



Institut Pendidikan Guru Kampus Dato' Razali Ismail

# Role Play, Dance, Mime as Language Arts – for DPLI

Notes for DPLI Language Arts Course

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## Use Role Play, Dance and Mime in Language Activities

Children need to be as active as possible in order to facilitate learning, and obviously it's even more beneficial if they can be involved in activities where they are using and practising the target language. The Language Arts Module of KSSR provides an opportunity for learning from all of the other modules to come together in fun and confidence building activities.

### ROLE PLAY

The idea of role play is simple – students have a chance to practice the kind of conversation that might take place between two or more people in a particular situation. For young children it could be simply a question and answer sequence, or dialogue with a sentence or two. Professionally written role play sequences can be used, such as those available on [Kidsinco](#). However it's much better if the teacher can quickly set up a short role-play to suit a specific situation and language learning objective.

A role-play can be created or developed based on a picture / photo or a story, song or poem. Children can be asked to act out the plot using prompts from the teacher or working out a basic dialogue in their group. Groups could then demonstrate their particular version of the role-play for the enjoyment of the whole class.

- Activity – look at some photos (included below), make captions / conversations. Which photos are best for this?

For students who lack confidence in creating or performing a role-play, line-up role-plays that involve the whole class can prove very beneficial. Versions of these can be found on [Bogglesworldesl](#), but these are mostly designed for older students. However, the basic process can easily be adapted.

*For example*, children could do a line-up role-play about buying something at the shops. Some of the children are assigned as shop-keepers, they can even be given a particular kind of shop with a list of products they theoretically sell, the prices for them, and examples of the types of conversation they will have with customers (e.g. a positive and negative response to a 'do you have ...?' question). Other students are grouped (possibly as families) and have shopping lists, and sample conversations to speak to the sellers. It can become a game or competition such as a relay with only one member of each group being permitted to 'go shopping' for one particular item in the list, and when they have 'purchased' it the next group member can go.

- Activity – try line-up telephone activity (included below) from Bogglesworld. Design a similar activity for kids.

Role-plays can also be presented using **puppets** (see module on puppetry), allowing for the children to play the part of less familiar characters through their puppets.

A short **movie** or part of a movie could also be used as a stimulus for a role play. Children could watch it (several times) and then try to copy the conversation, or create some variation of it. (Some of the [Kidsinco](#) role-plays have a matching YouTube video.)

- Activity – watch YouTube video [here](#) (follow link) of ‘at a restaurant’ role play. Here is the role-play:

**Waiter:** Good evening. Are you ready to order?  
**You:** Yes, please. I’d like chicken sandwich.  
**Waiter:** OK. And what would you like to drink?  
**You:** Orange juice, please.  
**Waiter:** Would you like anything else?  
**You:** No, That’s all for now. Thank you.  
**Waiter:** OK, your order will be ready in ten minutes.

With a partner, act out the role play shown above. Then view the video if you can. How should the YouTube video be used, if at all? How could the activity be improved or expended?

Quite a lot of songs, action songs, poems and jazz chants have more than one part to be spoken or sung. Children could also develop these exchanges into role-plays to practice the interchange. (see module on songs, poems and chants.)

Survey role-plays are a very easy way to involve all class members, each at their own ability level. A favourite, easy topic to start with is ‘food’. Each child (or pair) has 3 questions to go and ask about 10 other children/pairs. The questions revolve around a sub-topic of ‘food’ such as ‘breakfast’ or ‘fast foods’. The students record their results, and then report to the class what they discovered.

- Activity – try this food survey (included below). How could you adapt it or improve it for your students?

## DANCE

For children to be learning effectively, any physical activity is good. However, while ‘dance’ in the classical sense can be used (and is used by some) to improve children’s aptitude for learning, it may not be suitable in the Malaysian primary school setting for a variety of mostly practical reasons (unless a teacher already has a background in this area and is confident in teaching it.) Information about this style of dance teaching can be found in this [Dance in the ESL Classroom](#) slide-share.

- Activity – (Some of the Dance and ESL slides are included below.) Discuss: what music would you choose for this kind of activity? What kinds of words would be best for children to depict in dance? Would you use this kind of activity in your language classes?

Rhythmic movement, however, can play an important role in childhood development. All children, especially those in “Special Education” classes will benefit from rhythm practice.

Many **action songs** have dance-like movement associated with them. There are also simple movement songs / games such as “The Hokey Pokey” have some words, simple movements, and a dance sequence for the class in a circle.

- Activity – do the “Hokey Pokey”. (Instructions included below – including a link for the tune if you don’t know it. Everyone should sing along rather than relying on recorded music.) Discuss how this could be useful.

