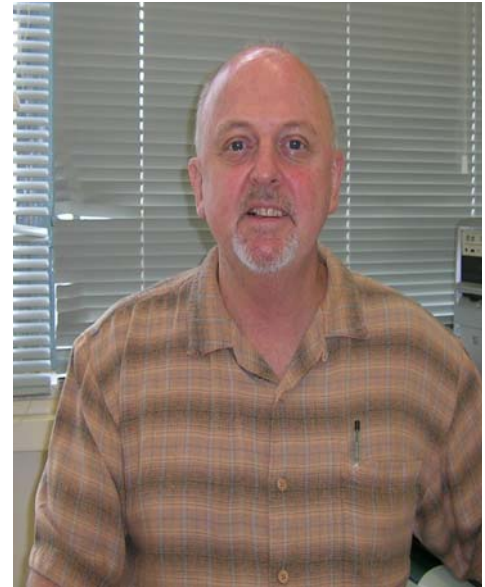


## **PART 2: DRAMA IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

## David Walker

David Walker is from Australia and has taught in Hong Kong since 2001. He taught at Sam Yuk Middle School for two years and is now the NET at Hoi Ping Chamber of Commerce Secondary School in Kowloon. David is a drama enthusiast. In 2006-07, he entered his students into the Drama Fest organised by the Association of English Medium of Instruction Schools. Drama Fest is a non-competitive event which aimed at celebrating and promoting student interest in drama. David's students performed in the 'Outstanding Performance' category of the event in May 2007.

The following article is based on an interview with David. The English Panel Chair in the school, Mr. Ken Wong, and the students from Hoi Ping Chamber of Commerce Secondary School who performed in Drama Fest 2007 also give their views of the rehearsal and preparation process.



### Featured Strategy:

√ Building a play from page to stage

### **Why did you decide to enter your students in the Drama Fest organised by the Association of EMI Schools?**

The event appealed to both the students and me because it was essentially non-competitive. We thought it would be a lot of fun, although we knew there would be a lot of hard work. Also, the Drama Fest organisers had stressed that the performances should be as simple as possible. Fussy costumes, props and scenery were discouraged. I strongly believe that simplicity leads to the best outcome and this was to be the trademark of our performance.



### **How did you choose the actors?**

We started with a group of 12 students, but soon discovered that some members of the large group were too self-conscious or not too focused – just what actors should not be! The cast was reduced to six. I asked for total commitment from the students because the success of the performance relied a great deal on regular rehearsal. Our group included actors from several forms. The youngest actor was a Form 1 student.

### **How did you choose the materials you performed?**

'Brown Bread and Honey' is one of the scripts in the *Voiceworks* series produced by Longman. This script would be the basis of our performance. However, we wanted to adapt the script to make it more accessible and interesting for a young audience. We revised the play and chose only those parts that worked for us. The script adaptation process eventually became a group project.

### **What was your role throughout the rehearsal process?**

I was there as the actors' eyes offstage. I pointed out to the students what worked and what didn't, but I wasn't a director in the traditional sense. Although I carried vetoing rights, everyone in the play could comment and contribute to the work. I was more of a teacher-advisor than a director.

### Can you describe the process of dramatising the script from 'page to stage'?

Having looked closely at the script, the 'stirring and whirring' in the story called out for a song. One of the actors, Russell, delivered a song two days after I asked him to write one! Then I suggested having a series of movements to complement the song. The actors liked the idea of marching around the stage in a figure eight. This movement, after some fine-tuning, became the pattern for all the movement in our play. I then suggested that the students play multiple roles.



The more the students worked on the play, the more they owned it. I could then delegate responsibilities, such as asking one of the cast members to inform the others about the dates and times of rehearsals. Everyone was at rehearsals at the agreed times and was even willing to spend extra time getting the play just right. Over the course of the two-month rehearsal period, our expectations and the demands of each other grew.

