



RATIONALE

Drama provides a way to explore using the body the circumstances surrounding a character or place within a book. Augusto Boal described the use of theatre as a new language, making the point that 'By learning a new language, a person acquires a new way of knowing reality and of passing that knowledge on to others.' (2008: 96). Boal argued that theatre had the potential to empower and change people because when you take part in dramatic action, your body tries out new solutions and take plans forward (2008:97). This means you can identify with the character you are portraying and feel more prepared to view alternative ways of looking at a situation.

Boal, A. (2008) *Theatre of the Oppressed*, London: Pluto Press.



ADVICE FROM MEDIATORS

Arranging a dramatic response depends on the book being used. The following pictures from one of our Cairo workshops show how Mustafa used the wordless graphic novel *The Arrival* to guide the participants to respond.

1. First he chose a page from the book and asked us to imagine we were characters on the boat.
2. He provided us with a set of prompt questions, asking us how we would feel as we approached the new land.
3. In groups we spent time thinking about our reactions, discussing them and agreeing as a group about how we would respond.
4. We shared our emotional reactions with the entire class.
5. Then we discussed how the drama activity helped us imagine how different people might react to one situation.

Make sure you have space and that the people working around you are not expecting the children to be quiet. Plan time to prepare, execute and discuss the activity.

TAKING NOTES OF THE CHILDREN'S RESPONSES

When children use drama they get to think, feel and discuss what is going on in the book, in a similar way to the annotations, only this time they are using their bodies to explore the visuals in the book. The activity can be great for children who do not like to respond through written formats.

You can ask them directly how the activity helped them see the perspective of the character more clearly and note their responses.