

## Social Issue Represented in a Dramatic Form

*by Andrea Haeussler*

<b>Tool(s) used:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainability Compass</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose of using tool:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Generating Questions</li> <li>• Synthesizing Thinking</li> <li>• Guiding Discussion</li> </ul> <p><b>Overview:</b></p> <p>Introduce the students to the context of sustainability, social issues or complex issues, the Compass tool, brainstorming, etc.</p> <p>(Continuation for next class: Students know that they have to perform some sort of dramatic form (short scene, monologue, etc.). Students have learned about character work, scene work, the steps it takes to put a production, etc. Students don't know that they have to put together a play that has some social message and talks about a complex issue.)</p>
<b>Context of lesson/case study:</b>	Drama Classroom
<b>Participants (# and description):</b>	Grade 8 students. 22 students in class. Divided in 4 groups of 5 or 6
<b>Topic, Theme, or Key Understanding of unit/project:</b>	Social issue represented in a dramatic form
<b>Length of unit/project:</b>	2 months in total (with the playwriting and play). This lesson: 1 class period- 90 minutes.
<b>Resources/materials &amp; setting required:</b>	Post-it, Notecards, Poster, Markers, Projector, images, <a href="#">complex issue presentation small9.pdf</a>
<p><b>Lesson Plan/Description of the Project:</b></p> <p><b>Lesson goals/objectives:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students choose a complex issue they care or are worried about.</li> <li>2. Students think of their issue as a global, complex, inter-related issue.</li> <li>3. Students ask questions and discuss their complex issue in their group in a reflective and insightful way.</li> <li>4. Students learn how to use the compass model when discussing real-world issues.</li> <li>5. Students rewrite and perform an existent Fairy Tale to portray their real-world issue and to represent one of its solutions.</li> </ol> <p><b>Drama Standards:</b></p> <p>Content standard #1: Script writing by the creation of improvisations and scripted scenes based on personal experience and heritage, imagination, literature, and history.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Students individually and in groups create characters, environments, and actions that create tension and suspense.</li> <li>b. Students refine and record dialogue and action</li> </ol> <p>Content standard # 3: Acting by developing basic acting skills to portray characters who interact in improvised and scripted scenes.</p>	

**Lesson plan:**

1. That person over there
  - a. In a post-it note: write the name and what do you think sustainability is...
2. Divide students into their Tribes (or groups).
3. Everybody writes
  - a. What is sustainability: poster
  - b. Together, come up with their own definition of sustainability
  - c. Readout definitions to class members
4. Students have to write down words/phrases that come to mind when they look at the images projected on the board. (the images were previously selected by teacher, and represent various social issues)  
Instructions: no talking. Poster paper, one per group. Again, everybody writes.
5. As a group discuss:
  - a. What complex issues did you see?
  - b. Are there other issues that I didn't project?
  - c. Connect them and discuss
  - d. Choose a complex issue everyone in your group is interested about
6. Introduce project: they will create some sort of performance that shows that complex issue using a fairytale or children's story.

**Teaching Tips/Ideas:**

- It is very important to have all material ready to use and pass out. Do not waste time getting organized or trying to find material.
- Also important to have some sort of visual ready with instructions written so that the students can follow.
- Always know the objective or purpose of why you are doing what you are doing it. I had students ask me what does this have to do with drama. And I knew exactly what to respond.

**Reflection**

**Plusses:**

- Students really liked "That Person Over There" strategy.
- Some students had no idea what sustainability is, and some had some idea. It is always nice to start a topic in which the students really learn something new.
- I, as a teacher, am also learning more and more about sustainability, so from hearing the student's conversations and their definitions, I got more ideas and learned more about it.
- Also, something that went well was that I had previously chosen the Tribes or groups the students would be working with. They were balanced, so the groups worked very well together.

**Challenges:**

- The students had already done the "humming a song" strategy to find their tribes or groups. I thought it was going to be something new to them, but it wasn't. That was a little disappointing.
- There is always one or two group members who don't want to participate or don't write. Find ways to engage them so they benefit from the activities.
- Something that I forgot to include in the powerpoint was a "definition" of sustainability to give to the students.

**Suggestions for other practitioners and educators:**

I think that the best way to practice what you learn during the training is to jump right into doing something with it right away. The fresher, the better. It doesn't really matter what you teach (hey, I teach Drama!). You can always tie in "the Compass" or the idea of sustainability to other lesson plans.

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**Case study submitted by: Andrea Haeussler, 2017, while serving as Drama Teacher at the Colegio Maya, Guatemala City, Guatemala**