**“Pass the Beat”** is a simple activity that can be played as a cooperative game with all of the children sitting in a circle. They attempt to clap a regular beat around the circle with each child giving one clap. This helps to establish cooperation, concentration, and a sense of rhythm. The game can then move on to endless variations such as each clapping a number of times or a rhythm, every 2<sup>nd</sup> / 3<sup>rd</sup> child giving a clap, making a movement instead of clapping (such as ‘Mexican wave’), saying a word as part of a sequence (e.g. counting, the alphabet, or a sentence) ... and so on.

- Activity – try “Pass the Beat” (as described above) in groups of about 10 or more. Each member should suggest something else to pass around the circle. Discuss the specific uses and benefits of each.

## MIME

Generally in the classroom context, 'mime' is acting/doing actions/interacting without words or props. It requires students to focus and imagine what is not there. Commonly it involves a guessing game, as other students attempt to identify the action, emotion, or possibly a vocabulary noun/verb/adjective/adverb as depicted by the actor(s).

Of course especially when the teacher is a native English Speaker without recourse to the students' L1, or if the local teacher has decided to teach strictly only in L2, then the teacher must be adept at using gestures and mime to assist the less able students to understand instructions. The [Busy Teacher](#) site offers quite a good article on this topic. (Generally this style of teaching enhances learning rather than reduction in learning caused by students constantly feeling the need to translate back into their L1.)

"What are you doing?" is a simple and amusing circle game involving mime. The first student (or the teacher) starts an action (e.g. brushing teeth) and the next student asks "What are you doing?" The student doing the action responds with a *different* answer from what they are doing (e.g. "I'm riding a bicycle") and then the student who asked the question must begin to make that action. The next student around the circle then asks "What are you doing?" and so on. Children generally find this amusing, while practising action vocabulary.

- Activity – try playing "what are you doing?" (As described above).

On the [ESL Classroom Games](#) site there is an example of a mime game called "What am I saying?" where children guess while one student mimes/mouths the words from a previously language lesson. Here are the instructions:

1. Write down a list of phrases that you have previously taught your students. E.g. I want to go to the cinema, I like walking and running, I like to watch football on TV.
2. Split the class into teams.
3. Stand in front of the class and mime the sentences very slowly without making any noise.
4. The first team to repeat the phrase you have mimed with your mouth are the winners.
5. You can give or deduct points for accuracy etc.

- Activity – try playing "What am I saying?" Discuss the effectiveness of this activity and possible adaptations.

Here is an activity suggested by [Busy Teacher](#).

Activities and games which use gestures and mime can be fun for the whole class. If you have just finished a section on feelings, make a list of feelings on the board and have students choose a slip of paper from a hat. Each slip of paper should contain a sentence such as *"You are happy."* Students should keep their sentences a secret.

**Have one volunteer at a time mime his/her sentence while the rest of the class tries to guess it.**

This would be a good review activity. To check individual comprehension, you can use the same basic idea but instead turn it into an interview activity where students have a sheet of paper with all the emotions listed as well as their secret emotion. The idea is that students go around the classroom miming and guessing emotions in pairs and getting a student signature for each emotion. When you go through the worksheet as a class you can have students read aloud from their worksheets sentences like *"Jane is sad."* and ask Jane to mime being sad for the class.

- Try the activity suggested above. Discuss its usefulness and possible adaptations.











## Line-Up Role-Play – Making Plans

### *A Line-up Role-play*

*Time: 1 hour*

#### **Focus:**

The purpose of this lesson is to give false beginners the skills to call somebody and make plans or make excuses. This lesson follows a simple format of an introduction and discussion, followed by a line-up activity.

#### **Preparation:**

The teacher will need to print off and photocopy the [caller worksheet](#) and the [receiver worksheet](#).

#### **Introduction:**

Tell the students that they will be making plans. Before explaining anything, give one student a note on which something like the following is written:

Call \_\_\_\_\_ and ask him to go to a movie Saturday night.

Another student's name should be written in the blank. Make the student actually pick up an imaginary phone and dial. Then you, the teacher, say, "Bringgg. Bringgg." and point to the person whose name is in the blank. Hopefully that person will be surprised but will still pick up their imaginary phone.

Listen carefully to how your students approach the task that has been set for them and *record their conversation* on the board as it is happening (or just after).

Usually, I find the conversation is very basic, lacks any sophistication and is very to the point. (Again, I teach false beginners).

Discussion:

Now that the conversation is written on the board, you can go through and make suggestions. Did they exchange greetings properly? Did the caller jump right to asking about going to the movies? Or was there some requisite small talk first: *How are you doing these days?* Did they remember to set a time and place to meet? Did the receiver show some enthusiasm at the proposal?

Now have another pair of students try it out. If all goes well this time have a third pair try it out but stop them when the caller asks if the receiver is busy. What if the receiver is busy? What could she say? Or what if the receiver isn't busy, but then doesn't really want to do the proposed activity? Flat out refusing a request might make the caller feel bad so you can discuss how to make excuses. Give them some pragmatic competence. In the role-play that follows students are supposed to say, "Oh! I just remembered I have to . . ." if they want to make an excuse.

