



CREATE YOUR OWN PUPPET SHOW

DRAMA 2: Developing a Character

Bringing to life a character we have made from Keith's Art Session, through Drama.

Step One: Who is your Character? (KSI / KS2)

Written and Drawing Exercise, 'Role on the Wall'.

1. Draw an outline of a Gingerbread Person.

Make sure there is space in the inside and on the outside of the gingerbread person. Once you have drawn your gingerbread person, we are going to fill these spaces with words or drawings to help us understand our character a little better.

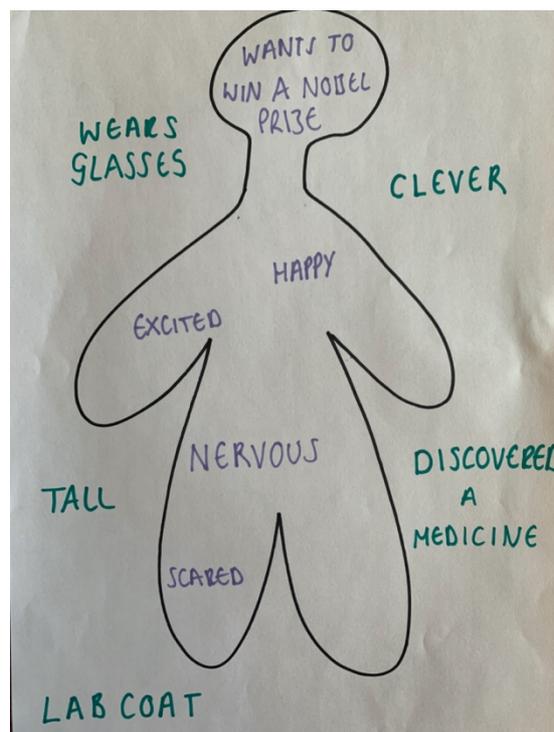
What you need to do is get either a pencil or a colouring pen and on the outside of your gingerbread person you are going to write all the things you can see in your character.

For Example: They are Tall, they have a Lab Coat, they are clever etc.

Then you need to write on the inside of your gingerbread person all the things that people can't see on the outside. Like their thoughts, feelings and dreams.

For Example: I'm scared, I'm excited, I want to win a Nobel Prize etc.

As my example I used a scientist as my character to do my 'Role on the Wall' with. I will show you my example here:



Step Two: Movement (KS1 / KS2)

Drama Exercise – How does your character move?

2. Paint Brush Exercise.

You are going to imagine that you have a paint brush on top of your head, and this paint brush reaches to the top of the ceiling above you. So, it's a really long paint brush.

Your aim is to imagine you are painting the ceiling.

Now, when you are painting the ceiling you need to keep your head straight so that you don't paint the wall in front of you, as this is going to help the character's posture.

Try and move around the room in different ways.

Moving in a Square: Move in strong straight lines and sharp angles. This could be a character who works in the army for example.

Move in a Figure of Eight: Moving in circular motions making an 'eight' on the ceiling. This could feel like someone is nervous, or they could be really excited like a historian who has made a new discovery!

Move in Slow Motion: Who could move in slow motion. An astronaut on the moon for example.

Try and find lots of your own ways to move your paint brush, this can really help you discover how your character would move.

Step Three: Going on a Journey (KS1)

Drama Exercise – What are your character's ideas?

3. For this exercise, as an example, let's pretend we are going on the moon!

- First our character needs a bag, this can be an imaginary bag!
- Secondly our character needs to pack their bag for their journey.
- List the things they need and use mime (actions) to add each imaginary item to the character's bag. **i.e. A Sandwich, Space Boots, Space Helmet, Space Suit etc.**
- Then zip the bag up and put it on your shoulders, then you can begin your journey.
- How do they feel are they excited? Is it a mission?

With this exercise it can be done individual or with others and you can each take it in turn to fill your own character's bag, this can be any journey you want it to be!

Step Four: Mime (KS2)

Drama Exercise – Using Mime to bring your character to life!

4. Miming Everyday Movements.

Pick an everyday action that you might do, **i.e. washing your face...** now pretend to wash your face. This is a very simple mime, just to get us warmed up. Try and make your movements as obvious as possible.

Now to think about character.

What action might your character do? **I.e. An Explorer might be reading a map, or a Scientist might be making an experiment...**

When you have found your action for your character, make sure it is one that is really clear and that you can repeat really easily.

Once you have done this you can look at the speed of your mime.

1 = Slow Motion, 5 = Normal Speed, 10 = Fast Paced

Now use the mime you have just created, and in the exercise, you could get someone to call out a number from 1 to 10, remembering that goes from slow to fast and you have to move according to the number given to you. You can also swap so you can be the number caller and someone else can do the mime.

Whilst you are doing these actions at different speeds, when you are moving fast or slow, how does this change the mood of the character?

Fast = Excited, Nervous...

Slow = Tired, Grumpy...

You can do this alongside the music you might have made in Ben's video, someone could be playing music as your character moves to the beat of the music.

Step Five: Voice Work (KS1 /KS2)

Drama Exercise – How does your character sound?

5. Finding the Characters Voice.

It's really helpful when you are finding your characters voice to use the mime technique and try and stand like your character. So that you feel a little less like yourself, and more like your character.

Simply start by saying the word **'Hello'** in a neutral way.

Then play with speed, start by saying **'Hello'** really fast. Find different ways to do this.

Now, to play with slow motion, say **'Hello'** in slow motion. Find different ways to do this.

You will find that when you said 'Hello' in different ways that your voice may have sound different. It may have gone high pitched or low pitched.

Think about who your character is talking to?

- Is it someone important?
- Someone they are scared of?
- A friend?

Say **'Hello'** in the different ways your character would do, to different people. No one acts the same around everyone, and neither does your character.

Upgrade this and say out loud a character's inner thoughts. **For example, 'I want to Rule the World'...** play around with the speed and the volume of what your character says to find their voice.

Naturally you might add a mime or movement whilst you speak in your characters voice.

Step Six: Puppets (KS1 / KS2)

Drama Exercise – How to bring a puppet to life?

6. Making your puppet into a Character.

Top Tips on Puppetry:

- Give your Puppet Eye Contact. Don't look away from your puppet when you are moving it. Or else the audience will be watching you and not your puppet.
- Think about how fast or slow your puppet moves. Make sure to have both hands ready to move your puppet, always have one hand controlling the arm and one hand controlling their face. To keep your puppet steady.
- **You can use the voice technique above with your puppet as well.**
- The nose, knows. Lead with your puppet nose, it helps to see where the puppet is going and makes it seem even more alive!
- You can move your puppet alongside music also!



This is the end of our Developing Character Session, have fun!