

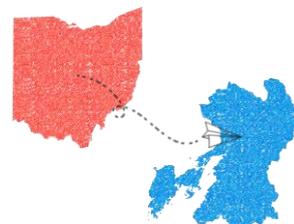
# DRAMA SKILLS FOR THE EFL CLASSROOM

Presented by Kristina Elyse Butke  
Skills Development Conference,  
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## ABOUT YOUR PRESENTER

- My name is Kristina Butke. バツキ クリスティーナです。😊
- This is my fourth time presenting at SDC!
- I'm from the USA, from Ohio.
- I am the Yamaga ALT. I teach at:
  - Kamoto High School
  - Kamoto Commercial High School
  - Kamoto Agricultural High School



## DRAMA BACKGROUND

- For a long time, drama was my hobby. I have about 20 years of experience!



As a writer and director...



...and as an actress.

## SPEAKING & TEACHING BACKGROUND

- Before I came to Japan, for four years I presented at some of the largest fan conventions in Ohio.

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- After I got my MFA from Seton Hill University, I taught English Composition at North Central State College for two years, then became an ALT!



## LET'S HAVE FUN TODAY!



- I hope to share what I've learned over the years and what I've used at English camps, classes, and skit contest practices.
- You are the best judge of what your students can do. You can change these activities to make them easier or more difficult. It's up to you to decide how.
- どうぞよろしくおねがいします。今日は楽しみましょう!

## WHY IS DRAMA IMPORTANT FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING?

- **Language is culture!** Drama "captures the essence of a culture or a group within that culture" (Casey, et al). If you want students to understand a different culture, **put them in situations that reflect what people in that culture do!**
- At your table, make a small group and discuss what you think **this idea** means. Then we will have volunteers share.



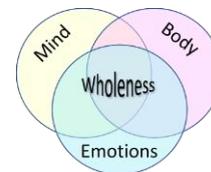
## WHY IS DRAMA IMPORTANT FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING?

- **Drama puts language in context.** Learners can practice which words and actions fit the scene, and they can do this in a safe place: the classroom (Giebert).
- **Words have different meanings in different situations.** Students can decide which meaning applies to which situation. Roleplaying and acting can help students remember the context!
- **FOR EXAMPLE:** "There was a mouse on the desk."



## WHY IS DRAMA IMPORTANT FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING?

- **Drama provides lasting, holistic learning.** Drama activities are physical and emotional, and they improve "retention of language structures and vocabulary" (Giebert).
- "Holistic" = whole (everything). Holistic learning is about the **whole person**: their mind, body, and feelings. Drama teaches students to use all these things together.
- In your same groups, talk about a **physical activity that helped you remember something**, then we'll have volunteers share.
- We'll do this again, and I want you to talk about **an emotion or feeling you had that helped you remember something**.



## Mouth Chart

	- Silent, M, B		- U, R
	- S, T, Ch		- Ooh!
	- E		- L, D
	- A, Ah		- F, V

## WHY IS DRAMA IMPORTANT FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING?

- **Drama improves speaking skills!** In this way, it improves the **physical act of speaking**—moving your mouth, changing your face, placing your tongue, and producing sounds.
- When actors are on stage, they must train themselves to speak in a way that everyone can hear. *It is a different method of speaking than in conversation* because making the sound clearly is so important.
- **PRONUNCIATION**—how you say a word
- **ENUNCIATION**—how you make the sounds of the word to be understood
- **INFLECTION**—the change in pitch when you speak

## SOUND CHECK!

### ▪ BETTER

- **PRONUNCIATION (EVERYDAY CONVERSATION)**
- BETTER
- **ENUNCIATION (DRAMATIC/PUBLIC SPEAKING)**
- **BETTER**
- **INFLECTION** ↑ ↓ →
- BETTER?
- BETTER.
- BETTER!



WHY IS DRAMA IMPORTANT FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING?

- **Do you understand why drama is important?**
- **Do you understand how drama helps students learn a language?**
- **Now...**

## LET'S ACT!



## PHYSICAL WARM-UPS

- Head & Shoulders
- Back
- Arms
- Legs & Feet

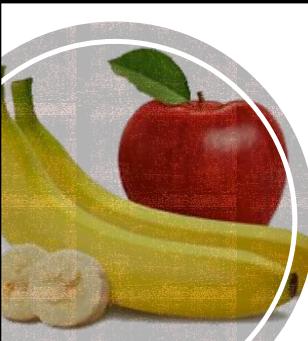


### FACIAL WARM-UPS

- Cheeks
- Lips
- Tongue
- Jaw
- Brow

### VOCAL WARM-UPS

- Pitch & Volume – BOO/AAH
- Pronunciation –
  - ABCs *with all sounds*
  - Word endings & consonant combinations
  - Apples & Bananas song for vowels
  - Tongue Twisters – there is one for every letter and sound of the alphabet!

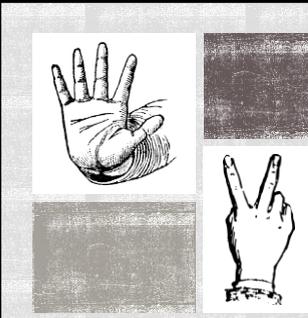
### THE APPLES AND BANANAS SONG

- I like to eat, eat,  
eat, apples and  
bananas!
- A E I O U



### TONGUE TWISTER

- I wish to wish the wish you wish to wish,  
but if you wish the wish the witch wishes,  
I won't wish the wish you wish to wish.



