



Changing Education Through the Arts

A KC Education Program

Going Global: Building Understanding Through Dramatic Monologues

Presented by
Mary Hall Surface
Kennedy Center Teaching Artist

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Introduction

Purpose:

This workshop uses drama and creative writing to explore diverse perspectives and uncover points of view about important global issues.

How:

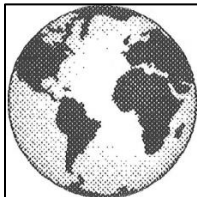
The workshop presents a multi-step process that invites participants to step into characters, to imaginatively experience their perspectives, and then demonstrate understanding by improvising and writing original dramatic monologues. Inspired by photographs and content from contemporary journalism, participants consider the complexity of emotions of their imagined character. Participants work collaboratively to deepen their understanding of how the culture, politics, and economics of a place and time might impact the character's perspective.

Goals:

This workshop will:

- Provide you with a structure and process for creating original dramatic monologues that build student understanding of issues of global significance.
- Empower you to strengthen your students' abilities to take the perspective of others and to uncover their own.

Why focus on global issues?



Today and tomorrow's world is increasingly globally interdependent. Our technologies, economies, politics, and policies link us ever closer together, creating both possibilities and challenges. To be effective innovators and problem solvers, students need to be **globally competent**. They need to have the desire and ability to:

- **Investigate the world** beyond their immediate environment.
- **Recognize perspectives**; their own and others'.
- **Communicate their ideas** effectively with diverse audiences.
- **Take Action** by translating their ideas and findings ways to improve conditions.

Global competence is the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance.

Boix –Mansilla & Jackson, 2011

Global competence is not a separate subject area, but rather is **teaching with the world in mind**. Bringing contemporary issues into the classroom across the curriculum can provide a relevant, engaging framework for building both disciplinary skills and real connection to issues that shape our times and the student's future. For more resources on **global competence**, see pages 51-53.

“We want students to be inclined to use what they know and to delve deeper into history, culture, the news, themselves, and other people to make sense of and participate in the world in which we live.”

Veronica Boix Mansilla,
Principle Investigator, Project Zero,
Harvard Graduate School of Education

Why focus on perspective-taking?

Recognizing perspective is an essential skill of **global competence**. But students can be challenged when encountering people whose beliefs, values, and experiences are quite different from their own. As importantly, students often struggle with articulating their own worldviews and understanding how they were formed. This work requires students to **exercise their empathetic muscles** and to **challenge their stereotypes**. “The other” is transformed into someone with whom students can more readily empathize and seek to understand. This leads not only to global competence; it leads to a more compassionate classroom and, indeed, world.

“Traveling out of yourself, you expand. You recognize the reality of another's existence. That imaginative leap is the birth of empathy.”

Rebecca Solnit, Author

What's tricky about perspective-taking?

The human capacity to take on the perspective of others is essential to our social interactions, to our societies, and to civil discourse. And it is **flawed**, for you cannot truly and exactly know or represent what another person from the past or the present thinks and feels. But **we must try**, for in the effort we make discoveries about **what we know** and **what we do not know** about others and, more importantly, about ourselves. These discoveries demand that we ask deeper and deeper questions. And **questions** are at the heart of learning and understanding.

Creating dramatic monologues engages students in thinking and learning **with** drama – embracing an **art form** that requires that we step outside of ourselves and **imagine** and **create** from a **compassionate, open place**.

Essential Questions:

These questions will frame our work:

- How can **drama** uniquely **explore perspective-taking**?
- How can drama help us **uncover the complexity** of our **own points of view** as well as others?
- How does perspective-taking **deepen our understanding** of global issues?

Going Global and Arts Integration:

Drama is an ideal art form for students to demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives. The multi-step creative process of writing an original monologue can connect drama with other subject areas such as social studies, global studies, history, and language arts, and addresses an area of concern or need – global competence.

The Kennedy Center's Definition for Arts Integration

Arts Integration is
an APPROACH to TEACHING
in which students
construct and demonstrate
UNDERSTANDING
through an
ART FORM.
Students engage in a
CREATIVE PROCESS
which
CONNECTS
an art form and another subject
area
and meets
EVOLVING OBJECTIVES in both.