

Drama
NEW ZEALAND



mahi whakaari
o Aotearoa

***Drama NZ Networks of
Expertise***

***School-based
collaborations to build
teacher capacity in
engaging students for
success in literacy***

***Presented by Judy
Norton***

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ALAND



Background

Team:

- Project designers and co-ordinators: Judy Norton (Specialist Drama teacher, St Kentigern Girls' School) & Charles Bisley (Associate Principal, - Kelburn Normal School)
- Expert teacher: Juliet Cottrell (The Drama Workshop)
- Academic advisor: Dr Viv Aitken (Research associate, University of Waikato)

NETWORK OF EXPERTISE

Networks of Expertise seeks to grow and develop existing and new curriculum, teaching and learning **networks**.

Supports subject associations and broader **networks** used by teachers and school leaders to support and improve their teaching practice.



Purpose



Deliver a blended drama/literacy programme increasing teacher capacity to engage students in literacy and writing

Research Question:

What did the teachers from a range of primary schools in Wellington and Hawkes Bay consider to be the benefits, challenges and effects of 8 weeks of professional development in process drama - in terms of their competence in delivering effective literacy education, particularly in writing?

Professional Literature Links



Advocacy for the efficacy of process drama in literacy

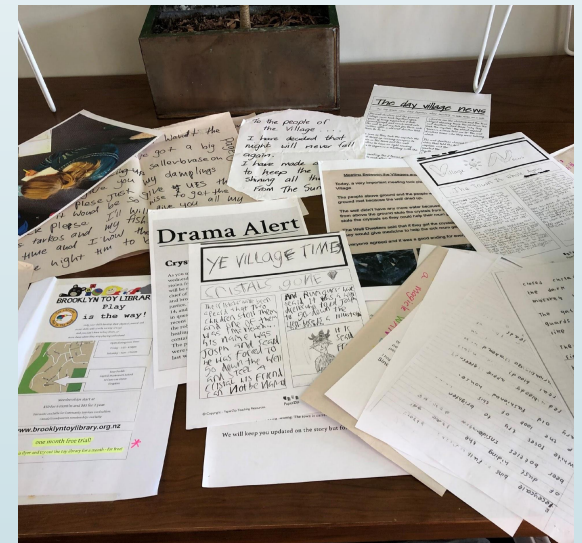
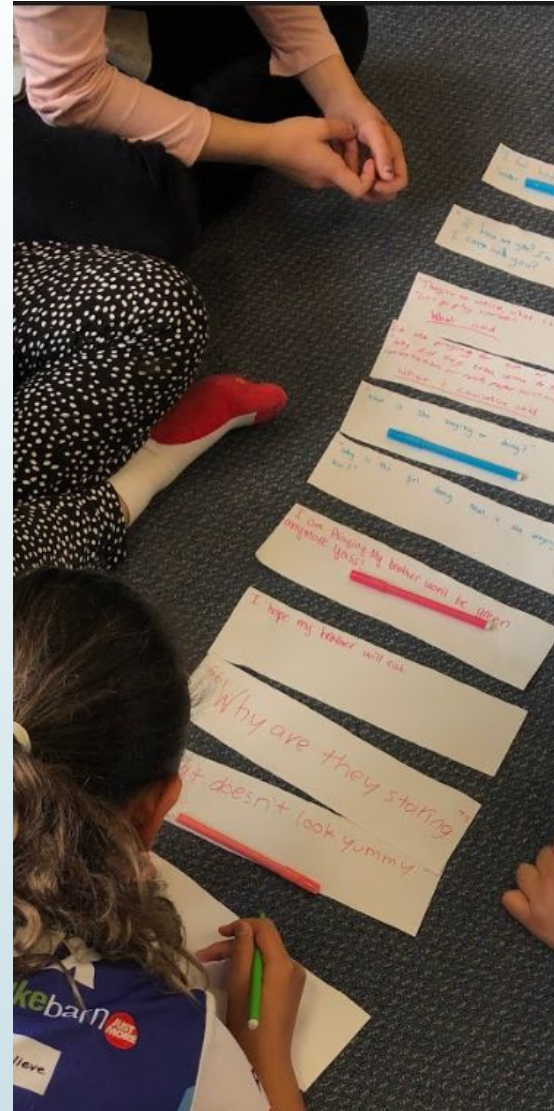
(Baldwin 2012, Baldwin & John, 2012, Miller & Saxton 2004)