### NONVERBAL ACTIVITIES

- How do we communicate if we don't know how to speak?
  - GESTURES
  - POSTURE
  - FACIAL EXPRESSIONS
- We are going to do some activities you can try in your classes to help students become more comfortable using their face and body as tools for nonverbal communication.

### SILENT WORDS

- This is an activity where you have to communicate a phrase or sentence silently.
- We'll warm up first with simple commands, then move on to sentences.
- It's all about communicating without speaking.

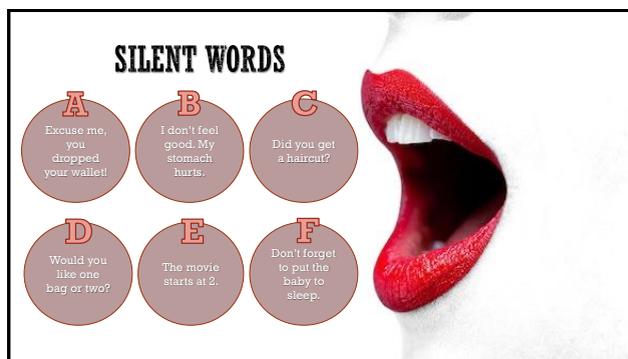


### SILENT WORDS - WARMUPS



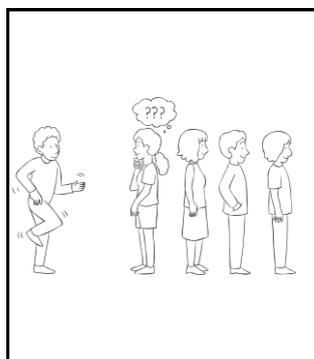
- Come here.
- Stop.
- Over there.
- Peace.
- Good!
- So-so.
- Okay.
- I don't know.
- No.
- Yes.
- Maybe.
- A little.
- A lot.
- Money.
- Dead.

### SILENT WORDS



- A** Excuse me, you dropped your wallet!
- B** I don't feel good. My stomach hurts.
- C** Did you get a haircut?
- D** Would you like one bag or two?
- E** The movie starts at 2.
- F** Don't forget to put the baby to sleep.

### SIMPLE CHARADES



- "Charade" is another way to say "pretend."
- Traditional Charades has more rules, including using hand signals to give hints about syllables and complex names.
- This is a little too difficult for language learners, so we keep it simple!
- Students are given a word and must use gestures to describe what it is.
- They are not allowed to speak or make sound!
- The class has to guess what it is.
- I WANT 3 VOLUNTEERS FOR A QUICK GAME!

### MUSICAL GESTURES



- Choose a song in English that has words that are easy to hear.
- Just use a short clip – not a full song.
- Play the music for the students to listen to.
- Show the words onscreen as well.
- Students need to use as many gestures as they can for all the words in the song they hear. If they stop moving or miss a word, they are out.
- It is ok if some gestures don't make perfect sense. The goal is for students to **keep thinking and keep moving**.

### MY HEART WILL GO ON



- Every night in my dreams  
I see you, I feel you  
That is how I know you go on  
Far across the distance  
And spaces between us  
You have come to show you go on
- Near, far, wherever you are  
I believe that the heart does go on  
Once more you open the door  
And you're here in my heart  
And my heart will go on and on

### EMOTIONS GAME



- An easy way to have students try full-on acting is to have them read a simple sentence, but express it in different ways using different emotions. They need to use their voice, face, and body to express the mood!
- Happy
- Sad
- Lonely
- Tired
- Hungry
- Excited
- Confused
- Disgusted
- Bored
- Scared
- Surprised
- Shy
- Romantic
- Hurt
- Angry
- Silly

## EMOTIONS GAME

"Your mother was a hamster  
and your father smelt of elderberries!"

- From *Monty Python  
and the Holy Grail* (1975)



## OTHER DRAMA ACTIVITIES

- Any time you have a dialogue in a textbook, assign students to read it out loud in small groups and act it out.
- Encourage students to write skits and practice them in class. Give them a prompt to make it easier.
- Introduce improvisation activities where students have to come up with unique answers based on changing situations.



## IMPROV EXAMPLES

- Ask students how they are feeling, but forbid them from answering "I'm fine, thank you." *Everybody says this to the point it has no meaning.* Require students to answer using **any phrase** that makes sense. To make it more difficult, ask students "Why" after they answer.
  - Have students act out a scene from everyday life:
    - Ordering food at a restaurant
    - Going through airport customs
    - Scheduling an appointment
- Have them follow a brief script of a couple sentences...then after they act out the script, have a student change one line to something unique to change the situation., and have students improv the conversation from there.

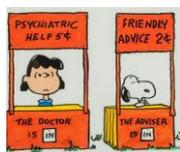
## HOW WOULD YOU ADD DRAMA TO YOUR CLASS?

- Take two minutes to talk in your group and come up with an idea or additional activity, then we'll share with everyone.



## Q & A

Ask me anything! I'll try  
to help you or point you  
in the right direction!



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した!

- Thank you for your hard work!  
I hope you had fun!



## WORKS CITED

- Casey, Maryrose, Gillian Kehoul, Delyse Ryan, and Paul Makeham. "Dramatic Teaching: Focusing on Drama, Theater, and Performance in Higher Education." *Journeys to the Interior: 2005 Conference of the Australasian Association for Theater, Drama, and Performance Studies* (2005): 1-6. QUT Digital Repository. ADSA, 2005. Web. 16 Nov. 2016.
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