

# Unit 1: Understanding of the play and the production of

## After Dark by Mike Kenny

### Part 1: Focus on the play

<b>English</b>	<b>Strand:</b> Competence and confidence in using oral language. <b>Strand:</b> Receptiveness to language.	<b>Strand unit:</b> Oral language. <b>Strand unit:</b> Writing: creating and fostering the impulse to write.
<b>Visual Arts</b>	<b>Strand:</b> Drawing	<b>Strand unit:</b> Making drawings of characters.
<b>SPHE</b>	<b>Strand:</b> Myself	<b>Strand unit:</b> Self-awareness – talk about what they liked/disliked in the play, share feedback about each other’s work.

### Activities

- Discussion about the play and the production
- Making connections
- Role-on-the-wall – drawing and writing
- The ‘Artist’s Chair’

### Objectives:

1. *To discuss what the children thought about the play and the production.*
2. *To work in small groups to make connections with the play and other stories.*
3. *To draw a character and write what they know about the character in pairs*
4. *To share, question and discuss their drawings and writing with each other.*

### **Activity 1: Discussion about the play and the production**

**Learning Objective:** *To discuss what the children thought about the play and the production.*

- After watching the production of ***After Dark*** ask the class to **Think, Pair** and **Share** their ideas about the production.
- **Think** about what did they like about the play? Who was their favourite character? Why? **Pair** discussion. **Share** ideas with the class.
- **Continuing the discussion:**
- What would they change about the play? Why?
- What was their favourite moment/part of the play?
- If they could ask any character a question, what would they ask? Why?
- How did the director, the actors and the sound designer create the world of the play?

**Plenary:** The play is called ***After Dark***. What other title could the play have been given?

### **Activity 2: Making connections:**

**Learning Objective:** *To work in small groups to make connections between the play and other stories.*

**Resources:** Post it notes, pencils, colouring pencils, a large piece of card.

Working in Table Groups ask the class the following questions:

- Did the play remind them of any other stories they had heard before? Listen to feedback from the pairs/groups.
- What were the similarities and differences between the play and the stories they had heard before? Did it have similarities with the story of 'Hansel and Gretel'?
- Give each group post-it notes to write their ideas. Ask one member from each group to stick the post it notes on a large piece of paper in the centre of the room.
- What were the differences between the play and the story of 'Hansel and Gretel'?
- Read the responses from the class.

**Plenary:** If you were going to re-tell the story of 'Hansel and Gretel' what would you keep from the story? What would you change? Give children time to discuss their ideas and share with the class.

**Activity 3: Responding to the play through drawing**

**Learning Objective:** *To draw a character and write what they know about the character in pairs.*

**Resources:** A copy of the Role on the Wall for the Interactive Whiteboard

- Display the Role-on-the-wall of Marie on the Interactive White Board (Role-on-the-wall example is at the end of this lesson plan).
- Discuss what we know about the character of Marie.
- Ask the children to read the ideas about Marie with their partners.
- Do they agree with the statements that have been written?
- What else could they say about Marie?
- Ask the children to work in pairs to create a Role-on-the-wall for a character from the play. It could be François, Maman, or the ogress.
- Encourage the children to label their drawings and to describe and write about what the character looks like, how they feel, what they say, what they want, what they dislike.
- Share the children's work using the 'Artist's Chair' Activity 4 and display in the classroom.

**Marie's Role on the Wall**

Marie

Looks:

Brown eyes  
Blue jumper

Feels:

Happy and excited  
When she tells a story.

Likes: Going to the fair.  
She enjoys playing, going  
on the Ghost Train at  
the fair. Telling scary  
stories.



Family:

Maman and  
François

Hopes:

Everyone will listen  
to her stories.

Dislikes:

When François interrupts  
her stories.