Benefits include:

- Increase ability to decode complete language (Hughes 2000)
- Increased use of imagery (Schneider & Jackson, 2000; Crumpler & Scheider, 2002);
- Inclusion of children with disabilities and reduced anxiety for ESOL students. (Nasen, 2017; Reif & Paquette
- Increased engagement (Aitken, Fraser, Whyte 2013; Wells & Sandretto, 2016),
- More use of direct speech and enjoyment of writing (Downey 2017)

Programme Design

- 3 clusters of schools in Wellington and Hawkes Bay (21 teachers)
- Expert Drama teacher practitioner worked alongside classroom teacher as mentor and co-teacher
- Eight 1 hour sessions over eight weeks
- Website with resources to support - ongoing
- Pre-program whole day workshop on process drama
- Post-program half day sharing
- Teacher survey start and end of project
- Teacher Inquiry



Objectives

- Positioning the teachers as learners (transparency with students)
- Mentorship in action - modelling, co-teaching, supporting to create own work.
- Teachers experiencing drama themselves
- Not adding to teacher workload
- That the students and teachers enjoyed the process
- The work was flexible enough for a diversity of learners and school settings.



Data Collection

- Survey completed at Pre-Hui and Post-Hui
- Focuses on teacher perspectives
- Analysis of teacher **confidence** and **competence**
- Provision for student voice will be part of Phase Two
- Analysed mix of quantitative and qualitative processes



Findings

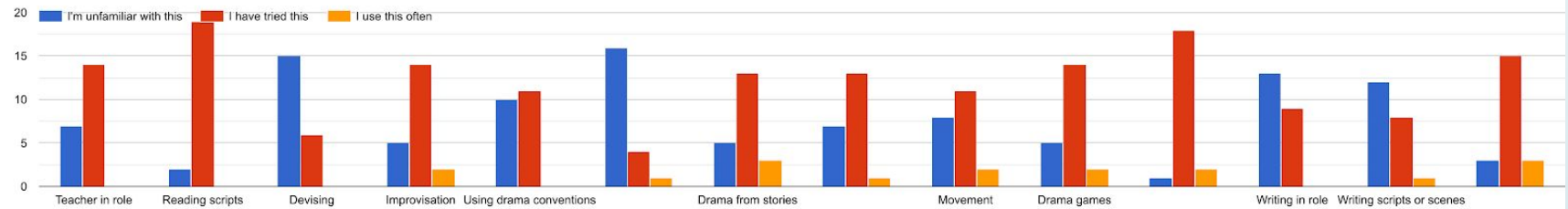
'We can explore current events using freeze frames and conscious alley.'

'We can get into role and explore issues and topics from other points of view.'

Finding #1: Familiarity with drama strategies Survey 1:

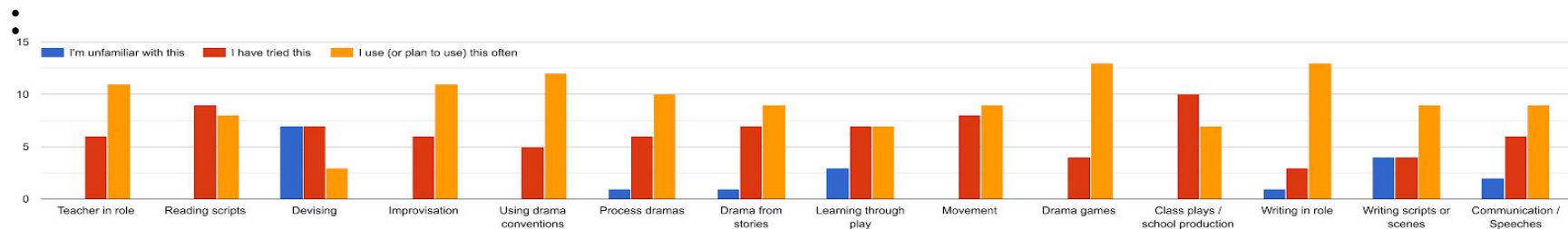
Teacher participants

To date, which of the following drama strategies or approaches have you used in your classroom? Tick to show your level of familiarity.



Survey 2:

In the previous questionnaire you were asked to indicate which of the following drama strategies or approaches you used in your classroom. How would you reply now?