Most rehearsals lasted only 15 minutes. That prevented the actors from losing interest. I had promised the actors we would only use a part of our lunchtime for rehearsal. However, as the date of the actual performance approached, we had to hold two longer rehearsals of two and a half hours each. During the second rehearsal, the actors wore their simple costume and put on make-up. Only one actor had used greasepaint before, and it was wonderful to see how their perception of themselves as 'actors' changed once the greasepaint was put on!



After they had put on the greasepaint, I could feel a difference in their acting during the rehearsal. The students stepped into their roles like stepping into their trousers. They were natural and relaxed. I knew then they would perform well at Drama Fest – and they did!

### Comments by the English Panel Chair, Mr Wong Chiu Sheung



I noticed quite a big difference in the students' confidence and English proficiency after the play. They are now more willing to express themselves in English. Mr. Walker's approach not only helped develop the students' English skills, but also allowed the students to use the skills they had learned in other subjects. The students used their knowledge of Chinese drama to design the movement in the play. This was not just a drama performance in English,

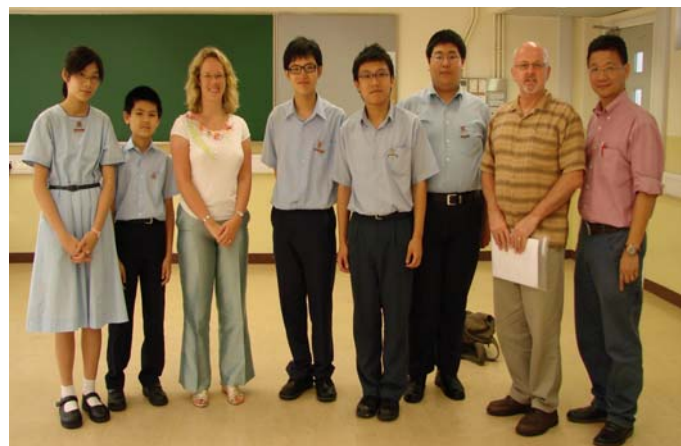
but also a kind of cross-cultural performance! I hope this type of drama can be continued.

### Student Comments

*Russell (Form 4):* Mr Walker chose the script and we had many discussions on how we would perform it. Having a song and other musical elements in our play made it more fun and enjoyable to rehearse and perform. It was a good idea for all of us to wear the same black costume and to put on white make-up because then we could swap roles.



*Matthew (Form 1):* My communication skills have improved a lot. Even though it was a lot of work, I would like to act in an English play again.





## Tina Engelbogen

Tina Engelbogen arrived at Yu Chun Keung Memorial College in 2004. In addition to her training in teaching Literature, Tina brought a wealth of experience in teaching drama in secondary schools in Melbourne, Australia.

In her early contact with students at her school, Tina found them to be uninterested in learning English and lacking confidence in using the language. She saw the need to inspire her students and to create excitement and adventure in the learning of English. To do so, she decided to use drama with her students.



### On Drama

When asked about her achievements at the school, Tina pointed out that many challenges had to be dealt with before drama could impact on student learning. Teachers had little time to share strategies. The school had limited resources. The idea of teaching drama at a school with challenging students and whose medium of instruction was Chinese was intimidating to some. However, with the support of the Principal, Tina and her Panel Chair gradually helped teachers see that through co-planning and co-teaching, opportunities for learning English through drama were possible.



### Featured Strategy:

√ Integrating Drama into the curriculum

### How Drama Evolved at the School

Tina gradually introduced drama in her lessons with Form 1-3 students. She taught her students to create scenes and write scripts using the guided readers that were used in Reading lessons. Then she had them perform their creations during English Week. When the Oxford Anthology replaced the guided readers, Tina found more text types for her students to develop their imaginations and practice language skills through drama.

