



pamelabowell
drama for creative learning

What's Happened to Ashley? - a drama of analysis and deduction

Yr 4

This drama scheme is set in Detective Training School. The detectives are taking their final exam. If successful they will become Detective Constables. They will have a case to solve. You will be the Detective Inspector who is examining them. There is an anti-bully focus.

The outline of the case, which you will know at the outset but the children will not, is as follows:

- ◆ *Single mother comes home from work to find a note from her child Ashley*
- ◆ *The note indicates that Ashley has run away and hints that there is something she can no longer 'stand'.*
- ◆ *Ashley is an friendly, outgoing girl who normally enjoys school and has been doing well*
- ◆ *What has actually happened is that two other girls from a different class have been bullying Ashley and her friend, Becky, at their primary school. They tease her, call her names, pull her hair, take her lunch money etc.*
- ◆ *She has kept quiet about it because of what they have threatened to do.*
- ◆ *Since the Christmas holidays her teacher has noticed that Ashley has become rather quiet and a bit withdrawn and that the quality of her schoolwork has gone downhill a bit. She finds it a bit difficult to think that bullying could be going on.*
- ◆ *The final straw came that morning. Ashley loves PE and her mother has just bought her a new bag to carry her kit in. She took it to school that morning to show Becky.*
- ◆ *In the playground before the whistle for start of school, the two bullies spotted Ashley and Becky and saw the new bag. They started teasing and trying to grab the bag and Ashley got upset.*
- ◆ *The lollypop lady on crossing patrol outside the school gates knows Ashley, who always says hello and please and thank you. She likes Becky, too. She has seen the two bullies having a go at Ashley before. They have a go at other children, too.*
- ◆ *She remembers that morning clearly because Ashley showed her new bag and as she watched her go into the playground she saw the bullies picking on Ashley, again.*
- ◆ *After a few moments, more children needed to cross the road and so she turned her attention to them. When she looked again, she could no longer see Ashley, Becky or the bullies.*
- ◆ *The next thing she remembers is the whistle being blown and the children lining up and going into school.*
- ◆ *Then a few moments later Ashley came out of the school gate hurrying the way she normally goes when she goes home. She didn't have her bag with her and didn't stop to talk to the lollypop lady, who thought that Ashley must have forgotten something important.*
- ◆ *In fact, out of sight of the lollypop lady, the bullies had pushed over Ashley and stolen her bag and Ashley had run out of school and gone home.*
- ◆ *They had made Becky promise not to tell otherwise they would hit her.*
- ◆ *Ashley went home, packed a small bag, took some money from her mum's purse, wrote the note and left.*

- ◆ *She is actually trying to reach her dad's house. He lives about 50 miles away and is away from home for a few days.*

Although a list of possible learning objectives is given, it is not definitive and teachers may wish to focus on certain objectives or add or substitute others of their own. I have written up the sessions in blow-by-blow detail to support you, if you need it, but this is flexible, of course.

Learning Objectives:

- ◆ To create roles to show how behaviour can be interpreted from different viewpoints
- ◆ To create, share and evaluate ideas and understanding through drama
- ◆ To reflect on how working in role helps to explore complex issues
- ◆ To enhance and practise skills of inference, deduction and enquiry through the improvised 'text' of the drama.
- ◆ Links could also be made to PHSE

Roles: who the children are going to be in the drama

- ◆ Trainee detectives

: who you are going to be in the drama

- ◆ The Detective Inspector conducting the examination
- ◆ Also, in Session 6: Ashley

Frame: the thing that gives tension to the drama

- ◆ The trainees must solve the case to get promoted

Strategies: the different ways of working in drama

- ◆ Improvisation
- ◆ Teacher in role
- ◆ Still image
- ◆ Mime
- ◆ Writing/drawing in role
- ◆ Role on the Wall
- ◆ Conscience Alley
- ◆ Collective Role
- ◆ Thought tracking
- ◆ Small group playmaking
- ◆ Dance drama

Resources

- ◆ All Sessions: Note books and pencils for the detectives
- ◆ All Sessions: Stand up signs for team tables labelled Team A, Team B etc
- ◆ All Sessions: Large outline of body (role on the wall) – large felt tipped pens
- ◆ All Sessions: Map of the location in which the incident has occurred.
- ◆ Session 1: The note from the missing child and copies of it for the children
- ◆ All Sessions: A1-sized sheet with three columns – what we know, what we think we know, what we need to know (knowledge, inference, enquiry) for the wall and A4 versions for each team table.
- ◆ Session 1: Clipboard and pencil

- ◆ Session 5: 21 Sounding Minutes (excerpts): Karlatonar [Sounds of Men] Running Time 1:08
Manuela Wiesler: Icelandic Solo Flute Music

Session 1

This session will work best in the classroom so that the children are able to write their notes easily. It will also give the right 'feel' to the drama.