#### **Activity 4: The ‘Artist’s Chair’**

**Learning Objective:** *To share, question and discuss their drawings and writing with each other.*

Activity adapted from: into learning. Module 1 Oral Language. (2015) [Online] Available from: [http://moodle.intolearning.ie/webdav/SupportingLiteracyDevelopment/modules/Module1/using\\_the\\_artists\\_chair.html](http://moodle.intolearning.ie/webdav/SupportingLiteracyDevelopment/modules/Module1/using_the_artists_chair.html) [Accessed: 8<sup>th</sup> January 2015]

**Resources:** A chair with a piece of fabric or a cushion

- A chair with a nice piece of fabric or a cushion is placed at the front of the classroom. The children can come up individually or in pairs to show and share their work with the class.
- The children discuss the character they chose for the Role-on-the-wall activity.
- The children can be encouraged to discuss why they chose to draw and write about that particular character, what they liked about the activity.
- The activity could be extended by developing key questions with the class to support their higher order thinking and questioning skills.
- The children could be encouraged to think about a question beginning with Who...?, What...?, When...?, Where...? and Why...?

**Plenary:** Ask the class to think about how they could use the Role-on-the-wall activity again? Could they use it to describe a character from a story in their Irish book? Or a book or comic they are reading? Share the children’s ideas with the class.

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### Part 2: Character, story structure and set design

<b>English</b>	<b>Strand:</b> Competence and confidence in using oral language. <b>Strand:</b> Receptiveness to language.	<b>Strand unit:</b> Oral language. <b>Strand unit:</b> Writing: creating and fostering the impulse to write.
<b>Visual Arts</b>	<b>Strand:</b> Drawing. <b>Strand:</b> Construction.	<b>Strand unit:</b> Making drawings of characters. <b>Strand unit:</b> Making constructions. Creating the imaginative world of the play.
<b>Drama</b>	<b>Strand:</b> Drama to explore feeling, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding.	<b>Strand unit:</b> Exploring and making drama in role during hot-seating.

#### Activities:

- Hot-seating a character and asking questions
- Story journey scroll –writing and drawing
- Story Box – set design

#### Objectives:

- *To work in role and create and ask questions to a character in role.*
- *To re-tell the story using key words, sentences and drawings.*
- *To imagine, design and construct a mini-set for the play.*

### **Activity 1: Hot-seating**

**Learning Objective:** To ask questions of a character being hot-seated/to work in role.

**Resources:** A chair, a hat, scarf, jacket, Interactive White Board to note questions

- This activity can be done as a whole class with the teacher or a child in role as a character from the play or the children could work in small groups and have one person in role as the character while the other children ask the character questions.
- Begin by telling the class we are going to have a visitor from the play. We will use a hat/scarf/jacket to imagine one person is the character. When the person is wearing the hat/scarf/jacket they become the character, when they take away the prop they are back to being themselves.
- Discuss the character the class would like to meet. Once this is decided, (the teacher may have decided prior to the lesson) the teacher and the class think about questions they would like to ask the character. If the chosen character was Maman, they might ask Maman: “Where do you work? What do you cook in your café? How does the moon look down on the children?” Encourage the class to use the “Who..?, what..?, why..?, when..? where..?, how...?” question openers.
- The teacher can model the activity, placing a hat on their head and telling the class, “My name is Maman, nice to meet you.”
- The teacher may go out of role at any time by taking off the hat to guide the class with questions.
- After hot-seating the character, ask the class what they discovered about the character of Maman?

**Plenary:** Tell your partner two new things you found out about the character and something you would still like to find out.

## **Activity 2: Story journey scroll:**

**Learning Objective:** *To re-tell the story using key words, sentences and drawings.*

This activity is adapted from: Grainger, T., Gooch, K., and Lambirth, A., (2004) *Creative Activities For Plot, Character & Setting, Ages 5-7*. Oxfordshire: Scholastic Ltd.

**Resources:** A large roll of paper, or large sheets of sugar -paper taped together, pens, pencils, markers, key vocabulary: First..., and then..., suddenly..., after that..., but..., soon..., until..., in the end...)