'Horizons Week' traditionally takes place in Yu Chun Keung Memorial College every year. It is a school-wide inter-disciplinary program in which students participate in a variety of learning activities. Tina and members of her Panel thought that Horizons Week would be a good opportunity to promote English learning. In the first year, they collaborated with the Art Club and took students to visit galleries. Then, with staunch support from the English Panel Chair, they expanded the activities in the second year to include drama workshops and games that lasted for 3 days. By the third year, in addition to the writing and drama workshops, Tina was able to partner with a colleague, Irene Mak, in taking their students on an educational excursion to the wax museum on The Peak. The students made observations and reported what they saw.

Since drama had been a part of classroom teaching and of the curriculum, in 2007 it was included in the Form 1 examination. A teacher-prepared script and rubric were developed to assess the speaking skills of students. Tina's students now appreciate their experience of learning English. They are more confident and participate more actively in English classes. They have also learned to be more disciplined when working with others.

### Instructional Materials

For examples of the scripts, handouts and worksheets that Tina used to teach drama, see pp. 48 - 57 of Part 3: Resources for Drama.

*"With language, students should not just be taught to...they should experience it... participate in it."*

*Tina Engelbogen*

### Acknowledgement

We are grateful to Ms Irene Mak for sharing her experience of collaborating with Tina Engelbogen and teaching drama.

## Maree Watson

Maree Watson has taught at Ko Lui Secondary School in Kwun Tong for almost 10 years. Ever since she arrived at the school, she has been preparing students for competitions in the Hong Kong Speech Festival. In the process, she discovered that her students could be expressive and creative, and that they would use English to communicate when they needed to. That inspired her to start using drama at school in 2004.



### On drama

Maree believes that drama provides students with experiences through which they can transcend cultural barriers to access authentic language. By participating in drama activities, students can pick up idiomatic as well as colloquial expressions and practice them in authentic situations.



### Featured Strategy:

- √ Building students confidence with drama



## How Drama evolved at the school

Starting with simple comic plays, Maree provided fun and non-threatening settings for her students to explore drama and practice speaking English after school. In classes that she co-taught – mostly to junior form students with whom she worked once or twice a cycle – Maree performed dramatic readings of short plays or poems. To engage the students, she would assign them the task of providing onomatopoeic sounds to complement the reading. Thus, many students, particularly those who lacked the confidence in speaking English, developed an interest in drama. Students from different classes and forms then began participating in after-school activities.

## Drama Productions

The list of productions includes:

- *Freddy Finds the Thief*, Dec. 2004
- *Quick Nick and Slow Jo*, Longman Drama Competition, Mar. 2005
- *The Psychiatrist*, May 2005
- *Aesop's Fables: The Wind and the Sun*, Nov. 2005
- *Santa and the Snowmobile*, Dec. 2005
- *Hippo*, Apr. 2006
- *Snow Bright and the Seven Sumos*, July 2006
- *Cats*, July 2006
- *An Inspector Calls*, Nov. 2006
- *The Airport*, Nov. 2006
- *Maddy Alone*, Nov. 2006
- *The Bank Robbery*, May 2007
- *I am Cherry and Duck Pond* (by S1 teachers), June 2007



Maree with Lucia Luk, a colleague with whom she has been collaborating closely on integrating drama into classroom teaching.

These productions entailed collaboration between Maree and other English Panel members. Some teachers offered help in organizing and supervising students or rehearsing lines with them. Others began using drama strategies when teaching their own students.



Some of the junior-form students who have enjoyed participating in the after-school drama activities

### Student Testimony

Many of the students at Ko Lui Secondary School felt that learning English was very difficult. Some called English a ‘monster’. Even for the minority of students who thought that the language was ‘easy to learn’, they admitted that English was ‘difficult to know’. Their perception of English reflected their lack of confidence in using the language. Being at a CMI school, they have only limited opportunities to develop that confidence.

Thanks to drama activities, the students were able to practise pronunciation, inflection and speaking tone. They often made mistakes but were given chances to improve. They learned to be expressive while playing different roles and by thinking about characterisation. They learned to work in a group and even built new friendships.