### **Role-play Activity:**

Now, comes the real focus of the class: a line-up activity to practice making plans. Divide the class into two groups: callers and receivers. Give each group their respective worksheets. Callers have to check off ten things that they would like to do. Receivers will check off five things that they don't want to do. Callers will make calls and asks receivers to do the activities that the callers checked off. If the receivers are not busy and they *want* to do the activity (i.e. the receivers didn't check it off), then the receivers accept the proposal and both parties negotiate a time and place and record the information on their worksheets.



Class setup is very important for this. Basically, the class is setup so that there are two lines of chairs. The receivers will face the wall and the callers will sit behind them. See the picture above. The receivers should have their names pasted onto the back of their chairs if the students are not too familiar with each other.


Callers will go to a receiver and tap on that receivers shoulder and say, "Bring! Bring!" Receivers will answer and they will either make plans to do something or the receiver will make an excuse. After they hang up the phone, the caller stands up and waits for the next available chair behind a receiver and tries the conversation again. As more and more phone calls are being made the schedules should start filling up and it will become harder and harder for the students to negotiate a time to meet. This will present them with a new task:

A: Are you busy on Tuesday evening.

B: Yes, sorry. I have plans with \_\_\_\_\_. How about Wednesday afternoon?

A: No, I'm busy on Wednesday.

Sample Conversation:		Making Plans:		Role-play: You are on vacation this week. In this role-play, you have to call up other classmates and make plans to do something every day.																																																																																																
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## Surveys on Eating

### Survey on Breakfast

- (1) Did you have breakfast this morning?
- (2) What do you usually have for breakfast?
- (3) Who do you eat breakfast with?

### Survey on Lunch

- (1) Where do you usually have lunch?
- (2) What do you typically have for lunch?
- (3) Who do you eat lunch with?

### Survey on Dinners

- (1) Where do you usually have dinner?
- (2) What time do you usually eat dinner?
- (3) What did you have for dinner yesterday?

### Survey on Fast-food

- (1) Do you go to fast-food restaurants often?
- (2) What is your favourite fast-food restaurant?
- (3) Do you prefer fast-food or your mom's cooking?

### Survey on Restaurants

- (1) How often do you eat at restaurants?
- (2) What is your favourite restaurant?
- (3) What is your favourite restaurant food?

### Survey on Western Food

- (1) How often do you eat Western food?
- (2) What is your favourite Western food?
- (3) What Western Food do you dislike?

### Survey on Favourite Food

- (1) What is your favourite food?
- (2) How often do you eat it?
- (3) What is your least favourite food?

### Survey on Cooking

- (1) Who cooks in your family?
- (2) Who is a better cook your mom or your dad?
- (3) What can you cook well?

### Survey on Rice and Noodles

- (1) Do you prefer rice or noodles?
- (2) What your favourite rice dish?
- (3) What do you like to eat with noodles?

## Taking a Survey

A: Excuse me, I'm doing a survey on \_\_\_\_\_  
Can I ask you a few questions?

B: Yes, OK.

Name	Question #1	Question #2	Question #3



## **Tell the class your results:**

Everyone in this class

Most people in this class . . .

A few people in this class . . .

About half of the people in this class . . .

Almost no one in this class . . .



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## **The Hokey Pokey**

### **ACTIONS**

*Participants stand in a circle*

1. You put your right foot in,

*everyone puts their right foot into the circle*

You put your right foot out,

*everyone turns slightly and puts their right foot outside of the circle*

You put your right foot in

*everyone puts their right foot into the circle*

And you shake it all about.

*Everyone shakes their right foot in the circle*

You do the Hokey Pokey

*hands under chin, elbows out, tip head side to side*

And you turn around,

*turn around on the spot*

That's what it's all about.

*Three claps*

***Repeat with each body part.***

2. You put your left foot in, ...

3. You put your right hand in, ...

4. You put your left hand in, ...

5. You put your right shoulder in, ...

6. You put your left shoulder in, ...

7. You put your right hip in, ...


8. You put your left hip in, ...

9. You put your whole self in, ...



*(If you don't know the tune, you can find the music on [ChildStoryHour](https://www.childstoryhour.org/))*

