

DRAMA WORLDS:
PLACES OF THE HEART,
HEAD, VOICE, AND HAND
IN DRAMATIC INTERPRETATION

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We accept the fact that the actor infuses his [sic] own voice, his own body, his own gestures—in short his own interpretation—into the words of the text. Is he not simply carrying to its ultimate manifestation what each of us as readers of the text must do? (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 13)

The combination of reading with dramatic interpretation—infusing text with the lively play of voice, body, and gesture—is a notion that seems to hover in America's literacy education and goes in and out of focus depending on the historical period (Robinson, Faraone, Hittleman, & Unruh, 1990). As Martin (1992) suggests, "perhaps at one time in American history our country could afford schools that severed heads from hands and hearts," but this is no longer the case. Instead, she reminds us that schools should be places where "mind and body, thought and action, reason and emotion are all being educated" (pp. 86, 87). Yet, how do we build a place in school where integration rather than separation is the norm? Rosenblatt's (1978) metaphor for the connections between drama and reading can be a powerful reminder of possibilities, for it invites us to establish new connections among students' textual experiences and the social and imaginative worlds students create together.

In advocating classroom drama, we support literacy which shifts meaning and control from teachers and texts to stu-

dents and teachers who create meaning together as they interpret, dramatize, and dialogue with texts. We regard literacy as much more than reading, writing and speaking, and listening. Literacy is "reading the world" (Freire, 1972) and "working the world" (Willinsky, 1990) as much as it is reading or working a text. The classroom that uses drama for alternative modes of meaning making is a place where "students and teachers can also be empowered to rethink the world-in-progress and their place in it" (Apple, 1990, p. xii). It is a place that deliberately constructs and reconstructs spaces for learning that can include students' multiple social, cultural, and expressive knowledge. Thus, drama educates for a freedom of the imagination in which students of diverse cultural backgrounds can connect with and transform texts in dramatic interpretations and thereby "surpass the given and look at things as if they could be otherwise" (Greene, 1988, p. 3).

This chapter is designed to serve as a map to places where the integration of drama with literacy exists—places of the heart, head, voice, and hand—all of which lie in the realm of what Stanislavski (*My Life in Art*, cited in Cole & Chinoy, 1970) terms "the magic if":

I came to understand that creativeness begins from that moment when in the soul and imagination of the actor there appears the

magical, creative *if* ... that is, the imagined truth which the actor can believe as sincerely and with greater enthusiasm than he believes practical truth, just as the child believes in the existence of its doll and of all life in it and around it. From the moment of the appearance of *if* the actor passes from the plane of actual reality into the plane of another life, created and imagined by himself. Believing in this life, the actor can begin to create. (pp. 494, 495)

It is the notion of shifting planes and altering perspectives by entering a conditional world that is important for players reading, writing, or enacting a piece of literature or exposition. To be able to cast themselves in the space and time of others, to walk between the pages of a book and imagine "what would happen if ...," not simply to mouth the lines and mimic the motions, but to understand, create, and convey meaning—this echoes Rosenblatt's (1978) description of the "ultimate manifestation" that readers as well as actors must do.

As children read and enact their interpretations, they express not only the possible worlds of other characters in time and space but the actual minds and imaginative possibilities of their own reality. Writers, too, must be able to see their work as more than "dummy runs" (Britton, 1972); as they create stories, letters, documents, scientific or historical reports they also engage in "social work" (Dyson, 1993). Writers in schools use situations to complete both the official work of the classroom and the unofficial work of negotiating their social positions with teachers and peers. Drama experiences, like children's play, can enable students to construct purposes and audiences for their writing. Thus, they simultaneously accomplish the official work of the classroom curriculum, while they move across perspectives and positions to "place" themselves in multiple social roles both within and outside the world of the classroom.

We begin this chapter by discussing two kinds of classroom drama—each of which encompasses a variety of specific dramatic forms—for commonalities and contrasts. We then look at these two kinds across the body of dramatic enactment. We first explore the heart and the head of drama, combining them to emphasize their integration. We then carry these concepts into the voice and ultimately the hand to show how drama fuses emotion and intellect through communicative channels and action. Throughout these sections, we emphasize Heathcote's (1984) notion of "framing." We suggest that children in drama not only try on particular roles, but experience feelings of commitment and responsibility to dramatic encounters as they interact with new perspectives.

KINDS OF DRAMA

Although drama appears in multiple forms, here we explore two perspectives on drama—one which pays close attention to the text on the page and one that emphasizes text as a starting point for exploring meanings beyond the page. The first entails dramatizing at the *center of text* and the second involves dramatizing at the *edges of text*. Yet, rather than dichotomize these two dramatic forms, we emphasize that

both are art forms and both are learning processes. Hughes (1991) has clarified that there is actually "a complex dialectic" between "drama as an art form" and "drama as a learning process." The first focuses on "actor/audience relationship and the semiotics of performance" while the second "accentuates the paradoxical nature of play in which the child can be engaged in a fictional world while simultaneously reflecting upon its symbolic significance" (p. 1). He goes on to say:

The debate, between those supporting Drama as a learning medium and those proclaiming the primacy of the art form, has led to a wide variation in teaching practice. There are some who say *I teach for art*; others see the extension of human empathy as essential. In Australia, the majority of educational Drama teachers seem to view both concerns as important. (p. 1)

In this chapter, we take the relationship of drama with written literary text—particularly the proximal distance between the two—to be a productive focus for understanding drama and literacy education and research. Yet, like literary genres which Fowler (1982) suggests are "not permanent classes but ... families subject to change" (p. v), the lines between different dramatic forms often blur. More important, the distance between literary text and dramatic enactment often works in accordion-like fashion—shrinking and stretching to meet the needs of the moment. Our point here is not to set up definitive categories, but rather to look at two large families of drama as they exist in classrooms today.

Dramatizing at the Center of Text

Dramatizing at the center of the text places the written piece of literature or exposition at center stage. Children read, interpret, and negotiate the enactment of text adhering (more or less) to the characters, dialogue, and plot written on the page. Even when written texts are adapted for various forms of production, McCaslin (1990) suggests that playwrights "must make every effort to retain the essential elements of the source material so as not to disappoint or offend the audience" (p. 161). Many teachers rely on professional playwrights and published suggestions (Wills, 1989), while others prefer to transform tradebook texts with their children, enacting particular scenes or transforming entire pieces for the classroom stage. No matter who serves as playwright—teachers, children, or professional playwrights—there is a sense of remaining "true" to the text on the page.

There are multiple forms that emphasize dramatizing at the center. Table 41-1 lists and defines three current forms:

Although Siks (1983) suggests that in story theatre "players are guided to *tell the story*, to be true to its intent, rather than to aim to elaborate, digress, or change its theme" (p. 48), her description could apply to all three of the forms above. As McCaslin (1990) explains, in all of these forms "the primary virtue is the text" (p. 280).