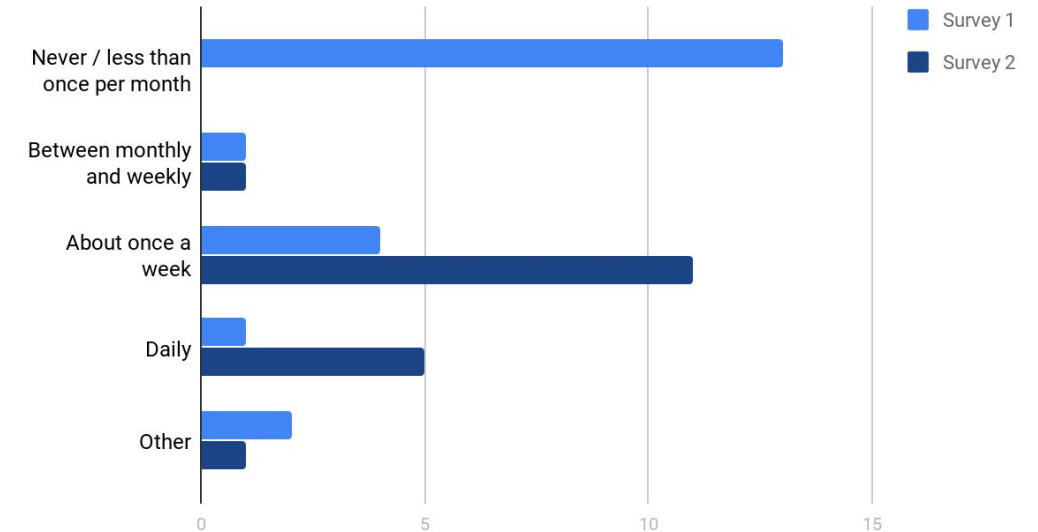


Finding #5 - Shift to a strength-based approach to writing

Teachers came to see drama as leading to improvements.

- lifting engagement and raising confidence.
- embodied, active learning was the third most frequently mentioned
- thinking and ideas
- Collaboration
- Improved speaking and listening
- More student ownership.
- Creativity and imagination

Frequency of drama use in teaching literacy



Finding #3: Shift to process-focussed strategies

'Opportunities for learning integrated across the subject areas - drama is not a stand alone or filler subject - the power is that you can use it to uplift all the subject areas and create a richer learning experience.'

Teacher participant

Finding #6: Improvements in creating meaning

- Drama more than providing enjoyment, effective in deepening skills and knowledge, and promoting thinking, agency and collaboration.

Finding #8: Challenges of using drama

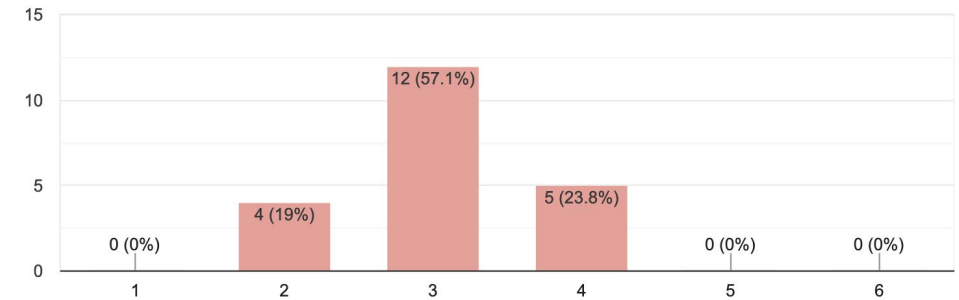
- Survey 1 Concerns about challenges for using drama; student engagement and lack of teacher skill or knowledge
- Survey 2 – Concerns decreased respectively, suggesting that their capability and expertise had indeed increased.

Finding #10: Growth in confidence

Survey 1:

Overall, how confident do you feel about using drama in your literacy classroom?