## Here are some of the slides about Dance in the ESL Classroom

<h1>DANCE IN THE ESL CLASSROOM</h1> <p>Arielle Scott LING 481</p>	<p><i>"Dance is a living language,</i></p>  <p><i>capable of expressing an infinite number of thoughts, hopes and possibilities."</i> <b>Carolee F. Bongiorno</b></p>
<h2>WHY DANCE?</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ Dance is a form of artistic movement. The instrument for dance is the body and other bodies. Dance is made up from the imagination, words, feelings, and moments.</li> <li>✦ The integration of Dance/Movement into the Language classroom is beneficial for kinesthetic learners.</li> </ul>	<h2>THE BENEFITS</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ "... Children who engage in dance may actually <b>gain more energy for their academic work</b>" (Kienänen, Hetland, and Winner 259).</li> <li>✦ "Dance exercises <b>stimulate visual thinking</b> and perception, which are considered right brain processes. These are often ignored in traditional modes of instruction. This is critical for students whose learning or cognitive style is characteristically nonverbal..." (Bongiorno)</li> <li>✦ "The process of dance is an excellent way to record creative ideas and student development through the use of videotape and film. Such recordings help students focus their writing activities because they <b>enhance observation and self-expression</b>" (Bongiorno).</li> </ul>
<h2>KINESTHETIC LEARNERS</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ Although dance/movement is a means to help create more comprehension within students language knowledge, dance/movement lessons must be well applied in order for students to actually make improvements.</li> <li>✦ For instance: Asking the students to interpret dance a scene from a selection of reading may be a fun way to integrate kinesthetic activities, but a teacher must ask them self <b>'why does it matter?'</b></li> </ul>	<h2>MOVEMENT THROUGH 'BEING' WORDS</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ Objective: Students will explore being words through movement.</li> <li>✦ <b>As a group, students will "be" words. The teacher will announce a "be" word and the students will react to the word. No answer (in the form of movement) is wrong, because the word may mean something different to each student.</b></li> </ul> <p><small>Maria J. Susan, "Integration with Gender/English Language Arts" <a href="http://www.inquiryschools.org">inquiryschools.org</a>, 11/01/01 Carolina Public Schools, 2002</small></p>



## MOVEMENT THROUGH 'BEING' WORDS

Classroom Model:

- \* Teacher: Up
- \* Students: -stand on tip-toes-
- \* Teacher: Down
- \* Students: -roll on floor-
- \* Teacher: Crooked
- \* Students: -make random body shapes-

These types of activities are great for class bonding, as well as active demonstration of 'being' words and how they can be used. Students will create and challenge themselves to consider the 'being' words as physical representations.

## PARTS OF SPEECH AND DANCE

- \* Objective:
  - + The students will discuss elements of dance, as well as sharing ideas on how language arts can be used to deconstruct dance.
  - + Students will use parts of speech as a basis for developing a dance composition.
- \* Examples of parts of speech to review with students: noun, verbs, adverbs, preposition

Hartley, Susan, "Integration with  
Dance/English Language  
Arts," *Integration with Dance/English Language Arts*, North Carolina Public Schools, 2000.

## PARTS OF SPEECH AND DANCE

- \* Teacher must explain each part of speech as review for the students. And then the teacher must explain to the students that:

"In dance terms, a noun says what or who moves, a verb says what you are doing, an adverb says how you are doing it and a preposition says where you are doing it."  
(Susan Hartley, *Integration with Dance/English Language Arts*)

Hartley, Susan, "Integration with  
Dance/English Language  
Arts," *Integration with Dance/English Language Arts*, North Carolina Public Schools, 2000.

## PARTS OF SPEECH, VISUAL ACTIVITY

- \* Showing videos of simple performances to the students will prime them for the task of developing compositions. Students will visualize movement and correlate it to parts of speech, through class discussion.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4NnW5hZcJ0Q>

The link above is a good example of a simple performance that students can describe by using the parts of speech reviewed in class.

Example: The dancers spun with their arms upward.

Dance Choreographer for video: Jayann Chipman, University of Montana

## WARM UP

Teacher will lead a warm-up using:

- ♦ "be" words: identify parts of speech
- ♦ isolation of the body parts: nouns
- ♦ a verb warm-up: twist, stretch, glide, freeze, melt, etc.
- ♦ a verb/adverb warm-up: twist slowly, stretch widely, glide softly, etc.
- ♦ verb/adverb/preposition warm: up twist slowly around your spine, stretch strongly towards a neighbor, etc.

Note each part of speech for the students, if the students don't nominate to tell you themselves.

Hartley, Susan, "Integration with  
Dance/English Language  
Arts," *Integration with Dance/English Language Arts*, North Carolina Public Schools, 2000.

## PARTS OF SPEECH AND DANCE: GROUP WORK

- \* Teachers will allow students to form groups of three or four
- \* Teacher will distribute three cards to each student. Each card will name a verb, adverb, and preposition.
- \* Students will decide how the cards relate to each other, and are given time to compose a piece that has a beginning, middle, and end (only using the cards objectives given to them). They will practice over time, and perform for the class.
- \* In the end, students will constructively critique each performance on paper and through discussion. Were the parts of speech identifiable? How did the choices of the performers movements relate to one another?

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