

**Process drama: Its effect on self-esteem and inclusion of primary Fifth  
Class boys and girls.**

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## INTRODUCTION

**“The self and society are twin born . . . and the notion of a separate and independent ego an illusion.”<sup>1</sup>**

### ***Self and Society***

Whether sleeping in the womb, walking to the shops with his mother or reading with teacher in school, a child is more often in company than alone. His<sup>2</sup> well being and self-esteem are largely formed in relationship with his primary caregiver. They are the child’s first link to society at large. The quality of inclusion in those relationships can be a predictor of the child’s future relationship with society when they grow up.

A problem can arise if a child does not belong in a group. This factor is an indication of low self-esteem. If each member of the group is to negotiate meaning successfully, it is important that each one feels they are safe, belong, and are liked for their own self. If a group is not including someone it is both a reminder of, and contributor to, his low self-esteem. The theory of the looking-glass-self, where I judge my self-esteem by what others reflect to me is pertinent here.

To make a construction analogy, if the self is the building block, society is the bonding cement that holds all the different selves together, in a mutual dependency. Should the foundations show cracks the edifice will crumble. Both self and society will suffer in the process. The time and effort put into building an individual’s self-esteem is rewarded. The prize is a self, integrated with authenticity into the group.

This is one of the express affective intentions of the formal education system, to integrate the self into society. Studies show that children with low self-esteem are most highly represented in statistics of early leavers.<sup>3</sup> A child with high self-esteem, therefore, will remain longer in school and have more success.

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<sup>1</sup> Cooley, C.H. (1912). *Human Nature and the Social Order*. New York: Scribners, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> In the interests of simplicity the masculine form has been used through out this document to represent both genders.

<sup>3</sup> Kite, H. (1989) *How to prevent dropout*: Orlando , Florida. This is dealt with later under School dropout.

Self-esteem is vital to a child's affective and cognitive development. Reasoner defines the Five Pillars of Self-esteem as : Security, Identity, Belonging, Purpose and Competence.<sup>4</sup> Low self-esteem and feelings of exclusion can lead to deviancy and alienation, and are an important indicator of academic and social success. As these are particular goals of the primary curriculum, they need to be given due attention.

### ***Role of Education in Social Integration***

Society talks to the self through the social discourse of education. In this way the self is inculcated into society. To be an accepted member of the group the self needs to be educated in the values, attitudes and beliefs of that group.

The way in which a group inculcates values and attitudes in order to inform and control behaviour is central to this research. What behaviour is expected will dictate not only what is taught to the young of a society but, pertinently, how it is taught. Teaching methods, if inadequate or mishandled, can undermine the learning of even the most attractive subjects.

### ***Progressive Education: the Group and the Self***

Rousseau's influence on the progressive educational movement resulted in a model of education that is child centred. The learner actively engages in things that are as close to natural man as possible. Games, free play and interaction between pupils were developed by Froebel among others. To create a positive environment for this fundamental unit of society, the individual, would have mutual benefits for both society and the individual in question. In their child centred epistemology, the self was at the centre of its own learning.

However, what learning was it, and who would benefit? This was learning about the creative self, working on personal issues through play. This learning- as- process was difficult to conceptualise and thus was often placed by successive Departments of Education on the edges of the school curriculum. This erroneous practice has been improved by the introduction of the new primary curriculum. If a child's self is affirmed in free-expression, he will see learning as a process in which he can create and develop.

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<sup>4</sup> Reasoner, R. (1994). *Building Self-esteem in the Elementary schools*. California: The Consulting Psychologists Press.

In Dewey's process model of learning, the pupil is socially active in his learning, negotiating meaning with the group, forming and affirming his own in the process. The self as creator and negotiator, acting, as Piaget would say "in and on the world". However, the learner still needs the guidance of a skilled teacher, a facilitator in the child's creativity.

### ***Role of the Teacher***

The teacher in a state school is an executive of state policy. They are the mediators between the state and the self.

Historically, the quality of that mediation is a reflection of a society's worldview, from education as product to education as process, from the individual as passive attender of traditional learning to the individual as creator and negotiator of meaning in a group. Bolton calls this way of learning 'self-spectator', Boal calls it the 'spectator' and Freire calls it the 'spectator as actor. It parallels the Looking-Glass View of self, where one sees oneself clearly in the reflection of others.<sup>5</sup> In each the learner is at the centre of his own transformation.

In this new way of learning, involving the participant as actor, what is the role of the teacher? The traditional model is replaced by a more progressive force, leading and motivating, as influential organiser of the enterprise in hand. The teacher /pupil relationship, mirroring the mother/child relationship, has a determining influence on the social inclusion of the child and particularly his self-esteem. What then is the best method to raise self-esteem, in a social context?

### ***Role of Drama in Education***

Drama in Education can offer a method to make pupils aware of self-esteem and inclusion as a concept, to define them, and use them. This will occur in the context of the inclusive interaction between the individual and the teacher, the other pupils, and the work in hand, creating the conditions in which the gap between self-image and ideal self-image could be narrowed. The forum and opportunity are both ideally created in a Process drama class.

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<sup>5</sup> Cooley, C. H. (1912). *Human Nature and the Social Order*. New York: Scribners, p. 152.

As Nicky in St. Rita's described it, "We were learning, but we were having fun as well." I argue that the achievement of that negotiation will lead to an increase in inclusive behaviours and self-esteem. This project will seek to do this using Drama in Education as a method, with the purpose of promoting self-esteem through inclusion. The Process Drama Experiment will focus on Reasoner's Five Pillars of Self-esteem, mentioned earlier.

## CHAPTER ONE

### **Theoretical Developments Underpinning Self-Esteem**

This chapter is concerned with a review of the literature in relation to the various theories of self, from which contemporary formulations derive.

#### ***Summary***

Self-esteem is determined largely by feedback received from the social environment including home and school. It is important to note that all the beliefs and images which we hold as an integral part of our self-concept were not present at birth. Most of the beliefs we hold are acquired before adulthood. In early infancy, the formation of children's self-concept is influenced to a large extent by non-verbal communication. The quality of the relationship with the essential caregiver is crucial to the development of a healthy self. When this is unavailable to the child on a continuous basis the child withdraws and is unable to develop satisfactorily, the child will present in school as withdrawn, insecure and unable to communicate needs. This often results in unacceptable behaviour that is disruptive. Self-esteem is defined as a combination of inherent endowments, accomplishments and feelings of lovableness, value, respect and control over one's life.

With intervention of Drama in Education at the school stage, the child, along with the teacher and the group, should be able to enhance this process and in some cases reverse it.

#### ***Developments in Self-Esteem Theory***

The literature suggests that a scientific consideration of the self came to the fore in the latter part of the nineteenth century when William James<sup>6</sup> promoted it as a psychological issue. James puts forward a view of a global self that comprises four components, spiritual self, material self, social self, and bodily self. According to James, these four selves combine in unique ways to establish people's view of themselves that cannot be easily separated. He saw self-esteem as the discrepancy between one's ideal

self and one's perceived self. His principle of self-esteem, known more commonly as James' law may be stated as follows:

“With no attempt, there can be no failure, with no failure, no humiliation. So our self-feeling in this world depends entirely on what we back ourselves to be and do. It is determined by the ratio of our actualities to our supposed potentialities; a fraction of which our pretensions are the denominator and the numerator our success.”<sup>7</sup>

In his time, the pretensions referred to aim, intention, purpose or goal. Therefore, success in attaining one's goal would produce self-esteem. This was one of the first attempts at formulating a definition of self-esteem and was focused primarily on the individual's evaluation of his own adequacy.

### **Symbolic Interactionism**

Socialisation is frequently referred to and has been cited as perhaps the most important factor in the development of the self-concept.<sup>8</sup> During the early part of this century, the study of the self moved into the sociological realm, where Charles Cooley (1864-1929) and George Mead (1863-1931) were the major theorists. Both were symbolic interactionists who produced considerable insights into the relationship between the self and society. Symbolic interactionism proposes that the meaning and evaluation of symbols, including symbolic labels applied to oneself, are learned during everyday interaction with one's network of social relationships<sup>9</sup> and can be defined as follows:

“The symbolic part of the term refers to the assumption that the environment should be regarded as consisting of objects whose significance lies in their social meaning. We are surrounded by a world of symbols, not a world of objects. Interactionism refers to the fact that via symbols, we are able to communicate with one another and to do this requires the ability to regard the world from another's perspective. The unit of analysis for symbolic interactionism is not an isolated individual, but the interaction between two people; the self and the other. One of

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<sup>6</sup> James, W. (1890). *Principles of Psychology*. New York: Holt, pp. 310-312.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Dechant, E. V. (1977). *Psychology in Teaching Reading*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

<sup>9</sup> Rose, A. (1962). Systematic Summary of Symbolic Interaction Theory. in *Human Behaviour and Social Processes: An Interactionist Approach*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

the results of interacting with another and taking the other's perspective is that the self is confronted with itself. It is in this way, that interactionists argue we are made aware of ourselves."<sup>10</sup>

Initially Cooley believed individuals were independent of society. He later revised his thinking to the point where he proposed in fact "That self and society were twin born ... and the notion of a separate and independent ego an illusion."<sup>11</sup> Subsequently, he agreed with Mead that the self arises from social conditions.

Direct social comparisons provide the individual with information about himself; for instance, compared to me he can run faster, she is quicker to grasp a point, and they are more assertive in conversation. But much of the self-knowledge that one elicits from others does not come from direct comparison. It comes from an analysis of feedback from others. Verbal and non-verbal communications provide a continuous response about the impression one is making.

It was Cooley who initially identified the importance of feedback from others as a primary source of information about the self. He believed that the self-concept is formed as a result of symbolic interaction between the individual and the various groups with which he interacts. This is referred to in the literature as the Looking Glass Theory of Self. The looking glass reflects the imagined evaluations of others about one. Cooley proposed that from early childhood our concepts of self develop from seeing how others respond to us. This is particularly true in the presence of someone whom we feel to be of importance. More modern theories are consistent in regarding interactions with these 'significant others' as the primary shaper of children's developing self-concept.

The major contribution of Mead was his insistence that interaction with other people is essential for the development of the self. "Selves can only exist in definite relationships with our other selves."<sup>12</sup> He expanded the view of the self as a product of social interaction. He agreed with Cooley that feedback combined with the individual's ability to imagine things from someone else's perspective provides the basis for a sense of self. As an individual develops and interacts with society, he develops self-attitudes

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<sup>10</sup> Hampson, S. E. (1982). *Sources of Information about the self in Personality Development and Learning*, London: Open University Press, p. 188.

<sup>11</sup> Cooley, C.H. (1912). *Human Nature and the Social Order*. New York: Scribners, p 5

<sup>12</sup> Mead, G.H. (1982). *Self-concept Development and Education*. London: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, p. 164.



consistent with those expressed by others around him. He values himself as they value him; he rejects himself to the extent that they reject him.<sup>13</sup>

### **Developmental Theories**

Erikson identified a series of eight psychosocial stages which provide a conceptual framework for understanding the self's development at any given point.<sup>14</sup> The theory postulates that emotional and social growth evolve through different stages. Each stage has its own particular tasks which must be negotiated successfully if the child's emotional and mental health is to be maintained.<sup>15</sup>

The crisis for infancy for example is labelled "trust versus mistrust." By this Erikson means, during infancy, the child must be able to establish a feeling of trust, of security with its carers. It is important that the infant comes through the first stage feeling more secure than insecure. In Erikson's view, each crisis builds on the previous ones. Specifically, the successful resolution of each challenge depends on the healthy resolution of the challenges that have preceded it. An infant who has not successfully resolved the crisis of trust versus mistrust will have a difficult time with any crisis he encounters through the rest of the life cycle. He may always be hesitant about becoming close with others because deep down inside, he fears others will let him down.

Erikson believes that the successful resolution of the crisis of identity versus identity diffusion, the fifth stage in Erikson's theory, depends on how the individual has resolved the previous crises of childhood. Without a healthy sense of trust, autonomy, initiative and industry, it is difficult to establish a coherent sense of identity. Erikson believes that what takes place during adolescence is intertwined with what has come before. This is of importance to this project as the pupils are pre-adolescent, most of the sample being eleven years old.<sup>16</sup>

Maslow was particularly interested in the process of self-actualisation. He suggested people couldn't behave in a self-actualising way unless basic, lower-level

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<sup>13</sup> Burns, R. (1982). *Self-concept Development and Education*. London: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, p.18.

<sup>14</sup> A table of these psycho-social stages is in Appendix I v

<sup>15</sup> Erikson, E. (1968). *Identity, Youth and Crisis*. New York: Norton.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

needs are gratified. He presented this in what is known as Maslow's hierarchy of human needs.<sup>17</sup>

Every individual requires food, warmth and shelter; every person requires a safe and secure environment in the home/classroom/workplace; all rational persons want to be loved, accepted and feel a sense of belonging. Those who do not, feel a sense of loneliness and isolation. Individuals need a positive sense of self-esteem in order to feel good about themselves. In order to attain the stage of self-actualisation, people require opportunities to develop inner talents and potential.

An individual cannot possibly expect that their needs would be met all the time by home/school/work. However, if the needs of each stage are not satisfied by some aspects of a person's life, the resultant effect is that the person will be unable to progress to the next level towards self-fulfilment.

A recent Irish National Teachers Organisation (I.N.T.O.) report questions whether the needs of children raised in poverty are being met. Research presented in the report 'Poverty and Educational Disadvantage' indicates that poverty adversely affects both physical and mental health. The report states that high levels of anxiety and stress, ill-health and lower life expectancy, feelings of isolation, lack of control and a sense of stigma have been shown to be part of the experience of poverty.<sup>18</sup> Recognition of this area, described as educationally disadvantaged, strengthens the argument for programmes that will address self-esteem issues.

Rogers presented the phenomenological approach to the self, also referred to as the humanistic approach. It is a perspective which

"Attempts to understand man through the impressions of the subject rather than how his needs, feelings, values, beliefs and unique perception of his environment influence him to behave as he does"<sup>19</sup>

This represents a swing from the socio-cultural perspective as the major determinant of self-development. It proposed that an individual's behaviour be influenced not only by society but also by what he, as a unique individual perceives the situation and his role

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<sup>17</sup> For chart of Maslow's Hierarchy of needs see Appendix I vi.

<sup>18</sup> *Poverty and Educational Disadvantage*. (1994). Dublin: Irish National Teachers Organization.

<sup>19</sup> Burns, R. (1982). *Self-Concept Development and Education*. London: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, p. 19.

within it to be. Rogers' approach centres on two theories, (1) that inherent in the individual is the capacity for self-understanding and (2) the positive ability of the individual to reorganise self-strengths. The therapist/educator must be able to "experience an empathic understanding of the client's internal frame of reference and endeavour to communicate this experience."<sup>20</sup> His theories have obvious implications for self-esteem initiatives and the role of the educator. It is clear that given the Rogerian conditions, students have the capacity to reorganise their self-perceptions and acquire a more positive self-esteem and take a stand with regard to feedback.

Studies by, for example, Stern (1985) and Winnicott (1965) have shown that the mother-infant relationship is crucial to the development of the self.

Winnicott<sup>21</sup> observed that many adults in therapy had problems that could have been diagnosed in the infant-mother relationship. In Winnicott's terms there was never "just an infant" The mother's adaptation to the infant's living needs is essential to the development of a true self that is a healthy self.<sup>22</sup> According to Stern, the self is developed in relationship and the quality of the essential relationship with the infant's primary care giver is crucial to the development of the child to wholeness.

Nichols, in his analysis of Stern's phases of infancy, places listening with understanding as the core need during these phases of development. During all the phases, it is necessary that the parent understands the infant and responds appropriately. The parent needs to respond to the mood of the child. This involves taking him seriously as an individual. Nichols presents the case of the baby whose parents tickle and poke him when he is not in the mood, as being as alone as the baby whose parents ignore him. This is the root of aloneness and insecurity. On the other hand, if a child communicates and does not receive a response they will eventually give up, and turn inward.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Rogers, C. (1977). *Carl Rogers on Personal Power*. New York: Delacorte Press.

<sup>21</sup> Winnicott, D.W. (1965). *The Maturation Process and the Facilitating Environment*. London: Hogarth Press, p.142

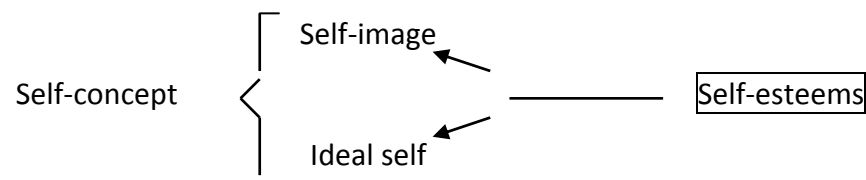
<sup>22</sup> Stern, D. (1985) *The interpersonal World of the infant*. New York: Basic Books, p.11

<sup>23</sup> Nichols, D. (1995). *The Lost Art of Listening*. New York: Guilford Press, p29.

### ***A Definition of Self-Esteem***

Early researchers were not always clear in relation to the terminology. Lawrence<sup>24</sup> reported on a study done by English & English in 1958 in which they identified over a thousand different combinations and uses of the terms in the self-concept area, with the same terms often used to mean different things. Different terms such as self-esteem, self-concept and self-image were often used to mean the same thing.

Lawrence presented a clarification of the terminology as he defines self-esteem within the context of self-concept. He suggests that self-concept is an umbrella term encompassing self-image (what the person is) ideal self (what the person would like to be) and self-esteem (what the person feels about the discrepancy between what one is and what one would like to become). This can be expressed as follows:



To understand the term 'self-concept' one needs to ask the question "Who am I?" a number of times. Answers will include such things as:

- I am John Murphy
- I am a man
- I am six foot tall.

Additional questions will necessitate the individual giving more information. High self-esteem levels are revealed in responses such as:

- I am clever
- I am successful

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<sup>24</sup> Lawrence, D. (1988). *Enhancing Self-Esteem in the Classroom*. London: Paul Chapman, p.xi.

Ideal self is revealed by responses, which normally include achievement:

- I would love to play for Ireland
- I would like to be able to speak in public with confidence.

Like Lawrence, more recent observers of self-esteem place it in the realm of acknowledging how an individual feels about himself. Adler<sup>25</sup> based his concept of self-esteem on the individual's natural striving for superiority, through the achievement of goals. He maintained that individuals enter the world in an inferior state and struggle toward superiority. Self-esteem, to him, was continuously evolving and constitutes the totality of the perceptions we hold of ourselves at any given moment.

In 1992 the board of directors of the National Council for Self-esteem in the United States, which represented twenty four authorities of self-esteem, agreed on the definition of self-esteem as 'the experience of being capable of life's challenges and feeling worthy of happiness.'<sup>26</sup> They agreed that it develops from the cognitive process of evaluating oneself and the affective process of feeling one's worth in five areas:

1. Inherited endowments, such as intelligence, appearance and natural abilities, moral virtue or integrity
2. Accomplishments or success in life, such as skills, possessions and achievements
3. Feeling likeable or loveable
4. Feeling unique of value and worthy of respect
5. Feeling in control of one's life.

These five elements inform the philosophy, approach and application of this research, carried out with fifth class boys and girls.

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<sup>25</sup> Adler, A. (1969). *The Science of Living*. New York: Double day.

<sup>26</sup> Reasoner R (1994). *Building Self-esteem in the Elementary Schools*. California: Consulting Psychologists Press, p 2.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Development of Drama in Education with Reference to its Application in Self–Esteem Enhancement

#### *Summary*

The lineage of Drama as an active learning method will be traced from the beginning of this century. This sets the context in which Drama in Education evolved. In this study I will review its use as a form of interactive collaboration and the development of models of drama from the personal to the social.

Connections to theories of socio-dramatic play will be illustrated. Developments in the role of the teacher and views on interventionist play will be described. Techniques and styles of drama will be examined, from Psychodrama to Drama for free-expression and Drama for personal development. More recent developments in Drama in Education will be reviewed, particularly teacher-as-participant type drama, which changed the educational purpose and dynamic into a heuristic social voyage in search of meaning. I will illustrate the development in Drama in Education of Process drama.

#### *Theoretical Origins of Drama in Education*

##### **Philosophy: Learning methods**

The origin of Drama in Education owes much to two educational disciplines: Educational Philosophy and Psychology of learning.

While O'Neill would say "drama is a mode of learning,"<sup>27</sup> I feel that Freire's teacher-as-learner philosophy<sup>28</sup> is equally important in the formation of a theory of Drama in Education. The former presupposes an effect on the latter. For whether, and importantly how, one uses the method depends on one's own educational philosophy and personal experience of formal learning. Both influence one's own choice of learning method, and thus teaching style.

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<sup>27</sup> O'Neill C. & Lambert, A. (1982). *Drama Structures*. London: Hutchinson, p.11

<sup>28</sup> Freire, P. (1993). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed: New Revised 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary edition*. New York: Continuum Publishing Company.

Freire criticises the educational status quo or what he calls the 'banking system' as morally unsustainable, and having a self-interest in conservatism and resistance to change.<sup>29</sup> This "banking system suffers from what he calls what he calls 'necrophily', or a love of dead things, a cultural inculcation based on the past, a glorious past which is safe and one which will not cause too much questioning of any ruling social élite. Not only is the past dead, but knowledge about it is transferred by necrophilic teachers, leading to classroom lessons that are suffering from what he graphically calls 'narrative sickness'.

In contrast, at a Freirean school, the democratic teacher would be interested in 'biophily'<sup>30</sup> or living things, including humans, using Drama in Education as 'a method of learning'<sup>31</sup> in pursuit of transformation and 'humanisation'.<sup>32</sup> This philosophy can change the question in Dorothy Heathcote's words<sup>33</sup> from a querulous "What happened then?" To a more curious and empowering "I wonder what happens now?" The result would be an alliance of teacher /student and student /teacher<sup>34</sup> working in what Heathcote calls "the crucible of learning"<sup>35</sup>. Freire's powerful and persuasive philosophy of teacher a partner, O'Neill's "drama as a mode of learning" and learning for transformation are core values in Drama in Education.

### ***Psychology: Play, Intervention and Supported Learning***

#### **Play**

*Homo ludens*<sup>36</sup> is often seen as the opposite of *homo faber*,<sup>37</sup> but a reading of the literature would suggest that there can be more *faber* in *ludens* than one might first be inclined to think. The self as imaginative agent is at the heart of children's play.

According to Moyles,

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<sup>29</sup> Freire, P. (1998). *The Paulo Freire Reader*. A. M. Araújo Freire (Ed.). New York: Continuum Publishing Company, p 67.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> O'Neill, C. (1995). *Drama Worlds*. New Hampshire: Heinemann p.5.

<sup>32</sup> Freire, P (1993). *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed: New Revised 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary edition*. New York: Continuum.

<sup>33</sup> Drury, M. (1994). *Drama, an essential component of learning and teaching*. A paper to Dramalive. Nov.19<sup>th</sup> 1994. This organization was subsumed into the Association for Drama in Education in Ireland (ADEI) in October 1999.

<sup>34</sup> Freire advocates this as a paradigm for transformation in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

<sup>35</sup> Quoted in Bolton, G. (1998). *Acting in Classroom Drama, a Critical Analysis* London: Trentham, p.177.

<sup>36</sup> Man who plays, or playing man

<sup>37</sup> Man who works, or working man

“Freud saw fantasy as a way to gain access to the psyche. Emphasising the function of the child’s instincts in fantasy play he suggested that through play, children will show their *inner selves*”.<sup>38</sup>

He proposed that acting out roles would help them to assimilate traumatic experiences.