Dramatizing at the Edges of Text

When dramatizing at the edges of text, the players do not have a script, though a story may become a "narrative prop"

TABLE 41-1. Dramatizing at the Center of Text

Story Theatre
In story theatre, a narrator (usually the classroom teacher) tells or reads a story with children seated in a semicircle. Siks (1983) tells us that there are three basic rules to follow: (a) <i>the rule of the theatre</i> —in which children take on character or scenic roles and move on stage to enact a part and off to be an audience for other roles, (b) <i>the rule of instant action</i> —the children must move the instant a role is called for and then quickly exit, and (c) <i>the rule of instant cooperation</i> —since roles are not assigned, children must cooperate to allow individuals to take on specific parts, though at times, parts can be taken by more than one player. This last rule also emphasizes the equal distribution of roles so the play is not dominated by a few eager volunteers (p. 48).
Readers Theatre
Readers theatre is "a form of group storytelling in which two or more readers present a piece of literature by reading aloud from hand-held scripts" (Robertson, 1990, p. 2). Children (a) read a story, (b) make selective and analytical choices in transforming the story into a script through social negotiation, (c) formulate, practice, and refine their interpretations, (d) perform for an audience, and (e) evaluate their performance (Shanklin & Rhodes, 1989). Readers theatre is often defined by its emphasis on language; performances involve no use of costumes or props; actors face the audience rather than each other; characters are brought to life through choices in voice and minimal gestures (Busching, 1981; Landy, 1982; Robertson, 1990; Sloyer, 1982).
Classroom Theatre
Classroom theatre is a blend of creative drama and readers theatre that ultimately has much in common with regular theatre. Classroom theatre takes and reshapes the best from both worlds—offering children opportunities to (a) participate in theatre games to exercise their voices and bodies as well as build concentration, and (b) collaboratively produce theatrical interpretations of selected scenes in published texts (Wolf, 1994, 1995). Children are encouraged to think like actors, using the technical vocabulary of the theatre and the strategies of those on the stage—marking their scripts to note body movement and intonation, arranging for a prompter if needed, and running their lines repeatedly, though they can enact the final performance with hand-held scripts.

(Heath & Branscombe, 1986) around which students and teacher raise questions and enact possible situations. Rather than providing students with words to interpret and enact, the whole or parts of the narrative become a prop or "pre-text" for creating a play world which intersects and interacts with both the world of the story and the actual world of the students. The pretext, as defined by Rogers and O'Neill (1993), is the shared beginning point for wide-ranging explorations of human relations and interpretations. Students' interpretive actions and discussions around the pretext will be informed by their personal and social experiences, their ideas of cultural norms and expectations, and the imaginative power they bring to experiencing, rethinking and transforming human dilemmas. Students' interpretations and creations of texts arise through improvised encounters which enable them to explore the ambiguities and possibilities of the text. Though at various points in the work some students may watch as others show or demonstrate, no

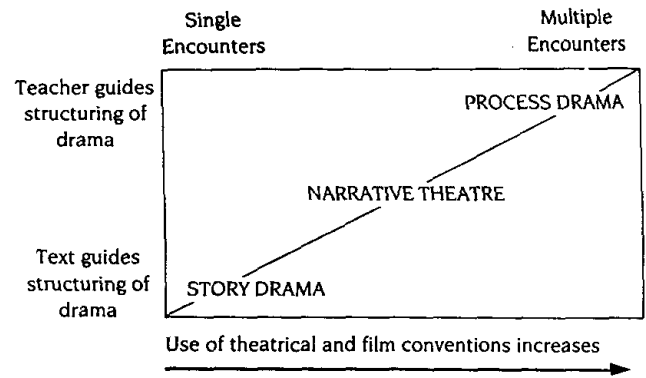


FIGURE 41-1 Features of Dramatizing at the Edges of Text

final performance is being prepared: the process is the product. In a sense, by dramatizing at the edges of the text, children's interpretive processes and perspectives, as well as the teacher's role in structuring those processes and perspectives are drawn into the center. As Heathcote (1984) stresses, "When it comes to the interpretation of ideas it is the child's viewpoint which is important ... he [sic] is offering a viewpoint and in return the teacher may offer another one" (p. 85).

Dramatizing at the edges of the text may take many forms and be referred to by various names. The terms drama in education and educational drama (Bolton, 1979; Heathcote, 1984) are used more generically. Story drama (Booth, 1985, 1994, 1995), narrative theatre (Edmiston, Enciso, & King, 1987), and process drama (O'Neill, 1991; O'Toole, 1992) are three other descriptive terms. These forms of drama are not distinctive and in practice overlap. However, all of these forms of drama are distinguished by their attention to process and the teacher's selection of and participation in encounters that may be actually evident in a text or only implied.

As seen in Figure 41-1, the teacher may focus on one encounter with children that is fairly close to the actual text. The teacher may make dramatizing at the edges of the text more complex in two ways: (1) increase the number of encounters, and (2) rely less on encounters in the actual text and more on his or her own aesthetic structuring of the drama.

There are many forms that emphasize dramatizing at the edge of text. Table 41-2 lists and defines three current forms, although it is important to remember that the lines between these kinds of dramatizing are often blurred. These approaches to drama, particularly process drama, may seem to require considerable skills and knowledge related to theatre and playwriting. Although "doing drama" in these ways may seem daunting, very rich, accessible drama experiences can be created with reference to some widely known conventions and principles of sociodramatic play. The following touchstones may be useful to a beginning drama and literacy educator:

(1) The source for creating dramatic images and encounters is as limitless as the whole array of theatrical and film

TABLE 41-2. Dramatizing at the Edges of Text

Story Drama
<p>Story dramas (Booth, 1995) are generally very focused on a single encounter or several brief encounters that are elaborated on and interpreted over time. As teachers work in this way, they use the text as a basis for determining which characters will be encountered, what problems inherent in the story are of concern, and what decisions and actions need to be taken. The players, in turn, interpret the story in ways which are meaningful to them—an interpretation which may ignore subtle details of the story or alter the story in substantive ways (e.g., changing the ending). Although their personal interpretations are elicited, players are also working within a shared social context. Thus, the story becomes a pretext to involve the children in ways of negotiating and dealing with imagining alternative possibilities beyond those in the text as well as those which they encounter in their actual lives.</p>
Narrative Theatre
<p>In narrative theatre (Edmiston et al., 1987), the teacher also relies on the text, and may actually read from it. He or she does so initially to guide students' actions and interpretations of the words of the characters or narrator in a story. However, in narrative theatre, students may be involved in numerous encounters covering the full chronology of the story while the teacher or students read excerpts from the text to set the scene or, as in readers theatre, devise possible interpretations of a character's meaning. Narrative theatre could be located at the midpoint of the continua in Figure 41-1. Dramatic encounters will be shaped by both the text and the teacher. The characters and the author's words can be used, as well as the students' own writings and interpretations. The teacher will both structure encounters and participate in imaginary interactions with the students. The students could be engaged in encounters implied by the circumstances of the story but also in encounters imagined by the students and teacher.</p>
Process Drama
<p>Process drama relies more on the teacher's knowledge of aesthetic structuring through improvisation and the use of theatrical and film processes and conventions in order to create multiple and carefully sequenced ways of creating dramatic art with students (O'Neill, 1991, 1994). As with story drama and narrative theatre the teacher can enter into the fictional world of a text. The text can provide them with an initial dilemma or situation. However, the original text will soon be supplemented by the texts which arise among students and teacher as they interact (Enciso & Edmiston, in press). It is not that a text is absent from this approach to dramatizing, instead it is "under construction."</p>

conventions (e.g., tableaux, dreams, multiple 'selves' speaking across time and space, etc.). Nearly every film uses time shifts, overheard conversations, or setting changes. Teachers who begin to pay attention to the ways in which filmmakers and theatre directors create situations or encounters among characters may try these out with students as they read, interpret, and write texts. A number of excellent publications are also available that fully describe a series of drama encounters and/or describe theatrical and film conventions that can be used in drama (Bolton, 1992; Morgan & Saxton, 1987; Neelands, 1990; O'Neill & Lambert, 1983; O'Neill, Lambert, Linnell, & Warr-Wood, 1976; O'Toole & Haseman, 1988; Swartz, 1988; Tarlington & Verriour, 1991).