- ◆ Explain to the children that in our drama today we are going to be police officers who are training to be detectives. They will be undertaking their final exam to qualify as Detective Constables. Explain that you are going to be in the drama with them and will be the Detective Inspector who will be conducting the examination and deciding whether they succeed.
- ◆ The trainees will be working in teams of 4. You can either group them before the drama begins or group them as part of the fiction. Probably, it would be easier to do it before hand, especially if you are considering asking children to move.
- ◆ You should have the notebooks, pencils, copy of the letter from the missing child and map of the area ready for use.
- ◆ Explain to the children that you are going to use a clap of your hands (or whatever signal you would prefer) as a signal for starting and stopping the drama. Tell them that when you speak again the drama will have begun. They will be in the Training School Exam Room and you will be talking to them.
- ◆ "Good morning. I am pleased to see that you are all ready in good time. Being late gets everyone off to a bad start so you're doing well, so far! Now, let's get down to the serious business. I'm sure I don't have to remind you why you are here. This is the final test in your Detective Constable course. You've all made it this far and let's hope you can all take this last step successfully.

This is how things will proceed. As you know, you are already in detective teams. The first thing is to give you your team identification. You will be Team A (give stand up label for the table) and you will be Team B etc.

I am now going to distribute your notebooks. This will be where you will make notes of your evidence as you find it. Please fill in the front ready to begin. I may need to examine these later.

Distribute notebooks to all and give a few moments for filling in name, team and date.

- ◆ Now are you all ready to begin? Excellent. I am going to present you with a case. There will be four possible witnesses. One of the key areas in which you must succeed is in asking questions, and so for the purpose of this examination, I will be playing the roles of those witnesses in order to judge your questioning skills. Is that clear, everyone?
- ◆ So, here are the details you have to go on. A mother has come to the police station and reported that her child is missing. She is Mrs Andrews and the child's name is Ashley.
- ◆ Your job is to find out what happened and find the child. The child left a note to the mother. This is the original in my hand and I am now going to give each team a photocopy."

Even if all of your children can easily read the note, I would still read it to them at this point.

- ◆ “The four witnesses you can speaking to are The Mother, The Best Friend, The School Teacher and The Lollypop Lady.
- ◆ Your first job is to decide which of the witnesses you would like to speak to first and to work out two questions that you would like to ask. Think careful to make sure you get your investigation off to a good start. I am going to give you just a few minutes to work this out.”
- ◆ Move round from group to group and support them. You can ask challenging questions in your role as examiner.
- ◆ After they have made their decision and devised their questions. Ask each team in turn which witness they would like to interview first. It may be that they all chose the same person but equally they could different ones. From the drama’s point of view, it is not a problem, either way.
- ◆ Your challenge now is to play the roles and answer the questions. The greatest skill of all when doing this is to resist blurting everything out in the first five seconds. Make the children work for their information. Just dangle carrots. When you re-adopt your examiner’s role you can always point out that they are missing a vital clue etc. because they haven’t asked the right questions. You want to leave lots of ambiguities for the children to come back to.
- ◆ Remind all teams that each will have their turn to ask their questions. However, everyone may record whatever any of the witnesses says that they think might be important.
- ◆ At the end of the first round of questions, draw the children’s attention to the three-column sheet and ask the teams to fill in the three columns in the light of what they have just found out.
- ◆ Now, draw everyone’s attention back to the giant version of the sheet and explain in solving a crime we have to come to a common agreement on what has happened and what we need to find out. Because of this, each team will take the whole group through what they have written down and they will have to say what has led them to those conclusions.
- ◆ The things in each of the columns that are agreed can be transferred to the master copy that will be on the ‘incident room’ wall.
- ◆ Now turn your attention to the outline figure on the ‘incident room’ wall – write ‘ASHLEY’ above the head. Explain that one of the key processes that detectives have to go through is building up a character profile of key people in their investigations. When looked at altogether these create a picture that can help work out what they have done or where they might go.

