



# Global education with drama methods

– How to redirect emotions as a positive force for change?

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# Peace School – Global Education (GE) with drama methods



Peace Union of Finland is an umbrella organization for 16 Finnish NGOs working for peace.

## Peace School -program

- established in 1998. Maintained by Peace Union of Finland.
- provides GE activity programs & workshops (also outdoor & online) in schools.
- develops pedagogical methods & teaching materials.
- offers trainings for education professionals, teacher students and youth leader students.
- reaches directly ~1400 youngsters, ~ 1000 teachers or teacher students yearly in Finland.
- Since 2008 the main funding from the development fund of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.
- Based on the approach of Critical Global Citizenship Education.
- Applies experiential and action-based teaching methods - participatory drama, which evoke thoughts, emotions and empathy.
- Aims to encourage young people to take action towards social justice & sustainable peace.
- **Process drama method.** The stories are based on real life events. The plots of the stories are placed in global south (Kenya, Zambia, South Sudan, Afghanistan).
- Issues of peace and global interdependence and their relation to development and global justice are approached through concrete examples.

# Process drama – dynamic teaching methodology



**Process drama** is a method of teaching and learning, where both the students and teacher are working in and out of role.

- Students learn to think beyond their own points of view and consider multiple perspectives on a topic through playing different roles.
- The situations and issues that are created and explored within the dramatic world reflect and illuminate the real world (O'Neill 1995).
- Peace School has 20 process drama scripts for global education, for different age groups.
- Scripted frames and stories that unfold with easy access drama exercises.
- Process drama can bring complex topics of global education closer to the learner. Learners can put themselves in situations they haven't yet experienced.
- The ability to work for social justice comes from the ability to understand another perspective.

# Stories and pedagogical drama

... can be used as a method to teach knowledge, skills, ethics and values.

... are instruments for sharing and interpreting experiences.

**Stories spark emotions.** We have an intuitive, emotional side as well as rational side to our character.

- Connecting with people only on a rational level isn't enough to change how people behave. When you touch the emotions, the shift in attitudes become possible.

Stories have been shared in every culture as a means of entertainment, education, cultural preservation and instilling moral values. Crucial elements of stories and storytelling include **plot, characters and narrative point of view.**

# Stories and drama



... are powerful ways to **make an impact**

... have power to match **reason with emotion**

... enable putting yourself into someone else's position, empathizing with someone else's experience and creating **emotional understanding**

... leaves **stronger imprint** than by telling just facts

... having **a plot** allows combining relatable stories with complexity by matching surprising and contradicting ingredients

➤ With stories one can share information, pass values forward, advance cooperation and motivate people for action

# Peace School's process drama: The Story of Nhial



## INTRODUCTION

- Objectives, drama contract and working methods. Warm-ups and icebreakers.

## BUILDING THE STORY

- Milieu of the story: background facts of the situation in South Sudan with photos
- Still images of Nhial's everyday life
- Role on the Wall
- Stepping into roles: villagers listening to the radio in Nhial's village.

## CHANGE – armed conflict begins

- Hearing war news from the radio
- Need to flee - What do we take with us?
- Stepping out of roles and reflection.

## ROOT CAUSES

- Linking the story to real events and root causes behind the conflict in South Sudan

## REFUGEE CAMP in Uganda

- Photos and information from refugee camp
- Hot seating - Nhial arrived to a refugee camp in Uganda

## FUTURE

- Refugeeism as phenomenon
- Future scenarios: Nhial's life after 5 years (discuss in small groups + create still images/short performance)

## REFLECTION

# Acknowledging, naming and encountering emotions in GE

Emotions are a natural part of being human.

Many kinds of feelings can arise when hearing about global development issues, human rights violations, conflicts or other challenges people face.

## ➤ **How do I react to my own and other's feelings?**

- Encountering emotions can lead to finding meaningfulness, empowerment, excitement, and a sense of connection.
- Emotions need no solving. Seeing them as travel partners or companions. Feelings have a message for us.
- Feelings have a need to be met; faced and heard. Some feelings (such as hate, shame, guilt) can be harder to express in social situations.
- People are good at deflecting issues / emotions that feel too big or, that one isn't ready to embrace.

# Recognizing feelings and naming them

- Teacher's feelings, reactions transmit for the group also in nonverbal communication
  - Teacher's acknowledged or unknown reactions (in body language, facial expression) affect how these issues are dared to be discussed in the group.
- Which topics are OK to talk about in the group?

## Questions for reflection:

- What kinds of thoughts, feelings and body sensations can arise in yourself or in the learners you meet, when hearing about for ex global challenges, war or human rights violations?
- How do I (as a teacher) take such feelings? - Can I be present with my feelings? Is it OK for me to feel all range of the feelings? What kinds of thoughts do they wake in me?
- What kinds of reactions can others' feelings raise in me?
- What kinds of reactions can my own feelings or reactions on the topic raise in others?

# How to redirect emotions as a positive force for change?

Recognizing and processing feelings can help find constructive ways to take responsibility.

## ➤ **How can this feeling serve life, be constructive? How can it be harmful?**

- Emotions and thoughts, however hard they might be, are not dangerous in itself, instead it is useful to take a pause to observe them.
- **Maintaining hope** in times of crisis and with difficult topics.
- What difference does it make if we act from pity / guilt / frustration versus **acting from a sense of compassion?**

→ Helping others versus cooperation and partnership in development

## **Once feelings have been encountered:**

- **Analyzing root causes** behind the problem / global challenge. - What structures maintain injustice, inequality and poverty? Who might benefit from the problem?
- **Action:** What kind of change is needed in order for the problem to start solving and the change to be sustainable? What can be done? What are our possible roles in making the sustainable change to happen? With whom can we cooperate?
- **Reflecting:** What things affect your ability to imagine solutions? What might prevent you from imagining other possible solutions?



Thank you!

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