(2) Following the reading of a story or some part of a story, drama can begin with the simple invitation, "Let's imagine that. . . ." Just as children often initiate play by entering into an imaginary situation from a book and assign themselves and their friends various roles (Wolf & Heath, 1992), so also students in supportive classrooms will adopt imaginary perspectives. Students' involvement in these encounters is often generated and guided by the features of play that have always attracted children: They are invited to "be a head taller" (Vygotsky, 1978), to imagine themselves as participants in a world where they have power to make choices, to take action, and to interpret circumstances. In drama, adults and students speak and interact together with the understanding that the students have an urgent responsibility to find out, make decisions, or interpret data. As in play, students are thinking through situations while they are in the midst of them, as participants who have the authority to act. They are not talking about what they would do if they were a certain character—they are doing it and finding out what it means to *be* in a situation and experience the consequences of actions.

(3) Students may adopt and shift perspectives as a group rather than as individual actors. For example, children can imagine they are the parents of children who live near Red Riding Hood's family and are concerned about Little Red Riding Hood's late return from her grandmother's house. They can also shift perspectives to test out possible meanings or thematic directions implied by the story. For example, if they shift to the perspective of wolves' parents, they entertain a completely different view of 'wolfish' behavior than that portrayed in the folktale. Having taken both parental views (and other possible perspectives related to the story), students are in a position to advise community members on safety or animal-human coexistence.

(4) Teachers enter the drama world and adopt positions alongside or in opposition to the students. Evaluative statements and questions are raised as possibilities that can be considered rather than regarded as authoritative judgments that must be accepted. In the scenario described above, for example, the teacher could adopt the position of a forest ranger who raises questions about the students' proposed standards for safety or planned education of young animals and humans. The teacher could shift to another perspective, such as an editor of the local newspaper who sends the students/reporters to conduct interviews about safety practices.

(5) In a drama world the teacher can always place herself in a position of relative (and often fictional) incompetence. She needs their help or she needs to know something from them. She can become very inept; for example, she could represent Red Riding Hood's parent who has no idea how to track wolves. In addition, the students can often be cast as "experts" so that they interact from positions of strength and competence. Students could be expert planners who create a wildlife refuge. They could be journalists who are expert at writing for a newspaper or creating a newspaper layout. The teacher can still "teach" but now she can do so indirectly and in response to students' needs. Extended uses of this strategy, called "mantle of the expert" by Dorothy Heathcote, are

described in Bolton (1992), Heathcote and Bolton (1995), Heathcote and Herbert (1985), and Wagner (1985).

DRAMA WORLDS

Blurred and at times extinguished by standardized expectations for response, Rosenblatt's (1978) image of reader as active interpreter through multiple channels of communication is more often a metaphor for reading than a reality. Yet, dramatizing at the center and at the edges of the text creates places that bring the vision to actuality. These places exist in the hearts, heads, voices, and hands of children and their teachers as they interpret and integrate the texts on the page and the texts of their lives.

Places of the Heart and Head

Rather than separate intellect from affect, drama, like life, weaves the two together—integrating mind and emotion within the experience and action of specific situations. As Dewey (1934) noted, the arts are experienced intellectually, emotionally, and consciously in a “union of sense, need, impulse and action” (p. 25). Vygotsky (1986) also emphasized this union by suggesting that thought is not individual and detached, but socially and emotionally constructed:

Thought is not begotten by thought; it is engendered by motivation, i.e., by our desires and needs, our interests and emotions. Behind every thought there is an affective-volitional tendency, which holds the answer to the last “why” in the analysis of thinking. A true and full understanding of another’s thought is possible only when we understand its affective-volitional basis (p. 252).

Many of Vygotsky’s examples of the emotional motivation behind thought come from his discussions of the dramatic interpretation of literature. Vygotsky’s interest in theatre was one that began in childhood and extended throughout his life. As Vygotsky’s sister explained, “I don’t think there was any period in his life when he did not think or write about the theatre” (Levitin, 1982, cited in Wertsch, 1985, p. 4). Leaning on the work of Constantin Stanislavski, actor and artistic director of the Moscow Art Theatre, Vygotsky suggests that underneath the written or spoken text lies the subtext of thought and emotion. An understanding of the subtext or the “inner life” of the text is critical to actors in the theatre (Stanislavski, 1961). They need not only deliver lines on stage, but also create hypothetical affective worlds of their characters off stage by negotiating among actors, for the “full person” has to interact with other characters/players. The collaborative and often conditional nature of the construction of meaning brings actors away from the isolated roles of fixed characters. Instead, they must play off each other’s roles, listen to the sounds of other’s emotional subtexts, and respond to meet or question interpretations.

For Dorothy Heathcote (1980), the dramatic intersection of heart and head occurs when children in classrooms learn to “read implications”—to discover the meanings which lie

behind words, meanings which affect the lives of human beings. She dramatizes predominately at the edges of texts, as children create characters, scenes, and interactions which *will* be structured by the teacher and *may* be structured by a text. Heathcote pioneered the strategy of “teacher-in-role”—the practice of teacher structuring from within the drama by participating in fictional encounters alongside the students. Johnson and O’Neill (1984) explain Heathcote’s position: “... the teacher, as the most mature member of the group, has not merely a right but a responsibility to intervene, since learning is the product of intervention” (p. 12).

In order to help children and their teachers learn to listen to and talk with implication, Heathcote and Horda (1980) led teachers and upper elementary school students in a variety of interpretations surrounding Percy Bysshe Shelley’s famous sonnet *Ozymandias*—a tale of a tyrant’s power and his lost civilization. In one activity, the children constructed a museum with waxworks that captured events they believed would “show the slow fall of the dynasty of Ozymandias to the strangers who finally conquered” (p. 13). The children then explained their exhibits to museum visitors:

- Ch. 1 (As Ozymandias) I see the ships on the horizon and I know deep within my heart that the end has come.
- Ch. 2 (The attacker) With pride I hold this dagger in my hand to kill the King of Kings, Ozymandias King of Kings.
- Ch. 3 (servant of the King) Oh the agony that I could not save my king. (p. 22)

The words the children used reveal mental states which are much dependent on emotional interpretation. As *Ozymandias*, the child uses the words “deep within my heart” to suggest that although the mental leap from ships on the horizon to certain doom is a feat of cognitive problem solving, it is sparked by a highly intuitive emotional reaction. The attacker holds his dagger “with pride” transforming a violent act into a moment of intense patriotism for his own country. And the servant does not distantly discuss the events that occurred after the King’s death, but the “agony” that he felt. As Heathcote suggests,

Attitudes shape happenings, and events are their result. Each event, which is the result of attitudes, creates another shift in attitude (either by change or by refusal to change) and so creates another event. So the story is what we find we have made, as a result of the seesawing between attitude producing action, and action changing attitude (p. 5).