Kitson recognises that very few children present such problems, nevertheless, he sees the value for play in non-therapeutic settings like schools.<sup>39</sup> Kitson saw a need for adult intervention in children’s play. He found that children began to lose interest in their play activities after a short time if there was no tension in the activity.<sup>40</sup> This insertion of a tension, then, is the marked difference between child’s fantasy play of Freud and Drama in Education. Success of the intervention, according to Neelands, depends on the way in which tension is inserted by the teacher, with as he says “a subtle tongue”.<sup>41</sup>

Kitson also favours Bruner’s use of an interventionist approach by the supportive adult which he calls ‘scaffolding’,<sup>42</sup> that with this, the participating adult can “keep the activity going by motivating the children to persist”,<sup>43</sup> the pupil can “behave and function at a cognitive level beyond their norm”. He further states that “the teacher can provide a model and also bring a myriad of people, problems, challenges and so on, into the play”.<sup>44</sup> Moyles says “such adult participation . . . allows for the structuring of learning areas for the children through the selection of themes or stimulus area”<sup>45</sup>, very much like the drama facilitator. Bolton supports this saying that dramatic play is a metaphor for children’s lives<sup>46</sup> and Erikson stresses the importance of life and rehearsal element of fantasy play.<sup>47</sup> Moyles reviews the contribution of socio-dramatic play in the self-confidence, self-esteem and social development of children in her book.<sup>48</sup>

Piaget’s views of education are clearly in the heuristic area where the learner is at the centre of the activity.

<sup>38</sup> Moyles, J. (1998). (Ed.) *The Excellence of Play*. (new edition). Open University Press. p. 90

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. p 90

<sup>40</sup> Kitson, N. ‘Please Miss Alexander: will you be the robber? Fantasy play : a case for adult intervention in Moyles, J. (Ed.). *The Excellence of Play*. UK: Open University Press. (1998) (new edition), pp. 88-98.

<sup>41</sup> Neelands, J. (1984). *Making Sense of Drama*. London: Heinemann.

<sup>42</sup> Smith, P.K. (1998). *Play & the uses of play*. In Moyles J (Ed.) *The Excellence of Play*. (new edition). UK: Open University Press.

<sup>43</sup> Moyles, J. (1998). (Ed.) *The Excellence of Play*. UK: Open University Press. (new edition). p 97.

<sup>44</sup> Kitson, N. (1998). ‘Please Miss Alexander: will you be the robber? Fantasy play : a case for adult intervention in Moyles, J. (1998). (Ed.) *The Excellence of Play*. UK: Open University Press, (new edition) p 98.

<sup>45</sup> Moyles, J. R. (1998). (Ed.) *The Excellence of Play*. UK: Open University Press, (new edition) p 97

<sup>46</sup> Bolton, G (1978). *Towards a Theory of Drama in Education*. London : Longman

<sup>47</sup> Moyles, J. R. (1994). (Ed) *The Excellence of Play*. (new edition). UK : Open University Press. p 92



“The principal goal of education is to create men who are capable of doing new things, not simply of repeating what other generations have done—men who are creative, inventive, and discoverers.

The second goal of education is to form minds that can be critical, can verify, and not accept everything they are offered.... We need pupils who are active, who learn early to find out by themselves...”<sup>49</sup>

Piaget also argued that “genuine active learning can lead to a more solid and long lasting understanding”.<sup>50</sup> He warned however, “teachers can impose little knowledge”<sup>51</sup>, and that teachers should provide their students with the possibility of “guided discovery”. This negates the role of teacher as source of all knowledge, suggesting instead an interventionist, facilitative role. He proposes that “another factor that leads to knowledge is social experience, or interaction with other persons”.<sup>52</sup> He calls for this in the light of students having to justify their opinions, and that “as others may not be as tolerant as they, it also serves to clarify a student’s thinking and makes him more coherent and logical.”<sup>53</sup> The social aspect, involving others, necessitates an adaptation to, and assimilation of, the other person. This assimilation is achieved through the compromise of rule-based play.

Piaget documents the development from personal to social based play in children. He postulates that fantasy play will, over time, change into rule governed activities.<sup>54</sup> While Bruner and Vygotsky<sup>55</sup> both agree that fantasy play fades away as a child enters the formal school system and becomes a rule based activity, the principles they espouse are common to the rule based activity that is Drama in Education. This supports notions of learning methods that have rules, are social, interactive and playful and in which a significant adult acts as a motivating guide.

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid. p 94

<sup>49</sup> Piaget, J. (1964). *The Early Growth of Logic in the Child*. trans. E.A. Lunzer and D. Papert, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. p.224.

<sup>51</sup> Ginsburg, H.& Opper, S. (1979). *Piaget’s theory of Intellectual development*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition New Jersey: Prentice Hall p.225.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. p.229.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. p.230.

<sup>54</sup> Moyles, J. (1998) (Ed.) *The Excellence of Play*. UK: Open University Press. (new edition) p. 91.

### ***Drama and Therapy***

I will now review developments in Drama in formal education and Drama in therapeutic settings, both of which had a formative influence on Drama in Education.

Though not a teacher in the formal sense, J.L Moreno (1889-1974) developed techniques out of Psychodrama and Socio-drama that were to have benefits for the classroom teacher. He specialised in building creativity through spontaneity. Moreno's influence was in the area of technique, the how of interactive learning.

Before immigrating to the US in 1925, he had developed role-play techniques at the *Steigreiftheater* in Vienna. Often based on newspaper reports of the day, his company would improvise and re-enact the events of the day on stage. Role-reversal was a particular technique used. His theatrical background profoundly influenced his contribution. In Psychodrama all the action happens on stage. It is self-conscious. The other people in the group act out the private dilemmas of one patient for him on a stage. His purpose then, was to provide opportunities for people to play as many roles as possible, believing that if one offers a typical role response in every situation, now that one becomes petrified and cannot respond spontaneously to events and people. The self is realised in relation to other.

There are useful techniques developed by him and used in Drama in Education every day:

- Statue and sculpture work
- Restructuring and re-ordering work
- Improvisation and hot seating
- Soliloquy
- Spectator as actor, later echoed by Freire and Boal in their philosophies and methods.

Moreno used Psychodrama to heal past hurts through role-play. In classroom drama, on the other hand, one's intention is to rehearse for the future, playing out scenes that the pupil may or may not encounter. As Kitson, quoted earlier, commented,

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<sup>55</sup> Bruner, J.S.(1976) et al (Ed) *Play its Role in Development and Evolution*. UK: Penguin Books, p. 554.

one does not often encounter trauma in the classroom. Moreno believed that Drama enabled spontaneous activity, and that this in turn developed the creativity of the self.

### ***Drama and Formal Education***

Harriet Finlay-Johnson (1871 — 1956) was cross-curricular in her approach and used drama as a method for teaching otherwise difficult subjects. She falls into the drama-as-a-mode-of-learning school when we hear her declare that drama “Arouses a keen desire to know”, also that she advocated getting rid of the audience.<sup>56</sup> She prefigures Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development when she says, “Children have a wonderful faculty for teaching other children and learning from them”<sup>57</sup>. She also prefigures Freire in her desire that the teacher be seen as “companion” and “fellow worker”.<sup>58</sup> Harriet Finlay-Johnson demanded that the play must be the child’s own.<sup>59</sup> Her methods were furthered by Edmond Holmes, the progressive advocate.<sup>60</sup> Through Holmes, she influenced the Progressive movement, her contribution being that of using drama for learning, for group teaching, for play and self-realisation.

Henry Caldwell Cook (1886 – 1937) was a visionary teacher who developed a learning approach that he called ‘Playway’. He proposed that “boys and girls in the upper school should have as much play as the infants in the kindergarten”. He believed that play was “a form of practice, a preparation for adult life” in support of which he says

“It would not be wise to send a child innocent into the big world. But it is possible to hold rehearsals, to try our strength in a make-believe big world. And that is play.”

He eschewed realism, preferring a poetic approach saying that the boys were not ready for it. He wanted his pupils to be freed from representational accuracy in favour of abstract expression and he emphasised collaborative work in the classroom.

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid. p22.

<sup>57</sup> Bolton, G. (1998). *Acting in Classroom drama, a critical analysis* London :Trentham, p.11.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. p.11.

<sup>59</sup> Finlay- Johnson, H. (1911). *The Dramatic Method of Teaching*. London : Nisbet, p.19.

<sup>60</sup> in works such as “*What Is, or The Path of Mechanical Obedience*” and “*What Might Be, or Self-Realisation*”

The point of realistic representation was taken up by Marjorie Hourd<sup>61</sup> who, like Caldwell-Cook, preferred the “paw under the door” approach rather than the “pocket torch of observation”. Her use of Eliot’s words indicates a preference for a post-positivist view of learning and drama, that there are different ways to view reality. She looked for resonance in the text. She claims that the “early adolescent is more interested in himself playing the part” than ‘the part’, and is less ready for performance than the junior child. He plays himself while believing he is portraying a character.

This use of nuance, ambiguity and allusion coupled with the knowledge that a pupil loses himself in the part in order to find himself was a useful step in Drama in Education. This put Drama in Education in the poetic as opposed to the functional domain which would later develop, in the life skills teaching of behaviourist psychologists. Ms. Hourds methods foreshadowed, in her use of role perspective, the personal development model of Drama in Education.

### ***Drama and Self-Expression***

Play, creativity and spontaneity are central to the work of Peter Slade (1910 —). In Slade’s case, activity generated by the child himself in pursuit of doing and ‘struggling’ with life. Over the years Slade evolved a developmental theory of drama.<sup>62</sup> According to him there were two main categories of Play:

- Personal play: in which the whole person or self is used.
- Projected play: where the whole mind is used but the body remains still. Strong mental projection takes place.

This approach has been characterised by Bolton as psychological. Slade removed from the teacher “such common supports as immediate goals and objectives”.<sup>63</sup> In deliberately not seeking short-term results, Slade promoted an apparently formless and aimless drama. He, like Harriet Finlay-Johnson, saw no merit in having an audience. He

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<sup>61</sup> Hourd, M. (1949). *The Education of the Poetic Spirit* London : Methuen.

<sup>62</sup> Slade, P. (1954) *Child Drama*. London: University of London Press.

<sup>63</sup> Bolton G. (1984). *Drama as Education*. London: Longman, p34.

feared that the focus of the pupil would shift from sincerity to 'showing off'. He often worried about 'stilted, unnatural' imposed styles of speech and movement frequently bred by formal Speech and Drama or elocution training. A successful Sladian session evoked spontaneous and sustained dramatic play, requiring minimal teacher guidance.

<sup>64</sup> This is close to Froebel's approach of "the free expression of what is in the child's soul".<sup>65</sup>

Bolton points to an ironic dichotomy in Slade's work. Whilst the class is structured for self-expression, it is, in fact heavily dependent on the structure of the teacher's story. It is in fact a mediated experience. Though Bolton acknowledges the eclectic nature of Slade's work and its difference to child play, he notes also that sometimes the work can result in real Child Theatre.<sup>66</sup> Bolton celebrates Slade's sessions, "that they are probably the nearest any individual has reached in giving a practical form to the Rousseauesque conception of education".

On the other hand, Bolton argues that drama is not about self-expression,<sup>67</sup> he further states that drama is a social event and is always concerned with something outside oneself.

"It is one thing to claim that, by sharing in a dramatic expression of a theme, I learn something about myself in the process and quite another to suggest that drama is for me and about me. It is a group's expression concerned with celebrating what people share, what man has in common with man ..."<sup>68</sup>

This is taken up later by Heathcote and developed as an experience that is culturally as opposed to socially bound.<sup>69</sup> This is the opposite of Brian Way whom Bolton would say had "psychologised the character building process".

This tension between two forces, the psychology of the individual and the clash of values of the social formed a major part of the Drama in Education debate of the rest

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<sup>64</sup> Coughlan, M. (1988). *Drama in Education-Proactive Primary Prevention: Evaluation of a Pilot Project using repertory grids*. Unpublished thesis for M. Psych. Sc. University College Dublin. p.5

<sup>65</sup> Froebel, F. (1912). ===== p50-51

<sup>66</sup> Bolton, G. (1998). *Acting in Classroom drama, a critical analysis*. London: Trentham, p138.

<sup>67</sup> Bolton, G. (1984). *Drama as Education* London: Longman , p46.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.. p.46.

<sup>69</sup> Bolton, G. (1998). *Acting in Classroom drama, a Critical Analysis* London : Trentham, p196

of the century. They also parallel the focus of this research, social inclusion and self-esteem.

***Drama and Personal Development***

Brian Way (1923 —) broke from his mentor Peter Slade and abandoned his idea of Child-drama-as-art in favour of a comprehensive theory of personal development, an instrumental view of drama. He developed a system and divided the personality into facets, which would be developed through drama. This led to a development functional approach in his work Bolton criticises

“The idea of being able to structure a lesson without actually doing any drama began to take hold in some quarters, a diversion also paralleled by the Laban movement ... could be entirely made up of effort exercises”.<sup>70</sup>

As a result of Way’s influence, it became an unwritten law that drama classes had to have warm-ups including a relaxation session. Bolton castigates him not only for promoting drama as exercise but also for denying drama’s characteristic as a social art.<sup>71</sup>

Improvisation for Way is a play with out a script and without an audience<sup>72</sup> for the development of the self.

***Drama as agent for personal change, with teacher as non-participant director***

During the 1950s and 1960s, drama as a functional system for behavioural change was influencing teaching and training in the US. Role-play was developed out of Moreno’s work and in the Harvard University Management Training programme it was seen as useful for examining behavioural change in work situations. Soon, it was developed as life-skills training in schools. Drama teachers were seen as ideal for this work, and they in turn welcomed it as a manageable task. Management training appropriated the content, thus learning methods used in the artform of drama were translated into a functional system of self-development.

Way’s system of private practice of life skills, such as sensitivity, was transformed into public scrutiny of contextualised functional skills.<sup>73</sup> Bolton argues that creativity is

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid. p. 151.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. p 153.

limited in this approach, that acting is reduced to “reacting mimetically”.<sup>74</sup> Margaret Wooton goes further than Bolton when she says of Way’s approach that “The link that Slade bears constantly in mind, between what he calls “the personal play of children ... and drama, has somewhere been lost”.<sup>75</sup> Theory needs developmental models to support philosophies and ideas coherently. Historically Drama in Education has sought a system that would make teaching easier. A downside of this approach is that the system can become an encumbrance not a liberating force.

This functionality became a defining characteristic of drama for Way, adding fuel to the fire of defining what drama is: an art or a tool? Slade’s emphasis on free expression led him toward isolationist experience, whereas Way’s emphasis on the private self and his use of exercise, to the exclusion of social interaction, led him in the direction of functional and private personal tool for development. If drama is an art, in fact it will defy any means to systematise it. It feeds on originality as its core value. One way to kill any desire to create a new experience is to create drama-by-numbers just as unscrupulous commercial interests have done for visual art.

What both Slade and Way lacked was the teacher in role as collaborator or facilitator. Dorothy Heathcote introduced the step of teacher taking a role in the drama itself as part of her ‘Living through Drama’. This results in steering, probing and advising the pupils, creating together as teacher/pupil and pupil/teacher as envisaged by Freire.

### ***Drama for personal and social change with teacher as participant and director***

“Good drama ... is made up the thoughts, the words, and the gestures that are wrung from human beings on their way to, or in, or emerging from a state of desperation.”

*Kenneth Tynan*<sup>76</sup>

For Dorothy Heathcote (1926 —), this definition was significant. She based her ‘Man in a Mess’ dramas on this and held this view of drama until the eighties. Bolton says she sees

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<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* p 159.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* p 162.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.* p 165.

<sup>75</sup> Wooton, M. (1984). *An investigation into the determining influences on Drama in Education 1947-1977*. MA thesis (unpublished) University of London, Institute of Education, p. 45.

<sup>76</sup> Tynan, K. (1957). *Declarations*. London : Gibbon & Mc Kee

“drama as the means of rooting all the school curriculum back into the human context from where it sprang, so that knowledge is not an abstract, isolated subject based discipline, but is based in human action, interaction, commitment and responsibility.”

This would appear to indicate that she sees the drama teacher as the upholder of human values against a mechanistic state machine. Like Harriet Finlay-Johnson before her, she sees drama as a laboratory. This view is supported by Coughlan who speaks of drama being a “scientific mode of enquiry, each session being a laboratory for living”.<sup>77</sup> Bolton speaks of it as drama being the ‘crucible’ for knowledge.

That this knowledge would be understood, after the event in reflection, was a given. Reflection is a key factor in Heathcote’s work. Plot is her least important play component. Instead of a chronological “What happens next?” approach she looks for the internal situation breeding or foreshadowing the next internal situation. She uses theme, context and particularity along with tension to produce ‘Living through Drama’. It is played at real time, in the present. This tension is inserted by the teacher in role.

Heathcote presents not in chronological order but in order of priority, through distancing devices, like ‘Mantle of the Expert’ or ‘Teacher in Role’. The source of Dorothy Heathcote’s interest in drama is man’s curiosity about the world.<sup>78</sup> Without it there is no tension of enquiry, no drama.

Development of her philosophy led to changes in approach for Dorothy Heathcote. In the late seventies, she began to move from her ‘Man in a Mess’ type of drama under the influence of Edward T. Hall. Hall had become interested in how the deepest values of a society or cultural group are those acknowledged only when threatened.<sup>79</sup> This was moving away from the desperation of a person in desperate circumstances to a group under threat. In their changing circumstances the group would have to work out

- What was important to them?

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<sup>77</sup> Coughlan, M. (1988). *Drama in Education-Proactive Primary Prevention: Evaluation of a Pilot Project, using repertory grids*. Unpublished theses for M. Psych. Sc University College Dublin. p5.

<sup>78</sup> Bolton, G. (1984.) *Drama as Education*. London: Longman, p. 55.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. p.187.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. p.198.



- What was different about the group which was threatening them?
- How would this make them see the situation and how would they act in this fictional scenario?

She was interested in the implications of actions. She defines her approach to this kind of drama as:

“being anything which involves persons in active role taking situations which attitudes, not characters, are the chief concern, lived at life rate (i.e. discovery at this moment, not memory based) and obeying the natural laws of the medium. (I) maintain that problem solving is the basis of learning and maturation”.

She also says that “the basic engagement is the building of a culture rather than representing a role or an attitude”,<sup>80</sup> i.e. the interpretation of actions and motives, not a description of events. The benefits are that when its inner laws are expressed (after being under threat) the pupils have “stumbled on authenticity”.

### **A Paradox of Distance and Perspective**

The distance provided by Brechtian techniques provides a safety net for new ways of being and becoming, to coin a phrase.

*Metaxis* is defined as the ability to operate in two perspectives at once, the real and the imaginary. It can allow a child to believe that a broom, on which he gallops around the garden, is both a horse and a broom at one and the same time. It also allows him to see himself acting in a drama and to watch others’ reactions to him. As Hourd would put it, he sees himself playing the part and the part at the same time.<sup>81</sup> It is through this metaxial quality that drama can be such a potent force for reflection and thus transformation.

Heathcote spoke of drama filling the spaces between people. Curiously, this is not achieved by confrontation, as in some drama therapies, but by what Neelands calls the subtle tongue and by protection into emotion. A paradox then, is to connect by using a technique that is designed to create distance and thus, safety. It is in that space, however, that reflection and transformation take place.

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<sup>81</sup> In Bolton, G. (1998). *Acting in Classroom Drama*. Birmingham: Trentham Books in Association with UCE.

O'Neill highlights the distancing effect achieved by Dorothy Heathcote's various strategies,<sup>82</sup> a concept that Bolton describes as "key to understanding drama as education".<sup>83</sup> In this regard her work in Drama in Education has been aligned with that of Brecht in theatre.<sup>84</sup> Of his theatrical structure, Brecht writes

"The individual episodes have to be knotted together in such a way that the knots are easily noticed. The episodes must not succeed each other indistinguishably but must give us a chance to interpose our judgement."

Bolton says of Heathcote's mode of work, that she wanted her pupils to make these judgements continually.<sup>85</sup> It is in the space given by distance that reflection and wise judgement takes place.

Influenced by Brecht, Dorothy Heathcote has three modes of creating distance:

- Living Through Drama, where Teacher in Role occurs, inserting tensions, probing as an active participant in the drama
- Mantle of the Expert, where pupils are given roles of responsibility in the drama
- Depiction, where she uses still-image and thought –tracking to help pupils invest.

She is looking for the 'self- spectator' who protects the participants into a level of emotion from which they may remain safely detached, both *engaged* and *detached*. The self is both included in the group as a member of the enterprise while discretely making judgements of a personal and social nature.

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<sup>82</sup> O'Neill, C. (1985). *Imagined Worlds in Theatre & Drama in Theory into Practice* Vol.24 No.3 Summer p.160.

<sup>83</sup> Bolton, G. (1984). *Drama as Education*. Harlow: Longman, p 155.

<sup>84</sup> Coughlan, M. (1988). *Drama in Education –Proactive Primary Prevention: Evaluation of a Pilot Project ,using repertory grids*. Unpublished theses for M .Psych. Sc. Dublin : University College. p9 . She quotes Bolton (1984),and O'Neill (1985) in support of this.

<sup>85</sup> Bolton, G. (1998). *Acting in Classroom drama, a critical analysis* London: Trentham, p.181.

### **Process Drama**

Cecily O' Neill ( 19 —), who archived much of Dorothy Heathcote's material, introduced the term 'Process drama'.

In 1982, Cecily O'Neill stated clearly "Drama in Education is a mode of learning".<sup>86</sup> Later, in 1995 she affirmed that 'Process drama is almost synonymous with the term Drama in Education "and that it is a theatre event".<sup>87</sup> She has travelled from being a follower of Heathcote to seeing drama in the classroom as a theatre event. In *Process Drama* (1995) pupils "are not treated as learners but as active agents making theatre happen".<sup>88</sup> She is with the students a playwright, a dramaturge.

Improvisation is the core of O'Neill's work, although she uses scripts and depiction, according to Bolton.<sup>89</sup> In the work of each of these Drama in Education experts, the group and the individual are co-dependent, all working in an inclusive creative tension.

It is O'Neill's own definition of Process Drama, quoted above, that is used in this research.

### **Social versus Individual**

Whilst Bolton recognises that Drama in Education is a social event, he also affirms the notion of self-spectatorship as central to Drama in Education.<sup>90</sup> The combination of these two opposites, or tensions, is at the heart of the definition for the purposes of this experiment.

- The experiment will use drama as a personal and social voyage using the imagination to examine, explore and investigate notions of belonging, inclusion and self-esteem.
- The rationale will be based on Freire's philosophy as expressed in O'Neill's methodology of Process drama.

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<sup>86</sup> O'Neill, C., Lambert A. (1982) *Drama Structures: A Practical Handbook for Teachers*. Portsmouth, New Jersey: Stanley Thornes, p.11.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.* p.5

<sup>88</sup> Bolton G. (1998) *Acting in Classroom drama ,a critical analysis* Trentham, London p231

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.* p. 231

<sup>90</sup> Bolton, G. (1998). *Acting in Classroom drama, a critical analysis* London: Trentham.

- Process drama, as defined by O'Neill, will frame the form of the experiment.
- In the experiment, drama will have the focus on learning across the curriculum as used by Harriet Finlay-Johnson and referred to extensively by Dorothy Heathcote.

### ***Elements of Self-esteem relevant to this experiment***

Belonging is one part of the development of self-esteem. The others according to Reasoner are security, identity, purpose and competence. A person cannot have high self-esteem if they do not feel that they belong. A group that shows each member that they belong in some way, is a group that has, by definition, high self-esteem. By affirming an individual and inculcating the norms and values of the group in a friendly way the individual sees benefit for them in joining the group. Thus the group and the individual are dealing in enlightened self interest, to the mutual benefit of both.

Unlike role-play, which is short and focused on one event only, with a strong line of intention on behalf of the teacher, Process Drama as articulated by O'Neill has reflective moments built in to the event. This allows the participant to review the many options he has without the fear and consequences of commitment. It is that reflection which is most powerful. In it transformation occurs.

I believe that a transformation, in this case an increase in self-esteem, can be achieved in the non-threatening arena of Process Drama.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Current Research in Self-Esteem and Drama in Education

#### ***Introduction***

Self-esteem, according to Branden, is an experience.<sup>91</sup>

I will firstly look at other investigations in the co-operative, interactive learning field to see if a link has been made between co-operative, interactive learning and enhanced self-esteem. I will be using the artform of Drama in Education to see if it can be proved, in empirical terms, that Drama in Education can in fact enhance self-esteem. I will examine what evidence exists for my hypothesis by reviewing what has been researched in the area of Drama in Education and self-esteem previously.

#### ***Summary of Self-Esteem Research***

There is a negative relationship between self-esteem and many social and personal ills, such as dysfunctional families, school dropout rates, drugs, violence and various forms of alienation and disaffection. There is a positive relationship between self-esteem and areas of human operation such as academic achievement, family relationships and involvement in social activities, co-operative learning, supportive peers, supportive teachers and supportive families.