- This activity is useful for sequencing events in a story and for creating a timeline.
- The story journey scroll can be done as a whole class in a large space, or in smaller groups at the table with a large piece of paper for each group.
- Tell the story of the play to the class and/or ask the class to **think** about the main events in the play. What happened at the beginning of the play? What happened in the middle of the play? Did something important happen at the fair? What happened every night? What happened at the end of the play? Discuss these questions in **pairs**.
- **Share** the children's suggestions and as a class decide on three key events for the beginning, the middle and the end of the play.
- Ask the class if there were any repeated patterns? What happened every night? What question did François ask Maman? ("What are you going to cook tonight?")
- Ask the class to sit in a large circle on the carpet. Tell the class, we are going to tell the story.
- Unroll a large strip of paper, or the sugar paper taped together. Ask two children to go into role as François and Marie. They are going to walk along the side of the paper, along the length of the roll of paper, along the character's journey to the end of the story.
- Divide the class up into seven groups with four in each group, with two children working in role as François and Marie.
- Place each group on either side along the long roll of paper.
- Each group is given a part of the story depending on where they are placed along the paper/journey.

- The group at the beginning of the paper could draw and write what happens and the beginning of the story; the second group could draw what happens when Maman goes to work; the third group could draw and write what happens at the fair; the fourth group could draw what happens that night when they arrive back from the fair; the fifth group could draw and write Marie's story; the sixth group could draw and write about the ogress, the picnic and asking Maman questions; the seventh group could write and draw Marie's story about cooking and getting rid of the ogress and the end.
- The groups of children sitting at either side may only draw when the characters have walking along their part of the paper and they call out, "Stop!" The teacher asks the group to tell the rest of the class what happened at that part of the story, children in other groups can help out too.
- The teacher could model how this activity will work, with the children working in role as François and Marie walking alongside the paper. The teacher calls, "Stop!" and the characters freeze and the teacher says what happened, "Maman, François and Marie were telling a bedtime story." She draws a picture and write some key words.
- At different points along the journey ask the children to ask the children in role as François and Marie to stop when something important happens. Ask a group sitting at that part of the paper to draw or write some words or phrases to show that event.
- This continues on until the end of the story. Ensure each group has an opportunity to draw an event in the story.
- Remind the children that this activity is about re-telling the story, the drawings and words are to help us to map the journey, to try and enjoy the activity.
- **Extension:** This activity could be developed by asking the children working in role as the characters questions about how they feel about different events in the story.
- When the journey is completed the scroll could be rolled up and then rolled out to help to re-tell the characters' journey.

**Plenary:** What other illustrations or words could we add to our scroll?

### **Activity 3: Story Box**

**Learning Objective:** To design a setting from the play using different materials.

The Story Box activity is adapted from: National Literacy Trust. Early years sector. (2015)

[Online] Available from:

[http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0000/3211/Story\\_box\\_guide.pdf](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0000/3211/Story_box_guide.pdf)

[Accessed: 8<sup>th</sup> January 2015]

**Resources:** Shoe boxes, small cardboard boxes, tissue paper, crepe paper, recycled paper, drawings made by the children – drawing of a fairground, a house, props to create the world – mini boxes for the Ghost Train, toys for the characters, old toys, PVA glue or glue sticks.

- Children can work individually or in pairs to create their setting or story world. A shoe box or small cardboard box is useful to help frame the world.
- Use school safety scissors to cut the vertical edges to create a flap on one side to open the box up. (Adult supervision when using scissors)
- Ask the children to decide on their theme – Maman, Marie and François's house? The fair ground, the park, the town.
- The children can cover the box in colour paper, recycled paper, tissue paper or drawings of their own background and stick it down with PVA glue/ glue sticks.
- The class can make the Ghost Train, a Clown, Maman's café from card and stick it onto the Story Box.
- Other props like toys, decorated mini-boxes can be added.

**Plenary:** Create a Walking Gallery to share each other's Story Boxes.