Thus, the stories of *Ozymandias* that these children *made* highlight both the emotional motivation of thought and their effect on other people. People in their events stress what Vygotsky (1986) calls “the personal needs and interests, the inclinations and impulses, of the thinker” (p. 10).

Yet, the intersection of head and heart is more intriguing when we consider not only individual motivations, but what happens when the motivations of one meet those of another. One can easily imagine the scene between *Ozymandias*, his attacker, and his protective servant. Lovers are not the only characters on the stage or in life who are “star crossed,” for intentions conflict and/or merge through events, solidifying

or transforming subsequent attitudes. Still, the issue here is not whether Ozymandias and his attacker could ever agree, but whether the children in these encounters can see another's point of view. Through the revelation of their highly emotional motivations, can players hear the *implications* of the others' lines? Heathcote believes that they can for "the point of view we have in life often cannot be changed, but in play and art we can adapt different ways of involving ourselves in the occasion" (pp. 4, 5).

A more recent study of drama and reading was developed by Jeffrey Wilhelm (1994, in press) for his 6th grade 'resistant' readers, who tended to read only for explicitly stated or plot information. In an effort to enable his students to recognize their authorial power relative to literature, he involved them in improvisations of brief episodes from *The Incredible Journey* (Burnford, 1961). Students spoke as if they were characters, creating responses that were replete with implications, innuendo, and possible motivations. They explored meanings implied by the text and, at the same time, began to reinvent the meaning of reading. As one boy stated, "If you're not there, in the story, you're not even reading."

Whether working at the edges or at the center of text, children learn to read and enact implications. In a study of text-centered classroom theatre (Wolf, 1993, 1994), one group of children prepared a production of *Tikki Tikki Tembo* (Mosel, 1968)—the story of two brothers who unwittingly take turns falling into the local well. Because of the brevity of his name, Chang is quickly rescued, though he is long-suffering for the accident of birth order which relegates him to secondary status. However, "Tikki tikki tembo—no sa rembo—chari bari ruchi—pip peri pembo" lies long at the bottom of the well while Chang rushes about in an effort to save him and simultaneously speak his brother's great long name with reverence. A key *implication* of this text is the relationship between Chang and his mother—for she gives Chang little credit and much grief as she dotes on her oldest son.

Two of the children who worked on this production explored the emotions behind the actions in their journals. Henry, who played Chang, wrote, "I am an unwanted boy. I act smart." This brief but telling description captures the cyclical nature of attitudes shaping action and action constructing attitudes. Chang is unloved and "unwanted" so he attempts to capture his mother's attention by "act[ing] smart." From the many discussions that surrounded this production, Henry let it be known that he well understood how children could be ignored and perhaps abused. In one interpretation of the scene, the mother was supposed to yell loudly at Chang, "*Tiresome child, what are you trying to say?*" After shrinking away from the intense eye gaze and loud shouts of his "mother," Henry stopped the scene explaining, "Cause I have enough of that at home." Perhaps because all the players could appreciate Henry's position, they offered a substitute for menacing violence with a world-weary voice of a mother burdened with daily duties as well as an incessantly tiresome boy jabbering at her side.

In his own journal entry, Bobby (who played the "mother") reflected on the nature of unwanted boys, but he wrote from the parental point of view expressing the overall disappoint-

ment that became the essence of his character:

Have you rea[d] Tiki tiki tebo? No then I will tell you all abawt it. it is abawt a mother and two boys in cinu [China] the two boys wer stopied [stupid] din't lisiin to thary [their] Mother thay [they] are lucke thay are alive.

He supplemented his words with an illustration of himself as parent looming over his two sons floating in the well. The words that appear in the bubble extending from his mouth are "I told yoo so." Never a part of the original script, these four words capture the tiredly bitter denunciation of two disobedient sons, and are reflective of the analytical conversation of the mind and heart. To get inside another character, speak her speech and think her thoughts, Bobby attempted to explain action through intention. The mother had a hard life, taking care of two relatively disobedient sons. Bobby did not see her anger directed at Chang as much as at her "favorite son" Tikki Tikki Tembo who proved to be just as disobedient when he too tumbled into the well.

As the production progressed, the boys decided to change the "mother" into a "father" and Bobby was able to understand the parental perspective even more by thinking about his own father:

Bobby: Well, ... just because like if you're a father and your favorite son is like on a baseball team ... and you expect him to do very, very good ... and you tell him like [deep voice] "Okay, now go and strike out this guy and make a big home run" [normal voice] and— you don't and it gets him really upset and he's like [deep voice] "you coulda done better than that." [Returning to the story] He's my most honored son and he does almost whatever I tell him to do and [then] he disobeys me and he goes in and he nearly DROWNS himself. So you know.

Shelby: So you're /irritated./

Bobby: /That. Ya./Ya. Just like my father sometimes.

Bobby's choices reveal the disappointment of a father whose instructions were ignored. As Bobby explained his reasoning, he moved in and out of the role of the character through pronoun shifts, speaking as both character ("He's *my* most honored son and he does almost whatever *I* tell him to do") and as self ("Just like *my* father sometimes"). Shifting from the textual scene to a hypothetical and metaphorical situation ("like if you're a father and your favorite son is like on a baseball team") allowed Bobby to enter into the thoughts and emotions of his character—to analyze and to feel the irritation of a father whose son had let him down.

When shifting into the character's world, children's analyses often fall into the hypothetical realm as they justify their decisions based on details they notice in illustration or word, on understandings they have about similar characters in real life, and on their own motivations and intentions. In the world of drama, children may or may not *identify* with the character, but they come to *believe* in the possibility of their character. They construct a narrative world for their characters, imbuing them with intentions, motivations, and reasoning that is often not explicit on the page. The performance is only the surface level; through their decisions the children

build a narrative foundation for what occurs on the surface. However, new understandings of alternative perspectives are not simply confined to the moment of performance or even postperformance reflection. Often, there are hints that the understandings children have gained in drama will become a part of what they know about the world. As they learn to read the subtext of particular situations, they come to see the implications for their own lives.

Fifth-grade students working with Brian Edmiston (1993a) engaged their hearts and heads as they dramatized at the edges of *The Journey: Japanese Americans, racism and renewal* (Hamanaka, 1990), a picture book about the experience of Japanese Americans who had been interned during World War II. The children's teacher read and discussed the text and then Edmiston worked in process drama to set up a series of dramatic encounters at the edges of the text. His goal was to bring the children to a decisive point in U.S. history when Japanese-American citizens had to decide whether or not to sign a Loyalty Questionnaire. Those who signed renounced their allegiance to the Japanese emperor and effectively to Japanese culture but were faced with conscription into the U.S. Army. Those who refused faced being branded as traitors and being sentenced to prison. Drawing on details of the book, the students first created "photographs from family albums" which illustrated both their Japanese and American heritage. Then Edmiston briefed some students playing the role of FBI agents about the Presidential decree which required them to arrest the Japanese Americans. Finally, in pairs, with one as an FBI agent and the other as a Japanese American the arrests took place.

