

Stranger, orphan, angel, child

This is an open-ended process drama which has two pretexts - closely linked ones.

The first is speculative, around a possible future world, and launches the story; the other is reflective, and sets off an inquiry into how students learn which connects with the online lockdown experience. The first pretext is a still image from a music video [Fly To Paradise](#). An angel, anime figure is looking at a city in the distance. We ask the children what she can see, hear, and so on, from where she is. Then ask the same questions of three more still images of her arriving in the city and exploring its deserted streets. The narrative question is about the identity of this mysterious figure.

The children also notice that all the people are inside, in their windows, on screens- hence the second question: what if being in lockdown were normal? This leads to the second reflective or metacognitive pretext: What if the only social contact we had was online- school included? In discussing this, the children draw on their experience of home and online learning- their ideas and questions initiate their inquiry.

Flipped drama: Creativity is about setting constraints and limits. The online group role play where the children are all in the same room facing away from each other, and can only communicate on a ZOOM leads on to creative mahi and writing in a variety of language modes and media, but this time in the imaginary world. The restrictions of the digital space can also generate play.

Combination strategies

Maximum to minimum/sculptures/thought tapping: to explore the stranger's pose, what she is feeling. The children suggest an emotion and we make a group sculpture. Let's say it's curiosity..so we start with the first child interested, and then add five more, one by one, all the way up to fascinated. Or if it's fear...from nervous, through alarmed to terrified. They hold the freeze and then you thought tap them-what they see first, and then second time round what they feel.

Collective role/rumours/thought tapping- in 3 modes: Using a chat chorus: ZOOM grid view still image from the video of the characters in the city. They are all in the windows of their grey tower blocks and have heard about the stranger and post on chat (teacher directs this). Then they mill around in the (maybe use a double circle for distancing). Third: I'm going to say you are all on mute, chat is disabled, and you can only mime what you feel on camera.

Teacher in Role: Play the ruler of this world, sending out messages to my subjects. It can be an online role play, where the only discussion allowed is replying to you. Use Google Groups for this discussion. Or take a low status role- in a group of street cleaners, for example. Take screenshots in role. You could do minimum to maximum with different emotions. Cast the images up on the big screen...thought tap the images, ask each child to speak...and then what they would ask the stranger if they could, or say to her. What advice, for example. Or warnings. Record all these to build a writing resource

Defining the space, guided tour, deepening response, creating meaning collaboratively: Look at images of a deserted futuristic city. Play some abstract spacey music to enhance the images. The composer Ligeti has written some pieces with the right vibe. Why is there no-one in the streets? What would life be like if lockdown were normal? How might this have come about?

Writing etc. in role: A Day in my life: Writing a list of can you see, hear, feel in the streets from your room. Backstory. One time, in the distant future, there was a wicked ruler.
A funny tourist promotion, a spoof...come to Lockdown City!
Make a promotional video using Flipgrid.

Soundscape: The children could work together on garageband or soundtrap to make a soundscape to go within the music video, or compose a song.

Rituals- the oath of allegiance/daily habits: Negotiate what the rules of the city are, and then to make up an oath to say at the start of each day. We can record us all saying it and it will begin every citizen Zoom Meeting by speaking along. And then as a contrast, each child has to invent a name for themselves and in role write all the little rules and rituals they have for their daily lives in their little rooms. It will be interesting to see how they draw on their own lives for this.

Role playing/Writing a voiceover: As a high status official, you film the girl from a drone and add a commentary or voiceover and record it, add that to the video. Now watch the whole video with the sound on. The next task is to write an alternative ending.

Movement chorus/small group performance. Play the video on the big screen and invite groups of children to follow her moves as she goes towards, through and over the city. Some might want to go on, develop this, practice it for a little dance performance.

Group role/Eavesdropping: What if there were a rebel group who made an alternative broadcast/podcast? And what if they were overheard/recorded plotting?