Role is central to Drama in Education. Numerous studies show the effectiveness of Drama in Education as an intervention in social problems at the teen and primary levels. Critical thinking is an important part of Drama in Education as it provides a forum for reflection. In primary schools there is a chance to intervene in role drama. The self-concept is not fully formed and the teacher can influence positively through interventions, like Teacher in Role. Available Irish Primary school research to date appears to have concentrated on the movement side of drama work.

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<sup>91</sup> Branden, N. (1998). *Answering questions about self-esteem* in Self-Esteem Today Vol.10 No.2. Journal of the National Association for Self-Esteem (NASE) in the US.

### ***Development of Self-Esteem***

According to Gurney there are developmental stages in self-esteem.

The first stage in which the child learns about himself and surroundings is characterised by his becoming aware of being a separate entity. At the point when he uses the personal pronoun “I do it” he has reached the end of that phase, which lasts from 0 to 2 years.

The second stage according to Gurney in self-esteem is the exterior self. This is from 2 to 13 years. Gurney states that it is important at this stage that the parents and teachers are as positive as possible at this stage. They will assist in determining the basic view that the child has of himself, which will be resistant to change once it is established.

Between 9 and 13 years the child comes to the final sub-stage of the exterior self. He comes to more internal forms of reference within self-awareness. In this period, according to Gurney, the child becomes increasingly aware of internal processes in adults and peers, which he comes to appreciate may be causal in their behaviour<sup>92</sup>

Coopersmith evaluated the self-esteem of 10 year olds and concluded that there were four major factors that contribute to self-esteem, which have particular significance for a teacher who wishes to enhance self-esteem:

- The amount of respectful, accepting and concerned treatment that an individual received from significant others in their life
- The history of an individual’s successes and his status in his community
- The way experiences are interpreted and evaluated by him
- The manner in which the individual responds to the evaluation.

### ***Influences on Self-Esteem***

#### **Family and Peers**

Research has established links between youths’ feelings of self-worth and transactions both in the family and peer microcosms.<sup>93</sup> Indeed in dysfunctional family profiles, there

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<sup>92</sup> Gurney, P. (1990). The Enhancement of Self-Esteem in Junior Classrooms. in *Education and Alienation in the Junior School*. Docking, J. (Ed.)

<sup>93</sup> Hirsch, B.J. & Du Bois, D.L. (1991). *Self-Esteem in early adolescence: The identification and prediction of contrasting longitudinal trajectories*. *Journal Of Youth and Adolescence*. Vol. 20 pp.53-72.

is potential for youth to become involved with peers whose values deviate from those held by the family, but who hold more positive appraisals and boost their self-esteem.<sup>94</sup> Support and involvement both communicate the parents' esteem for the youth, whereas autonomy, restriction and hassles can be conceptualised as more likely to give negative evaluations of a youth's . . . self-esteem."<sup>95</sup>

In the peer group it has been found that strained peer interactions have shown to relate negatively to feelings of self-esteem<sup>96</sup>. This has implications for school pupils and teachers alike. In other research peer support has manifested a robust and positive association with self-esteem.<sup>97</sup> Sullivan has argued that peers can serve as an important correction factor in relation to what has happened in the family<sup>98</sup> which is also supported by Ohanessian et al.<sup>99</sup> Harris, on the other hand, has argued that peer group experiences are the primary context and that these experiences are brought into the home rather than the other way around. Youth who reported a clearly positive, functional-involving family transactions reported higher levels of self-esteem than those with less positive backgrounds.

Remediation in school, among peers, with a positive caring adult would seem to be a model for action with pupils who are exhibiting low self-esteem. Roberts' study recognises that peers play a key role at the stage of early adolescence and it would appear that they are not necessarily more influential than the family, as others have argued.<sup>100</sup>

## Schools

Much research in the area has been done in schools, an indication of its importance in the nexus of relationships that exists in schools. Reasoner states that evidence supports

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<sup>94</sup> Kaplan, H.& Robbins, C. (1983). Testing a general theory of deviant behaviour in longitudinal perspective. In K.T.Van Dusen & S. Mednick (Eds) *Prospective studies of Crime and Delinquency*.(pp117-146). Hingham, Maine: Kluwer-Nijhoff.

<sup>95</sup> Roberts, A. et al..(2000) Perceived Family & Peer Transactions & Self-Esteem among Urban Early Adolescents. Journal of Early Adolescence Vol.20 No. 1 Feb. p.75.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid. p.75

<sup>97</sup> Ibid. p.74

<sup>98</sup> Roberts, A. ..(2000) *Perceived Family & Peer Transactions & Self-Esteem among Urban Early Adolescents*., Journal of Early Adolescence Vol.20 No. 1 Feb p.76

<sup>99</sup> Ibid. p.76

<sup>100</sup> Ibid. p.89

the fact that most schools are not conducive to self-esteem since the level of self-esteem declines for most students the longer they are in school.<sup>101</sup> He argues for research in the area due to the debilitating and insidious effects on the individual and society. He cites convincing figures in areas from violence in schools, to suicide, teen pregnancy, nervous conditions, psychological distress and even homicide among school children.

While these are US figures, trends can be deduced from Irish experience, which suggests a move in this direction. There appears to be little doubt that research in the area would be of benefit to students and teachers in the formal education system.

### The Self and School Achievement

Brookover et al. found that there was a significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement.<sup>102</sup> This is supported by Purkey<sup>103</sup> and also West and Fish.<sup>104</sup> Coopersmith reported that children's self-concept predicted a child's ability to read in first grade.<sup>105</sup> Wylie found that there is considerable empirical evidence that self-concept predicts and influences achievement in school.<sup>106</sup>

Holly says that self-esteem is more likely to be the result than the cause of academic success. However, he acknowledged that a certain level of self-esteem is required in order for a student to achieve academic success; that self-esteem and achievement go hand in hand and that they feed each other.<sup>107</sup> Gurney however, finds that there is little direct evidence to support this view, though he mentions an exception in the findings of Lawrence who found that counselling of infants led to increases in reading skills.<sup>108</sup>

He recommends a dual approach, that of enhancing self-esteem and academic achievement at the same time. He also found that the teacher pupil relationship was fundamental to any positive change, and that there were prerequisites in that

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<sup>101</sup> Reasoner, R.W. (2000) *Self Esteem resources*. <http://www.nase-self-esteem-research.htm>. p.1

<sup>102</sup> Brookover, W.B. (1965). *Self- concept of ability and school achievement*. East Lansing Michigan: Office of Research and Public Information, Michigan State University.

<sup>103</sup> Purkey, W. W. (1970). *Self-Concept and School Achievement*. New York: Prentice Hall.

<sup>104</sup> West, R. C. & Fish J.A. (1973) *Relationships between Self- Concept and School Achievement: A Survey of Empirical Findings.*, ERIC, Clearinghouse on Early Childhood Education (ED 092 239).

<sup>105</sup> Coopersmith, S. (1967). *The Antecedents of Self-Esteem* San Francisco, California. W.H. Freeman

<sup>106</sup> Wylie, R. C. (1974). *The Self-Concept*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

<sup>107</sup> Holly, W. (1987). *Self-Esteem, Does it Contribute to Students' Academic success?* Eugene, OR: School Study Council, Univ. of Oregon.



relationship to any change in self-esteem, of the child or the teacher. He recognised the dialectic at the heart of self-esteem. His four conditions to enhancing self-esteem were:

- Respect for the pupils as persons
- Positive teacher regard for the pupils
- Mutual support, in the event of initial failure, the child's second attempt will depend largely on the support he receives from the teacher<sup>109</sup>
- Both parties should learn and grow together.

Covington concluded, most importantly, that self-esteem can be modified through direct instruction and that such instruction can lead to achievement gains.<sup>110</sup> The instruction according to La Benne and Greene should contain experiences which provide a challenge and at the same time maximise his opportunities for success.<sup>111</sup>

### Effects of Low Self-esteem

Kelley found a correlation between delinquency and low self-esteem. When programs to raise self-esteem were implemented, delinquency decreased.<sup>112</sup> Kaplan found that pupils with lower self-esteem were more likely to adopt deviant behaviour, as low self-esteem frequently becomes a source of anger and hostility.<sup>113</sup> Sahagan found that kids join gangs because of the need to belong. To reduce gang membership, focus needs to be put on self-worth and self-esteem programmes.<sup>114</sup> Lopez found that the reason for forming gangs was a need for recognition and identity, tradition, sense of belonging and peer pressure.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Gurney, P. (1990). The Enhancement of Self-esteem .in *Education & Alienation in the Junior School*. Docking, J.(Ed)p.12.

<sup>109</sup> This was echoed by De Charms who recommended warm accepting teacher behaviour in De Charms, R. (1976) *Enhancing Motivation*. New York: Irvington Publishers.

<sup>110</sup> Covington, M. (1989). *Self-Esteem and Failure in School* . The Social Importance of Self-Esteem Berkley, CA: U.C. Press

<sup>111</sup> La Benne, W.D. & Greene, B. I. (1969). *Educational Implications of Self- Concept Theory*. California, Pacific Palisades : Goodyear.

<sup>112</sup> Kelley, T.M. (1978). *Changes in self-esteem among pre-delinquent Youths in Voluntary Counselling Relationships*. *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*. Vol. 29 May.

<sup>113</sup> Kaplan, H.B. (1975). *Self-Attitudes and Deviant Behaviour*. Pacific Palisades, CA: Goodyear

<sup>114</sup> Article in *Los Angeles Times*, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1996.

<sup>115</sup> Lopez,L. (1992). *Keeping Kids Out of Gangs*. Thrust for Educational Leadership, January.

Kite found that, of the seven major factors contributing to school dropouts, four of these were related to self-esteem. Pupils felt that they lacked the intelligence or the ability to succeed in school. In other words they suffered from low self-esteem, reinforced, consciously or unconsciously, by their parents and teachers.<sup>116</sup> At pre-adolescent stage this is most noticeable, as the teacher has a central role as 'significant other' in the child's life. In schools where courses in self-esteem are in operation, Whitely found that there was less cheating and stealing and more concern about the common good of other students.<sup>117</sup>

## Gender

Reports show that early adolescence is a critical period in the development of self-esteem. At this stage the self-structure is being reorganised and consolidated. During this time pre-adolescents find themselves in conflict due to the paradoxical tasks of cognitive integration and the self and social differentiation.<sup>118</sup>

The school environment provides an important context for the development of self-esteem. It is also in these domains that pre-adolescent girls may experience most intensely the conflict between success in these domains and conformity to role gender stereotypes.<sup>119</sup> This may contribute to findings that during pre-teen years girls score lower than boys on measures of academic achievement.

Educational psychologists agree that the task of building a distinct sense of self while simultaneously remaining connected to others in a society that values a male independence model, can cause difficulties for girls. Occurrences of losses of confidence and depression have been found in preadolescent girls.<sup>120</sup> It is proposed that this depression be linked to loss of self-esteem at this stage due to gender conformity. Girls are not meant to be seen by peers as intelligent.

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<sup>116</sup> Kite, H. (1989). *How to Prevent Dropout*: Orlando, Florida.

<sup>117</sup> Whitely, J. (1980). *Moral Character Development of College Students*. Irvine, CA : U.C. Irvine,

<sup>118</sup> Bernstein, R. (1980). *The Development of the Self-System During Adolescence*. *Journal of Genetic Psychology*. Vol.136. pp.231-245

<sup>119</sup> Maccoby, E. (1988). *Gender as a Social Category*. *Developmental Psychology*. Vol.24 pp.755-765.

<sup>120</sup> Boscki , S. etal. (1997). *Field Independence and Self-Esteem in Pre-adolescents: Does gender make a difference?* *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* Vol. 26 No. 6.

Declines in girls' self-esteem are reported at pre-adolescence in many studies<sup>121</sup> but contradicted by others.<sup>122</sup> It is recommended that girls see their cognitive styles as inherent human qualities and not masculine or feminine traits. Educators can help girls realise that they are not passive recipients of gender socialisation but they have a role to play in how much they allow gender stereotypes to control their thoughts and feelings, especially their self-esteem. A programme which is being used with boys and girls needs therefore to avoid stereotyping girls in its content and delivery. This will help restore a balance allowing the girls, as it were, to run with the wolves.

### ***Intervention to Enhance Self-esteem***

Reasoner states that while definitive research has been difficult because of the variety of definitions of self-esteem, and the many self-esteem measures used, that the preponderance of evidence underscores the significance of self-esteem and its relationship to the many problems facing young people today.<sup>123</sup>

It is also evident, he says, that programmes that enhance self-esteem can act as a social vaccine in reducing the incidence of many of the problems, some of which have been outlined above.

### ***Types of intervention***

#### **Co-operative Learning and Self-Esteem**

Slavin found that children in co-operative learning classes have been found to have more positive feelings about themselves than those in traditional classes. This research is supported by the findings of Blaney and Slavin & Karweit.<sup>124</sup> Pupils report that they like others and feel liked by others in co-operative learning classes. He also found that pupils are more successful when they work in teams than when they are alone. He further states that a child, who has had a co-operative, mutually supportive experience in

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid..p 699

<sup>122</sup> Boscki, S. et al. (1997). *Field independence and Self-Esteem in pre-adolescents: Does gender make a difference?* Journal of Youth and Adolescence Vol. 26 No.6 p. 699.

<sup>123</sup> Reasoner, R. (1992). *What's Behind Self-Esteem Programs: Truth or Trickery?* The School Executive. April.

school, is less likely to be anti-social, withdrawn or depressed in later life. A study of lower socio-economic groups by Hartley in Kansas City, Missouri showed that children at risk of becoming delinquent, who worked in co-operative groups at 12 years old, were less likely to have negative contact with the police in future years.

Other research in the area of self-esteem include findings that children aged four to sixteen years show low incidence of behavioural problems if they are involved in social activities. They become more resilient and have better coping strategies.<sup>125</sup> This research has implications for Drama in Education as an experimental method, as it is both co-operative and social.

### ***Aspects of Role-play as a Method for Enhancing Self-Esteem.***

#### **Role**

Central to both self-esteem and Drama in Education is the notion of role. Parents, teachers, peers, environment and the child itself play a significant role in the enhancement of the child's self-esteem.

#### Role of Teacher

The teacher has multiple roles in Drama in Education. He is an educator in the formal system, executing a centralised curriculum. He is a drama teacher, often isolated in the margins of the subject centred activity that is school. In the drama lesson he will have a role of artist, using strategies and skill to facilitate his pupils in achieving their goals. To do this he will manipulate his tools to achieve this desired outcome. He will also, as Teacher in Role, play many artistic roles that complement his outcome centred roles as formal teacher, drama teacher and artist. When these three are in harmony, the effect of his work is greatest felt.

The teacher's role as creator of a safe environment through unconditional positive regard for his pupils, is fundamental to the achievement of all other goals, including self-esteem.

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<sup>124</sup> Slavin, R. E. (1992). Co-operative Learning. *In The Social Psychology of the Primary School* (New revised edition). C.Rogers, P. Kutnick (Eds). London: Routledge pp. 238/239.

### Role of Pupils

By participating in role in a fictional world the pupil creates new perceptions for himself through reflection.

This concern with role and the self is shared with J.L. Moreno. Spontaneity was observable and quantifiable by the amount of roles a person could play effectively. “ Every person has a range of roles in which he sees himself and faces a range of counter roles in which he sees others around him”.<sup>126</sup> Novel environments demanded original roles. A person’s spontaneity could be increased by broadening his range of role experiences. “ Role playing is prior to the emergence of the self. Roles do not emerge from the self but the self may emerge from roles.”<sup>127</sup> Through his role therapies Moreno developed a number of improvisational techniques, which facilitated a broadening of the range of roles played by the participants.

### **Benefits of Role-play**

Blatner found that whilst pupils were “exercising the component skills of role-playing, they were learning to shift frames of reference in exploring problems imaginatively”. He further states that “role playing offers a positive vehicle for dealing with the disorientation of modern life, because it teaches people skills for participating in the creation of their own unfolding identities”<sup>128</sup>

Kottler asserts that role playing is a “ laboratory where the various techniques of staging and bringing forth feelings and ideas are the equivalent elements to the scientific equipment”.<sup>129</sup> He further states that “Role-playing ... involves interaction rather than position, and the shifting among several points of view, rather than a reliance on linear reasoning”. He later states that there is a vitality that arises out of participation in the world of imagery and play. The act of creativity reinforces the healthiest source of self-

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<sup>125</sup> Dumont, M., Provost, M.A. (1998). *Resilience in adolescents: Protective role of Social Support, Coping Strategies, Self Esteem and Social Activities on Experience of Stress and Depression*. Journal of Youth and Adolecncce. Vol.28 No.3 1999.

<sup>126</sup> Moreno, J.L. (1972). *Psychodrama: Vol. III* New York: Beacon House Inc. p 36-37.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid. p. 157.

<sup>128</sup> Blatner, A. (1995). *Drama in Education as Mental Hygiene: A Child Psychiatrists Perspective*. Youth Theatre Journal. Vol. 9 p.92-93.

<sup>129</sup> Kottler, J.A. (1994). *Advanced Group Leadership*. Pacific Grove CA: Brooks & Cole p.273.

esteem and makes it easier to forego the development of more narcissistic manipulations which provide an equivalent, though illusory, sense of being okay".<sup>130</sup>

The roles of teacher and pupil are complementary. Role-play propels the participants through layers of reality and fantasy, gradually seeing their own multiple realities in an organic psychosocial balance.

### **Critical thinking and role-play**

Riherd combined theatre and creative drama to create a methodology that would develop pupils' decision-making skills. His work was with high school students.<sup>131</sup> Myers and Cantino that teacher questioning and structuring in role enhanced evaluative and divergent thinking.<sup>132</sup> Bailin recommended more critical thinking in Drama in Education sessions as opposed to only activities which build belief and commitment. These affective goals are only part of the equation according to Bailin. Critical thinking is the other part.<sup>133</sup>

### ***Aspects of Drama in Education as a Method for Enhancing Self-Esteem***

#### **Sociodrama**

This technique evolved to deal with shared problems, ideas and experiences of the whole group. This group role-playing technique evolved from psychodrama. A sociodrama group enacts roles, usually stereotypic, and always of equal relevance to each group member. The school classroom houses a ready-made socio-dramatic group.

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid. p. 95.

<sup>131</sup> Riherd, M.(1992). *Critical Thinking through Drama*. *Drama/Theatre Teacher*.Vol. 5 No.1 p.18-20.Fall.

<sup>132</sup> Myers,J. & Cantino, H.B.(1993). *Drama Teaching strategies that encourage problem Solving Behaviour in Children*. *Youth Theatre Journal*. Vol. 8 No.1 pp.11-17.

<sup>133</sup> Bailin, S. (1998). *Critical Thinking and Drama in Education*. *Research in Drama Education*.Vol.3 No.2 September p152.

### **Drama for Socialisation through Role-play**

Simeonson et al. used socio-dramatic activities to promote social competence in children with a learning disability.<sup>134</sup> Carelli used sociodrama to the same effect with gifted children. Smilansky defines socio-dramatic play as the “most developed form of dramatic play and that it “has great value in developing the social tendencies of the child”.<sup>135</sup> Her finding that girls seem to benefit more than boys from sociodramatic play has been replicated many times. Stone in Herron and Sutton Smith has remarked how girls prefer adopting realistic roles, like mother or teacher, whereas boys prefer fantasy roles like Cowboys and Indians or television heroes.<sup>136</sup>

Jersild, in Mc Lellan believes that, just as children learn acceptable social behaviour through realistic role playing, so fantasy role-playing provides an acceptable outlet for antisocial behaviour, especially aggression, she sees fantasy as a child’s way of overcoming rather than avoiding life’s problems.<sup>137</sup> This is an echo of Bettelheim who claims the same for fantasy and fairy tale. Studies using theatre in the fight against crime, drugs and violence in young people, were reported in Safer and Harding.<sup>138</sup> Coughlan concludes, “drama can challenge participants construing of routine social interactions with a view to promoting assertiveness and team skills”.<sup>139</sup>

### **Drama for the self**

Ridel used participant observation to show that Drama in Education can raise concentration and self-esteem.<sup>140</sup> Yau found that Drama in Education “enhances affective growth through promoting self-confidence, social skills, and increased empathy. She concluded that it enhanced teachers teaching as well.<sup>141</sup> Bieber-Schut

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<sup>134</sup> Simeonson, R.J. (1979). et al. *Promoting Social Competence in Exceptional Children, through Perspective Taking & Sociodramatic Activities* . Group Psychotherapy Psychodrama & Sociometry.Vol.32 pp .156-163.

<sup>135</sup> Smilansky, S. (1968). *The Effects of Socio-Dramatic play on Pre-school Children*. New York: Wiley.

<sup>136</sup> Herron, R.E. & Sutton-Smith, B. (1971). *Child’s Play*. New York: Wiley.

<sup>137</sup> In Coughlan, M. (1988). *Drama in Education-Proactive Primary Prevention: Evaluation of a Pilot Project, using repertory grids*. Unpublished theses for M. Psych. Sc Dublin: University College,p.5.

<sup>138</sup> Safer,L.& Harding, C.G. (1993).*Under Pressure Programme: Using live theatre to investigate Adolescents attitudes and behaviour related to drug and alcohol abuse education and prevention, Adolescence*. Loyola University . Spring.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid. p.78.

<sup>140</sup> Ridel, S.J.H. (1975). *An investigation into the effects of Creative Dramatics on Ninth Grade Students*.Ph.D Dissertation, Florida State University.

<sup>141</sup> Yau, M. (1992). *Drama :Its Potential as a Teaching and Learning Tool*. Scope Vol.7 No.1 March.

found that in post-test measures visually impaired adolescents showed increased levels of concentration, interaction and higher levels of self-esteem.<sup>142</sup> The use of theatre to investigate and enhance self-perception in teen mothers was reported by Nelson.<sup>143</sup> Williams found that there was a relationship between attending an out of class drama club and self-esteem that had a positive effect on at-risk student behaviours.<sup>144</sup>

Warger,<sup>145</sup> quoted in Yassa's study found that "most students found that once they had built up their self-confidence through drama, their self-image also improved." This is replicated in Yassa's own study of adolescents at grade ten.<sup>146</sup>

Renard and Sockol have developed a method of teaching self-esteem systematically through drama. Their book emphasises the five components of self-esteem in their lesson plans: Belonging, power, uniqueness, role models, and process. They state that at the beginning stages, cohesiveness of the group is a major step towards building self-esteem.<sup>147</sup> Cohesiveness and belonging will also be the focus of the early stages of this research programme.

### ***Drama and Primary School***

Woody found that informal drama in the style of Dorothy Heathcote enhanced self-esteem but not other areas of the self-concept. That programme had a particular religious goal, which this programme does not.<sup>148</sup>

Carroll found that in studying the discourse in a primary school Process drama class that "in-role drama provides a powerful alternative teaching /learning strategy to the recitation methodology that is still prevalent in many of our primary schools". An issue that arose in the study was the degree to which cognitive and affective responses

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<sup>142</sup> Bieber-Schut, R. (1991). *The use of Drama to help visually impaired Adolescents Acquire Social Skills*. Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness. Vol.85 No. 8 pp. 340-341 October.

<sup>143</sup> Nelson, J. (1994). *Improvisational Theatre helps Teen Mothers to Raise Sights*. Children Today March.

<sup>144</sup> Williams, W. & Mc Colleston, M. (1990). *The relationship between Participation in an Extra-Curricular Drama Club and the Self-Esteem of At-Risk Elementary Students*. ERIC No.: ED352149 EDRS.

<sup>145</sup> Warger, C. (1988). *Practical strategies for promoting social interaction of students with behavioural disorders through creative drama*. Perceptions Vol.24 p.26.

<sup>146</sup> Yassa, N.A (1999). *High School Involvement in Creative Drama*. Research in Drama Education. Vol.4 No.1 February, p38.

<sup>147</sup> Renard, S. & Sockol, K. (1987). *Creative Drama: Enhancing Self-Concepts and Learning*. Educational Media Corporation, P.O. Box 21311, Minneapolis, MN55421 USA.