In the so-called "relocation centers," the internees recalled what happened to them and shared their inner thoughts. One said, "There must be some mistake, we are Americans." Another replied, "I don't want to be American if they treat us like this." The FBI agents advised the soldiers at the camp that, for example, "They need to accept the facts . . . this is not their country." Then the students shifted perspective to their future and spoke their thoughts as they looked back on their memory of those events. An FBI agent said, "I didn't realize it would be like this; I'm so sorry."

Edmiston next asked them to return to the internment camps and also adopted the position of an internee. He told them that he had heard that they would be let out of the camp if they all signed a piece of paper and renounced allegiance to Japan. There followed a heated and insightful discussion among the students which was intensified when Edmiston repositioned himself as the camp commander demanding a response. Their comments ranged from the boy who said, "I am proud to be Japanese. I will not say I am not Japanese just to get out of this place" to the girl who lamented, "I have to sign, my poor little baby and when she was born in the concentration camp she would die and if I sign I can never speak of my homeland again but my baby will live to tell the truth about the foolish Americans so it won't happen again."

Finally, the students concluded their work by depicting a sculpture which would show what the Japanese Americans wanted all Americans to know. The students became statues with inscriptions which they spoke aloud. One girl stated,

I've been in concentration camps, my sister's died and my daughter's gone away, but I know one thing after living through all I've gone through, you've got to be good to yourself and when doing that you can't be bad to anyone else. You try to be the best person you can be and in doing that you don't hurt anyone else.

Another said simply, "We're all different and we should be proud of all of our cultures."

The 5th-grade students were not only thinking about the experiences of Japanese Americans, they were affectively engaged as they imagined they were involved and implicated in the events of the 1940s. While dramatizing at the edges of the text, the students thought and felt deeply about the themes of the book. Their interpretations of the situations described, illustrated and implied in the original text were placed at the center of the classroom interactions as the teacher structured a sequence of encounters.

The students described above, who were dramatizing at the center and at the edges of texts, all readily adopted and switched perspectives several times. They experienced and explored attitudes as much as they adopted points of view. They also made connections between the people described in the texts and their own experiences—webs of feeling and thought which were inextricably bound together. These students' interpretations endorse the position of Ellen Langer (1989) who categorically rejected any artificial separation of feeling from thought: "Neither separating these two functions, nor trying to reduce one to the other, seems to me to make sense. Nor is it enough to see them as simply related. [We should view] them instead as part of one total simultaneous reaction" (p. 174).

Places of the Voice

In this section we discuss three definitions of voice: (a) one of vocal interpretation, marked by stress, tone, accent, and characterization; (b) one of perspective and the facility with which children and teachers shift perspectives to explore their perceptions and attitudes within situations; and (c) one of voice in terms of whose voices are heard in the classroom.

In dramatizing at the center of the text, voice is most often seen as vocal interpretation. Anger, affection, threat, tristezza, excitement, and ennui all emerge in the voice. As Bakhtin (1986) suggests, an utterance is a complex integration of word choice, emphasis, and attitude which the voice can either hide or reveal. The voice puts life to words, reflecting or obscuring the context, the manner, and the intent of the speaker. The phrase, "It's all right," for example, can be the soothing voice of a mother to a crying child, the art critic's sarcastic dismissal of a less than stunning painting, the suppressed frustration of a host to a guest who has just broken a favored momento, or the injured athlete's anxious assurance to a coach in the hopes of returning to the field. In each interpretation of the phrase, decisions in vocal attitude and emphasis highlight or shadow the inner thoughts or subtext of the speaker's meaning. A similar multifaceted construction of a phrase is described by Roman Jakobson (1960):

A former actor of Stanislavski's Moscow Theater told me how at his audition he was asked by the famous director to make forty

different messages from the phrase *Segodnja vecerom* 'This evening,' by diversifying its expressive tint. He made a list of some forty emotional situations, then emitted the given phrase in accordance with each of these situations, which his audience had to recognize only from the changes in the sound shape of the same two words. For our research work in the description and analysis of contemporary Standard Russian ... this actor was asked to repeat Stanislavski's test. He wrote down some fifty situations framing the same elliptic sentence and made of it fifty corresponding messages for a tape record. Most of the messages were correctly and circumstantially decoded by Muscovite listeners (pp. 354, 355).

A dictionary definition of the phrase 'This evening' does little to enlighten the listener; it is the vocal shaping of the context which provides the sense, not simply the meaning (Vygotsky, 1986).

Similarly, in text-centered drama, changes in tone mark the students' adoption of the external features of their characters as well as the internal features as they voice inner speech to demonstrate the thinking of their characters in their analyses, stage whispers, and asides. In exploring voice in classroom theatre, Wolf (1995) followed the vocal interpretation of three children—Bart, Stella, and Tomás—as they enacted William Steig's (1982) *Dr. De Soto*—the story of a mouse dentist with a problem. While Dr. De Soto ordinarily refuses to treat animals dangerous to mice, he and his wife decide to treat a fox in a moment of weakness. Under the influence of gas, the dapper but devious fox reveals his plan for the ultimate demise of his helpers. In the face of such a threat, the De Sotos spend a worrisome night wondering how they will be able to insert a new gold tooth without self-sacrifice. They devise a marvelous plan, affixing the tooth and resolving their problems by offering the fox a secret formula which will rid the patient of further toothaches. The fox quickly agrees and his teeth are painted with the secret formula. However, after he is told to hold his teeth together tightly for a full minute, he discovers that he cannot open his jaws. His teeth are glued together! The De Sotos smile victoriously as the fox stumbles away.

In the final performance of their play, Bart (as the fox) swaggered onto the classroom stage, his top hat tipped recklessly to the side. Tomás (as Dr. De Soto) wore a white coat and was in the midst of organizing his "instruments" (a child's toy doctor kit) when Bart entered. Tomás immediately began to pace back and forth, shooting nervous glances in Bart's direction. He then hid under the desks to create the effect of having disappeared into the fox's mouth. Bart pretended to snap his jaws shut and then chortled loudly at his own humor. But Tomás emerged from the desk and said "*Be serious*" in an authoritative "get down to business" tone. After the operation, Bart ran his tongue over his teeth and exclaimed "*My it feels good, boney!*" Then he tucked his head down and lowered his voice to a stage whisper, "*I really shouldn't eat them. On the other hand, how can I resist? Ya!*" Later while applying the "secret formula," Tomás painted Bart's fake fox teeth carefully with a paintbrush, while Bart leaned in to accommodate the process. Yet, when he realized that his teeth were stuck together, Bart leapt off the stool and turned in amazement to face the clever doctor and his wife. As Stella,

who played both wife and narrator read the lines: "*The fox was stunned. He stared at Doctor De Soto, then at his wife. They smiled, and waited,*" she looked up from her script and joined Tomás in a heartfelt grin, their eyes, all the while, on Bart. The eye gaze, touch, tone, and intonation all combined to join the characters in the time, space, and relationships of the play. While Bart's eyes registered stunned disbelief, his actions and those of the successful De Sotos, created a believable scene.