“Drama could be time consuming,” lamented one student, and many others agreed. However, in the end, they were grateful for becoming much more confident in speaking English.



### Acknowledgement

We are grateful to Mr. Kane Lee, English Panel Chair, for making the interviews with teachers and students possible and for submitting photographs for this publication.

Thank you to the students and teachers on the English Panel for their frankness and valuable contributions.

A special thank you to Ms Wong Sheung Kam, Principal of Ko Lui Secondary School, for giving us open access to her school and staff.

## Snapshots of Drama Activities

Maree rehearsing with students on stage



Performance of *Cats* (July 2006)



A scene from *Bank Robbery*  
(May 2007)





Performing for primary school students with audience participation



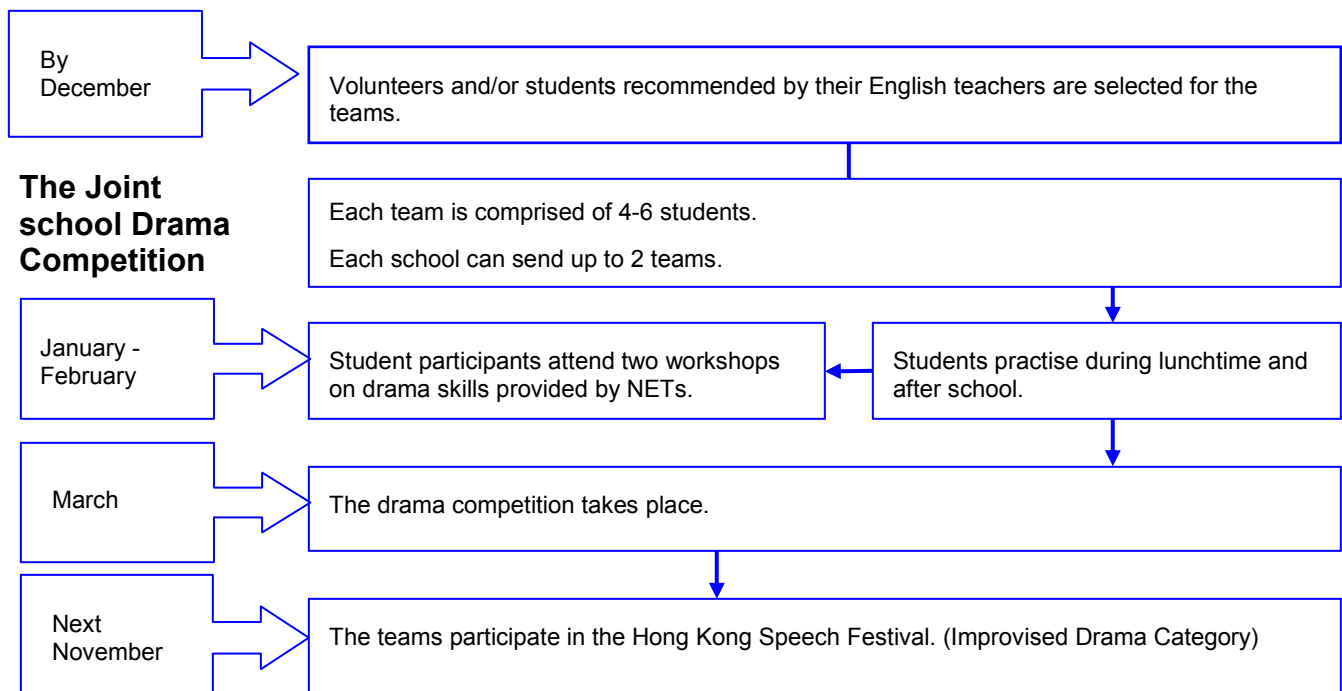
Performing in public at a shopping mall

## The Hong Kong True Light Schools

Every year, the four True Light Schools of Hong Kong organise an inter-school drama competition. The aims of this event are to :

- promote interaction among students from different schools,
- introduce students to communicating in English through drama,
- develop performance skills and
- prepare students for the English Drama Improvisation category of the Hong Kong Speech Festival.