What we are asking the children to look at here, are aspects of character, we are trying to build up a word profile of Ashley.

- ◆ Ask the children to put forward what they feel they know at this stage about Ashley's character. We want to build a consensus here and so if they detectives can agree, these words can be written on the body outline either by you or preferably by the child who made the suggestion. Make sure that the outline is low enough for a child to reach.
- ◆ Now draw attention back to you and tell the trainees that this is where the first day of the investigation will come to a close. All teams will gather again next time to continue. Remind them that they have already recorded what they think they still need to know.
- ◆ Remind them that they must not forget to write a report of the events of the first day.

Writing opportunity: in teams or individually the children might write the formal report of the day's events using the notes they have made to support them.

Session 2

- ◆ Out of role, recap with the children when the drama ended last time. Explain that when you give the signal they will be trainee detectives again and you will be the examiner and that Day 2 of the investigation will be about to begin.
- ◆ "Good morning everyone. Team A are you all here? Team B? etc". If anyone is missing from any of the teams then remind them that they will have to cope as best they can and that you will take the situation into consideration as you exam their work.
- ◆ Explain that it is time to move the investigation forward. Tell them than trying to trace the movements of a missing person is a great aid to detectives and draw their attention to the map of the location.
- ◆ Ask each team to review what they have found out and begin to plot on the map where Ashley was at which times. Get them to present to each other, citing the evidence that they have used to draw their conclusions. Encourage questioning.
- ◆ Now, ask the teams to decide which witness they would like to see and two devise the two questions they would like to ask. If not all of the witnesses were interviewed in the first round of questioning; strongly advise that vital evidence might be being overlooked.
- ◆ Organise this like before but this time; allow other teams to ask supplementary questions after the lead team has asked the first two. Again encourage note taking.
- ◆ Now, explain that one of the other important thing detectives do is to hold a press conference where they give information about how far they have got in their investigation and ask for assistance from the public. So, the next part of the examination is for each team to prepare the statement they are going read out at the press conference.

Writing opportunity: each team should compose and write their press statement.

- ◆ Now, hold the press conference. Explain that for the purpose of this part of the examination, when each team presents its statement, the other trainees and you will take the part of the reporters. Reporters may ask one question. Not everyone will get a chance to ask.

On paper, this might look like a short session but it won't be. So, this is where this session ends.

Writing opportunity: the children might write the newspaper reports that the reporters wrote after the press conference.

Writing opportunity: revisit the three-column sheets and the body outline to add to/revise in the light of our further investigation

Writing/art opportunity: the children might create a missing person poster.

Session 3

- ◆ Begin Day 3 of the investigation by announcing to the trainees that there has been a breakthrough. The school has a number of closed circuit television cameras located around the school premises. The head teacher has recovered the videotapes and they are now in your possession. Examination of the footage from the last week might hold some clues about bullying incidents.
- ◆ Stop the drama for a moment and explain that we are going to re-create what was on the videotapes so that the detectives can watch them and find clues.
- ◆ Out of role, each of the existing groups of children is going to show a different incident. Give each group a different day to work on and tell them where their camera was located and the time of day. You'll have to take into consideration how many groups you are working with in your particular class but places like by the main entrance to the building, near the bike shed, etc. would be appropriate. Make sure that you only give one group the camera by the gate for the day of the disappearance.
- ◆ Ask the group to work out what might have happened and then to make a short 1-minute scene to show the event. Remind everyone about the key people we are hoping to see on the tapes. Ashley, Becky, the bullies and perhaps the teacher and the lollypop lady.
- ◆ Take the opportunity to really make the children think about they might show and how effective they can make their incident. What we are not trying to do is give permission to children to bully each other but to very coolly reconstruct events for the purpose of a police investigation.
- ◆ In rehearsal encourage them to act it out with speech, as this will help them make a better piece.
- ◆ Now we are going to 'run the tapes' so that the detectives can see what happened. Make sure that you 'show' the tape from the morning of the disappearance last in the sequence.