Each of the children leaned on the language in the play to communicate their character and scene. Very early in rehearsals, Bart began to add "cocky" additions such as "honey" and "baby" to the end of his lines. He only added one or at most two words to the entire script and the additions appeared at different points in different rehearsals. In discussions with fellow players, he did not appear to have a fixed plan of where these additions should fall, only that they should be inserted at some point. In the final performance, however, he added the word "honey" to his first line, and this addition, combined with his "jive" tone, set the entire audience into giggles. Their reaction seemed to trigger an alternative decision in Bart, for he then abandoned his more conservative plan of only one or two additions and instead added *six* new endings which included one "baby," two uses of "honey," and three supplementary expressions of either "Ya!" or "Ah!" The audience went wild. Through cocky endearments slurred carelessly over the tongue, Bart copped an attitude with his character—a fox who was sly and sinister but humorous as well.

The character of the dentist was less dramatic, and Tomás played it accordingly. He adopted a professional air—though he did appear to be extremely nervous at first sight of the fox. His face was set in a serious expression, and his vocal interpretation was a careful match—deep-voiced and dignified. Stella, too, was more serious. She played the part of Mrs. De Soto but had no character lines. Instead, she read all the narrator's lines, emphasizing the words with a slight increase in volume. After Tomás, her husband, succeeded in gluing the fox's teeth together, Stella read, "*The fox was stuu::nned*" elongating the vowels with a musical lilt. Her choice emphasized a key word to show that the De Sotos' trick had worked, and her musical tone highlighted the pleasure of her character's success. Had she been able to express her character's inner thoughts, they would no doubt be striking a triumphant chord.

In dramatizing at the edges of text, students adopt multiple perspectives and speak in many voices. In their interactions, their discourse becomes what Bakhtin (1981) calls "multivoiced", if they talk about different concerns from varied points of view. Their voices are not only vocal interpretations of imaginary people's expressions, but a montage of multiple positions and perspectives on the world. As Carroll (1980) has shown, in such dramatizing students use different genres and also shift among different registers and modes as they use language for multiple purposes and varied audiences.

Working at the edge of the *Dr. De Soto* (Steig, 1982) text, Edmiston (1988) led 1st-grade students to imagine they were all mice dentists wondering what to do about foxes and other dangerous animals in need of dental care. The De Sotos had

come to them for advice asking whether they should help the suspicious fox who needed a new tooth. As the children wondered about dangerous animals, they made signs for their offices (some consulted the text for their words while others wrote their own), they made a television commercial advertising their offices for all “nice animals,” and they practiced what to do if a fox came to their offices. They gave varied vocal interpretations and used language in multiple ways.

If with Vygotsky (1986) we connect language with thought and feeling, we realize that as students talk they do more than use words, they explore alternative ways of thinking and feeling about the world. The possible worlds created in dramatizing at the edge of the text open up limitless opportunities for social interactions and explorations in multiple dramatic encounters. In every encounter, students adopt positions or points of view from which they can voice their reactions and thereby create new meanings and understandings. As they find new voices, they also see the world in new ways. The mice dentists in Edmiston’s study (1988) were not only talking as animals, they were thinking and feeling about multiple ways of reacting to dangerous situations where they could keep enemies out, warn them to stay away, attack them, ignore the danger, be clever and outwit them, talk nicely to them, and so forth.

As students engage in dialogue, their voices intermingle and their meanings and understandings continue to develop and change. For Bakhtin (1981), genuine dialogue is much more than a conversation; in dialogue we listen to each other, exploring social and cultural references and experiences, and change the way we think in doing so. A script contains repeated encounters where students can see how characters do (or do not) listen to each other and react to what others say and do. Plays are concerned with how characters change or resist change in the situations they find themselves. The De Sotos in the text considered but did not agree with those who refused to help foxes—they changed their ideas and came up with a novel way of protecting themselves and the fox from his desires to eat mice. In dramatizing at the edge of the text, each encounter between teacher and students or among the students is an opportunity for dialogue and change in understanding. Although students in improvised dramatic encounters may talk but not listen, the 1st-grade mice dentists dialogued with each other and considered multiple ways of dealing with danger—some agreed, some disagreed, and many changed from their original positions.

The teacher, who functions as playwright, stage manager, director, and actor (Edmiston, 1993b) is critical in promoting dialogue through both external and internal facilitations. Structuring externally is what good teachers do all day long as they help students create limits for their work together. This is essential in dramatizing at the edges of texts to ensure that encounters or tasks do not end before they have begun. It is also critical that students explore possibilities with others as well as express themselves. The teacher can be clear about choices and about a task’s purpose or outcome. For example, at one point, the 1st-grade students chose what to work on—the dentist office notices, the letters, or the commercial. All knew who their audiences were, the purpose of their task,

and what to do when they had finished. The teacher can also set up encounters with dramatic constraints (Bolton, 1992) or other obstacles which increase dramatic conflict but create spaces where students can interact with each other. Students may, for example, interact in pairs, make a tableau in small groups, or collectively demonstrate an event. For a few minutes in the text-edged *Dr. De Soto* work, half the students were foxes and the others were mice hiding to watch them. They were all constrained by their physical separation; the foxes could not eat the mice even if they wanted to; and the mice had to watch and listen if they wanted to try to figure out if all foxes were dangerous. Since some foxes behaved like dogs and others were planning to eat chickens or Little Red Riding Hood some children were still unsure whether or not to trust the one who had come to Dr. De Soto.

Structuring internally the teacher enters the drama world and encounters the students. The 1st-grade students talked with their teacher—she was a fox with a toothache and they decided that they were mice pretending to be wolves. Some children were unsure whether or not to trust the fox. They asked her about what she liked to eat and whether she liked to eat mice. She drew on the original text and said that she would not want to eat a mouse dentist, but she did love mice and licked her lips. In reflection, the children all agreed that they had to be cautious. Recognizing that the power relations among teacher and students can become malleable in fictional encounters, the teacher may construct various positions of power relative to the students—higher, equal to, or lower (Morgan & Saxton, 1987). She does so in order to present students with other voices with which they can dialogue and discover new perspectives, create new understandings and find new voices in reaction. When the teacher was a mouse dentist she and the children had an equitable power relationship so the children could more easily agree or disagree with her. When the teacher was the fox being interviewed, in one sense she was more physically powerful since she could have attacked them. Still, in another sense the children could exercise more power since they were outwitting the fox. The children were, however, listening intently to what the fox was saying and to one another’s ideas—they wondered together about trusting foxes and about the nature and meaning of trust. The multiple encounters possible in dramatizing at the edges of the text allow students to adopt and shift perspectives many times. In doing so, students’ interpretations and understandings can become more complex. Some 1st-grade students who were very trusting became more cautious by the end of the drama, others who had been ready to kill all foxes came up with a plan similar to the De Sotos—they decided to give him more gas and then lead him outside when he was half asleep.