<sup>148</sup> Woody, P.D. (1974). *A comparison between Dorothy Heathcote's Informal Drama Methodology and a Formal Drama Approach in Influencing Self-Esteem of Pre-Adolescents in a Christian Education Program*. Florida State University..Ph.D Dissertation



were inseparable in the intellectual development of primary school children.<sup>149</sup> David Best also supports this argument.<sup>150</sup> It has implications way beyond the drama curriculum and is at the heart of any debate on humanistic education, that the affective and cognitive sides of our lives are symbiotically linked, the bridge being imagination.

O'Hara and Lanoux found that Drama in Education offers a place for preadolescent girls to find their voice and bring them into their power. The work in Drama in Education would concentrate on revising images of normal behaviour for girls at this sensitive stage.<sup>151</sup> Barnes describes in her study of third grade pupils that Drama in Education made the social studies curriculum more accessible and meaningful.<sup>152</sup>

### ***Research in Irish Primary Schools***

While there have been studies of secondary school drama by O'Driscoll (1978),<sup>153</sup> O'Dwyer (1987)<sup>154</sup> and Coughlan (1988)<sup>155</sup> and a survey of provision was carried out by the Curriculum Development Unit,<sup>156</sup> there has been little experimental research in primary drama to date. However, a Drama programme had been developed for an Irish primary school whose aim was, among other things, to enhance self-esteem of disadvantaged children. The sample was similar to one of the groups I would have, so it was with interest that I examined the results in this project.

Hurley was working with ten-year-old boys from disadvantaged backgrounds. The programme ran from September to April. She felt the need to introduce a programme to minimise the gap between home and school. This was because she had found that

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<sup>149</sup> Carroll, J. (1987). *Taking the initiative: role of drama in pupil/teacher talk*. Ph. D. Dissertation. UK: Newcastle upon Tyne University.

<sup>150</sup> In Best, D. (1992). "The Rationality of Feeling". London: Falmer Press.

<sup>151</sup> O'Hara, E. Lanoux, C. (1999). *Deconstructing Barbie: Using creative drama as a Tool for Image Making in Pre-Adolescent Girls*. *Stage of the Art* Vol.10 No.3 p.8-13 Spring.

<sup>152</sup> Barnes, M.K. (1998). *Kids on the campaign trail: Process drama, social studies and assessment in the elementary classroom*. Ohio State University Ph.D. Dissertation.

<sup>153</sup> O'Driscoll, P. (1978). *Creative Drama & the personality development of students in the post-primary school*. Unpublished M.Ed. Thesis. Dublin: Trinity College.

<sup>154</sup> O'Dwyer, P.M. (1987). *Towards a model for the introduction of Drama in Education in Post-primary Schools in the Republic of Ireland*. Unpublished M.A. Thesis. Northern Ireland, Jordanstown: University of Ulster.

<sup>155</sup> Coughlan, M. (1988). *Drama -in Education-Proactive Primary Prevention: Evaluation of a Pilot Project, using Repertory Grids*. Unpublished Thesis. M. Psych. Sc. Dublin: University College

<sup>156</sup> Scully, D. (1998). *Bare Boards and a Passion*. Dublin: CDU Publications.

introduction to school can maximise that gap, with a consequential negative attitude towards their self-concept and learning.<sup>157</sup>

The title of the study includes the words P. E. and Drama, which would indicate that drama was a core element in this project. However the emphasis was on an unstructured free-expression type of drama. What is more Hurley says, “drama was always presented as an extension of the movement activity”.<sup>158</sup> It took place in the context of P. E., and usually consisted of mime, although there were some undirected free improvisations, for example free response to the poem or other stimulus that they were studying in another class lesson. An important point is that Drama was always secondary to the P. E. lesson. This, though valuable in its own right, would serve to confuse the nature of drama in the minds of the boys, as it was presented as a consequence of an activity that had movement as its fundamental dynamic. Reflection, a major part of Drama in Education, was missing.

Hurley reported an increase in enthusiasm for unpopular subjects. There was also an increase in self-motivation and self-control. Attention seeking increased, which is not a surprise as, if children had been hitherto to an uncommunicative teacher, they were going to want to communicate with a sympathetic teacher in a better climate.

Teacher role was important in this study. Hurley reported the teacher pupil relationship changed qualitatively, though she found that in order to maintain control, she had to place the drama lesson after a writing lesson.<sup>159</sup>

Hurley found that it was feasible to intervene in the development of a child’s self-esteem,<sup>160</sup> though with the proviso that school was second only to home in determining an individual’s self-concept.<sup>161</sup> She persevered because, according to Burns, self-concept is most accessible in childhood, as it is most unformed and unstructured.<sup>162</sup> She found a small increase in self-esteem, though there was a greater increase in friendships.

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<sup>157</sup> Hurley, A(1988). *The development evaluation of a programme in an Irish primary school, which was designed to enhance the self-esteem, self-control and thus the self-concept of the disadvantaged child, through the media of physical education and drama.* M.Ed. Thesis Dublin : Trinity College, p.2.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid. p. 89

<sup>160</sup> Ibid. p. 180

<sup>161</sup> Ibid. p. 9

<sup>162</sup> Ibid. p. 14

However, she was disappointed in the amount of work needed to produce such a small increase.

Rewards can fluctuate and one cannot be sure in interactive play that one is always achieving targets. But what were the targets in the first place? Her focus was on Physical Education (P.E.), which meant that Drama took a secondary role. While P.E. is a corporeal activity, Drama is holistic, involving both mind and body. To exclude thinking time is to misunderstand the role and function of classroom drama, which is to transform through the body and the mind, the affective and the cognitive together. I really believe that it is in that reflection where personal transformation occurs. Role-play needs to be followed by reflective exercises in or out of role, in order to support and consolidate the learning objectives.

This project hopes through reflection, role-play and other Process drama strategies, to achieve significant enhancement of self-esteem in ten-year-old primary school children, in schools designated as disadvantaged, for both girls and boys.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Methods

#### *Hypotheses*

“Hypotheses make statements about relationships between variables and provide a guide to the researcher as to how the original hunch might be tested”<sup>163</sup>

*Judith Bell*

My hypothesis has been arrived at as a result of reading the literature and many years of teaching drama to a variety of populations. The hypotheses are outlined below:

1. That a sense of belonging, or inclusion, is a prerequisite to a child having a sense of self-esteem.
2. That Drama in Education and particularly, Process drama is an agent for personal and social change.
3. Drama in Education is as valuable for boys as it is for girls
4. Exposure to a Process drama experience will lead to an improvement in friendliness and inclusion of pre-adolescent pupils.
5. That this will, in turn, enhance their self-esteem.

#### *In Search of a Paradigm.*

The Institute for Drama Education Research Conference in 1995 asserted the belief that “drama education research operates within the artistic medium. The institute could not separate drama as pedagogy from drama as art”.<sup>164</sup> This statement has fundamental implications for this research. The same institute reported a concern that drama and arts educators are expected to pursue a conventional model of research design which draws on standard notions of empiricism. These notions conform to a stereotypical paradigm that emphasises linearity, control, measurement and non-ambiguity, a positivist world-view as espoused by Descartes and Newton.

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<sup>163</sup> Bell, J. (1993). *Doing your own Research Project*. Buckingham: Open University Press, p.19.

Although it is the case that such paradigms are promoted within the academy as familiar and acceptable, there is a danger that drama and arts educators may irrevocably misrepresent their work if they mindlessly adopt them.”<sup>165</sup> It would appear that an empirical approach would tell us “the outcome of the game but little about how the game is played”.<sup>166</sup> Statistical analysis may give information that is useful only in the context of the whole experience, leading to an experience that may be dominated and even trivialised by the research design.

The challenge therefore, is to form an eclectic model that will gather information that is cognitive, affective, moral, valid and useful. Greene talks of “dreary attempts at neutrality, the claims of being value-free, and the intoxication with the measurable”.<sup>167</sup> The balance is somewhere in between, the challenge is to find it. Taylor quotes Bruner in trying to find a new paradigm,

”The art is a form of knowing that operates under a form of multiplicity rather than a form of unification. For, in the experience of art, we connect by a grammar of metaphor, one that defies that rational methods of the linguist or the psychologist ”

That grammar of metaphor cannot be contained within a fixed vision of theory, facts and phenomena. Taylor seems to be arguing for an eclectic research design.

The design I will be using is similar to that of Buege,<sup>168</sup> who was aiming to test the impact of creative drama on the social health of emotionally disturbed children. She says

“Due to the small sample size, it was essential to document, triangulate, and validate results, using as many procedures and reliability checks as possible. Two teachers served as participant-observers and ethnographic auditors.”<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Taylor, P. (1996). (Ed.) *Researching Drama and Arts Education: Paradigms and Possibilities*. London : Falmer Press, p.xi.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid. p.xii.

<sup>166</sup> Eisner, E. (1985). *The Art of Educational Evaluation*. London: Falmer Press, p .141.

<sup>167</sup> Greene, M.(1996). Introduction to P. Taylor, (1996) (Ed.) *Researching Drama and Arts Education: Paradigms and Possibilities*. London : Falmer Press, p. xvi.

<sup>168</sup> Taylor, P. (1996). (Ed.) *Researching Drama and Arts Education: Paradigms and Possibilities* . London: Falmer Press, p.9.

<sup>169</sup> Buege, C. (1991). *The effect of Creative Dramatics and Social Skills Training on Attitude and Self-Concept*. University of Wisconsin :Dissertation.

She used two quantitative tests to measure changes in attitude and self- concepts and also “kept a weekly journal to record personal thoughts, lesson plans, and observations immediately after the lessons”. Casual observations were also made. At the end of her project oral taped interviews were made individually using open and closed questions. Children’s journal entries were also evaluated. Buege also conducted open interviews with the class teacher, a student teacher, and a volunteer mother who operated the video. This triangulation was intended to provide credibility and validity. This eclectic model of tests, interviews, questionnaires and open questions with teacher and pupils is a model that I will adapt.

I do this in the awareness that even Guba and Lincoln recognise the fragile nature of their four paradigms. They note that “ no final agreements have been reached even among (each paradigm’s proponents) about the definitions, meanings or implications.” I am also aware that I am looking for a way to communicate my investigative findings which will, to paraphrase Ely, do justice to the form and honour the researchers voice.<sup>170</sup> Taylor advocates that “truth is constructed in the circumstances in which people find themselves, just as those circumstances might change over time, so might the truths.”<sup>171</sup> I will use the reflective practitioner approach as “ it honours the intuitive and emergent processes that inform artistic meaning making”.<sup>172</sup>

The paradigm then is an eclectic mix of quantitative and qualitative research methods. The methodology used is Drama in Education. The experimental method will be the strategies I adopted in the Drama class. The research design will include the following:

- Coopersmith’s Self-Esteem index filled out pre and post test
- Class Teacher’s Group Inclusion questionnaire filled out by the class teacher pre- and post-test.

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<sup>170</sup> Ely, M. Light the lights! Research writing to communicate. In Taylor,P. (1996) (Ed.) *Researching Drama and Arts Education: Paradigms and Possibilities* . London : Falmer Press, Chapter 12.

<sup>171</sup> Taylor, P. (1996). (Ed.) *Researching Drama and Arts Education: Paradigms and Possibilities* . London :Falmer Press p.26.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid..p 29.

- The pupils questionnaire, 'Drama for Friendship and Inclusion', which evaluated the drama sessions as a block
- My own reflections
- Pre- and post- interviews with the class teacher.

### **Research Experiment: Drama in Education**

Bolton sees Drama in Education as a research method in its own right. He makes the following assumptions:

- Dramatic representation in the form of role play could be used in orthodox research
- Reflective processes common in action research are critical to process drama
- Classroom practice can empower students to investigate a problem or issue as researchers.

Cohen & Mannion devote a chapter to role-play in their book on research methods.<sup>173</sup> Schon maintains "that those moments in the classroom when artistry rather than logic determine the way through uncertainty are most ripe for analysis for they reveal professional competence. How a teacher reflects during such moments is something people might learn from".<sup>174</sup> Bolton calls for a "solution which lies in triangulation and crystallisation". I have been guided throughout by what Bolton warns "The idea of persistently seeking the intellectual link between drama and a research question may be too confining for everyone- *and may militate against the creation of theatre form* (his Italics).<sup>175</sup> In other words the research design may destroy the very thing it seeks to measure. Sobering message to a researcher in Drama in Education!

Nevertheless with this caveat I will use the post-positivist research design which I have chosen for this reason. The Drama in Education experience is an event and a reality. The participants shared that reality and each has a perspective that will answer not only what happened in terms of enhanced Self-esteem but also how the events were viewed

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<sup>173</sup> Cohen, L. & Manion, L. (1980). *Research Methods in Education*. London: Croom Helm

<sup>174</sup> Schon, D. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner*. New York: Basic Books.

<sup>175</sup> Bolton, G. (1996). Afterword: Drama as research. In Taylor, P. (1996) (Ed.) *Researching Drama and Arts Education: Paradigms and Possibilities*. London : Falmer Press p.187-194.

by them. This mixture of quantitative and qualitative research methods will give a fuller picture of the effect of the experiment on the children and the possible causes of its influence on their self-esteem.

I have adopted this approach and will first consider the quantitative elements of the study.

### ***Quantitative methods***

This study attempts to assess the effects of Drama in Education on the self-esteem of the participants. In order to do this it is necessary to consider and choose a method of measuring self-esteem.

### **Measurement of Self-Esteem**

Assessment of Self-esteem presents a number of difficulties. Self-esteem itself is a hypothetical construct and is defined by subjective definition only. The definition adopted by this study is the Coopersmith definition:

“Self-esteem refers to the evaluation a person makes and customarily maintains with regards to himself or herself. Overall self-esteem is an expression of approval or disapproval, indicating the extent to which a person believes him or herself competent, successful, significant and worthy.”<sup>176</sup>

This hypothetical construct cannot be observed directly. In order to assess performance, behaviour that we assume reflects the underlying construct has to be assessed. The behaviour I will concentrate on as an indicator of this is Inclusion. I believe that a group that includes each of its members in the class work activities is a group which has high esteem.

### **Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory**

The Coopersmith inventory was chosen as an instrument to measure self-esteem for a variety of reasons. According to Adair, in his critique of the Coopersmith inventories, this

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<sup>176</sup> Coopersmith, S. (1981). *Self-Esteem Inventories* California: Consulting Psychologists Press, p. 5.



measurement was devised following six years of empirical research by the author.<sup>177</sup> He devised three forms: the adult form, the school form and the school short form. I will use the school short form as the most appropriate for this group.

According to Peterson and Austin “ the school short form contains twenty five items from the School Form with the highest item-total correlation” .<sup>178</sup> Coopersmith recommends that this form should be used to measure total self-esteem. It does not include a lie scale and does not elicit sub-scale scores.<sup>179</sup> In a review of this test, Shavelson et al<sup>180</sup> suggest that a dependable measure can be obtained with total scores. The purpose of this research was to measure the total self-esteem of the subjects. Consequently it was decided not to use sub-scales.

### **Internal validity**

The Self-Esteem Index was administered by Spatz and Johnson to over six hundred students from grades five, nine and twelve from which one hundred were selected. The Kuder Richardson reliability estimates were administered and the coefficients obtained indicate consistency in all three grades:

- .81 for grade five
- .86 for grade nine
- .80 for grade twelve.

According to Sewell in his review, reliable data are impressive.<sup>181</sup>

### **Stability**

A number of studies concentrated on the stability of the Self-Esteem Index. Fullerton reported a coefficient of .64 for 104 children in grades five and six who were tested twelve months apart and Coopersmith reported a test-retest reliability to be .88 for a

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<sup>177</sup> Adair, F.L. (1984). *Self-Esteem Inventories* in *Test Critiques* Vol.1 Keyser, D.& Sweetland,R. (Eds).

<sup>178</sup> Peterson, C. & Austin J. (1984). *Review of Coopersmith Self-Esteem inventories*, p. 396.

<sup>179</sup> Coopersmith, S. (1981). *Self-Esteem Inventories Manual*. California : Consulting Psychologists Press,p2.

<sup>180</sup> Shavelson, R. (1976). Et al. " *Self -Concept: Validation of Construct Interpretation*". *Review of Educational Research* Vol.46 No.3 p.425.

<sup>181</sup> Sewell,T. (1984). *Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventories*. In *Test Critiques*,Vol.1 eds.D.J.Keyser & R. Sweetland. Test Corporation of America: Westport Publishers, Inc.

sample of fifty children in grade five (five week interval and .70 for a sample of fifty six children (three week interval).<sup>182</sup>

### **Normed**

The test has been normed in the United States. Donaldson, in his study of 643 public school children found that Self-Esteem Index scores increase slightly with grade level. The test was administered by Ketcham and Morse (1965), Owens and Gustafson(1971), Kimball(1972), Trowbridge (1972), Strodbeck(1972) and Reed (1972) all of whom attest to the validity of the test.<sup>183</sup> Adair in his critiques finds that the Self-Esteem Index is all well researched, well documented and widely used .<sup>184</sup> Sewell recommends it for research purposes.

### **Definition**

Agreement of a definition continues to be a major problem in this area, cited by Peterson and Austin who say there is not enough evidence that self-esteem measures operate from the same construct.<sup>185</sup> This is supported by Shavelson et al.<sup>186</sup>

### **Socially Appropriate**

Peterson has indicated that respondents may complete questionnaires according to socially acceptable standards.<sup>187</sup> This could prove a difficulty in assessment of true feelings.

### **Variables**

In an assessment of the test, there is not any discussion about the variables that have been accepted as continuous variables. According to Peterson, recommended uses

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<sup>182</sup> Coopersmith, J. (1981). *Self-Esteem Inventories Manual*. California: Consulting Psychologists Press, p.13

<sup>183</sup> Ibid. p.17.

<sup>184</sup> Adair, F. (1984). *Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventories* in Test Critiques. Vol.1 eds. D. Keyser & R Sweetland. Test Corporation of America: Westport Publishers Inc. p.231.

<sup>185</sup> Peterson, C. & Austin, J (1984). *Review of Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventories* in Test Critiques. Vol.1 eds. D. Keyser & R Sweetland. Test Corporation of America: Westport Publishers Inc., p 396.

<sup>186</sup> Shavelson, R. (1984). *Review of Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventories* in Test Critiques. Vol.1 Eds. D.J. Keyser & R. Sweetland. Test Corporation of America: Westport Publishers, Inc., p.410.

<sup>187</sup> Peterson, C. & Austin, J. (1984). *Review of Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventories* in Test Critiques. Vol.1 Eds. D. Keyser & R Sweetland. Test Corporation of America: Westport Publishers Inc., P 396.

typically regard Self-Esteem Index scores in terms of cut off values.<sup>188</sup> Other reviewers have not referred to this as a problem.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Permission to administer these tests was given by the school principals at the planning stage of the research. The identity of the participants was confidential. Real names have not been used. Results did not name individual participants. All information was kept confidential.

### ***Qualitative methods***

#### **Teacher Inclusion Survey Questionnaire**

Inclusion of individuals is a symptom of a well-balanced group. If each individual has high self-esteem, the group will be accepting of others. If the members of a group have low self-esteem the group will be shy, and lacking in social skills which would leave it unwelcoming to those who do not conform to that particular group's norms. If there are people excluded in a group my hypothesis is that self-esteem is low in the group as a whole.

I wrote an Inclusion survey for the class teachers. They agreed to be at each session as an observer. The teachers would be in a position to survey changes they observed in the group and would add validity to the findings of the Self-Esteem Inventory.

The survey was in the form of an open questionnaire. This was to facilitate the maximum amount of information in a short time. I was taking a large chunk out of their day and did not feel that a long interview session would have been appropriate in the circumstances, as I felt that the teachers had been kind enough with their time and I did not want to intrude further. The survey was filled out pre-test and post-test and was filled out contemporaneously with the pupils.

The layout of the questionnaire reflected the information sought. I wanted to find out empirically if there had been change in inclusive behaviour. The changes had thus to be observable if they were going to fit into a positivist paradigm. There were

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

twenty-five questions in all. They were graded on a Likert scale of one to five. The behaviours observed fell into four categories:<sup>189</sup> One of which included global negative behaviour.

*Table 5.1: Teacher's Test of Group Inclusion: a Table of Sub-scales*

<b>Verbal emotional</b>	Question Nos.	5 7 8 10 12 13 15 21 23 24
<b>Non-verbal physical</b>	Question Nos.	2 4 16 20
<b>Non-verbal emotional</b>	Question Nos.	1 6 9 22
<b>Negative questions</b>	Question Nos.	3 11 14 17 18 19 25

The above structure was chosen because inclusive behaviours are both verbal and non-verbal. Body language can powerfully reveal attitude.

I have used 'belonging' and 'inclusion' interchangeably although some people may disagree with this I have done so because the verb 'belong' is not transitive whereas 'inclusion' allows for wider usage.

### **Interviews**

Both teachers were interviewed before and after the drama sessions. Notes were taken and casual observances were elicited during the project. At the pre-test interview, an overview of the class was given in terms of self-esteem and inclusion. Three people in each class were named as displaying at-risk behaviour. These became a focus for my observation, though I was conscious that the drama experience was going to be for the whole group. The at-risk children would be observed in the relation to the whole group, as it was this group in which the inclusion problem was occurring. As the problem was

<sup>189</sup> See Appendix I iii for complete form.

shared by the group it would be solved by the group, with, it was hoped, intervention from a drama experience.

I sought permission to work in both schools from the principal, who in turn asked for interested staff to get involved. I had never taught in either school and was coming cold to the research location. The principals of both schools were supportive of the project.

I was aware that the teachers who were selected by straw pulling were interested in having Drama in Education in the first place. This might sway the teacher in support of the intentions of the project. I am also aware that I wanted the project to work. It would be a valueless experience to teach a programme that one did not believe in.

### **Participant Details**

The population is ten and eleven-year-old boys and girls in fifth class. The sample size was forty-four. Participants came from two schools classified as disadvantaged under the criteria laid out by the Department of Education and Science. One was an all-boys national school (n = 25) and the other an all-girls national school (n = 19). Average age of respondents at commencement was eleven years. Of the forty-four participants nineteen were female and twenty-six were male.

The area is economically and socially disadvantaged as considered by the Operational Programme for Local Urban and Rural Development 1994-1999.<sup>190</sup> It has been identified as one of the priority areas for drug misuse. Drugs misuse is closely linked with social and economic disadvantage, characterised by unemployment, poor living conditions, low educational attainment, high levels of family breakdown and a lack of recreational facilities and other supports.

### **Pupil Evaluation of Drama Project**

The voices were recorded in an eclectic way. Firstly the pupils indicated through the self-esteem inventory the difference in self-esteem before and after the drama sessions.

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<sup>190</sup> *First report of the Ministerial Task Force on Measures to Reduce the Demand for Drugs.* (1996) Dublin: Governments Publications, p. 27.

This test is internationally validated and reliable as described earlier. It is not linked in structure to drama.

The second test that the students underwent was a six-part, long answer questionnaire. Information about their perception as to the value of drama was elicited here. Question variables ranged from drama for friendship to shyness. Response was expected in four line answers to each question.<sup>191</sup>

*Figure 5.2: Pupils' Drama for Friendliness and Inclusion Questionnaire*

<b>Q1</b>	Is drama a good way to make friends? Give examples from our sessions
<b>Q2</b>	Did drama make you less shy about speaking your mind in a group? Give an example
<b>Q3</b>	In drama with Colum I spoke to people I never really spoke to before. What happened?
<b>Q4</b>	Do you feel more included in the group after these drama sessions? Give reasons for this.
<b>Q5</b>	I see my classmates being friendlier after doing drama. True or false? Give a reason.

This questionnaire also contained dates of birth and the same identifying marks. This enabled cross-referencing between the Coopersmith test and the Drama evaluation. I hope to be able to determine a correlation between self-esteem and Drama in Education. The questionnaire was administered on the day after the final workshop in the classroom with their classroom teacher present. Time taken was approximately one hour for all post-tests.

### **Pupils**

Pupils filled out the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory pre-test on the day before the programme began and post-test on the day after it finished. The purpose of this was to have an unprejudiced measure of change in their global self-esteem. Respondents were

<sup>191</sup> For actual form used see Appendix I ii.

asked to write identifying marks on the questionnaire sheet, in order to match with the post-test answers.

