

Three steps into the drama process

This process can be used as a way into any drama using a strong pretext that invites curious minds to ask questions and create their own narrative using specific drama conventions.

This one-hour drama session is designed to look towards the future but also acknowledge the feelings, emotions and experiences that students may have had over the last 7 weeks. By looking at things from the perspective of a fictional family, the students are able to step into the shoes of 'someone else' - safely distanced from their own stories while giving opportunities to recognise themselves or people they know within the story. The students will have the opportunity to participate in a number of drama conventions including hotseat, freeze frames, speaking in role. With part of the lesson having the students enrolled as documentary film makers this appeals to them as multi-media consumers and critics.

The three steps are:

1. Responding to the pretext- a poem

In the beginning

Dad was wringing his hands and kept on checking his phone

Mum was really quiet and said she wanted to be alone

Sister started to bake and bake and bake

I found I couldn't sleep, just lay in bed awake

Discussing lockdown from the perspective of a fictional family, the students are able to step into the shoes of 'someone else' - my questions and their responses and further questions lead us into their story

2. The students create freeze frames in which they dramatise the story in the poem - first as individuals then in groups. Freeze frames allow students to role play and develop the story
3. The students are hot seated as members of the family. Teacher in role is used here to model and invite the students 'in' to deepen understanding of the characters. I invite the rest of the class to role play documentary makers to provide context and deepen the questioning.

Afterwards through a carefully scaffolded process, the classroom teacher can then guide the students through a simple writing exercise that when completed can be crafted into a piece of poetry/film for them to have as a keepsake.

A Rich Resource for Process Drama.

John O'Toole and Julie Dunne, [*Pretending to Learn*](#)