In these dramas, students’ ideas are given a platform or stage that enables them to test their voices through perspectives and situations that are quite unlike the ones they encounter in typical classroom contexts. As Delpit (1988) and others have argued, power differentials are inherent in classroom interactions; and these differentials can be used to silence children who are uncertain about the purposes of the teacher’s instructions, who do not accept the premises of the approach to teaching and learning in the classroom, or who

recognize that their voice, because of their race, ethnicity, class, or gender is not going to be heard. Dramatizing encourages teachers to use and shift their power in a way that may make our beliefs and practices relative to our students more explicit and open to change. As described above, in dramatizing at the edge or at the center of texts, teachers must create openings for dialogue, and then they must listen. It is the kind of listening Delpit describes that requires:

...not only open eyes and ears, but open hearts and minds. We do not really see through our eyes or hear through our ears, but through our beliefs. To put our beliefs on hold is to cease to exist as ourselves for a moment—and that is not easy.... it means turning yourself inside out, giving up your own sense of who you are ... but it is the only way to learn what it might feel like to be someone else and the only way to start the dialogue” eliminated quick work (p. 297).

Places of the Hand

In this section, the “hand” serves as a metaphor for the integration of all that players do to take a text into action and create their own interpretive stances. Though we do not wish to dichotomize, we find it useful to distinguish between two kinds of stance—physical movement and mental action. The first stance is the physical attitude demonstrated by the player through body movement and orientation, gesture, eye gaze, facial expression, and the use of props. The second stance is the mental attitude and action that is aroused by physically shifting into the possibilities of a play world, and by allowing interactions in that world to affect and change the players’ understandings and attitudes. Wertsch (1991) explains:

When action is given analytic priority, human beings are viewed as coming into contact with, and creating, their surroundings as well as themselves through the actions in which they engage. ... This contrasts ... with approaches that treat the individual primarily as a passive recipient of information from the environment (p. 8).

In stressing action, we move from the transmission of meaning to the generation of meaning, for mental action is “often socially distributed and it is connected to the notion of mediation” (p. 14). In stressing dramatic action, we note that students not only discover new possibilities, they also transform *themselves* in the process of transforming the words or situations of a text. Maxine Greene (1988) states it succinctly: “It is, actually, in the process of effecting transformations that the human self is created and recreated” (p. 21).

As Kenneth Burke (1969) noted, dramatic action can be contrasted with movement—action is consciously willed and the result of a choice, whereas movement can be reactive and instinctual. Vygotsky (1978) argued that paradoxically in play we are more in conscious control than we are in non-play situations because in play every action becomes significant. Thus in drama, students tend to be more deliberate and conscious of their actions especially as symbolic meanings are generated during a sequence of encounters.

In text-centered drama, the focus is often on the body or the first stance. Physicalization calls for the player to embody the emotion of the words in the text into the motion of the

character. Stanislavski argues that the gesture can often contain the key to meaning: “If the intellect can inhibit, and the emotions are fickle where can an actor begin in his exploration of a role? The answer is with what is most immediately available to him [sic], what responds most easily to his wishes—his body” (Benedetti, 1982, p. 67). Langer (1953) explains that each utterance must spring from thought and feeling which begins inside the speaker’s body, “so the actor has to create the illusion of an inward activity issuing in spontaneous speech, if his [sic] words are to make a dramatic and not a rhetorical effect” (pp. 315, 316).

Wolf (1994) followed three children—Jewel, Catalina, and Maia—as they enacted *Mirandy and Brother Wind* (McKissack, 1988)—a story about an African-American girl who persuades the wind to instill his spirit into her friend Ezel, and together the two children high step their way to first prize at their community cakewalk. The physical movements the children chose were carefully planned. Maia, in her role as Mirandy, for example, incorporated a number of movements which she designed in rehearsal and repeated in the final performance. When she warned Orlinda not to tease about Ezel, Maia approached Jewel with her hands on her hips, flung back her head, and walked away. When she was in the barn, supposedly regretting a foolish mistake, she paced back and forth with her finger to her cheek, as though in studied concentration. When she danced across the floor, she kicked her thin legs high at the fan that Jewel held out to her. And when she was presented with the cake, she turned proudly toward the audience, holding the cake up like a well-earned prize.

Weeks after the final performance, the girls were able to hold on to the physical patterns they established for their characters. When Wolf asked them to pose in character for a photograph, they immediately chose the scene of the confrontation between Mirandy and Orlinda when Mirandy boldly announces that she and Ezel will win the cakewalk, while Orlinda and her friend look skeptically on. As Jewel, Catalina, and Maia took up their own positions, Jewel who played Orlinda adopted the hands-on-hips stance of Mirandy, leaning toward Maia with a smirk on her face. Maia did not take the stance offered by the text but instead folded her arms in stubborn defiance. Still, the thrust of Maia’s chin was a mirror image of Mirandy’s and revealed the determination that was strong in the character as well as in the child. Just as the character of Mirandy in the story captured Brother Wind, Maia captured the character in the thrust of her chin. The girls’ body positions demonstrated an understanding and internalization of the story’s central mood and the primary attitude of the characters that helped establish this mood. Such perceptions did not receive specific labeling in their talk before the photo. These understandings emerged from extended discussion as well as physical exploration of the story. Through their positionings, the girls expressed their textual understandings of character both in posture and in facial expression.

Enciso (1990, 1991, 1996) shows that as readers, we may go “inside” a book as we adopt the perspectives of characters, empathize with them, spy on them, argue with them, and even try to lend them our help and advice. However, when we *talk*

about literature, we are always outside the world of the story and are no longer experiencing it except in retrospect (Edmiston, 1993a). In drama, however, we can enter the world of the story with others. Our private world of literature can become a drama world, a public shared world of the text in which we can walk around and interact with other people in role. Heathcote (1984) uses the phrase "now and imminent time" to describe the feeling that an experience is happening now rather than in the past. In drama, we feel we are in the middle of events that concern us or are happening to us because in our imaginations we are in the same world as in the story. What we say and do within the drama is not just a detached comment about the world of the story. On the contrary, every action and inaction affects that world directly and affects the person we imagine ourselves to be in the drama world.

Working at the center of text often spreads out to the edges. In other words, *physical stance* within an interpretive text action can sometimes motivate a *mental stance* that leads to a highly personal reaction. This is exemplified in the work of Nancy King (1981) who often uses drama to move from literature to life. Working with the text of *The Big Wave* (Buck, 1948), she asked students to enact scenes in the book that affected them most deeply. One group formed a huge wave and swept everything up in its path. King (1981) explains:

The villagers tried to flee, to protect themselves as best they could, but the power of the wave was too much. Soon everything was swept away and nothing remained but an empty, silent space.

As the lone child returned to the quieted waters she looked around in horror at the emptiness. Slowly the full meaning of what had happened penetrated her being, and she sank to her knees and rocked with despair. Clutching her small toy to her chest, she crooned a chant that was half sound, half sob. Then there was only silence.

... The group was preparing to discuss their feelings about the book when one member of the class who had been watching, an eight-year-old boy, suddenly got up from his seat. Without paying any attention to anyone else, he ran to the girl, knelt down in front of her, took her face in his hands, and said, "Come with me. You can live with me and my family. We will help you." The girl looked at the boy as if not fully understanding his words. "Come," he repeated. "Come with me to my family in the mountains. There you will be safe." The girl followed the boy, still holding on to his hand. She left the space in the middle of the room and sat down in a seat next to his (p. 165).

