to begin the improvisation on your signal. Freeze the improvisation and put a post it on either B or C and restart the improvisation. Play through.

Step 6

Discuss with the group what it felt like to be overlooked; or what it felt like to get something because you could pay for it.

Step 7

Set up a Make a Stand, where one end of the room is where you stand if you strongly agree and the other side is where you stand if you strongly disagree. The students can stand at either end or anywhere in the middle depending on how they feel about the statements you read out.

STATEMENTS- agree or disagree

- All children need rights
- Adults need rights more than children
- Some people need more rights than others
- If you can collect more rights, you should
- If you can afford to buy more rights, you should.
- The poor have charities to take care of them
- The rich know best
- Education is overrated.
- There is no one who can help children keep their rights.
- *Add you own*

Step 8

Explain and discuss who is there to safe guard children's rights, inc. the Children's Ombudsman.
Break the fiction and take down the sheets covering the rights that had been taken away.

Buy Your Rights Workshop

Session 1

List of wants and needs

Sweets Fruit Blankets

Books Pencil Television Computer

Information Water Medication

Love Money Transport

Meat A passport Toys

Downtime / relaxation

Sports Music

Gel-pens The police A roof

Movies Hoodies Trainers

The Office of the World President

To whom it may concern:

As you know, we are living in difficult times. We all need to make sacrifices and everything has a price. There have been many discussions and we have come to the decision that if the public want rights, they can pay for them.

We feel that Childrens Rights are a luxury we cannot afford. As children do not pay taxes or generate any income for the economy, we have decided to cut the number of Children's Rights from 25 to 10.

There was a plea made on your behalf to involve you in the selection process. Therefore we are asking you to select the most important 10 rights out of the 21 in your version.

It is only fair to inform you that there may be more cutbacks, but if you can figure out some ways of earning money the richest among you can buy back more rights.

To tell who has the basic package of rights and those who have more we are going to introduce child tagging system. Therefore those with more will not lose out. We feel that €10,000 euro per extra right is fair.

We look forward to your selection and will keep you posted on any future changes to our situation.

Yours sincerely

James Black

World President

The Office of the World President

To whom it may concern:

I thank you for your work so far. However we have had a change of heart. As you know, we are living in difficult times, Childrens Rights are a luxury we cannot afford.

We feel that Children may need as little as 5 rights as they are in the care of adults most of their lives.

It is only fair to inform you that this is the new reality. Again the richest among you can buy back more rights should you feel that you really need them.

We look forward to discussing the matter with you when you are tax paying, valued citizens of this state.

Yours sincerely

James Black

World President