In 2005, the rules and structure of the competition were established. NETs from all four schools are involved in the competition. They coach students, encourage creativity and provide workshops on skills in using voice and movement, story-building through drama, characterisation and team-building.





## **Competition Information and Supporting Documents**

The following materials are included:

1. General Information on Workshops 1, 2 and Competition 2006
2. Details of Workshop One
3. Details of Workshop Two
4. Sample Tasks for Improvised Drama in groups:
  - Disaster – Ingredients to Create Your Own Situation
  - At the Market

### **Acknowledgements**

We are grateful to Nisha Argawal, a teacher at True Light Middle School, for bringing the drama improvisation competition to our attention.

The Principals of the four True Light Schools of Hong Kong.

The NETs (2005-8) at the True Light Schools of Hong Kong who helped to develop this programme.

**GENERAL INFORMATION ON WORKSHOPS 1, 2 AND COMPETITION 2006**

<b>Workshop One</b>	
Time:	9:00 a.m to 12:00 noon
Programme:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Warm-up activities – short drama activities to introduce movement and mime (followed by a 10 minute break)</li> <li>2. Developing a plot or storyline (followed by a 5 minute break)</li> <li>3. Stage skills — using sequence (followed by a 15 minute break)</li> <li>4. Improvising drama in groups — each group prepares a 5 minute performance.</li> </ol>

<b>Workshop Two</b>	
Time:	9:00 a.m to 12:30 p.m.
Programme:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Developing characterisation and using mime (followed by a 5 minute break)</li> <li>2. Using voice and language with improvisation in groups — each group prepares a 5 minute performance. See Sample Tasks One and Two on pp. 44-45.</li> </ol>

**WORKSHOP ONE**

	<b>Time</b>	<b>Content</b>	
Arrival	9:00 a.m.	Sort out name badges. Getting to know each other/mingling	
Session 1: Warm-up	9:15 – 9:50 a.m. (35 minutes)	<b>Activities (Whole group/pair work)</b>	
		(a) Clumps (movement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People walk around the room. When a number is called out, they 'clump' together in that number. Those who cannot get into a group are out.</li> <li>• (Pair work) One person is blindfolded and is led around the room by a partner. Begin by walking slowly. As the trust builds, move in a faster pace and then into a slow jog.</li> </ul>
		(b) Trust Walk and Trust Catch (movement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Group work) In a group of 5, one person stands in the middle blindfolded and starts to fall. Others in the group try to prevent her from falling.</li> </ul>
		(C) Body Works (mime)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divide the class into small groups of six. Each group thinks of a word containing at least six letters. Group members form the word by making each letter with their bodies. The other groups then guess what the word is.</li> </ul>
	9:50 – 10:00 a.m. (10 minutes)	<b>Break 1</b>	
Session 2: How to develop a storyline	10:00 – 10:30 a.m. (30 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers review the elements of a story with the students.</li> <li>• Teachers emphasise that a story must have a beginning, a middle and an end. These elements must be included in a story.</li> </ul>	
	10:30 – 10:35 a.m. (5 minutes)	<b>Break 2</b>	