I am aware that the language of the test may need to be paraphrased and supported by the teacher or myself. For a disadvantaged pupil of 10 years may have difficulty with the level of language and syntactic detail in the questions.

### **Pupils' Homework**

Pupil work done as a result of the Drama in Education sessions will also be used to support the qualitative review. This included

- Art, craft
- Poetry and songs on tape
- Letters, reports and biographies in role
- There is also a partial record of pupil work in action in the photographic record
- Samples of this work are in the appendix. All the material related to the research is available.

### ***Researcher's Journal***

I kept a journal that recorded personal reactions to the work in progress, pupils' comments, and moments of significance. My focus was on the interplay between the structural elements of the instrument and the goals of the programme. These were :

- Drama in Education
- Inclusion
- Self-Esteem

My purpose in doing this was to assess the success of Drama in Education as a method for influencing self-esteem. I was also assessing my own effectiveness as a teacher in terms of how well I had judged the structural elements of the programme and my handling of the pupils. Each entry was written directly after the session and followed a

chronological format based on the lesson plan. The entry for session six is in Appendix II i.

### ***Tests and administration of Tests***

The Self-Esteem Inventory test first administered was the short form of the school inventory devised by Coopersmith and critiqued elsewhere in this dissertation.

The Coopersmith Pre-test was administered on 11<sup>th</sup> January. The teacher pre-test was also administered at this time. Post-test was administered on 16<sup>th</sup> February. After the Coopersmith post-test, the pupils filled out their Drama for Friendliness Questionnaire and teacher filled out her Group Inclusion Questionnaire post-test.

Introductory remarks were kept to a minimum. There was difficulty however with the language, both paraphrase and examples had to be given. The researcher read the statements on the questionnaire and allowed the students time to think about and form their response. The Self-Esteem Inventory Questionnaire took thirty minutes to complete. The Inclusion Questionnaire took thirty minutes to complete. This was a considerable amount of time for some children to concentrate and they were visibly tired after the two post-tests.

The Drama in Education programme was followed for six weeks between the administration of the first and last tests and questionnaires.

### ***The Research Experiment.***

In order to carry out the research it was necessary to have an implement with which to work. Below is an outline of the drama sessions over six weeks. Sessions lasted two hours making a total of twelve hours of drama. The classroom teacher was to stay in the classroom at all times, as I was a guest teacher. She would observe.

The story used was my own telling of the story of Setanta.<sup>192</sup> I also used for illustration purposes a short cartoon version. I told the story without notes to the children on day one and the rest of the drama emerged from this. Focus in all the lessons was on one or other of the pillars of self-esteem, especially belonging and identity.

The style of drama is community-based Process drama where the central tension is for example, a clash of values between the dominant group, the Celts, and an outside



group, the Vikings, also a clash between an individual, Setanta, and the establishment. This would provide the necessary material to discuss the importance of security, identity, belonging, purpose and competence in the lives of the roles we would enact. I have included Sessions Five and Six lesson plans, as well as the Researcher's journal and the experiment layout in the appendices.

### **Cross-curricular approach**

By using the Irish Myth of Setanta and locating it in a particular time and space I will be using more than one subject on the curriculum. This cross-curricular approach is supported by Wooland who says, "It gives a reason for the drama".<sup>193</sup> I will also be using a social drama approach as opposed to a personal private approach as was advocated by Slade and Way. This is in keeping with Heathcote and O'Neill's social and cultural learning.

I will use techniques initiated by Moreno and developed by Dorothy Heathcote such as Teacher in Role, Mantle of the Expert, Depiction and also artwork, poetry and song which is used by O'Neill. This is an attempt to "build their own bridges of understanding"<sup>194</sup> and ultimately to work in the fantasy world on issues that will inform their responses in the real world when they return. The research will place particular emphasis on attitude and values of the group, and also how the individual and the group relate in this regard. This is because, as will be shown, inclusion of the individual in the group is a sign of belonging.

### ***Critique of Experiment Design***<sup>195</sup>

As a resource for this section I have relied heavily on the Researcher's Journal. In this, my thoughts about the effectiveness of the design were written during the process. They are therefore a suitable and real account of the process of the experiment.<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> in Gantz, J. (1983) *Early Irish Myths and Sagas* (trans). London: Penguin Books, pp.130-137.

<sup>193</sup> Wooland, B. (1993). *The teaching of Drama in the Primary School*. London. Longman.

<sup>194</sup> Mc Caslin, N. (1981) *Children and Drama*. Second edition. London, Longman Inc.

<sup>195</sup> For Experiment Design Layout of *Setanta* see Appendix p. I vii

<sup>196</sup> For journal see appendix p. II i

Jenny Mosely promotes a system for raising self-esteem in which the teacher operates.<sup>197</sup> This system, called Circle Time has a structured syllabus and lesson layout. It starts with:

- a game
- pair work
- role play
- Circle time, in which problems are aired with a focus on ‘How can I improve the situation?’”

In this last section, Circle time, the lesson objectives are underlined and reviewed to assess their level of achievement. This structure is similar to many Process drama classes. Often however, the role-play would be preceded by investment exercises that help participants believe and empathise with the situation and the roles. It is no surprise that Mosely trained as an actress and uses drama in the personal development style of Way. This structure was also used by Reasoner.

A significant difference between Circle time and Drama in Education is that there is no fixed outcome or desired behavioural change in Drama in Education. That may or may not happen. The Drama in Education lesson responds and dialogues with the participants. It is not prescriptive, in that the outcome is not known by the teacher or the participants. This is the difference between art and behaviour modification programmes, no matter how laudable their aims. This puts research in Drama in Education in Arts Based Research as defined by Eisner.<sup>198</sup> The research instrument ‘Setanta’ matched all seven of his features of Arts based Educational Research. These are:

1. Creation of a virtual reality
2. Use of expressive language
3. Presence of ambiguity
4. The use of contextualised language
5. Promotion of empathy

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<sup>197</sup> Mosely J. (1997). *Quality Circle Time in the Primary School*. Cambridge: LDA

<sup>198</sup> Jaeger, R.M. (1997). (Ed) *Complementary Methods for Research in Education*. “Arts Based Educational Research”. Article by Tom Barone and Eliot Eisner.p73.

6. Personal signature of the writer

7. Presence of artistic form.<sup>199</sup>

Perusal of lesson plans, scheme and journal will reveal that this is the case.<sup>200</sup>

As the programme set out to see if drama promotes self-esteem it would be suitable to look at the process under the focus headings of the pillars of Self-esteem. These are

1. Security
2. Identity
3. Belonging
4. Purpose
5. Competence.

## **Security**

### Gaining Entry and Teacher Security

The main focus here is on the participants but a prerequisite is that the teachers have a sense of security.

In my case there was a warm welcome from both principals for the project. I had wanted to work with both boys and girls as I had felt that the findings would have more credibility among teachers if the project had had equal success among both genders. The Principal of St Raphael's introduced me to the teacher who had accepted the offer. I interviewed her for 40 minutes about the class in general. I asked her if there was any exclusion and she pointed to three pupils who had been in the special class and were not integrated fully. Two of the girls, Nicky and Loretta, had home problems and Sandra was extremely shy. Nicky's home background was particularly grim, both parents were dysfunctional. Absenteeism was Loretta's symptom. Each in their own way was sending a message that they were not getting much out of school.

In St.Patrick's I met the class teacher, Noreen, in less favourable surroundings on the landing outside her busy classroom. There was more exclusion in this group though she said that they "were a good class really". She mentioned George who had been

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<sup>199</sup> Ibid. pp74-79

found on few occasions on the school roof and whose mother had to come to the school and sit with him at break, as he was fighting in the yard. Mark was a negative leader and was in trouble a lot, he did not work well in groups and was regularly absent. Adam was an attention-seeking child who was often the butt of these two boys' comments. There was friction between them and exclusion as a result.

During the project each teacher went out of her way to make me feel in control. Name tags were given to children and both teachers remained in the classroom as much as possible. Neither seemed to feel threatened by me coming into the classroom. They both co-operated with the homework assignments and were extremely helpful. The teachers created a supportive holding environment in which the researcher and the pupils could operate without extraneous filters.

On my arrival, the classroom in St Raphael's was laid out and the desks put back ready for drama work. In St. Patrick's on the other hand we worked in a learning support room. On the first day we swept up glass from a vandalised broken window. The atmosphere of the room did not have the learning atmosphere of their own classroom. This had consequences for the group. They did not feel that they owned the room and some time was spent on this. Coupled with this I never had more than an hour with the St. Patrick's boys as their lunch was fixed for the end of the drama class, whereas in St Raphael's I could run over time. The result of this was that I got further with St Raphael's and covered more ground with them. One hour is little enough for fifth class drama. I found that ninety minutes is the optimum.

#### Which Teacher had Control?

As I was operating in a type of In-Service Teaching (INSET) role, the locus of control was in the hands of the class teacher. This was good in that I was working in an efficient environment with no bedding in problems. On the other hand there was a sense of freedom if the teacher had to leave the class for any reason.

Security for me was in finding the school norms and matching my style as close to that as possible. In St. Patrick's there was a culture of quiet concentrated work. Noreen said that they had not done any groupwork or drama ever. In St Raphael's, the teacher,

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<sup>200</sup> See Appendix II.

Mary, said that they had done some chatting in circles. They had had drama two years previously in third class from a speech –and- drama teacher.

The effect of her own style, which was involving and interactive, was to be seen in the openness of their answers, answers that Mary respected. There were a number of divergent negative leaders in the boys' group, which were controlled by Noreen's calm style and presence. In the girls group there were two very vocal leaders, one of them potentially negative. I felt that the drama was strong enough to get their attention' however.

There was a dual focus in control, the class teacher and myself. The children exploited, on occasion, the weakness inherent in a diumvirate structure of classroom control. In the end it was the class room teacher who would be obeyed if there was a problem. The class teacher remained and intervened in a supportive way, before a divergence would have occurred. This added to my feeling of security. The children felt secure because, if the teacher trusted me, then they could.

In the games, the work was group task focussed which allowed for minimum divergence and maximum security. The spotlight was not on any one in particular. Control of the group was done through task work that was at their level, for instance, debating how long the child Setanta should live or making the map of Brú na Bóinne or Mapping Setanta's journey to Eamhain Mhacha. Security was also dealt with in role, as the group had to make Ogham stones with curses to keep away potential attackers.

Security was provided to the pupils by the control of the teacher. Also, the Drama in Education classes used distance to illuminate the theme of security. In our case I used the Setanta myth and emphasised the security elements in my version of the story. We looked at the physical walls, the psychological mindset of a tribe at war, and the social responsibilities one took to make the Fort safe.

In terms of personnel, structure, pedagogy, and story, security was an issue that was dealt with early on in the first two sessions.

### **Identity**

Who am I and who are we? We discussed the origin of the Celts and their language and customs. We compared them to our own in structure and any remains that we can see

today. *Dún* was mentioned. We made a map of our village with all the important features in it. Each feature answered the question, “What do we need in our village to survive and thrive?” Followed by, “Who will take the responsibility for ...?” I emphasised the responsibility and identity of participants.

### Showing Identity

Identity is seen. This issue of how we show our values and attitudes was next. Here activities about the fort were central. People had to decide on what was important to them when they had to leave the fort after hearing about a Viking invasion. Here we discussed the things that say who we are. Belief systems, making sacrifices to the gods, metalwork, heirlooms and other articles were mentioned. Later, when Setanta broke the code of *Eamhain Mhacha* by being rough and over boisterous the group had to decide on what behaviour they would accept. What was part of their code?

### **Belonging**

Inclusion was the central focus of the behavioural aspect of the programme, there was a number of activities which had this as their theme.

### Establishing belonging

Warm up exercises such as ‘Mirrors’, ‘Indian Chief’ and eye contact games started the inclusive atmosphere. As did use of circle as our working space. When the pupils had to write the name of the village and their own name in Ogham script and establish the occupations in the village we saw belonging as part of the learning method.

### Exploring and defining belonging

When the stranger came to warn of Viking raiders the group had to decide whether they would come or go. The group had to form a clear picture of what it meant to belong, one’s affective links, relationships and responsibilities. In the ensuing dilemma “Would we go or stay?” they had to face losing all they had built up. When Setanta had to go to *Eamhain Mhacha* there was a discussion on what he meant to the village, and what the village meant to him.

### Purpose and competence

As the story developed the elements of security, identity and belonging were subsumed into the plot of the individual versus the group. This was where the strong Setanta had hurt the group and the group had to decide on what he had to do in order to be able to live with them again. This became a discussion on the compromises an individual had to make in order to coexist with the group. It was in these sections that the final two pillars of self-esteem were underscored and explored. These were purpose and competence.

Purpose was underscored in the tasks we had to achieve. In the end the pupils wrote out a list of rules in role by which Setanta had to live.<sup>201</sup> Competence was highlighted by the groups' academic work. They produced work in the following subjects: Art, English writing, Poetry, Craft, Mathematics, Religion, Music, Social Political and Health Education (S.P.H.E.) and Social Environmental and Scientific Education (S.E.S.E.), History and Irish. They put some of their poetry on tape as well as their singing. Aesthetically as well as cognitively and affectively the work was of a high order.<sup>202</sup>

### **Summary**

I have demonstrated that in structure and content, the pillars of self-esteem were highlighted, explored and investigated. Each student had the opportunity to examine at a distance what this meant and create some personal meaning for himself or herself. The pupils did this through symbolic activities that encapsulated their concepts of the five pillars of self-esteem.

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<sup>201</sup> See App. II v.

<sup>202</sup> For photographs, and poems, songs. see App. II iv

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Report and Discussion of Results

#### *Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory*

There were 25 questions in the inventory. The highest possible score was 25. I have given a value of 4 percent to each question. A full score is therefore 100 percent. I have categorised the results further in to the following sub-groups:

- Low self-esteem: 1 — 9
- Mid self-esteem: 10 — 19
- High self-esteem: 20 — 25

Whole group results indicate an improvement in self-esteem over the period of the project. (See *Figure 6.1*) While the mean increase was 4.57 percent, it was in the context of a short period of time. McHugh in her study supports the fact that enhancing self-esteem is tedious and takes place slowly over time.<sup>203</sup> This would imply that the programme may have even greater influence if taught over a whole year, for instance.

#### **Whole Group Improvement**

Overall findings of difference in pre-test and post-test results:

*Table 6.1: Coopersmith Self-Esteem Results: Pre- and Post-Drama Average Increase of Global Self-Esteem*

	<b>Out of 25</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Pre-test</b>	19	76
<b>Post-test</b>	20.14286	80.57
<b>Increase</b>	1.142857	4.57

<sup>203</sup> McHugh M. (1998). *Values and Self-esteem among early-adolescents-a case study of the Robert Reasoner Programme in a Christian Environment in a Dublin Primary School*. Dublin: Hallows College unpublished MA thesis.



The pre-test figures for self-esteem are high at 76 percent. This would indicate a high baseline level of security, identity, belonging, purpose and competence. It would also mean, if my hypothesis were correct, that the inclusive behaviours I am seeking to enhance are already there in large measure. If the pre-test levels of self-esteem are lower then post-test increase is greater. As pupils enhance and develop their self-esteem it becomes more and more challenging to boost.

The groups had been together in primary school for seven years. In both groups there was a general feeling of belonging, as evidenced by their tests for inclusion. The group's self-esteem was improved at 4.57 percent. This enhancement would have been greater if the project had been longer. By the sixth week I was getting to know the names of the children better and a relationship had built up. Both groups were anxious to maintain the relationship and pursue other projects in Drama in Education. This would indicate that I had gained successful entry and that they saw the resultant effects themselves. This is apparent from their Drama for Friendliness questionnaire that I will analyse later.

*Table 6.2: Difference in Boys' and Girls' Self-Esteem (n = 42): Results of the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory*

	<b>Overall</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
<b>Mean</b>	+1.142857	+7.880342	-5.0535
Boys	+1.166667	+3.769231	-2.625
Girls	+1.111111	+4.111111	-2.4285
<b>Median</b>	1		
Boys	1		
Girls	1		
<b>Mode</b>	0		
Boys	4		
Girls	2		
<b>Standard Deviation</b>	3.79712		

<b>z-score</b>	1.950573		
<b>p-value</b>	0.025554		

Allowing four percent for each value and also rounding up figures, there was an overall improvement in self-esteem of 4.6 percent. At baseline self-esteem of 76 percent the amount possible to increase was 24 per cent maximum. As a factor of the possible increase this amount of nearly five percent was almost 20 percent of the possible self-esteem increase.

### **p-value**

The *p*-value of the self-esteem results was 0.025554 which means that the programme had an effect on the participants which was significant.

### **z-score**

z-score for these results was 1.950573.

### **Standard deviation**

The standard deviation for these results was 3.79712.

The median self-esteem enhancement of four percent was useful as it supports the claim for an overall self-esteem enhancement of almost five percent. The modal score for self-esteem enhancement was zero. This result, initially disappointing, is viewed differently if the baseline self-esteem figures of the zero improvement values are compared to their average group norm of 19 or 76 percent. Of the five zero improvement values recorded, three were at a baseline self-esteem value of 24 or 96 percent, two others being 92 percent and 84 percent respectively.

The indication would appear to be that either self-esteem is more challenging to improve at the higher levels or that the test was blunter than was first thought. Those achieving a zero score were initially in the high self-esteem group. Their self-esteem seems to have stabilised in the higher reaches.

### **Test Administration**

The language used in the self-esteem inventory necessitated teacher intervention to explain terms with examples. Social acceptability could have played a role here too, as I saw some pupil eye contact and some minor conferring in the tests that might indicate a commonality of choice in their answers. This was unavoidable even though I had asked that there be none. A number of other relevant details are below:

1. The test was not carried out in ideal conditions
2. The test was the short school form. It was normed with 10 year-olds in the US, and was possibly too difficult linguistically and syntactically for this group
3. It has not been normed in Ireland
4. It had not been normed in disadvantaged schools
5. It included some double negatives and syntactic difficulties that the group found confusing.<sup>204</sup>

### ***Whole group summary***

Quoting the p-value, figures apparently show a significant improvement in self-esteem. These findings need to be set in context of the short timescale of the project. A longer period of experiment would have had greater effect. The high baseline of the participants was a challenge to raise. Mid range students did show greater enhancement than students who already showed high self-esteem on the Coopersmith scale. The test was not ideal in structure, due to difficulties with vocabulary and syntax or in administration of the test itself, for the reasons cited.

### ***Gender as a Variable in Self-Esteem.***

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1. <sup>204</sup> See Appendix li. Questions 18, 21, 24, 25.

**Table 6.3: Gender Difference in Self-Esteem** containing Pre- and Post-Drama Results and consequent effect on participants' Self-Esteem. Data for numbers 25 and 44 were not available due to absenteeism

*Note: Table is split between two pages due to sample size*

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6	Column 7	Column 8
Gender	D. O. B.	Child No.	Pre Drama	Post Drama	Difference	Positive Result	Negative Result
M	31/08/88	1	17	21	4	4	
M	22/08/88	2	10	23	13	13	
M	25/08/88	3	21	18	-3		-3
M	07/12/88	4	13	11	-2		-2
M	13/10/88	5	16	19	3	3	
M	31/10/88	6	25	23	-2		-2
M	13/12/88	7	22	20	-2		-2
M	19/07/89	8	17	11	-6		-6
M	29/06/89	9	21	25	4	4	
M	02/04/89	10	20	21	1	1	
M	25/06/88	11	17	22	5	5	
M	30/07/89	12	24	24	0		
M	23/03/89	13	18	20	2	2	
M	20/09/88	14	12	16	4	4	
M	13/05/89	15	18	24	6	6	
M	07/11/88	16	24	24	0		
M	13/10/88	17	18	14	-4		-4
M	15/02/89	18	25	24	-1		-1
M	17/02/89	19	19	20	1	1	
M	22/05/88	20	24	24	0		
M	03/08/89	21	19	22	3	3	
M	04/07/88	22	23	25	2	2	
M	14/01/89	23	20	21	1	1	

M	10/05/88	24	24	23	-1		-1
M	//////////////// //	25	No	Data	Available	///////// /	///////// ///
F	13/11/88	26	13	11	-2		-2
F	12/11/88	27	13	15	2	2	
F	25/01/89	28	22	19	-3		-3
F	23/07/88	29	21	21	0		
F	01/10/88	30	19	24	5	5	
F	01/09/88	31	14	24	10	10	
F	24/07/89	32	17	23	6	6	
F	26/12/88	33	17	16	-1		-1
F	11/09/89	34	24	20	-4		-4
F	11/09/89	35	15	17	2	2	
F	08/06/88	36	21	18	-3		-3
F	14/08/89	37	20	19	-1		-1
F	14/09/89	38	20	17	-3		-3
F	12/11/88	39	23	23	0		
F	02/06/89	40	23	24	1	1	
F	25/10/88	41	14	19	5	5	
F	25/01/89	42	14	18	4	4	
F	////////////////	43	No	Data	Available	///////// //	///////// ///
F	08/04/89	44	21	23	2	2	

### Gender

There was a similar increase in the self-esteem of boys and girls. (See Table 6.3) The groups were taught separately, so there was no leaking effect between the two samples. The implication for this result is that Drama in Education is as effective for boys as it is for girls.

However, the style of engagement of the boys and girls differs. This is supported by Smilansky, who states that boys engage in fantasy roles and girls in realistic ones.<sup>205</sup> In the research programme, the roles were realistic in execution and effect but not in their Mythical Celtic context. This seems to have suited both boys and girls. Boys had the magic and bigness of mythical heroes (The gods, Setanta) and girls had the interpersonal engagement roles (villagers, mother figures) that seemed more useful for them. A programme that has imaginative fantasy-roles and action coupled with interpersonal negotiation will have a better chance of raising self-esteem and inclusion in both boys and girls. The mean score for boys and girls at 4.57 percent has been alluded to. There are other values reported which support that increase.

## **Mode and Mean**

### Mode

The overall groups modal difference scores were zero. (*See Table 6.2*)

The modal score for the boys at 16 percent is in fact twice that of the girls at eight percent. This is somewhat larger than the four percent mean and indicates an improvement to a large number of boys that was greater than that of the girls. An implication of this is that more boys improved in this programme than girls, and also that more of the boys were susceptible to self-esteem and at greater levels than girls.

### Mean scores

There was little difference in the mean increase of boys' self-esteem and girls' self-esteem. (*See Table 6.2*). Of those showing a negative difference in self-esteem, the rate was the equal for boys and for girls. A conclusion that one can make is that Drama in Education is as effective in raising self-esteem in girls as it is in boys.

Of those pupils that were positively influenced (*See Table 6.3, Column 7*), the mean rate was almost the same for boys at 3.76 percent as for the girls at 4.11 percent (*See Table 6.2*). Those affected negatively are affected at almost the same rate also. Boys at -2.6 percent and girls at -2.4 percent. (*See Fig 2*). The conclusion is that boys

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<sup>205</sup> Smilansky, S. (1968). *The Effects of Socio-Dramatic play on Pre-school Children*. New York: Wiley.

who were receptive appear from the results to be *as* receptive as girls. This would go against the received knowledge among some teachers that drama is good for girls, and that boys are better served, perhaps, by sport. These figures explode this stereotype convincingly.

Of those positively affected there was a recorded greater effect than among those negatively affected. 14 participants had positive improvements of 12 percent (+3) or greater. This contrasts with those affected negatively where there were only seven who had a decrease of 12 percent (-3) or more. The enhancement in self-esteem was greater not only in number but also in size. The conclusion is that the effect is greater in those positively influenced than those influenced in a negative way. Further support for the argument that not only does Drama in Education have little significant negative effect but that the positive effect considerably outweighs the negative.

#### ***Gender as a variable summary***

Modal scores for the boys and girls separately, show a greater than average increase for boys. Boys' modal scores are twice those of girls. Mean scores show that the increase was as great for boys and girls. Mean average decrease was almost the same for boys and girls.