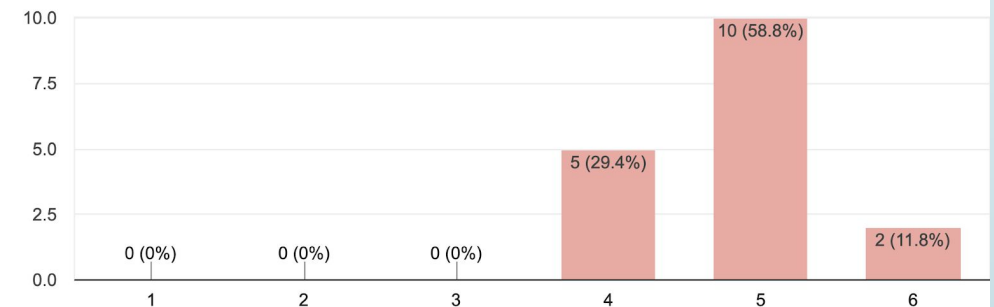
21 responses



Survey 2:

Overall, how confident do you feel about using drama in your literacy classroom?

17 responses



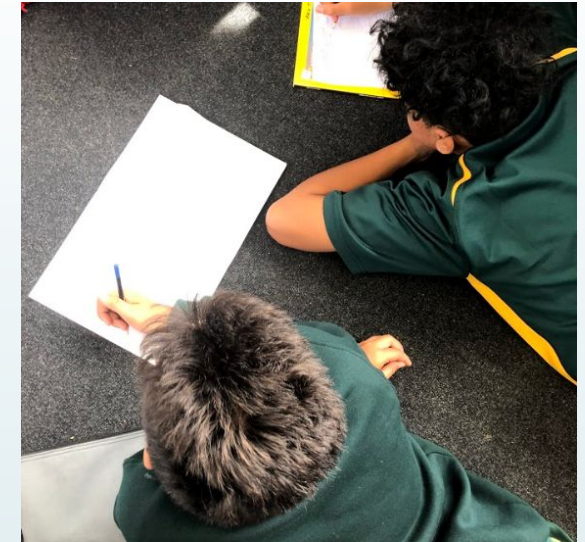
Finding #11: Teachers valued impact on students

Positive outcomes for students including engagement, buy in, participation and motivation.

Finding #15: Increase in teacher capability and capacity

'Opportunities for teachers to change their beliefs and misconceptions about drama - teachers need to see drama as more than drama games - this program has shown that all types of teachers (from introvert to extrovert - from clinical to theatrical) can access and use drama to enrich their classroom - it's something that we should all be doing and we all have the skills to make it happen - it's about the guidance and support to give it a go.'

Teacher participant



Finding #13:

The positives of the facilitator's role and the project design



- *'I think actually doing the drama as a group and having fun really solidified the learning for me. I've been on so many trainings in the past where that just doesn't happen. Being able to do what we were being told really helped me to see the benefit of the drama and to apply it to my own practice.'*
- *'Watching Juliet model for me gave me the self belief that I could run this myself in my own class.'*
- *The first hui we had together made me feel inspired to try this in class when I wasn't sure how to.'*



Challenges and Limitations



Sustainability: The need for continued support and PLD

- *'I think that the pilot needs to be over two years to affect change. It is easy to slip back into what you've always done and I think to revisit in the second year would be better in future. Another workshop, in class sessions more teacher driven with Drama teacher support then another end of year hui'.*

Local resources and culturally-responsive practice

- Need for more resources with a New Zealand context and also explicit connections to culturally-responsive practice.

Technical features of writing

- *'Teaching the deeper and surface features of writing without disengaging them from the drama and emotion to write and share their thoughts.'*

Timing and additions to the in-class model

- Highly ranked - An expert teacher and mentor in their classroom, working with their students, the one day hui and opportunities for sharing.
- More opportunities for discussions, workshops and networking would have been valuable.
- School disruptions and timetabling issues

Phase Two –Where to next?

- **Return to Phase One schools**, add additional teachers to programme, use Phase One teachers a resource people and mentors to build continuity and support.
- **Builds sustainable partnerships with schools** based on each school's curriculum, its approach to professional learning, its organisation, and also the assessment and evaluation of outcomes in literacy and drama.
- **Expands to address improving student outcomes** in the areas of the development of oral language, of student voice, of student agency and the ability to whakamana, and of success as writers across the curriculum.
- **Expand to new regions**, including kura kaupapa Māori.
- **Work in partnership with an academic institution** in order to strengthen its research aspect, and communicate its findings.
- **The project recognises and addresses its obligations** under the Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and explicitly enacts Ngā Tātaiako and culturally-responsive practices.

*Kotahi te kākano, he
nui ngā hua o te
rākau.*

A tree comes from one
seed but bears many
fruit.

