

Educational Drama - A way of learning

“Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand.” - Albert Einstein

In the early stages of life, a child learns through play quite naturally and informally as they try, do and explore new ideas and things. However, very often as part of getting educated and going through school, the same children are discouraged from spending time in ‘play’ in favor of ‘real’ learning. The focus shift from gaining an organic natural experience of living through life interactions to an inorganic structured experience of learning knowledge about subjects and topics from books and teachers. This natural process in the child for learning new things by play disappears and learning things by reading, writing and lectures becomes all important.

To retain this spontaneous and natural way of learning which is achieved through play, it is necessary to consciously build it back into the curriculum. This can be done through **Educational Drama** which has its roots in play. The use of drama is to create dramatic situations to allow the children to explore their feelings and thoughts in those different contexts and gain a new, different and varied perspectives through these experiences.

Objective

The objective of the Educational Drama is to bring back the joy of play back in to a child’s life. The focus would be on experiential learning rather than prescriptive learning. As part of making and creating drama, they would get better awareness and learning about skills involved in everyday living - decision making, problems solving, critical thinking, effective communication, interpersonal relationships, self awareness, empathy, coping with emotions and stress.

Approach

Drama is a framed activity where using role-play, children can think and behave in different contexts and situations. By imagining these situations, it will allow children to experience and explore different humans conditions and situations and their own responses to them.

Drama games and activities enable them to explore ideas, thoughts, feelings, impressions and attitudes. Drama aims to help children to present and express themselves positively, with confidence and ease. The processes involved – imagining, thinking, reasoning, feeling and speaking - are all valuable and highly experiential. Drama aims to increase personal skills in all of these areas.

To clarify, the focus is not on making the children learn acting or theater skills and also not on creating a production play for an audience. The focus is on the process of drama rather than the output of drama. The process would be explored along the full continuum of drama - from simple role-plays to more structured sharing and presenting - with the intent to identify opportunities for learning and self-exploration.

Read more about this and other workshops conducted by Ashok Kumar @ jembeashok.com