- ◆ HOWEVER, remind them that CCTV footage does not have sound so that the detectives will only be able to see the pictures. The challenge for the actors is present their scenes as if the people were speaking but without making any sound. This will leave some ambiguity and challenge the children watching to make inferences and deductions from what they are seeing.

(Of course, if you have the facilities to actually videotape the scenes and play them back without sound, this would be the best possible way of doing it.)

- ◆ As the other groups watch, now back in the role of the detective teams, they should make a note of what they are seeing. This might best be done after each 'tape' has been seen. The children who presented the tape could also make notes.
- ◆ Whilst the detectives need to take note of all of the incidents, pair the groups so that each group pays especial attention to one of the tapes.
- ◆ The detective teams now have to decide what they believe they have seen happen on their particular focus incidents and draw conclusions from it.
- ◆ Now ask the pairs of groups to take it in turns to run the silent tape and present their interpretation of what is happening to rest of the detectives so that they can take notes.

In this way each incident will have been closely analysed by one group but all groups will hear the conclusions drawn from every one.

- ◆ And this is where the session ends. The detectives will have to see what Day 4 holds.

Writing opportunity: a time line of bullying incidents could be drawn up and a chronological report written.

Writing opportunity: the children might write their incidents in the form of playscripts.

Writing opportunity: further revisions of the three-column sheets and the profile of Ashley could be made.

Make adjustments to the map of her movements if appropriate

Session 4

- ◆ Explain that Day 4 of the investigation is going to focus on trying to get inside the mind of Ashley and trying to find out more about what she thinks and feels about the circumstances that drove her to run away from home.
- ◆ Explain that we are going to generate some more evidence about her to help with the investigation and we are going to begin by trying to imagine what Ashley was like before all this started. Remind them that her friend Becky and her mum and her teacher all said that before the Christmas holidays she was happy and doing well at school.
- ◆ So, working in their teams, ask the children to imagine Ashley before the bullying started and to think of a moment when she was really enjoying herself – birthday, going on a trip, playing with friends etc.

- ◆ Now ask the teams to work out who was there and exactly what was going on and then bring it to life and act it out to make a one-minute play – with talking this time. Ask them to rehearse it.
- ◆ You need to be moving round the groups supporting them in the devising and rehearsal process.
- ◆ Once they are ready, share these happy moments. At the end of each one, invite the watching children to ask Ashley questions about how she is feeling etc. The way we are going to do this is through a drama strategy called Collective Role.
- ◆ Once their playlet is over ask the group to sit together closely facing the other children – it would be good if this was on chairs rather than on the floor. Tell them that for this part, they are all going to be Ashley and when the questions are asked, anyone of them can answer. Tell them that they will need to listen carefully to what each other says so that they don't say anything that contradicts what has already been said.

In this manner it will be possible to build up quite a history for Ashley.

- ◆ Now, tell the children that Ashley keeps a diary and that she writes in it almost every day. She sits at a little table in her bedroom and does it just before she goes to bed. Tell them it is the evening after the last thing they saw – the last playlet that was shared – and that Ashley is writing in her diary.
- ◆ Explain to the children that they are going to be Ashley's thoughts whilst you represent Ashley for them. You need to have a sheet of paper and a pencil and basically you'll take the dictation from the children.
- ◆ Ask the children to speak out loud some of the things Ashley wrote in her diary that day.
- ◆ Now slip back into your Detective Inspector role and tell the trainees that this is very useful evidence and that on Day 5 we will follow it through further and see if we can find out how things changed after Christmas. Remind them that they need to record their evidence. But for today, this is where we have to stop the drama.

Writing opportunity: revise the on-going documents

Writing opportunity: the members of each group, collectively or individually, might write the diary entry for the evening of their particular happy moment in Ashley's life.

Session 5

- ◆ Begin the drama by recapping where the investigation has got. As the Detective Inspector, tell the investigation teams that they are running neck and neck at the moment and it if all continues in the same manner; everyone is in with a chance of qualifying for Detective Constable. However, it's not all over, yet.