The physical stance of one child—sinking to her knees, rocking in anguish, grasping a toy as if it could save her—led to a mental stance in another child—a boy who thought he *could* save her by offering her a place to stay, taking her hand, and leading her away from the scene of her pain. Later, in a discussion of times when he himself had felt terribly alone, he explained his actions, "When I saw [her] all alone, it reminded me of how I feel, and I just wanted her to know that she still had a friend" (p. 165).

In dramatizing at the edges of the text, players also consciously use and link their "hands": their bodies demonstrate physical attitudes which others interpret and they take actions

in dramatic encounters which transform texts, situations and themselves. Gavin Bolton (1981) describes a particularly vivid example. At the resolution of process drama work which took place in South Africa several years ago with black school students, Bolton positioned them as old people looking back on the changes which had taken place during the imaginary time of their lives. They imagined that apartheid had ended. One student extended his hand to Bolton—a white teacher. Bolton read his gesture and shook hands as the student said with confidence and dignity, "Now we are equal."

Throughout the Japanese American work (Edmiston 1991, 1993a), players demonstrated their mental and emotional attitudes through physical action. For example, some of those who were arrested initially resisted—their bodies struggling against the arresting agents. Others were stoically still as they packed their belongings with dignity. In the internment camp as they deliberated over whether or not to sign the loyalty statement some sat hunched over in despair, while others sat upright as they refused to reject their cultural heritage. Players repeatedly took action to express their reactions. They had many choices—how to react to racist remarks, how to act when arrested, whether or not to sign. Their actions and reactions also affected each other and led to further reactions. When some were resisting arrest, others argued that they should not behave in such an undignified way. When one wanted to join the army, others tried to talk her out of this decision. When one jumped up and cried out that they were being denied justice, others leapt to their feet as well.

The "hand" or the active mental and physical stances represented in the body cannot be separated from the heart, head, or voice. Instead, they intersect and influence each other within the individual and among individuals. Eisner (1985) is highly critical of the discourse of separate "domains" of knowing—cognitive, affective and psychomotor—for it tends to reify distinctions and privilege discursive and logical thinking, rather than emphasize that processes of meaning making involve all modes of being and interacting. In drama, we understand through shaping and reading movements and actions as much as through our words and emotions. In other words, we cannot extend our hand without putting heart, mind, and voice behind it.

CONCLUSION: DRAMA WORLDS IN SEARCH OF A CLASSROOM

In the 1920s, Pirandello wrote a play in which six characters unexpectedly appeared in a theatre rehearsal to tell their stories. They described themselves as unused creations of the author's imagination and performed key scenes which, though never written, contained the content of their lives. Their search for an author stemmed from their desire to play their parts not for eternity, but "only for a moment." As the lead character explains, "The drama is in us, and we are the drama. We are impatient to play it" (1922, p. 219).

In much the same way, dramatizing at the center and at the edges of text are rarely used creations searching for classrooms that will make room for the integration and expression

of the head, heart, voice, and hand. The “places” that we have described in this chapter have no borders. Instead, thought and emotion, articulation and gesture all merge in environments where children and teachers act together to negotiate the dramatic interpretation of texts through multiple voices, perspectives, and symbolic systems. While the voice of written texts is stronger in text-centered forms, children’s individual and negotiated needs and narratives are heard throughout.

In literacy instruction we often focus on children’s identification of discrete elements, but we ignore the possibilities of discrete elements in other symbolic systems and their potential for use of metaphor, emphasis, and parallelism. Moreover, we ignore uses of pause, nonverbal gestures, and facial expressions or eye gaze as symbolic elements to underscore, complement, or negate verbal meanings. The enactments described here combine the verbal with the nonverbal to create a theatre in the round of children’s interpretations of texts and their needs to express these interpretations. The texts they ultimately enact are rich orchestrations of multiple symbolic systems which simultaneously analyze the action of the story with a call for action in the real world.

Much of the current work in restructuring and rethinking education, particularly in literacy education, is on putting theory into practice—taking into account the multiplicity of voices and perspectives in text interpretation, reminding teachers of the power of negotiated action through group work and peer discussion, as well as reflecting on the possibilities for mental action through alternative symbolic systems; but we continue to measure new theories with old practices. We test students, but we do not carefully examine the breadth or depth of their knowledge. We do not acknowledge authentic deeds accomplished by verbal displays of knowledge as well as by other symbolic systems.

As teacher education programs introduce these issues to beginning teachers, there is a tendency to ignore the students in the cycle (Wolf, Carey, & Mieras, 1996). Much of the discussion in education is about teachers as reflective practitioners and stresses theories into practice in terms of interpretation of text, movement into action, with action by teachers to create a context for learning given analytic priority. Yet it is critical to remember that students are reflective practitioners as well (Edmiston & Wilhelm, in press). The students described here immersed themselves in written story in order to tell a number of stories about who they were and what they knew. These children were not passive recipients of knowledge, but active participants who were able to generate, negotiate, and enact their own understandings. Moreover, the children were given opportunities to reflect on their learning and their creation of a learning environ-

ment in their actions, their writing, and their talk. They played and worked not only in “now and imminent time” (Heathcote, 1984), but beyond the vivid immediacy of the moment to make decisions for how they would live their lives.

The negotiation and interpretation of text is a living, protean, and richly varied creation in a classroom of children. Children of different linguistic, cultural, social backgrounds bring diverse gifts, symbols, and methods of accomplishing tasks in language, art, music, and drama. While some children leap to the director’s role seeing the scene as a unified whole, others add the much needed creative details, while still others provide stability, decoding expertise, humor, artistic advice, or practical experience about the way things work in the real world. In traditional classrooms, children’s individual thoughts and talents are often separated from their peers as children work in isolation and through uniform symbolic systems for expression. But in the collaborative work of dramatic interpretation, individuals come together to create new understandings. In the enactments of seemingly simple scenes, multiple sources of knowledge meet together; individual stories, voices, dialects, accents, resources, and reflections flow into a rich representation of a community of learners. The multiplicity and diversity of contributions represented here offer just a glimpse into the resources available when children have opportunities to call on personal experiences, narratives, and ways of working in the world. In such an atmosphere, cultural preferences as well as individual learning styles, find room for expression.

Nearly 60 years ago, Rosenblatt (1978) reminded us of the links between literacy and drama. Yet, drama still hovers outside of classrooms and rarely appears in the research literature (Wagner, in preparation; Wolf & Enciso, 1994). Although there is much anecdotal information on the “benefits” of drama, teachers and researchers need to more formally substantiate and carefully describe the transformations that occur when children meet drama. The research studies we have presented here will hopefully serve as a spark to fire the imaginations of teachers and researchers willing to offer children more room for expression and eager to think in new ways about how meaning is created in the world. As teachers and researchers of drama, we find ourselves in much the same position as Pirandello’s (1922) lead character, for we are impatient to see drama play its role in more and more classrooms. The drama worlds that we have described here offer children and their teachers much needed room for interpretation and expression. Is this not simply carrying to its ultimate manifestation what each of us as teachers and researchers of literacy must do?

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