	Time	Content
Session 3: Stage Skills – Use of Sequence	10:35 - 11:10 a.m. (35 minutes)	<b>Activities (Whole group/Small group)</b>
		<p>(a) Mirror Images</p> <p>(b) Freeze Frames</p> <p>(c) Picture Postcards</p> <p>Exploring plot sequence (beginning, middle, end)</p> <p>1. In pairs, one person leads with a simple movement while another follows as a mirror image. Join the pairs to make groups of 4. Then join those groups together until one large group is formed.</p> <p>2. Freeze and Move — in small groups of approximately 6 people, each creates a frozen picture according to a given topic/situation, e.g. a winning moment on Sports Day, a family photo, a scene at the beach/a barbeque/the market/a pop concert/a volleyball game/ in the classroom/in the exercise class.</p> <p>3. Create 3 pictures to show the sequence of plot.</p> <p>Example 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a story on a given topic, e.g. 'Robbery'</li> <li>• Picture 1: All standing in a queue</li> <li>• Picture 2: Robbers coming in, some people on the floor.</li> <li>• Picture 3: Police standing and robbers on knees being handcuffed</li> </ul> <p>Example 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic: Growing old</li> <li>• Picture 1: You are born.</li> <li>• Picture 2: You get married.</li> <li>• Picture 3: You die.</li> </ul>
	11:10 – 11:25 a.m. (15 minutes)	<b>Morning Tea Break</b>
Session 4: Improvising drama in groups	11:25 – 12:00 noon (35 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will develop teamwork further by using prompts to create a storyline.</li> <li>• In groups or pairs, students will select a situation to create a short dramatic piece.</li> <li>• Remind students that the stories must have a beginning, a middle and an end. A situation is given; some events occur; a climax builds; a problem is solved and the tension subsides.</li> <li>• The teacher can give an example to demonstrate the development of a story. (Any childhood tale, famous film, etc. will be acceptable.)</li> <li>• Students are then given the topics. Encourage them to use their creativity.</li> <li>• The story will be created first. Then the performance will be prepared.</li> <li>• The teacher may allow students a short practice before preparing for the competition.</li> </ul>

**WORKSHOP TWO**

	<b>Time</b>	<b>Content</b>	
Arrival	9.00 a.m.	Distribute name badges, get to know each other and mingle	
Session 1 Characterisation and mime	9:00 - 10:30 a.m. (90 minutes)	<b>Activities (Whole group/pair work)</b>	
		(a) Mime	<p>Role play: use facial expressions &amp; gestures to demonstrate feelings, e.g. being angry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elicit from students the range of emotions: frightened, bored, happy, sad, worried, stressed, curious, surprised, amazed, excited, etc.</li> </ul>
		(b) Words and Body Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In groups of 4, the students use mime to demonstrate various emotions. Familiarise them first with the body language and facial expressions.</li> <li>Role play with facial expressions, gestures, words and tone of voice.</li> <li>Then, whisper an emotion to students in groups of 4. Students will create a scene using the emotion. They must use body language, facial expressions, words and tone of voice.</li> <li>Feedback. Each group acts out the scene while the other groups guess the emotion.</li> </ul>
	10:30 - 10:45 a.m.	<b>Break</b>	
Session 2: Using Voice and Language	10:45 a.m. - 12:00 noon (75 minutes)	(a) Introduction	<p>Ask the students which is better and why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place students at the back of the stage with their back to audience. Ask them to mumble, 'Hello. How are you all today?'</li> <li>Go to the front of the stage. Do the same again.</li> <li>Talk to the students with your back to them and facing them. Speak quickly 3 times, slowly 3 times. Mumble once and speak clearly once.</li> </ul>
		(b) Tongue Twisters	<p>Take 10 paces away from the group. Read the tongue twister normally, then very loudly using the diaphragm. Students choose a tongue twister and practise saying it. One at a time, each reads the tongue twister 10 paces from the group.</p>
		(c) Game 1: Volume	<p>Use voice according to instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each group receives an envelope with sentences.</li> <li>Each student in a group takes turns to practise saying a sentence to the group.</li> <li>Then they swap sentences. If a person has to shout a sentence, the next student will have to whisper it.</li> </ul>