#### ***Age as a variable in Self-Esteem.***

*Table 6.4: Age at Pre-test: January 11<sup>th</sup> 2000*

<b>Maximum</b>	10/05/88	11y 8m
<b>Minimum</b>	14/09/89	10y 4m
<b>Average</b>	07/01/89	11y 0m
<b>Median</b>	13/12/88	11y 2m
<b>Mode</b>	--/10/88	11y 3m

From *Table 6.5* below it can be seen that nineteen of the sample ( $n = 42$ ) were in the ten years old and that the remainder of the group had turned eleven years. The average age of eleven years is a more accurate picture of the group than either the median or mode that indicate an older level. This would indicate that twenty-three of the sample were possibly in the adolescent group whereas nineteen were pre-adolescent.

**6.5: Coopersmith Self-Esteem Results Pre- and Post-Drama: Sample in Descending Order of Age:**

*Note: table is split between two pages due to sample size.*

<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>Child No.</b>	<b>Pre -Drama</b>	<b>Post -Drama</b>	<b>Difference</b>
10/05/88	24	24	23	-1
22/05/88	20	24	24	0
08/06/88	36	21	18	-3
25/06/88	11	17	22	5
04/07/88	22	23	25	2
23/07/88	29	21	21	0
22/08/88	2	10	23	13
25/08/88	3	21	18	-3
31/08/88	1	17	21	4
01/09/88	31	14	24	10
20/09/88	14	12	16	4
01/10/88	30	19	24	5
13/10/88	5	16	19	3
13/10/88	17	18	14	-4
25/10/88	41	14	19	5
31/10/88	6	25	23	-2
07/11/88	16	24	24	0
12/11/88	27	13	15	2
12/11/88	39	23	23	0
13/11/88	26	13	11	-2
07/12/88	4	13	11	-2



13/12/88	7	22	20	-2
26/12/88	33	17	16	-1
14/01/89	23	20	21	1
25/01/89	28	22	19	-3
25/01/89	42	14	18	4
15/02/89	18	25	24	-1
17/02/89	19	19	20	1
23/03/89	13	18	20	2
02/04/89	10	20	21	1
08/04/89	44	21	23	2
13/05/89	15	18	24	6
02/06/89	40	23	24	1
29/06/89	9	21	25	4
19/07/89	8	17	11	-6
24/07/89	32	17	23	6
30/07/89	12	24	24	0
03/08/89	21	19	22	3
14/08/89	37	20	19	-1
11/09/89	34	24	20	-4
11/09/89	35	15	17	2
14/09/89	38	20	17	-3
////////////////	25	No	Data	Returned
////////////////	43	No	Data	Returned

<p>Ten Oldest Members of Group  Ten Youngest Members of Group</p>
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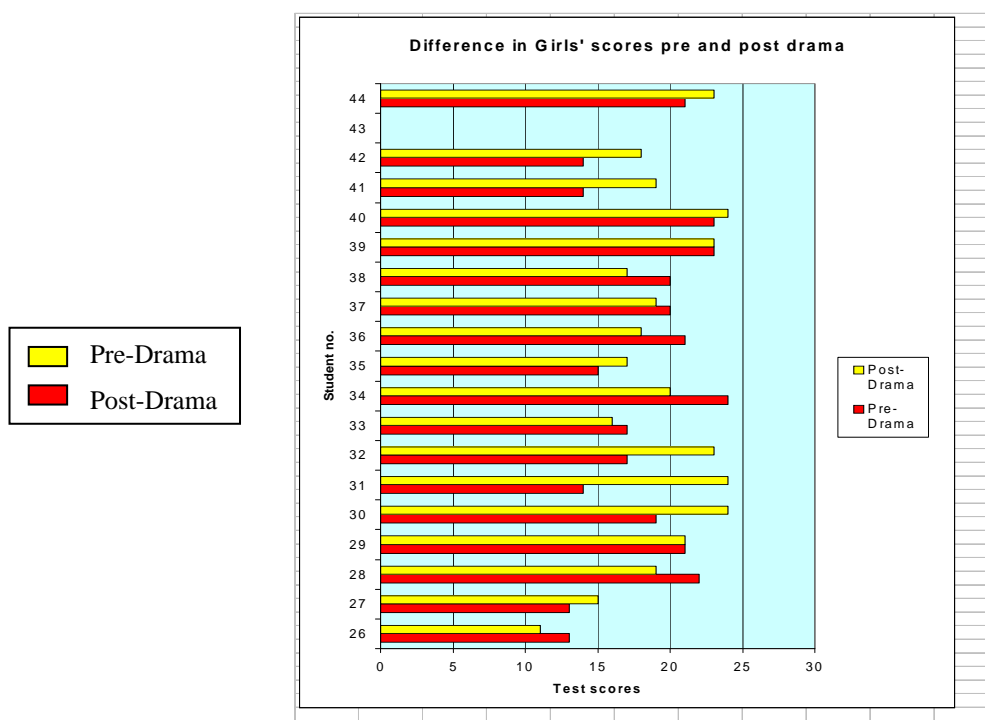
The ten oldest children showed a greater positive response to the experiment (See Table 6.5). They showed an average increase of 2.7 (10.8 %). This concurs with Donaldson, mentioned earlier, who found that self-esteem improved with age. The ten youngest showed an average increase of two (less than one percent). Younger children had lower

positive differential scores and higher negative scores than older children did. In the ten youngest children four had decrease scores of twelve percent or greater whereas, in the oldest group, two had a twelve percent decrease and none greater (*Table 6.5*). The older group was thus more susceptible to change and also in greater amount.

The negative effect was less and the positive effect was greater in the older group. This might be a factor of reading age, as there was a difficulty in reading and understanding the tests. I had to paraphrase and give examples when the group was filling out their Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory questionnaires. The implications of this finding are that those children of eleven and over experience self-esteem enhancement more than their ten year-old colleagues in the same class, another could be that the test itself was distorted. Older children in general received more positive and less negative self-esteem enhancement.

#### ***Base line Scores as an Indicator of Susceptibility to Programme.***

*Figure 6.1: Girls' Self-Esteem Scores Pre- and Post-test*

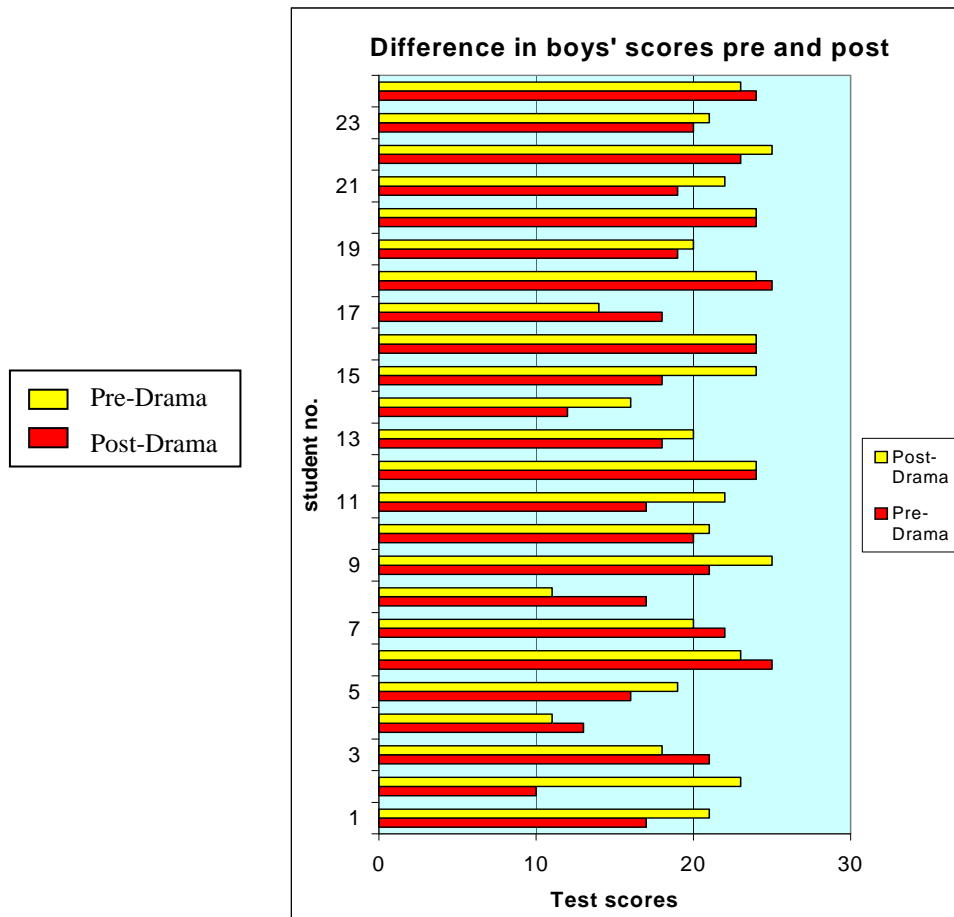


It can be seen that in the girls' pre-test (n = 18) that nine (50%) of girls had a high baseline of self-esteem, (numbers 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 39, 40, 44) that is twenty (80%) or

greater. The post-test reveals that only seven girls were recorded in the high self-esteem group. In the upper group there had actually been a drop in the number of those achieving an improvement in self-esteem. Not only that, four girls had dropped from high self-esteem to the mid self-esteem group (numbers 27, 36, 37, 38). If a pattern is to be seen, it is that in the higher reaches of girls' self-esteem that there was a minor decrease. The greatest increase in girl's self-esteem was in the mid-range where scores of between sixteen percent (+4) and forty percent recorded. No such increases were recorded in the higher ranges.

The conclusion made is that this type of interactive role-play programme using Drama in Education will have an effect on the self-esteem of girls in the mid to lower range and affect less those who are already in the upper range. Whatever effect will be achieved in the upper ranges will be small, if not in fact negative in some cases. This programme therefore appears to be suitable for girls in the mid to lower range of self-esteem.

*Figure 6.2: Coopersmith Self-Esteem Scores Pre- and Post-test: Boys*



In the boys' group pre-test (n = 24), twelve (50%) recorded in the high self-esteem group (numbers 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 16, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24). In the post-test, however there were eighteen (75%) pupils in the high self-esteem group (numbers 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 26, 21, 22, 23, 24) Unlike the girls decrease of two (22%), there was an increase of six (50%) in those reporting high self-esteem after the programme.

Whilst this is significant, in that it shows that these boys benefited even more than the girls from Drama in Education, it must be underwritten by the caveats already mentioned of suitability of the test instrument with this group. At the same time two of the boys who fell from the high self-esteem group to the mid self-esteem group. This compares favourably with the girls' number of five. Another support for the positive effects that Drama in Education has on pupils, especially boys.

### ***Gender as a variable summary***

More boys than girls were recorded as being in the higher self-esteem group in the post-test scores. More pupils in the mid-self-esteem range than in the high-self-esteem range showed enhancement of self-esteem.

The conclusions are that this type of programme is suitable for pupils in the mid self-esteem range and has particular significance for boys in the high self-esteem range. This is in spite of the fact that girls appear to engage more readily in the interpersonal nature of the work and also produce higher quality documentation of the work in homework and other written and oral assignments.<sup>206</sup>

### ***Pupils' Evaluation of Drama as a Method for Enhancing Friendliness***

*Table 6.6: Drama for Friendliness and Inclusion:* Columns 1 — 6 are replicated from Table 6.3. Columns 7 — 12 represent participants' perceptions of the effect of Drama on their friendliness and inclusion.

*Note table is split between two pages due to sample size.*

<b>GW = Group Work</b>
<b>SC = Self -Confidence</b>
<b>SOC = Sociability</b>
<b>S/I = Social Inclusion</b>
<b>C/D = Class Dynamic</b>
<b>1 = Yes          0 = No</b>

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Gender</b>	<b>D.O.B.</b>	<b>Child No.</b>	<b>Pre Drama</b>	<b>Post Drama</b>	<b>Diffc e</b>	<b>GW</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>SOC</b>	<b>S/I</b>	<b>C/D</b>	<b>Tot</b>
M	31/08/88	1	17	21	4	1	1	0	0	1	3
M	22/08/88	2	10	23	13	1	1	0	1	1	4
M	25/08/88	3	21	18	-3	1	0	0	1	1	3
M	07/12/88	4	13	11	-2	1	1	1	1	0	4
M	13/10/88	5	16	19	3	1	0	1	0	0	2
M	31/10/88	6	25	23	-2	1	1	1	1	1	5

<sup>206</sup> See Appendix II v and II vi.

M	13/12/88	7	22	20	-2	1	1	1	1	0	4
M	19/07/89	8	17	11	-6	1	1	1	1	0	4
M	29/06/89	9	21	25	4	1	1	1	1	1	5
M	02/04/89	10	20	21	1	1	0	1	1	1	4
M	25/06/88	11	17	22	5	1	0	1	1	1	4
M	30/07/89	12	24	24	0	1	1	0	1	1	4
M	23/03/89	13	18	20	2	1	1	1	1	1	5
M	20/09/88	14	12	16	4	1	0	1	0	1	3
M	13/05/89	15	18	24	6	1	1	1	1	1	5
M	07/11/88	16	24	24	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
M	13/10/88	17	18	14	-4	1	1	1	1	1	5
M	15/02/89	18	25	24	-1	1	1	1	1	1	5
M	17/02/89	19	19	20	1	1	1	0	1	1	4
M	22/05/88	20	24	24	0	1	0	1	1	1	4
M	03/08/89	21	19	22	3	1	0	1	1	1	4
M	04/07/88	22	23	25	2	1	1	1	1	1	5
M	14/01/89	23	20	21	1	1	0	1	1	1	4
M	10/05/88	24	24	23	-1	1	0	1	1	1	4
F	13/11/88	26	13	11	-2	0	1	1	0	0	2
F	12/11/88	27	13	15	2	1	0	1	1	1	4
F	25/01/89	28	22	19	-3	1	1	0	0	0	2
F	23/07/88	29	21	21	0	1	1	0	1	0	3
F	01/10/88	30	19	24	2	1	1	1	1	1	5

F	01/09/88	31	14	24	10	1	1	1	1	1	5
F	24/07/89	32	17	23	6	1	1	1	1	0	4
F	26/12/88	33	17	16	-1	1	0	1	1	1	4
F	11/09/89	34	24	20	-4	1	1	1	1	1	5
F	11/09/89	35	15	17	2	1	0	1	1	1	4
F	08/06/88	36	21	18	-3	1	0	1	1	1	4
F	14/08/89	37	20	19	-1	1	1	0	1	0	3
F	14/09/89	38	20	17	-3	1	1	1	1	1	5
F	12/11/88	39	23	23	0	1	1	1	1	1	5
F	02/06/89	40	23	24	1	1	1	1	1	1	5
F	25/10/88	41	14	19	5	1	0	1	1	0	3
F	25/01/89	42	14	18	4	1	0	0	1	1	3
F	08/04/89	44	21	23	2	1	1	0	1	0	3

(n = 42) Friendliness Scores are in Columns 7-11

Table 6.7: Pupils' Drama for Friendliness and Inclusion: Overall Scores (Mean, Median, Mode)

	Highest Possible Score = 5
<b>Mean</b>	4
<b>Median</b>	4
<b>Mode</b>	4

There were five yes/no answers to this inclusion test.<sup>207</sup> The results showed a consistency between the elements of mean, median and mode at four. Girls scored even higher on modal scores, indicating that they had an even higher awareness of the value of Drama in Education in enhancing inclusion.

The conclusion is that the majority of participants attributed their sense of inclusion to the Drama in Education programme. I think it is interesting that the scores for inclusion were equal in all elements when compared with those scoring both negative and positive on the Coopersmith post-test (*See Table 6.3, Columns 7 and 8*). The conclusion I make is that even though pupils may not have reported an increase in self-esteem they all report awareness that Drama in Education helped the group become friendlier and more inclusive.

In the case of the girls the recorded scores were as follows:

*Table 6.8: Drama for Friendliness and Inclusion (Separate Gender Figures)\_n = 42; highest possible score is 5*

	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>
<b>Mean</b>	4	4
<b>Media</b>	4	4
<b>n</b>		
<b>Mode</b>	4	5

The mean awareness was high at four, as is the median. In the girls group there was a 100% modal awareness of inclusion and friendliness engendered by the class. I divided the group in half, in terms of self-enhancement.

Among the lowest improvers in self-esteem enhancement there was a mean score of four or eighty percent awareness of the value of Drama in Education. Among the highest scores of self-esteem enhancement there was a similar mean score in Inclusiveness at four or eighty percent. The group reported that Drama in Education was influential in enhancing self-confidence, sociability, class dynamic and their own sense of inclusion. They also reported that the group work, acting and role-play had played a

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<sup>207</sup>For Drama for Friendliness questionnaire see Appendix I ii.



significant part. A conclusion is that regardless of Self-esteem enhancement levels, almost all pupils reported large increases in friendliness and inclusion.

The results to the questions were tabulated as follows:

*Table 6.9: Results of Teachers Group Inclusion Questionnaire (by Question)*

N = 42. Top score possible: 42. Scores that did not register in the value expected were not included. This explains the discrepancy in score totals. For copy of survey questionnaire see Appendix I iii.

	<b>Question 1</b>	<b>Question 2</b>	<b>Question 3</b>	<b>Question 4</b>	<b>Question 5</b>
	Group Work	Self-Confidence	Sociability	Sense of Inclusion	Class Dynamic
Boys	24	14	18	20	20
Girls	17	12	13	16	11
Total	41	26	31	36	31

Boys: n = 24

Girls: n = 18

***Question 1: "Is drama a good way to make friends?"***

The highest score recorded above (41) is for the awareness that it was groupwork, be it acting, games, or role-plays which created the positive change.

**Boys**

Of the 26 participants in the boys' questionnaire nine thought that the games helped them make friends, eleven thought that group work and six thought that acting out the stories helped them make friends. The indications are that group work is the factor that they see as most contributing to friendship, followed by games and acting in stories. The active nature of the games is no surprise perhaps but what is interesting is that they were aware that they had to work in groups. Donal puts it well when he says

"Drama is good for making friends because getting into groups helps you make friends because say you and somebody else was not talking they

would talk to you if you were arguing with somebody have to talk to you in the end or else nobody would like to talk to them.”

This confirms my hypothesis that it is in the reflection that the pupils learn, that P.E. type exercises are not the same as interactive, co-operative meaning making in drama.

### Girls

Of the 19 girls surveyed, only three mentioned games as a catalyst for friendship. This was also the figure for writing a song together in role. By far the largest figure was for working co-operatively in groups (12). There was a group who saw the programme as an opportunity to, as Loretta said, “speak to people that I never spoke to before”. Sheila said “I have been with people I’ve hardly spoke to before”. This contrasts with Doreen who said that “We always were friends, we were already friends”. It is interesting to note the opposing views of Doreen and Loretta of the same situation which highlight (a) the different perspectives and (b) the need for a process for inclusion. For although there was a friendly atmosphere in the group there were still people in it who felt marginalised like Sheila and Loretta.

### ***Question 2: Did Drama help you be less shy about speaking your mind in a group?***

Over half the group felt that Drama in Education had helped them to be less shy (26). Many reported that they were not shy to begin with.

### Boys

Eight of the boys said they were not shy initially. Two mentioned that drama gave them confidence and two liked the fact that everyone got a chance. Of the others, five said that the speaking out in front of others in role made them less shy. Donal said that “I was king and I had to speak for people”. This in-role speaking had positive out-of-role consequences.

### Girls

Only two of the girls said they were not shy. Doreen said “I’m always shy about acting and I always will be. OK? I was less shy about talking about the war”. This response

points up a theme that was evident in this group. Doreen feels shy about acting but not in Drama in Education because she was not performing for an audience. Karla had supported this in Circle time, she said “I thought you had to be good looking and learn lines and all in drama. Now I know it just gets easier as you get to know the story, it gets easier”. Four of the girls mentioned the discussion in role as help with shyness. This supports the notion of protection into emotion that is central to Drama in Education. Doreen, Karla and others felt safe to talk in role. Nicky, a neglected child, felt that people listened to her in role. Another painfully shy girl, Sandra, said that she was not shy “in a group”. Sheila felt “less shy now because even though I was speaking, so was everyone else and I felt less ashamed and shy and it didn’t matter if I laughed”. Karla also supports this saying “everyone has to do it so you do it”.

It seems that being in role and in a group is a protected rehearsal for shy people and that there is no penalty for getting it wrong. This creates the secure conditions for confidence raising so important for shy people.

***Question 3: In drama I have spoken with people that I have not really spoken with before.***

#### Boys

Sometimes rejected people do not get an opportunity to connect that further reinforces their sense of isolation and lack of belonging. When asked about whether they had spoken to people they had not spoken to before there were certain constraints. The group had been together for eight years now and they felt that they knew each other well. Having said that, fifteen of the boys reported that they had spoken to people they had not really talked with before. Five said that they always talked to everyone.

#### Girls

Nine of the girls reported that they always had spoken to everyone in the group. But nine others reported that Drama in Education had helped them talk to people they had not worked with before. The most rejected and neglected fell into this group. The brightest in the group had an opportunity to work with an unfamiliar classmate and the rejected also were aware that Drama had given them an opportunity to work with

another classmate. Awareness of the value of Drama in Education was not restricted to the 'academic' group in the class.

***Question 4: Did you feel more included in the group after drama sessions?***

High scores of 36 (84 percent) were recorded.

Boys

Twenty-one of the twenty-six boys reported that they felt more included after the Drama in Education sessions. Some of the reasons given attributed the inclusive behaviour to: games (4), something to talk about (2), the story (1), and working together (1). Two reported that boys who never used to talk to them now talk to them "all the time". There is a boy in this class whose mother has to come to the school to be with him at yard time. He is violent in the yard and the school won't allow him socialise. I feel this had had an effect on the social health of the class. Drama in Education can have the effect through lightening the atmosphere of allowing a positive feeling in which to nurture friendships again. Seventeen of the boys said that their classmates were friendlier after Drama in Education. Two said that they were always friendly. Like Doreen, this may be a function of age and egocentricity where one presumes that because you have a lot of friends that everyone does. Drama in Education had a beneficial effect on the boys group.

Girls

Among the nineteen girls, eighteen said they felt more included after Drama in Education. They gave reasons similar to the boys in that they said because they "worked with everyone" (2), that they "had more to talk about" (3), that they were needed (1), or that they felt they could speak out (1). None of the girls reported that there were people who did not speak to them before Drama in Education. Seventeen of the girls reported that the group had always been friendly. This would indicate a good level of social health in the class. This compares with only two of the boys saying that their class had always been friendly.

***Question 5: I see my classmates as being friendlier after doing this drama.***

A high score was recorded for friendliness, not just to the respondent but to the whole group in their attitude. These scores supported strongly the claim that drama is a good way to make friends, to include and to be included. This is the foundation for the self-esteem that in my hypothesis will follow a sense of belonging.

Witness from the teacher in both groups backed this claim that the group was more inclusive up. Both casually reported to me that the group was in better humour and were getting on better with each other, especially with the rejected and neglected pupils in the group.

Among the top half of ranked Coopersmith self-esteem enhancement scores there were six full scores for Friendliness and Inclusion, i.e. a score of 5. Among the lower end of scores in the Self-Esteem Inventory there was also six full scores of 5. In these recorded figures there does not seem to be a correlation between high self-esteem and inclusion. One conclusion is that inclusion and high self-esteem are not completely linked.

***Summary of pupils Drama for Friendliness and Inclusion***

Boys and girls showed a clear awareness that Drama in Education had improved both the class dynamic and inclusion in their groups. However there was no correlation between high self-esteem and inclusion, as both those with high and low self-esteem were aware of the contribution Drama in Education made to inclusion.

I am aware however that the class teachers' own style may have created the inclusion before my arrival and that the Drama in Education had not influenced it to such an extent. On the other hand respondents themselves had reported that Drama in Education had in fact been the root cause. There may have been some socially acceptable answering in their replies. The benefits of Drama in Education were apparent to both boys and girls. Boys reported greater increases in friendliness than girls. Both groups reported that Drama in Education creates the right conditions for inclusion. Most cite group-work as a reason for the success of this programme.

**Results of Teacher Class Inclusion Questionnaire Scores.**

The results of the questionnaire are below. Test applied pre and post experiment

SRNS = St. Raphael's Girls National School

SPBNS = St. Patrick's Boys National School

*Table 6.10: Teacher Class Inclusion Scores.* This researcher originated a questionnaire which was filled out pre- and post-drama.