- ◆ In your role, explain to the trainees that scientists believe that the dreams of people can tell a lot about how they are feeling and so for the next part of the exam the trainees are going to recreate some of the dreams Ashley has been having since Christmas.
- ◆ Recall the incidents of bullying captured on the CCTV footage as a way of reminding the teams of the things that Ashley has been putting up with of late. Contrast them with the happy times we know she had before.
- ◆ Ask the children to form two lines facing each other, a couple of metres apart. Explain that you are going to represent Ashley and walk down the corridor between the lines. As you pass by the children, ask them to speak out loud how they think Ashley is feeling.
- ◆ Stop the drama and explain that we are going to work in our teams to imagine some of Ashley's dreams. They are only going to last one minute each.
- ◆ Help the teams to think creatively about how to present the dreams and explain that we are going to make dreams that not going to look just as if they were really happening. So we are going to use words rather than whole sentences and lots of movement and we will have a piece of music to help us.
- ◆ In their groups ask the children to think of one of the words that they used to describe how Ashley is feeling now. Ask them to imagine that we could see how that feeling looks. Ask them to make a group still image (statue) of it. How would sad look, etc.
- ◆ Now ask each group to choose another word and make a statue of that word.
- ◆ Now explain that we are going to put those two things together. Tell them that when they hear you signal they are to become the first statue and when they hear the next signal they are to change to the next statue.
- ◆ You could share some of these but don't take too long at this point because there is more to come.
- ◆ Now ask them to do the same for two other different words that describe how Ashley is feeling.
- ◆ Now explain that what we are going to do is put these two sets together to form a group of 4 statues. This time give four signals so that they move through all four statues.
- ◆ Explain that the next step will be to bring the statues to life as if the statues were really just a video or DVD on pause. So what they will have to do is work out how to join them all up in a continuous piece of movement.
- ◆ This is the moment to play the music that is going to be the soundtrack to the dreams.

It lasts a minute and helpfully has a bang at the end that will be a good signal for the children to freeze as their dream ends.

- ◆ Remind them that they can use the words in the dream, too, if they would like to.

- ◆ You'll need to support them in devising these dance dramas. Working from still image to movement is a very sure way of developing the work. The challenge, though, is to encourage the children to let go of the stillness as they put the statues together and bring them to life.
- ◆ When they are all rehearsed, share the dreams. I think this deserves to be done dream by dream rather than all at once, so that the children can see each other's work. (Sorry but this means hearing the piece of music as many times as you have groups!)
- ◆ When all the dreams have been seen, then as the Detective Inspector, tell the trainees that this has given a big insight into how Ashley is feeling. "No wonder, she felt she had to get away."
- ◆ "It makes it really important that we get her home, quickly."
- ◆ Use your signal to stop the drama and tell the children that we will have to wait until next time to discover what happens in the end.

Writing opportunity: make further amendments to the on-going documents

Writing opportunity: the children might write a sad diary entry

Session 6

- ◆ Begin the drama and, as the Inspector, ask the children to review all their evidence and say where they think Ashley has gone. Ask them to give reasons for what they say.
- ◆ I expect that, if they drew out from you that Ashley had a father, then they may well say she had gone there. If they come up with another place and all happen to agree then go with that.
- ◆ Anyway, you need to let them know that they are correct and, in fact, Ashley was there but she has come back and she is actually here. Tell the trainee detectives that she is sorry to have caused so much trouble but she didn't know what else to do.
- ◆ Explain to the trainees that it will be their final task to show Ashley the different ways she could have dealt with the bullying incidents.
- ◆ So, as the teams to go back to the CCTV footage that they created and make a short 1-minute scene of the same incident (with words) to show Ashley what she might have done.
- ◆ You need to make sure that the children refresh their own memories about how children can respond in bullying situations – tell a teacher or a grown-up etc.
- ◆ To conclude the whole thing, for the very last part of their examination you are going to be Ashley and they are going to show you what you could have done differently.
- ◆ The trick for you here is to have the dawning realisation as the scenes unfold that there are ways to deal with bullies. By the end you need to have moved from being sad and quiet to being cheered up.

- ◆ Then, switch roles back to the Detective Inspector and congratulate them all on the skills and commitment they have brought to the investigation and give the trainees the good news that they have all passed the examination and have won promotion to the rank of Detective Constable.

Writing opportunity: create a pocket-size guide to dealing with bullies so Ashley can always have it with her.

Writing opportunity: write the newspaper report of Ashley being found safe and well

- ◆ And that is the end of the drama.