	Time	Content	
<p>Section 2 (continued) Using Voice and Language</p>	<p>10:45 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. (105 minutes)</p>	<p>(d) Game 1: Tones</p> <p>(e) Game 2: Emotions</p> <p>(f) Game 3: Instructions to students</p> <p>(g) Game 4: Roleplay</p> <p>(h) Improvising drama in groups</p>	<p>When students begin to achieve some volume and contrast in tone, model the different tones, such as saying, ‘you’re a stupid fool’ when you are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pleased</li> <li>• Upset</li> <li>• Angry</li> </ul> <p>Ask students what they notice about the use of the voice when it is combined with emotions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When we’re angry, what happens to our voice?</li> <li>• When we’re pleased, what often happens to our voice?</li> <li>• When we’re upset, what often happens to our voice?</li> </ul> <p>Conclusion: To express emotions, we use our voice to reinforce what we want the word to mean in the situation.</p> <p>Each student takes a sentence and says it using three different emotions from the following list: anger, fear, love, hatred, pain, happiness, nervousness.(5 minutes)</p> <p>Students pick a card with an emotional characteristic written on it. They pretend they are in an MTR station, and need help to get to Mongkok. Each student in the group must act according to what is on their card.</p> <p>You are in a very nice restaurant. You will receive a piece of paper assigning you a role. Study it. The paper will be collected in 2 minutes. Now introduce yourself to everyone at the table. Use your voice and show the kind of person that you are supposed to be through your words and manner of speaking.</p> <p>For example, Mr. Suen has invited an important businessman and his wife to dinner just before signing an important contract.</p> <p>‘Hello. I’m Mr. Suen’s auntie. I’m a bit deaf so you’ll have to speak up. He doesn’t usually invite me to do these occasions, do you, Tony? He prefers to keep me hidden, I think, ‘cause I don’t get on with my sister, his wife. She’s such a boss, aren’t you Yat? ... (talkative)</p> <p>The workshop ends after all the students have performed — time permitting. The most important thing is that students are able to portray the role that they have been assigned using appropriate body language, tone and volume.</p> <p>See Sample Tasks One and Two on pp. 44-45.</p>

## Sample Tasks for Improvised Drama in groups (30 minutes)

### **SAMPLE TASK ONE: Disaster — Ingredients to Create Your Own Situation**

Instructions: Choose and combine ingredients from the following categories to create your own disaster. You have 25 minutes to prepare your improvisation.

#### Characters

A mayor, councillors, engineers, mountain climbers, skiers, rescue-helicopter pilot, fireman, a family, a young child, an old man, a captain, etc.

#### Times

Late at night, early morning, midday, as school finishes, a hot day, a cold day, before or during or after a storm, a flood or a fire, dam bursts, an earthquake or avalanche, and any ideas the students may have.

#### Places

A school, by the river, by the sea, on a snow-covered mountain, aboard a ship, a fault-line in the shopping center, and any ideas from the class.

#### Plot Points

Early warning, a sudden movement underfoot, a panic, an evacuation, everyone remains calm/cool, where to hide, a loud noise/water rising, someone is trapped, there's no food left.

### SAMPLE TASK TWO: At the Market

You have twenty-five minutes to prepare your improvisation.

#### Situation

You are in a crowded place and you know no one. Who are you? Where are you? Decide on your character.

Move about at your own pace. Avoid looking at people as they pass by. Speak to no one. STOP. You now see someone you know. Are you happy to see him? Greet him or her and move on. STOP.

You are carrying some glass objects. Hold them carefully. What are they? How heavy are they? Hold them carefully with both hands. Continue walking. Be careful not to knock against anyone. Reduce the amount of space that the group moves in.

The crowd is getting bigger, but you have less space to move in. Try to keep going. STOP. Put down the parcel. Find a partner and a space to sit down.

#### Topic - At the market

1. Students are either vendors or customers.
2. Discussion: At the market, what sounds do you hear? How do the vendors attract customers? What strategies do they use to sell their goods?
3. Assign roles
  - Vendors - what are your goods and what selling strategies will you use? Each pair is to work out a relationship between the vendors: employer/employee, friends, relatives.
  - Customers - who you are and your reason(s) for being at the market. Do you have time to look around the market? Students have two minutes to decide.

#### Starting a conflict

Teacher gives each pair of vendors or customers instructions to start a conflict, for example, quarrelling over payment, quality of goods or accidental damage.