SRNS	Question	Pre	Post	Diffce.	SPBNS	Pre	Post	Diffce.
Bonding	1	5	5	0	Q1	2	2	0
Smiling	2	4	4	0	2	4	4	0
Hesitation	3	4	2	-2	3	2	2	0
Sharing	4	4	4	0	4	2	3	1
Listening	5	2	5	3	5	2	2	0
Acceptance	6	5	5	0	6	2	2	0
Supporting Peers	7	3	4	1	7	3	3	0
Laughing	8	5	5	0	8	3	4	1
Eye contact	9	5	5	0	9	4	5	1
Opinions accepted	10	4	5	1	10	3	3	0
Put downs	11	4	2	-2	11	2	2	0
Collaboration	12	2	4	2	12	2	2	0
Promotion	13	4	5	1	13	2	2	0
Attention seeking	14	4	2	-2	14	3	4	+1
First Names	15	5	5	0	15	2	4	2
Sitting Close	16		5	1	16	1	2	1
Avoidance	17	1	1	0	17	4	2	2

Teacher Intervention	18	2	3	+1	18	5	5	0
Challenging Teacher	19	2	4	+2	19	2	2	0
Working with	20	4	5	1	20	1	3	2
Affirmation	21	3	5	2	21	2	4	2
Awareness of Change	22	2	4	2	22	3	5	2
Volunteer Opinions	23	2	5	3	23	2	2	0
Loans	24	2	3	1	24	2	2	0
Breakages	25	2	2	0	25	2	2	0
<b>Total</b>		61	83	27	<b>Total</b>	68	73	5
<b>Total Positive Change</b>				<b>27</b>				<b>13</b>
<b>Total Negative change</b>				<b>-3</b>				<b>+1</b>

Negative questions are in red. A minus result in these columns indicates a decrease in that negative behaviour a positive result means an increase in that negative behaviour.

This questionnaire, as has been previously explained, is subdivided into three sections. It is hoped to get information about the change that the teacher noticed in physical, verbal and emotional behaviour that could be called inclusive.<sup>208</sup>

### Verbal -Emotional inclusion <sup>209</sup>

*Table 6.11: Summary of Verbal-Emotional Inclusion Behavioural Indicator Questions in Teacher's Group Inclusion Test: (Qs 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 15, 21, 23, 24)*

<sup>208</sup> For copy of this questionnaire see Appendix I iii

<sup>209</sup> See Chart p.47

5	Listening to others
7	Supporting peers
8	Laughing in appropriate places
10	Positive acceptance of opinions of target pupils
12	Collaboration by target pupils
13	Promotion by peers in play or discussion
15	Using first names
21	Peer affirmation
23	Target group volunteering opinions in discussion
24	Negotiating successfully for loans

These behaviours are the expression of an inclusive attitude in words. There was an increase in inclusive behaviours in both groups indicating that Drama in Education can enhance inclusion and thus self-esteem. In verbal emotional behaviour there was an increase in both groups, though noticeably higher in girls. There was a total increase in verbal emotional behaviour of 14 or 28 percent. There was a significant increase in collaboration in the girls though not the boys.

There was an increase in the use of Christian names as opposed to the pronoun 'he/she' in the boys though not in the girls. This could be because the girls already used Christian names in class and boys did not. The neglected pupils in St. Raphael's became more willing to express opinions in class compared to St. Patrick's where there was no increase. There was a marked increase in listening in the girls as opposed to the boys, whereas the boys tended to be more open in affirmation of rejected and neglected pupils.

### **Non -Verbal Physical<sup>210</sup>**

*Table 6.1: Summary of Non-Verbal Physical Inclusion Behavioural Indicator Questions in Teacher's Group Inclusion Test: (Qs 2, 4, 16, 20)*

2	Smiling at each other
4	Sharing by target pupils with others
16	Sitting close to target pupils
20	Main group choose to work with target pupils

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<sup>210</sup> Ibid.



These behaviours are those that include body language signs of acceptance and inclusion.

There was an increase in both groups. The boys showed a greater increase in inclusive non-verbal physical behaviour. There was a high instance of this behaviour in the girls to begin with. There was an overall non-verbal physical increase in behaviour of 6 or 30 percent. Change was more noticeable in the boys who were starting from a lower baseline. There was no increase in girls smiling and sharing whereas there was an increase in boys sharing. Both groups showed an increase in desire to sit with less popular pupils. It was in the boys group that a greater increase in working with less popular pupils was evident. This would indicate that boys express positive attitudes in action rather than words.

### **Non-Verbal Emotional<sup>211</sup>**

*Table 6.13: Summary of Non-Verbal Emotional Inclusion Behavioural Indicator Questions in Teacher's Group Inclusion Test : (Qs 1, 6, 9, 22)*

<b>1</b>	Sense of group bonding
<b>6</b>	Acceptance of target pupils by main group in class activities
<b>9</b>	Eye contact with peers
<b>22</b>	Awareness by group of change in less social pupils

This type of behaviour is typically physical expression of inclusion, for example A sense of bonding, acceptance, eye contact and awareness of change in less popular pupils.

There was a reported increase in this behaviour of 5 or 25 percent.

There was a marked difference in both groups in terms of bonding and acceptance of less popular pupils. The boys were in the range of 'sometimes' whereas the girls were in the range 'very often' in terms of bonding and acceptance. There was no increase in either. The girls could not have increased any more as they were at the top of the scale. The boys however stayed at the level they were at. This does not fit in with the bigger picture of the boys' behaviour however. They had shown an increase in

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

‘Sitting with less popular pupils’ and also affirmation and choosing to work with less popular pupils.

### **Negative behaviour<sup>212</sup>**

*Table 6.14: Summary of Negative Behaviour Inclusion Indicator Questions in Teacher’s Group Inclusion Test: (Qs 3, 11, 14, 17, 18, 19, 25)*

<b>3</b>	Answering teacher’s questions with hesitation
<b>11</b>	Put downs of target pupils by other group members
<b>14</b>	Attention seeking behaviour
<b>17</b>	Avoidance physically by others
<b>18</b>	Teacher intervention in conflict situations
<b>19</b>	Challenging of teacher instructions by target pupils
<b>25</b>	Target pupils involved in breakages ,damage

There was an overall decrease in negative behaviour of 5 points or 16.6 percent. There was a greater decrease in boys’ negativity than in girls. The only increase in boys negative behaviour was in Q.14 “Attention Seeking”(+1). Whereas the girls increased slightly in Q.18 “Teacher intervention in conflict situations” (+1) and Q.19 “ Challenging teachers instructions”(+2).

### ***Discussion of Results of Teacher’s Inclusion Questionnaire***

#### **Boys**

The boys showed increases in affirmation, sharing, sitting and working with less popular pupils. There were also increase in eye-contact and an awareness that the unhelpful behaviour of the neglected pupils had changed. The pre-experiment score reveals that there was a low sense of bonding in the group. They also had to work with each other in a co-operative way in the class. They could not avoid working with each other. Thus proximity, opportunity and practise in drama allowed perceptions to be altered which facilitated this change. The class teacher reported that the increase in attention seeking

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

was because “they were at that age”, indicating that it was a phase of pre-adolescent behaviour.

There was no decrease in teacher intervention in class in the boys’ group, attributable perhaps to the rise on volubility of a group exposed to Drama in Education. There was an increase in boys affirming, being aware of change in less popular pupils and sitting with less popular pupils. This I attribute to their having been in close proximity to each other during drama. There were increases in support for others and laughter in appropriate places. Unpopular pupils were identified by the teacher in the pre-drama interview. See p.46

### Girls

The girls had higher pre-drama scores of inclusive behaviour than the boys. It appears that there had been a higher degree of interpersonal negotiation among them prior to testing. However with the increase in interpersonal activity there was an even bigger increase in positive behaviour in the girls than the boys.

The girls showed marked increases in listening, support, acceptance, affirmation and encouraging less popular pupils to volunteer their opinions. They also showed increases in sitting and working with less popular pupils. While they maintained a high level of bonding, acceptance and eye contact, there was a marked increase in the awareness of change in less popular pupils.

The over all increase in inclusive behaviour was greater for girls (+27). Whilst boys did not show increases in inclusive behaviour as much as girls, they increased in greater amounts from where their baseline behaviour had been. There were more high range and full scores reported in the girls’ results. Girls showed increases in listening skills particularly, a feature of Drama in Education.

I am aware that these results are the perceptions of the class teachers and may not be objective as they both wanted the programme to work. They were both asked to be as objective as possible in filling out the questionnaire. Implications for schools are that the more chances pupils have to work together in a random non-volunteering way, and that that contact is meaningful, the more included the neglected and rejected pupils will be.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Conclusions and Recommendations

#### *Conclusions*

The aim of the study was to reach an understanding of the impact which participation in a six week Process drama class has on the self-esteem and sense of inclusion of 10 /11 year old fifth class girls and boys in a disadvantaged urban school in Dublin. The following conclusions have been drawn from my analysis of the data.

1. The data confirms that pre-adolescent pupils enjoy improved sense of belonging and inclusion in their class group. This confirms my first hypothesis: that participation in Process drama will increase a sense of belonging in a group.
2. The data confirms that the group itself had become aware of changes in friendliness and inclusion in themselves, changes that they attributed to Drama activities. This confirms my second hypothesis: that Drama is an agent of personal and social change.
3. The data reveals that the increase in inclusivity and self-esteem is similar for boys as it is for girls. This confirms my third hypothesis that Drama in Education is as valuable for boys as it is for girls.

The data also reveals that self-esteem for boys starts higher and rises more than girls. Girls on the other hand have slightly lower self-esteem initially and whilst they rise in self-esteem, less of them terminate in the high self-esteem bracket. Girls in the highest bracket of self-esteem are resistant to improvement in self-esteem. Boys are more susceptible than girls to self-esteem-enhancement. This also confirms my third hypothesis that Process drama is as beneficial for boys as girls in terms of self-esteem.

4. Data reveals that there was a significant improvement in pupils' global self-esteem. This confirms my fifth hypothesis: that participation in a six-week programme of Process drama enhances global self-esteem.
5. Data reveals that initially there was a higher degree of inclusion in the girls, who did not have a consequent rise in self-esteem. Girls and boys with lower self-esteem scores had high inclusion scores. This confirms Hurley's thesis<sup>213</sup> that friendship is improved greatly and self-esteem moderately. One predictor of improved self-esteem is the candidate being in the lower to mid self-esteem range initially.
6. Caution needs to be exercised regarding a more general application of these conclusions, as the sample was very small and further research is needed to corroborate the findings. The period of intervention would need to be longer. Most self-esteem programmes operate integrally over a year. In that time judgements can be made, linking causes and effects.
7. Drama in Education had a significant effect on areas of the curriculum, both cognitive and affective. See Appendix II iii

### ***Recommendations***

1. The results support the new primary curriculum in Drama. All primary school pupils should participate in Process drama sessions. The problems of absenteeism and consequent remediation would be minimised. The gap between the school formality and home would be also reduced.

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<sup>213</sup> Hurley, A. (1988). *The development & Evaluation of A programme in an Irish primary School, which was designed to enhance Self-Esteem, self-control and thus the self-concept of the disadvantaged child, through the media of physical education and drama*. M Ed Thesis unpublished. Dublin: Trinity College.

2. Programmes in Process drama that recognise the difference in dynamic of boys should be provided for boys' schools.
3. Teachers in boys' schools should be made aware of the findings that both sexes respond to drama equally in terms of inclusion and self-esteem. Teacher training should address the needs of boys' schools in this regard.
4. In order to comply with the conclusion that lower self-esteem is enhanced in Process drama, further experiments should be done with groups who have lower self-esteem. The groups under experiment here were of relatively high self-esteem to begin with.
5. If the new curriculum is to be feasible in schools, teachers need to be aware of the different creative dynamic that boys and girls bring to Drama in Education. Harnessing these will ensure that self-esteem and inclusion, which is integral to Process drama, will continue in both boys' and girls' schools.

**Appendix I**

- I i Coopersmith Self Esteem Inventory
  
- I ii Pupils' Drama for Friendliness and Inclusion Questionnaire
  
- I iii Teacher's Group Inclusion Questionnaire
  
- I iv Results of Teacher's Group Inclusion Questionnaire
  
- I v Erikson's Psycho-social stages
  
- I vi Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs
  
- I vii Research Experiment Design and Layout

**Appendix I i**

**Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory Short School Form**

**Appendix I ii**

**Pupils Drama for Inclusion Questionnaire**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class :** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Is drama a good way to make friends? Give an example of this from what you saw in our sessions.

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2. Did drama make you less shy about speaking your mind in a group? If so, give an example.

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3. In drama with Colm I spoke to people in class that I haven't really spoken with before. What happened?

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4. Do you feel more included in the group after these drama sessions? Give a reason for this.



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5. I see my classmates being more friendly after doing this drama. True or false?  
Give a reason.

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## Appendix I iii

Teacher Group Inclusion Questionnaire

Look at the behaviour of the class group. With regard to *those you would think as being excluded by the group* please fill in the grid below.

Please mark in the **grey boxes** according to the following scale:

A = never

B = sometimes

C = usually

D = often

E = very often

Does class behaviour suggest that there is a sense of the group bonding?	Are there situations where you see pupils smiling at each other?	Are there times when you see pupils answering teacher questions with hesitation?	Do you see sharing by target pupils with many people?	Do you see evidence of listening to others in small group discussion?
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Is there normally acceptance of target pupils by the group in class activities?	Is there evidence of these pupils supporting peers in discussion?	Do you notice laughing in <i>appropriate</i> places?	Do you see eye contact with peers?	Is there positive acceptance by target pupils of peers' opinions?
6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Are there put-downs of target pupils by other group members?	Is there collaboration by target pupils with group?	Is there promotion by peers in play or discussion?	Attention seeking behaviour?	Do you hear the group sing first names as opposed to <i>he/she</i> , when talking about target pupils?
11.	12.	13.	14.	15.
Do you see the main group sitting closer to less popular pupils?	Avoidance physically by others?	Teacher intervention in conflict situations?	Challenging of teacher instructions by target pupils?	Does main group choose to work with less popular pupils?

Does class behaviour suggest that there is a sense of the group bonding?	Are there situations where you see pupils smiling at each other?	Are there times when you see pupils answering teacher questions with hesitation?	Do you see sharing by target pupils with many people?	Do you see evidence of listening to others in small group discussion?
16.	17.	18.	19.	20.
Is there any affirmation of pupils by other pupils?	Is there an awareness by the group of change in less social pupils?	Do the target pupils volunteer opinions in group discussion ?	Do you see much negotiating successfully with peers for loans?	Are the target pupils involved in damage or breakages?
21.	22.	23.	24.	25.

### Appendix I iv

#### Results of Teacher Inclusion Questionnaire.

Test applied pre- and post-experiment

SRNS = St. Raphael's Girls' National School

SPBNS = St. Patrick's Boys' National School

SRNS	Pre	Post	Diffce.	SPBNS	Pre	Post	Diffce.
Question 1	5	5	0	Question 1	2	2	0
2	4	4	0	2	4	4	0
3	4	2	-2	3	2	2	0
4	4	4	0	4	2	3	1
5	2	5	3	5	2	2	0
6	5	5	0	6	2	2	0
7	3	4	1	7	3	3	0

8	5	5	0	8	3	4	1
9	5	5	0	9	4	5	1
10	4	5	1	10	3	3	0
11	4	2	-2	11	2	2	0
12	2	4	2	12	2	2	0
13	4	5	1	13	2	2	0
14	4	2	-2	14	3	4	+1
15	5	5	0	15	2	4	2
16	4	5	1	16	1	2	1
17	1	1	0	17	4	2	2
18	2	3	+1	18	5	5	0
19	2	4	+2	19	2	2	0
20	4	5	1	20	1	3	2
21	3	5	2	21	2	4	2
22	2	4	2	22	3	5	2
23	2	5	3	23	2	2	0
24	2	3	1	24	2	2	0
25	2	2	0	25	2	2	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>83</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>68</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>5</i>
<b>Total Positive</b>			27				13
<b>Change</b>							
<b>Total Negative</b>			-3				+1
<b>change</b>							

Negative questions are in red. A minus result in these columns indicates a decrease in that negative behaviour a positive result means an increase in that negative behaviour.

## Appendix I v

Table of Erikson's Psycho-social Stages

<b>The Life Cycle</b>	<b>Erikson's Psycho-Social Stages</b>		
<b>Late Adulthood</b>	<b>Ego integrity</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Despair</b>
<b>Middle Adulthood</b>	<b>Generativity</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Stagnation</b>
<b>Early Adulthood</b>	<b>Intimacy</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Isolation</b>
<b>Adolescence</b>	<b>Identity</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Identity Confusion</b>
<b>Middle &amp; Late Childhood</b>	<b>Industry</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Inferiority</b>
<b>Early Childhood</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Guilt</b>
<b>Infancy</b>	<b>Autonomy</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Shame, Doubt</b>
	<b>Trust</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Mistrust</b>

### Appendix I vi

#### **Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs**

Table is read from bottom to top

<b>Actualisation needs:</b>	<i>To find fulfilment and realise one's potential.</i>
<b>Aesthetic needs</b>	<i>Symmetry, order and beauty</i>
<b>Cognitive needs</b>	<i>To know, understand and explore</i>
<b>Esteem needs</b>	<i>To achieve, be competent, gain approval and recognition</i>
<b>Belongingness and love needs</b>	<i>To affiliate with others, to be accepted and belong</i>
<b>Safety Needs</b>	<i>To feel secure and out of danger</i>
<b>Physiological needs</b>	<i>Hunger, thirst etc.</i>

## Appendix I vii

### The Research Experiment Design and Layout.

#### *Session 1*

#### *The Celtic story of Setanta*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Focus</b>
1) Warm up exercises	Group working, Trust, Security, Space Habitation, Co-operation
2) Viewing charts of Celtic forts	Convergence on story background
3) Telling the story	Listening. Empathy. Context for action
4) Sculpt into images from the story	Security, skill building
5) Teacher in Role as druid, pupils as Setanta's parents "A short life or a long one for Setanta"	Moral dilemma

#### *Session 2*

#### *The Village*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Focus</b>
1) Warm up	Groupwork, trust
2) Mirrors	Imagination
3) Sculpting partner, then self included helping	A job in our ringfort
4) Map making	Creating village model

5) Ogham writing; own name; village name	Cultural identity. Belonging
6) Visual guided imagery	Identifying with the stranger
7) Establish Occupations in village	Identity. Belonging
8) A time capsule for the village at the time of Setanta	Personal, social, culture of Brú na Bóinne at Setanta's time

**Session 3****War and Rumours of War**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Focus</b>
1. Warm-ups	Eye contact. Security.
2. Amorphous prop	Imagination
3. Change!	Story review
4. Gossip circle. Pairs	Reaction to war rumours
5. Teacher in Role as stranger comes with news	Threat to identity, status, and security
6. Vicious enemy on the way	Reaction to rumour
7. Discuss in role	Dilemma. Go or Stay.
Tableaux. Those who left; those who stayed.	Implication's of decisions.
9. Write a poem, song in the voice of a survivor	Empathy

**Session 4****Setanta's Youth**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Focus</b>
1) Warm-up. 'Indian Chief'	Group task
2) Campfire story of battle. 20 years	Review of story so far



later	
3) Setanta boasting of hunting. Pairs	Setting context for life of hero
4) Pairs	Persuading parents to go to fighting school
5) Saying goodbye	Security, identity, belonging
6) Present for Setanta	How we show people we love them
7) Village says goodbye	Whole group identity. Security, identity, belonging
8) Circle time	Discussion on belonging, identity. Out of role

**Session 5*****The School at Dún Conor and Setanta's Entrance***

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Focus</b>
1. Review story	Warm-up. Memory Sharing
2. Snapshots of Setanta in danger on journey	Selecting. Focusing on strengths of Setanta
3. Draw a picture map of his journey	Narrative. Rite of passage
Visual guided imagery of his journey and the hurling match at Dún Conor	Empathy. Plot advancement
6. Sculpting in three's of injured players	Empathy. Counter argument preparation for later scenes

**Session 6*****The Judgement of Conor***

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Focus</b>
1. Gossip Circle	Complaints against protagonist
2. Teacher in role as Steward to Conor	Security, Identity, belonging, bullying. Setting up complaint
3. Teacher in role as Setanta	Establishing rules of fair play
4. Conscience Alley	Go or Stay. King Conor is helped to decide by the people in the Castle at Dún Conor

## Appendix II

- i. Drama Researcher's Journal: Session 6
- ii. Lesson Plans: Session 6
- iii. Photographs of participants' classroom wall work
- iv. Photographs of participants at work
- v. Samples of Songs, Poems and Empathetic Diary Entries
- vi. Copy of the Rules created by the participants in role
- v. Copy of *Setanta*: Source of story used in class

## Appendix II i

### Drama Researcher's Journal: Sessions Five and Six

From Setanta's leaving home to arrival and acceptance into his peer group.

Background: *Setanta has permission from his parents Sualtaim and Deichtine to go to the training school at Dún Conor. In this section he says goodbye to his village and friends. He goes on the three-day journey to Dún Conor, meeting dangers on the way. His arrival at Dún Conor and the violence at the hurling match lead to a conflict that is resolved by the training school pupils' and King Conor. Setanta is accepted into the group.*

#### Boys' School: Session Five

As an opener I used *Sharks!* which actually was confusing as the boys changed the rubric and allowed a touch of uncertainty to creep in. I moved on to 'Indian Chief' which was thematically linked to the notion of belonging and the outsider. This produced an atmosphere of concentration and co-operation that showed me that the group could work well together if they were involved in an intriguing situation.

We revisited the map. I told the group we would move 20 years on from the battle of *Brú na Bóinne*, but that stories of the battle were still told around the fire. The group of 5 telling the story of the battle worked. Getting the group to reinvest.

The character of Setanta was then introduced and in pairs the group further invested in the individual Setanta in context of the group.

In pairs the group retold of hunting adventures that Setanta had had to a willing friend. We then examined the boy wanting to go away to training school to learn how to protect his village. He knew his dad and mum, Sualtaim and Deichtine (names on the board) would not agree so he had to find a way of persuading them. I set up two sides of the argument when I told the boys that Dad would not give his blessing and that Mum would not be too keen to let him go but in the end she would.

Then in three's the Voices in the head was effective, but I had to model this for them, as it was new. He decides to go. He told his best friend but his best friend told him about how hard the Fighting school was, and the shame of being sent home. Then the village gathered to say good bye. Setanta was represented as a chair on the edge of the circle. Again no one had done this before. Each gave him a present that would be useful to him on his way. These consisted of gifts :

- Swords, Shields, Spears,
- Satchels, Blankets, Horses
- Bread, Herbs.

Next we set up the freeze-frame of the villagers saying good bye.

I told them that the chair that I moved to the door would represent Setanta on his horse with all the beautiful presents he had been given. I told them to go close to the chair if they were close friends and further away if he was less well known to them. Of course they all wanted to be his friend, or perhaps they did not want to be seen in their own class group as not identifying with the manly attitudes and heroism of Setanta.

I asked them to break up and reformed the freeze-frame one by one and to focus on the chair that made them look away from their friends. George and Mark were very much on the ball today, getting involved appropriately in the activities at every stage. Certainly, from what I could see, they were including themselves in the work, with gusto and appropriate questioning.

I did not get much time at the end as we ran over the hour to 12.30. But I underlined what we were doing in Setanta, that we were looking at what it meant to belong. To have to leave and what was important to take with us. I told them the story of me taking a teddy to school on my first day (in the bag of course), which I hope will give them permission to open up tomorrow when we go to the School for fighting. I found that when doing choosing or deciding work, do it in ones and twos, involving the whole group mitigates against an authentic decision, as it is cumbersome to get clarity and unanimity.

### **Session Six: Boys' School.**

#### **Map of Journey of Setanta, covered, for effect. List of Conflict Resolution modes on board.**

We had covered fighting, war and the core of today's lesson was Setanta's lack of sensitivity to the group. This general area of sensitivity to others' feelings was covered in the raid of the Vikings. Rather than a Visual guided imagery to get the group to reinvest' I asked the boys to imagine the dangers that Setanta might have undergone. In six groups of five they came up with one each. We got:

1.Wild Boar    2. Snakes    3.Vikings    4. Bandits    5.Forest    6.Waterfall

Each group elected one boy to go to the board and mark out the danger on a prepared map. Thus we got a journey of dangers and investment. This economical use of time gave space for discussion later on.

Then in the same groups I asked for an illustration of the danger, in mime. This was difficult for the group and perhaps I should have concentrated on the next section as there was an attempt at horse-play which reduced the investment again. I could have asked for a picture of what he faced, if I had time. A class teacher would have this time and could have benefited from a slowing of pace, leading to a better realisation of his later problems. If I had asked the boys to tell the story of his dangers in groups. This would have increased their reflection and advanced the story. Time did not allow and the quality of the drama suffered somewhat.

I used visual guided imagery for Setanta's arrival and the central portion. I had access to their imaginations and gave a vivid description of Setanta's taking part in the boy troops' game and giving a hiding to them in game terms.

This was the core moment and the quality of listening and response was perfect. Consequently, the frozen-images of battered and bruised boys later on in the castle licking their wounds were realistic. Thought-tracking revealed that they were indeed mad at him though there was understanding of his not being aware of his own strength. More and more I feel that the insightful comments are growing and the boys who make them are less and less shy about saying them. This is a factor of getting to know the boys better. A gossip circle was a good idea because here the argument was set up as to

whether he should go or stay. I had the group in fives; two for, two against and 1 not sure. We were now ready for the public airing of their grievance to a steward of Conor's. I took this mid-status role as a buffer to allow a get out in case of a stand-off with the boys.

I put the conflict resolution techniques on the board and said that these were a well-recognised set of guides for resolving any dispute. I was hoping that there might be transfer between the lesson and their daily life. I realise now that there would need to be consistent and continuous practice of the conflict resolution skills in order to achieve that kind of change. McHugh says that this kind of change is "a slow tedious process".<sup>214</sup> Solutions offered included:

- *Kill him*
- *Don't let him play hurling with us*
- *Put him in the castle and don't let him mix with us*
- *Let him go, one warrior is not worth a hundred of us*
- *Keep him, he will defend the country later for us*
- *Teach him to be gentle*
- *Get him a person to show him around and teach him the rules of Armagh. This would stop him getting into trouble again.*

This last suggestion was popular but no one wanted to be the one to adopt him. He was still an outsider.

A majority however, went for this as a decision and we decide to try to get Conor to agree.

At this crucial stage the teacher left the room. There was a perceptible change in commitment from the group who I was trying to work with George, Mark and Kevin. So much so that the others asked me to put them out as they could not work. After five appeals I removed Kevin to the side and let him back after this exercise.

We set up Conscience-alley. That needed a lot of explaining and the low concentrators found this difficult. There was some divergence and as the group were moving at the time, getting into their places, divergence was more noticeable. We had

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<sup>214</sup> Mc Hugh, M. (1998). *Values and Self-Esteem among Early Adolescents-A Case-study of the Robert Reasoner Programme in a Christian Environment in a Dublin Primary School. Unpublished MA Thesis Dublin : All Hallows College.*

had 90 minutes of drama and they were tired. An appeal to their maturity and the fact that we were nearly finished worked and the boys lined up. The voices were positive in the main. So we decided democratically to let Setanta back, under the condition that he have a guardian angel in effect. Particularly Rory, who did not want Setanta to fail.

Whilst I was discussing the eviction or not, George, the most divergent of the group was very interested and involved and said that Setanta should be allowed back. He is on special restriction at the moment so this was a comment on himself, I felt. Then I read them the end of the story and they enjoyed hearing their experience being narrated in a book. They found it interesting that Conor had let him back. Setanta had found redemption. Security, identity and belonging were central to that redemption.

*End of Boys' School Reflection*

### **Girls' School: Session Five**

Poems, songs and a tape of both were made in this group with their class teacher to record their response to the Battle of the previous week. Loss and departure and longing for a better time, guilt at having had the village fight, having forced them to stay, were dealt with in a fairly typical way, the songs were influenced by the popular boy bands of the time, Westlife in particular. The group used sentiments from their roles as villagers and words from modern day to express feeling that they could not have had in their short lives. Indeed drama was here a rehearsal for life. Homework in response to this is in the appendix.

A sitting starter was appropriate as they were in a circle when I came in. As a review I listened to their poems and songs on tape. We then broke this atmosphere as I wanted to establish 'Drama Time' and we played a short game of 'Indian Chief'. Context was easy to set up and there was great interest in the fact that we were going 20 years into the future. We were older and wiser. In their groups of five they told their story in 'Change!'



Setanta's boasting about hunting was not as easy for the girls to identify with. But the atmosphere remained thoughtful and there was investment. Perhaps I should have explored why the girl, Fionnuala was not going, and what that meant to her.

The scene with his parents asking to go was engaged. Animated argument was seen and helped by the insertion of the tension that they had to each give two reasons for their argument, this made them laterally think about it as opposed to assertive attitudinising—"You're not going and that is that!" The excitement of leaving home was underlined with a pair interview with his friend again.

To reinforce the sense of belonging I introduced the notion of giving him something special to help him on his journey. Blankets, swords, food and souvenirs were offered and each girl in the class participated. These were offered to Setanta, who was represented by a chair.

We set up a freeze-frame of the whole village saying good bye to Setanta, who was represented by the same chair, but it was moved to the door. In Circle time we talked about what we do to make people feel they belong. I changed this to Setanta and the villagers to get a distance. We decided that they would teach him in their ways, hunting fishing etc. I asked the girls to think what it meant to belong. Trust was mentioned and they qualified this with the fact that you would have someone to share your secrets with. This was agreed to be important. Nicky said that she was the one in the family that every one shared their secrets with. This may have been an attempt to impress or the remark of a wise child. In this case wise before her time, as Nicky gives the impression that she is older than many others in the room. She has reached the early adolescent phase. Attention seeking interested in adult issues like power and boys and love. Her lament was about regret for having to leave the village was poignant and is available on tape cassette.

I was emphasising the notions of belonging and how we feel it and show it in groups and our selves. This will come up next day again, in the court of King Conor. I feel that I have stuck too much to the story. To find tensions we need points of decision or confusion. I have tried to enrich a telling of the tale and not taken the tale as a basis, taking off into their own world. The story acted as a control and tension raiser, though there was an element of closure about having to stick to the plot, which was linear.

I would like to have said

*What if he went off without permission to the court?*

*What if he was robbed by bandits and put under ransom?*

*What if his powers failed him and he became weak in certain circumstances?*

*What if the druid spread rumours about him that he was possessed?*

In effect, to have used more of their imagination in the driving of the plot. The sessions were relatively cognitively driven. As a teacher in the classroom I felt that I had to stick to cognitive dynamics to fit in with the structure of the experiment whereas with my own group I would have had more leeway and would have been more risk taking. This is an effect of me not being the class teacher. The fact is that there was a large amount of class work generated much of it imaginative- poetry, letters, songs, art, and research.

### **Girls' School: Session Six**

#### **The trials on Setanta's journey to Armagh and his entry to the Hero troop and Training School.**

On Board: A1 sheet with representational drawings of *Brú na Bóinne* and *Dún Conor*.

Background: Setanta, having gained permission to go to Dún Conor, sets off on his three day journey.

The groups named three challenges he met on his journey of three days. This was a handy number and created a frame of three in which to work.

Decision was made that he met:

- A boar
- A bear which he killed and skinned for food and clothes.
- An evil druid who had been expelled from the court of Conor. This druid would tell him to beware of Conor.

I drew these on the map on the board and retraced in narrative his journey. But we did not know how he had met each challenge. Freeze-frames were used for this. Each person in the group could say one word. The reason was twofold; time was short and this would also discipline the pupils to think of the key words necessary to get their

message across. Interestingly, the two animal freeze-frames were less invested than the druid frame. We had not done any animal work and at age ten there was an amount of self-consciousness evident.

An effective and strong Druid frame created a tension that was to be useful in the following work. The druid told Setanta that his uncle Conor was evil. As a test of loyalty in the last scene this would be significant. Visual guided imagery was used to create the emotion and reality of Setanta arriving at a new destination and playing hurling. With eyes closed there would be no distraction from the intensity of the experience. Empathy with Setanta's situation was an objective. I wanted the children to see that people who are violent do not always do it on purpose.

Under pressure for time I set up a debate in three's. A was anti-Setanta, B was pro- and C was one of the people hurt by Setanta on the pitch. As it happened, of the six groups, one wanted him to stay, five wanted him to go. At this stage I mentioned that he would be expelled from the school. Discussion about what expulsion would mean for Setanta and us deepened the investment in the scene and also made a parallel with our own lives. The word *expelled* triggered for me where the focus of the drama would be that day. The disgrace and consequent guilt of Setanta would be a tension to be resolved in the final scene, underlining the necessity for rules in social situations to allow for justice and fairness. *Dún Conor* would be a metaphor for school. This called for a new role for teacher. I adopted the role of Setanta, which I played high status, to increase the tension in the scene.

I went into role as Conor's steward, as the king was preparing for a visit from the King of Scotland. A conch was used to allow each the time to speak and be heard. The children of the *Dún* were fed up. Both arguments were promulgated. Those that were strongest in favour of him being kept were in fact two of the people in the group, Nicky and Helen were most vocal in our work and indeed I speculated that they might have been in this situation themselves. Doreen and others felt he should go but it was when Sheila said that he might be useful to us when he is trained later on that the group realised we had a dilemma.

We needed to talk to Setanta to resolve that dilemma, to see if there was a case for redemption.

I went into role as Setanta. Frightened, feisty and holding a hurl in case of attack. My attitude was what I felt theirs would have been if they had been summoned before a group of their peers for a wrongdoing. The group was of the opinion that if he were to stay he would have to obey rules. As devils advocate I challenged each statement.

I asked the class teacher to go into role as clerk, to have written set of rules in case of breach. We were now a group of people drawing up rules for behaviour in any social situation, but especially in Armagh of *Dún Conor*. Complaints ranged from:

- Karla's "You hit us not the ball"
- Amie's "You don't know how to play hurling"
- Doreen's "If you don't change you won't be here much longer"
- Nicky's "Take it easy, and ask us to play"

A way forward from complaint and anger to a positive action was emerging. I thought this was significant for 10 year olds. Playing Devil's advocate again I raised the hurley and threatened them. I said to them that they might only be trying to get at me. With this, two others took out rulers and in like manner threatened me. This tension of arms needed to be addressed.

I stepped out of role and asked the group why was Setanta so reluctant to put the hurl away? "Lack of trust" was the reply. The group said that he had to trust them. How would the group show him that he could trust them. By being friendly and open was the reply. At this delicate stage Helen said what was a type of epiphany for the group. She told Setanta that he "Shouldn't take his pain out on other people." The group reflected on this. Class teacher also picked this up and asked her to repeat it. I asked her what she meant by this and the reply was "If some one hurts you, you shouldn't go on and hurt someone else just because they hurt you".

I felt we could proceed with the rules for Setanta's staying. I asked what would happen if the warrior school had no rules. "They would be beating each other up all the time and hurting each other and all" was Karla's reply. So the need for a list was clear. The list was written and copied by the classroom teacher, who, observing from her desk, acted in role as clerk.

But I still had not let go of the hurley. I asked the class what needed to happen to make Setanta feel safe in the group. Now, it was here that Sheila brought in the final tension. “How do we know that he is not sent by the evil druid to wreck the warrior school?” Indeed. Now it was up to Setanta to give something. He first made his loyalty to Conor very clear. Then he said he would fight any one who was against Conor. “Prove it “ said Sheila.

So I slowly laid down the ruler which was my hurley but also a symbol for my own power. Now they could trust me and I was one of them. Trust and belonging went hand in hand. One can’t belong where there is no trust. The teacher called out the rules checking whether each person was in agreement. See Appendix II vii

- 1. Ask if you wish to join. Say “Can I play?”**
- 2. Listen and ask what the rules are**
- 3. Play properly**
- 4. Hit the ball not the people**
- 5. Be more gentle**
- 6. Do not have a cheeky attitude**
- 7. Trust**
- 8. Do not take your pain out on somebody else.**

We finished the group ritual by sending around the group *Electric Spark*. Each held hands. And the squeeze went first clockwise then anti-clockwise. This group centring was a satisfying end to the mornings work with the hurleys in the floor in the middle as a potent symbol of what we had achieved.

Belonging, loyalty, friendship, accepting the outsider in a way that meant no compromise in dignity by either side, all were illustrated and investigated in a way appropriate to the age group of the children. In fact, I thought that responses indicated a maturity that might not have been evident on first meeting the group. The class teacher said that listening to each other’s opinion had improved greatly in the 6 weeks.

### **Summary**

With the proviso that the group had been together for a 7 years, I think that sessions showed that drama in the classroom could integrate a group. However there were

people who were not feeling they belonged. Nicky and Joan attended the special class, and were academically weak. When a challenging question came up, Nicky became disruptive when asked a question she did not understand. Joan was quite confused and would say something inappropriate. The only difficulty I had was with Nicky who had difficulty filling out the questionnaire on the last day. She felt confident enough to take me on and found fault with the questionnaire. Class teacher was quick to spot this and helped her to write it out, which settled her.

The group became aware of issues of inclusion and exclusion. Responsibility for inclusion was a relational problem and required commitment from the individual and the group. This is a two way process in which the group agrees to make it a safe place and the individual agrees to fit in with the dynamic of the group without wishing to change it, a dialogue between the two interest groups in which each has a responsibility and each has a pay off. For the group it is a stronger and more unified force for the individual it is a sense of personal security and belonging.

Self-esteem is not achieved in isolation but happens in relation to the group. Initially, the mother is the significant force and this is taken over by the teacher, being replaced by the peer group in early adolescence.

To enhance a person's self-esteem then one needs to enhance their status in the group. To make the group aware that the person is worthwhile member and also for the individual to be aware that they are a member of the group, that they belong. To use role-play can be threatening and self defeating in this delicate situation. An objective perspective can be achieved through the distance that drama offers. Here the pupil can make choices in behaviour and attitude and values that will not be a threat to him if they fail to work for him. He can rehearse for life. By clarifying his attitudes and values in a safe place he gradually becomes aware of where he feels he belongs. By definition, this is in a social relationship. To analogise, the drama class provides the nest in which the emerging egg of self-esteem can crack slowly allowing the fledgling to investigate and explore before flying off into the adult world, secure in the knowledge of who he is and where he belongs.

*End of School Reflection*

## Appendix II ii

### *Lesson Plans*

#### **Session 5      *Setanta Leaving Home***

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**Central Question:** Why he wanted to go?

**Theme:** Belonging and inclusion. Setanta's community

**Context:** It is 20 years after the battle against the Vikings

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**Groups of Five:** The story of the Battle Setanta would have heard around the fire. In groups of five.

**Pairs:** Setanta and a friend boasting about their exploits in hunting. Each tells a tale to the other, about a narrow escape.

**Voices in the Head :** The decision to go away. A dream.

**In threes, Setanta asking Parents:** Persuading his Mum and Dad. Dad won't give his blessing

**Leaving:** What conditions would he leave in? Setanta is going away to learn to fight.

**Telling people in pairs:**

- Him and neighbours
- Him and his best friend

**In pairs:** How will they show him they will miss him? What present will each give to show him he belongs to this village? Decide what you will give him from this time and what use it will be to him on the journey.

**Freeze –frame:** Set up a freeze-frame of the whole village saying good bye. Thought-track it. **Ritual:** Find a saying that will show him he always will be one of them. In

family/occupation groups. Remember he is an only child. He naturally feels he is special in many ways.

**Circle Time:** Does Setanta feel included in the village?

1. How do we show that we exclude people, what do we do?
2. What does it mean to us to be included?
3. What do people do to make everyone feel a part?
4. When we include people what do we do?
5. How does it feel to be out of the gang?
6. How does it feel to be in the gang?

**Final Game:** Rhythm Circle. Clap-Clap. 'Indian Chief'.

### **Session 6: *Conor's Court***

#### **Setanta on the journey.**

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**Themes:** Bullying and Exclusion.

**Context:** The hero making his way in life

**Central question:** Will I be up to the challenges ahead?

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**Thoughts in his head:** A dream? Circle and speak his thoughts.

**Snapshot exercise:** Three views of Setanta in danger: He can't show he is afraid. If he shows fear he will be sent home in disgrace

- Bandits
- Animals. The wild animal turns friendly
- No Shelter.



**Arrival at the castle:** Visual guided imagery of journey and first view of castle and hurling game. What does he see? Show the Game at an exciting point. Setanta gets the ball. Setanta scores an amazing goal. He beats them all. No one can score against him and no one gets the ball. He has not learned to share.

**A three sentence play:** Sculpt a statue group in threes. C sculpts A and B. Then C joins in the sculpture. "You can have one sentence each".

- This play should show the boys and girls at Conor's court at being not too happy with Setanta's behaviour at all. Gossip circle.
- Boys complaining in twos and threes saying what they will do to him. Exclude him? Yes. Go to Conor.

**Teacher in Role as High- steward to Conor the king:** A group of boys and girls want to see him. *Class Teacher to act as secretary.*

- Remember he is the High-steward and needs to be spoken to as one. He is also close to King Conor, Setanta's uncle.
- They lay out their complaint. He speaks to them and listens.
- **Conflict resolution techniques.**

**What is the major problem?** ( Describe Problem)

**How do they feel about it?** (Express Feelings about it)

**What would they like to see happen?** (Lay out the options for action)

**What would they like to do to make the situation better?** (Agree goals)

**Conscience alley:** Conor cannot decide. Help him decide. As Teacher in Role walks up and down the group speak his thoughts in his head. "No one else can hear this but him. It is a trick of course because we can all hear him can't we?"

End

**Appendix II iii****Photographs of pupils' school work**Appendix II iii a) **Girls' school: Ringfort. *Brú na Bóinne*.**

The design of the fort was developed from the roles created by the pupils. Availability of water was the reason for choosing the site, for life, transport and defence. They all decided to live communally in a long-house. There were out houses or work houses where the crafts of skinning, cooking etc. were carried out. Religion was central to the villagers' lives as evidenced by the religious statue in the middle of the public area.

## II iii b)

In the photographs below evidence of cross-curricular work shows as the breadth of knowledge that came from the Setanta programme.

***S.P.H.E.******English******History******Design***

***Geography***

***Home economics***

II iii c)

***Art***

***Politics***

***Religion***

***Sport***

***Economics***

***Drama***

**Appendix II iv**

***Photographs of participants in Role***

Appendix II iv a)

The Druid persuading the villagers to stay in the face of attack. This led to poetry and song from the participants which captured the ambiguity of feelings and responses to a traumatic though fictional event. Cassette tape of songs and poems also available.

II vi b)

The villagers in role decide what they would take with them as refugees.

II iv c)

Villagers hiding from Viking attackers

II iv d)

Teacher in role as Setanta, after negotiation, finally giving into the will of the group.

**Appendix II v**

**Songs, Poems and Diary Entries.**

II v a) The songs and poems were written by a survivor of the battle.

**The Druids Song.**

**Appendix II v**

II v b)

**Surviving**

**Appendix II vi**

The diary entries helped the children invest in identity and belonging

II vi a)

Aodh.

**Appendix II vi**

II vi b)

Maeve

**Appendix II vi**

II vi c)

Rumours from the Stranger. Santra the Farmer.

**Appendix II vi**

II vi d)

Shawn O'Connor

**Appendix II vi**

II vi d)

John

**Appendix II vii**

Rules that allowed Setanta to remain at King Conor's training school. Drawn up by pupils in role in Session 6.

## Appendix II viii

### Copy of Source Story of Setanta

I found the original story in a children's book.<sup>215</sup> While it had promise I felt that it lacked three dimensions. As with other myths the characters were larger than life and the events were incredible. However it was the placing and context that I wanted to work on to flesh out the bones of the story and empathetically create a world into which the children could go.

I identified the five pillars of self-esteem in the story.<sup>216</sup> These would be the focus for the self-esteem and inclusion elements. In those I would present a context for each element, allowing the group to investigate and explore what those elements meant for them.

<b>Element One</b>	Security	The setting up of the fictional lens of the village. Values, Responsibilities, Crafts and family	Session One
<b>Element Two</b>	Identity	What does it mean to be a member of our village; language ;beliefs	Session Two
<b>Element Three</b>	Belonging	Showing Setanta that he was one of us. What farewell gift to give him?	Session Three
<b>Element Four</b>	Purpose	Preparing for battle; being part of the village. Deciding Setanta's fate at Dún Conor	Session Four

<sup>215</sup> Gantz, J. (1981) *Early Irish Myths and Sagas*. London: Penguin Books. p. 134 -137.

<sup>216</sup> Security, identity, belonging, purpose and competence.



<b>Element Five</b>	Competence	Homework done as part of the experience. Songs, Poems, Drawings, Craftwork, Plans, Maps.	Session Five
<b>Element Six</b>	Rights and Responsibilities <sup>217</sup>	Establishment of Rules, acceptance without losing face by all sides.	Session Six

### Birth of a Prince

In the north east part of Ireland, near Omeath and Dundalk in ancient times there was told a story. These were the times of the Celts, about 300 years before the birth of Christ, and people lived in groups of scattered farms on the hillsides facing the sun. They lived by hunting, grazing their cattle, fishing and trading. They were the first farmers that we knew of in Ireland. Much time was spent training for battle as there was no agreement as to where one man's land ended and another began, cattle were no respecters of boundaries and so a farmer often had to go into enemy territory to reclaim his property. Conor was the most powerful of these and as such was the king of the Celtic tribes in Ireland at the time.

Apparently Lúg, the Celtic god of light, came as a raven to the beautiful *Deichtine* and slept with her and left her with a child. Although she was as sincere as she was beautiful her father was afraid that she would be alone and found a man to look after her, this was *Sualtaim*, who had admired *Deichtine* from afar, but never had the courage to speak to the most beautiful girl in the whole of the Cooley Mountains.

On the night Setanta was born there were strange happenings in the forests around *Brú na Bóinne*. Flocks of birds appeared over the house where he was born and there was a fierce snowfall which showed everybody that *Setanta* was of divine blood.

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<sup>217</sup> This extra pillar was added by me, in order to integrate all the values, attitudes and beliefs into social behaviour that would be respected by the individual and the group.

*Cathbhad* the druid was there and he made a prophecy about *Setanta* and *Deichtine* and the fact that he would have a choice: for a short famous and exciting life or a long, peaceful and quiet life. *Deichtine* thought hard and consulted with her husband. She chose the short life for her son.

From early years, in order to get him to sleep, *Sualtaim* told the boy *Setanta* many stories about the world when he was a young warrior. Especially interesting to *Setanta* was the tale of the court of the king. *Sualtaim* did not want to tell of the court of *Conor* for he was afraid that *Setanta* would go away to train and never come back.

The young boy had heard about the great group of lads who were fostered from all over Ireland and trained in the fort at Navan Fort near Armagh. Only the toughest and the bravest were picked to serve in the King's army. One hundred and fifty young lads were fostered there in the court of the king of all Ireland, *Conor*. Here they trained in all the skills of battle.

*Setanta* had heard that you had to be brave to fit in with this lot. He had heard stories of boys who were not accepted into the boys' group and who, in disgrace, had to go home to their families again. This was a great shame on any house. There were many girls also who tried to get into the troop.

*Deichtine* said that he could not go until he had persuaded one of the heroes of Ulster to go with him. None of them, she felt would go against her will. But *Setanta* would not give up. Eventually, *Sualtaim* and *Deichtine* called *Setanta* into their home one harvest evening, and after eating the best supper in a week they spoke to him and gave him permission to go to Navan from Newgrange. On the journey he would need some things to make him safe. His father gave him advice on leaving home.

*Sualtaim* had seen *Setanta* practising fiercely in the courtyard. He gave him some advice. "Be aware that though you have great gifts that there are others who have not. You will be more powerful if you can beat your friends. You will have more friends if you use your power." "Well. What does this mean?" *Setanta* asked. Great gifts come with a price. If you have the gift of singing then you should use it to make the world a better place for you and those whom you are to protect. If you have the gift of strength, you should use it to protect the people who have not this gift." Sadly, *Deichtine* did not want him to leave her, as he was too young and the journey too far for a young lad. But for

the prophecy to be fulfilled, she knew that he would have to go alone, this was the tradition. And she felt the dangers of the journey were too great for one so fair and so young. She made him a talisman to hang on his neck on a piece of leather.....

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